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ARTS-BASED METHODS FOR DECOLONISING PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

EDITED BY
TIINA SEPPÄLÄ,
MELANIE SARANTOU
AND SATU MIETTINEN

Arts-Based Methods for Decolonising Participatory Research

In an effort to challenge the ways in which colonial power relations and Eurocentric knowledges are reproduced in participatory research, this book explores whether and how it is possible to use arts-based methods for creating more horizontal and democratic research practices.

In discussing both the transformative potential and limitations of arts-based methods, the book asks: What can arts-based methods contribute to decolonising participatory research and its processes and practices? The book takes part in ongoing debates related to the need to decolonise research, and investigates practical contributions of arts-based methods in the practice-led research domain. Further, it discusses the role of artistic research in depth, locating it in a decolonising context.

The book will be of interest to scholars working in art history, design, fine arts, service design, social sciences and development studies.

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1 Introduction

Arts-Based Methods for Decolonising Participatory Research

Tiina Seppälä, Melanie Sarantou and Satu Miettinen

The foundations of academic knowledge production are increasingly questioned and contested from a diversity of perspectives. On the one hand, academic research has suffered from a legitimacy crisis in the so-called post-truth era, which has transformed the meaning of 'truth' and shaken the position of scientific knowledge in society (e.g. McIntyre, 2018). On the other hand, within academia itself, a wide range of epistemological criticisms stemming from various critical approaches have emerged and are challenging conventional forms of academic knowledge production, along with its ethical premises and value base. Calls for more participatory, horizontal and democratic research practices have become widespread.

Due to what has been called the 'participatory turn', the growing relevance of participatory research—that is, research done in close interaction with people, groups and communities—or community-based participatory research (Leavy, 2017), has been manifested in many fields. The emergence of concepts such as *collaborative research*, *research partnership*, *co-creation* and *co-production of knowledge* is one result of this. This turn to participation has taken place simultaneously with the growing popularity of arts-based research methods, in parallel with the turn to community in the arts (Badham, 2013; Bishop, 2006; Wyatt et al., 2013), and they have also become intertwined. As a result of this, substantial contributions to the role of arts-based methods and arts-based research in participatory research have been made (e.g. Kara, 2015; Leavy, 2015, 2017, 2018; Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008).

Arts-based methods represent a wide umbrella category under which there are many art forms, genres and practices—including *visual art* (painting, drawing, collages, installation art, photography, three-dimensional art, sculpture, comics, textiles, needle crafts, quilting); *audio-visual art* (film, video); *multimedia forms* (e.g., graphic novels); and *performative arts* (theatre, dancing, music, creative movement, poetry) (Leavy, 2018, p. 18). Even more broadly, activities such as narrative and poetic inquiry, creative writing, essays, novels, storytelling and screenwriting can be considered arts-based methods. They may also include multimethod forms that combine two or more art forms (p. 18). Arts-based methods refer to 'any social research or human inquiry that adapts the tenets of the creative arts as a part of the methodology' (Jones & Leavy, 2014, p. 1) and can be used in different phases of research: as methods for data collection, in analytical processes and in interpretation and wider dissemination of research outcomes as communicative or aesthetic elements (Leavy, 2015). Creativity in research is context-specific—it depends on the knowledge, skills and abilities of those involved

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and where the research is conducted (Kara, 2015). Some researchers understand arts-based research as a paradigm (Gerber et al., 2018, p. 13; Leavy, 2015).

The potential and benefits of arts-based methods for participatory research have been discussed widely. Studies have explored, for example, the role of art in participatory development (e.g. Cleveland, 2011; Coemans et al., 2015; Michelkevičius, 2019), fostering plurality through social design methodologies (Akama & Yee, 2016), collaborative design where power relations are more equally distributed (Sanders & Stappers, 2008) and participatory service design which looks at service production from the user's point of view (Miettinen & Vuontisjärvi, 2016). A plethora of arts-based methods are used in various practices, as illustrated by studies in areas of education (e.g. Baden & Wimpenny, 2014; Barone, 1995; Cahnmann-Taylor, 2013; Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2017; Kamler, 2013; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013), health (e.g. Boydell et al., 2012; Fraser & al Sayah, 2011; Wang, 1999) and arts therapy (Chilton & Scotti, 2014; Coholic et al., 2009; Connellan, 2019; Ledger & Edwards, 2011; McNiff, 1998).

While the participatory turn has been embraced for its transformative potential, it has been also critically discussed from various perspectives. It has been argued that more attention should be paid to the questions of power, diversity and intersectionality, as well as decolonising participatory research (e.g. Baum et al., 2006; Cooke & Kothari, 2000; Eubanks, 2009; Genat, 2009; Gill et al., 2012; Hickey & Mohan, 2004; Kincheloe, 2009; Schurr & Segebart, 2012; Sherwood & Kendall, 2013; Tolhurst et al., 2012; Tuck & Fine, 2007; Zavala, 2013). As noted by Kassem (2019), decolonising participatory research can benefit from critical methodologies and interdisciplinary work. Our book seeks to continue the important work that has been done in this regard, focusing especially on the potential of arts-based methods for contesting hierarchies in research, increasing multivocality, and developing new and more transparent forms of participatory research.

The aim of the book is to explore how arts-based methods can be utilised in developing better research practices—for doing research that supports the perspectives, needs and interests of the research participants in their place-based and cultural contexts. While engaging in ongoing, lively discussions on the need to decolonise research, we draw on postcolonial, decolonial and other critical perspectives, as well as their cross-disciplinary intersections. We ask questions such as: Can arts-based methods contribute to decolonising participatory research, its processes and practices—and if yes, how, under what conditions and on whose terms? How can arts-based methods, for example, challenge hierarchies, foster pluralism, increase multivocality and facilitate dialogue in research? What practical, political and communal issues need to be considered when designing arts-based processes and participatory activities from a decolonising perspective? What kinds of tensions, ethical issues and concerns arise when using arts-based methods in participatory research? How can they be addressed? We pay attention, for instance, to questions of representation, authorship and ownership created and shared through participatory artistic processes, research ethics and practical artistic production. We seek to present new perspectives, methods and processes to promote as well as to problematise the use of arts-based methods for decolonising participatory research—that is, we explore *both* the transformative potential *and* the challenges and limitations of arts-based methods.

Our main focus lies in the interface between social sciences, service design and art, but we also reflect on the recent discourse concerning the need to decolonise

design (Akama & Yee, 2016; Chaturvedi & Rehn, 2019; Jansen, 2019; Pissarra, 2011; Raghuram et al., 2009; Tunstall, 2013; Yamamoto, 2018), which is underpinned by the values of postcolonial and feminist theories in design practices. Design innovation has been criticised for sustaining colonial and imperialistic ways. As an example, Tunstall (2013) discusses how the ascendant influence of design innovation practices is reflected through the segregation of traditional craft and modern design, which ignores other intrinsic forms of design innovation amongst local communities. Additionally, a perception of design thinking is maintained as 'a progressive narrative of global salvation', which undermines alternative ways of reasoning, knowing and becoming (p. 235). Too strong of a focus on European, Euro-American and Japanese design and the development of solutions at the level of prototypes further limits the positive impact that design can have on communities. The effect of design on communities is illustrated in the way designers in India and Africa, for example, have creatively responded to challenges within their communities, which are often underpinned by hegemonic processes of capitalism and (neo)colonialism (p. 236). Decolonising design, through practices and thinking, seeks to question dominant narratives and relationships of power that perpetuate delocalised and disembodied perspectives of the Global North/West and eliminate other ways of knowing (Tlostanova, 2017; Venn, 2006). While there already exist some good discussions on the theme of decolonising design, the debate can benefit from practical examples and case studies.

It needs to be noted that debates on decolonising through arts-based methods are not a recent phenomenon, but draw on a longer history. Since the early 1980s, Wa Thiong'o (1992/1981) commenced his discussions on the role of the arts on the decolonisation of the mind. For him, decolonisation represented an 'ongoing process' that is 'based on a critical view of the self that emerges from states of not knowing, hearing or seeing'. He reflected on the role of fiction, drama and poetry as ways to reconnect with broken roots of the past: first, by looking at the past critically and, second, by helping build healthy societies (pp. 42, 57, 60, 63). Other postcolonial scholars have also reflected on the role of arts-based methods in decolonising. For instance, for Mbembe (2016), they offer avenues for overcoming the 'dualistic partition' or 'split between mind and body, nature and culture' and opportunities for embracing 'a horizontal strategy of openness to dialogue among different epistemic positions' (pp. 37, 42).

Conceptual Clarifications

Decolonisation itself has been defined in many different ways and for many different purposes. Traditionally, it has referred to formal decolonisation, to the process in which the colonial powers, principally European nations and their administrators, were compelled to give up, whether voluntarily or by force, their overseas possessions in various regions (e.g. Le Sueur, 2003). While this process usually required armed resistance on behalf of the colonised, the debates about psychological decolonisation—that is, about the destruction of socially and culturally constructed mental structures and discursive hierarchies which tried to produce the colonised as inferior to the 'civilised' coloniser—were also central to these struggles (e.g. Fanon, 1963/1961). Over time, the meaning of the concept has expanded beyond these particular decolonisation processes, and it now refers to a variety of different ways in which colonial/ity and hierarchical relations of power that characterise the present world order and societies might be undone and replaced

in different spheres of contemporary life, including education, media, economy and political systems, as well as science and academic knowledge (see e.g. Laako, 2016).

With respect to science and academic knowledge, knowledge processes and knowing subjects, decolonisation usually entails both critique and the visioning of alternatives. Firstly, criticism of the way in which colonial power relations and Eurocentric forms of knowledge are reproduced in Western epistemologies and their claims to objective and value-free science. Secondly, it has the aim of creating alternative theories, methodologies and epistemological inquiries to open new, less Eurocentric forms of knowing and inquiry to support the perspectives and political projects of the colonised and/or subaltern layers of the society. We are aware that, in recent years, decolonising has become something of a trendy buzzword within Western academia, one that too often serves as a metaphor instead of contributing to concrete practices of decolonisation, which is also illustrated in debates around decolonising knowledge production. As Tuck and Yang (2012) argue, 'when a metaphor invades decolonisation, it kills the very possibility of decolonisation; it recenters whiteness, it resettles theory, it extends innocence to the settler, it entertains a settler future' (p. 3). Therefore, it has been emphasised that decolonising knowledge should be regarded as a means to end colonisation, not as an end in itself (Essen et al., 2017). Yet, the extent to which it is possible to contribute to decolonisation through research is very much debated, especially when taking place within the Eurocentric academia. As McEwan (2019) states, 'scholars located in the North face a double bind: decolonization as a force to dismantle the power structures of modernity can never be achieved from within its own theoretical orthodoxies and infrastructures' (p. 91).

This relates also to critical discussions about the differences and tensions between postcolonial and decolonial perspectives. While postcolonial theory struggles against 'epistemic coloniality', critiquing Eurocentric knowledge production based on European traditions and experiences; that is, 'a particular anthropological knowledge, which is a process of knowing about Others—but a process that never fully acknowledges these Others as thinking and knowledge-producing subjects' (Mbembe, 2016, p. 16), decolonial theory rather 'attempts to envisage alternatives to European traditions and experiences and demands that decolonizing efforts go beyond critique and towards the removal of enduring forms of colonial domination' (McEwan, 2019, p. 91). Many theorists consider these approaches incommensurable. For example, Mignolo (2007) regards postcolonial theory as a 'project of scholarly transformation within the academy' grounded in the Eurocentric post-structural theory of Foucault, Derrida and others, which remains within the confines of the modernist, Eurocentric project even when critiquing it (p. 452).

Indeed, decolonial thinkers differentiate their work from postcolonial theory in several ways. In discussing modernity/coloniality, they start with the Conquest of the Americas in 1492 instead of the European Enlightenment. This means that although postcolonialism and decoloniality have 'both emerge[d] out of political developments contesting the colonial world order established by European empires', their understanding of the historical basis of this emergence differs in terms of geographical location and time period (Bhambra, 2014, p. 119). Instead of academic institutions, many decolonial scholars build on the world views of marginalised groups in their politics of liberation (McEwan, 2019, p. 93). In drawing on non-European sources beyond the metropolitan academy, decolonial theory seeks to delink from Eurocentrism, go beyond critique and embrace decolonial thinking and doing (Mignolo, 2007); thus, it can be considered more strongly linked to material and socio-economic aspects than is postcolonial theory (Bhambra, 2014).

While our approach comes closer to the postcolonial approach in many ways, we simultaneously emphasise aspects that are relevant in the context of decoloniality. This is because we are not interested in critiquing only academic knowledge production or power relations in participatory research as such, only in the abstract, but our broader aims are related to transforming—that is, decolonising—these practices while seeking to develop alternative practices, some of which may also have some material effects beyond these projects in the sense that they can inspire and support communities to actively challenge colonial structures and practices, demand what rightfully belongs to them and create new transformative practices on their own terms. It is in this way that our approach connects with the decolonial perspective.

We depart from the perspective that, while there are clear and undeniable differences between postcolonialism and decoloniality, there are also important interlinkages and similarities. As McEwan (2019) points out, they both are concerned with present-day global inequalities, suggesting that a closer dialogue between them is needed (p. 95). Decolonising should take place in our everyday practices in academia, in the field, in the classroom and everywhere we come across colonial structures and practices on a daily basis (Rutazibwa, 2019; see also Jong et al., 2019; Maldonado-Torres, 2011). This is why we consider both approaches necessary for decolonising participatory research in practical terms, which in our understanding benefits from the important power/knowledge critiques of postcolonial theory and from the strong focus on transformative political practice of the decolonial approach.

Power, Privilege, Positionality

We are aware that many Western scholars working with colonised and marginalised communities are increasingly criticised for succumbing to 'innocent colonialism' that is falsely represented as 'solidarity', for arguing that they are engaging in processes of decolonisation while their work is not really connected to the needs and interests of the communities and even for using research to reproduce their own positions of privilege (Tuck & Yang, 2012; see also Dey, 2018; Tuck & Fine, 2007, 2014; Simpson, 2017; Smith, 2012). Too often, research still segregates 'knowledge from the people, from its contexts and local histories' (D'Souza, 2011, pp. 236–237; see also Battiste, 2007; De Sousa Santos, 2014; Escobar, 1995; Icaza, 2017; Jauhola, 2020; Kothari, 2005; Lincoln & Cannella, 2009; Mignolo, 2009, 2011, 2012; Mignolo & Escobar, 2013; Mohanty, 2003; Motta, 2011, 2016; Simpson, 2017). There is also a great deal of critical discussion on questions such as who should be the key agents of decolonisation, who are entitled to act as allies or solidarity actors and in what ways should they engage with colonised people so as not to 'take over' their ownership of these processes, and thereby end up reproducing colonial power relations (e.g. Land, 2015; Nagar, 2014; Smith, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2012; see also Spivak, 1988). Indeed, it is essential to remember that research always involves power—it is not an innocent exercise 'but an activity that has something at stake and that occurs in a set of political and social conditions' (Smith, 2012, p. 5). The question of power is especially important in postcolonial contexts due to the highly negative historical experiences of research which was 'inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism' and the ways in which knowledge was extracted and appropriated (pp. 1, 61). We must not forget that, in the present as well, researchers have the 'power to distort, to make visible, to overlook, to exaggerate and to draw conclusions, based not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden

value judgements, and often downright misunderstandings', a fact that concerns also participatory research (pp. 128, 178).

We consider these kinds of critiques fundamentally important and justified. We also believe that the need to decolonise is such *an urgent, broad and demanding task* that it should take place across different levels and by various actors at the same time. As Tuck and Fine (2007) suggest, 'decolonization must be a common project on multiple social justice agendas' (p. 145). We understand that there is always a risk of enforcing and reinforcing colonial attitudes under different names, concepts, terminologies or methods. As noted by Smith (2012), emancipatory models of research have not 'freed researchers from exercising intellectual arrogance or employing evangelical and paternalistic practices', including ethnographic and qualitative methods which 'may sound more sensitive in the field, but . . . can be just as problematic as other forms of research' (p. 180). Building on the legacy of Lorde (1984), she refers to methods as master's tools which will not dismantle the master's house (Smith, 2012, p. 40). Yet, she points out that decolonising does not necessarily require 'a total rejection of all theory and research' (p. 41).

While the most significant processes of decolonisation probably happen elsewhere—that is, outside of academia, in the social and political realms—we have a responsibility as researchers to contribute towards the aim of decolonising academic research through our own active engagement; that is, by decolonising our research practices and 'knowledge-practices' (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008). We believe that many scholars engaged in participatory research and collaborative partnerships with communities are genuinely interested in supporting the perspectives and advancing the priorities that the(ir) communities consider important. Many researchers also have, over time and through their active and long-term engagement with communities, become aware of the complex contradictions that are related to power relations and hierarchies between themselves as researchers and the(ir) communities they work with. These are the kinds of experiences and processes that we seek to visibilise in this book, including analysis of and reflection on *both* successes and good practices *and* shortcomings, failures and challenges, involved in these processes. By introducing a broad spectrum of case studies and practical examples, we seek to illustrate what and how arts-based methods can contribute to decolonising participatory research in different research contexts, while also discussing challenges and ethical concerns this involves and how they can be addressed.

We do not claim that we can offer any kind of 'perfect' solutions—far from it, as we are only learning ourselves in the process. Moreover, we do not propose that our findings are generalisable or can 'travel' as such from one context to another, as any context or community is always unique and particular. However, we hope that the value of the experiences presented in this collection as a whole might exceed the personal and particular and provide some useful examples on the ways in which a variety of power/knowledge relations and hierarchical structures intersect and are negotiated in practice when engaging in participatory research through arts-based methods.

Defining Decolonising in This Book

For the purposes of this book, we define decolonising as a process or practice that actively seeks to transform colonial and Eurocentric research practices based on

hegemonic Western epistemologies by repositioning the research participants at the centre of the research process and developing alternative ways of engagement to support their perspectives and interests. From researchers, this requires self-reflection and unlearning the old ways—that is, the process of decolonising does not start with the 'other', but rather trying to decolonise oneself and transform one's practices (e.g. Motta, 2011, 2016). Despite this general definition, we have given our authors a free hand to decide how they define and use the concept of decolonising in their chapters. We believe that it is necessary to allow different understandings of decolonising to emerge for two reasons: first, because the debate on decolonising is constantly evolving and developing into new directions; and second, because the chapters and their cases are very diverse contextually, empirically, theoretically and methodologically. In fact, there are three types of chapters in the book: those describing research processes that have built on the perspective of decolonising from the very beginning, those contributing some useful examples to already existing theory and arguments, and those not originally drawing on a decolonising perspective but presenting some retrospective reflections on how certain parts of their research processes and lessons can potentially contribute to decolonising research practices.

This clarification is important as one of the most recent debates deals with 'demetaphorisation' of decoloniality, emphasising the need of especially Western scholars who have become increasingly interested in decolonising 'this and that' to clearly define what they are *decolonising from*, stressing the importance of conceptual clarity and proper analysis of what is being decolonised (Dey, 2020–present). Yet, there cannot be one fixed definition, but it needs to remain open-ended for different kinds of contexts and purposes (e.g. Dey, 2018). While recognising diversity, different conceptions and alternative ways to decolonise (and encourage people to find their own ways), it must be noted that diversity in this context is not only a positive thing, as the meaning of decolonising can become easily obscured—the definition cannot be too broad, as it would empty out the meaning of the word and lead to metaphorisation.

Situating Ourselves

It is important to reflect upon our own positionalities and academic histories to offer a transparent account of the motives that have inspired us, as scholars and individuals, to edit and write this particular book. We, the three female editors, have become interested in the theme of decolonising through our own research when working with communities in various contexts, including countries such as Nepal, Namibia, South Africa, India, Bangladesh, Australia, Finland and Russia (e.g. Khanam & Seppälä, 2020; Miettinen, 2007; Miettinen et al., 2016a, 2016b; Miettinen et al., 2019; Motta & Seppälä, 2016; Sarantou, 2014; Sarantou et al., 2019; Seppälä, 2014, 2016, 2017; Seppälä et al., 2020). As white, privileged Western scholars, we have tried to find ways to deal with complex issues, such as white privilege, problems of Eurocentric knowledge production and existing hierarchies of power/knowledge, as well as our own situatedness, positionality and ethico-political responsibilities as researchers.

For us, this book represents a conscious and *collective* effort to address some of the previously mentioned issues. Through sharing our experiences and learning from each other, as well as from the other authors in this book, we seek simultaneously to *self-educate* ourselves—an important task for scholars interested in decolonial research (e.g. Land, 2015; Smith, 2012; Tuck & Fine, 2007)—and provide some practical examples of the use of arts-based methods for students and other scholars working

with similar issues. The fact that the three of us are from different disciplines—service design, art/artistic research and social sciences—means that we sometimes tend to emphasise different kinds of perspectives. While we have had many debates and also some differing views during this co-learning–editing process, we have noticed more commonalities than radical differences in our approaches and have become convinced that bringing different fields together can contribute to collective learning through epistemic dialogue. However, there remains so much for us to learn, especially from post/decolonial and Indigenous scholars who engage and do research with and about their own communities and their struggles. Our positionalities are quite different, and we acknowledge that this has an influence on how we think about and do research.

During the process, we have discussed the reasons why each of us has become interested in working with communities on the margins. Seppälä's research in South Asia has been influenced by the fact that she is originally from Enontekiö, one of the most northern municipalities of Lapland, where the Indigenous Sámi community continuously struggles for its existence and right to self-determination. While these contexts are very different from one another, they both are characterised by structural violence and injustices related to processes of (settler) colonialism and manifest how the historical and present-day injustices are intimately intertwined. Sarantou was born to a mixed heritage settler family in Namibia, where she lived and worked for almost 40 years. She initiated and taught fashion at the University of Namibia (1998–2008). Miettinen has become interested in marginalised communities due to her engagement with local crafts communities in Namibia, South Africa, Lapland, Ostrobothnia, Australia, Chile and Azerbaijan in searching for ways to improve their livelihoods. As Smith (2012) points out, many scholars who study margins 'come from the margins or . . . see their intellectual purpose as being scholars who will work for, with and alongside communities who occupy the margins of society' (p. 205). Even though we have become interested in margins for different reasons, what ties the three of us together in the present is our current academic location at the University of Lapland. While socially engaged or arts-based research is not generally much appreciated in the neoliberal academy (it is difficult to gain funding and the funding instruments are not always suitable), it is especially challenging at smaller universities which receive less state funding and have to compete with larger universities that have broader international networks. Often, it is also hard work to justify that Global South–North collaboration is truly important.

Structure of the Book

The book is divided into three sections that address different fields of research but are interrelated and weave together a whole that provides a nuanced picture of the theme. The first section of the book, edited by Tiina Seppälä, presents cases mainly (but not exclusively) from the field of social sciences, also exploring certain forms of participatory research that are not that often associated with arts-based methods. In Chapter 2, Vishnu Vardhani Rajan, Shyam Gadhavi and Marjaana Jauhola discuss connected entanglements and disruptions with care through their collaborative quilting process. In describing their process of co-creation in India and Finland in the form of a conversation, accompanied by videos and audio-visual material, the chapter demonstrates the power of sharing, learning and doing together as a means to visibilise unspoken histories and reverse power hierarchies across the boundaries of coloniality. The chapter itself is an example of creative co-writing, including poetry and excerpts

from letters. It also challenges the conventional practice of using only standard English in academic publications—some parts are written in other languages.

In Chapter 3, Susanna Hast explores movement as a research method in her study of capoeira for refugee women and children in Jordan. She illustrates that while capoeira may offer valuable tools for developing movement pedagogies that are helpful in addressing some challenges in the everyday life of refugees, these methods are restricted by factors such as the short-term nature and discontinuity of activities. Sunniva Hovde, Asante Smzy Maulidi and Tone Pernille Østern continue with the theme of movement and embodied research in Chapter 4. It underlines the importance of incorporating decolonial perspectives into research design from the very beginning. The authors argue that through collaborative and embodied approaches based on dancing together, teaching/learning dancing from and with one another enables taking small steps towards more *just* dance research. Through an analysis of 'stop moments', they also discuss some tensions and issues of controversy in their research process. In Chapter 5, Tiina Seppälä describes a participatory photography project co-organised with women's rights activists in Nepal. In analysing the process through the perspective of decolonial feminist solidarity, she demonstrates that participatory photography can advance more horizontal and intimate engagement, learning and sharing between the researcher and participants, as well as enable important dialogue amongst research participants. The chapter also highlights the importance of researchers critically reflecting on their positionalities/privileges and being alert to the risk of producing a 'romanticised' view of participatory photography, as unequal power relations cannot ever be fully avoided in research, no matter how participatory it is.

The second section, edited by Satu Miettinen, focuses on the ways in which participatory serviced design (PSD) can facilitate transformation (Irwin et al., 2015) and transition processes to create solutions, have an impact and promote social change. Service design approaches enable participation, both digital and face to face, and thus address inclusion, community penetration and barriers to engagement with arts and culture (Eça et al., 2016). PSD manifests itself as a collaborative activity (Sanders & Stappers, 2008) whereby power relations are carefully considered (Ehn, 2017), and the designer's role is facilitative (Howard & Melles, 2011). Design for social innovation can be seen as a community-driven process of change emerging from the creative re-combination of existing assets and a bottom-up approach (Manzini, 2015). Armstrong et al. (2014) argue that social design highlights the concepts and activities enacted within participatory approaches to research and creates new transitional approaches. Service design adds value to systems and processes, while social design seeks to question and improve social conditions (Bailey, 2012). PSD practices with communities can be related to fostering social cohesion, participatory and democracy goals, increasing trust and accountability of services and creating sustainable social innovation. This section of the book integrates arts-based methods into service design by connecting art and design through fruitful collaboration, instead of creating artificial divisions between them.

The section starts with an exploration of two metaphors through which world views on designing can be understood. In Chapter 6, Yoko Akama posits that by thinking through the metaphor of islands, dominant design can shift to 'archipelagos of design' that embrace a 'plurality of ontologies', thus enabling reimagination and connectedness to places and location. In Chapter 7, Mariluz Soto, Katherine Mollenhauer, Satu Miettinen and Melanie Sarantou discuss the important role of communication in service design. The chapter sheds light on the process, its initiation and its efforts to decolonise a design process in a project related to creation of a community

in the context of a postgraduate design programme in Chile in which students, graduates and professors were the co-creators. In Chapter 8, Caoimhe Isha Beaulé, Solen Roth, Anne Marchand and Karine Awashish describe how the relational dimension of participatory design can be developed through creativity-based methods. They demonstrate that using a creativity-based approach—one that draws on arts, crafts and design—throughout the collaborative process can be one step towards building more respectful, reciprocal and relational collaboration with communities. In Chapter 9, Maija Rautiainen, Michelle Van Wyk and Satu Miettinen explore the themes of participatory arts, service design and grassroots development in communities. The chapter illustrates how arts-based methodologies can be utilised for local empowerment, stakeholder dialogue and discussing local democracy. In particular, it shows how arts-based methods enable inclusion and multivocality in service development.

The third section, edited by Melanie Sarantou, explores collaborative development and participatory arts methods and practices that generate creative energies that have the ability to re-humanise (Bishop, 2006) research practices that are often fragmented and driven by hegemonic forces. The approaches that underpin a social turn to the arts are, to name a few, community based, socially engaged, collaborative and research based (Badham, 2010; Bishop, 2006). This social turn, however, has been criticised for its focus on a British and American art history and visual arts practice, as many societies peripheral to the West have not necessarily departed from art as social practice (Badham, 2013; Wyatt et al., 2013). The challenge posed by the social turn to the arts is that this view is specifically Western. Another way in which arts practices and methods can contribute to decolonising is through a place-based focus in the arts, which adopts a deep consideration of the 'place ethic' (Lippard, 1997), or the cultural value of place, by acknowledging that place is deeply rooted in cultural meanings and traditions, which are often rendered invisible or silent due to the hegemonic forces at play.

The section starts with Chapter 10 by Nithikul Nimkulrat, who reflects on the philosophical background of arts-based research and its application in literary, performative, visual and audio-visual arts. It describes the potential of arts-based methods for decolonising from the perspective of the author's own scholarly expertise which intertwines research with textile practice through a focus on experiential knowledge in art and craft processes. In Chapter 11, Heidi Pietarinen and Eija Timonen introduce and discuss methods for multicultural artistic expression. They demonstrate how a project titled 'Flying Ants and the Beauty of Ice' enabled listening 'around and beyond words' and resulted in innovative embroidery art. The role of participatory arts is to 'go beyond' the obvious—for example, dominant narrative structures such as language—to (re)discover traditional making and transform this knowledge into innovative artworks. In Chapter 12, Nina Luostarinen and Kirsi MacKenzie describe their practice-based research project 'Paint That Place with Light!' and discuss the potential applications of the method of light painting in the context of arts-based placemaking projects and the decolonising of locations. In Chapter 13, Tuija Hautala-Hirvioja discusses John Savio's art as a part of early Sámi decolonisation practices in the 1920s and 1930s by examining how he used his Sámi-themed woodcuts as a tool for decolonising. The author uses research materials such as Savio's landscapes of Finnmark- and Sámi-themed woodcuts that belong to the collection of the Savio Museum in Kirkenes to illustrate how he embraced a stand against colonisation through the themes that he selected for his woodcutting.

Key Findings of the Book

As a summary of our key lessons from the case studies presented in this volume, we propose that the most important aspects of arts-based methods for decolonising participatory research are that they

- can be useful in designing research to support the perspectives and needs of communities in their place-based and cultural contexts;
- can help to base research on principles and practices of openness, respect, dialogue, reflection and collective problem-solving;
- can enable more horizontal relationships, foster pluralism and increase multivocality;
- can support in centralising and amplifying marginalised or devalued knowledges;
- can allow both the participants and researchers to think, learn engage and express differently;
- can foster mutual respect and empathy as well as critical awareness;
- often work to challenge elitism and centredness on expert knowledge;
- can enable access to, or creation of, alternative knowledges;
- can activate and strengthen links within communities and create new social practices;
- may involve the sharing of emotions—that is, learning to listen where other people are at;
- can help envision new ways in which to create connections, reciprocity and care;
- enable the researcher and participants collectively produce multiple and diverse forms of knowledge (e.g. written, visual, oral, embodied);
- allow the researcher and participants to reflect on what kind of knowledge is relevant for them; and
- challenge individualism and instrumentalism of conventional research practices by emphasising collective doing and co-creation of knowledge.

Most of these aspects are related to very practical activities taking place during the research process. Here, again, we draw on Smith (2012), who emphasises that the processes themselves are, in many projects, 'far more important than the outcome' as they 'are expected to be respectful, to enable people, to heal and to educate' (p. 130). She also underlines the role of art, imagination and creativity, as channelling collective creativity enables 'people to rise above their own circumstances, to dream new visions and to hold on to old ones'—that is, it 'fosters inventions and discoveries, facilitates simple improvements to people's lives' (p. 159). In other words, arts-based and creative methods, if used in the right way, can help create avenues for envisioning alternative futures and working towards social change.

However, it is important to underline that arts-based methods are not decolonising *as such*. There are many general limitations with regard to their use—some of which are more practical and some much broader. Arts-based methods are not suited for all kinds of research, they require a deep understanding of the specific context and participants, and usually only a relatively small number of people can participate. Using arts-based methods often necessitates building trust and may require long-term partnership and engagement. The researcher must self-critically reflect on her position and privileges; have an attitude of openness and flexibility; and place a strong emphasis on ethical considerations.

While it is often argued that all humans are creative, it is not easy for all to engage in creative processes: not every participant or researcher is comfortable with arts-based (especially embodied) practices, with high levels of proximity and intimacy. From the perspective of decolonising, the most crucial issue to understand is that using arts-based methods can create new kinds of hierarchies, power imbalances and ethical concerns; at worst, it can (re)colonise. As Smith (2012) stresses, 'the potential to reproduce colonizing ideologies and colonizing perspectives is always present' (p. 174). An idealised view of arts-based methods, or any form of participatory research, must be avoided for the simple reason that it is not possible to erase existing power relations and inequalities in any research.

In other words, using arts-based methods can potentially *but not automatically* contribute to the effort to decolonise participatory research. It is essential to know what one is decolonising from and ensure ethical, respectful and reciprocal engagement with the participants. Constant critical reflection is required—researchers must 'continuously develop their understandings of ethics and community sensibilities, and critically examine their research practices' (Smith, 2012, p. 205). One challenge is that decolonising is considered such a challenging and difficult endeavour that many shy away from it completely. While these efforts should take place in more systematic and ambitious ways, we believe that we have to start doing our own part in this collective task, by taking small steps, even if they are not always perfect; there will also be mistakes. As Smith (2012) puts it, 'Research for social justice expands and improves the conditions for justice; it is an intellectual, cognitive and moral project, often fraught, never complete, but worthwhile' (p. 215).

Many cases presented in this book are intentionally small-scale examples to demonstrate that arts-based methods can enable taking humble and small practical steps, while carrying with them some transformative potential that not all other methods necessarily have. At the same time, some of the cases show how difficult an endeavour decolonising really is; how imperfect and partial, and sometimes even controversial, many of the efforts to decolonise are. The process of editing this book also reminded us of the limits of academic publications in exploring the potential of arts-based methods for decolonising. For example, the language editing process of the texts illustrated our own obliviousness to certain internalised colonial practices, such as the preference for the use of standard English, which was justifiably criticised by some of our authors. Conventional writing and publishing practices sit deep and are not easy to challenge. In an attempt to move beyond established format and create alternative platforms, this book is accompanied by a website where the authors are invited and encouraged to provide the readers with more information about their projects and processes on their own terms and in multiple forms and languages. Each chapter has its own website that is accessible through an embedded link at the bottom of their title page.

In decolonising participatory research, using arts-based methods is only one approach amongst many. We need to continuously work hard to find new ways to rethink our encounters and our work 'in a radically different way . . . to push more seriously for ways to make these encounters a mutual, two-way street affair' (Rutazibwa, 2019, p. 174). Decolonising should not be about 'making feel good', but transforming and changing something radically; hence, it takes time and requires collective action and consistent work—practical, pedagogical and intellectual (Dey, 2020–present). Addressing broad structural aspects related to de/coloniality is beyond

the scope of this book, but we believe that researchers should not avoid taking part in difficult discussions and that, all in all, they should play a much more active role in a world characterised by deep inequality and injustice.

While the call for decolonisation through the arts has been advocated for the past 40 years (Wa Thiong'o, 1992/1981), the value and practical application of arts-based methods needs further concretisation. We hope that our effort to demonstrate some of their potential benefits for creating more horizontal and reciprocal practices in participatory research, while also discussing their limitations and challenges, provides some new insights that may encourage other researchers to reflect on these issues and continue to develop further the contributions of this book.

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Section I

Co-Creation, Collaboration, Movement

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2 Co-Creation Through Quilting

Connected Entanglements and Disruptions With Care

Vishnu Vardhani Rajan, Shyam Gadhavi and Marjaana Jauhola

A Note for the Reader

Our priority with this text is to bring to you the stories of three people who came together because of quilting. In some parts of the world where literacy still is a privilege, writing English 'correctly' may not be one of our priorities.

> The whole **of language** is a continuous process **of** metaphor, and the history **of** semantics is an aspect **of** the history **of** culture; **language** is at the same time a living thing and a museum **of** fossils **of** life and civilisations.
>
> Gramsci 1971, quoted in Buey 2015, p. 143, emphasis added

The Workshop

Quilting Experiences, Affects and Knowledge: Collaborative and Co-Production of Research/Knowledge

This 'walk-in' workshop aims to bring together scholars, artists and activists who engage themselves in collaborative forms of research and/or knowledge production as responses to experiences of inequality and to provide safe spaces for recovering from these experiences and/or solving them.

The aim is to de-centre Eurocentric forms of knowledge practices and neoliberal universities' praxis of ranking publications and to reward careers. The way of working in this panel is inspired by the practice of quilting, in which a wide variety of materials, such as recycled clothes and fabrics, colourful threads and fillings, are brought together to create quilts that form essential wealth in many Indigenous communities, each one of the quilts being a unique result of the labouring and creativity of its maker.

Quilting is learned through matrilineal knowledge transfers of everyday skills. Brown (1989) has described the Afro-American quilting practice as a process in which the results are not compared against other quilts, but rather appreciated and acknowledged for their own qualities and standards. Here, we will present a quilt prepared in the Kutch district of Gujarat, India and introduce the idea of quilting as a method of working together at this conference.

www.ulapland.fi/ArtsBasedMethodsForDecolonisingParticipatoryResearch/Chapter2

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Come and join us if you are interested in sharing your experiences of collaborative processes and ways of working; negotiating languages, privileges and power hierarchies; patterns of working and negotiating archives and the use of the knowledge; examples of turning power hierarchies and authorship upside down; ethics of involvement; labouring, recognition and integrity; and the potential conflicts and failures of such processes. We will document the discussion and work towards a collaborative (written/audio-visual) piece.

Workshop organisers:
Marjaana Jauhola, University of Helsinki
Shyam Gadhavi, Prakrit Foundation for Development
Vishnu Vardhani Rajan, body-philosopher

On 28 February 2020, this walk-in workshop at an otherwise conventional academic conference consisting of invited plenary talks and panels with paper presentations of the Finnish Society for Development Research gathered 20 people to explore ways to decentre Eurocentrism and neoliberalised forms of knowledge production. As a temporary, free to join and leave at any time venture, this walk-in workshop gathering, or collective, was a new experience for us three organisers to work together.

Dear Vishnu,

We met at the quilting event in Vallila roughly a week ago. Thank you so much for the experience, it was a lovely evening and experience!

I mentioned there briefly that we (me and my Kutchi research collaborator Shyam also copied in this email) are organising a quilt and quilting-related workshop as part of Development Research Day (www.kehitystutkimus.fi/conference/panels/wg12), an annual event mostly attended by students and researchers affiliated with Development Studies. Ours is geared towards collective learning about collective knowledge production experiences, and was inspired by quilting done in Shyam's family and community mostly by women—and the connections that quilting has to many, many cultural contexts as a form of recycling, caring and transmitting cultural practices.

It took me a while to get back to you, as I wanted to wait until our proposal was accepted and the organisers published the call.

It would be so lovely to stay connected, and I was wondering if you'd be interested in coming to the event/'our thing' to share all that has happened to your quilting since early October. Sharing that story might be very interesting for others, and I could negotiate you in as an artist invited for the session.

But let's stay connected, and maybe we could meet for tea/coffee at some point! Thank you also sharing the book on anarchiving. It looked really interesting when I had a chance to take a peek last week.

With regards,

Marjaana

Dear Marjaana and Shyam,

Thank you so much for your email. I looked up the event. Yes. It will be a pleasure and an honour to join your session.

In my current quest, along with conflict resolution and sleep, I am also exploring the mental health aspects of quilt making.

As I feel everything is interconnected, all these aspects have a big impact on our living.

How the weight of the quilt has a calming effect, aiding in curing insomnia, which can worsen mental health matters.

Usually, quilts get heavy with layers, these layers provide proprioceptive input, providing your brain with feedback on your body's position in space. With the weight, your brain relaxes, and your body produces 'serotonin—the happy hormone' when you use them to cover yourself.

I am excited.

A poem I wrote as a response to our last meeting.

> Indeed the quilt is getting wiser with many hands sewing into it.
> Layers of thread as memories and histories unarchived.
> This quilt, may it stand as a symbol of what I desire for many countries to be, imperfect, multitude, supportive.
> Play of needles, threads, fabrics resolving conflict, creating utopias, this quilt a promise of a new environment.

This poem grows every time the quilt gets heavy.

Sending you my best wishes.

Vishnu Vardhani RAJAN
Body-Philosopher

Thus, our paths crossed on this occasion, and it was through the simultaneous exploration of quilting that brought us together. Vishnu organised a quilting workshop 'Sew a Quilt, Talk Conflict' at Publics, a curatorial and artistic space located in one of the urban neighbourhoods, in which Marjaana participated.

> Pixelache's Public Meetings are a new event format for Pixelache in which we open our previously private monthly meetings to the public in the development of our further programming. For the remainder of 2019, a selection of our membership presents new projects, experiments and research for Pixelache that is open to experience by both members and non-members.
>
> Number three in our Public Meetings series will take place in partnership with Publics, a curatorial agency with a dedicated library, event space and reading room in Vallila, Helsinki.
>
> This meeting will be led by Pixelache member Vishnu Vardhani RAJAN and is entitled 'Sew a Quilt, Talk Conflict'.
>
> Let's sew a quilt, talk about conflict.
>
> Quilt = A quilt is a multi-layered textile, traditionally composed of at least three layers of fibre (fabric).
> Sew = join, fasten or repair (something) by making stitches with a needle and thread.
> Conflict = be incompatible or at variance.

Quilt embodies diverse, mismatched, incompatible pieces of cloth to form a single entity that provides comfort.

With this session, Vishnu wants to address how a restorative act such as sewing surfaces the nuances of embodiment of conflict.

Through this work, Vishnu wants to address the textured expressions of conflict, normalise conversations around conflict, identify it and name it to navigate towards restoration.

'Sew a Quilt, Talk Conflict' is an ongoing research project.

Body-Philosopher Vishnu Vardhani RAJAN believes that conflict exists both in and beyond our finitude.

'We come to the encounter with conflict, it doesn't happen afterwards'.

Vishnu Vardhani RAJAN has been a member of the board of Pixelache since 2017. She was one of the artistic Directors of the Bi-annual Pixelache Festival 'Breaking the 5th Wall', and community building.

Simultaneously, Marjaana had been exploring quilting and patchwork as a metaphor for collaborative writing and academic co-creation practice in feminist peace research (Lyytikäinen et al., 2020). Further, Shyam and Marjaana had explored the quilts in the Kachchh district in Gujarat, India as part of their research collaboration. This was sparked by a confusing and conflicting experience: finding a similar quilting pattern to those used in quilts made in Shyam's village Zarpara on the shelf of a Swedish lifestyle shop, and later again in an expensive design shop dedicated to the 'idea of "helping design" to reduce poverty and to increase equality in society'. Yet, in both cases, the quilt pattern was altered and appropriated into Nordic aesthetics using plain light-brown linen and white threads, leading us into conversations about commodification, racialisation and Nordic whiteness as 'exceptionality' in the global debate on continuities of coloniality and slaverism—slowly, slowly, emerging into public discussion due to the wider media focus on the events in the United States and the #blacklivesmatter movement's demands.

To follow the quilting workshop video, open using the following QR (quick response) code (Figure 2.1):

Figure 2.1 To follow the quilting workshop video, open using this QR code.

Checking In

- How are we feeling in the body?
- How are we feeling in the mind?

Quilt Play

'Lali'—comforting—not being shamed for being later, although feeling one has missed maybe something before, embodying affect theory
'faster'
'maybe softer'
Singing starts
'Ah, I am falling asleep
'They are higher there, you are higher that side'

Ljulja ljulja ljuške, bere majka kruške. Pa je dosta nabrala i diječici davala. Sad su dijeca vesela, jer su kruške pojela.[1]

Swing swing, my swing, mother is picking pears. She has picked enough now and gave them to the children. Now the children are satisfied/calm because they ate the pears.[2]

Vishnu's Song

Lullaby sung by my grandma. A beautiful song. This song is my school. A song about more than human relationships, the ethics of labour and especially women working in the fields. I never managed to sing this lullaby without tears rolling down my cheeks. A surprise that these lyrics were sung as a lullaby.

పిట్ట రవే పిట్ట పిల్లల్ల తల్లి హచ్చి. . .
పిల్లలకు పాలిచ్చీ పల్లెలకు పోవే హచ్చి.

'It is a beautiful challenge to move and sing'
'We have to be stronger on this side'
'We can slowly release Shyam'

How Does Quilting Disrupt the Academic and Office Conventions in a Walk-In Workshop Like This?

I lock my bicycle and walk into the building Google Maps leads me to. I go straight to the third floor. The sense of security feels vigilant, present. No one stops me as I seem to know where I am going. When I arrive at the designated room, Marjaana and Shyam are not there; instead, a diplomat greets me. I am carrying a heavy pink IKEA bag. I set it down. I ask this person where the workshop is. I show the email and ask where Marjaana and Shyam are. They look confused. I call Marjaana. Meanwhile, the diplomat calls the info-desk to check if there is a workshop happening in the space. My pandemonium lifts as I realise that I need to be in the adjacent building. I don't know what actually happened; I left while still talking to Marjaana on the phone. To me, this was an important prologue to the workshop. How we perceive confidence, knowledge and the right to be in a certain space. Especially, being POC and being in a space that to me, from the outside, seemed white, powerful and impregnable but was actually accessible. I stay with the question of how we process spaces, and if

it's my prejudice of spaces that engenders my feeling of being an imposter. This was translated into the workshop when the patches I carried with me to sew into one quilt got sewn into another, Aashbai's (Shyam's mom's) quilt. The stitches are dissimilar to those of the rest of the quilt.

***

The phone calls prior to the workshop day to the event location, House of Science, revealed that the seminar room reserved for us did not allow moving the heavy structured tables and chairs in any way. Second, knowing from previous experiences the temporality of conferences pushes the mind to certain temporalities of 90 minutes, although usually, the invited plenary speakers, often big names in the given scientific discipline, exploit this given framing by taking space and time. This was also the case here. We were setting up the workshop on the third floor, but knew that when 'our time' started, the conference participants would be still sitting in the main hall in the delayed Q&A session. We set up the room, spreading out our quilting materials and as the workshop participants began arriving, extended our spatial boundaries to the corridor, welcoming each participant and inviting them into our circle which was forming and growing little by little.

Yet, we also had a set and limited time frame to follow: 90 minutes were divided into three sections marked by the ringing of a copper bell, which in Kachchh is normally used to recognise the animal when they are grazing in the forest. The bell, which had travelled from the Banni grassland area of Kachchh, had a warm, yet strong, sound that a piece of wood attached to its frame was making when Marjaana held it in her hand, having kept it in her pocket to wait for its turn to ring. During the workshop, we decided to expand our time frame over the lunch break and promised the participants that they could take their time to work on the materials even if our time was officially over.

Disruption of the conference normalcy occurred again when the next session was about to begin. Three people, all super-formally dressed (again, diplomats?) in suits and dresses representing an intergovernmental development organisation, walked in, started setting up their institution's banner stand with development slogans and inserted PowerPoint presentations into the seminar room computer. Non-verbally signing their irritation—or was it just me (Marjaana) who sensed it? no; Shyam sensed it, too, as (Vishnu speaks aloud to one of the participants about activism weaving, knitting and sewing, completely unaware of the irritation) we sensed so strongly that we were breaking some unwritten rules, both physically with our 'being late' bodies, but more so, with the pieces of fabric, threads and quilts spread around the room as we had left them when the workshop participants departed. It was as if two separate worlds had collided or, rather, were forced to co-exist in awkward silence in this encounter with the predominantly white Finnish office culture, during those few minutes when we slowly started packing our materials back into the bags that Vishnu had carried with her through the city, and after which we finally made out way up to the third floor of the House of Science. Although otherwise in full silence, when we tried to wind up quickly so as not to further disturb the newcomers, the copper bell kept moving inside one of the bags, marking with its sound our departure, doing its job and telling what we left unsaid. In our shared imagination, the silence we left behind must have been loud. Recalling the incident of the so-called modern developments, such as mining, salt and mineral extraction, arriving in the Kachchhi forests and the bells tied on the necks of the animals gently sounding as they were displaced from their

previous home in the hope of an open and wide place of opportunities for fresh food, drink and a carefree life. And so did we.

Earlier, prior to the arrival of the newcomers, we had been holding the quilt together in the corridor, a quilt which had created a surface, or cradle, on which the participants were invited to climb on, bringing our bodies and minds to the same shared place that we were creating. Much laughter emerged and a sense of care, responsibility, along with observations that were connected to hierarchies, positions of power (speed, positionalities) and attempts to find responsible positions to work through them—but also to recognise them and silently experience, yet again, how easily whiteness takes up space, explains and demands to be heard as an expert.

Although we have come together to explore the possibilities of quilting, we have also recognised during this process the differences in our thinking about human encounters: Vishnu's workshop on quilts, on one hand, was guided by the idea of people coming together in encounters with a potential conflict; the result of that encounter would depend on those people and whether the conflict would govern their relationship, or if the people would govern the conflict. Shyam, on the other hand, has taught Marjaana during their joint urban ethnographic research (Gadhavi & Jauhola, 2019) to learn to release the predetermined conflict, hierarchies and antagonisms built into situations and focus on possibilities of being surprised, accepting the existence of that person and recognising the situation where we are meeting that person (platform), in order to embrace the idea of living in peace, creating harmony and believing that the person is moving towards positivity, happiness and love. This means that the agenda of life and encounters is moving us towards happiness and peace—the movements and encounters are aiming towards that; they are founded on that basis. However, having experienced hurt or discrimination alters the future possibilities of such encounters. Rebuilding a trust that has been lost is not easily achieved.

Workshop Notes

Having an orientation of topics. (Quilting and feminism) (Body, clothes shame and quilts)
(Cosmopolitanism and quilting)
(What else did we talk about over lunch?)

- Philosophy of quilting.
- Quilting experiences.
- Touching the fabrics.
- Getting to know the fabrics.
- Sewing.

Few notes on:

- Affects, movements, discussions.
- Anarchiving.
- Knowledge cultivation instead of knowledge production:[3] certain open-ended, non- zero-sum, non-competitive logic of oxygenation from which other insights can grow or resurface <3<3 <3.

- Sewing and talking.
- Anecdotal evidence, insights.
- Quilts as carriers of seeds.

Making Poem

Make it out of the sari that wraps you/in tender celebration/like the mother you longed for/make it out of the mother you got/in all her wounded magnificence

Make it of all the hands that have ever/touched you the hand that grabbed your eighteen-year-old breast/on a Nairobi street/so that weeks after/you still walked hunched over/arms against chest/the hands that slid a needle into your inner elbow/ drew up a fat column of liquid red to test if it was/pure enough to get you a green card/hands that taught you how to throw/elbow strikes pull/mouth-rips hands/that sing healing into your muscles hands/that have worshipped you/in ways that leave you/consecrated humbled

Make it for the hands/hacked off the arawaks by columbus and his men/lopped off ohlone children by the spanish priests/baskets of severed hands presented at days\'s end/to Belgian plantation masters in the congo thumbs/chopped off India weavers by the British/make it because you/still have hands

Make it for everyone/who's ever said/you think too hard/you talk too much you question/more than you need to you're too/intense too serious you're too/angry/ lighten UP for chrissake it's not like YOU/have family in Eye-rak!

Make it because you don't have/health insurance/it flashes neon in your brain/each time you take a fall in dance class/ride a road without a bike lane/your close friend/is 53 she has no/health insurance you remember zari/threads of beaten silver woven into saris so that in extremity/a woman could burn her saris/recover the molten silver/you wonder how it feels to touch a lighted match/to your inheritance.

Make it because Iraqis/had free healthcare one of the world's best/before the US invasion/now/children scream ceaselessly four or five to a bed from the pain/of sand parasites for want of/three cents worth of antibiotics/women give birth on the floor/in corners not packed with war victims

Make it from rage/every smug idiotic face you've ever wanted to smash/into the carnage of war every encounter/that's left your throat choked/with what you dared not say excavate/the words that hid in your churning stomach through visa controls/ words you swallowed down/until over the border they are/still there they knew/you would return for them

Make it knowing that art/is not political change/make it a prayer/for real political change/a homage to your heroes a libation/to your gods

Make it for the archaic meaning/of the word maker/poet/for the Greek root/of the word poet/to create

by Shailaja Patel (2010, pp. 122–124)

Shyam: obaki thi obaki—The Journey Between the Yawnings

Vishamo—Take Rest

Dhalki ek jane ke humfala garbh jevu pan chhe jema hu mari jivan nu lagbhag adhdho samay vitavu chhu. E pan evo samay jyare hu sajag nathi hoto. Maru rakshan, Mari

sahajta. ane savarni te mari paheli 10 mineut jayre hu jagi ne mari te ratni anubhuti ane temate no dhalki no sath mate teno khubj alotine abhar vyakt karu chhu. Vari pachha sanje jaldi malvana promise sathe ke je mari jat pratye ek dilaso ane divas sarukarvani prerna saman hoy chhe.

Dhalki, taro ane maro e sambandh mara janam thi atyar shudhi rahyo chhe. Jyare hu nano hato tayare tu pan nani hati, dhadaklo hati. Pan mari sathe tu pan mothi thai. Apna bane no e samuhik valan adbhut chhe. Jane ke mara sarirno j ek ang. Kem nai tu bani pan to mara perela kpda mathi chho. Ane aagad pan rahevanu. Aapnu e darroj nu sath khatri sathe rahesej. Tane fari malvani e chah mane tyare samjay chhe jyare hu koi karan suvane saksham nathi. To kem nai aaje tari thodik visheh vato karu.

Dhadki kyathi aavi, kyare janmi e kahevu thoduk mushkel chhe kem ke matha ni garam topi hoy athva pag ni chakhdi hoy aakha vishvma badhe ek sathe j janmi lage.

Mane yad chhe ke hu ramto ramto athva amastoj latar marava gar ma jau atle **dhadkiyo** na **damchiya** ne adoti ne j pacho aavu. Kyarek ene bhulthi padi pan deto ane pachi ena upar aloti ne moj pan manto. Ane hu olkhi pan leto ke aa koni dhalki chhe.

***

Quilt is like a warm womb in which I am staying almost half of my life and the time which is when I am not awake or conscious. When we are between the quilts, we feel so secure. When I am between the quilts, I feel so natural. First ten minutes of the morning, when I have woken up, all the experiences of the night I remember. For that whole experience I cuddle the quilt again, and appreciate it. With the promise of meeting again in the evening. The cuddle which is also comfort to my heart and inspiration to start the day.

Quilt, the relation of you and me exists since my birth until today. I was small, you were too (you were called *dhadkalo* at that time). But you grew together with me. Our collective attitude is so amazing. Like you are part of my body. And why not? Because you are made of the clothes I wear. And it will also continue like that in the future. Our accompanied existence will continue for sure. My wish to meet you again, I realise, when I am not able to come to sleep with you in my bed. Then why not talk about you today?

From where did the quilt come? When was it born? It is a bit difficult to say. Because the warm cap for the head or shoes to protect the feet looks like they are all born together in the world. Quilt is also born like them. They are all created into such a society and life, where the body was to be protected, more effectively. Then the comfort was added into that.

I remember that either by playing or just as a joke, I would go inside the house, enter the house, and only come out of the house after I had cuddled the corner of the quilts (called *damchiya*). Sometimes by mistake, I dropped all the quilts on the floor and I would roll myself inside the quilts and sleep. I would know which quilt belongs to whom.

Let's learn from Aashbai what quilts are. Open the **ધળકીયું** quilts video using the following QR code (Figure 2.2).

Exploring the Kachchhi/Gujarati Words for Quilts: Godali and Dhalki

Here we explore some of the Kachchhi and Gujarati words used for quilts. Kachcchi is an oral language; however, today, it is often either written by using standardised Gujarati, or Roman script in chats and text messages.

Figure 2.2 ધળકીયું quilts video. Open using this QR code.

In Gujarati, the quilt is called ગોદડી written in Roman script Godali or transcribed as Gōdaḍī to express its pronunciation: long 'o', ડ pronounced as 'd' but moving the tongue in the middle of the hard palate. To hear the pronunciation, copy the Gujarati scripted word ગોદડી into Google Translate and play. Try to repeat it. Feel how the sound is created in your mouth with the touch of the tip of the tongue and hard palate.

When the British arrived in India and started to use Roman script for words expressed in different Indian languages, these nuances were missed. Gōdaḍī became scripted as Godali, and similarly, an important location from the history of Indus Valley civilisation, in English known as *Dholavira* (ધોળાવીરા), is in Kachchhi pronounced as Dhōḷāvīrā, where Dhōḷā means white.

ગોદડી, Godali or Gōdaḍī derives from the root 'go' that otherwise bears the following meanings:

Go: Īndrī, ઈન્દ્રી/ all the senses of human body.
Go-pal: compliance with all the senses of human body.
Go-vardhan: advancement of all the senses of human body.
Go-kul: set, a group, mass of all the senses of human body.
ગોદડી/Go-daḍī:grind/comminute/refine/polish/calm down to the all senses of human body.

In Kachchhi, the quilt is called ધળકી. The root dhaḍ/ધળ means human body, and dhaḍkī/ધળકી has a meaning of human body/for human body/by human body or something that belongs to human body.

Quilts, or any fabrics used by someone, will gain direct connectedness to the body through the vibrations of the body and the connectedness of the particles touching the body. This means that the properties become shared the longer a particular piece of cloth, or quilt, is in the use of one person. In order to become relaxed, we have our favourite places in which to do that. We may not be aware of it, but using the same place to sleep, where our bodies have released fragrances and sensations (*saṅskāra*) of calmness, helps us to relax. ગોદડી, therefore, helps us to gain sensations of calmness, and filling our senses with wisdom.

Quilt as an Idiom, Dhalki ek Rudhipryog

Odhvani dhalki ne unchhan kevay ane pathrvani dhalki ne vachhan kevay.

Vichhan sabad e ek idiom tarike pan vaprvama avyo chhe. Koi pan gatna ma sthiti etli vikherai jay ke ene bhegu na krisakay athva ankus karvu khubaj muskel hoy tyare kachchhi ma ene vichhan thi yyo em kevay. Vachhan hamesa vyaktina kad karta motu hoy chhe. The quilt which is used as a cover is called *unchhan*, and the quilt which is used on top of a mattress or a bed on top of which one sleeps is called *vachhan*. The word vachhan is also used as an idiom to describe a situation where chaos is created, and it is defined as an uncontrollable and ungovernable mess. Vachhan is also always bigger than the size of its user.

- Making quilts and connectedness to family relations: a quilt is made for a sister, brother, father, mother, husband, children. The form it takes connects to this relation and caring affect (who is going to use it).
- Memory from childhood: was using a certain quilt that was made for me—also father asking where my quilts are, grandfather—the connectedness of oneself to a quilt: part of who I am (at home), extension of who I am.
- Traditional stories about quilts: a quilt is used as an idiom. If someone sleeps a lot, the person is called a 'quilt' (*dhalki*)—quilt transforms into being.
- Arrangement of quilts at home: care is taken for the selection of the place where the quilts are kept, and there is a word for it: *damchio*.
- Quilts as co-creation: examples from the family are how quilts also provided income for a Kshatriya family in economic difficulty (who were ashamed to look for daily labouring outside the household)—but they did not like to be connected to that labour anymore because their situation eventually improved (Aashbai asked them to do quilts recently).
- Different colours used for men and women.
- Different meanings of quilts amongst communities (for example, Gadhavi and Sama).

'Hu ane mari dhalki', e ek khubaj shahaj ane sarva many adat che. Hu, mari dhalki kya gai evu kau to e ek nirvivad kabjo chhe. Kem ke e mara mate banava ma aavi chhe. Ema mara mateni kalpana raheli chhe. E banava pehla mari jaruriyat hati. E kalpna ma e badha j kapda hoychhe jema thi te baneli chhe. E kalpana ma mari vastivikta pan chhe je mara kadd ne darshave chhe ane tena parthi teni size naki thay chhe. Mane dhyan chhe ke mane ane mara pita ne mari maa dhalki damchiya upar thi kadhi aape chhe. Ane badhi dhalki ni gothvan ni shrinkhla pan sui javani aadat aadharit rahe che.

Expressing 'me and my quilt' will be accepted by everyone. When I ask 'Where is my quilt?', it is an unquestionable possession 'my' because the quilt was made for me. In that quilt, there is a conception or imagination of me. It became my need even before it was made. In that imagination, all the clothes of which the quilt was made are there. In that imagination, my reality also exists. It expresses my size and from that, the size of the quilt is decided. I remember that my mother takes the quilts every day for me and my father from the damchiya (wooden structure or a table which is the size of a twice folded quilt where the quilts are kept at home). The arrangement or the order of the quilts on the damchiya depends on sleeping habits and the different times when people sleep.

Ketli sambhal, ketli vastvikta, ketli svikruti ane ketlu shahayojan. ek adbhut prakriya raheche jyare avlokan bad rangbe rangi alag alag aakar vala juna kapdana tukdaone shajik vinodthi ane vishvash thi jodvama aavche. Ane kharekhar e dhalki adbhut bane che.

How much care, how much actuality/reality, how much of acceptance and how much co-planning are involved? That remains a wonderful process, when after observation, all clothes of different shapes and colours are sewn/joined in an intuitive way with humour and confidence. Truly, the quilt is amazing.

Ek samaj ni kalpana jema svikruti tatva ena paya ma rahelu chhe. Are darek rang potani samprubhuta lai ane e samajik Rangoli ma sobhit kare. Jyare dhalki ena upyog karta ne ptratham var aapva ma aave tyare te eene svikar kari ane nirvivad bheti pade chhe jema lamba bhavishya na sath no sankalp rahelo che. Ane pachhi te khubaj anadayak chhe.

Like an imagination of a society, where acceptance of difference lies at the base of it, every colour gives beauty to that social *rangoli* (patterns that are created on the floor or the ground using materials such as coloured rice, dry flour, coloured sand or flower petals), and all colours bring their own sovereignty and increase the beauty of the rangoli. When a quilt is given to its user for the very first time, at that time, it accepts the person and embraces undeniably the person and signifies a long joined future together. That idea of a long future together is very satisfying for both the quilt and its user: both are receiving and giving care and love.

Amara research darmiyan marjaana ane hu evi ek kalpna sathe aavash jaiye chie. Ane koi sabhy ne malie tyare evo ehsash thay j ke koik karansar ni nakhusi ane fariyad sathe emna raday na khuna ma raheli ek evij rangbe rangi godli jeva samajni kalpna ane asha chalkay chhe. jema darek ne kad, akar, rang, rup, gunvata ane sthan ni vaividhyata ne khula mane swikari levama aave. ane vishvash na ekj tatne jadayela hoy. Jya nyay ane svikruti athva teni laykat mate koi rudhigat biba no astitvaj na hoy. Ek nivas ni kalpana jya juda aakar ane gun ne sthan aapvani dhilans hoy. Agaman ne svikar kari ane pramanik rite fari sthitisthapak ta thay. Jyare varsoni asha aknagsa puri na thayi. to nirasha svbhav nu pratham aavran bani chhe. Saruvati divashvapno ne mrugjal thata joya pachi, samacharpatro, sansthao, netao ane adhikario ni kshanik jigyasavardhit pralobhno ane pachu ej nirash andhakar. emne puchhvama aavela e prashno ane tena javabo. je have temne apekshit rite yad rahigaya chhe ane sahhjik thai gya che. tyare te visheni aruchi pan hoya j. Marjaana e jyare research ne ek novo savrup aapyo, jare ame e prashidh aapatkal ni charcha ane rudhigat prshonotri ke jena aavash na rahevashio aadi chhe, tene dur rakhi ane malya to. E band ane achkata hoth pachha khulya ane emana man ni vato moklas thi kari. Jemke te sakbhaji vala bhai, amne aavta joi emna chehra upar thaknsh ni rekha ubhri aavi ane amari sathe vat karva ma pan achkaya. Pan jyare emne ahesahsh thyo ke ame emni vartman parishthiti ane emni lagni ne khula mane svikar kari chhe. To ame trane sathe mali ane ek eva vatavarn ni rachna kari ke jema temni nirasha dur thai gai ane teo ek bhangela svabhav thi nikli ane ek ashavadi bani ane potani bahvnao ne vacha aapi.

During our research, Marjaana and I have been visiting Awas (temporary post-earthquake relocation site in the city of Bhuj initially built in 2001–2002) with this imagination of love, harmony and care. When we met residents of the neighbourhood, we realised that there was unhappiness, for many reasons, and complaints in their hearts. We could also see in the corner of their hearts an imagination and hope for a society like a colourful quilt, one where everyone is intertwined by the thread of trust and accepted with an open mind, regardless if they are of different shapes, colours, forms, qualities,

sizes and locations. There are no pre-decided conservative norms for justice and acceptance of a person. The idea is of a dwelling, or a neighbourhood, where there is a flexibility to place different shapes and qualities, accepting/allowing arrival and honestly regaining resilience when the hopes of the years were not fulfilled. Despair is often the first refuge of those who have experienced disasters. After seeing such dreams becoming a mirage and witnessing the momentary curiosity of temptation created by newspapers, organisations, politicians and government officers, Awas's residents return to the same frustrating darkness. The questions and answers of the residents they now repeat as expected ones. There must be an aversion to it. When Marjaana suggested a new form for research, distancing our meetings from the well-known disaster narratives and the typical conservative questionnaire/survey style which Awas residents are used to experiencing, the closed and hesitant lips and minds opened again, and they talked openly; for example, the vegetable seller when seeing us enter the neighbourhood, first, non-verbally showed tiredness, and a hesitancy to talk to us. After we had adjusted to his current activity and feelings, we (the three of us) created an atmosphere where the hopelessness disappeared, and he was no longer broken, allowing his hopes and spirit to be expressed.

Marjaana: Quilting Conviviality

Watch 'Friendship Between Sisters' using this QR code (Figure 2.3).

The Tears

> 'mä itkin niin kovasti kun Elina vihittiin Eetun kanssa'
> 'I cried so much when Elina was married with Eetu'

The scraps of memories and stories are found in compact audio cassettes, letters and quilts by later generations. But I must admit, I never really understood this. I mean, I was not immediately literate to it. It required a process of learning to read anew and to sense conviviality that also had the shades of pain, sorrow and loss.

When I was exploring quilting, then the scraps of these memories started talking to me very loudly. Decentring the intimate story of two sisters, however, also allowed me to connect them and to understand the connection of our current presence in Finland to (post)coloniality, processes of colonisation and enslavement, and the global extraction

Figure 2.3 Watch 'Friendship Between Sisters' using this QR code.

of knowledge, skills, materials and bodies. The following aims at practicing what Gurminder Bhambra (2014) has called connected sociologies. She draws from the work of Sanjay Subrahmanyam and his notion of connected histories, which 'do not derive from a singular standpoint, whether that be a putatively universal standpoint—which postcolonial theorists have demonstrated as being in fact a particular standpoint linked to colonialism—or a standpoint of the generalized subaltern' (Bhambra, 2014, p. 4).

'Elina äidin tekemä Petelle/sinulle. Kankaat on tilkkuja [emoji of a green dress], esiliina, yöpaita ym kankaista jotka äiti on ommellut. Vaatteet ovat äidille, Sirkalle, minulle ja lahjaksi Haminaan'.

'Elina's mother made it for Pete [my brother]/you. Materials are scraps of [emoji of a red dress], apron, nightdress etc. which mother has sewn. Clothes were made for mother, your aunt, me, and gifts to home in Hamina' (Figure 2.4).

My mother WhatsApped me when I was preparing for a quilting workshop with Vishnu and Shyam. This dialogue started from a sense of lack of connectedness. What is my connection to quilts? And, why had I lost the connection to this quilt which I, after so many decades, remembered? Fear of having lost it made me think of the loss that I had actively pushed aside: childhood and teenager years wearing clothes my mother had made instead of branded jeans or shirts, and the moment it became possible, moving on to wear what the others did with great relief without paying attention to who had made it for me. I was a class traveller with no global consciousness.

Figure 2.4 'Elina äidin tekemä Petelle/sinulle'.

The Skirt

> '18.4.1933
> Rakas Kulu!
> Kiitos kortistasi! Ja nyt vasta minä yritän tätä pikkupakettia rustailla'.
> '18 April 1933
> Dearest darlin'!
> Thank you for your postcard! And only now I try to send this small parcel to you'.

Sixty years of letters. Sometimes written three times a week. Sharing gossip, detailing the landscape, the people, dreams and connecting the two sisters in ways it is hard to imagine at this time. Meeri kept Elina's letters, and they have been circulating amongst myself, my mother and my aunt over the last few years when they were discovered after her death.

It was through the recorded stories of Meeri that I felt the meaning of your sisterhood, and friendship and conviviality became real. Why celebrating the marriage felt like a loss, source of tears.

Childhood spent in first missing and absent father working for the Finnish railways in St Petersburg, Russia. Father, who went missing in the 1917 Russian Revolution, and who upon a mysterious return, turned into an absent, alcoholic father, who was feared and avoided until his death. The price of the Russian Revolution was far greater than I could have ever imagined, although each year in December, Finnish people are asked to commemorate and celebrate their independence from Russia.

But the tragedy also tightly connected the two sisters, knitted and sewn into their letters sent to one another.

'Ja sitten se hamejuttu. Päätimme niin, että minä teen sinulle leningin ja mamma puseron . . . . Eikö musliini ole sopivinta? Tästä sorjasta vihreästä leningistä tuli tämännäköinen, kun minä rupesin muotitaitelijaksi! On vähän *hankalaa* kun ei voi lähettää koko mallilehteä. Koeta keksiä!!'

'And then the skirt issue. We decided that I will make you a dress and mother makes you a skirt . . . Isn't muslin most suitable fabric? (Figure 2.5)'

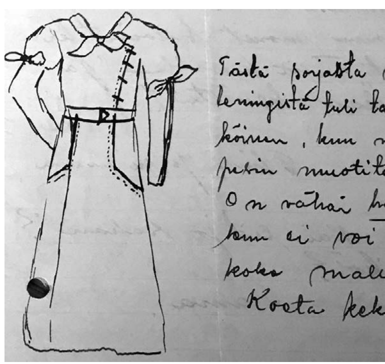

Figure 2.5 'And then the skirt issue'.

The Fabric

The blood, the violence of slavery and coloniality spills over the pages I am Googling. I thought I could simply search for the facts of the origins of cotton sewn into fabrics in Finland at the time of my grandmother and her sister. And write few sentences on coloniality to add the facts, knowledge, and add a level of seriousness to this.

How innocent these letters describing the colours, the touch and the weaving are! There is no trace of slavery, colonial violence, labouring, or traces of the origin of such beautiful materials transformed into pieces of art and the caring in the hands of my grandmother. How casually was I just going to quote a few statistics and move on.

Had it not been for the British, including James Finlayson, who established the first cotton spinning factory in Finland in 1820 and imported cotton for it from the US (Helsingin Sanomat 2018), it would have been flax or linen she'd been working on: itchy, hard material that had to be worn, washed, worn and washed again before becoming bearable against the white skin.

Indian cotton found its way to the US and the plantations of the slave owners where the labour was done by the African slaves. Later, when Indian cotton fabric was banned from Europe, raw cotton was transported to England, woven in Europe, sold and used as a currency to purchase more slaves (Beckert 2015). This was the intimate, corporeal and violent web that for our white pleasure is distanced, hidden and most preferably, forgotten.

Muslin, the dress my grandmother had promised to sew. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, muslin (*malmal* in Hindi) cotton fabrics consumed in Europe were mostly woven in Bengal and Odisha and transported to Europe as part of the colonial trade partnerships from Gujarat (Bharuch). Later, when the English copied the techniques of weaving from Indians, it was also produced in Scotland and England, and, who knows, maybe also in Finland for my grandmother to purchase for her sister in a small village in Central Finland.

The Stitch

Open the Aashbai quilting video (Figure 2.6a) by using the following QR code (Figure 2.6b).

Sitting side by side, I watch Aashbai go through my old clothes. 'This is too good to be used in a quilt', she says in Kachchhi, and hands the scarf back to me. As for our verbal

Figure 2.6a Aashbai quilting video.

Figure 2.6b Open using this QR code.

communication, we need her children to be simultaneously translating for us; over the next five to six hours, we work through the fabrics by tearing them into quilt materials, design of the quilt, and sewing it together mostly in silence, following each other's non-verbal language and clues and our limited knowledge of Gujarati. I have kept these clothes for this purpose for months, and slight sadness passes through me when I see them being deconstructed by scissors, torn apart and cut into usable sized sections.

I carefully watch Aashbai stitch the pieces together and learn a new way of holding the fabric tightly in one hand, holding the fabrics together, whilst the other hand manages the needle piercing through the fabrics in neat stitches. No need for pins in this hand-stitching technique, which for me meant management and order, yet keeping the material further away from the hands and the touch. Once the pieces are sewn together to form the base of the quilt, the heat of the day, despite the Arabic Sea wind breeze, prompts us to change our location.

It is time to place the quilt base on the floor, unwrap the cotton filling and the left-over pieces of the clothes. Aashbai fetches colourful threads with which we stitch the quilt together. She prepares a finger protector from old jeans fabric and thread, which she places on my left middle finger. I first refuse, thinking I will not need it, but I later thank her for doing that as the quilt is thick, and my finger becomes sore because I have not used it before with such intensity. Aashbai leads by stitching the edges of the quilt together, and then asks me to follow her trail within a thumb's distance. We sit side by side, and as my stitching speed is slower, we switch roles. Continuing from where the other left off and following each other, we move towards the centre of the quilt and change colours as the previous one finishes.

The haptic connection to the quilt, the stitching that changes the fabric into a three-dimensional layer, highlighting the batik details in new ways: the stars, the flowers become alive. The old patterns speak in new ways. Most importantly, I feel connected to this labouring and to my teacher in new ways. I have felt, since we met for the first time, inadequate, as we do not share a common language. But with the threads and the needles, we are able to follow each other, and be guided by each other in a silence that speaks so loudly—without needing another language.

Vishnu

Articulating my bittersweet relationship to sewing, and sewing బొంత was initially a task akin to weight training. Shailaja Patel's discerning poem evoked very physical

manifestations of emotions in me. A brand-new atlas awakened in my body. 'The Making' brought me to woke.[4]

I wanted to dialogue with Shailaja Patel, a being whom I never knew existed before this poem, who now lives in me, holding me, 'The Making' my chant, I respond—I make it.

I Make it . . .

I make it/ I don't have to blame groping/common practice in public spaces / hunching to hide breasts/benefits my sewing too
I make it/dexterous needle poke/my clumsy finger draws/clean blood/monthly blood whispers I am here too/I hear dirty/weren't we made from this dirty blood you and I?
I make it/sometimes/mind rests as hands work/delicate stitches recreate the eleven sutures/from slipping and falling in the bathroom/ needles picked /burdens laid down
I make it/ for the death of mothers/mother lands / mother tongue/that pricking pain turning into patch work of dying languages
I make it/under the everyday security/ adzan recited by muezzin/it's maghrib time / time for dinner/the hunger pangs call too/ rumbling belly signals the sound/ insecurity of ration cards/screams of silent tears/ stomachs of different faith comprehend each other's despair /we all know to swallow words / we giggle our secrets away / I eat meat / my body haram on all counts
I make it/each stitch marking/neverending blackouts in Kashmir/even in the dark sartaj/obligation to bejewel Indian map stands/pitiful pride burns the crown
I make it a protest against/citizenship amendment act/turns into CAB/ Klutz-PM's ceaseless concern with chai/and नमस्ते[5] tramp/desperate migrant workers dehydrate/drenching in/corona care/dry food for dinner /Tuk-tuk a motor for money doubling as semi-shelter/ family friends famished duelling with rain
I make it /an observation/as namo's flute summons/capitalism a climbable rope/ as most pots expended cracked and leaking/PM funds overflow/tsk 'he' never carries a wallet/let us clank plates and spoons and turn off lights
I make it amidst combating yet another episode of depression/for mental health support/that is all for the elite/matter for films/are you mad is still not a slur/in a nation of a billion people/it's mad in India
I make it /the warmth of mothers lap/an embroidery on the quilt/contact-traces on skin/abortion protocols/all are fading memories/only body remembers traumas
I make it/knowing les amasseurs de fortune/Ça c'est pas moi
I make it/amidst farmers protests/soiled hands/sweetened mouths/correlation between campaign funding and electability/ rights lefts et al eating from that very same platter
I make it/to make maahanmuuttovirasto believe /I can make it / through the day/ the month
I make it /to pay the rent

Needle, Thread, a Stitch, a Song

I was invited to the carrier bag (thecarrierbag) festival in Copenhagen. I was racking my brain for the most interesting ideas to present there. This was exhausting. I tried

to nap more frequently, but this time naps did not help. 'To calm your sizzling brain cells, do something with your hands'. My grandma's words rang loud in my head. As a body-philosopher I picked up the cue to relax in the languorous act of sewing. A simple task. repair, gather and rest with no further affectation. Growing up, I witnessed numerous times how this chore of mending turned into a space of bonding. A venue to gossip. Mainly a care station for the women of the household and the community. As a pundit and a practitioner of procrastination, I switched back and forth from making up debilitating lists of ideas for the festival, self-doubting and sewing to relax.

One afternoon while I was sewing, my mom called, and she was surprised that I was sewing a quilt (*bontha* in the Telugu language). She asked me if I was still ashamed of quilts. I did not realise until then that a quilt could hold a huge class trauma in its folds. While growing up I witnessed my grandmothers hoard everything. She held on to every thread, piece of cloth with dear life. In retrospect I understand how growing up in colonised lands of south India, with scarce resources affected also their later behaviours. My grandmothers did not wear blouses until they migrated to the city (Hyderabad), and I used to be ashamed of their bare chests. These two factors might seem at first very far from each other, but they are intricately joined. My shame was not mine. My personal processes of decolonising was to first recognise that covering the body was imposed in the cities by the British. A bare chest was an offence, and one could be fined heavily; therefore, some women would just stay at home. Over time, this penalty, I feel, brought so many impositions to the women of my household. As I quilt I reimagine a world where people of all genders walking bare chested, as the sun's heat warms the skin. Quilting is moratorium. An area at once decolonised and depatriarchalised.

At the carrier bag festival, even at the risk of relying on identity politics, an overwhelming indulgence overtook me and I decided to offer a sewing quilt to experience the cartography of hidden (mis)educations situated in my body.

At the workshop, I projected the world map onto the sheet that was tethered, and yet very dear to me, as it was my first acquisition in a place I was recognising more and more as home. I asked the participants to lie down on the sheet and rest where they felt at home. A simple act elevated the sheet to being a space of rest, even a symbol of home. We chose to sew a patch where we felt at home (Figure 2.7). This was, thus, my journey into the manifold aspects of quilt making.

Here is a score—I invite you to interact with the following sentences.

- Sew a patch—or find a patch; by looking at the patch, can you access a conversation? smell? time? Do you also feel that each patch can hold a memory?
- Sarees that cover; sarees that continue to cover you—Please continue this sentence as you feel—as a conversation, a sketch, sewing something that may cover you or any other.
- Imagine all the possible meanings of the word and meditate on the word COVER.
- If you my dear reader could come to this text with a needle, thread and a piece of cloth what would you sew?
- What kind of a quilt is the city you live in?

This Is Not a Conclusion: Living Quilts

Time to conclude? Instead, let us cherish this moment, and these few paragraphs, sentences and lines for having had the opportunity to come together on this occasion,

Figure 2.7 This was, thus, my journey into the manifold aspects of quilt making.

and share experiences about how quilts live and are alive, and how we and our experiences are quilted together through sharing and listening, connecting to one another, beyond politics.

Shyam: Few years ago, one buffalo at our farm gave birth during the monsoon at night-time when there was heavy rain. Soon after the birth, the buffalo needed to be cleaned and warmed as its body temperature dropped dramatically. The buffalo vibrated in the cold rain; the newly born calf was carried inside the house. Aashbai took one of her favourite quilts and put it on the buffalo. The wet quilt insulated the buffalo for a couple of days while she regained her strength. Aashbai later took the quilt back, washed it, and used it as it had been used by her before the buffalo's use. I wanted to share this story as it shows how the users of quilts are not always humans. Also, mice like to make nests in stored quilts, whether we like it or not.

Also, when old quilts are reworked, like we did at the workshop, they are recognisable as specific quilts. For example, there is an old Muslim shrine in our village. It is maybe 100–150 years old, but it still has the

bed with the quilt. Age and ageing of quilts is also connected to how we humans change and transform—I am still Shyam, but I am no longer the same Shyam as I was as a child, using a certain quilt.

Marjaana: When I was sharing our quilting experiences on Facebook, an Egyptian colleague shared a story that in her family there was a tradition every summer to undo and wash the patches of quilt and then reconstruct the quilts for new use. This tradition is a reminder that quilts are never really finished or final, yet they have recognisable features that have strong affective connections to those who have used them.

Vishnu: I wish you rest. So you can—
Fight!
Fight! Fight! Fight!
Fight with your two pollices!
Fight the police!
Fight the policies!
Fight until all have the right to sit!
Fight for the toilets!
Fight!
Fight! Fight! Fight!
Fight with your two pollices!
Fight with a song!
Fight with a dance!
Fight against the norms!
Fight the neuro typicalities!
Fight with your pen!
Fight with your needle!
Fight!
Fight! Fight! Fight!
Fight with your two pollices!

As a form of anarchiving, repertory of traces of collaborative research-creation, this piece has aimed at carrying potential: trigger new events and processes forward-feeding mechanism for creativity (SenseLab 3e, 2020).

These conversations, videos and texts on quilts and quilting, have been (re)constructed for this book as a chapter based on our conversations as a part of an edited (or we suggested, quilted) book that focuses on decolonising or reversing power hierarchies of arts-based methodologies. On these pages, we have connected our life histories with those of the traditions of quilting, and we have unravelled some unspoken histories and their connections to pain, grief and the need to be touched and belong across the boundaries of coloniality, state borders, social hierarchies and discrimination.

Notes

1. Throughout this text, there will be a number of languages used. At times translated into English, at times not. Sometimes, the original language is written in Roman script, other times in their current standardised written form. When translating the texts into English, we follow Richa Nagar's notion of hungry translation which insists 'on a collective and relational ethic of radical vulnerability that refuses to assume that it can arrive at a perfect translation (Nagar, 2019, p. 36).

2. Saba, one of the participants, emailed the lyrics to us in June 2020: it is a short lullaby that mothers and grandmothers sing to their children while rocking the cradle. It is sung widely in most of the former Yugoslavian countries, with small variations, of course. This is how my mom and grandma used to sing it to us—their seven (grand)children.
3. Rutazibwa (2020, p. 225) quoting Shillam, 2015; see also www.youtube.com/watch?v=e83LOt4Zc1k
4. *Stay woke* became a watch word in parts of the black community for those who were self-aware, questioning the dominant paradigm and striving for something better. But *stay woke* and *woke* became part of a wider discussion in 2014, immediately following the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. The word *woke* became entwined with the Black Lives Matter movement; instead of just being a word that signalled awareness of injustice or racial tension, it became a word of action. Activists were *woke* and called on others to *stay woke* (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).
5. Namaste (pronounced as namah sthe).

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3 In Touch With the Mindful Body

Moving With Women and Girls at the Za'atari Refugee Camp

Susanna Hast

Introduction

For me, the question of decolonising has always been a practical one. Stating my privilege makes visible the structures that position me as a researcher, and by so doing I can alleviate my own guilt, but it is not enough. Actions must be taken with an awareness of privilege. Thus, I have been asking myself the following questions. What are the actions through which I can work toward decolonisation in my own research and pedagogic practice? How do I move and relate to others as a body in an unjust world?

In this chapter, I propose an embodied view of decolonising—in other words, a strategy of bringing bodies into focus and proximity. I emphasise that this is a *proposition* of ideas to think with. By embodiment, I mean rethinking the way research is founded upon binaries of emotion and rationality, body and mind—thus, overriding a central tenet in Western epistemology. Decolonising through embodiment means rethinking methodology and asking: Whose knowledge is privileged? I use as an example of an embodied research interest a short trip I made to the Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan in January 2018 for a study on capoeira (Hast, 2019). The purpose of this writing is to propose that engagement with embodied knowledge is one possible way to study the lived experience of young Syrian women and girls. Movement is a tool through which we can think about corporeal strategies of decolonising participatory research.

I begin with a short introduction to the Za'atari camp, trauma and capoeira projects I was conducting research on. Next, I discuss how the body is the site of emotion and knowledge, and I explain my feminist curiosity toward healing practices and children's agency instead of pain stories. I then provide examples of movement techniques which can provide access to embodied knowledge and self-awareness. In the conclusions, I propose that the participants in the capoeira classes are attuning their bodies and (re)connecting themselves as bodies.

Capoeira at the Za'atari Camp

In early 2018, over 170 children and adolescents were taking part in capoeira programmes run by the founders of Capoeira al-Shababi, Lauren Hales, Ramzy Natsheh and Hussein Zaben, at the Za'atari refugee camp. Capoeira classes took place at the Peace Oasis of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Makani Center of Relief International for children and youth from the ages of 9–19, as well as Syrian facilitators training as capoeira trainers. Unfortunately, the programmes were discontinued

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after the authorities began to view capoeira as a problem for the camp's security, and the small organisation lacked resources to explain that their work was designed to protect all those involved.

My own interest in capoeira comes from personal experience. Capoeira changed me—it changed me as a researcher, as a woman and as a survivor of violence. I learned about the use of capoeira to empower and heal, and through my capoeira contacts, I got in touch with Hales, who was one of the founders of Capoeira al-Shababi and who was working in Jordan. I travelled to Jordan because I was welcomed and because I felt I could be of use. Through an embodied dialogue with the young capoeiristas, I hoped to make visible the movement that was emerging in the margins. In this chapter, I do not discuss in detail my collaboration with Capoeira al-Shahabi (see e.g. Hast, 2019), but focus on participation through sharing movement with young Syrian women and girls.

The camp is over an hour's drive from Amman, the capital of Jordan. The terrain is dry, and roadsides are covered with piles of rocks and plastic trash. After a bumpy ride of the last kilometres, we arrived at the Za'atari refugee camp, and from afar I could see the immense size of the camp, housing 80,000 Syrian refugees in densely placed metal containers. The camp was established in 2012 by the Jordanian government and the United Nations Refugee Agency. Different humanitarian agencies offer services for the camp's inhabitants, such as medical care, education and food.

The camp is a militarised space—fenced and guarded—a form of structural and institutional violence descending from the concentration camp models (Bushnell & Nakase, 2018, p. 30). A refugee camp is not a safe haven or an escape from war—it is war's continuation. The very day I arrived at the camp, two boys—brothers, I later learned—drowned in a well which had been left open without a cover.

Capoeira is an art which originated from movements of enslaved Africans brought to Brazil by the Portuguese. In Brazil, capoeira was illegal from 1889 until 1938, associated with gang violence, and it was spread to the US and Europe by Brazilians in exile after the fascist junta seized power in Brazil in 1964 (Delamont et al., 2017, p. 6). Capoeira is a game which is played in a circle formation called a *roda* (wheel). It involves training of movements around a swinging step or *ginga* (swing): kicks, escapes and sidesteps (*esquivas*) and acrobatics. An important part of capoeira is singing capoeira songs and playing musical instruments. Capoeira is tied to resistance and social justice as it resists the forgetting of racial violence and injustice in Brazil, but it is also tied to social projects amongst marginalised and unprivileged communities (Downey, 2005, p. 63). Capoeira al-Shababi was using capoeira at the camp as a psychosocial tool, offering the children the possibility to explore movement and music in a safe space, similarly to other social projects, such as capoeira classes for former child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (United Nations International Children's Fund, 2015) or capoeira in young offenders' rehabilitation in Canada (Joseph, 2015), for example.

Sophie Fuggle (2008) has described capoeira as a discourse of subversion, carried out in the form of a negotiation aimed at finding a way out, to escape socially imposed rules and limitations. Rather than an escape to the outside, this means playing with the limits and transforming them. Capoeira engages with power relations and resistance, providing alternatives to fixed solutions. The subversions are expressed as false attacks, changing directions, playfulness and unpredictability. While capoeira is historically not built upon white or Eurocentric knowledge, as a practice now globally

known, it is neither oppressive nor liberating in itself. Any form of activity can reproduce inequality. It is through choices in pedagogy and methodology that we can experiment, question and develop different ways of being together. I believe it is possible to experience and envision different relations of power through movement.

Capoeira was used at the camp as a therapeutic tool, in addition to being a recreational activity. The benefits of a body-based approach to trauma have been extensively researched (see e.g. Van der Kolk, 2014). In such therapies, it is understood that, since the body stores traumatic memories, the body needs to heal, as well. A healing body is a body in movement. As the body psychotherapist Laura-Hope Steckler (2017, p. 142) has noted, non-habitual movement seems to refresh the nervous system, enhancing the ability to deal with challenging life circumstances. Movement affects the brain positively. Judith Lynne Hanna (2014) explains that dancing sparks the creation of new brain cells and their connections (neuroplasticity), increases neurotransmitters and nerve growth factors, helps regulate stress and boosts brain chemicals that enhance learning. By engaging with art, children can express their creativity and have fun, and this self-expression is essential for both healing and living to the fullest (Brown, 2012).

There are no data on the extent of trauma amongst the children who took part in the capoeira classes. Yet, research has been conducted on how post-traumatic stress disorder and depression are common amongst refugee children (see e.g. Jabbar & Zaza, 2014; Ugurlu et al., 2016). Children are not only plagued by traumatic memories, but also by the dire daily circumstances at the camp, as well as loss of home, work, family members and friends due to displacement. Children are also affected by family members suffering from trauma and loss. The camp as a living environment is a place of scarcity and imprisonment. It poses an additional challenge to the rights of girls who at the camp are at higher risk of being married at a young age (see e.g. Sahbani et al., 2016). In these circumstances, the capoeira class presented a space of safety and creativity.

The Body Knows

I argue that language is not the only and most important form of knowledge. I also propose that if language is too abstract, to the point of being abstracted from experience, it is not accessible. I struggle with writing high-level theory because it rarely speaks to those I would like to include in the discussion. Language provides access to certain places of knowledge, but it also maintains hierarchies. One way to manage the tension created by this dichotomy is to consider the possibilities of knowledge that is corporeal and descriptive. To gain a more comprehensive view of knowledge, I have adopted the concept of *enactivism* (Varela et al., 1993), by which I mean a body full of soul (Sheets-Johnstone, 2018, p. 11), the entire living body as minded or mindful (Colombetti, 2014), the living body (and not just the mind) as the locus of subjectivity (Parviainen, 1998, p. 25) and freeing the senses from the captivity of reason (Manning, 2007, p. xii).

Overlooking the tactile, kinaesthetic and affective body has meant that the body counts for very little within the knowledge hierarchies in many scholarly disciplines, but so it does as well in the society at large: ‘if society is disembodied, perhaps it is also because there is sole reliance on talk and an absence of relating to each other in the silence of movement’ (Sheets-Johnstone, 2018, p. 8). The body talks with silence or sounds other

than words. Maxine Sheets-Johnston (2018) has proposed changing the point of view from an embodied mind to a mindful body. The body is not inhabiting the mind or the soul, but the body is the mind and the soul. She goes on to distinguish 'having a body' from 'being a body', the latter being the intuitive experience of infants: they experience themselves as living bodies, not selves who possess a body (p. 19). Rather than perceiving the body as an object, the flow of the body's dynamics is felt in movement.

Body and self belong together, making a *bodyself*. Self-processes are underpinned by the capacity to know the body, and the (body)self is known to the mind because it generates emotions and feelings (Damasio, 2010). Emotions are first experienced as changes in the body, which the brain maps visually and non-visually. Only after that we become aware of our feelings (Damasio, 2010). Thus, the body is the locus of emotion. Yet, the mindful body, or 'kinaesthetic consciousness' (Sheets-Johnstone, 2011), is inter-subjective, so a body is constantly changing and emoting in an environment with other living creatures. Moving with other bodies is then an exploration not only of how the body is minded, but also how the self is deeply relational.

The body knows and the body remembers. Knowing is experiential (see Rothschild, 2000, p. 26), and memory is constructed in active engagement with the world (Damasio, 2010, p. 132). Identities are rooted in our bodily experiences, while our embodied existence can also limit our ability to be and feel part of the world (Anttila, 2004, p. 41). Everything that goes into the brain goes through flesh, via the body's surface (Damasio, 2010, p. 91). So, despite how much we like to consider the mind as being separate from the body as the thinking, feeling, problem-solving, decision-making and perceiving self, this is not the case.

Self is in the flesh, emotions emerge in the body and making sense of the world relies on our bodily senses. The question of how to be a body is especially relevant for traumatised individuals, who often avoid feeling their bodies, and are often disconnected from their sensations (Levine, 2015). Thus, attending to and acknowledging the body in all its visceral dimensions is essential for being in charge of one's life and for healing (Van der Kolk, 2014). Becoming aware of the felt sense of the body means accessing the implicit procedural or body memories: movement patterns, motor skills, visceral sensations (Levine, 2015). This awareness can then produce new experiences of release, relaxation, safety or expansion.

As I move with other bodies trying to understand something of their lived experience, I do that as a researcher mindful of her own body and emotions. Kindon et al. (2007, p. 3) use the term 'extended epistemology' to convey that in participatory action research knowledge comes in diverse forms, and it is collected for the purpose of change. For me, this means participating as a body, being present as a body and thinking of ways through which I can practice change as a body.

Refusal to Focus on Pain Stories

Tuck and Yang (2014, p. 223) state that 'Social science often works to collect stories of pain and humiliation in the lives of those being researched for commodification'. They also point out how damage-centred researchers rely on Western notions of power as scarce and concentrated, leaving communities with a narrative that tells them they are powerless (p. 227). In our fascination with scarred bodies, the existence of the scarred is predicated on pain. The refugee, in order to represent what the saviour needs, has to be a victim, and not an agent.

When I had interviews with the Syrian facilitators training to become capoeira trainers, I did not ask them about their pain, and I did not intend to tell their pain stories. I asked about capoeira, and when they wanted, they told me about their pain, too. I had the feeling already when we had these conversations that none of the pain stories were meant to be told in that particular context. Instead of making pain the focus, I asked about how they felt when clapping hands or doing a cartwheel. By my refusal to narrate pain, I hope to shift something in the refugee—victim narrative in my own practice and writing.

In my earlier study on war experience in Chechnya, I attempted to avoid reproducing macabre aesthetics of war bodies. Instead, my focus was on dance, love and compassion (Hast, 2018b). I was also curious about children in war beyond victimhood: children whose insights are easily sidelined as subordinate to adults' experience, knowledge and agency. I wanted to see children beyond the dualism of weakness (children) and capacity (adults). Children are needy bodies, but they are not mute unless muted. When children are viewed as incapable, their insights are written out of the sagas on war and agency.

Johannes Gunesch notes how political scientists often proceed deductively: 'First, we name the beast, then we try to tame it' (Gunesch & Nolte, 2020, p. 51). The beast we are up against here is 'white patriarchal capitalist coloniality' (Motta, 2018, p. 4), of which I am a part of as a white person. I am not able to tame the beast, and the beast inhabits me, but I can at least try to deconstruct some aspects of the beast through situated, contested, propositional, changing, different and many *movements*.

Body Practice as Participatory Research

A Finnish scholar visiting a refugee camp seems like the epitome of using privilege to get into spaces for one's own purposes. I was able to visit: to go in and get out. The imprisonment of the camp's residents, and my freedom to move, troubled me every day I was there, and it still troubles me—and it should.

I did not visit the camp only as a researcher, but also as a *capoeirista*. I did not see exotic bodies different from me, but capoeira bodies. Most of the time, I was learning in the class just like the rest of the participants. I was an experiencing body. Breaths, touches, silences, sounds, steps, laughter, falls and different emotions were the 'data' I was collecting in my body. My body is a trauma body, and I have studied and explored movement techniques in order to better understand the role of the body in healing from trauma. With a personal background in late childhood trauma, I was not distanced, and often I was not particularly analytical. I was taking part as an empathetic and curious witness, and relied on the participation to be the method through which I might be able to overcome some of the problems of an assessing, judging and evaluating gaze that often characterise these kinds of settings. With the privileges I had, I could embody several positions, just like I could come and leave the camp. But it was also my *responsibility*, then, to move beyond any one role that would set me above from those who allowed me to see into their lives. This is why I chose to be a capoerista first, a scholar second. When I conducted interviews, I could feel how the hierarchical relationship of the researcher and researched was established in the stillness of bodies. An interview was in stark contrast to the intimate dynamic of moving together. Movement was an exchange, interview felt like extraction.

Kaptani and Yuval-Davis (2008) explain how the use of participatory theatre as an action research methodology not only challenges the disembodied research process but brings social impact right to the heart of research. I wanted to offer my own movement, touch and laughter to those present, and not only abstract their knowledge for my own use. Through exchange of knowledge, I proposed movement exercises, and asked the participants how they felt about them.

Three Body Techniques for Awareness

During my visit to the camp, an opportunity arouse to explore 'roots of the mind in its body' (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 3) when Hales asked me if I wanted to lead some exercises during classes. I happily agreed, and decided on exercises, hoping I could learn about the participants' felt states and body awareness. In the following, I describe these exercises in detail. I want to present these exercises and the knowledge they can produce as concrete examples of experimentation that is a possibility with problematics. In the context of decolonising, it would be counterproductive to generally declare that body work is healing or that, through art, we can ethically engage in research. We can do harm even when we try to do good, so we need to critically study different artistic methods in their contexts to understand both their benefits and pitfalls.

My position was that of an outsider. The first problem was that I did not know the girls and young women, their language and their life-worlds. On the other hand, I had been participating in the classes a few times. We had laughed together, and our bodies had already spoken in movement and become tuned with each other. This was the trust upon which I could ask the participants to move. I also knew they were used to talking about their feelings at the end of the class, so I could expect some verbal feedback on the exercises. In fact, the movement exercises we performed in class replaced interviews which were not a possibility practically and ethically. Hales, their teacher, was there facilitating and translating.

The exercises I introduced to the group can be grouped into three: 1) sensing the self as a body by touch or by focusing on breathing; 2) moving another body and being moved—exploring intersubjectivity; and 3) changing between extended and contracted body poses in order to explore how emotions change in movement. I had learned these in different contexts—all of which are Western—and had used them in movement work with immigrant women.

My analysis in the following pages is 'incomplete and detached from the realm it points to' (Visweswaran, 1994, p. 1), yet I do not see this as failure. Amina Nolte refutes the idea of fieldwork as failure by explaining how to 'accept the partiality and limitedness of one's own perspective is a big chance and relief' (Gunesch & Nolte, 2020, p. 57). I believe an important part of decolonising research is the ability to talk about failure straight on. This is not the same thing as feeling guilty. Acknowledging our fallibility and complicity is a practice of responsibility. This is a question that haunts me: What right did I have to go to the camp in the first place? The power imbalance cannot be reconciled, no matter how I try; it cannot be explained away. I had not thought about this question seriously enough until I was there, and as soon as we passed the guarded gates, I realised that I had been too focused on getting access. It had become so important for me to 'be there' that being there, in my mind, equalled success for my study. This was my failure.

Another problem that I need to express here is that even if I attempt to decolonise research by using embodied methods, I still work through Western academic conceptions and language. A framework is provided, analysis conducted and text written from a perspective that does not adequately reflect on the situatedness of those whose lived experiences are being studied. Capoeira is the only framework that is of non-Western origin here. Moreover, I cannot know the experience of the children I met. I can only propose meanings through an interaction we had. At the same time, it would be a form of epistemic violence to exclude those whose knowledge is not communicated on my terms (see Vaittinen, 2017, p. 49). I cannot eliminate the stark power relations between myself and the inhabitants of the camp, but through an embodied approach, I have attempted to resist the 'thingification' (Wheatley & Hartmann, 2013) of the war body and of the body of a child.

I have made the choice to write about the girls and young women I could play capoeira with, and I hope that, through my writing, I can convey some insights into how bodies and co-movement can bring forth new insights.

Being a Bodyself

Around 15 female students took part in each class. Girls and young women did not have many possibilities for sports at the camp, especially after marriage, so the class was a rare opportunity for them. The capoeira classes typically began with singing and playing instruments together. The singing was loud and energetic, and yet there was a silence embedded in it. It was like shouting into the world a deeper truth, which cannot be talked about, or a dream which is too big to be believed in. The truth of the voice, the dream of the body. What followed the musical part were different kinds of exercises: capoeira movements, acrobatics and sequences.

Body awareness was already part of the male and female classes alike. Many exercises were done in pairs or in a circle mirroring, mimicking or synching—attuned to and simulating the body state of another. For vulnerable children and youth, capoeira—with exercises such as mirroring—offers the opportunity to be in the present moment by focusing on their inner physical experience in relation to those around them. They can explore pressure, risk and release. Playing capoeira and singing capoeira songs create a break from one's daily struggles, but more than that, they present the possibility to connect with one's body and, thus, one's self.

In the first exercise, we tapped our own bodies with the palm of the hand gently from head to toe, in order to get a sense of the body's boundaries and to feel safe. The tap is a neutral touch, giving neither pain nor pleasure, and it assists in becoming aware of how the body is part of the self, not something separate from it. Another version, or a follow-up to tapping which I used with one group, was to squeeze the muscles, an exercise adopted from Peter Levine (2003). It does much the same as the tapping, but instead of activating the skin's nerves, the touch goes all the way to the muscles—this is a stronger way to explore one's sensations. Especially when a body is storing trauma, tapping and squeezing can activate the link between awareness and body sensations.

Instead of tapping, I tried a breathing exercise in one of the classes with young women, which resulted in giggles. Breathing in silence was awkward and difficult, and we did not manage to do it very long because of the eruptions into laughter. Nevertheless, one of the students said after the exercise that she felt calmer after breathing, and another student explained how she could feel the breath travel from her chest toward

the throat and out of her mouth. This kind of body work can teach how to develop an awareness of sensations as well as how changes in the body alter how we feel. What breath or touch can do is to prepare the body for meeting other bodies, by first feeling safe and calm in one's own skin. Then, being a body means being a body in relation to others, as a self in the present moment.

Relating to Others in Space

In an exercise I call *the marionette*, two bodies communicate—in the silence of movement—by one giving a gentle movement impulse by touch, and the other receiving it with movement. In such an exercise, the participant may become aware of the sensations and feelings which are generated by giving the movement impulse, and by being touched and moved. Bodywork practitioner Licia Sky, in an interview with Bessel Van der Kolk (2014, p. 535), explains that 'When you are touched, you wake up to the body part which is being touched'. Touching and touched bodies are changing, creating and inventing worlds 'by drawing the other into a relation, thereby qualitatively altering the limits of the emerging touched-touching bodies' (Manning, 2007, p. xiv).

The idea is that the *marionette* is not coerced or forced into movement but is given an impulse or a suggestion. The receiver of touch is not passively following orders; she can choose the way she interprets the impulse, take her space and improvise. Touch is transformed to movement through choice. I asked the participants to touch different parts of the body: hands, legs, waist, back and others, and not just the shoulder, which is easiest to do. I did not give any instructions on how to move or how to touch. I participated myself, always doing the exercise with one of the participants. Thus, I could not fully observe, as I was engaged in the exercise myself. In the beginning, some of the students just stood watching, hesitating, but little by little, more joined, and yet even more after we changed the roles with the partner. Their movement language was mainly capoeira—it was a capoeira class, after all.

We did the exercise with three groups. The discussion which followed was translated by Hales and a trainee, Samah Hourani. Talking about the exercise afterwards enhances awareness of emotions experienced in the body's movement. During the discussion, we stood in a circle. The circle is an equal way to organise bodies in space, and it was often preferred by the girls and women themselves. I asked how it felt to be moved or pushed, and moving or pushing another. I used the word 'push', which was easier to translate and understand than movement impulse. With respect to interpretations, it is hard to say exactly in what way the participants understood the question, and translating from lived bodily experience to language is not always easy—thus, I am drawing conclusions with caution.

The children who answered the question said pushing was easy and that it felt like *being in control*. They felt more comfortable in the role of the leader, than being the one who moves. One young woman answered:

> Feels like someone is controlling us. Like we are a doll and they are controlling us. The moves we make are from them. I feel like a remote control is controlling me, like there is someone above me dictating my every move.

One young woman said, 'I honestly don't like someone controlling me, but when someone pushes me, I know how to move'. One of the facilitators said that it was

nice to experience both roles, having the power to lead, and then having someone lead you. I was often touched, kissed and hugged by the girls and young women, but in the marionette exercise, all my partners hesitated to touch me, and I tried signalling with my body that they could really use their hands to move me. They girls were thus not shy to touch me, but hesitant to move my body.

One of the younger girls said that to be pushed or moved felt like self-defence: 'When they come at me, I defend myself'. She also said that when she is pushed, she becomes more active and moves away from the other person. Another participant said she felt like the person pushing her wanted to control her. She continued to explain that the exercise was like a question and answer: 'When they ask, I answer correctly', suggesting that the person being moved will move according to the impulse given. When asked how it feels to be the one who pushes, a participant answered: 'I feel happy'.

The participants who voiced their feelings in the circle disliked the role of the marionette (feeling controlled) and preferred to be the one giving the movement impulse (feeling in control). The act of pushing then had a negative connotation as something imposed on another person. On the other hand, the participants said the exercise was fun and easy to do; thus, any feelings of discomfort had been mild and within limits of tolerance.

In movement, one can study corporeally how it feels to be touched and asked to move and how it feels to be leading or led, and one can practice sensing and reading another body. How a person experiences such an exercise depends on how it is framed, but also on the interaction with the other person, on how one is feeling at the moment of the exercise, and on the social norms and codes related to bodies and movement. The participants interpreted the movement through control and power. It is likely that, because of the context of capoeira, the participants interpreted the exercise as an attack and defence and not, for example, as a dance. This is speculation, but perhaps feelings related to control also surfaced due to the children's daily life at the refugee camp, or their experiences as females with various constraints and demands imposed on their bodies.

Remembering and Forgetting

Traumatic memories are but a part of the lifelong collection of implicit, non-conscious and automated body memories. They relate the self as a bodily experience to emotions as they emerge, as well as to the individual's autobiographical memories. Body, emotion and self are inseparable. Sometimes, body memories become conscious images or sensations. For example, more than once in my dance classes with immigrant women, someone has voiced how they felt like children again when running, jumping and goofing around. Movement work can also be a mindful moment of forgetting the past and the future.

The capoeira classes were experienced by the students as a break from daily struggles and painful memories, as explained by one of the Syrian facilitators, Sara. Sara described her feelings after the capoeira class as peaceful, as she could leave all her life circumstances, and the loss of family members aside for a while. She wanted this peacefulness for the children as well, saying, 'I feel indescribable when I do the thing I love. And doing that with kids. I feel joy when I see kids happy'. She continued,

> I don't want them to think that 'we just left a warzone and all'. If they don't forget about this, they will have it as a wound in them. I don't want that. At this hour, I

> will put everything behind my back and walk in and have fun and empty everything inside of me and then leave.

For Sara, capoeira was a means to exit the world of war, of the past, and be present in the moment where everything is here and now. For the other facilitators and students alike, capoeira was a special and precious time of the week, an escape and relief. They expressed it as a privilege which had benefits much beyond the class. As Sara said, 'So, I am very happy I can't wait for the capoeira day to come so we can all spend time together singing and clapping and doing things. I feel like I own the world and what's in it'.

I had not planned the third exercise as memory work because it can be risky and evoke traumatic memories. But, sometimes, awareness of movement awakens the forgotten self. The purpose of the body poses exercise was to explore how movement affects emotions. What came out in the situation were body memories and feelings related to safety.

The exercise consisted of a transition between two postures: one curled up into a contracted pose, even foetus-like on the ground, and then elevating the body from that crouched position to a 'super woman pose', that is, an expanded pose with legs wide and arms up and spread apart. This exercise resonates with Peter Levine's (2015) somatic therapy of 'pendulation' between contraction and expansion, which addresses the procedural traumatic memory in which contraction has become the dominant state of existence (see Hast, 2018a). In our exercise, the movement was done with the entire body. I anticipated that the participants would feel better in an extended pose ('power posing'), but it turned out that some of the younger participants and one of the young women experienced the curled-up position, with the arms protecting the body, as safety.

The exercise was, nevertheless, not too serious. The students laughed, and I went along with their funny gestures. At least in one of the sessions, which I audio-recorded, the participants mimicked each other's voice pitch and volume when transitioning between poses. When they repeated my words (in English) 'go big, big, big', the sound was progressively deeper and louder, while when we went down into a contracted position, 'go small, small, small', the sound was higher in pitch but thinner and quieter. I do not know who led the soundscape: we collectively, I or the participants. But, as the girls and young women had trained with the music and synchronising their voices for weeks, it was easy for them to take part in the movements by using their voices. In fact, the emergence of a sense of a collective body takes place in just such moments when it becomes hard or impossible to determine who is the leader and who is the follower. Thus, as we moved, we also used our voices to reflect that movement, together, attuned with each other.

After the exercises, we discussed how they felt. In a class for young women, one facilitator said she felt strong when in an open and extended position. Hales, who was translating for me, asked those who felt better in an open position to raise their hand, and all but one did. The young woman who did not raise her hand had been hustling about the entire class, holding a feather duster in her hand and teasing others with it. During other classes, too, she sought attention, and I learned that she had experienced great losses in her life. She had difficulties concentrating, but she always joined the musical part of the class. So, the young woman who was outgoing, but easily

distracted, was the one who felt better in a small position, holding her body within her arms. 'I felt safe', she said bravely, when her experience differed from that of the others.

Hypervigilance is a frequent symptom of traumatic stress, which can be addressed through body techniques for calming the body's central nervous system (see e.g. Levine, 2017). Movement techniques are an effective approach to self-discovery and healing trauma (Van der Kolk, 2014). Movement work for emotional regulation and body awareness is an exploration into self and relationality. What I mean by exploration is that there are multiple techniques and multiple lived experiences of the same movement exercise. The effects of movement are individually and uniquely experienced, and there is no linear and universal causality. So rather than proving that a certain movement technique causes an effect, I would propose that the feedback from the participants illustrate their curiosity in what their bodies can do, and how they feel in their bodies; that is, an orientation towards embodied knowledge.

As regards the question of which pose felt better, a difference emerged amongst the young women between those who had reached their teenage years and the younger ones: while the older students felt better in an open position, the younger ones all said they liked the contracted position better (raising hands when asked). In the younger females' class, some of the students said that they felt comfortable in a contracted position, and one girl said she felt happy in this position. One girl said that, when curled up, she remembered the time when she was small. One of the facilitators explained that she also remembered her childhood in the contracted position, and in an expanded position, she felt like her problems had gone away. Next, another facilitator said that being in a curled pose made her think of her deceased mother, while being in an open position made her feel responsible and grown-up. Another facilitator said that she felt better in an open position because she felt like she could do whatever she wanted. Movement aroused body memories and emotions attached to them. Such memories emerge from the non-linguistic part of the self, the thinking body. Movement and attending to sensations are also future-oriented, as they open up possibilities. As reported by the children themselves, capoeira gave them hope (Capoeira al-Shababi, 2018).

Movement for a Mindful Body

I have proposed in this chapter a participatory method which begins with the body. Such research can only be conducted in an environment of trust. The capoeira class at the Za'atari camp was a safe space where participants trusted the teachers and trusted that no one would get hurt, and that they would be treated with respect and confidentiality.

Through different body exercises, I found out how at least some of the girls and young women taking part in the capoeira classes experienced their bodies as minded, knowing and remembering in movement. Such an exercise is hard for anyone, and it is intimate. Even though the participants had not been exploring their sensations and emotions after any particular exercise, they had a habit of creating corporeal dialogues in capoeira. Their focus was on their bodies when they were practicing capoeira. This was the result of practice. In the beginning of the programmes, Hales told me, most of the students hesitated to express themselves, but in just a couple of months, their courage to move, sing and speak up had increased significantly.

Figure 3.1 is a simplified categorisation of the exercises and how they relate to being a body as a self, as an inter-subjective self and as a self in time.

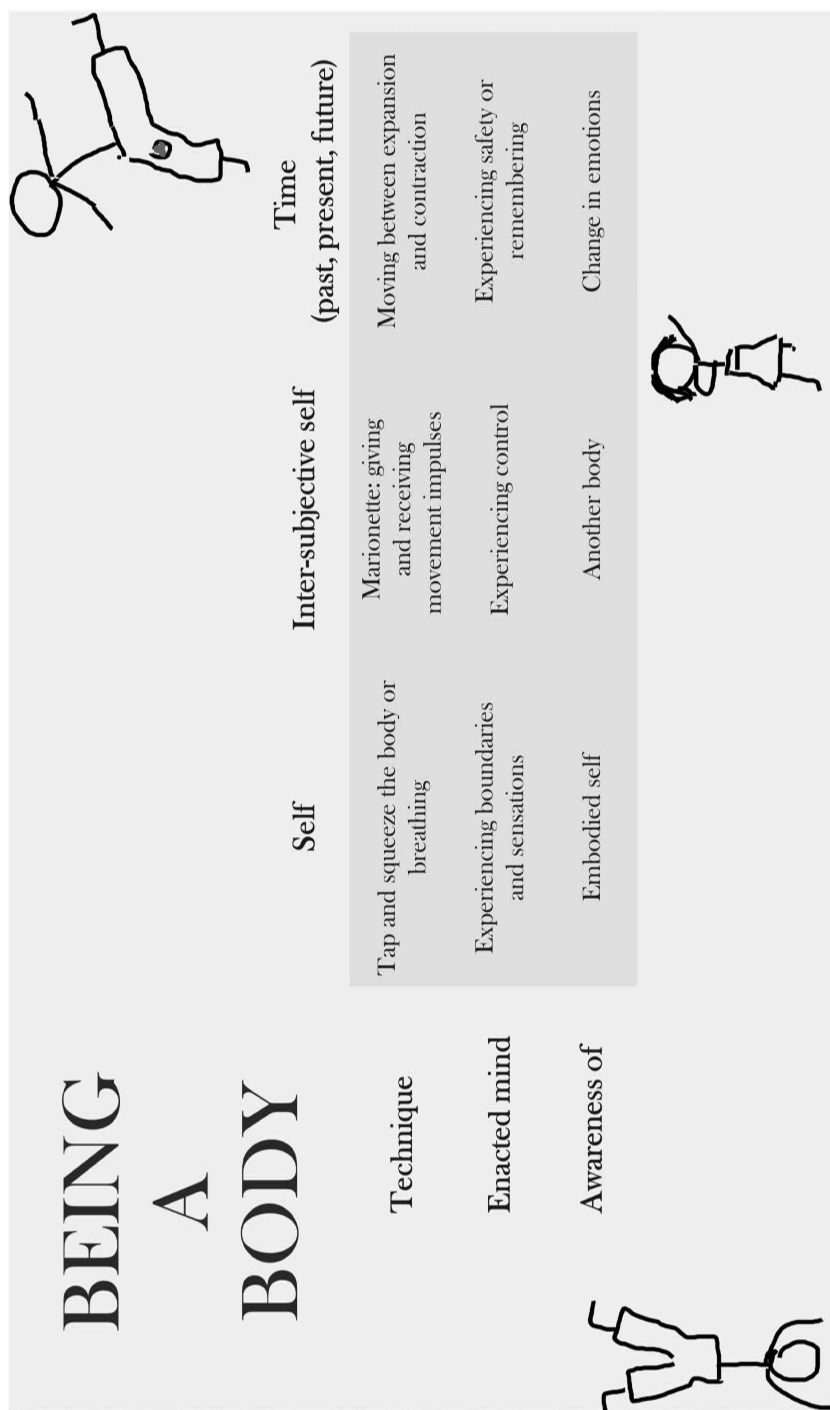
Tapping and breathing bring to mind sensations and emotions associated with them. The self is embodied, thus reconnecting with one's body is an exercise of self-awareness, reminding the individual that *I am a body*, *I am here* and *I am real*. Giving and receiving movement impulses means relating to another body in space. Emotions are then aroused in interaction with and proximity to each other. At the camp, the exercise was experienced as control of another body, and the participants were more comfortable with pushing than being pushed. Alternating between contracted and expanded poses was meant to enhance awareness of how emotions change in movement. The young women felt better in an open pose, while younger girls experienced safety when curled up. Some participants remembered their childhood in a position where they held themselves in their own arms.

Having a discussion right after the exercises helped the group to discover how movement relates to emotions. Mindful body work can assist in healing within a community by enhancing bodyself awareness and emotional regulation by creating new body memories—keeping in mind that, in such environments as a closed camp, space sets certain limits to empowerment, and that empowerment is unstable and not straightforward. Except for the tapping, squeezing and breathing, the capoeira classes in the camp were composed of just such exercises of relationality, or 'kinespheric meetings', such as mirroring, mimicking, playing capoeira and pendulating between contraction and expansion through attacks and escapes (Hast, 2018a).

In the group, everyone participated but not everyone spoke. Yet, bodily knowledge was created in the moment, which is often not reducible to words. The body stores new memories even if they are not consciously processed. Our bodyminds are ever changing, whether we are aware of it or not. Furthermore, the fact that some children kept silent does not mean they did not reflect on their bodily experience. For those who did not speak up, the experience still happened, and they took their own space in movement.

Movement changes a person, even if it can be difficult to measure how and how much, especially if the capoeira programme runs only for a limited period. Sara, one of the facilitators, told me that she believes that capoeira changes the entire body. It is not just a physical change, but a change in emotions as a result of moving together. Sara told me, 'I enjoy when Lauren says, "Let's do a roda", and we hold hands. I truly see joy in the eyes of the girls. Like "yeeeeh", and then we stamp our feet. Honestly, I swear to God, I wished the class would not end' (Personal communication, 15 January 2018). In my interviews with facilitators (Personal communications, 11–22 January 2018), and in the interviews conducted by Capoeira al-Shababi (2018), male and female participants reported positive changes in their bodies and increased focus and self/emotional control due to capoeira. Two such changes were not getting irritated and provoked as easily as before, and the capacity to calm oneself in a stressful interaction.

Through a pedagogy designed for and with a vulnerable community, capoeira is turned into embodied knowledge which actively connects the bodyself and emotions into a non-fragmented whole. From the perspective of trauma, getting in touch with the mindful body enhances a sense of safety, agency and solace. Movement is the language in which the participants can 'talk' about difficult issues in movement, including losses, insecurities and pains, but also share the joy of playing, learning and sharing.



BEING A BODY

	Self	Inter-subjective self	Time (past, present, future)
Technique	Tap and squeeze the body or breathing	Marionette: giving and receiving movement impulses	Moving between expansion and contraction
Enacted mind	Experiencing boundaries and sensations	Experiencing control	Experiencing safety or remembering
Awareness of	Embodied self	Another body	Change in emotions

Figure 3.1 Body as a self, as an inter-subjective self and as a self in time.

Conclusion

Through our presence as bodies in movement, we can make participatory research embodied. Movement work is not automatically ethical, but we can think about the ethics of research with movement. Movement is work through the senses, and an embodied methodology challenges, at least, the mistaken view that the body does not matter. What I want to say through my research, to girls and women in particular, is that your bodies do matter, your body is you, and what you feel in your bodyself is important. By asking questions about embodiment, I am making bodies matter in the moment. To develop a sensitivity toward others' knowledge is, for me, a corporeal practice. The fact that the young women and girls in the room wanted to do these movements together with me, and share their experiences, taught me the importance of listening even more carefully and not underestimating or neglecting the insight and understanding that is nurtured within a community, and amongst children.

This research is not grand theory, nor does it fit into a standardised academic narrative. Perhaps it can, however, help us appreciate and nurture the insights of an undermined and overlooked margins. I believe the corporeal participatory approach to research can be also reparative (Sedgwick & Frank, 2003). It is reparative as a result of the refusal to reproduce only pain stories, and it is reparative as a transformation of research practice. I cannot get the people I met out of that camp, but choosing to work through participation and movement, I can evoke questions that are relevant for decolonising research. In the marionette exercise, for example, controlling the movement of another body, following movement or resisting it, are tactile routes into feeling one's boundaries and their violations. Body work can also promote conceptual thinking: what a particular body can do is always cultural, social and political. Body work is theoretical work, building insight in the moment of movement.

The capoeira classes with different attunement and awareness exercises developed the participants' sense of their bodies—brought the body to mind, and mind to body as a conscious practice. The exercises I conducted opened up the possibilities to consciously think about, discuss and name sensations and emotions right after the exercise.

Capoeira might seem like a rather insignificant recreational activity at a refugee camp, but the work of Capoeira al-Shababi took refugees' lives, women's lives and children's lives seriously. The small organisation was ambitious in transferring capoeira body knowledge to the camp's inhabitants rather than imposing structures which would make people even more dependent, helpless and hopeless. This was done by helping the young Syrians get in touch with their inner worlds, and the world they are invaluable parts of. The capoeira trainers of Capoeira al-Shababi were creating a body-based model for participatory engagement, which can be of great value for anyone who works with marginalised communities.

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4 Towards *Just* Dance Research

An uMunthu Participatory and Performative Inquiry Into Malawian–Norwegian Entanglements

Sunniva Hovde, Asante Smzy Maulidi and Tone Pernille Østern

Research Focus—Malawi, Norway and a Wish to Decolonise Tertiary Dance Education in the West

This chapter is the outcome of a practice-led (Smith & Dean, 2009) and collaborative (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013) exploration between three different authors within the frames of performative (Fels, 2015) and decolonising (Smith, 2012/1999) research. The object of decolonising is Nordic tertiary dance education, represented by Tone, a Norwegian-Finnish dance educational researcher, the third author of this chapter. The fields that we build on in this task are Malawian dance, philosophies and pedagogies, represented by Asante, a Malawian dancer and artistic leader, the second author of this chapter, as well as Sunniva, the first author of this chapter, a musician, ethnomusicologist and music education researcher who is Norwegian and Malawian, a married Malawian. She has initiated and been the driving force for this study, as well as the bridge between the Global South–North collaboration that runs as a red thread through this chapter. Both Sunniva and Tone as academics work with performative, critical and decolonising perspectives on tertiary arts education.

This research started when Sunniva returned to Norway from a longer period in Malawi in 2018, and contacted Tone for some assistance. Sunniva's research interest, that originated from her discussions with Asante and his dance troupe, was to explore how young people in Malawi are dealing with becoming local–global Malawians in-between traditional dance and a modern Malawian identity. She was interviewing Asante's dance group, *Afro-Fricana*, on the issue and needed a dance studies scholar to study some movements. As the dances that Sunniva had filmed were unfamiliar to Tone, she wanted to start with learning, thereby embodying, some of them. Sunniva contacted Asante and wondered if he could help; then, we set up a WhatsApp communication platform among the three of us, and from there, this practice-led and performative study started.

With no other clear preliminary intention than teaching Tone some of the Malawian dances, we soon ran into methodological struggles and challenges as a Global South–North research group working with and against colonial structures that we are all part of. While inquiring this, the three co-researchers needed to take a step back before proceeding to discuss how it was possible to take steps towards a more just, attentive and decolonising methodology. This side-step was needed as neither Malawi

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nor Norway has integrated decolonising perspectives in mainstream dance education; these perspectives are not present if we do not address them directly.

The aim of this chapter, or in the main project, was not initially, and still is not, to decolonise Malawian dance practice or education, as that has to be done as a Malawian Dance Education initiative, but we are happy if the discussions from this cross-cultural project can support any such initiatives. From this practice-led collaboration and (positive) struggle, slowly an analytical question was formulated by the three of us. 'Analytical question' is often used instead of 'research question' in post-qualitative and practice-led research, emphasising that the research question is not ready in advance (St. Pierre, 2014). Instead, an analytical research question is slowly created through exploring and experimenting in creative practice. We have formulated the analytical question that leads us through this chapter as:

> How can we approach a Malawian–Norwegian dance education research project methodologically in a just, attentive and decolonising way?

In the following sections, we describe the context of the main project, the theoretical perspectives and the methodological approach of this chapter, and analyse the practice-led exploration through performative inquiry.

Music Crossroads Malawi

In Area 23 in Lilongwe, Malawi, there is a cultural school: Music Crossroads Malawi. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday after school lets out, there is training for Hear Us Children (HUC), a traditional cultural dance troupe with children from 8–18 years of age. They train hard every week, learning to dance traditional Malawian dances and to sing and play traditional Malawian songs and music. They have acquired a knowledge that is rare these days for their generation: the knowledge of traditional cultural expressions. They have this competence and knowledge while they are, at the same time, living in an increasingly global world where local traditional expressions have been devalued for years. In the 1980s and 1990s, Radio 1 in Malawi, for example, played old songs and folk songs every day (Østern & Hovde, 2019). This does not happen much anymore, and traditional cultural expressions are rarely used, except for special occasions, particularly celebrations. Even though these songs and dances are important to people in their identity constructions as Malawians; at the same time, the dances and songs are labelled as old-fashioned, connected to village life and a lifestyle that is considered outdated, or *not modern*.

Modernity, as used here, refers to a lifestyle equivalent to the European or American lifestyle, music, dance and culture (Østern & Hovde, 2019), and should not be confused with the time epochs often called 'modern' in the Western arts tradition. As Mignolo and Walsh (2018) point out, the term is intertwined with colonialism. However, the term is used as a part of everyday language in Malawi, to describe a certain way of living. This does not mean it is not intertwined with colonialism; on contrary, we think it is clearly connected to both old and new forms of colonialism, but it also embeds the reality of lived hierarchies, locally and globally, in Malawi. The process, as we see it from a Malawian–Norwegian perspective, has not yet reached the point where this term is problematised in many educational situations. There are exceptions such as the Bachelor of Arts in African Musicology (2020) and Bachelor

of Arts in Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (2020) programmes at the Malawian University of Science and Technology, led by Dr Robert Chanunkha, and such resources are of great importance for our project with young Malawian traditional dancers.

This means that when we use the term 'modern', it emerges from our empirical material, and from an understanding that this is the reality as it is, even though it is painful to admit that it is a term that so clearly undermines much of the local Malawian cultural heritage. It is important to clarify that the term is not understood in our empirical material only as strictly colonising, but it is at times also connected to issues such as gender equality and other aspects of human rights that are welcomed. While there are significant reasons to problematise the term, the content and the consequences of the word 'modern', and even to avoid using it altogether, that elaboration will not happen in this chapter. We use this term here, as it is used in most places in Malawi, carrying either an admiration towards the West or towards other 'more successful' countries in Africa, thus positioning *modern* as something that has rejected *traditional*,[1] as painful as it is to the authors, for this important reason: if we would not use it in the way our local participants commonly use it in their daily lives, we would be covering up the challenges that we are facing and we would not face the reality as it is. It would mean not acknowledging the premises on which the term *modern* is mostly used. Becoming a modern Malawian (this is a very common term while talking about what kind of citizens we are), is explained as an attractive prospect for many young people, by the young Malawian dancers involved in this project. The dancers refer to being *modern* as having access to and using equity-strengthening value systems,[2] digital and electronic technologies, being interested in globally oriented—or at least pan-African oriented—cultural expressions and political ideas, rather than traditional perspectives. Malawi is one of the most rapidly urbanising countries in the world, and the difference is remarkable between living in a traditional village where you do not necessarily have direct access to water, good education, electronic technology or value systems that promote equity, and living in a Malawian city where life is not so different from city life anywhere else in the world. Urbanity is in large seen as the equivalent of 'modernity', and village life as equivalent to traditional ways of living.

Sunniva has been discussing the divergence between what *seems important* and what *has status* with fellow Malawian musicians for some time. It seems that one of the consequences of this divergence is that, while people in their everyday lives appreciate many of the traditional expressions, and traditional artwork might be very important to them, at the same time, traditional cultural expressions are considered old-fashioned, non-modern and 'hyper-Malawian'. As such, they are not expected to have much value, no matter if one as an individual appreciates them, because they point backwards to a less technological past, closer to farming and not technological every day, and not to the prosperity of a modern technological society. Asante, one of the first children to start in the HUC cultural troupe over 10 years ago, and a research participant, co-researcher and second author of this chapter, has played a crucial part in these discussions. Asante has started his own dance troupe, practicing and performing both traditional and modern dances. Modern dance, in this context, includes dances that do not originate from Malawi, including African dance practices connected to the commercial African music industry, the global music scene and also more local dance practices from other countries such as Brazil or Spain. This is not a strict definition, but a looser understanding of the term, amongst the young dancers

involved in the project. It is also relevant to mention that the term, as we use it, has nothing to do with 'modern dance' the way it is used in the context of dance traditions in Nordic or other Western dance education.

Previous Research

The analytical question we are investigating in this chapter is how we can approach a Malawian–Norwegian dance education research project methodologically in a just, attentive and decolonising way. The focus is methodological, and we are aiming at contributing to the decolonising of dance and dance educational research in Nordic dance education.

The challenge is to contribute to this field of knowledge particularly through Malawian knowledge, and in doing so, be careful not to reproduce existing unequal power relations. As Land (2015) mentions, it is important to consider who are entitled to act as allies. In the context of this project, both Malawian and Norwegian participants need allies to discuss these issues with. This is also why we are asking the question: Who is benefitting from this project? As Smith (2012, pp. 175–176) points out, in cross-cultural contexts, questions that need to be asked are ones such as:

> Who defined the research problem? For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so? What knowledge will the community gain from this study? What knowledge will the researcher gain from this study? What are some likely positive outcomes from this study? What are some likely negative outcomes?

When discussing these issues together, Asante points out that he believes that we all will benefit from conversations based on respect and equity, and that it is beneficial for everyone to get new ideas, particularly as there are not many people available, in the music and culture scene to discuss perspectives such as decolonising with. He also emphasises that we all need allies we can trust.

The four academic contributions that we are aware of about Malawian dance education that would be internationally accessible are the following: *Music Education in Malawi: The Crisis and the Way Forward* (2002) by Robert Chanunkha (Professor, Malawian University of Science and Technology); *The Dance of Politics: Gender, Performance, and Democratization in Malawi* (2011) by Lisa Gilman; *Dancing Prophets: Musical Experience in Tumbuka Healing* (1996) by Steven Friedson; and *The Traditional Concept uMunthu as Entangled in a Malawian Dance Teacher's Educational Practice* (2019) by Sunniva Hovde. Music and dance are strongly linked in Malawi, as in many other Southern African countries, and both are integral to music education, as Alinane Mildred Ligoya describes in *Music Education in Malawi: The Need for a Philosophy* (2011). The articles on Malawian dance are, in general, ethnographic studies describing the dances and the differences amongst them (Wroe, 2017; Soko, 2014; Banda, 2013; MacKay, 2013). Gilman and Fenn (2006) have also written an article on popular music, dance and gender, with a focus on gendered practices. In this chapter, however, the focus is methodological, and the context is a participatory study of dance education.

The ongoing project this methodological chapter originates from has followed the three young dancers—Asante, Nthoko and Prince, who were part of the HUC dance company in Malawi, and who now have their own dance group. They practice

traditional Malawian dance professionally, and they have, through HUC, performed on many different occasions, for example, for ministers, presidents and diplomats in Malawi. The dance company HUC has had a significant impact in strengthening the national identity of many people in the local communities. Yet, the dancers have experienced many situations where they have been confronted by the communities' struggle between acknowledging their traditional dance practice and the strive to identify as *modern* Malawians. The dancers themselves do not find this personally difficult, but they stress the surrounding communities' difficulties with the issue. As *modern* Malawians, and as *modern* dancers, they also practice many other dances, not only traditional ones. The Malawian *modern* dances and the Malawian traditional dances are different from one another, but the dancers fully embody both styles. In the research project, we—Asante, Tone and Sunniva—have sought to take part in the spaces in-between, where Nthoko, Asante and Prince seem to move.

The aim was, in the beginning of the project, to investigate a movement dimension, an identity dimension and a local–global identity dimension. We also addressed two essential questions: How do traditional and modern Malawian dances differ and benefit from each other on a movement level? How is this movement level entangled with identity becomings when viewed from a local–global perspective? In a later phase, after Tone got involved in the project, it became evident that we needed to discuss some methodological questions first; hence, we formed the analytical question that is presented in this chapter.

When Sunniva and Asante discuss the issues of modern–traditional–global identity–movement, Asante emphasises that the *modern* dances are not necessarily Malawian—rather, they are to be seen as African dances with Malawian variations. He then states that there are some *modern* Malawian dances that are particularly Malawian, but they are no longer popular and may not be seen as *modern* anymore either.

In our research, we seek to develop culturally responsive research methods. This is important because, as soon as we enter the project, the power dynamics amongst us—Sunniva, Asante and Tone—become tangible and necessary to deal with right from the start. There are material–discursive aspects related to us, such as Western–non-Western, older–younger, blackness–whiteness, academic–non-academic, high formal education–no formal education, that are involved and may establish colonial frames right from the beginning if we do not actively resist them. It might not be possible to totally avoid them—see, for example, the criticism presented by scholars such as Tuck and Yang (2012) and Smith (2012)—but these questions are nevertheless important for this project: Can we do this research differently, and can we act in a decolonial way? Are we capable of such an effort at all? A decolonising knowledge contribution might add something of value to the (methodological) research field, but also to the dance community and the research participants in Malawi.

The discussions between Asante and Sunniva about dance education and Asante's thoughts on this project have prompted other discussions within the dance group, and created other ways of seeing themselves as dancers, as well as reflecting on the educational perspectives of dance. The Malawian participants have, for example, discussed among themselves how traditional dance might be attractive globally, but not always locally. Even though this is not the aim of the main project, these discussions might contribute to processes whereby the group, or other dance groups as well, would start decolonising processes from within. This is something all three of us would highly applaud, as well as support if asked.

The project can also contribute to the Nordic dance education field (through Tone's teaching, workshops and projects) and on the Malawian dance field (through the discussions Asante is joining in on, and his dance experiences in this project). The arts scene in Malawi might benefit from this expanded knowledge. Moreover, Sunniva, being a part of this scene, contributes to discussions and workshops on democracy, feminism and decolonial work in this area regularly. She is also committed to bringing in the lessons and experiences from this chapter into projects on documentation of traditional dance/music/cultural heritage education initiated by the Malawian Film Association, involving the Malawian University of Science and Technology (MUST). As such, this chapter can directly benefit students at the MUST programmes on African musicology and Indigenous knowledge systems and practices.

The Co-Researchers and/or Research Participants in Collaborative Research

This project situates itself within the field of collaborative approaches to research. Savin-Baden and Major (2013, p. 258) explain how there has been, since the emergence of action research, 'an increasing interest in collaborative approaches to research'. Yet, while action research builds on 'the idea that research can lead to constructive change and even empowerment for individuals', there are also scholars who think that action research has 'not gone far enough in breaking down the barriers between research and between researcher and the researched' (p. 258).

The central idea of collaborative approaches is that legitimate knowledge is not only located with the privileged experts and their dominant knowledge. Instead, knowledge needs to be produced in collaboration with local expert knowledge and with the voices (and in this case, also with the bodies) of the knowers (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 258). At the heart of collaborative approaches, there is a strong emphasis on transformation, change, participation and voice (p. 272). There is a fine line between research participants and co-researchers in collaborative research projects, and often the same people find themselves in both roles. In this project, the three young dancers—Asante, Nthoko and Prince—take part as *research participants*. Asante has played an important role in outlining the dance content in this project, as he leads his own dance group. He is also actively taking part in the ongoing discussions amongst musicians situated in Lilongwe on the role and position of traditional music in Malawi. Nthoko and Prince are members of the same dance troupe as well, and they also have similar backgrounds having been involved in HUC. Asante's role in this methodologically oriented chapter is more active, as he has been engaged also in the analysis and writing stages. Asante, therefore, finds himself in the roles of both a research participant and co-researcher, and thereby also one of the co-authors of this chapter. His motivation for the project is to discuss issues that he encounters and experiences on a daily basis and that he is in touch with through his colleagues who consider these issues from a slightly different perspective, but still from the viewpoint of the arts.

Asante and Sunniva also cooperate with each other in other ways—they are music colleagues, play together from time to time in bands, have been engaged in the process of establishing a Centre for Traditional Arts together, and Asante is also teaching Sunniva how to play traditional drums. They continuously discuss music education and the situation of being part of the traditional music/dance scene in Malawi. Their

discussions are influencing their ways of thinking about teaching, learning and how they can strengthen decolonising perspectives as part of their educational approaches, as well as Asante strengthening the capabilities of his students and his dance crew in their navigation in becoming local–global Malawians in-between traditional dance and a modern Malawian identity. The literature addressing these issues is limited, and there are not many opportunities to discuss these issues with experienced Malawian artists, as many of them grew up in a different time and faced different challenges. Nevertheless, the aim is to strengthen the awareness of and competence in articulating these conflicting interests and challenges together.

Tone is a Finnish–Norwegian dance artist and academic from the field of dance with a background in contemporary dance (in the Western meaning of contemporary dance). She finds herself both in the role of a research participant and co-researcher. She takes part as a learner in trying to learn Asante's dances, and she also takes part as a co-researcher and co-author in analysing and writing. Sunniva is the bridge between Malawi and Norway, and in this project and chapter, she is a co-researcher, but not a research participant. In other words, in this context, she is not an active, dancing participant but remains in the role of a dialogue partner and researcher. When becoming colleagues, Sunniva and Tone discovered that they had mutual interests in the issue of decolonising arts education, Norwegian dance education as a normative practice and the local–global positioning of cultural expressions.

An ongoing discussion in Malawi amongst musicians and artists is how Malawi is still under colonial pressure, mentally, philosophically, culturally and economically. Sunniva is part of these discussions through being a musician in Malawi and connected to many musicians and artists through the cultural meeting point of Music Crossroads Malawi and HUC, and she has an extensive network in the music scene through her Malawian husband, who is also a musician. Her position as a local musician with a large network has presented many opportunities to discuss and explore how young people find themselves touching upon both postcolonial and neocolonial issues, in trying to preserve the traditional culture and navigate in the local–global, modern–traditional dynamics of a country undergoing great change and with a wide range of differences within.

Decolonial Theory

'Decolonial' in this context is connected particularly to dance education and the strengthening of multivocality around the identity position in a community as a 'Malawian traditional dancer'. Decolonising, as we use it here, refers to the process of emphasising local artistic and pedagogical understandings, practices and becomings, as many of these practices have been marginalised to the benefit of European and American perspectives. In the introduction of this book, decolonisation is suggested as an 'ongoing process' that is based on a critical view of the self that emerges from states of not knowing, hearing or seeing (Wa Thiong'o, 1986/1938). We believe that this definition is appropriate for our project, as we need to together investigate ourselves critically while openly acknowledging that there are so many things we do not know, but that we can try to learn from others. Some decolonial scholars question whether it is possible—and if so, to what extent—to deconstruct colonial powers through research alone (e.g. Tuck & Yang, 2012). Smith's (2012) concerns about the colonial power of academic writing should be taken seriously in this kind of a project,

and at the same time, knowledge produced in academic research should be made available for everyone interested in contributing to the field. We are aware of the risk of (re)producing colonial perspectives in academic knowledge production, and indeed, this is the main imperative for our critical reflections on dance education.

Our broader research project has originated from arts education and deals especially with dance practices and pedagogies. In this chapter, we focus on the question of how we can approach a Malawian–Norwegian dance education research project methodologically in a just, attentive and decolonising way. If decolonising is defined in terms of acknowledging and supporting local practices and knowledge and striving to amplify otherwise excluded voices that can contribute to the field, we believe that this project has some potential to do so. We also want to emphasise that the struggle against colonialism/neocolonialism is something we see as a collective task, particularly from a Malawian point of view, whereby systematised injustice generally is seen as a collective issue.

While many decolonial scholars, such as Tuck and Yang (2012), underline the importance of decolonising projects to benefit those defined as the colonised, the perspective in this project is somewhat different, as it rather aims to decolonise our own curricula and arts education. We attempt to find ways to work toward a more just and decolonising methodology for us all. In this context, it has been especially beneficial that Asante has often pointed out that he is critical of the typical victimisation perspective, which he considers damaging, as it ignores the agency and power of the victim of injustice. This means that someone else is in control and defining how things should be considered. Instead, working together for common aims requires partnership that is based on equity and mutual respect. In Asante's words: 'It is somehow easy: let's respect each other, be aware of background and power, but not in a way that is "protecting" me. If you do that, you diminish my actions, my thoughts or my choices. There is no need of that'. Seen in relation to Tuck and Yang (2012), we think this indicates how different actors in a collaborative project need to critically consider themselves, their history and their position in the society.

Mabingo (2015), a dance teacher and researcher from Uganda, states that even though some non-Western dances have been included in curricular and mission statements both in Africa and elsewhere, the format, the pedagogies and the teachers remain still within a Western frame. This can be considered a type of cultural appropriation, where the bearers of the practices and knowledge are not made visible, but the products, tokens and symbols of the practices and knowledge are used to benefit a majority culture. In Mabingo's example, the majority culture is a majoritarian global culture, a North American dance culture. *Majoritarian* and *minoritarian* are terms borrowed from Deleuze (2005/1987). While majority refers to the group with the highest representation of a certain entity, majoritarian, as a concept, is useful in this discussion as it refers to the normative power of a group or process regardless of whether they are in the majority or not. In Malawi, Malawians are in the majority, but the processes of settler colonisation, cultural colonisation and globalisation are still rendering Malawian practices minoritarian in the Malawian context.

Decolonising can also take the form of an act where terms and ways of thinking from non-majoritarian cultures are given space and power of definition. In this way, local embodied and non-articulated cultural concepts can be articulated and given visibility. Emielu (2018) provides an important way of looking at the dynamics between traditional and popular music in the African context that is considered an elastic and

continuously changing process, as Nettl (2005, as cited in Emielu, 2018) puts it. Nettl also writes that 'in the context of Africa, given its colonial heritage, there is a sense whereby Westernization connects with modernization' (p. 222), which corresponds with our experiences in Malawi. Everything Indigenous or Malawian is associated with traditionalism and non-modernisation.

The decolonial perspective can be used as a tool to see power structures at work, some of which can be hidden from us due to privilege and the naturalisation of long-term effects of colonialism and which can also gain new forms due to neocolonialism. Morgensen (2012, p. 805) emphasises that 'by exposing normative knowledge production as being not only non-indigenous but colonial, (we) denaturalize power within settler societies and ground knowledge production in decolonization'. Here, 'settler societies' refers to non-Indigenous societies in Canada, which is her research context. This is also what we try to do through our decolonial perspective: to expose different forces affecting the young Malawian dancers in the space in-between traditional dance and modern Malawian identity, as well as to challenge the colonial premises of Eurocentric knowledge production in the dance education field. We use the decolonial perspective methodologically to explore ways in which to contribute towards a more participatory, just and attentive knowledge production in/about traditional and modern Malawian dancing. This includes an attempt to describe the dynamics and becomings of the *modern/local/traditional/global* in the young Malawian dancers' lives with the terms and concepts that they themselves use. It also means that learning the dances takes place in a participatory way.

Performative Inquiry

Performative inquiry we understand as a methodological concept which seeks to articulate *how* to conduct performative research in practice. Fels (2015, p. 478) states that performative inquiry invites us to attend to what calls our attention and describes how the heart and pulse of performative inquiry are *stop moments*. Fels explains how they are moments that interrupt, disrupt, trouble, astonish and call for action: 'A stop moment invites us to interrupt our habits of engagement, to recognize absence within presence, to renew an opportunity of choice' (p. 478).

We have structured our methodological experiences so far in the project around what we have experienced as such stop moments. To each stop moment we give a name, which serves as a subtitle. Similar to Haseman (2006), by naming what we bodily experience as stop moments, we also *produce* these moments *as practice*. The stop moments are not necessarily there before we recognise and name them as stop moments with research value. The stop moments we travel through as we write this chapter are the following:

- the relations and local–global entanglements in the project;
- uMunthu participatory, performative inquiry as the research approach; and
- our bodily, performative encounter with the dances of Asante.

In the end, having moved through these three stop moments, we are able to discuss the capacity of the uMunthu participatory, performative inquiry to create movement throughout the research process. Performative inquiry, decolonial theory and uMunthu as a participatory way of doing things in this emerging research design seem

important elements in trying to transform colonial research practices and grounding the analysis in a more complex and contextual understanding. In this way, we seek to produce space for non-binary understandings and non-coherent practices. In the following, we describe how we have been able to move through, and with, the performative stop moments, creating them at the same time as they shape our understanding of an emerging methodological design.

Stop Moment 1—The Relations and Entanglements in the Project

Our first stop moment, our real methodological challenge/opportunity, is to manage to dwell in the relations that we identify or create as we move through the project. It is the relations themselves that are our interest, not the dichotomies or what is created through the relations. The relations in the project are entangled, never separated in the first place, and they are also discursively tensioned. For example, there is a discursive tension in the Malawi–Norway relation. There is another discursive tension amongst the Malawian dancer Asante, the Norwegian–Malawian ethnomusicologist Sunniva and the Finnish–Norwegian contemporary dancer Tone. These tensions have both productive and destructive potentials. Figure 4.1 visualises the project's discursively entangled relations.

We find these discursively tensioned entangled relations everywhere in the project, and they seem to fuel the project with its necessary energy at the same time as they present themselves as methodological challenges, as stop moments. In fact, they are

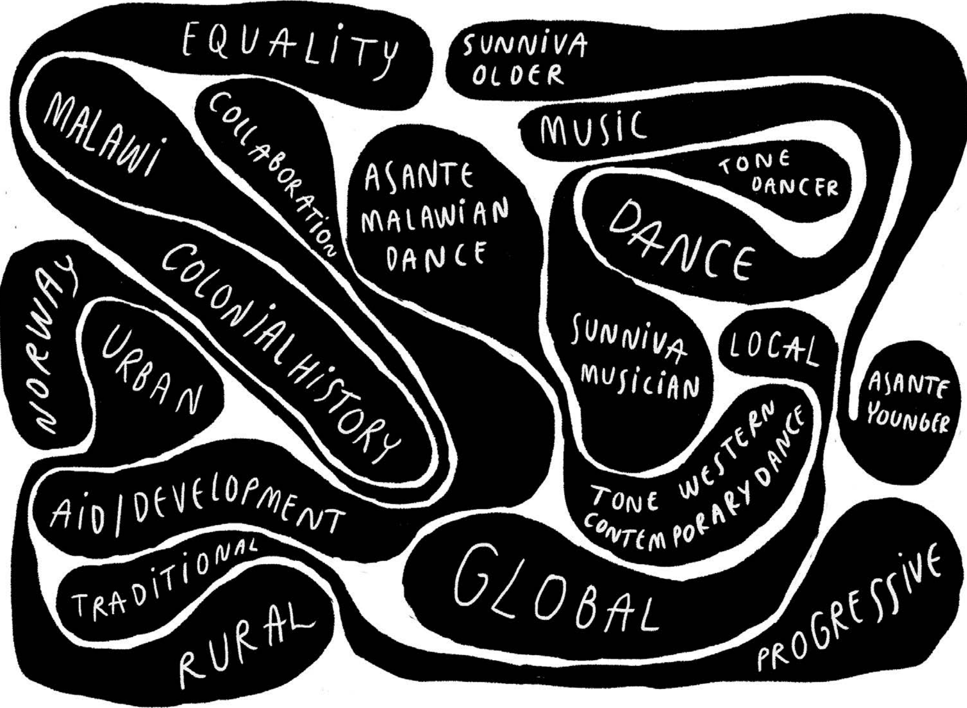

Figure 4.1 The tensioned, discursively entangled relations presenting themselves as methodological challenges and opportunities in the project.

Source: Design by Tintin Rosvik

simultaneously challenges as well as opportunities. Our methodological challenge is to not slip towards either side of the relations, but dwell in the middle of them. These relations are non-binaries; they are not in opposition to each other, but rather complementary powers working together and in different directions. Different directions are not necessarily in opposition to each other, and the term-couples are not to be seen as in opposition to each other; they are rather ways of relating to the dynamic between all the word-couples. Figure 4.1 should be read like a rhizome (Deleuze, 2005), where the terms communicate in an inter- and intra-textual way where they are relating to the dynamic in all the couples and in the response from the different dynamics. For example, *urban–rural* does not represent an opposition, as the terms are not binary or mutually exclusive.

Stop Moment 2—uMunthu Participatory, Performative Inquiry as Research Approach

The term uMunthu—defined as a participatory way of doing things—is central to the (traditional) culture of Malawi. Our encounter with uMunthu functions as a stop moment for us. One Malawian proverb goes like this: 'kali kokha nkanyama, tili awiri ntiwanthu', meaning that when you are on your own, you are as good as an animal of the wild; when there are two of you, you form a community. This refers to the concept of uMunthu, which is explained, amongst other things, as care for others in a community, humanity and the role you have as an individual in a community. You will always be part of a larger community, and it is the collective benefit of the community that is the focus. In sub-Saharan cultures, this concept is used nearly everywhere in slightly different versions, and it implies, in general, that situations should be solved for the greater good, hence the community. As Tambulasi and Mickson Kayuni (2012) point out, the 'ubuntu concept highlights humaneness, interconnectedness and concern for others'. uMunthu, also known as ubuntu in the more general pan-African context, is defined by a focus on humanity and kindness (Nafukho, 2006), interconnectedness as in a social fabric (Tambulasi & Mickson Kayuni, 2012), supportiveness and cooperation (Koster as cited in Tambulasi & Mickson Kayuni, 2012) and a capacity for including values like compassion, dignity and mutual caring in a society (Tomaselli, 2009). These aspects highlight the importance of *participation* as a traditional value in Malawian communities, as one must participate to be part of the community. Traditional dance teacher John Duma also emphasises the concept *love* as central in dance education, as part of uMunthu, as well as in recognising one's place in a bigger community (Hovde, 2019). The values of uMunthu are applied in the collaborative, participatory research we have practised in this project, as it is the participation and the communal contribution that is emphasised, not the individual result. At the same time, emphasising participation of and for the collective implies that there could also be another way to do it; that is, without participation and a collective focus, which is confusing in a Malawian context due to the strong emphasis on collective participation. However, it must be noted that even this perspective is slowly changing because of what is perceived as the modern way of living, influenced by a turn towards individual focus, is becoming a token of someone being non-traditional, more educated and more directed towards 'globalised' knowledge instead of local knowledge.

Another cultural practice in Malawi that can be considered a part of uMunthu participatory element is the everyday emphasis on the autonomy of a person's perception of something. In everyday situations, it is often accepted that people have an

understanding about something without making an explicit argument, just stating how they feel about the issue. On the one hand, this can be regarded as a part of a non-confrontational Malawian culture, but it also gives people a voice through their affective and embodied responses to different issues, without demanding a verbalised reason for it. People who are not familiar with the local culture might interpret such communication in a different way, which might also have implications for the collaboration; for example, between Asante and Tone when they communicate about the ways in which the dances should be performed.

Performance theory, and performative approaches in research, are concepts where we all three intuitively feel at home, as artists. Performance theory and performativity are not the same, but they are related, and as we understand them, performance theory concerns itself with live sociality while our *performative approach* comes from an interest in what is done (not represented), and to the ever-changing dynamics of what is live and social. Performance theory has developed throughout the twentieth century, with a focus on the live, processual and immediate, in opposition to much art theory which focuses more on the art product as an object. Performance theoretician Richard Schechner emphasises the following qualities of the performative:

1) that it is live or immediate;
2) that this immediacy has a transformative character and that something is at stake for those involved; and
3) that the space or situation where the performative immediacy takes place is given particular attention.

(Schechner, 2003; see also Christensen-Scheel, 2009, p. 85)

Christensen-Scheel (2009, p. 87) states that the performative can perhaps most importantly be understood as a *research attitude* which seeks to relate to the ever-changing, undecided and dynamic quality of what is live and social. Bolt (2016) understands the performative in terms of the performative *force* of art, which she explains as the capacity of art to effect movement in thought, word and deed (p. 130). She points out that J. L. Austin was the first to introduce the term 'performativity' in a lecture series at Harvard in 1955 (p. 133). His argument was that performative utterances do not *represent* anything in the world. Instead, they *do* things in the world in specific contexts. As an example, Austin used the words 'I do' from the wedding ceremony, an utterance producing a marriage in the world. Further, Bolt explains how the performative produces real effects, actuals, in the world. The performative act thus has a transformative power; as Fischer-Lichte (2008) notes, something is at stake. Further, Bolt emphasises that performativity emerges through iterative practice. It is about repetition with difference, never repetition of the same. Performative research, thus, is never replicable.

In line with Bolt (2016), we see our task as researchers with a performative approach to map the movement our research journey produces (p. 141). This can be movement in concepts, understandings, methodologies or sensorial experiences as we move along (p. 141). Central concepts describing what aspects or qualities we are turned towards through an uMunthu participatory, performative approach in this research have been especially inspired by Nafukho (2006), Tambulasi and Mickson Kayuni (2012), Tomaselli (2009), Christensen-Scheel (2009), Bolt (2016) and Fels (2015), and we thus formulate these as the following: *community*, *kindness and humanity*, *interconnectedness and concern for others*, *live sociality*, *social responsibility*, *affected and bodily ways of knowing and understanding*, *what is processual*, *the immediate*,

transformation, *actuals*, *something at stake*, *space and situations*, *ever-changing movement*, *repetition with difference*, *interruptions*, *ruptures*, *action* and *astonishment*. These are the aspects or qualities that we are oriented towards as researchers with an uMunthu participatory, performative approach in our project.

Stop Moment 3—Our Bodily, Performative Encounter With the Dances of Asante

The third and final stop moment is based on the experience of Tone and written by her in the first person.

I had the first real working day with Sunniva in this project about Malawian–Norwegian dance entanglements on one day, after she had returned from a longer period in Malawi. She had brought many videos of Asante, Nthoko, Prince and their friends dancing. I watched clip after clip on Sunniva's computer, and I related to the different dances to various degrees. I had not really studied Malawian dance in particular before, but it was still possible for me to connect to the dances through my own bodily experiences of different dances from around the world. As I sat there, I felt slightly estranged, and realised that my only possible way into this project was through the bodily experience of dancing and relating to it myself. However, trying to study the dances using the films seemed somehow disconnected: unaffected, not performative or participatory. Watching the dances did not make me sweat with the dances, struggle with them, enjoy them. It also did not put me at any risk, thereby keeping me slightly on the outside of a performative approach, slightly not-in-touch with Asante and his co-dancers. *Watching* dance is safe, distant, whereas *bodily participating* in learning a dance, and particularly in unknown and unfamiliar dances, presents a risk. I might not succeed in learning Asante's dances.

Bringing with me the uMunthu participatory performative approaches already explored, I knew I needed to engage bodily in the dances, at the same time putting myself at risk in some kind of a relation, creating a space where something would be at stake for me. I needed to try to engage with a community to which I obviously was on the outside. I knew that simply learning the dances from the video clips would not be enough. I needed to stay in *live*, *immediate*, *bodily* and *affected* contact with Asante (as the leader of the group). I sent him a Facebook invitation, but it took a long time before he answered. Therefore, Sunniva suggested a shared WhatsApp group instead (Figure 4.2), as Asante at that time was not very active on Facebook. Suddenly, we were in touch, *interconnected*.

Then, another kind of *space* and *situation* turned up. I was invited to present some of my work as a dance researcher at a Dance in Education conference in northern Sweden.[3] A new place, new people, new possible networks. Very *live*, very *social*. I accepted, knowing I wanted to present this project before it was even designed into a research project: in its very beginning, with me, Sunniva and Asante not having very much more than a very fresh relation at that time. In my presentation, I wanted to explore what performative inquiry in connection to dance research can be, thinking about the workshop as *processual*. It would be an *actual*, creating a *rupture* between this new project and my previous work as a dancer and dance researcher (coming from the Western contemporary dance field, here meaning the dance genre). I presented my workshop like this to the organisers:

> In this participatory development through an art and performative research workshop, I seek to take the participants with me into arts-based research projects with

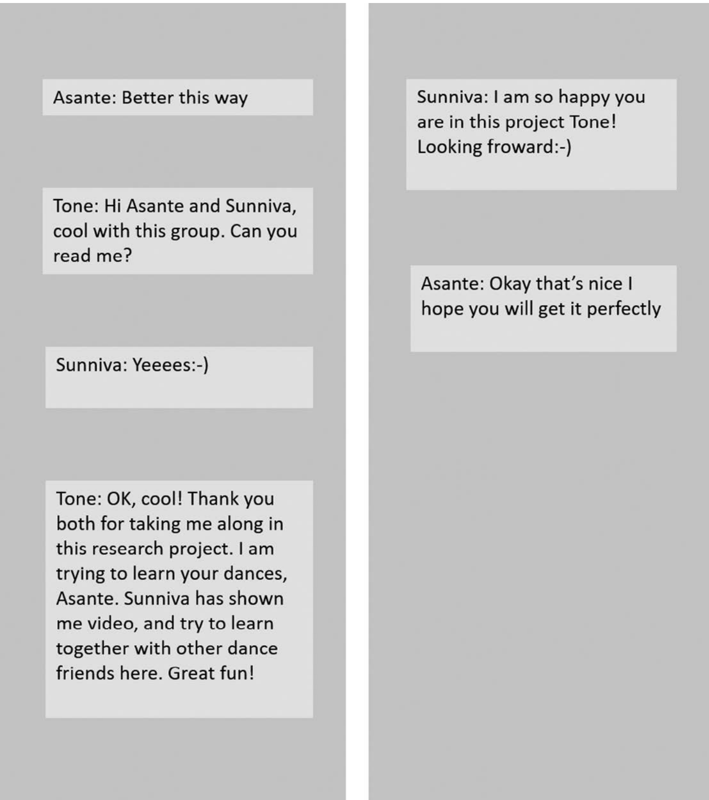

Figure 4.2 A Malawian–Norwegian WhatsApp group was formed (Spring 2018), connecting Asante, Tone and Sunniva.

> which I am involved. In the project, I am, as a third researcher and author, travelling into a dance area completely unknown to me—the traditional dance form danced by the company HuC in Malawi. The participatory turn in many fields, also arts-based research, emphasises the role of communities in determining their own development priorities and creating solutions addressing their needs. What does a participatory and performative turn mean for the dance-in-school research field? During this short workshop, I will seek to address that question together with the participants.

Later, we gave up the 'participatory development' term, recognising it as a concept that can be considered colonising, and instead turned to the uMunthu participatory way, emphasising community, interconnectedness and bodily ways of knowing and understanding.

The 45-minute-long workshop was designed around several proposals or invitations that I had printed out on papers, which I spread out upside down on the floor (Figure 4.3).

I explained to the participants (around 20 dance teachers and dance researchers from around the Nordic countries) that this was part of my performative inquiry and

Traditional Malawian dance /
HEAR US CHILDREN

• How young people in Malawi are becoming local-global Malawians in
the in-between traditional dance and a modern Malawian identity.
• How is the movement level in the dance entangled with identity
becomings in a local-global perspective?

Manifesto for performative research
Brad Haseman (2006)
Practice takes the lead.
All practices are situated in a specific context - why is this interesting also outside the context.
Imply questions regarding ethical issues, sustainability and a wish to contribute to make the world better: the question is not what dance *is*, but what dance can *do*.
Becoming local-global Malawians in the in-between traditional
dance and a modern Malawian identity

Performative inquiry
Lynn Fels (2015)
• Performative inquiry invites us to attend to what calls us to attention
• The heart and pulse of performative inquiry are *stop moments*

Sunniva Hovde
HEAR US CHILDREN – Music Crossroads Malawi
Asante Smzy Maulidi
Tone Pernille Østern
• How can we investigate and learn together?
• What problems will we have?
• What possibilities do we have?

Asante's dances
• A way of getting to know one another through the dance, feeling the dance in the body
• I send greetings to Asante through dancing the dances with groups in my local context, film them and send them back to him

Participatory and socially engaged art as research
Pablo Helguera (2011)
• Meaningful interaction or social engagement
• Dependence on social intercourse, away from the autonomous, individual artist
• Deskilling, unlearning and learning anew
• About transpedagogy, where the pedagogical process is the core of the artwork
• Seeking to go from nominal – directed – creative participation toward collaborative participation
• From lecture towards conversation

Figure 4.3 The workshop was designed through a different proposal on papers turned upside down, inviting a participatory, performative route through the workshop.

that we would move through the workshop in the order in which the paper proposals were opened and revealed by the participants. I then asked one of the participants to choose one paper, turn it over and read it out loud. We would then act according to the proposal written on the paper. In this way, the structure of the workshop was not decided by me beforehand (thereby, also challenging typical teacher-led teaching pedagogies). I needed to stay ready to have a more theoretical entrance to the activities, if one of the more theoretical proposals was turned over first: a more contextual one, or a more practical entrance into the workshop. One of the paper proposals was a QR code.[4]

When this QR code paper proposal was turned around, the workshop participants were asked to take their mobile phones, scan the code and use ten minutes trying to learn the dance by themselves (Figure 4.4). The participating dance teachers did this with great joy, and soon the workshop space was buzzing with activity, with dance teachers trying to learn the dance from their mobile phones. Music was heard from the different devices, playing out loud in unsynchronised ways. I thereby removed myself completely from the established instructive dance teacher position, and instead the space was filled with *ever-changing movement*, *interruptions* (especially musical ones, the music playing at different spots of the dance from the different devices at the same time), *action* and *astonishment* as the dance teachers were trying to engage with the video clip on their mobile phones.

The dance teachers learned different parts of the dance—some learned a long part, some a short one—and they materialised the dance they saw in different and personal ways. The time was limited, so there was no point in striving for perfection, which was something I emphasised as part of the performative approach. After ten minutes, I asked if we could film ourselves doing the dance together, and send the link back to Asante. The dance teachers happily agreed and commented that it became real, actual in a way, since we were sending the film clip back to Asante and his friends. The result, which we sent to Asante, can be seen with a QR code (Figure 4.5).

I had a happy and live feeling having finished the workshop. Somehow, we had created a little sense of community across Malawi and northern Sweden, even if for

Figure 4.4 QR code taking the scanner to the Malawian–Brazilian dance that I had chosen out of Sunniva's video clips for this occasion.

Note: To access the film, use the password: sunniva_malawi_2018

Figure 4.5 QR code taking the scanner to dancing in Sweden.

Note: To access the film, use the password: tone_sweden_2018

only a short moment. The 45 minutes had been real, actual, and I was highly present the whole time, walking out of the workshop space slightly transformed. When the workshop was finished, I left northern Sweden and posted the link on WhatsApp. This dialogue amongst Asante, myself and Sunniva then followed (Figure 4.6).

This stop moment, formulated as *our bodily, performative encounter with the dances of Asante*, was what really brought me into the project. From that moment on, I lived the project, lived with it, experienced transformation with it. Asante and I had formed a live relation, a relation we considered just and equal (as far as that is possible). Until then, I was mainly a participant in a learning process in this project, seeking to relate to Asante's dances. In this learning process, I have at the same time been investigating what an uMunthu performative inquiry approach in dance research means, actively exploring the research qualities that we had earlier defined together.

Because of this inquiry, I was left with the thought that maybe it enabled taking some preliminary steps towards more *just* dance research—attentive and possibly also contributing to decolonising of dance education. I was investigating a form of dance that I knew very little about, and from a long distance. The sensed feeling between me and Asante was that he was the expert and I was the novice. Also, all the Swedish dance teachers that I was exploring Asante's dances with were novices in this particular context. In this situation, we were the learners. The Northern–Southern hemisphere and Norwegian–Scandinavian–Malawian power imbalance was challenged in this micro situation. I felt that we managed to avoid entering into the more binary roles. These are the dichotomies that have been present historically, socially and geographically, in the understanding of relationships involving a global North–South dynamic. We must be aware of them if we are ever to transform them.

Discussion: uMunthu Participatory, Performative Inquiry as a Research Approach

At this point, having framed our emerging research design theoretically with decolonial theory and methodologically with participatory, performative inquiry as well as

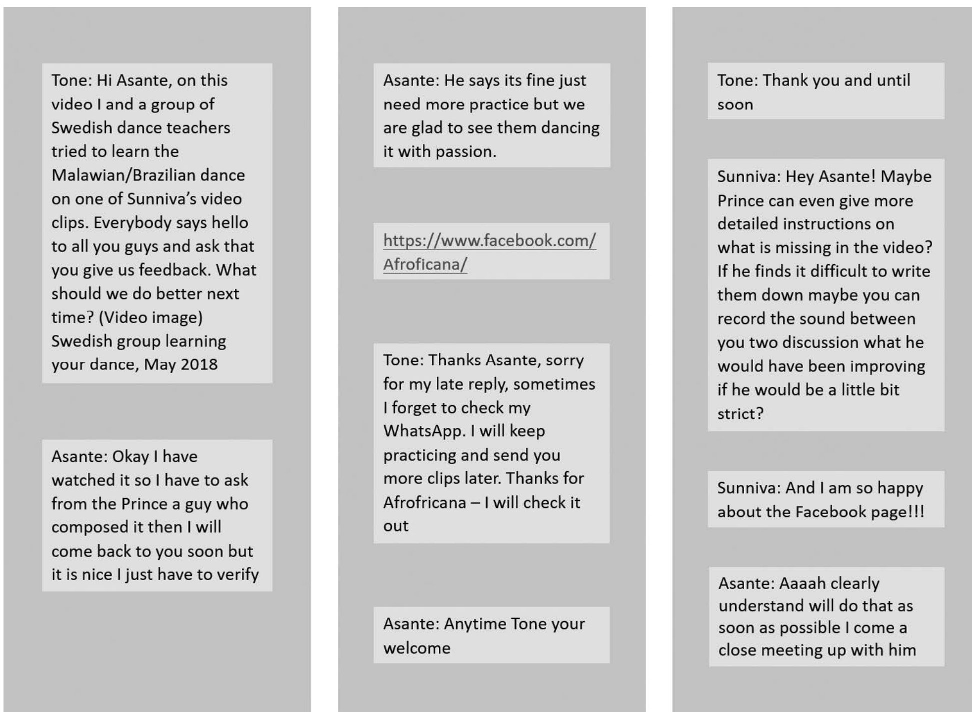

Figure 4.6 WhatsApp dialogue amongst Asante, Tone and Sunniva after the participatory, performative inquiry workshop organised in northern Sweden.

describing and analysing our experienced stop moments, we return to the analytical question we set out to answer:

> How can we approach a Malawian–Norwegian dance education research project methodologically in a just, attentive and decolonising way?

We know that as we create a Western–African relationship, we must address the heavy burden of colonialism, which requires an active effort to ensure, as much as we possibly can, that colonial practices are not reactivated. As we approach the end of this first phase of the larger research project, we are left with a (bodily, affected) feeling that we have managed to take at least one methodological step in the right direction. The performative journey has involved a growing understanding of how we create dancing together and how we can work towards establishing that decolonial space where the entanglements between dance movements and various identity becomings/movements can co-exist, a source of tension and traces of controversy (Hovde, 2012), functioning like stop moments.

The performativity in the process has helped us address the asymmetrical power structure in the sense that we have focused less on the hierarchies of aesthetics: good or not so good dancing. We emphasise the learning of a dance, a learning process and a discussion more than we look to definitions of 'quality'. We produce

live sociality where we attempt to dwell in the middle of the identified, discursively entangled relations displayed in Figure 4.1. Decolonial theory has helped and reminded us not to fall, at least consciously, into the trap of exercising majoritarian power. Decolonial theory has also worked as an important tool to see power structures at work, structures that are often hidden behind structures of privilege and the long-term effects of colonialism. In this way, and through the performative inquiry approach, we have aimed at destabilising those structures of privilege in the context of our project.

What was needed in addition to take the methodological approach one step further, however, was to establish a participatory approach as well—not just any participatory approach, but an uMunthu participatory approach. There is a real danger of constructing a harmful dichotomy between those 'helping' and those 'in need of help' as we addressed earlier through Asante's questions on victimisation. We actively tried to avoid entering those roles and imposing Western ideas about dance or identity construction—instead, we tried to create a platform for equal investigation of these issues. We are interested—all three of us—in investigating what role dance and dancing play for Asante and his dance group in exploring and balancing their position in-between traditional dance and a modern Malawian identity (for definition of the terms, see the 'Music Crossroads Malawi' section of this chapter).

In our project, uMunthu has worked as a participatory frame, derived from a Malawian understanding of participation, interaction and communication. With the help of uMunthu—and the way we understand it through Asante's understanding of the concept, through traditional dance teachers (Hovde, 2019), as well as through decolonial theory and Sunniva's ongoing inquiries and discussions in Malawi—we believe that we have been able to add some important research qualities to the performative list we described previously. In the following, we mark the uMunthu participatory qualities with bold font: ***community***, ***kindness and humaneness***, ***interconnectedness and concern for others***, *live sociality,* ***social responsibility***, ***affected and bodily ways of knowing and understanding***, *what is processual*, *the immediate*, *transformation*, *actuals*, *something at stake*, *space and situations*, *ever-changing movement*, *repetition with difference*, *interruptions*, *ruptures*, *action and astonishment*.

The uMunthu participatory approach has enabled us to take some steps towards a decolonising practice in the field of dance education; approach this dance education research project in a more just, attentive and decolonising way; and understand how at the same time we move together entangled in those practices in a way that is affected and bodily. The relationships within the project are, in different ways and in different relations, struggling to challenge colonial perspectives and other asymmetrical tensions. We have been avoiding established research paths and producing new ones through participating in an uMunthu participatory, performative process, and we have tried to do it in as just, attentive and decolonising a way as possible (see Figure 4.1). With our lived lives as artists/researchers, travellers and locals, we are using the performative inquiry to engage in each other's lives through dancing, dancing—understanding and dancing—learning/teaching.

The participatory elements in uMunthu have revealed the need to use our expertise and talents for the benefit of something larger—the community/group: in this case, researchers, dancers and Norwegian–Malawian colleagues, and the dance education field in both countries. Moreover, uMunthu can imply using our abilities as dancers (Tone) to learn someone else's dance, based on other systems of movement, in order

to investigate the tensions and joys experienced on a bodily level, even though her own dance training comes from a dominating and colonising educational structure in a global perspective. To become a learner in a more shared and performative way can include refusing/declining established truths about aesthetics and carefully resisting socialised training to deconstruct such dominant truths. This kind of an approach can potentially redistribute power to some extent, and lead to a more equal partnership. The uMunthu participatory way can also imply using one's research abilities as a scholar to study, describe and discuss, in dialogue and participation with other participators, colonial structures that come to the surface through the performative inquiry in learning to dance.

This uMunthu participatory, performative journey on which we perform/learn/understand physically/emotionally/cognitively while discussing, dancing, presenting and performing has also created movements. It has put into motion movements of thoughts, bodies and perceptions about dance and identity, and dance concepts. The way of living dually, for Sunniva, in both Malawi and Norway, creates a movement towards a more in-between feeling, instead of dual living. She lives in both places at the same time. The repetitions and the variations in the learning processes, particularly for Tone and Sunniva, are not linear but cross-cultural and complex. Asante has, as a result of the research project, expressed through discussions a feeling of becoming more sensitive to, and aware of, the resistance from society against traditional arts, in the way described previously as a tension between traditional–modern–global–local structures. This is something he is in touch with in his everyday life.

There has been movement towards a knowledge production of decolonial awareness as well, in the group of dancers who have started, for example, to correct Sunniva's understanding, telling her: 'Now you see it like a Norwegian, it doesn't make sense', or giving positive feedback when they believe that she understands it as a 'true Malawian'. Throughout the discussions, the participants have gradually gained confidence to be more direct and assertive while pointing out their own points of expertise.

Our research project is still ongoing, and there is yet much more to learn and explore. For now, we conclude that through this performative inquiry research journey, where using an uMunthu participatory approach has been crucial, we have managed to take some small, preliminary steps towards more *just* dance research that consciously seeks to be attentive and decolonising.

Notes

1. We would like to point out that this view is not in contradiction with our visualisation in Figure 4.1, where we describe the word-couples as non-binary. They are powers working in different directions and with different aims, which does not mean they would be entirely in opposition to each other. There are also distinctions between stereotypical positions, such as the ones we refer to in this particular phrase, and the experienced discursive tensions in-between *modern* and *traditional*, visualised in Figure 4.1. It should be also noted that there are also ways of understanding the term *modern* in Malawi that do not reject *traditional*, challenging the mainstream understanding of the word in Malawi, but that is an inquiry for another article and will not be discussed here.
2. Equity here refers to areas such as gender, age, finances, education and tribe.
3. www.dansiskolan.se/se/p%C3%A5-g%C3%A5ng/biennal-2018-37371602
4. The use of QR codes in performative workshops is inspired by Kristian Nødtvedt Knudsen's (2017) PhD project.

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5 Participatory Photography With Women's Rights Activists in Nepal

Towards a Practice of Decolonial Feminist Solidarity?

Tiina Seppälä

Introduction

In this chapter, I analyse a small-scale experiment in participatory photography co-organised in Kathmandu with women activists from two organisations, a landless women's network organisation, Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (NMES), and the Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC). The workshops took place in May–July 2014, with the activists utilising disposable cameras in photographing their activism and daily lives, followed by reflective group discussions.

The questions I seek to answer are: How can participatory photography be used in the research design phase, and can it contribute something to the efforts to decolonise participatory research—that is, to enable a more horizontal approach to co-production of knowledge in (the later phases of) research? What kinds of potential and benefits emerge when focusing mainly on the reflective discussions around the photos (instead of the photos themselves or their dissemination)? What kinds of problems and challenges might this involve? The perspective through which I approach these questions is that of decolonial feminist solidarity, while also drawing on discussion about prefigurative epistemologies and methodological debates related to the use of photovoice in participatory action research. This combination establishes the basis for my attempt to reflect on the aims, process, outcomes, opportunities and challenges of the chosen approach.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. In the following section, I first describe the background and context of the experimental project. Then, I introduce the theoretical-methodological basis of the chapter, after which I move on to describing the process, focusing on the discussions in the reflective workshops. In the concluding section, I summarise the main findings and end with a discussion on the learnings of the project, its benefits and challenges.

The Context

I became acquainted with the organisations involved in this project, NMES and WOREC, during my first fieldwork period in Nepal in 2012 when doing research on slum evictions and forced displacement in the 'Governing Life Globally: The Biopolitics of Development' research project, funded by the Academy of Finland. Many activists in both organisations were involved in movements defending the rights of

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local slum communities. In Kathmandu alone, over 50 slum communities are under constant threat of forced eviction due to urban development projects connected with the rapidly rising value of land in the city, as well as industrial and environmental projects taking place in the Kathmandu valley. The activists work together also on women's rights-related issues and campaigns.

NMES is a non-profit network organisation established in 1998 by landless women, working for the rights of women living in slums and informal settlements in 40 districts throughout Nepal. Since its inception, it has relentlessly worked to combat discrimination against landless and displaced women and women without citizenship and advocated for their rights, especially housing, shelter and land rights. NMES envisions a prosperous—economically equitable, culturally plural, socially equal and inclusive—society. It defines collective effort, empowerment, inclusion and accountability as its key values. In practical terms, it seeks to mobilise landless women living in different parts of the country, make them aware of their rights, develop their capacity for a dignified life in the society and work against forceful evictions and for the elimination of gendered domestic violence in a patriarchal society. Over the years, NMES has done remarkable and successful work in each of these areas and contributed towards a more equitable, multicultural and inclusive society in various ways.

WOREC is another movement-based organisation working for women's rights—an endeavour it considers a prerequisite for peace, social justice and sustainable development. Established in 1991, WOREC has worked for three decades to prevent violence against women and its causes and consequences, and to ensure the economic, sociocultural wellbeing of women and other marginalised groups by promoting their access to rights and social justice. Originally, it was founded to rehabilitate female trafficking survivors in Nepal, but its mission has broadened over the years. In addition to gender-based and domestic violence, WOREC focuses on issues such as women's health, sustainable livelihoods and the right to mobility and decent work. It works with a broad range of community-based women's groups and provides them with support in multiple forms. It has engaged in many campaigns, such as Violence Against Women (VAW), in partnership with local, national and international partners.

WOREC and NMES also collaborate with each other. For example, they have been co-organising protests such as the Monday *dharna* (Nepali word for protest) for years. Moreover, they both engage in the National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders (NAWHRD), which is, with over 5,000 members, a broad network alliance working to advance human rights.

During my first visit in 2012, I stayed in Nepal for three months, getting acquainted with the activists, conducting fieldwork and visiting slums and programmes run by NMES and WOREC. NMES Project Coordinator Bhagavati Adhikari played a key role in my fieldwork, helping me organise practically everything. We kept contact through Messenger/Facebook, and prior to my second visit, we discussed how to continue our collaboration in practical terms, planning together activities for my upcoming fieldwork period.

During the second fieldwork period in 2014, our collaboration was part of my research project 'Governance, Resistance and Neoliberal Development: Struggles against Development-Induced Displacement and Forced Evictions in South Asia' (Academy of Finland, 2013–2016). It studied the dynamics between governance, resistance and neoliberal development, focusing on struggles against development-induced forced displacement in three neighbouring countries: Nepal, Bangladesh and India.

I had two months for my fieldwork in Nepal, and when discussing with the activists, it became clear that the most suitable forms of research–activism collaboration from their perspective would include different forms of participation in events and campaigns, as well as joint projects planned and implemented together. I felt it was very important for us to discuss these issues in detail in advance, not only because of the underlying research ethics, but also because I needed to take seriously the lessons that I had learned during the first project. It really had changed a lot for me, as I had started to realise the blatant Eurocentrism and deep power imbalances and complexities of ethnographic research. The learning process already started when doing research in India (2011–2012). I have reflected on this process of unlearning and relearning in my previous works (e.g. Seppälä, 2016, 2017; see also Khanam & Seppälä, 2020), and will not go into detail here. Yet, it is important to underline that due to these experiences and various challenges, mistakes and failures, it was necessary to develop a different kind of approach. This is how the participatory photography idea originally emerged, first when discussing with the NMES activists, then together contacting others to see whether there would be interest in developing the idea further and experimenting with it in practice.

Decolonial Feminist Solidarity

When working in solidarity with feminist activists in different life-worlds and with different life experiences, it is important not to negate or try to transcend this diversity (Mohanty, 2003; Lugones, 2010). For decades, feminists of colour have written about the discursive colonisation of lives and struggles of women of the Global South, pointing out that mainstream feminism is a Eurocentric, highly theoretical and elitist philosophy that serves 'the narrow self-interest of Western feminism' (Mohanty, 2003, pp. 222–223), reflecting white, bourgeois and liberal frames of feminism while not taking sufficiently into account questions of race and class. While Mohanty and other post/decolonial feminists have critiqued Eurocentric and falsely universalising methodologies in feminist cross-cultural scholarship, a similar critique has been voiced by Black, queer and working-class feminists who have criticised mainstream feminism for silencing and ignoring their voices, experiences and strategies (Motta et al., 2011; see also Collins, 2000; Frankenberg, 1993; Motta, 2013). An important source of criticism is that considerable sections of the feminist movement in/outside academia have become institutionalised and are 'easily assimilated within the logic of late capitalism' (Mohanty, 2003, p. 244), which raises questions of how well they can understand and support struggles against neoliberalism by less privileged women (Motta et al., 2011, p. 1; Mohanty, 2003, pp. 248–250). Moreover, the high level of abstraction in feminist theorising has been denoted as a problem, as the deconstruction of the subject of 'woman' has resulted in academic research detaching itself from women's actual struggles, depriving 'feminist politics of the categorical basis for its own normative claims' (Motta et al., 2011, pp. 11–12; see also Mohanty, 2003, p. 6; cf. Butler, 1990; Haraway, 1985).[1]

This is why post/decolonial feminists stress the importance of centralising the experiences and struggles of marginalised women whose histories have previously been considered 'deviant, marginal, or inessential to the acquisition of knowledge' (Mohanty, 2003, pp. 200, 231–236). This means bringing forward voices that are 'excluded and delegitimized by the universalizing and violent power dynamics of

patriarchal colonial capitalism' (Motta, 2013, p. 37) in a way that does not disregard contextual differences, produce women as 'a singular, monolithic subject' (Mohanty, 2003, p. 51) or overlook their agency and experience (Motta, 2013, p. 37; see also Spivak, 1988).

Applying this approach in the context of women's movements means that the realities, views and concerns of marginalised women must be taken seriously to learn and 'engage in solidarity with the complexity of feminized political subjectivities being formed and the contradictions and tensions in this process' (Motta, 2013, p. 49; 2018; see also Motta & Seppälä, 2016). I have built on this perspective, trying to develop further the concept of Mohanty's 'feminist solidarity' (2003), and what I have referred to as decolonial feminist solidarity (Seppälä, 2016), which, as an approach, has much in common with intersectionality in stressing the importance of recognising different sociocultural categories and their interactions on multiple and often simultaneous levels (e.g. Collins, 2000), and also with the idea of 'border thinking' by Anzaldúa (1987) and Mignolo (2000), developed further by Lugones (2010) in her 'feminist border thinking'. All of these can be thought of as methodologies privileging 'those on the margins . . . without reifying or homogenizing their positionalities and struggles' (Motta, 2013, p. 50). As Motta eloquently puts it, in seeking 'to break down conceptual and theoretical categories of knowledge by speaking from the epistemological margins of modernity', these methodologies encourage a 'dialogue between different places and experiences on the margins' through which it becomes possible 'to further, in solidarity, our struggles' and to bridge 'our experiences, struggles, theories, and lives, transgressing the borders of capitalist coloniality that seek to divide us' (p. 37).

Building on the ethico-political approach of decolonial feminist solidarity in my own work has also necessitated methodological rethinking. Here, I draw on Motta's article (2011) on prefigurative epistemologies,[2] where she urges researchers to unlearn their academic privileges—to relinquish part of what we have been taught about our roles as social scientists in Western academia to widen our understanding of movement-relevant research, learn from the practices of movements and transform our practices. The presumption that the researcher has 'the epistemic privilege of producing theoretical knowledge' needs to be challenged, as it fails to recognise that movements also create theoretical knowledge (Motta & Nilsen, 2011, pp. 21–22). According to Motta (2011), theory is not produced individually but collectively, 'via reflection, within political struggle, based upon the lived experiences and struggles' of those who have been excluded or marginalised, and consequently, research that is done 'in solidarity with such struggles for social justice' (p. 194) must build on 'a horizontal relationship of mutual "learning" in which abstraction is based upon closeness as opposed to distance from lived experience and in which epistemology becomes a prefigurative practice of everyday life' (p. 196). Engaging in participatory photography with the activists was one way to explore and experiment with this perspective in practice and to step away from the conventional role of a researcher in the way described.

Participatory Photography

Participatory photography and different forms of photovoice (also known as photo novella) have been used for decades in participatory and community-based research. As a research method, it was first introduced by Wang and Burris (1994) in an effort to 'promote a process of women's participation that would be analytical, proactive, and

empowering' (p. 179). Photovoice is based on the idea that images and words together can effectively express community and individual needs, problems and desires, and broaden the participants' perspectives, which makes it an effective tool for self-development, creating awareness and doing advocacy (Nykiforuk et al., 2011; Wang & Burris, 1994, 1997). It is closely connected to the premises of participatory action research, which is 'grounded in lived experience, developed in partnership, addresses significant problems, works with (rather than simply studies) people, develops new ways of seeing/interpreting the world' (Bradbury-Huang & Reason, 2003, p. 156).

While some scholars question photovoice as a research method, claiming that photographs taken by research participants have more to do with 'art' than research, for others, such photos are not 'real' art but 'only' research data. For the first criticism, it can be said that certain types of data that can be acquired through photography (or other arts-based methods) are difficult to capture or produce by traditional research and data collection methods. For the second line of criticism, it can be stated that it is not necessary to produce art valued by conventional artistic standards or to be a professional artist to utilise arts-based research methods meaningfully (see e.g. Leavy, 2015). Photographing is not automatically an artistic activity, but when used as a method of self-expression through visualisation, it can be considered an arts-based method.

Photovoice first became popular in health and social work research, and only later more broadly in social sciences. Originally, it drew on Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2007/1970) and was strongly influenced by feminist theory and the concept of empowerment. Some scholars maintain that, over the years, these premises have become diluted, and photovoice has lost its critical edge (e.g. Lykes & Scheib, 2015; Sitter, 2017). Indeed, in recent years, a growing amount of critical literature has emerged, making visible photovoice's limitations and complex challenges, as well as ethical dilemmas and power imbalances related to it (e.g. Carlson et al., 2006; Evans-Agnew & Rosemberg, 2016; Sitter, 2017). It is stressed that photovoice becomes misused if considered 'a "quick-and-easy" replacement for long-term ethnographic engagement and immersion in fieldwork contexts' (Gubrium & Harper, 2013, p. 73). Another body of critical literature argues that the significant aspects of empowerment and social transformation are ignored in many studies (e.g. Coemans et al., 2017; Johnston, 2016; Liebenberg, 2018).

From the perspective of this chapter, the most important studies are those reflecting on the ethical dilemmas, power relations and the de/colonising potential of participatory photography. Higgins (2014) claims that the critical and pedagogical potential of photovoice is 'not always actualised as the assumptions that undergird photovoice are often the same ones that (re)produce inequalities' (p. 1). This is because most projects are designed 'by and for the researchers and center deficit narratives rather than . . . much needed stories of survivance and resilience' (p. 3; see also Higgins, 2016; Hergenrather et al., 2009; Truchon, 2007). Higgins (2014) talks about de/colonial aspects related to 'using and abusing visual methodologies', and underlines the importance of recognising 'decolonial goals and other inter-connected objectives' such as feminism, anti-racism and anti-capitalism (pp. 3–4). Importantly, he reminds us that 'every attempt to work against colonization is also within colonization and inevitably reifies (neo)colonial constructs, concepts, or structures through the process' (p. 6).

Furthermore, in pointing out that 'every act of research is an act of power, even when the goals and aims strive for empowerment', Higgins (2016) underscores the risk of photovoice 'being ethically problematic through the reproduction of the oppressive

relations of power that it aims to work against, albeit differently' and points to the question posed by Lather (2007, p. 13)—'how can writing the other not be an act of continuing colonization?'—which necessitates 'a persistent ethical questioning of whether what is gained through research is worth what is lost, and for whom' (Higgins, 2016, pp. 673, 675–676).

Although there are many pitfalls to avoid and a broad spectrum of justified criticism and important words of warning to seriously consider, photovoice has also been used successfully, for example, in revealing and resisting racialised stereotypes and the culture of whiteness in academia by studying Black students' experiences of transformation (Cornel & Kessi, 2017), developing feminist and anti-racist practices (Lykes & Scheib, 2015) and envisioning decolonial feminist praxis (Cornell et al., 2019). This is also where this chapter seeks to make a humble contribution. However, it must be clarified that the rationale of the project discussed here differs from conventional photovoice projects in several ways. The main differences are related to the primary objectives of the project (and thus, also the process) and the role of the photographs.

The main components in a traditional photovoice project are usually defined in terms of: 1) participation; 2) research; 3) action; and 4) social change. In this case, however, the focus was only on the first two, and with regard to them, the emphasis was more on the first than the second component, as the primary purpose was not to produce data to be directly utilised in research or activism *as such*. Instead, the aim was to co-organise a small-scale experiment with participatory photography as a means to engage in collective doing and learning, to become more familiar with each other and discover themes that could be explored in later phases of research–activism collaboration. This is not totally uncommon in the context of arts-based methods, as they are utilised in all phases of the research process, including the research design phase, which was the case here. However, this approach is not without problems, as the original premises of photovoice are intimately related to the creation of possibilities for social change. Photovoice projects commonly include the following phases: 1) identification of community issues; 2) participant recruitment; 3) photovoice training; 4) camera distribution and instruction; 5) identification of photo assignments; 6) photo assignment discussion; 7) data analysis; 8) identification of influential advocates; 9) presentation of photovoice findings; and 10) creation of plans of action for change (Hergenrather et al., 2009, p. 695). Here, the approach was different: it focused on phases 1–7, but phases 8–10 were not included. The rationale was first to experiment with the method, and only later develop a more comprehensive photovoice project.

Second, this project differs from many conventional photovoice projects in that the photos themselves are not displayed here; they are only described textually. This was a conscious decision, collectively made with the participants beforehand. In the meetings preceding the workshops, we discussed this issue from several perspectives and came to this particular conclusion. Although the activists often use photos for campaigning, awareness building and advocating for their cause, in this context it was more comfortable for them to take photos quite freely, without having to worry about privacy issues and not being sure of the audience. Even though the photos will not be used in any research publications, one of the organisations (NMES) did exhibit a selection of their photographs in 2014 for their own community purposes.

The Workshops

From NMES, 11 activists participated in the workshops, taking a total of 242 photos. There were four participants from WOREC, and 41 photos in total. Before distributing

the cameras, we discussed, in both groups, the aims of photographing, and then practised using the disposable cameras. Next, we set a timeline for returning the cameras and organising our reflective group discussions. We also discussed ethical questions, as well as practical challenges which included difficulties in using a disposable camera, lack of time and possible lack of interest amongst the participants. We agreed that, if someone did not have time, they could freely withdraw at any point. It was important not to add any extra burden to women who already had so many responsibilities and duties. As Smith (2012/1999) points out, 'ideas about community collaboration and active participation need to be tempered by realistic assessments of a community's resources and capabilities, even if there is enthusiasm and good will' (p. 141).

Materials

The primary material on which this chapter is based consists of my fieldwork notes and workshop diaries in which I documented the discussions with the participants about the photos, their meaning and the photography process. Additionally, material collected through personal interviews, focus group discussions and participatory observation (April–June 2012, May–July 2014) is used to provide more context and depth. In addition to the slum area in Sinamangal where the NMES office is located, I also visited three other slums: Bhangsighat, Manohara and Shankha-Mul, and conducted interviews there. Also, previously in 2012, I had visited many of the same slums, interviewing and engaging with many of the same people. As it would not even be possible to fully distinguish the multiple forms of knowledge gained during these different periods, I draw on all of them here, as they have enriched my understanding. In fact, without them, it would not be possible to comprehend and contextualise many of the issues covered in the workshops.

In the following section, I will present a summary of the discussions in our reflective workshops in the form of thick descriptions that are based on my workshop diaries. As the photos themselves are not displayed, this is an alternative way to visibilise some of the issues that are important to the activists and to share their stories and experiences. The text has been read and approved by the participants, and I have gained consent to use their real first names.

Learning From/With the Activists

Meeting at NMES Office, 14 June 2014

I have arrived at the NMES office in Sinamangal. Two years have passed since my previous visit in 2012. Although I still am, and always will be, an outsider, a privileged white Western feminist, we are no longer complete strangers to each other. We chat for a while, drink some tea, sit down on the pillows in the meeting room and start discussing our plans.

Meeting at WOREC Office, 27 June 2014

We are at the WOREC office in Balkumari. Luisa informs us that Sunita has collected the disposable cameras; four have been returned so far. We discuss the situation while drinking tea. Luisa says that, for her, it has been difficult to take photos, as she has been very busy. Sunita tells that three other women who wanted to take part have also

been so busy that they cannot participate. We all agree that this is very understandable and decide to meet again the following week to see if any more cameras would have been returned by then. We also reserve a date for our reflective discussion.

Meeting at NMES Office, 1 July 2014

We are discussing the practicalities of the project. Manika tells us that so far, five cameras have been returned. We re-schedule our next meeting for Sunday, and Manika asks me to join a public women's rights protest in New Baneshwor on Monday. We also make plans for visiting the Balkhu slum.

Workshop at WOREC Office, 2 July 2014

We are sitting on the floor of the meeting room, going through the photos. Luisa has taken eight, of which two have failed due to difficulties with the camera. For Geeta, too, using the disposable camera has been challenging. When she showed it to her 9-year-old daughter, she could not believe that it really was a camera. Geeta is accustomed to taking photos with her mobile phone, and for her, the disposable camera was old-fashioned and clumsy. It was difficult to take photos from a distance, as the camera does not allow zooming.

Having taken nine photos, Geeta says that she has mixed feelings about them. It was easy to photograph activism and NMES-related work, but she would have also liked to take more personal photos. However, as we decided in our discussion about privacy issues, the photos should be such that they could be shown to everyone in the group without hesitation, including the researcher. Hence, Geeta has focused on taking photos at different protest sites. She explains that she often takes photos in programmes run by WOREC, especially on their impacts, and posts them on Facebook. Then, she talks about one of the protests. At first, only a few women were protesting, but later, increasingly many people joined. Geeta points out that a continuing problem for the activists is that there is no permanent space for protesting—they have to stand on a narrow pavement near a busy road, which is dangerous. Luisa and I agree, as we have been there. I briefly share my experiences of when I was taking part in the Monday protest two years earlier, wondering why this site is still used.

Geeta explains that despite the risks, the place is very effective—during office hours on weekdays, hundreds of vehicles and thousands of people pass it. The protest gets a large audience. The activists have protested every Monday for over two years, and slowly, more people take an interest in it. Geeta says that even young girls attend the protest despite being organised beside a busy and polluted road. She mentions that both journalists and police officers often ask them questions. She says that there is a strong presence of the police in the protests: 'Sometimes there are more security people than we are!' Sunita adds that often also passers-by come and talk with the activists, asking about their reasons for protesting. They are very happy to explain their aims in defending women's rights, working to end violence against women and challenge patriarchal societal norms.

Luisa has categorised her photos into six thematic groups. First, she has photographed the activists attending protests. Second, she has taken informative photos that could be used for creating awareness and support for women's rights. Third, she has photos of female police officers to highlight that, although women are not expected

to join the police force in Nepal, women now have new roles, both as police officers and activists. She mentions that Nepal is not as dangerous for protesters as some other countries where the police are equipped with guns. Fourth, Luisa has photographed materials with argumentative content such as t-shirts, which she regards as an effective way to use one's body to show support for a cause: 'Clothes are a means of communication, too. We don't need big things to do protest'. Fifth, she has taken photos related to environmental issues. These include images of solar energy, rechargeable batteries and non-disposable bags to highlight 'small decisions that we can do to make an impact'. Sixth, Luisa shows photos taken at a WOREC meeting organised in the city of Dang, where they met a women's group that is growing onions for sale. The women talked about their results, mentioning that they are now making a decent living, earning between 2,000–5,000 Nepali rupees monthly. They have also started new activities, such as knitting, with the help of WOREC.

As Deepak and Kavita, the two other activists who have taken photos, are not present, we do not discuss their photos in detail. Sunita and Geeta pick out a few they consider important. One of them illustrates a women's dance group performing traditional dances. Sunita explains that female dancers at the entertainment section work for long hours, and they have participated in the protests to demand equal pay and respect at the workplace.

'Stop Rape' Protest, 7 July 2014

It is 10 am, and we are attending a women's rights protest in New Baneshwor, across the street from the Everest Hotel. Tens of activists from both NMES and WOREC are present. We are embodying a 'STOP RAPE' banner with signs, each of us carrying a different letter. Luisa is holding 'A'; I am holding 'R'. Some of the activists take turns in giving public speeches. On the narrow street pavement, there is also an ongoing street theatre performance dealing with gendered violence. Many people have stopped and are watching it. I am talking with a person holding the letter 'P'. She says she attends the Monday protest every time it is possible. For her, the most important issue is to bring more attention to legal issues concerning rape cases—they should be fast-tracked in court. According to her, previously, it was more difficult for women's rights activists to protest, as the police were much stricter. Now, they stand in the background observing; rarely are there any problems.

While we are protesting, Luisa actively takes photos. At times, she also engages in the discussion. She is pleased that the street performance is attracting considerable interest. She points out the importance of the activists utilising different strategies for gaining attention. She also refers to one of the activists, Shristi, who is being interviewed by a journalist with a camera group behind her, and tells us that as she is actively engaged in making a documentary film, she does not have time to participate in our project.

Meeting at NMES Office, 7 July 2014

We have come back from the protest site in New Baneshwor and are starting our first group discussion. Bhagavati, Manika, Mani, Maya and I are present. Bina joins us for a while, but has to leave as she is busy with her work. Maya begins by stating that it was beneficial for her to have a camera when working in the Kathmandu-Bhaktapur

district, as she was able to document the hard work the team is doing there. She laughs when telling us that some people in Bhaktapur did not believe that the disposable camera was a real camera. One of Maya's photos is taken at a children's learning centre where NMES activists work daily. In the photo, they are washing hands after cleaning the school classroom together. Maya has also photographed everyday life in the Manohara slum. In one photo, children are outside playing football. During the rainy season, the slum and nearby roads were flooded. Now, the situation is better, and Maya says she feels proud of the photo where children are playing outside, safely. There are also photos of a water tank and an old man holding medicine in his hands. Health services are available in the Manohara slum only once a week, on Saturdays. I am also familiar with this as I visited there when Bhagavati arranged the possibility for me.

Mani has taken 23 photos, most of them at the previous week's protest. In one photo, there is a man cycling. Mani explains that the government has promised to construct proper cycling lanes, but this promise has not materialised, not even when the road itself was widened. Another photo illustrates a micro-bus, which serves to remind that it is difficult for women to travel safely in Kathmandu. Mani is one of the NMES activists actively involved in the 'Safe City' campaign, which aims at raising awareness of gender-specific challenges of living, working and travelling in Kathmandu.

Amongst Mani's photos, there is one that looks like it was taken by mistake; it portrays an empty seat in a micro-bus. However, it turns out that this photo has an interesting story behind it. Mani tells about an incident taking place one morning when she was entering a bus. A man was sitting on a seat reserved for women, and Mani asked him to give the place to her. When he refused, Mani took the camera out of her handbag, and at the precise moment when she was going to take a photo of the man, he stood up and left the bus, looking embarrassed. Mani also shows another photo and talks about a man who was pushing women to enter the micro-bus, but when Mani took out the camera, he started to behave very nicely. We discuss these two incidents in detail, and come to the conclusion that 'a woman with a camera' seems to hold some emancipatory power.

Mani also talks about her own work in NMES and as an activist. She is very dedicated to the cause and believes that she can truly express herself, having an important role with diverse responsibilities. Currently, she is working to expand the NMES unit committee, and she shows a photo taken of one of the meetings. Another one portrays the women's savings cooperative office. In a photo taken by her daughter, Mani is doing dishes. She mentions that she was washing pots and pans very quickly, as she was in a hurry to attend the Monday protest. With this photo, she wanted to point out the double burden of female activists, having to also do household work. Then, she shows a photo of a man carrying vegetables and explains that he has been selling vegetables for 22 years. With this image, she highlights the fact that people working in agriculture are not valued or offered enough possibilities to develop their livelihoods and improve their working conditions. Mani then shows a photo of a woman with vegetables and explains that the woman had given them to the NMES activists as a token of appreciation for their important work. She mentions that vegetable gardens used to be common in Kathmandu, but due to the increasing number of building blocks, there is no longer much space for cultivation.

Mani has also taken some photos at the riverbank. She notes that slum communities are highly dependent on the river, as it gives them access to water. However, the

river also presents some risks. During the monsoon, the riverbank and nearby areas often become flooded, washing away houses and leaving people homeless. She next shows a photo of a huge amount of riverside garbage, emphasising that it has not been dumped there by the slum communities but by outsiders. Indeed, there have been many complex challenges with regard to the Bagmati River, as the slum communities have tried to convince the authorities, including the team in charge of the Bagmati River conservation campaign, that most riverside garbage does not originate from the slums. Rather, the residents are trying to protect the river, as they need clean water. These issues have caused a lot of controversy, as the government has used river pollution as an argument for slum evictions. For example, in April 2012, the riverside slum Thapathali was evicted, leaving hundreds of families homeless. More generally, the lack of clean drinking water is a serious problem in slums. Water plays an important role in the daily lives of women, as they are in charge of collecting water; men do not usually take part in it.

Dillu takes her turn in presenting. Most of her 25 photos have been taken when working on the Bhaktapur district committee. She describes them as 'development photos'. In the discussion, she prioritises talking about a sharing group in which 500 women are involved in the NMES livelihood programme that is organised in the area monthly. Manju has also focused on livelihood issues. She presents a photo of herself milking a cow and explains that she could not attend the Monday protest as she was busy with the cows. She is working hard, as she is saving money. In another photo, there are clothes hanging in a room; Manju explains that many women take part in the sewing programme. In another image, a woman is running a small tea shop, which represents a common livelihood in the slums. She has also taken a photo of the slum school, which has been expanded, first with funding from the government, later from NMES and some NGOs.

Manika joins in by talking about the significance of school. She says that women in slums 'waste most of their time collecting water,' and do not have time to study. She tells about NMES programmes focusing on unpaid domestic labour and shows a photo of a couple she considers to be a good example of sharing household work. She also has a photo of children playing at the office, which, for her, demonstrates how much work women do. She points out that men usually do not take children to their work.

After discussing for several hours, we end the session by talking about the ethics of photographing. Manika says it is understandable that not everyone likes to be photographed. Yet, when she has been taking photos, nobody has refused when she has explained for what purposes they are taken. She believes that photographing is an effective method to engage in activism, as it can be used in many different ways to educate, inform, protest and create solidarity, as well as to reflect on one's own role. Adding to Manika's views, Mani concludes that she would love to have a digital camera to be able to take photos of their work all the time. We end the meeting by deciding on a date for our second reflective meeting.

Workshop at NMES Office, 14 July 2014

We have gathered for the second group discussion. We are Bina, Sabitri, Pushpa, Sita, Devaki, Sweta and I. We discuss the key points of the previous meeting and start going through the rest of the photos. Devaki presents her 23 photos, first at a rapid pace,

then slowing down, photo by photo. First, she shows us a photo of a small shop near her home in the Sinamangal slum and a photo of a school assembly. In the next photo, children are playing, including the son of one of her colleagues. There are also photos of mothers with their children, women doing household work and women teaching their children. At the office, she has taken photos of women working and writing. Devaki proudly presents a photo of a Child Message Award, which NMES has won four times. The competition is organised by Action Aid Nepal. This particular award was granted for the 'best photo and report', and for Devaki, the award 'represents motivation to do this work'. There are also some more private photos; for example, of her brother doing homework.

Sabitri has been very active in taking photos. Three of them are of a child training programme and related posters. She tells that, as her son is still quite small, she cannot take part in this or similar programmes herself. She usually brings her son to the office when working there. Sabitri also shows photos taken in Bhaktapur, where NMES is running multiple programmes. In one photo, a girl is carrying a sign that reads 'We are not to be silent'. Then, she shows photos taken at protests organised during an anti-rape campaign. In one of the photos, there is a large watch. Sabitri mentions that 'time is important for us, activists are busy'. She also has taken a photo of me (the author). She explains this with a reference to the importance of international partners and cooperation, and adds that many volunteers and foreigners have visited the NMES office over the years.

Then, Sabitri shows a beautiful photo of women's hands and fingers intertwined, which to her represents women's unity. Additionally, she has taken a series of photos related to rights. A photo of a water bottle serves to illustrate the right to water, and the following one, an image of a computer and mobile phone, serves to illustrate the right to communication. There is also a photo of a big house that highlights the importance of secure shelter rights. When showing us a photo of a guest house with a green lawn in Bhaktapur, Sabitri says that she wants to remind us of the right to a clean environment, which is also connected to land rights issues. The right to food is manifested by two photos: in the first, a man is eating alone; in the second, there are women eating together. In some photos, women are cleaning plates and washing clothes—this represents the right to sanitation. Sabitri also points out the right to leisure time and entertainment: in one photo, there is a young girl and a child playing. In another photo, a man is reading a book; this relates to the right to education. A car and moped in one of her photos refer to the importance of affordable transportation in the city. Concerning livelihoods, Sabitri shows a photo of two men constructing a road pavement outside the NMES office. She then presents photos taken in the NMES programme in the Shankha-Mul slum, dealing with unpaid care work. One photo portrays a man who has cooked his first meal ever, which demonstrates that it is possible to improve women's position by educating men about the importance of sharing the burden of household work.

The first of Sweta's photos is of her mother Bimala, who she considers her idol. Sweta tells us that she has taken photos of her typical day. In the morning, women have many responsibilities, such as cooking and getting children ready for school. Sweta says that they are busy with household work all day long—they need to decide what to cook, buy it and cook it, while also collecting water. She shows a photo of a differently abled woman who does not get any help from her husband. The woman is making small handicrafts for sale. In another photo, there is a boy begging; he

does not have any fingers. Sweta says that he has important skills—he is very good in drawing with his toes, and in this way, he can earn some money. Sweta mentions that also she has faced many difficulties, but is doing quite well at the moment, as she has managed to open a small shop for her livelihood.

One of Sweta's photos has been taken on a roof-top, where there are vegetables growing. Sweta points out that agriculture is one of the most important livelihoods in the community. There is also a photo of a micro-bus, which she took when remembering how difficult it was for her to travel when she was pregnant. In the Manohara slum, she has taken some photos of children and points out that community childcare centres are very important for women, as they enable them to spend some time together outside their homes where they have to do a lot of unpaid care work. Sweta has also taken photos of her family members: her husband and her son and daughter.

Then, it is Pushpa sharing her stories. In one photo, there are women attending the school in the Manohara slum. It is open on Saturdays, and the classes last for two hours. In another photo, children are reading and writing in a small room inside the community house—this is part of one of the programmes in Bhangsighat. In photos taken in the Manohara slum, children are playing football. Pushpa points out that the very dirty riverside, full of garbage, has been cleaned by the residents of the community. They have also planted trees by the riverbank to protect the area from flooding.

Sita first shows a couple of trial photos, which did not work out. Three of her photos are related to water. She explains that the government has made several plans to provide water for slum communities, but so far, water problems have not been resolved. One of the photos illustrates a bridge. The river underneath looks highly polluted, and the riverbank is covered with garbage. Sita explains that the bridge has been declared dangerous by the government, and most of the traffic has stopped. Yet, many people have to use it for livelihood purposes—they are selling vegetables and other goods on the bridge, as the government has forbidden street vendors from selling on the roadside.

Next, Sita shows three photos of children playing, explaining that, instead of video games, they are playing with sand and grass. One of her photos portrays a community shop, run by one of the women in the community. In two photos, there appears a big hole in the ground; it is used for collecting garbage. Sita explains that pollution is damaging the health of the community. There is also one photo of large bulldozers, which the authorities typically use for demolishing slums.

It is Bina's turn. She explains that many photos are of her family and NMES colleagues, as she found it easier to take photos in the private rather than in the public sphere. She presents a photo of her family celebrating her brother's son passing a school entrance exam. There is a series of photos where children, mostly girls, are studying. Bina regards the right to education as crucial. In one photo, one of her activist friends, Bishal, has a mobile phone in his hand—Bina tells us that he is sharing important information with other activists. In one photo, Bina's brother is helping his wife serve food for the kids—this is meant to be a reminder that it is not only women's responsibility.

Several of Bina's photos are related to water. She is angry about the fact that slum communities have to drink dirty water despite the right to safe drinking water. She also shows photos of vegetables and planting tools, saying it would be important for low-income people to be able to cultivate vegetables in the city. At the same time, she points out that all resources are not utilised to the fullest: people throw away a lot

of goods that could be recycled, and garbage can also be collected and sold. In one photo, there is a statue of a goddess in beautiful environmental surroundings. Bina explains its message to us: 'We all think that natural resources are a gift from god, so why are we destroying them?' In the last photo, one of Bina's friends is featured with tape over her mouth. She says that while women are eager to do many things, the patriarchal society prevents them from speaking out or, at least, makes it very difficult: 'I took the photo to symbolise that'.

Discussion

What can be concluded about the contributions of the photography workshops, and especially the reflective discussions? The process started by discussing the aims of the project and its potential benefits and challenges, and outlining the actual process, including some training and discussion about photography ethics. After that, the participants individually took the photos and selected the ones they wanted to present and discuss in the reflective workshops, in which they constructed a meaning for each photo to be further discussed in the group. In this way, the issues and experiences represented in some of the photos (but not all) also gained a shared, collective meaning. This collective element is very important in photovoice; it enables the participants to use the photos to reflect on their lived experiences while sharing and discussing them with others (Liebenberg, 2018). When we reflected on the outcomes in connection to the aims and the desired and potential benefits of the project, the opportunity to reflect on one's life and activism together with others (including the group members and the researcher) was one of the aspects that came up, in addition to others such as learning a new skill (taking photos for a collective purpose) and spending time together. As Liebenberg (2018) mentions, photovoice can be used for creating a slow, reflective space in which photos 'prompt a different kind of reflection on lived experiences' as well as emotions and thoughts about these experiences.

When used well, photovoice can also enable 'going beyond a narrow focus on discourse into the realm of perception, experience and spatial and embodied ways of knowing the world' (Gubrium & Harper, 2013, p. 71). This echoes what Wang and Burris (1994, 1997) emphasised in the original version of photovoice: it can enable participants to reflect on strengths and concerns in the community and produce knowledge and critical dialogue about issues experienced in the community, which can be then utilised in informing policy-makers to bring about social change. In the case under discussion, however, the aims or outcomes were not as substantial. The project was experimental by definition and is best understood as a small-scale example of doing and learning together in an effort to create some common ground.

In practice, this means that as the aim was not to develop concrete strategies for taking action to affect social change, the outcomes cannot be evaluated by conventional standards of photovoice. This, then, raises the question: How can the views of the participants become heard, and how can this result in seeing the results in action? It is important to acknowledge that participants are not 'empowered' by merely providing them with cameras and asking them to transform their experiences into photos, even when they have the possibility to reflect on the photos collectively (Liebenberg, 2018). Moreover, it invites critical questions about my role in the project, as it is important to remember that 'despite the critical positions taken by "outsider" researchers and their embrace of critical reflexivity . . . they are sometimes blinded by their own

positionality, the demands of their university-based contexts' (Lykes & Scheib, 2015, p. 139), a paradox that has been discussed in great detail by Jauhola (2020) in the context of her conceptualisation of 'stumbling scholarship'.

Even though the project was co-organised and did not primarily seek to produce research data for academic purposes, it is not possible to avoid these critical questions in this context, either. Hence, I do not feel comfortable in making any grand claims about the usefulness or benefits of the project, but would rather like to emphasise, in the words of Higgins (2016), that different forms of 'negotiations, relationships, and modes through which knowledge are produced are as important as the knowledge itself' (p. 679). This echoes the premises of decolonial feminism, which is based on the imperative to 'learn about each other as resisters to the coloniality of gender at the colonial difference, without necessarily being an insider to the worlds of meaning from which resistance to the coloniality arises' (Lugones, 2010, p. 753). Yet, the researcher has to see and understand the colonial difference while 'emphatically resisting her epistemological habit of erasing it' (p. 753). In the kind of a context described in this chapter, working through the perspective of decolonial feminist solidarity in practice has meant doing and learning together with the women, as well as bringing forward some of their stories and perspectives. It is in this way it has been also possible to honour, at least partly, the feminist origins of photovoice.

Conclusions

This chapter has described an experimental participatory photography project co-organised with women's rights activists in Nepal as a part of a long-term research–activism collaboration. As the project differed from conventional photovoice projects in several ways (most substantially in terms of aims, the process and role of the photographs), it has to be openly acknowledged that it has left out some of the important components and phases of photovoice in the way originally outlined by Wang and others. As the chosen approach was different, the analysis does not follow traditional ways of elaborating on the outcomes. Rather, the value of the project is understood from the perspective of practicing decolonial feminist solidarity, including dialogue and reflection, as well as collective doing and learning.

In the descriptive section, some of the stories and experiences from the reflective workshops were shared in the form of thick descriptions. The section worked to demonstrate, in a very practical way, how participatory photography is not only about taking photos, but its significance is also related—and often even more so—to the process of reflection. It was the reflective discussions that helped us achieve what was aimed for in the first place; that is, to become more familiar with each other and discover important themes to focus on in more detail later in our research–activism collaboration. When discussing together, we found common ground and understanding, for example, with regard to many issues related to working towards women's rights and defending slum communities against evictions. Developmental justice also emerged as a significant theme; it was considered an aspect that combines several different struggles in fighting against the nexus of patriarchy and neoliberal developmentalism as a cause of gender inequality.

While the project helped some of the participants, and particularly me as a researcher, to become more aware of certain larger social processes and structural issues in which the everyday experiences of the activists are embedded, at the same time, it left us all

a bit uncertain about what the concrete benefits were, both from the perspective of the activists and from my perspective as a researcher. We could not anticipate all the results of the process in advance, as its value would become concretised only later. Indeed, the decision to write this chapter was made several years after the workshops. When discussing about the issue, we decided that in this particular piece, it would be my role to describe the process and learnings from the perspective of the methodology, and later we would co-author another article together.[3]

Moreover, the project reminded us of the inescapable power imbalances and inherent inequalities in research–activism relationships that cannot be erased despite the best of intentions. One of the most concrete manifestations of this was related to the different scale of effects brought by the failure to gain funding for implementing the next phase of the project. Originally, our plan was first to experiment with participatory photography as a method and later develop the approach further in the context of a separate project. However, we have not been able to acquire funding for it, despite numerous efforts in which we have been involved with some of the women activists during the past five years. While for me as a researcher, this has been disappointing, for the activists, who invested a lot of time and effort in the project, it has been a cause of much more serious and deeper frustration, and very justifiably so. We still continue to write applications, but due to discontinuity the initial excitement has been partly lost; yet, our collaboration continues in alternative ways, in ways not confined by the neoliberal academy.

Notes

1. Moreover, as Mohanty (2003) notes, 'One problematic effect of the post-modern critique of essentialist notions of identity has been the dissolution of the category of race', as it has been 'accomplished at the expense of a recognition of racism' (p. 137).
2. Cf. discussion on alternative, Black feminist epistemologies (e.g. Collins, 2000).
3. Hence, the reflections presented here must be considered partial and one-sided as they focus mostly on the researcher's perspective.

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Section II

Participatory Service Design

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6 Archipelagos of Designing Through *Ko*-Ontological Encounters

Yoko Akama

Acknowledging Our Bodies in Place

> *There is a deep warmth that hums inside me when I see the majestic gum trees waving and listen to the Lorikeets gossip over breakfast. I am grateful for the peach-grey skies above the urban rooftops that herald another day.*

I was born in Japan, but I have been living and working in Melbourne, on east Kulin lands, since 2002. I acknowledge the unceded sovereignty of the Traditional Custodians, the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung mobs of the Kulin Nation, and pay my respect to their elders, past, current and emerging. My respect also extends to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

I also pay my respect to all Traditional Custodians of the lands, waters, animals, forests and skies where this text might be read. I extend my respect to all Indigenous and First Nations ancestors and elders, and I am grateful for their cultural wisdoms that may teach us how to re-entangle with many sentients of our worlds.

I open with a public 'Acknowledgement of Country', which is offered at most formal and public gatherings in Australia. When I do this Acknowledgement, I ground my presence to country. I call upon the rituals deep inside me when respecting elders, ancestors and the sentience of more-than-humans. Such rituals of respect have been habituated since my birth, such as visiting our local shrine or offering gratitude at our Buddhist altar at home in Japan. My utterance is imbued with spirit—*kotodama* (spirituality of words). As an uninvited Japanese visitor to Aboriginal lands, the ritual of Acknowledgement allows me to be present and supplicate with *kokoro* (heart–body–spirit) to honour the Traditional Custodians. I will be returning to the significance of rituals later.

The formal 'Welcome to Country', offered by Traditional Custodians, is generous and powerful. *Womienjeka* in the Woi Wurrung language is commonly interpreted as 'hello', but I have also learned from N'arweet Carolyn Briggs (Boon Wurrung Elder) that it is a request to state one's purpose: *Why are you here? What is your purpose?* (RMIT, 2020). The Welcome by a Traditional Custodian comes with obligations. As an intruder on these lands, I take seriously the commitment to obey the laws of Bundjil, Kulin's creator deity, to not harm the land (*biik biik*), waterways (*wurneet*) and children (*bubups*) of Bundjil while I dwell in their country. From friend and colleague, Peter West (2020), I have also learned that Acknowledgement is a reply and acceptance of the terms and laws to engage with Indigenous sovereignty.

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Stating one's purpose, to me, is an obligation to bring your whole self to a sovereign encounter, to have a respectful sovereign relationship with Aboriginal people. I was taught the importance of this from Wiradjuri and settler friends (Tye et al., 2020; West, 2020). To me, bringing your whole self calls upon one's entire relationality—ancestry, family, place where you are from—to an encounter. I am not an individual, disconnected from these things. Acknowledging our lineage also obliges us to attend to the scars in our family histories and to learn from the wise and painful experiences of our elders. Such obligations participate in a wider movement of ethical practice of locating oneself that has relevance beyond settler-migrants on colonised lands (see for example Agid & Chin, 2019; Linström & Ståhl, 2020; Rizvi, 2018) and also to remind us of our pre-existing relationalities. The past for many of us is very much alive.

• • •

Three pairs of chopsticks.
The long black one is Dad's.
Mum has a lacquered pair in indigo.
The red one, chipped in many places, is mine. I've had it since I was a teenager. It's always been the three. These are set on the table at every breakfast.
A bit of a cliché I know, but it is the most important meal of the day.
A time we're together as a family.

I am the only daughter of Chiaki and Kinue. Chiaki, my dad, grew up on a farm in rural Hokkaido (north island of Japan). He is the youngest son of 13 children of a migrant railway worker. Dad was born just when the Pacific War started and he was the only one who went to university in Tokyo, far from his birthplace, carrying with him hopes of his entire family to take them out of poverty. He studied economics, taught himself English and was employed by a multinational trading company at a time when Japan was entering its period of high economic growth. Our nuclear family migrated with him to different cities around the world. He ensured our financial security and never once hesitated to support the tutoring that I needed to keep up with my Japanese and local education. He was a typical 'salary man'—one of an army of workers who shouldered the burden of rebuilding post-war Japan through a lifetime of dedication to their companies. Demands from work meant we saw very little of him. When his colleagues were dying from *karoshi* (work-related exhaustion) (Kanai, 2009), I grew up thinking his absence at home was normal. Japanese innovation and technology are generally celebrated without acknowledging the harsh and private sacrifices by workers and their families. The times I affectionally remember are his delight in helping me with my schoolwork, and how I was his clever little daughter who learned to speak perfect English. He would have been a brilliant maths teacher, if he had that choice. I am so grateful to him for teaching me about loyalty, resilience, discipline and the value of education.

Kinue, my Mum, was born in northeast China, then Manchuria, occupied by the Japanese army when my teenage grandfather was stationed there. Boys like him were sent to the front line by sacrificing their lives to the Emperor, who was believed by most people in Japan to be a deity until Japan lost the Pacific War. Every August, when Japan marks its end, my mum weeps with shame and compassion. The atrocities by the imperial forces in the Asia-Pacific will never to be forgotten. I, too, will carry

that sorrow, shame and compassion for what history has implicated us in. Like most women at the time, my mum was not permitted to go to university, despite her intelligence, proactiveness and charisma. She went to finishing school in Japan to learn domestic science, then married to serve her husband and the family. She is a proud housekeeper, the most amazing cook, incredibly thrifty, sociable and creative. I have her hands and nimble fingers, and she has taught me to be a maker. Her hands are my grandmother's hands that stitched kimono for the three daughters. I continue to be inspired by what I see as 'social innovation' projects she is involved with in our local community. She takes me to the rice paddies to find pesticide-free water snails to feed the fireflies she breeds that have gone extinct from our local river. I am awed by the care she shows for the seemingly ignoble larvae that spends most of its life in mud. Every summer, when they are released along stretches of the river cleaned by the community, locals of all ages gather to share joy in their fleeting beauty and their return.

Because of my family circumstances, I grew up in various countries and gained heightened sensitivity to plurality, and this has led me to acknowledge my responsibility for being entangled in the violence of colonial structures. Global forces, political power and world histories have shaped our family, just as it has yours.

You and I are a product of this worlds' continual becoming.[1]

Holding and Carrying

I opened with an 'Acknowledgement of Country' as a way of being embodied on sovereign lands to state where I am. Acknowledging in this way challenges prevailing anthropocentricity because place is already plural. Beyond common ways place is defined for its significance by humans, places are also sentient (Inoue et al., 2003; Moran et al., 2018). The land where our ancestors are from, and the various places where we were taken or choose to dwell, also shape who we are and become.

I introduced my family, ancestry and the conditions that have shaped who I am becoming. In so doing, I am avoiding co-option by the hegemony of whiteness. Rarely shared are descriptions of the researchers' (or practitioners') backgrounds, sociocultural context, values, philosophies and where/how their world views are shaped. Critical social psychology scholars Adams and Salter (2019, p. 273) evoke a powerful metaphor of a white lab coat that researchers wear in exchange of their identities, to 'promote a sense of abstraction from social, historical, and material contexts' of a privileged position. Their argument is compelling because the lab coat is a metaphor for whiteness associated with 'epistemic perspectives of racial power', going beyond being culturally neutral or the absence of colour, towards a 'thinly disguised directive for assimilation to a particular racial position' (p. 273). In other words, designers and researchers that choose, by default, to be nowhere and nobody are at risk of being concealed by whiteness. For many Black, Indigenous and people of colour, this is not a choice; rather, whiteness is a violent structure that can render them as invisible nowhere and nobody (Fanon, 1994).

Neutrality and placeless-ness are conflated with impartiality, rendering invisible the importance of race, gender, class and such experiences to matter by their disavowal. The common parlance for knowledge sharing is also bound by the unfortunate structures of standard English 'preoccupied with abstraction or with nothing/nobody evidently alive' (Jordan, 1985, p. 130). These symptoms of whiteness are evident in *Dominant*

Design and Research, fortifying a cycle of nowhere and nobody (Suchman, 2002). I will be using the uppercase 'D' to refer to professional norms and ossified understandings as 'Dominant Design' (or just Design) in an attempt to distinguish this from ethical, situated and ontological notions of designing (in lower case) throughout this chapter.

Whiteness is a continuing legacy of colonialism, Indigenous dispossession, slavery, segregation and immigrant exclusion where we are all living within structures and conditions of racial hierarchy (Crenshaw, 2019). The omnipotence of whiteness makes it the 'unmarked norm against which difference is measured' (Gerding, 2019, p. 24). This is the world we have inherited and these histories surface on our bodies (Ahmed, 2011). Dominant Design is complicit in designing worlds of whiteness and future of others, because designing is shaped by ontologies, and also shapes ontologies: 'We design our world, while our world acts back on us and designs us' (Willis, 2006, p. 80). This means Design is never innocent of the way it structures and hard-bakes whiteness as the standard bearer. In designing bodies, behaviours, imaginations and futures, Design is also ontological in its whiteness and in its affect. These range from literal and visible ways in which 'White Standards' promote cosmetic products to affirm paler skins as notions of 'beauty' (Kabai as cited in Onafuwa, 2018), Design technologies that do not recognise darker skin tones (Ogbonnaya-Ogburu et al., 2020), elevation of the creativity of designers in Silicon Valley to cast 'Asians as mathematical, unaesthetic, rule-oriented' pool for outsourcing labour (Irani, 2018, p. 11) and the representation of Africans as 'impoverished and/or illiterate users in HCI [Human Computer Interaction]' (Bidwell, 2016, p. 24). The examples go on, and they are everywhere. The attention I give here is because of Dominant Design's invasiveness: 'Our ontological stances about what the world is, what we are, and how we come to know the world define our being, our doing, and our knowing—our historicity' (Escobar, 2018, p. 92).

The approach I have taken in this chapter reveals layers of entanglements that I am already participating in, in different ways. Recognising our entanglements obliges us to be more sensitive to how we participate in existing structures, dynamics and rhythms in collaborative designing and research. I welcome others to 'hold and carry' these approaches with them to disrupt the legacies and desires of neutrality, objectivity and placeless-ness in Dominant Design. It is a way that complicates simplifications of race, class, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and other systems of economic, political and ideological conditions of binary oppressions. This relationality is an intersectional matrix that asserts varying levels of disadvantages and privileges (Collins, 1990), in relation to when, where, and who I am with. This also signals a way to accommodate the hermeneutic way this text might be read by you, dear reader, and such reading also changes our positionalities in dynamic ways. You and your ancestries may be from lands invaded by Japanese forces, including the Indigenous islands of *Ryukyu* (Okinawa) and *Ezo* (Hokkaido). You might be reading this in North America or Australia, where legacies of prejudice linger from the time when citizens of Asian descent were labelled 'enemy aliens' and interned in camps. You may be a person fascinated with cultural exports from Japan and the variety of terms taken and applied in Euro-American contexts. In other words, my lineage and being a Japanese woman already entangles me in all of these histories, perceptions and more. This means my positionality is always in-between (*Ma*), dynamically moving in relation to yours (in the Sea of *Ma*—more on this later), even though this writing will remain fixed in time. Such shifts also include flaws and immaturity in my emerging

consciousness about how *I should be* in Design Research. Its predominant whiteness means my Japanese body and being will always be challenged. Nothing is permanent, or at least, from my world view, and I would like to see how we can keep that notion alive during our encounters here.

Ko-Ontologies of Inter-Becoming

In starting from body and place as ontologies of locating, I also add *kokoro* as another significant ontology—a resonant quality of being and becoming-with. Dominant Design's modern roots has meant that spirituality has been accorded little importance, eroded through religious, political and social reform in the pursuit of progress and technological advancements in northern Europe (Walker, 2013). Resisting the disparagement of spirituality is another act of decolonising. For me, 'Acknowledging Country' is *kokoro*—a resonant responsiveness with place uttered through the spirituality of words (*kotodama*). Respecting Bundjil and ancestors is through *kokoro*—a resonant responsiveness with sentiency of more-than-humans. I aim to design and research with *kokoro*. In fact, my being and becoming-with-many is all *kokoro*. *Kokoro* is often poorly translated as 'heart and mind', reflecting the Cartesian detachment in 'Standard English' (Jordan, 1985), when in fact, *kokoro* is a quality that arises in interrelatedness of mind—heart–body–soul–spirit that are already and always inseparable. This is why I appreciate the way Kasulis (2002, p. 25), a notable Asian philosopher, describes *kokoro* as 'a resonant responsiveness'. I dedicate a large portion of this chapter to the significance of *kokoro* and designing as one example from the archipelago of Japan.

Kokoro collapses mind-constructed categories and locates resonance in the in-betweens of plurality. Like the letters 'co' added to recognise the plurality of human and more-than-human actors that participate as co-designing or co-ontology, my meaning of 'co' is in fact closer to the '*ko*' of *kokoro*. In other words, replacing the 'co' with '*ko*' in designing and ontology enables me to include the inter-becoming of body–spirit–place that is often omitted in Design. While it might appear like a trite re-labelling, I am trying to take advantage of affordances when writing Japanese Roman English as *kokoro* (『心』 or 『こころ』 in Japanese), because of our English–writing-reading encounters. This enables me to discuss *ko*-designing and *ko*-ontology as an expanded resonant responsiveness and relational in-between later on. Continuing this strategy of ruffling conventional writing-reading, I have woven fragments in *italics* to invite a *ko*-ontological, expansive encounters for resonant responsiveness that lies beyond rational argumentation. Altogether, another offer I make to holding and carrying is to experience *ko*-ontological ways we are inter-thinking, inter-acting, inter-being and inter–becoming-with-many in plural worlds. I encounter you and worlds through-with-as *kokoro*.

However, we must be vigilant in appropriating concepts and ontologies for the service of human-centred politics, which makes me reluctant to 'use' the notion of spiritual and plural ontologies of *kokoro* for decolonising. Like Professor Sheehan, who looks up at night to 'see knowledge reflected in the Country of the universe' (Moran et al., 2018, p. 75), certain kinds of consciousness and ontologies are beyond the realms of human minds and histories. As we shall see, the references to rituals and practices I speak of are sacred. I will also address the importance to respect knowledge and ontologies without needing to know fully.

This will likely disappoint readers looking for customary footholds for replicable and generalisable methods for decolonising Design. This is not a 'how to' collaborate with Indigenous people (for guidance, please see the International Indigenous Design Charter), though some of what I address might be relevant. Here, we must pause to query why and where expectations for transferability comes from that assume methods and knowledge can be untethered from the sites of their relational embodiment and moved elsewhere like a package (Akama et al., 2019). Instead, I offer other forms of learning that I hope are significant: the effort of unlearning and unsettling, being prompted to reflect and question, and entangling one's own experiences and understanding. Most importantly, I foreground ontology for methods and methodology to enact as decolonising. This means I premise inter-becoming (*ko*-ontologies) by acknowledging the whole self of being embodied on sovereign lands and recognising one's entire relationality to resist whiteness that renders one as nowhere and nobody. I aim for our *ko*-ontological encounters by being expansive with structures of language and writing, and using metaphors and poetry to invoke alternative imaginaries, resonating with the artist, writer and colleague Paul Carter (2019), who has inscribed metaphorical literacy to think figuratively in decolonising discourses.

Archipelagos: Sea of Islands

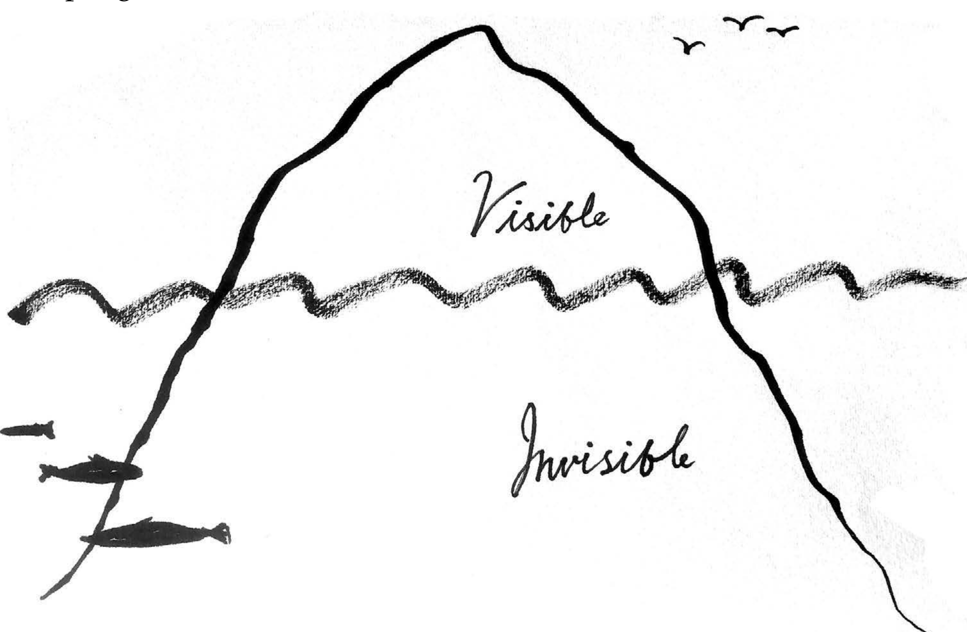

Figure 6.1 Island of visibility and invisibility.

I have been using islands as a metaphor (Figure 6.1) to teach introductory constructs to those learning more about design. Cultural theory and anthropology scholars have offered a model whereby cultures can be likened to an iceberg, composed of layers that can be easily observed in the upper levels and those that are less visible below the surface (Giddens, 1984; Hofstede, 1994). While the unitary and generalisable model of an iceberg is problematic (more on this later), nonetheless, the image

helps to convey the visibility of products, tools, methods, behaviours and touchpoints that are supported by the underlying layers of values, mindsets and world views, which are harder to see. For example, the replicable Double Diamond model, visible and used commonly in Design, manifest and amplify the values that lie beneath the surface, such as problem-solving, simplicity, efficiency and linear progress (Akama et al., 2019). The island metaphor invites learners of Design to embark on decolonising by understanding and respecting various values and world views under the water line, to avoid assuming what is visible on the surface as styles, techniques and knowledges that can be transferred and replicated. The International Indigenous Design Charter (n.d.) has been created because Design has followed, and continues to follow, colonial acts of acquisition, so we must remain vigilant.

Design has accompanied modern world-making practices to be useful, effective, functional, durable, seductive, convenient, original and innovative, and has been used to solve problems for others, grow market share and increase customer satisfaction. We can see this most clearly in Service Design, where operations management and systems thinking influences have further elevated the belief that complete understanding of systems and their parts is possible (Agid & Akama, 2018). Our paper also noted that methods, such as Customer Journey Maps and Blueprints, have become mainstream proxies for 'real-world' models to universalise individual experiences by stripping away cultural, social, geographical and political dimensions. Service Design, like its parent Design, has become a powerful agent in advancing ideologies of growth, control, competition, productivity and neoliberal capitalism. It is a concern shared by Escobar (2018), who has talked about the paradox of fixing modern problems with

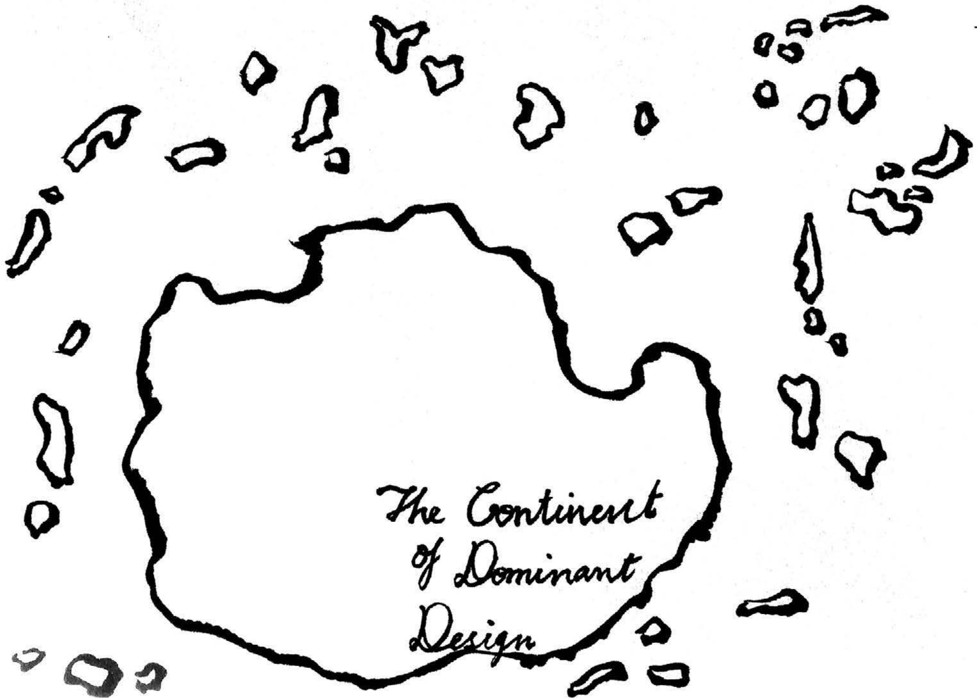

Figure 6.2 The Continent of Dominant Design.

modern solutions, especially if these problems stem from modern world-making practices that have erased and subjugated divergent onto-epistemologies and world views.

To show how Dominant Design has become the central frame of reference for this discipline, I draw 'The Continent of Dominant Design' (Figure 6.2) as a massive island in the middle, just as cartographers of the past have visualised, magnified and centralised their particular nations on their own map to demarcate power and territories. Dominant Design is similarly positioned in status. The scale, centrality and universality are metaphors of 'One-World' hegemony (Escobar, 2018; Law, 2011) imbued with modern colonial values and world views that lie under the water's surface.

However, I also draw 'The Continent of Dominant Design' as nested within *archipelagos*. Archipelagos unsettle iceberg models that suggests universality, detachment and containment, and also troubles island tropes that connote singularity, isolation, insularity and periphery. Archipelagos have enabled relational and non-binary ways to think and *be with* in the broader humanities to premise reciprocal connectivity (Hau'ofa, 1994), as an ontology of mobilities and multiplicities (Stratford et al., 2011), creatively imagine possibilities (McEntee et al., 2016), prefigure transfiguration and metamorphosis (Pugh, 2013), and 'islandness' as a relationality of emplacement (Oliver, forthcoming). Decolonising is not treated here as a metaphor (Tuck & Yang, 2012), rather, metaphors can activate expansive dialogue in decolonising (Carter, 2019). I surround the Continent with a sea of islands to indicate that there are various forms of designing that express and cyclically shape many kinds of values and world views.

The metaphor of archipelagos refers to significant constellations of designing that are ignored, exoticised, universalised or often appropriated by 'The Continent of Dominant Design'. The archipelagos act as an invitation for all to identify designing that has been ongoing under other names as both specialised and everyday practices. Design researcher Gutiérrez Borrero have called these practices *diseños con otros nombres*: 'designs with other names' (Calderón Salazar & Guitérrez Borrero, 2017). These reminders compel us to take responsibility to relate to other names, forms, articulations and practices of designing by paying closer attention to what is below the water line that matters to groups of people. As a design student trained by Dominant Design in the UK and Australia, and later, as a maturing practitioner and design researcher, I know how powerful the desire is to be legitimised (see Akama et al., 2019). This meant that I, too, in the past, felt the need to define and only account essential characteristics of designing by using Simon's (1968, p. 55) popular approach to 'devise courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones' and to determine how things ought to be. I had to unlearn these deeply entrenched scripts as a mindful way of *unlearning* (see Akama, 2018).

For the remainder of this chapter, I will introduce a notion of designing that has been practised in Japan, an archipelago made up of more than 6,000 islands, which has been buffeted by various ideas, thoughts and world views carried along currents of trade, religion, conflict, migration and globalisation. It is important to state also that while I identify as a Japanese woman, I ask not to essentialise what I describe as inherently Japanese or lump it as 'Japanese Design'. Like an archipelago, there are numerous forms and expressions of designing in Japan.[2] The particular rituals, poems, teachings, philosophies and quotidian practices I call attention to have been important to me in recognising a way designing can be understood. These are not theories with a capital T, or philosophies with a capital P, but they are intimately woven into the social fabric, having endured through centuries to shape how people inhabit and always-become-with-many worlds. This means I have used my own writing from

other places because some of these weighty ideas have been developed elsewhere, and often in collaboration.

Kokoro of Designing

Kokoro is a commonly used term in Japanese that has expansive and holistic meanings. *Kokoro* is not an organ, or just a mindset or a feeling, but denotes *qualities of interrelating*. Thus, its use encompasses mind, heart, body, soul, spirit and emotions that are all involved in interrelating that enable *kokoro* to also mean empathy, essence, truth, virtue, naturalness, awakening and more. Owing to the influences in Taoism, Shinto and Zen Buddhism in Japan, *kokoro* is a reflection of embracing the sentiency of everything, so humans are not at the apex, and 'living beings' does not mean just those with cell division. This means *kokoro* is a quality of interrelating between and beyond humans and can be attributed to animals, plants, mountains, materials and objects, and also speeches, writings, drawings, music, weathers, waters and heavens. *Kokoro* infuses being and worlds as interrelatedness, entanglement and 'resonant responsiveness within the overlap between the world and the person' (Kasulis, 2002, p. 25).

The Japanese architect Isozaki (2011, p. 36) writes that 'erasing distance that separates subject and object—of becoming one with nature' is common across all creative fields in Japan, including design. He recalled a conversation with Isamu Noguchi who said, 'Facing a natural stone in silence, I begin to hear its voice. My work is just to follow the voice; my role is just to help it a little bit' (Noguchi as cited in Isozaki, 2011, p. 36). His statement has echoes of *Sakuteiki*, a guide for designing gardens, written in the twelfth century: 'The placement of the stone must follow the stone's request'.[3] From this, we can learn that materials are not yielding themselves to service human needs or uses; rather, designing could be seen as a way for these materials and humans to engage through respecting their distinct materialness. The respect accorded to materials is celebrated as the aesthetics of naturalness and simplicity, but I worry how popular articulations of 'Japanese design' outside Japan is conflated with the modernist ethic of 'less is more' that strips away *kokoro* as a significant dimension, perhaps due to the impossibility of grasping its meaning in writing and in English. Like Noguchi, maybe we can move closer to *kokoro* through listening carefully to materials: 'The plain clay may speak for itself, but its voice is so soft that the potter of the mindful heart amplifies it so we can all hear it' (Kasulis, 2002, p. 44). We can sense in these accounts the intimacy of interrelatedness that does not separate self–other, human–nature or human–object. From this, we could say that the *kokoro* of designing aims to *enhance* the qualities of interrelatedness.

This world view of interrelatedness is founded on Shinto, the native spirituality of Japan, which anchors many traditions and current practices in domestic life. This spirituality is also referred to as *Koshinto* (ancient Shinto), because Shinto became a formalised religion when it was amalgamated with Buddhism in the early sixth century to unite and educate the nation (Gomi & Toriumi, 2009). My engagement with Shinto is closer to *Koshinto* and not the religion that positioned the Emperor's divine supremacy to enforce imperial power, because I carry within me the horrors of my grandfather's wartime experiences, but also my spiritual being and relationship to Shinto has been densely woven by countless, everyday practices since my childhood.

Furutone river runs through my hometown, a few blocks behind our house.
In the stillness that precedes the dawn, we quickly head to Mum's special spot along the river. Many of our neighbours are already there.

We exchange muffled greetings—Akemashite omedetooo! Kotoshimo yoroshiku!—through our masks, scarves and foggy white puffs of a bone-chilling dawn.
We all wait in semi-darkness, gazing east.
The first ray of sun catches a whisker of cloud with a minted dazzle.
The New Year is here.
Everywhere, our hands are pressed together as we pray to the first sunrise.

Attending *hatsuhinode* (New Year sunrise) is a ritual that many Japanese perform, stemming from an ancient practice of worshipping the sun. Some scholars have related *Koshinto* to animism, a view that the natural world is made of a community of spirits of which humans are just one part (Inoue et al., 2003). This spirituality has coexisted alongside successive Western influences from science, technology and industrialisation during the Meiji Restoration so that everyday items such as cooking pots, wooden clogs and paper lanterns (see Itaya [1860] on the Hyakki Yagyo scroll of a parade of supernatural creatures), as well as modern inventions like cars and robots (Geraci, 2006) are also imbued with *kami*—a term that loosely refers to gods, deities, souls and spirits. Its reference to any animate or inanimate being speaks to the diversity of *kami* (*yaorozu no kami*), which in turn, reflects the diversity of forms, rituals and encounters with *kami* across Japan.

Encountering *kami* has been likened to natural wonders such as seeing a spectacular sunrise (Kasulis, 2002). Awe is an overwhelming and humbling experience, a merging of self and other, forging the 'relationship with a power or force, an element of life that it is not only greater than the self but is ontologically different' (Elfers & Hlava, 2016, p. 124). In Shinto, anything associated with *kami* is marked with a *torii* (gate) or *shimenawa* (rope), so we see *shimenawa* encircling rocks, trees, entrances to caves, islands, mountains and shrines, or hung around altars in homes. Kasulis (2002) interprets the *shimenawa* to be an act that serves as a 'bookmark' to tether us, in our busy, modern lives, to our connection to awe, intimacy and belonging with the world.

Various historians believe that, in ancient times, shrines were not buildings; instead, a *shimenawa* was hung to demarcate *himorogi* (a space of sanctum), and *kami* were called and welcomed there (Inoue et al., 2003; Yamada, 1966). This ritual for invoking *kami* continues today. Upon approaching the *yashiro* (hut) of a shrine, visitors bow–bow–clap–clap–bow. The style of these rituals varies across the regions, but this invocation is customary. These rituals mark ways of crossing over thresholds to avoid entering the grounds in haste and mindlessness. Walking through the *torii* gate and listening to the footsteps on pebbles prepares for an encounter, for *kokoro* to be open and 'empty' to be enveloped by awe and wonder. *Kami* are thought to be numerous and everywhere—*yaorozu no kami*—so the clapping is a form of awakening or concentrating their attention. These rituals are the means to draw on the power of *kami* (Yamada, 1966).

Rituals of invocation also extend to speech. Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) was a famous scholar of the most ancient Japanese text, *Kōjiki*, and the native oral *Yamato* language before Chinese scripts were imported. His contribution was significant in articulating *kotodama* as the spirit and sacredness of words. For Norinaga, poetry was words with *kokoro* (*koto no kokoro*) and the 'moving power of things'—*mono*

no aware (Marra, 2011, p. 384). Building on Norinaga's contribution, Kasulis (2002, p. 26) further explained *kokoro* as resonant responsiveness:

> The poet's *kokoro* resonates with the *kokoro* of the actual mountain mist and the *kokoro* of the Japanese words. Through the interpenetration and common responsiveness of these *kokoro*, the poem is produced. From this perspective, the poet alone does not write a poem about the mountain mist. More precisely, the mountain mist, the Japanese words and the poet write the poem together.

Here, we can see the respect afforded to immaterial and material worlds that are participating in resonant responsiveness, in how Norinaga articulates this state. One could say that designing can involve the same responsiveness to enhance the qualities of interrelatedness.

For Norinaga, *waka* (Japanese poetry) embodied the 'moving power of things' (*mono no aware*) to be drawn into a field of resonance—*kokoro*. This *waka* was composed by a famous poet and monk, Saigyo (1118–1190):

nanigotono owashimasukawa shiranudomo	I know not what lies within
katajikenasani namida koboruru	but I am moved to tears with gratitude

When Saigyo visited Ise Shrine during the twelfth century, a pilgrimage destination regarded as one of the most ancient and sacred shrines in Japan, he composed this famous *waka*. Isozaki (2011, p. 125) explained that this poem 'expresses an awe inspired by the sacredness of Ise. The *waka* formula requires no logical explanation; the simple statement enters the hearer's heart and reverberates there—it is sheer power of language'. Here we see Isozaki referring to *kotodama*—the spiritual, sacred, primordial power of words. The moving power of Saikyo's *waka* and the awe-inspiring power of Ise combine to create an intense field of resonance—this is a *ko*-ontological encounter.

Ise Shrine is a significant reference for architects and designers due to several distinct features. Its architecture is said to reflect *Yayoi*-era structures that were used to store rice more than 2,000 years ago, reflecting Japan's agricultural roots. The most unique feature of Ise, however, is the ritual of dismantling and rebuilding its entire structure on an adjacent site every 20 years. These include 65 built structures including the gates (*torii*) that demarcate the threshold to the shrines, many *yashiro* (huts) for *kami*, bridges and 1,567 ritual objects. This is a practice called *shikinen-sengu*. These are all rebuilt anew to enable maintenance, and the used timbers are passed on to repair other shrines around the country. The whole township and region take part in this process. The central *shin-no-mihashira* (heart pillar) is a timber, at least 300 years old, that has been felled from the sacred mountains. This means that our ancestors planted these trees for this very purpose, 300 years ago and much earlier, for this ritual to have continued more than 1,000 years. The timbers are carried down the rivers and streets through various townships. When the sacred pillar is raised, the master builder chants a prayer, invoking the moving power of *kotodama*. I see the deconstruction and reconstruction reflect Shinto beliefs to celebrate life born, decaying and then extinguished, marking these cycles to orient passage through life to teach and remind us that nothing is permanent.

The use of significant resources to dismantle a structure every 20 years, only for it to be rebuilt again, may seem bizarre—especially to those that adhere significance

to preserving historical architecture, much like restoring the Acropolis. In fact, both European and Japanese architects have equated Ise and the Acropolis in beauty, function, religious prominence and cultural originality in the world of modern architecture. This comparison was famously made by Taut, a German architect, in the 1930s, who 'elevated' Ise in international architectural hierarchy (Reynolds, 2001). Isozaki (2011, p. 125), however, was critical of positioning Ise 'on a Western scale of value'. He argued the 'mindset haunting modernity and its conflation with genealogy' is because it requires a 'discovery of origin . . . to perform an evaluation' (p. 130). In other words, time is linear in the mindset of modernity, so a singular point or origin has to be created or defined from which things can be explained and measured. Preserving the original is a way to measure and assure values such as authenticity, durability, consistency and progress. Design, with its modern lineage, also expresses these values.

Yet, there is no 'origin' as such of Ise. Being a culturally significant site noted in the earliest written records of Japan, *Nihonshoki*, its entanglements are both deep and broad. Scholars are unable to verify its inception, as this matter is not about this one shrine but also concerns the politicisation of Shinto, which is and has been, associated with a variety of *kami*, beliefs, myths, events, rituals, ideologies and rulers, as well as the politics of writing and interpreting premodern histories (Hayashi, 1997; Loo, 2010; Reynolds, 2001). In all, instead of seeking foundational truths, we could say all manners of deliberate concealment and reconstruction have been the constant practice associated with Ise (Rambelli, 2014). This paradox fascinates scholars and lay people to continue re-interpreting the significance of Ise to this day, including myself, because both experience and documentation are intentionally shrouded. Instructions for the re-build are not written or turned into blueprints. The entire shrine complex is surrounded by four layers of sacred hedges. The ritual of renewal takes place in predawn darkness and behind silk veils. Such secrecy may arouse suspicion for religion, tradition and myths in those who value logic, transparency and public verifiability (Kasulis, 2002). The same values underlie 'blind' peer-reviews in Design Research that determine what knowledge is deemed important to Design.

However, many forms of onto-epistemes are embodied in practices, and they are legitimate, available to those proximal with an affinity to such practices. This is true for Japanese philosophy (Kasulis, 2002) and in creative practice research (Barret & Bolt, 2007). During Ise's reconstruction, countless adjustments have taken place through many hands, techniques and materials in response to varying climates and resource scarcity. Over the centuries, its style has also incorporated Buddhist influences from Korea and China, and the cycles were often disrupted due to war and natural disasters. From this, we can see a way of designing that differs from Design, which does not promote values of clarity, originality, durability, rationalism or linear advancement. Isozaki sagely cautioned us not to seek origins because it also 'causes us to lose the point, abandoning the real object' (2011, p. 125). What I learned from Ise's ritual is that one can respect and appreciate 'contradictory' truths and wisdom without fully seeing, owning or understanding. It also taught me about the sacredness of knowledge and being mindful when crossing over thresholds. I will elaborate more on this in the concluding remarks.

The importance of what we cannot see, own or understand speaks most powerfully to me when standing in front of the site where the old shrines once stood (Figure 6.3). This space is 'empty', marked by white stones and an 'empty' wooden *yashiro*. Cleared, 'empty' sites are characteristics of shrines as seen in *himorogi* (cleared spaces

Figure 6.3 Geku Shrine, Ise.

of sanctum) demarcated with *shimenawa* (rope). In other words, this 'emptiness' is the grounds for invoking *kami*. This 'empty' site is not disused or abandoned; rather, I see it as an ontological space that is anticipating and always-becoming-with. It reflects a world view shaped by philosophies of absence, where formlessness is the necessary grounds for being (Nishida as cited in Dilworth et al., 1998). It is this very emptiness that receives our presence and retains the 'possibility that something may enter it' because 'an empty state possesses a chance of becoming by virtue of its receptive nature' (Hara, 2011, p. 30). I come to Ise's teaching through this ontology of emptiness. This emptiness and cycles of dismantling and rebuilding are precisely what enables Ise Shrine to continue becoming-with.

Interrelatedness is seen in the 20-year cycles that maintain generational and community ties. Every material is handcrafted by a person as a sign of their respect and a gift to *kami* and community. Families bring their children to participate in Ise's various festivals as *ujiko*,[4] and these children, later when fully grown, continue to visit with their own families. A total of 230,000 people across Japan are selected via a ballot to participate in the stone-laying ritual (Teeuwen & Breen, 2017). Each person offers one river-washed stone, wrapped in white cloth, to contribute to covering the whole ground to demarcate the sacred places that no one can enter. Apprentices commence their training to develop their craft over the decades to become masters who teach the next group of apprentices. While historical and contemporary patriarchy underpin gendered roles performed at shrines, the 20-year cycles maintain correspondence amongst a vast network of carpenters, artisans, construction workers, caretakers and communities to pass on knowledge, practices and stories. Generations have affectionately called the Shrine *Oise-san*[5] and Ise Shrine continues to be a major a pilgrimage for the 14 million who visited during the last *shikinen-sengu* in 2013 and another 9.7 million during the 2020 New Year celebrations (Asahi Newspaper, 2020). The next *shikinen-sengu* will be in 2033.

In all, I provided one notion of designing that is relational to and with human, more-than-human and broader ecologies, imbued with ontologies, philosophies and spiritualities that have accompanied practices that continue today. Interrelating here is a way of being, learning and awakening a heightened awareness of relational sensitivity across plurality. This is what I see as *kokoro* of designing that seeks to enhance the qualities of interrelatedness. When such practices are collapsed under established canons of Co-design or Participatory Design, I hope you can see what politics are at play when this happens that omit a way of interrelating beyond materials, projects, infrastructures and human-centred timespans. To me, *kokoro* of designing resonates across a deeper, broader scale and plurality of 'participants'.

Departing and Sailing

Thinking with archipelagos is a reminder that islands are plural and have never been isolated (Hau'ofa, 1994). This means we can find alliances by forging ties and learning amongst one another, as well as find the courage, support and inspiration to depart from the shores of the Continent. However, just as the metaphor of the Continent references colonial cartography that created universal, technical and imperial epistemologies to demarcate worlds and territories (Schultz, 2018) for us here, it is a reminder to be vigilant about the violent acts of taking knowledge and resources from one part of the world to another, especially if we have already been conditioned with

values that they should always be free, accessible and transportable. In other words, when we sail to other archipelagos of designing, it is important to understand that the act of departure and travel is an arduous effort.

The labour of unlearning entrenched conditioning, mindsets and habits can be challenging, as it often requires one to be open, uncertain and vulnerable (Rose, 2004). Alongside Shinto, I also continue to draw upon Zen teachings, such as *it is not our preference that causes problems but our attachments to them*, because of the emphasis they give to *mushin* (mindfulness) as a way of letting go (see Akama, 2018). The word *mushin*, often associated with 'mindfulness', is written by combining *mu* (emptiness) and *kokoro*. *Mushin* is a lifelong practice of clearing away preconceptions, distractions, habits and reactions to being mindful of what I am holding and carrying into places, relationships and occasions. It is an act of composure and readiness (Akama & Light, 2018) to take responsibility for how we are already entangled. The introductory section spoke to the structures of whiteness and the efforts I am making to avoid remaining as nowhere and nobody. I know how it feels to be 'othered', so my practice also includes avoiding 'othering' anyone, such as labelling 'white people' as default oppressors. The powerful poetry of Audrey Lorde (2018) has taught us that 'the master's tool will never dismantle the master's house'. Her work powerfully speaks here to mean 'othering' oppressors only leads to swapping rooms within the same house of dualism, discrimination and disempowerment.

As we depart from 'The Continent of Dominant Design', this also signals a movement away from dualism and disempowerment. I see decolonising as powerful forces like the tectonic plates that broke up the supercontinent, Gondwanaland. Allies in decolonising in this collection, and beyond those I have cited, are doing this challenging and necessary work to dismantle hegemony and provide alternatives to those already conditioned with the modern and colonial scripts of Design. If decolonising is the powerful courage needed to depart the shores of the Continent, the archipelagos is a metaphor for plurality of many minds, places, perspectives and relationalities, as well as the fluidity and partiality of our own viewpoints. This means that archipelagos are not literal locations, nations or cultures, but they are where these pluralities can be embodied in ourselves. This echoes the work of friend and colleague James Oliver (forthcoming), who explains 'islandness' as 'inhabited complex of multiplicity'.

There are so many archipelagos of designing that manifest many kinds of ontologies, philosophies and spiritualities that have continued within industrialised societies. Sadly, there is no room here to include more, so instead, I recommend learning how designing has always been participating in becoming-with-many from those who are generously inviting us to listen and engage. For example, I have learned a great deal from the wisdom offered by Uncle Moran, Uncle Harrington and Professor Sheehan (2018, p. 73) in Australia on Indigenous knowledge that considers design as 'a natural and naturalizing power', and it is 'how all living beings co-operate and co-create'. This designing for 'mutually enhancing sustainable economies and sociotechnical systems' informs how Tristan Schultz (2018, p. 85) spearheads Indigenous Design Futures. Many contemporary Indigenous designers in architecture, urban planning, product design, communication design, fashion and textiles are drawing upon this significant heritage and wisdom, adapting, blending, evolving the notion of designing in ways to continue contributing to their communities and broader ecologies (Browning et al., 2017).

From another archipelago, I learned from designer/researcher Diana Albarrán González (2020) the wisdom of Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal peoples, a compelling form of decolonising and artisanal designing through *Buen Vivir* (good living, collective wellbeing) and *Lekil Kuxlejal* (a fair and dignified life). From Desna Whaanga-Schollum, a founding member and Chairperson of Ngā Aho, a network of Māori design professionals, I learned about Te Ao Māori (Māori worlds) and the philosophies, principles, protocols, values and world views practised as *Kaupapa Māori* (Akama et al., 2019). With friends and colleagues Joyce Yee, Khemmiga Teerapong and Viola Petrella, we have begun to understand the significant role played by Lanna temples in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in sustaining designing and social innovation (Yee et al., 2020).

Plural worlds are embodied in these practices, which I find so compelling. These 'island to island' relationships (Stratford et al., 2011) have become a significant constellation by which to orientate my approach to navigating the eddies and currents that powerfully influence the movements of my practice and becoming-with. These encounters, often through invitation, have required me to listen and follow, guided by the host, while releasing and surrendering what I am holding on to and carrying with me. Like the rituals at a shrine, I aim to be mindful when crossing over thresholds and be open to encounters by acknowledging the sacredness of knowledge, the spirituality of words, and the sentiency of place and more-than-human beings. I aim to respect teachings, truths and wisdom without needing to know fully.

As we sail to many archipelagos, we must also learn how to respectfully embrace other perspectives, knowledges, practices, experiences and world views and attempt to rediscover or reorientate relationships. I use the term *reorientation*, with regards to those who were conditioned through systems of separation, omission and acquisition, as a way to encourage alternative ways of relating, of being entangled and implicated with one another. This resonates with what Tlostanova (2017, p. 54) has argued as 'multiple optics and many-valued logic' that can lead to a more radical rethinking of Design.

By acknowledging our fluid positionalities of our own knowing, being and worlding, we can enable differences to be premised and embraced. Yet, the irony of the 'diversity' agenda means that many of us who are identified as 'non-white' women are brought into spaces of whiteness to 'educate' or 'diversify' established groupings or ways of thinking. This labour is wearisome, but I take up such spaces as my duty and privilege towards creating conditions for plurality to flourish. Institutions have a way of 'managing diversity' to contain conflict and to make visible literal differences. The abstracted individuality of liberalism still threatens to flatten diversity because, as Ahmed (2012) noted, diversity is tolerated as long as it does not disrupt established structures. This means diversity is contained within pre-existing categories, much like filling out the grid of a table. Adding more content does not disrupt the stability of the grid, but it can make it appear diverse and equal. Extending Ahmed's critique, when diversity is seen as a threat to institutions like the establishment of disciplines, this means that we, as educators and researchers, must be careful not to participate in closed circularity and authority of the status quo, so that our systems of qualification, validation of knowledge and structures of education is not ossifying Dominant Design. Rather, in premising diversity, we must constantly be questioning what is taught or omitted, what is considered knowledge or dismissed, what is visible and promoted, and what is invisible under water and kept unseen.

Archipelagos: Sea of *Ma* (In-Betweens)

It is curious how rational logic rejects incongruence when contradictions are always co-present and interrelated. Plurality is to respect knowing, being and worlding that are different and always will be irreconcilable. Zen teaches us that the notion of opposites consists of dualisms constructed by the linear mind (Suzuki, 1969). What appears as opposite poles to the linear mind might just be partial views from various archipelagos.

> *One Day During Lockdown*[6]
> *Knowing smiles from strangers—*
> *for now we have something in common besides the weather.*
> *Why does avocado and vegemite on toast taste so good?*
> *Paralysed by fear of not being able to say goodbye to my mother in person.*
> *Watching the clouds bump into the sky.*
> *News report of an outraged woman who was refused entry to a store for not wearing a face mask. A corner of my soul is ashamed to admit that we might be totally missing the teachings from the more-than-human virus deity.*

The disruption and persisting challenges of the pandemic are acute reminders that our experiences defy easy comparison or can collapse under the weight of a universal ontological equivalence. Contrary to the utopian imaginary of an island paradise, archipelagos are multibeing assemblages of flotsam and jetsam, continually whirling and creating dynamic forms that also intensifies, multiplies and disrupts relations of land, water, island and continent so it remains no longer a 'composition of things that are believed to fit together' (Stratford et al., 2011, p. 122). Similarly, various forces are always at work that buffet our being and becoming. The examples shared from Japan are familiar to neighbouring lands because there are well-worn shipping channels and trade routes where ideas and practices have travelled in-between. We are already entangled in evolutionary, geologically and globalising ways. Building on what I have previously written about *Ma* as between-ness and in-between created by the pre-existence of both and many (Akama, 2015), the space in-between (*Ma*) the islands are just as important to the archipelagos. Philosophy and ontologies of *Ma* 'denies the position of a fixed subject' (Isozaki as cited in Davidson, 1991, p. 66). The currents and channels in-between are the Sea of *Ma* (Figure 6.4) that maintains a correspondence, co-emergence and sensitivity that is neither one nor another, to remain entangled in the flux and flow of changing and becoming-with-many. The Sea of *Ma* can be a metaphor for many things where supposedly 'incongruent', 'contradictory' or 'incommensurate' knowledges, experiences, ontologies and cosmologies as currents intermingle, and have always intermingled, to compose new things. In other words, rather than emphasising sameness or fearing divergence, connections and resonance can be found in difference when plurality is embraced in its own right (Carter, 2019). This reinforces that archipelagos are not literal locations, nations or cultures, but a metaphor for how these pluralities can be embodied in ourselves.

Being at sea is unsettling. These in-betweens can be a contested space of turbulence, tension and survival for those whose onto-epistemologies continue to be ignored and belittled (Nakata, 2007). It can create anxiety for those conditioned by the Continent who fear that their engagement might result in misappropriation and further

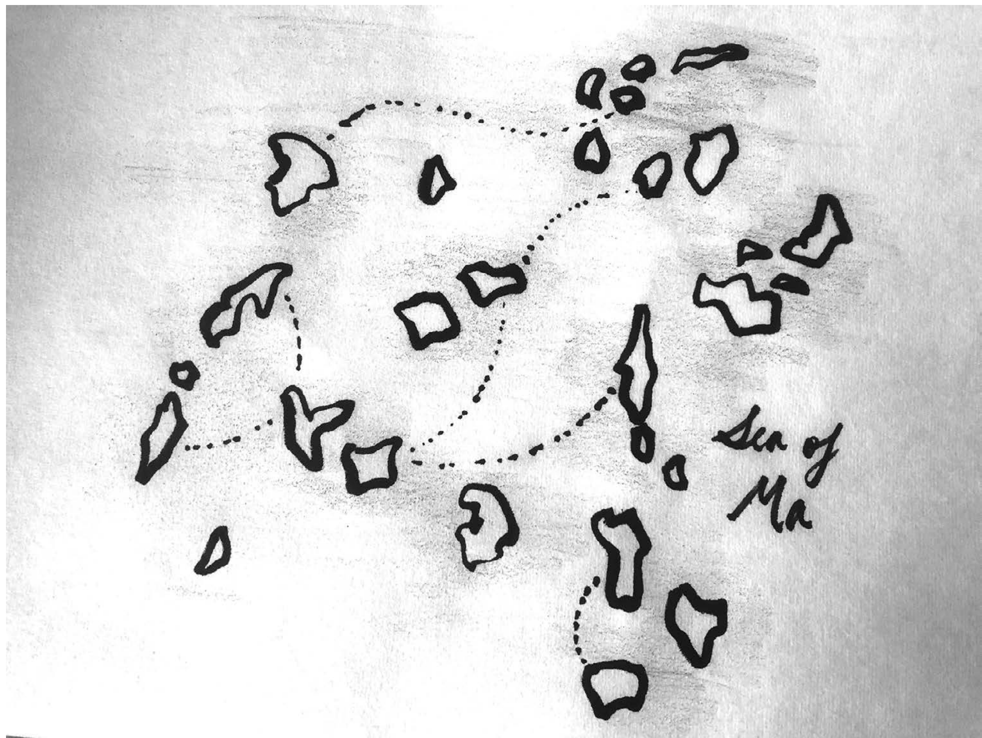

Figure 6.4 Sea of *Ma*.

colonisation. Just as the need to be vigilant to read the tides, rips, swells and depth when entering any body of water, we must also be attentive, responsive and reflexive at all times in the Sea of *Ma* to engage with difference with respect and sensitivity. This includes attending to the values that lie under the surface and how these are expressed and negotiated through our practices when we design and research with others, including more-than-humans. It is an ethical and political vigilance to deeply engage with mind–body–heart–spirit and honour the 'distinctions between the relationships of things' and 'spaces for plural ethical relationships' (Oliver, forthcoming).

When we are no longer victims of whiteness, we can encounter one another in this Sea of *Ma*. My stories shared at the start is an Acknowledgement of being relationally emplaced. My explorations in writing–reading is another way I am aiming to engage with you through *ko*-ontological inter-becoming. I welcome all to share how designing is constituted by many stories, relationality and positionalities in plural worlds. Locating ourselves is one way we can understand what we are holding on to and carrying with us, so we can avoid appropriating, flattening and dividing. It is a way of being respectful to our primordial entanglements, dependencies and co-emergence, that obliges us to feel, think, act, imagine and become-with-many. In doing so, I am hopeful that we can embrace many practices as designing and research so we can confidently depart the Continent's shores. This also means to abandon logical constructs that invalidate contradictions and paradoxes, and collapse them under universalisms

or categorisation of sameness. When such logical temptations occur, let us enact rituals such as walking, gardening, swimming or preparing food that have been practised over-and-over-and-over-and-over again that can deepen one's relationship with diverse ecologies. This can remind us of the delightfulness of contrasting flavours, distant correspondence between the moon and tides, and how life cannot be without the reciprocities of decay.

The plurality of archipelagos means that many worlds exist simultaneously, and often in close proximity. If being entangled is already our pre-existing condition, it compels us to act within an obligation, responsiveness and responsibility. I have shared one example as *kokoro* of designing that inspires me from the archipelagos of Japan, but as we know, there are many archipelagos of designing that can also be our initial navigating guide. As we set sail in the Sea of *Ma*, it is my hope that the Continent will then shrink in dominance in our view and in our being, as we move further towards becoming-with archipelagos.

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Notes

1. Video recorded on Wurrundjeri land (password: Mindfulness2020). https://vimeo.com/285071671
2. Modern Design in Japan emerged during the Meiji Restoration (1868–1912). Colonisation was rampant across Asia during this time, and Japan, wanting to avoid invasion by foreign aggressors, rapidly industrialised, Westernised and centralised the emperor's power. Modern design is an outcome of Western culture that was imported, imitated and assimilated in a bid to 'attain parity with the great powers' (Yasuda, 1917, p. 51), and used in the militarisation and colonisation by the imperial state (Adriasola et al., 2016). Design—or『デザイン』as it is referred to in Japan—is written in *katakana* script to indicate this imported origin.
3. *Sakuteiki* (*The Book of Garden*) by Tachibana no Toshitsuna (1028–1094) provides a compilation of techniques used to create the *shinden-zukuri* garden for temples. It is considered as one of the oldest publications on garden design in Japan (Tachibana, 1976).
4. *Ujiko* is similar to a shrine 'parishioner', referring to those connected to the shrine or deity.
5. Adding '-*san*' is common for names, so attributing this to Ise signals a relational intimacy.
6. A fragment of my text from the 'Writing With the Virus' project with the Expanded Writing Group during COVID-19.

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7 Building a Community Through Service Design and Responsiveness to Emotions

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Introduction

This chapter explores emerging decolonial approaches to service design in the context of a Chilean education and design community. The chapter draws on reflection-on-action (Schön, 1984) about a project that was based on the formal certification of quality, which is an official process to probe the constant improvement of educational programmes of Chilean universities. Reflections were made by the authors, who were teachers, facilitators and managers of the Master in Advanced Design (MADA) of the School of Design at the Pontificia Universidad Católica of Chile (PUC). This chapter shows how a formal and structured process, which is usually based on more top-down administrative management, can contribute to building relationships within a programme. The project, which resulted in defining a community, was implemented over a two-year period from 2015–2017.

The School of Design approached the evaluation certification process by focusing on the users of the courses; that is, the students. In other words, the comprehensive evaluation process of MADA was designed from the onset to include students in every stage of the evaluation. The purpose of the project was to strengthen collaborative practices amongst students, graduates, lecturers and managers; hence, the evaluation process sought to create a sense of community by first listening to the ideas and needs of the participants in the MADA programme, followed by careful considerations for implementing actions for improving student experiences.

MADA has had nine years of uninterrupted trajectory from 2011–2020, and has delivered more than 100 graduates. It is a programme aimed at professionals from different disciplines seeking to develop advanced design capabilities to transform communities, society and/or organisational contexts from a strategic perspective through processes of economic and/or social value creation. The students are from different fields—mainly from design, but also from engineering, architecture, journalism, arts, pedagogy and more. The teachers are mainly from design and other related fields, all of them with a master's degree as a minimum qualification. Classes are held in the evening (6:30–9:30 pm), and only some classes are conducted during the daytime, mostly on Saturday mornings. Therefore, students and teachers work during the day and attend classes after the usual working hours. Students are encouraged to complete their master's study in two years, which is why they need a certain number of credits every semester and attend classes at least three times a week. It is an intense modality

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for those who work and study. Training at MADA focuses on: 1) intervention projects with the objective to use solution-oriented and sustainable design and technology; and 2) systematising the process of transformation they have experienced by the creation of instrumental design-driven models that enable replicating and/or scaling of solutions in contexts of similar characteristics (Mollenhauer et al., 2020).

In the project, the key actors of the process were students, graduates, teachers, facilitators and managers who, although they had a good relationship, had not discussed each other's expectations or how, according to their role, they expected the programme to continue growing. Within the implemented project, which is the case explained here, that relationship was strengthened by listening to and fostering egalitarian dialogue to agree on what this community would be like and by considering each individual and group perspective. During the process, a selection of graduates, student representatives, facilitators and teachers from PUC were involved in a cyclical process that drew on participatory service design approaches and methods for the quality certification process.

The aim of the process was to include the student communities in the decision-making for implementing future strategies; hence, a practical and strategic roadmap for future programme development, marketing, implementation and evaluation was developed collaboratively. The School of Design sought to understand the needs of their student communities, avoiding the continued management of learning programmes that are based on assumptions about the needs of the communities. The process included three process cycles during which data were collected over a six-month period. After each cycle, data were collated and analysed. The second and third cycles built on the knowledge gained from the previous cycle. The process did not focus from the onset on decolonial methodologies, approaches or aims, but this chapter will review the process through a decolonial lens, with the aim of exploring to what extent the practices may have contributed to decolonial approaches in the specific context of the quality certification process at MADA.

Mapping and conceptualising decolonising approaches in tertiary education contexts in South America is possible through the lens of student movements and emerging praxis that are underpinned by pedagogies of emancipation and by autonomous and more democratic knowledge co-creation (Motta et al., 2020). In Chile, the education system promotes the educational ideal of 'inclusion, social mobility, personal fulfilment and liberation' that is underpinned by the Chilean Inclusion Law, according to Lohaus-Reyes (2019, p. 76). Further, she aptly explained how the Chilean curriculum is a result of laws and reforms that aim to establish such ideals for inclusion, but that a gap exists between its theories and praxis. The curriculum, which is expected to serve as 'connective tissue that is supposed to link diverse identities, expectations and realities', often portrays a 'language of objectives and standards, instead of worrying about its content and relevance with respect to the local context' (p. 76), thus failing to connect with the realities and knowledge systems of local communities and cultures.

In this sense, some Chilean curricula continue to reveal some colonial vestiges, with a tendency to portray power that can render locals as incapable and inferior (see Mignolo, 2006). Lohaus-Reyes (2019) has written about decolonising approaches to curriculum development in Chile, claiming that 'efforts of the teachers, students and communities who become conscious of the diversity, share and visibilise their education practices with others who are not familiar with their reality' (p. 79). From this perspective, the chapter will explore decolonising approaches in the quality certification

process of a master's programme at a Chilean tertiary education institution. The aim will be to refrain from ways in which problems are commonly solved in the Chilean education context as previously outlined. Rather, a focus will be placed on diversity and building on various processes in educational contexts; for example, evaluation and quality assurance that can share and visibilise local knowledge.

The aim of this chapter is to view the process that emerged at MADA through decolonising approaches, which Tunstall (2013, p. 238) has described as the arrangement of 'methods, principles, and rules [that] contributes to the self-definition and self-determination of those formerly colonized'. Decolonising is about ongoing reflection on how to change the way that we think by re-evaluating and resituating experiences and expressions that can contribute to respectful dialogue. Such values tie in with how Lohaus-Reyes (2019, p. 7) sees the importance of decolonisation in the Chilean educational context as a means to recontextualise 'a space for dialogue where the voice of those who teach and learn can be seen and expressed'. The aforementioned authors have warned against mere exercises of theorisation; hence, caution is needed when decolonising approaches are attempted in contexts of design and innovation (Tunstall, 2013) or education (Lohaus-Reyes, 2019, p. 79).

A vast body of work exists that discusses the need for decolonising approaches in knowledge production, research, education and pedagogical contexts (see e.g. Bhambra et al., 2018; Mignolo, 2006; Smith, 1999; Walker, 2000). Unpacking the main strands of the discourse will be beyond the scope of this chapter, as it focuses on a specific case study in the Chilean context. Thus, the gap that this chapter seeks to address is how the comprehensive quality certification process in a Chilean context may have practically contributed to decolonising higher education practices in quality certification by bringing together and providing opportunities for discourse amongst the course leaders, teachers and a community of students and graduates. We explore how participatory service design may have contributed towards taking humble steps for integrating local knowledge in the evaluation process.

The evaluation process will consider the role of emotions and decision-making when applying service design and co-creation as collaborative practice that is needed when designing more inclusive evaluation processes. Decision-making in this chapter refers to collaborative practice and co-design of facilitator–service designers and the student community. Also, it is defined by the two-fold process described by Aven and Zio (2011, p. 64): '(a) how to faithfully represent and express the knowledge available to best support the decision making and (b) how to best inform the decision maker'. Emotions can be both conscious and unconscious, and they manifest as neurophysiological changes that can be brought on by responses to feelings, thoughts, moods and creativity, to name a few (Cabanac, 2002; Plutchik, 2001, p. 346). A very large number of emotions have been identified in various cultural settings, but emotions remain difficult to define (Plutchik, 2001, p. 344). Authors have identified the number of basic emotions differently, but several agree on fear, anger, sadness and joy (Soto et al., 2020, p. 91).

Ekman and Cordaro (2011, p. 364) included culture-specific feeling states, defining emotions as 'discrete, automatic responses to universally shared, culture-specific and individual-specific events'. Emotions can be considered one of the essential elements in meaningful decision-making processes (Frijda, 1988; Frijda & Parrot, 2011; Lerner et al., 2015). In the cyclical participatory service design process, the focus is placed on the integration of body, emotion and mind of all the participants, teachers and

facilitators. The connection between emotions and decision-making can become tangible during collaborative workshops and facilitation by service designers, who should foster respect and equality in their roles as facilitators by presenting information that is supported by local knowledge of the community in order to best inform decision-makers.

In the context of co-creation, service designers can promote open attitudes, listening first, and using their experience and knowledge to promote respectful interactions and communication amongst participants, resulting in personal and collective benefits. Service design which involves communities provides an appropriate framework for collaboration and dialogue with the members of a community (Miettinen et al., 2016). Participatory service design practice creates a collaborative platform where users and the various stakeholders of any community (i.e. organisation, institution, company, group, municipality, etc.) have an active and essential part to play in design processes. More importantly, service design will lead to beneficial implementation and action by the communities who engage in design. Thus, this chapter posits the following questions: How can the consideration of participants' emotions support more democratic and inclusive decision-making through service design workshops? What can be learned from this specific evaluation process in Chile to be further used and implemented in decolonising approaches?

This chapter is organised in four parts: the first presents the theoretical framework that clarifies the key concepts that underpin the arguments presented here; the second explains the research method, tools and process; the third part reveals the findings of the project; and finally, the fourth proposes a discussion on the reflections and the lessons learned during the project.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is built around the concepts of service design and decolonising approaches to the role of emotions in facilitating democratic decision-making in co-creative processes with communities. The role of co-creation in shaping connections and interaction within communities through dialogue and interaction will be considered.

Decolonising Design and Service Design

The terms *design* and *development* carry strong connotations and associations with the West or the First World (Ghose, 1989, p. 39). Design is closely linked to Western technology, imperialism and colonialism (Ghose, 1989, p. 32; Tunstall, 2013, p. 234). The clarification of the purpose of designers in any given context is necessary, as well as questioning their roles and their contributions to communities (Tunstall, 2013). By drawing on the practical approach suggested by Khandwala (2019), practical steps for decolonising design can be outlined. She asked how designers can adjust their thinking to critically evaluate their design practices. First, designers have to acknowledge that design, as such, does not disrupt practices as it is often closely connected to Western ideologies that are built on a system of privilege, the extraction of resources from the colonised and capitalist ways of doing (2019). As practical steps, decolonising design can be framed by the following critical views described by Khandwala (2019):

- Diligence and ongoing critical reflection are needed for implementing decolonising practices.
- False divides and distinctions amongst art, craft and design should be omitted (in addition, see Tunstall, 2013) to acknowledge all cultural forms of creation and making.
- Question the familiar, disrupt established orders and question how solutions may be experienced by others.
- Question your role as designer in a process or project, acknowledge when some roles are not yours to take and step aside (also if not-for-profit work is involved) to create spaces for locally practicing designers to gain a foothold in creative communities to sustain their livelihoods.
- Continue self-education and curiosity, and acknowledge that design is not a neutral practice.

Participatory and socially engaged service design aims to generate social transformations (Miettinen & Valtonen, 2013); hence, it draws on the abilities and decisions of individuals and groups who can, through their behavioural perspectives and their specific and subtle actions, influence and instigate such transformations (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). Service design is a holistic research and application field that enables improved services and experiences (Moritz, 2005). Moreover, service design endows professionals with specific communication and empathic skills (Miettinen et al., 2014) which can also be applied to learning (Kuure et al., 2014). According to Manzini (2009, p. 45), services are 'interactions between people who cooperate to produce a commonly recognized value'. As a result, the services created with and by communities can support collaborative interaction, as services that are created and implemented by communities are underpinned by user and stakeholder integration.

Service design is facilitated through the visualisation of processes, iterative actions and reflections on the processes, which are underpinned by possibilities for anticipating certain situations (Miettinen & Sarantou, 2019). Service designers should be aware of and consider the possible differences in people's lives by asking 'whose stories are being privileged and whose stories are being marginalised in any representations of the Other' (Wilson, 2001, p. 217). They need a willingness to abandon a privileged role, considering the user as part of a network of relationships and not simply a means to predestined and designed outcomes (Schultz et al., 2018). Therefore, this approach is oriented towards the critical perspectives that promote decolonising approaches, as emphasised by Khandwala (2019) and Tunstall (2013). Service designers, in their roles as facilitators, should work towards the undoing of dominant structures and lower their own expectations, visions and purposes in terms of project outcomes that would be acceptable in their own contexts. Such approaches, which enable communities to design by themselves, foster appreciation for plurality and diversity as the basis of design processes. Despite the perpetuation of established power structures, by adopting decolonising approaches, facilitators can effectively analyse and then question these structures. When facilitators of service design workshops include respectful practices such as listening and valorising the heterogeneous experiences of each member of the community whereby the position of everyone is viewed as equal, horizontal interactions amongst the community can potentially be strengthened.

In service design, the role of the facilitator is essential and not limited to workshop environments, but also includes being a project coordinator (Miettinen & Valtonen,

2013). Service designers have to change or adapt their mindset and critically consider the frameworks that guide their actions. The performance of the facilitator, besides applying methods and techniques, can be evaluated according to the extent to which collaboration and commitment of the participants are maintained (Hogan, 2007). Developing communication and practical skills that are sensitive to the emotions which are exteriorised by the expressions and behaviours of people and that sustain a continual flow of dialogue are necessary. The facilitator can encourage collective thought, which is 'people thinking together' according to Bohm (2013, p. 29). Emphatic approaches and respectful and inclusive perspectives, as well as the sense-making abilities of facilitators, can enhance connections amongst people. The mentioned approaches often come about through 'persistent unlearning and relearning [how] to see the world' (Schultz et al., 2018, p. 94).

Service designers are facilitators of processes; thus, they guide processes of collective participation and draw on associations of concepts that are underpinned by complexity and diversity (Schultz et al., 2018). Within dynamic contexts, it is possible to promote the emergence of various languages, whether they are spoken, visual or alternatively expressed. The experiences service designers draw on are continuously informed by interaction itself, which impacts co-created results and outcomes. Service design processes may combine a variety of emotional and decision-making aspects by constant dialogue that may come about through prototyping actions and co-creation activities.

Emotions and Decision-Making

Flexibility to continuously adapt perceptions can enhance the abilities of service designers to gauge their decision-making in facilitation processes according to their intuition and emotions (Lerner et al., 2015). Therefore, depending on conditions in their environments of operation and interaction, emotions arise that can influence and guide decisions. In this chapter, emotions will be considered according to their role in decision- and meaning-making (Lerner et al., 2015). Emotions influence people's responses according to the inspiration that emerges from life experiences (Mattelmäki et al., 2014), and they can drive people's interactions and their emotional responses (Mikkonen, 2017). Possible responses to a variety of information (George & Dane, 2016) also influence emotions. Emotions are constantly fuelled by people's experiences, which have an impact on the present and an influence on future decisions (Soto, 2018). Experiences are influenced by interactions with people, objects and the environment. Intuitions are driven by stimuli such as temperature, light, colour, smell and other sensations (Norman, 2004). Intuition and visceral sensing can impact participants' emotions in co-creative processes because each will react according to the intuitive stimuli that they receive during the process from their immediate environment and from their previous experiences. These factors play a role in their judgements about the situation they are experiencing.

Emotions in service design workshops are related to emotions that arise in the interaction between people and between people and their environment, which is different from emotions related to products which place the emphasis on the interaction between people and objects (Desmet, 2002). The complexity of emotions in an interactive environment is influenced by factors related to the perceptions and previous experiences of participants in service design processes. When service design is based on a participatory perspective, the emotions of the participants, users, stakeholders and service designers become relevant. Emotions in co-creation contexts present many challenges for service designers in their role as facilitators. The emotions of

participants need to be recognised and acknowledged during workshops, while service designers and facilitators need to come to terms with their own emotions, such as satisfaction or frustration, which relate to positive or negative results. In addition, their emotions can fluctuate when promoting and guiding dialogue (Soto et al., 2020).

Emotional aspects and their integration into decision-making are influenced by pluralities of vision and the knowledge that participants themselves produce during a process (Schultz et al., 2018). In the context of this chapter, such integration finds an explicit application in the perception, understanding and defining of community by its members, whether they are current or former students, teachers, facilitators or course leaders. The construction of a shared vision in a community context provides members with new means and motivation to take and enact their decisions. Service designers and facilitators can play a key role in encouraging and perhaps even challenging participants to manage their choices based on their emotions, but keeping in mind that flexibility is needed in community contexts as changes may occur in the relationships, common visions and shared perspectives of the community, this impacting the anticipated results.

Co-Creation

Co-creation is a broad term that can have connotations that range from concrete to abstract depending on the context. It refers to any collective creation activity (Sanders & Stappers, 2008) and is understood as a collective creative process with several influencing factors that could determine the perception and quality of the experience. One of the essential elements of co-creation is that people participate in a shared space by learning from their personal experiences while influencing their collective experience (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). As a practice with a specific purpose, co-creation requires a pre-design that guides actions for reaching a goal. Therefore, the production of knowledge comes about in a shared space and is achieved by the participants of the co-creation process themselves (Schultz et al., 2018). Designers can facilitate and guide the process, and in participatory service design, community members are involved in various roles of the process, depending on the levels of responsibility they can and want to take on (see Chapter 10 of this book).

The skills required to guide co-creative processes are closely related to the ability to establish creative relationships. Co-creation processes that are guided by decolonising design approaches encourage open attitudes and capabilities for articulating interests and learning processes (Khandwala, 2019), which come about through interactions with others. Although there may be restrictions on the position or role that people fulfil in a certain structure (Hoffman et al., 2015), co-creation can mitigate dominant structures and constraints, especially if the emotional perspectives of communities are respected. Such emotional components in decision-making, combined with decolonising practices, can impact personal and collective perceptions of co-creative communities.

Dialogue, Interaction, Community

Dialogue is an interaction that can come about between people as the 'flow of meaning' can establish common understandings (Bohm, 2013, p. 7). Attitudes of flexibility and willingness to create agreeable outcomes can enable the integration of personal interests to identify common goals. Some emotions can fuel trust or mistrust that can be experienced by participants during various interactions; hence, emotions

can enable the strengthening of relationships or fuel relationship breakdowns. In interactions between people, the expression and communication of emotions can contribute to effective problem-solving by their clarifying communication (Lerner et al., 2015). Clear communication of emotions enables diverse perspectives and interactions within a community.

The experiences of communities should be understood as local knowledge that should be invested into co-creation which acts on behalf of the community. To improve this understanding, it is necessary to systematically and collaboratively work directly with the communities (Meroni, 2008), which requires changing the focus from the individual to the network of relationships of a community (Miettinen et al., 2016). Understanding the context in which the community operates enables scenarios to be identified as well as the people who should be involved in co-creating a product or service (Cantù et al., 2012); hence, greater precision in defining possible relationships and interactions is possible. Design is not a neutral practice, but it can be considered a tool for social integration and for the promotion of co-creation in marginalised environments (Soto & Kaplún, 2019), with the potential to enable social cohesion relevant to each project. In the case of public services, citizens are also a community in which user/citizens establish a system of interactions through which they define their relationship and experience (Mollenhauer & Soto, 2019).

Therefore, users understood as a community of people establish a set of actions that enable them to interact with other members (Tolosa, 2013). In such systems of interaction, their roles, relationships and sense of community are created within a given environment.

The daily interactions of people leave visible and invisible marks and traces in people's lives; behaviours and habits determine the form of interaction and relationships that people establish with others (Tolosa, 2013). In intensive work processes, a relationship of trust, or mistrust, is generated amongst participants, which is determined by a specific activity or moment (Judice, 2014). Therefore, the relationships within a community depend on the intensity of the interactions and the bonds that can be generated as a result of the respectful dialogue and perceptions that come from belonging to the community. The appreciation and respect for the experience of each member of the community is vital to avoid the hegemony and domination of some members of the community (Tunstall, 2013) and to promote equality in their interactions and relationships. Thus, encouraging horizontal and respectful interactions and the awareness of emotional plurality of participants in the co-creative process can give facilitators a holistic, inclusive and empathic approach to the community (see Chapter 10 of this book).

Community as a visible and invisible network creates, modifies, strengthens, eliminates and resignifies its relationships according to interactions and experiences. Interactions within a community are constantly changing according to the particularities that influence perceptions and experiences (Soto, 2018). The creation of a community includes a negotiation amongst its members to define various personal, social, economic and political aspects (Kuure, 2017) defining other people. One of the benefits of design with a community emphasis is the ability and intention to understand people's social behaviours and needs (Meroni, 2008). Designing with the community encourages listening respectfully and grasping the horizontal connections amongst users in a system of relationships, behaviours, expectations, visions and emotions that present in different intensities, ranging from abundantly rich to deficient (Figure 7.1).

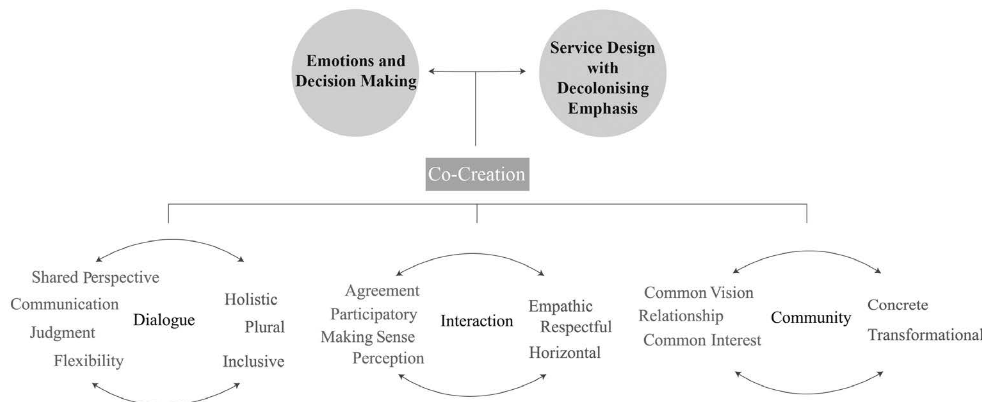

Figure 7.1 Visualisation of the concepts of the theoretical framework.

Research Methods

The data described in this chapter were collected in a case study, the MADA programme, over a six-month period from 2016–2017. The research process included three cycles during which data were collected and analysed for the development of the next cycle, but the data were also disseminated in a next cycle for the benefit and ongoing development of the community. The three cycles (Figure 7.2) consisted of three workshops that drew on a variety of research methods. Participatory service design was used as an overarching approach to strengthen participation and a sense of community.

The goal of this case study was to explore how the MADA community was strengthened through a participatory service design process that included participatory workshops, meetings and surveys (Table 7.1).

In the workshop, the participation of students, graduates, facilitators, teachers and course leaders was essential to understanding the concerns, perceptions and expectations about their learning, teaching and facilitation processes. The project followed a cyclical but flexible structure (Figure 7.2) to take into account the needs of the MADA community, possible scenarios and the role of carefully listening to the community's desires. The emotional component to decision-making was based on open communication about the process and defining activities that made sense to participants and would provide valuable experiences to the community.

Six sets of data were collected during three participatory workshops (Table 7.1), which brought together a total of 120 participants; for those workshops, different tools were developed to collect the data, described in what follows.

1. Would scenarios: The participants were organised into five groups of graduates and three teams of students. Each team identified the aspects from the programme that 'they would not like', those 'they would like' and 'how they would materialise their ideas'.
2. 3Cs matrix: The participants worked on the definition of the identity of the programme through the 3Cs, from the Spanish words *cabeza* (head), *corazón* (heart) and *cuerpo* (body).

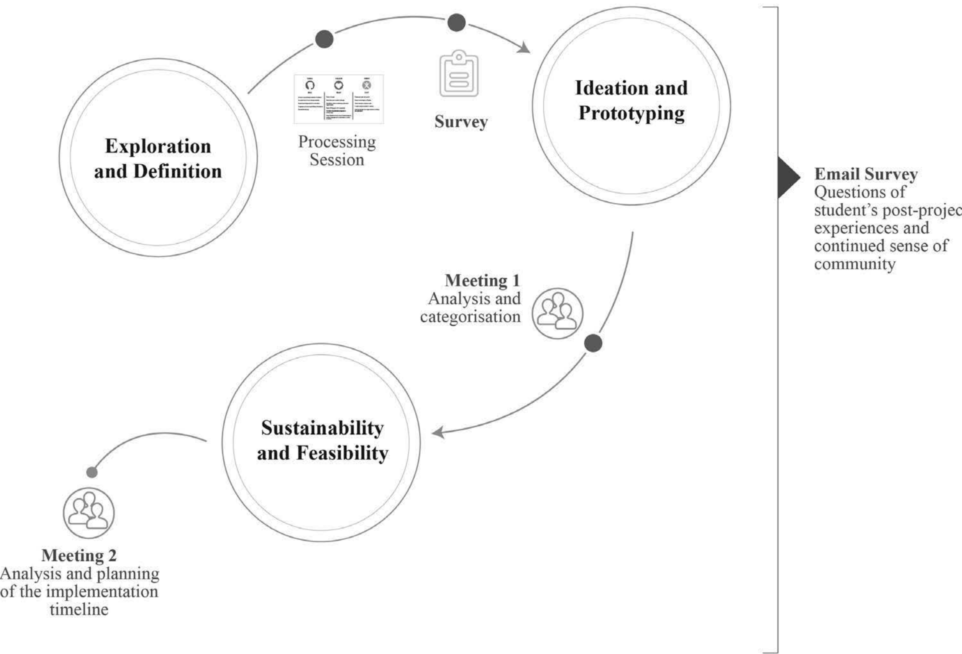

Figure 7.2 The cyclical research design process of the project.

3. Qualitative surveys that included questions: What is MADA? What do you feel about being students/graduates of MADA? What are the rituals of MADA?
4. Anecdotal data: Using the questions 'What?', 'Why?' and 'How?' to analyse the ideas, and as a way to specify and evaluate the proposals.
5. Strategic roadmap: A step-by-step plan indicating how to implement the project, including the perspectives of traceability and sustainability. This tool was applied to each proposal to identify strengths and opportunities and those that remained unaddressed.
6. Email surveys: Questions about the student's post-project experiences and continued sense of community.

The questionnaire resulted in 27 responses that identified possible actions for improvement in three specific areas: technology, infrastructure (e.g. lighting and air conditioning in the facilities, access to equipment) and aspects for improving learning experiences. The third method was to conduct two meetings with students and graduate representatives to analyse and categorise the data. The qualitative analysis of the data followed the strategy of categorisation and thematic analysis to converge the data with possible actions (Simons, 2009) from the first research cycle to the last. The analysis included the 3Cs matrix (Figure 7.3) mentioned previously. According to Tolosa (2008), the 3Cs are a way to understand people from their mental representations, emotions and behaviours. In this case, we used the matrix as a tool to visualise the three aspects related to people in a comprehensive way, specifying their

Table 7.1 Summary of research methods

Key methods: workshop, focus group discussion and survey	Three participatory workshops (over a six-month period)			Survey (10–15 minutes to complete, four open-ended questions)	Two meetings, following the structure of focus group discussions (collecting anecdotal data and notes)	Email survey (5–10 minutes to complete, two open-ended questions)
	WS 1 Exploration and definitions	WS 2 Ideation and prototyping	WS 3 Sustainability and feasibility			
Participants	120 Students, graduates, teachers			27 Students, graduates	5 Representatives of students and graduates, management team	11 Students, graduates, facilitators, teachers
Objectives	Identify the participants' perception of the master programme performance	Exploration of ideas and co-creation of the dreamed community. Definition of the main characteristics	Critical analysis of ideas and assessment of feasibility	Identify actions to be improved	Review, analysis and categorisation of the results to be worked on in the participatory workshops	Follow-up with student community on project experiences
Methods for data collection	Would scenarios, 3Cs matrix, note taking, survey	Free methods, selected by the participants, use of creative tools and materials	What, Why and How questions, and business model canvas	Survey data	Anecdotal data, note taking	Anecdotal data
Time frame	2015	2016	2017	2016	2016–2017	2020

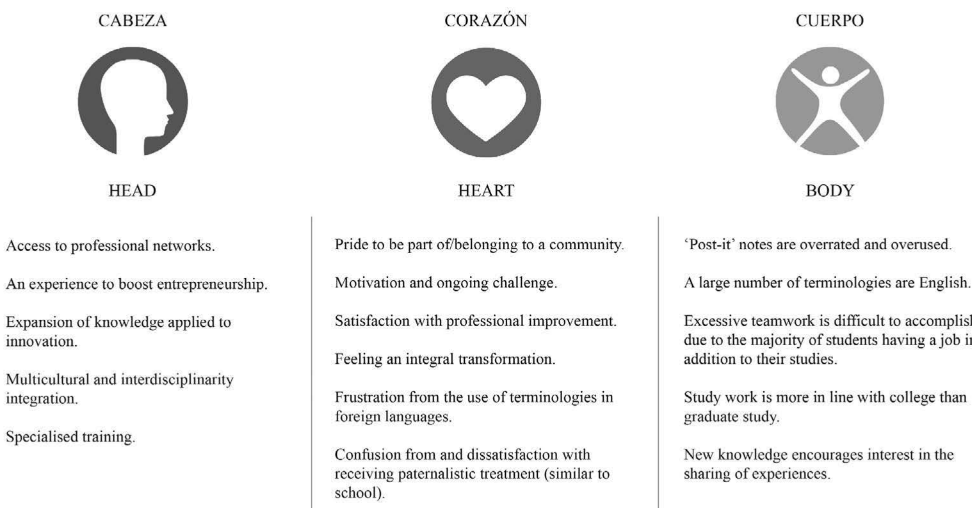

Figure 7.3 3Cs matrix with the summarised experiences of the participants.

rational, emotional and behavioural characteristics. The matrix was applied to visualise the participants' perception of the postgraduate programme, defining the features of the programme in the three areas and at the same time reflecting on the implicit identity of the programme.

The three different methods for data collection were based on their suitability for the participatory design process in which the participants could, based on their experiences, define the next steps in the research cycles. These methods could be used by any project in which different visions need amalgamation as the process starts with an evaluation of what the participants and the community itself have in common and what they envisage to further develop through prototyping. The interaction in the workshops linked the participants from the first moment by creating the first steps for building a sense of community. One of the first exercises was the identification of the opportunities and limitations of the programme through an analysis of its strengths and weaknesses.

The 3Cs matrix lists the concrete, emotional and behavioural aspects of the participants' experiences. The first column shows the responses of participants related to access to new knowledge and skills, which reflects the decision to carry out a postgraduate study. The second column, mostly illustrating positive emotions, differs from the third column, which illustrates mainly negative emotions which create a gap between what is experienced and the awareness of the emotions experienced. In the heart column, most of the recorded responses involve personal significance both in individuals' perceptions and in their relationships generated with peers. However, the body column shows those aspects of the programme that do not meet expectations or in which weaknesses are detected. Therefore, in the head and heart columns, the answers are linked to an invisible or abstract aspect related to the professional and personal benefit that participants experience in the postgraduate study, as opposed to those in the body

column. It is possible to observe that the answers refer mainly to the visible and concrete aspects that correspond to the dynamics and structure of the program.

In the second workshop, the prototyping stage, participants built the desired community with five proposals at the end, which reflected the participants' opinions of the activity. The five proposals are different from each other, but in all cases, they consider actions to be carried out virtually and in person. The virtual activities were divided into three orders: the first focused on increasing access to content, the second on advancing a virtual network and the third on enhancing the professional positioning of students and graduates. On the other hand, the face-to-face actions are shown in three of the proposals, which refer to the increase in content development activities and an infrastructure that enables compliance with the requirements that participants identified as essential for the success of MADA and their postgraduate studies.

The proposals received in one of the participatory workshops were reviewed in the first analysis and categorisation meeting. The meeting participants identified three categories: linking, learning and dissemination. First, linking includes the solutions related to the opportunities for links amongst community members and for actions that strengthen the community and improve the experience. Second, learning involves the answers obtained related to access to more meaningful content, increased support for the process (i.e. the graduation project) and access to more tools. Third, dissemination refers to the promotion of the activities and achievements of students and graduates and the possible activities and incentives of other institutions to which they may have access. All the ideas that emerged in the ideation and prototyping workshop were sorted into these three defined categories (Figure 7.4). The intersection of the three categories shows the actions that were developed during the realisation of the project, which fulfilled the possibilities of the programme for its achievement in the short and medium term.

As the title of Tolosa's (2009) article states, to communicate is to create communities. Therefore, the communicational and emotional aspects of the project were fundamental to the evaluation process for the MADA programme. One of the first actions to define the community was to start talking as a community. To support the first action according to the 3Cs matrix outcome, it was essential to create a storyline or narrative of the programme with flexible characteristics to keep improving it for the purpose of communicating the emotions regarding the community. The purpose of this story was to integrate the expectations of students and graduates to strengthen the bond amongst them and create an explicit ground for communication decisions. The research was finalised in 2020 with post-project email surveys that focused on enquiring how the community experiences were continued and the results and impact the evaluation process had. A total of 11 respondents (students, graduates, teachers and managers) participated in the email survey.

Due to the cyclical research design of the project, the methods for data collection were selected because of their practical value and ability to deliver analysable and reliable data in a short time span. The rigorous methodology relied on methods that were able to deliver sufficient data that were collected through a focused approach. For example, graphic tools were employed and surveys consisted of a small number of key questions. A limitation of the selected approach was that the final email survey was completed long after the project ended. At least three respondents commented on

Linking

- Welcome kit for new students
- Vitamin MADA: A set of useful tools
- Annual Gala
- Platform: Promoting professional profiles and projects of graduates
- Promote work opportunities
- Community meetings
- Welcome activity for graduates
- Networking
- MADA House

Learning

- Blog
- Complementary activities
- Publication of research
- Continuing education and lifelong learning
- Coaching for the successful delivery of final projects

Dissemination

- Offering more activities to stimulate engagement by graduate and students
- Participation in workshops by MADA community
- Participation in workshops offered by other institutions
- Incentives for students to use existing infrastucture (e.g. the FabLab equipment)

Actions Developed During the Project:

- Organising annual meetings
- Boosting the integration of students and graduates in projects carried out by the postgraduate programme
- Generating new content of students and graduates through new web site functions
- Making quotas available for graduates to participate in international workshops offered by the programme
- Organising complementary activities such as talks and seminars organised by the programme
- Expanding the networks of the programme and enable students to collaboate with partner organisations to create shared benefits for all participants and organisations
- Delivering students' services for strengthening the scope and reach of the programme
- Supporting students' entrepreneurial and businesses activities through disseminating their achievements

Figure 7.4 Visualisation of the results during the community prototyping process.

having difficulty remembering some details about the project. Yet, the responses of the participants clearly illustrated the impact the community-focused approach had on building a lasting sense of community as it was commented on enthusiastically three years after the project ended.

Findings and Discussion

The analysed data from the email survey were organised into three subthemes: the first discussed the role of the facilitator in service design, the second connected emotions with decolonising practices in service design and the third focused on community creation.

Role of the Facilitator and Service Design

In the role of facilitator, service designers have to be open to constant learning. Taking on a facilitator role as a designer requires a more neutral and close position with the communities that are central to the design processes, which enables proactive participation and commitment to the tasks at hand, guided by the community vision. At MADA, the user perspective meant the integration of the views of the student community. One facilitator explained this:

> Bringing the user perspective into designing for services encourages the students to think about how power is used and distributed in the design process. At MADA, service design course students were encouraged to rethink the way services are designed and delivered and enable inclusion and participation of wider stakeholder groups. I see that getting students involved in this kind of critical thinking and reframing of things promotes openness and re-evaluation of learning practices. The process nature of service design encourages students to go very fast from a problem into the solution space.

Service designers strengthen their practice when they can integrate community experiences as a fundamental value in projects, specifically with the development of a sensitivity to emotions that enables connections to people through dialogue. Dialogue is one of the conditions that facilitators have to trigger, but it also depends on three key elements—*process transparency*, *the co-creation process* and *horizontal logic*—with the purpose of building a collaborative environment. One respondent stated: 'The emotional experience is based on dialogue, the presentation of ideas and taking collective decisions'. According to the responses, the dialogue, the sense-making and the service design methods can foster the conditions for an egalitarian and meaningful experience through the sense of belonging and the feeling that one is heard. One respondent remarked,

> Two essential instances, the first of them was the creation of this community, and the way in which the needs were raised from the community itself (collaborative work and co-creation), and the second of these was the continuity that was established, allowing traceability in the development of activities and achievements of these.

Therefore, the role of the facilitator is to flow with the participants, identify blockages and dissolve them, strengthen common spaces of creation, make agreements visible and project them in accordance with the initial purposes of the workshop.

The atmosphere and feelings that are transported in interventions, with facilitators willing to provide space for the participants, are important, as a respondent reflected: 'I think the most valuable thing was creating community gatherings in a more informal mode, where the managers stand a little "aside" and, therefore, support a more friendly and less structured environment avoiding seeing workshops as another extra activity'. Facilitators can foster the emotional conditions to build a safe and comfortable place to create, as one respondent highlighted: 'I especially value the possibility of participating, the collaborative atmosphere, the openness to different views and sensibilities, and the balance between a speculative and action-oriented exercise'. The relationship between experience and results was emphasised by another respondent who stated that 'the emotional experience is very positive, since collaborative work methodologies are applied'. The same interviewee stressed dialogue as an essential condition to transform experience into achievement.

In addition, service designers can bring their methodological strengths to the communities when asked to do so. Participants appreciated methodological rigour and guidance, as one participant stated: 'From the survey of needs, through design to implementation, throughout the process, the focus was on co-creation, participation and methodological rigour on the part of the team that led the project and it showed'. Another respondent commented on the driving value of quality: 'Continuous quality improvement as the engine of the process'.

The workshops were valued, as the perspectives on community experiences and application of existing knowledge resulted in students feeling involved in the process. One respondent noted that they made sense of the process 'through the use of the same methodology that we learn during the programme; listen to our concerns and make us participate in the entire process'. Also, one participant noted: 'We had an active role in this process, where methods and tools were used to gather information, just as we worked in our training process as students'. The transfer of knowledge through methodological approaches, as well as the application of methods that were known to the students, thus integrating their local knowledge, was evident in the collaborations between students and facilitators in this case study. At the same time, it is important to reflect on the need for some students to expand local knowledge to the level where local practices are described in local languages, so that those terms can be adopted and used (see Figure 7.3).

Emotional and Decolonial Approaches in Service Design Practice

The emotional experiences during and long after the evaluation process contributed to the fostering of individual and community identities, which were driven by emotions and a sense of belonging. Respondents used phrases such as 'feeling part of', 'reaffirm ties with my colleagues and teachers' and 'there is a "MADA profile" that I am proud to belong to'. Emotions that were driving interest and continued participation in the community long after the evaluation process ended were described as follows: 'The emotional experience is defined as rewarding and generating identity', and 'trust and satisfaction for contributing to a process of defining a community'. Additional

comments from respondents included: 'Joy for the interest and participation of students, graduates and teachers', while another remarked: 'feeling of co-responsibility and enthusiasm'. Other positive responses about the emotions experienced during the process were: 'I was excited because everyone participated with interest and commitment, they felt comfortable,' 'in the end, I was satisfied' and 'it excites!'

However, facilitators have to retain sensitivity for a variety of emotions, which are sometimes less than ideal, including frustration, irritability or sadness, that can evolve and even erupt during working processes with communities. One respondent explained: 'Different emotions emerge at different times: sense of belonging, joy, associated with participation and companionship; frustration—sadness, associated with the lack in some cases of a critical gaze; satisfaction—optimism—joy, for future possibilities and the will to improve'. However, some participants' responses indicated that there was a need for more critical reflections during the implementation of the process cycles. Hence, the cyclical process could have benefited from more opportunities for reflection and feedback from the student community. Yet, our focus on sensitivity may have resulted in valued opinions being shared in the process, as one respondent mentioned: 'My opinion is important, I feel heard' and 'This is all worth something. I'm participating in something important'. One of the facilitators in MADA summarised the importance of the awareness of emotions in service design workshops:

> Being sensitive to emotions throughout service design workshops may generate balanced workshop dynamics that enable more equal and inclusive participation of all workshop participants. Making sure that everyone is included in the discussion, enables various ways of self-expression through visual participation, enacting and so on.

The main contributions of this chapter are related to developing very practical ways in which participatory service design processes and practices can be decolonised by drawing on emotions as a means to such an end. As the preceding respondent commented, the value of inclusive and equal participation should not be underestimated, and emotions are the means that can achieve such ends as inclusive and equal participation. Emotions are valuable to facilitator/service designers, as well as other members of the community, in gauging the inner feelings and mental states of participants.

Creating Community Within a Community

The nature of community cannot be pinned down or easily defined by boundaries as it continues to reshape and reinvent itself. Community is not a concept; it is an organic and flexible flow of people that adapts to various factors and influences. One of these factors is the people who constitute communities with their emotions, reactions and silences, while other factors include the environment, interactions and the particularities of the situation. One respondent stated: 'The most valuable thing was to identify what defined us as a community and make it a conscious process by further strengthening ties and creating new ones'. Another respondent's view was: 'From the outset, the community building process was based on a strong commitment to coordinating the participation of the entire ecosystem that would be impacted by

the initiative'. Valuing plurality and diversity when defining the community enables connections with new perspectives and therefore potentially encourages innovation. A community that values heterogeneity decreases the probability of exercising hegemony by distributing power amongst all its members by distinguishing the presence of each one as a contribution to the general purpose of the community. The value of creating the community from the community itself lies in considering people or users as co-creators of their community. This perspective diminishes colonising design practices that aim to install a predesigned vision that undermines the voice of the members of the community.

Creating communities hinges strongly on identity processes. One respondent commented on the value of community in identity processes:

> The generation of a sense of belonging through welcoming ceremonies, having representatives of the students, the network of graduates, the incorporation of alumni into teaching has allowed us to strengthen the identity and cohesion of the programme and increase the complicity between teachers and students.

Identity processes not only contribute to a sense of belonging, but also to the characteristics that differentiate various communities, as another respondent said: 'I can say that we have a super particular character and identity that differentiates us from other student communities'. Emphasis should be placed on the processes that are promoted through dialogue and expression, as they can serve as ways to ensure 'continuity in the community' as one respondent reported.

Understanding that the interests of users are not necessarily the same interests of the institution is essential. By listening to the community first, it is possible to identify their various concerns and interests, and then, if possible, connect these with the interests of an institution. However, co-creative processes need to focus on negotiating and finding solutions to the needs of communities if it is not possible to connect these with the interests of organisations. In these cases, organisations need to consider how to compassionately and proactively engage in dialogue for defining and implementing local actions that can address the needs of communities. One respondent reflected on her dual roles during the process: 'I felt very welcomed by the group. In the same way, being part of the management team means that there is always a barrier towards the community, perhaps self-imposed'. The challenge for organisations is to avoid the imposition of their commercial, social, political and technological interests in collaborative processes. MADA is one example of how a typical top-down quality certification process was transformed into an opportunity to listen, engage in dialogue and find common solutions for developing inclusive actions that the community perceived as valuable and meaningful. Creating a community that respects workshop participants' emotions enabled the facilitators to look at organisational decisions from a more bottom-up or organic perspective and follow the interests and expectations of its users.

Conclusion

We have discussed how a quality certification project carried out in a Master of Design programme at PUC was built with elements that can contribute to decolonising approaches. Hence, the project sought to decolonise such a process, which in

educational contexts is usually top-down and authoritative. One of the challenges of the project was the interdisciplinary characteristics of the postgraduate programme, because it required greater flexibility to define the scope of the community and a level of precision that makes sense to all its members, regardless of the academic and practical background of each participant. In the case of MADA, interdisciplinarity was experienced by users when they were exposed to the following: 1) a multidisciplinary learning environment composed of actors, such as teachers, students and graduates from different disciplines; 2) integration of the systemic thinking of the strategic design and design thinking in designers and non-designers, respectively; 3) constant mediation to address the complexity in the interaction and decision-making of the various actors in the same challenge; and 4) the convergence of the different approaches in the same methodological design application.

From a participatory service design perspective, the process carried out for the creation of the community emphasised the experiences, emotions and opinions of all participants to deepen a respectful understanding of the broadest and deepest interdisciplinary context. The development of this project enabled navigation of a plurality of perspectives contributed to making positions more flexible and horizontal, hence fostering dialogue to identify common expectations and desires. The interdisciplinary challenge was faced through a guided participatory service design practice which emphasised the empathic listening to and by the community that was vital to decision-making that is underpinned by local knowledge made available through the use of well-selected methodology, dissemination of information and sensitive guidance throughout the project by the facilitator/service designers involved. Furthermore, the project was a good example of service design practices that enable more emancipatory, autonomous and democratic processes of knowledge co-creation by and with the students.

Emotions are an essential consideration in the building of community. The responsiveness to emotions is tightly interwoven into decision- and meaning-making, which may present more challenges, but also add more depth to service design in general and to decolonising approaches in particular. Decision-making based on emotions contributes to building a community. Considering community identities and characteristics through observation, listening and promoting an attitude conducive to dialogue can create awareness of community members' emotions. Dialogue is a practical way to listen to the voice of the community, making visible their expectations and desires, in this case through the inclusion of the participants of the MADA community who contributed to more democratic knowledge co-creation. Through the value placed on local knowledge that was brought forth through the voices of the community, the students were able to actively reflect on and contribute their stories, feelings, expressions and visions to the development of MADA and, in the process, foster inclusion, dialogue and visibility.

Participation is a challenge because it requires an emotional balance to identify the best decisions according to participants' interactions, environments and specific situations, and the project's purpose. More inclusive and decolonising approaches to service design are linked with the ability of service designers to carry out projects through participatory practice. Service designers can assume the role of coordinator, facilitator or member of the community. Considering all the various parts of a community that constitute a complex system of relations can prompt a reflection on the role of service designers as being only a small part of that system. Hence, they have

to develop or strengthen adaptive skills connected with their emotional and behavioural responses, such as empathy and respect, to cope with the possible situations. Service designers need to question their roles in processes and be willing to step aside to enable learning for community members to express their needs and co-create possible solutions to those needs. Thus, emotions can mitigate the usual power structures in workshops, fostering egalitarian interaction and attitudes from participants and facilitators by bringing together their various experiences. The job of service designers from this perspective is to be facilitators of spaces in which the convergence of opinions promotes respect for differences, and to serve as actors who contribute with their experience to visualise possible paths.

Decolonising approaches to service design should be holistic, plural, inclusive and horizontal processes that are applied by continuously questioning and reflecting on the power that may result from an expert position as a facilitator/service designer. Thus, the skills for remaining sensitive need to be nurtured and developed to distinguish between plural emotions and behaviours. By stepping aside, service designers can provide spaces for creating community identity and even livelihoods. This will also afford opportunities for service designers to question their agency and reflect on how their solutions will impact the communities in which they work, as design is not a neutral practice but it is influenced by Western thought. Empathy and respect are basic approaches to developing decolonising service design practice, as facilitators need to address the complexities in interactions through dialogue. Flexible, participative and locally adapted methods, such as workshops, can encourage a fundamental inclusion of the expectations and desires of communities. Workshops, once approached in this fashion, are valuable spaces for drawing on and including a variety of forms for creating and making, including design, arts and craft methods. Such approaches avoid artificial divides that were theoretically and in practice set up amongst arts, crafts and design in Western knowledge systems.

This case study affords insights into a bottom-up evaluation process in a Chilean university. Although a decolonising approach was not adopted from the onset, upon reflection on the project, such approaches were revealed that can be further expanded and adopted into more rigorous processes in the future. This chapter contributes to a collection of case studies that can elaborate on an understanding of what aspects of decolonising approaches may be entailed, while contributing to the education of designers and service designers who are working with the aspirations and dreams of communities.

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8 Developing the Relational Dimension of Participatory Design Through Creativity-Based Methods

Caoimhe Isha Beaulé, Solen Roth, Anne Marchand and Karine Awashish

Introduction

Mainstream design history often highlights that the discipline's professionalisation emerged primarily from Western institutions after the Industrial Revolution. The dominant discourses in design (e.g. the fields of product design, service design and strategic design) characterise its value as a strategic tool for innovation and an alternative mindset that uses 'human-centred' and iterative approaches to problem-solving (Brown & Katz, 2009). As well as for creative problem-solving, designers are recognised for their problem setting and framing methods and their ability to conjure up ideas about 'what might be' (Dorst, 2011, 2019). Such 'design ways' are now being applied to a multitude of areas, ranging from visual communication and product and service development to policy-making (Bason, 2016; Nelson & Stolterman, 2012). Accordingly, design is a dynamic field that keeps on evolving; novel methods and tools are developed as these new contexts of intervention emerge to proffer the latest opportunities and challenges. In the practice of participatory design (also referred to as co-design or co-creation), designers are required to have specific mindsets and skill sets to navigate a design process that involves multiple stakeholders and participants with diverse backgrounds. However, learning to collaborate is not always part of the foundations of design education, leaving young designers and designer/researchers with very few frameworks for working in participatory projects, even less so when the project involves collaborating with a community where there is a history of settler colonialism.

A critical discourse has been emerging within the design community regarding the dominance of Eurocentric paradigms in the field of design, which leaves 'other ways' of designing on the so-called periphery. As in many other disciplines, the topic of decolonisation in design studies has been developing, which has revealed aspects of participatory design that were previously unacknowledged (see Akama et al., 2019; Janzer & Weinstein, 2014; Schultz et al., 2018; Tlostanova, 2017; Tunstall, 2013). For example, there is increased attention and criticism in respect to implying the universality of design methods and theories developed on the basis of Western epistemologies. These unconscious assumptions 'persistently locate the other while failing to account for the geographical, historical, and corporal locations of the producers' (Schultz et al., 2018, p. 91). One needs to be careful when applying theories and methodologies to a context different from the one in which they were developed. Akama et al. (2019)

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strengthened this idea by giving examples of 'design with other names' (p. 11) that stem from personal stories (specifically, Māori, Pākehā and Japanese points of view):

> The exemplars we share here powerfully demonstrate how respectful, reciprocal, and relational co-designing is already practiced, and in many cases, is being continually practiced in another name by Māori and Aboriginal peoples, and has been, long before design was coined as a term and a profession in Europe in the twentieth century. Most importantly, this enables us to de-couple design from its modern, industrialized roots so it can be re-situated and re-conceptualized as a method, approach, mindset, and ontology, centrally grounded in respectful, reciprocal relationships.
>
> (p. 22)

In this chapter, we aim to discuss the relational dimension of community-based participatory design projects. We propose that using a creativity-based approach—one that draws on art, crafts and design—throughout the collaborative process can be one step towards building more respectful, reciprocal and relational collaborations with the communities we engage with. As stated by Akama et al. (2019), relationality is a fundamental yet often unacknowledged part of collaboration. It is actually the key to being able to balance several worlds in a common project (Escobar, 2018). This is especially important when engaging in a collaboration with historically oppressed or marginalised communities.

The ideas outlined in this chapter are based on insights from a decade-long partnership between designers from the Université de Montréal (UdeM) and Indigenous community members of the Atikamekw Nehirowisiw Nation in Quebec, Canada. We will describe some of the reflections that emerged through our experience as design researchers and collaborators in an intergenerational participatory action research project entitled Tapiskwan. More precisely, we questioned ourselves on the influences and confluences that allowed us to investigate the 'colonial' or 'decolonial' approach in the Tapiskwan initiative. Our reflections for this chapter were guided by the following question: What has the Tapiskwan project taught us on the role creativity-based methods can play in developing meaningful and fruitful relationships when design collaborations involve universities and Indigenous communities? We propose that certain kinds of creativity-based methods offer particularly relevant avenues to challenge some of the dominant world views and top-down hierarchies inherent in Western academic frameworks. Given the wickedness of addressing the challenges that are generally approached through a decolonising perspective, in the following sections, we will not be presenting an example of a 'decolonised project' or even a 'decolonial approach'. Rather, we aim to contribute to the discussion by sharing some reflections that emerged from our own hands-on experience in the Tapiskwan project.

We will first situate our chapter in relation to the decolonising theme of this book and how it relates to the specific practice of participatory design. An overview of collaborative design processes will follow, whereby we locate the relational dimension of a participatory design process. We will then conceptualise what we mean by 'creativity-based methods' and the relevance for designer/researchers to expand their frameworks to include activities associated with craft and art when working in community-based participatory projects. Finally, we will share some insights on these themes that emerged from our experience as collaborators in the Tapiskwan

project. These exchanges raised new perspectives regarding approaches to decolonisation from economic, institutional and multicultural perspectives.

Participatory Design and Decolonisation

Community-based participatory design projects increasingly involve academic–community partnerships. While the intent is often to provide a framework for good working relationships, such partnerships can inadvertently impose hierarchies amongst partners that can be manifested through tensions concerning the very premises of these new collaborations. There is an added challenge when partners come from different cultures, which is compounded even further when these cultures have a shared colonial history, as is often the case for collaborations involving Indigenous partners. Whether intentional or not, the involvement of designer/researchers is frequently driven by the dominant paradigm in which they are located. These issues should be explicitly addressed in the foundations of design education, as stated by Akama et al. (2019):

> With the exception of [Participatory Design] and research training in academic domains, traditional design education (including design thinking) has not paid much attention to the relational or ethical aspects of designing with people. Questions of power, decision making, reciprocity, or responsibility are often left untouched. This has resulted in a significant gap in teaching and self-training in design. This is no longer acceptable.
>
> (p. 17)

The link between design and colonialism exists on many levels; for instance, when non-Western crafts are arbitrarily set apart from Western 'modern' design, when local forms of innovation go unacknowledged or when Western forms of innovation are portrayed as the ideal (Tunstall, 2013). This seemingly justifies the 'intervention' of Western designers in non-Western contexts. In addition to the hierarchies that are already embedded in Western research and academia in general, these additional tensions can have profound impacts on the researcher/designer–participant relationships, and ultimately, on the outcomes and success of these intercultural collaborations. Further, by focusing primarily on the process (e.g. tools and methods) of a collaborative project rather than its outcomes, one can do more harm than good. A community-based project that ends while still in the *prototype* phase, if designers leave before doing their part in the implementation phase, can greatly diminish the positive impacts on the community involved (Tunstall, 2013). From this perspective, community-based projects must arguably 'shift [their] focus from one that is user-centred to one that is situation-centred' (Janzer & Weinstein, 2014, p. 327), which requires a deep understanding of the situation in question. Outsiders designing in and for situations that they do not fully understand can lead to particularly 'risky cultural bias' (p. 341).

Discussing decolonising practices in the context of design is complex, and shifting the paradigm on the ground is difficult, yet extremely important. Based on our experience as designer/researchers and collaborators in a project involving Indigenous partners, we see these reflections as being essential. Indeed, Indigenous peoples often come to these new projects with the baggage of previous negative experiences working with social scientists, biologists and health researchers within a colonial approach (Kovach, 2010; Smith, 2012). Designer/researchers cannot ignore the fact that they have inherited and, in some cases, contributed to the colonial dynamic that exists between these

communities and universities. And yet, even those who are aware of this history and do not wish to reproduce it are not always well equipped to shift their practice towards more decolonial approaches. In that regard, an increasing number of academics have cited 'decolonisation' as one of their objectives, prompting Tuck and Yang (2012) to remind us that this is not merely a 'metaphor'. Simply put, true decolonisation cannot occur without the repatriation of Indigenous land and life. Therefore, we use this term carefully, however, at the same time, take a cue from Ho-Chunk scholar Amy Lonetree's (2012) claim that 'Decolonising is powerful not only because it ends and mends harms, but also because it opens opportunities. . . . Sites of oppression have the potential to transform into sites of revitalisation and autonomy' (p. 173).

The Relational Dimension of Participatory Design

Using design in participatory contexts is not new, as the practice has been around for about 50 years and is typically referred to as *participatory design*, or *co-creation* and *co-design* in more recent terminology (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). As mentioned previously, we direct our attention to the relational work that is not typically acknowledged in participatory design processes. We argue, along with Akama et al. (2019), that this crucial and often invisible layer is a key component of successful community-based participatory design projects (see Figure 8.1). We need to add that the relational

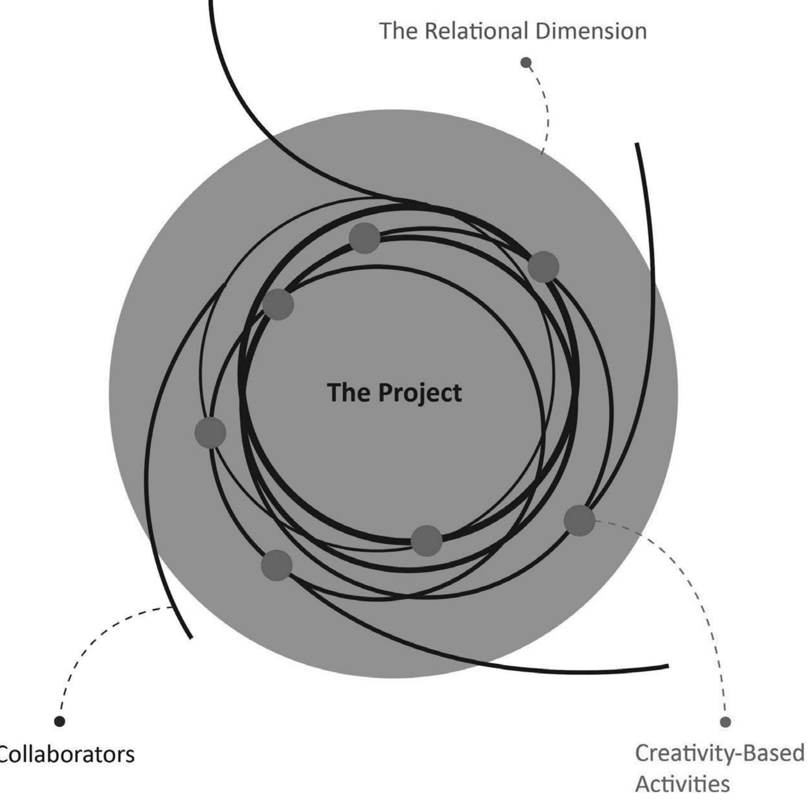

Figure 8.1 Situating the relational dimension of community-based participatory design.

Source: Figure by the authors, 2020

dimension is always present throughout a collaboration. Although it is not often explicitly discussed, it affects a project in many ways: ensuring good communication, making participants feel valued, helping establish fruitful collaborations and potentially challenging arbitrary and ethnocentric hierarchies.

Different ways to visually represent this collaborative course of action have been used to communicate the core principles of 'design thinking' to various audiences. One of the most common visual representations of the design process is the UK Design Council's 'Double Diamond' (DD) model (Design Council UK, 2005). The two diamond shapes in the DD model represent the way designers move between *diverging* and *converging* phases in a design process, moving from problem framing and ideation to solution development and implementation. Designers around the world use this model to communicate their creative processes, most typically for product, service and strategic design fields. However, in participatory contexts, Akama et al. (2019) criticised the use of the DD model and, in fact, any type of replicable model, as they are seen as inadequate for depicting a design process in collaborative settings. The authors argued the danger of using such perpetuating colonial ways when using 'problem-solving, replicable methods and outcomes' (p. 1) stating, as an example, that the DD model 'must sit alongside any number of design expressions, and not displace, disembody, or dislocate design from the sites in which it lives' (p. 23).

Ironically, we almost used the DD model to situate the relational dimension of collaborative design in this chapter. In our discussions, we realised that our practical experience in the Tapiskwan project did not correspond to this at all. Even though we can relate to popular models such as the DD on a micro level (e.g. product development), it does not reflect our experience on the structural level of a community-based participatory design project. Based on our hands-on experience, we agree with Akama et al. (2019) that participatory design processes are difficult to illustrate because they are unique to the contexts in which they operate and the participating individuals, and how they actively are shaping the process. In participatory design practices, Sanders and Stappers (2008) characterised the first stages as being fuzzy, chaotic, filled with ambiguity and confined to open-ended questions. We characterise community-based participatory design processes as being messy, chaotic (not only in the initial phase), organically constructed and not having a clean-cut end (broadly illustrated in Figure 8.1).

The next section gives an overview on how particular kinds of creativity-based methods (at the intersection of art, design and craft) can create a setting that is favourable to collaboration and to the development of relationships of mutual understanding and trust amongst project collaborators.

Creativity-Based Methods for Participatory Engagement

Although not yet a common practice in mainstream participatory design workshops, nor in design research in general, arts-based research methods can be seen as a valuable set of approaches for designers and researchers working in community-based projects. Arts-based research perceives art as a way of knowing (Leavy, 2018) and allows 'important social and cultural issues . . . to be seen in a previously unavailable light' (Barone & Eisner, 2011, p. 122). The forms of artistic practices one can engage in are endless, ranging from literary forms (e.g. essays or poetry), performance (e.g. music, dance or theatre), visual arts (e.g. photography, drawing, installations or sculpture), audio-visual forms (e.g. film and video) or combined multiple forms of artistic

expression (Leavy, 2018, p. 4). The use of methods that draw on artistic expression in the design process already exists, particularly in the 'discovering phase' and in user-centred mindsets. For example, the use of cultural probes (e.g. packages with cameras, maps, postcards, paper and pens) are used to stimulate the participants' imagination (see Gaver et al., 1999). Arts-based methods are also a gateway to different kinds of information, in contrast to what can be expressed through writing and speech only. They allow individuals to express themselves in a different way than with words; the possibilities are extremely varied. Each activity should be selected to match the specific project's characteristics, including the overarching objectives, the participants' profiles and the available resources and expertise.

Art and design research conducted by teams in the Arctic region of Finland has strengthened the relevance of intersecting artistic, design and craft practices when working in community-based projects. The latter has shown that a more holistic approach is a better fit for the context circumpolar communities, where these different practices are not often considered as discrete entities as they are in Western institutions. For example, Indigenous concepts such as Sámi *Duodji*, or handicraft, encapsulate a more holistic understanding of the practices of 'making', which intersect not only art, design and craft, but do not separate the spiritual and physical worlds (Guttorm, 2015; Jokela et al., 2019). Sámi works that are handmade 'carry in them knowledge about the past, they explain people's relationships to each other, about crafting skills and aesthetic sense' (Guttorm, 2015, p. 64). Similarly, Akama et al. (2019) have reminded us that design exists in many other cultures: '"designs with other names", including a variety of skills, spaces, artifacts, practices, instruments, representations, knowledges, and ontologies, that are embedded in these everyday environments can enhance an intimacy of interrelatedness "in-between" . . . beings and non-beings' (p. 11).

Along the same line of thought, researchers in the participatory field of service design have also been combining methods from art, design and crafts into various design projects. Mäkiranta and Ylitapio-Mäntylä (2019) highlighted the importance of paying constant attention to the complex ethical issues regarding participatory design research projects with Indigenous communities and have discussed the researcher/designer–participant relationships that emerge within these collaborations. The authors stress the importance of having community members participate in the workshop planning in order to avoid redoing the work on-site to adapt it to the cultural context of the local community. As part of this process, activities that enable cultural exchanges which help build researcher/designer–participant relationships are deemed essential in order to acknowledge different ways of knowing, but also to identify similarities amongst epistemologies (Mäkiranta & Ylitapio-Mäntylä, 2019). We have had similar experiences. Moreover, in contrast to choosing Western methods and tools by default, they emphasised that it is important to prioritise ones that are familiar to community members. The Tapiskwan project provides many examples of this.

Indeed, decentring Western concepts and world views to make room for those of the participating communities is not only good practice from the point of view of intercultural relationships; this practice is also one of several key tenets of decolonisation efforts, another one being the full participation of communities. As Roth (2019) has argued previously, when non-Indigenous people attempt a transformation in the realm of values and concepts without the active participation of those whose values and concepts they use, then the process is arguably more appropriative than it is

decolonial. In some cases, it can even amount to what has been defined as 'cognitive imperialism' (Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000, p. 12). This is one of the reasons why, if creativity-based methods are to be used as part of decolonisation efforts, they must also be combined with *participatory* approaches as well as encompass fundamentally different logics (Tlostanova, 2017).

These critical reflections are relevant regarding the way in which participatory design (as taught in Western education) could benefit from expanding its frameworks and blurring the borders amongst art, design and crafts, especially when collaborating in intercultural contexts with Indigenous communities or other contexts located outside of the 'mainstream'. In respect to the idea of developing the relational dimension of participatory design, artistic methods can enable empathy and cultural exchanges and leave room for a multiplicity of views and ways of knowing (Leavy, 2015; Miettinen et al., 2016) to collaboratively build a design process. Creativity-based methods could also allow more horizontal sharing in the initial stages of a project. Designers and designer/researchers working in community-based participatory settings could develop their own creativity-based research methodologies when engaging with communities, as opposed to using social science research methods by default (e.g. interviews, focus groups, participant observations) or replicating design methods that are taken out of context. While these commonly used methods can prove useful, they may set the stage for a researcher–researched relationship that is not always conducive to creating trust from the outset—and may result in quite the opposite of what was intended.

In Quebec, Canada, the *Design et Culture Matérielle* (Design and Material Culture [DCM]) group has been working with creativity-based methods that foster empowerment and knowledge transfer amongst Indigenous peoples for over two decades. In the next section of this chapter, we draw on some of our insights as researchers, designers and collaborators concerning one DCM project, Tapiskwan, an intergenerational participatory action research partnership between the UdeM design school and the *Conseil de la Nation Atikamekw* (Atikamekw Nation Council [CNA]). We discuss some of the creativity-based methods employed, how they benefited the collaborative process even as challenges emerged, and the importance these methods had with respect to the relational dimension of the project.

Insights From the Tapiskwan Project

As we previously noted, community-based participatory design projects can greatly benefit from the integration of creativity-based methods (in art, design and crafts). Especially when used early in the process, they have great potential for identifying skill sets and expertise amongst participants and collaboratively building an organic design process that is unique to the project's context.

The Tapiskwan Project

The Atikamekw Nehirowisiw Nation is one of 11 Indigenous nations whose traditional territories, called *Nitaskinan* in the Atikamekw language, are located in the Canadian province of Quebec. The majority of the Nation's members live in the three communities of Wemotaci, Manawan and Opitciwan, and they are regrouped politically under the CNA. The Atikamekw were traditionally semi-nomadic people who

roamed the vast territory of the Mauricie and Lanaudière regions (Gélinas, 2003). Many Atikamekw still practise hunting, fishing and foraging alongside most aspects of contemporary life in Canada (Lamothe, 1999). Nonetheless, like the situation that face Indigenous communities across Canada, the Atikamekw way of life has been fundamentally transformed in the twentieth century by the creation of reserves. These miniscule portions of land forced a mostly sedentary lifestyle upon the communities. The construction of railways and hydroelectric dams and clear-cutting has also contributed to these transformations (Marchand et al., 2018). Further, a specific Canadian residential school system was developed to consciously assimilate Indigenous nations and erase their rich cultures (Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Still, the Atikamekw remain very active in the making of handicrafts, especially in the making of bark objects, one special skill of the Nation's craftsmanship which is a product of traditional know-how (Awashish, 2013). This context framed the focus of the Tapiskwan project towards the development of workshops that were aimed principally towards intergenerational knowledge sharing and empowerment through creative activities (i.e. art, design and crafts).

The university–community partnership was initiated in 2011 when the design school was approached to work with Atikamekw artists and craftspeople who wanted to develop a new range of products inspired by their cultural heritage. The general methodology used over the years is based on work done by *La Boîte Rouge Vif*, an Indigenous organisation that is affiliated with the University du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC) and its research group, the DCM (see Kaine, 2018; Kaine et al., 2010; Kaine et al., 2016). This collaboration led in 2017 to the creation of the *Collectif Tapiskwan* (Tapiskwan Collective), an Indigenous non-profit organisation (NPO) aiming to value, develop and share Atikamekw art and culture. As of 2019, the project has been managed by the Indigenous-led *Coop Nitaskinan* (Nitaskinan Cooperative), having transitioned from a university project to a community-centred organisation.

As many actors have been involved in this project, what follows does not summarise the experience of the diverse set of collaborators and participants in the Tapiskwan project, and especially not that of all our Atikamekw partners and collaborators. It reflects our own personal experiences, mostly as members of the design team, all joining the project at different stages of its development. Anne Marchand, who has been part of the research project since the very beginning in 2011, acted as the leader of the UdeM design team. She also became one of the co-founding members of the Tapiskwan Collective in 2017, when the project governance was transferred to a community-based cooperative. Over time, she worked with several designers specialising in product and graphic design. Amongst them was Caoimhe Isha Beaulé, who joined the design team in late 2015. For three years, her principal roles were workshop coordinator and facilitator and graphic designer. In addition to designers, the team included social entrepreneurs and social innovation researchers, as well as an anthropologist, Solen Roth, who joined the UdeM design team in early 2015. Her involvement has focused on the cultural aspects of the project, with most of her activities pertaining to Atikamekw cultural heritage and its perpetuation through creative work. Karine Awashish collaborated in the project at the start, carrying out an action research project on the development of an Atikamekw crafts cooperative coordinated by the CNA (2008–2013); her personal involvement began in 2014. Subsequently, it was through the Nitaskinan Cooperative, which she co-founded in 2015, that the collaboration between UdeM and the CNA continued. Through the Nitaskinan

Cooperative, she is currently coordinating the Tapiskwan project to ensure administrative and operational sustainability.

The Creativity-Based Tapiskwan Workshop Approach

Over the years, Tapiskwan has developed an approach that places art, design and crafts on an equal plane. This emerged over the years through the involvement of a diverse set of participants and collaborators, whose individual expertise and ideas allowed innovative methods to be explored each year (see Figure 8.2). In the first workshops, when working on developing new products, a classic iterative design process was used, which included brainstorming, drawing and sketching ideas before prototyping and making the objects. Designing new products was a central aspect of these workshops in the effort to explore and develop socio-economic opportunities for artists and craftspeople. This focus was also aimed at finding new ways to work around the increasingly limited access to raw materials, such as birch bark or good quality moose skins, both of which are greatly impacted by the forestry industry and environmental change in the area. Thus, an important criterion became the ability to make multiple reproductions of the same item with alternative materials. This shifted the focus to developing graphic designs based on Atikamekw symbolism and to exploring print-based art methods that allowed for the reproduction of imagery on new materials.

After making their new graphic art, participants applied it to various surfaces: framed art pieces, metres of fabric, tote bags, cushions, notebooks and wooden paddles. This approach proved to be quite successful for the ideation process, but more challenging for the actual production of a collection of items, especially at first. The pre-thinking and pre-planning phases of the production process (which designers are trained to do) were not something these craftspeople were accustomed to doing in a formal way; in their regular practice, they do not typically reproduce the exact same item multiple times. Even when they make more than one item at a time, each usually remains unique in one way or another. Their disinterest in line production necessitated reconsidering the degree to which it was feasible and important to standardise production in the perspective of marketing the products. As a result, the lines between 'craft' and 'design' remained blurred.

Moreover, new techniques were tested and explored with participants every year, including linocuts, foam stamps, stencils and silk-screening (see Figure 8.2 for an overview of the creativity-based methods used in the Tapiskwan workshop approach). As the communities in which the Tapiskwan workshops have been held are remote, access to some materials and equipment is limited. Finding new ways to do activities that worked in these settings was a key objective: for instance, making stamps with cardboard and foam found in recycling bins, using inexpensive foam camping pads to turn cafeteria-style tables into makeshift fabric printing stations or finding a way to prepare high-quality silk-screens in the community without access to professional equipment. Although it requires some technical knowledge, silk-screening immediately attracted the interest of the participants as a popular printing method due to its effectiveness for repetition and the quality of prints, mitigating somewhat the previously identified challenge of line production. As far as being a feasible reproduction process, participants found that it struck a nice balance between precision and the freedom to explore. Other printing methods used during the workshops mirrored the

Figure 8.2 Creativity-based methods in the Tapiskwan workshop approach.

Source: Photos by Collectif Tapiskwan; the photos included are mostly from workshops held from 2015–2018

methods which Atikamekw craftspeople have always used to adorn their work. For example, cut-outs are commonly used to engrave symbols into birch bark, while stencils are often used to draw embroidery patterns on leather. The participating craftspeople were therefore almost instant experts in what were supposedly 'new' creative techniques brought to the table by the designers.

In a workshop that was held for high school students, in addition to the graphic and print-based activities, a second and parallel programme was held in the wood workshop with one of the community's best craftspeople, who knew how to make canoe paddles from scratch. Being able to work with such experienced individuals provided the youth with a particularly motivating setting. The enthusiasm of the professional designer who co-facilitated this workshop, and the positive dynamic between these two mentors, was crucial in that regard. In general, it was a fundamental requirement to involve members of the Atikamekw community in the facilitation process. This helped to further expand the methods being used and developed during the workshops. Especially when working with youth, these mentors could also act as role models and speak in their native tongue. At the same time, the involvement of outsiders who brought their own expertise *and* were respectful of these community mentors' knowledge and know-how proved a fruitful combination. Although always unique, the Tapiskwan workshop model generally followed this basic structure: 1) intergenerational knowledge transfer by inviting elders, craftspeople, accomplished and emerging artists or entrepreneurs; 2) technical training such as learning new printing techniques or practicing drawing skills; and 3) a definite project to complete by the end of the workshop, such as printed designs, artwork or wood objects. The workshops most often ended with a sale or an exhibition.

The methodological approach developed over the years revealed itself to be the most important outcome of the project. Its success was evident with the high school students who demonstrated an increased attendance, motivation and pride in accomplishing the workshop goals. Moreover, collaborators have often been invited to present the method to other communities or host workshops in various settings. Many Atikamekw mentors and collaborators have also continued using and developing the methods on their own. Previous publications on Tapiskwan have focused on the development of these methodologies (see Leitao et al., 2017; Marchand et al., 2018). Beyond the methodological design approach that was at the heart of the research contributions, the Tapiskwan initiative enabled the forging an identity that advanced the diffusion of Atikamekw art and design, but also helped to create a sense of belonging to the project amongst researchers, collaborators, participants and partners. In fact, these relational bonds that were developed through these intensive creative activities were an unforeseen—yet highly valued—outcome of the project.

Establishing the Basis for Collaboration With Creativity

In order to successfully develop interpersonal relations through 'making', some foundational elements are needed. Designer/researchers require a set of abilities and mindsets when engaging in projects such as Tapiskwan. They require training in ethical and participatory research practices, particularly if the project involves Indigenous participants. However, learning about these aspects of collaborative design with communities has yet to become a staple of the mainstream design education curriculum. Unfortunately, this type of content is impossible to learn entirely from books. In that

respect, creativity-based methods can be part of this process of intercultural mediation, insofar as everyone involved is open to engaging in the creative process.

In a project that brings together individuals with diverse backgrounds, not everyone may be comfortable painting, drawing and engaging in any kind of artistic activity. In Tapiskwan, all the participants were encouraged to partake in the creative work, and it was typical for everyone to participate in the workshops' creative activities one way or another, regardless of experience or expertise. Although it was essential to have mentors who had already mastered the techniques being transmitted, it was also important for all the participants to feel welcome to engage in the creative activities. Our organic approach made for an unexpected and unorthodox distribution of roles. Instead of each person keeping to their field of practice, social entrepreneurs could momentarily take on the title of creative director, or an anthropologist could become the assistant of an experienced artist; in fact, an industrial design teacher accustomed to running the show with his students took on the position of an apprentice to an expert craftsman, and a master seamstress mentored students in the art of printmaking. This generalised engagement in creative activities, and the mixing up of roles and responsibilities, allowed for different kinds of relationships to develop amongst participants (Figure 8.3).

While some of the activities were organised according to a more traditional approach (experienced mentors taking inexperienced learners on as mentees), the less traditional redistribution of roles served an important purpose: that of calling into question hierarchies that could have easily been reified. In this more cooperative mindset, the goal was to recognise each person's contribution in terms of knowledge and skills, all the while acknowledging the potential for mutual pollination across levels of expertise as well as the room for growth in each collaborator. The Atikamekw are no strangers to the cooperative approach and to learning to adapt to one's environment and its resources, since both are central to their traditional social organisation and world view (Awashish, 2013). For instance, a participating textile designer learned to adopt a much more do-it-yourself (DIY) approach than what she employed in her own professional workshop, such as using foam camping pads to transform a cafeteria table into a printing station, as mentioned previously. Other participants also demonstrated ingenious initiatives, such as using scrap wood to craft handles for linocut stamps. Both this participant and the textile designer came out of the experience having had to draw on their previous knowledge and existing aptitudes, but each helped the other identify new avenues in their creative process.

Indeed, creativity-based activities in which everyone could engage and learn something new, including those with the most experience in the room, introduced a democratising dynamic into the collaboration. In particular, this forced designers to find a good balance between, on the one hand, sharing their expertise and training participants in new techniques (the task for which they had ostensibly been recruited at the start of the collaboration), and on the other hand, avoiding taking over or imposing a too specific way of doing things. The latter tendency could have easily backfired for two reasons: first, it would have overshadowed the expertise of other partners, and in particular that of community artists, knowledge holders and craftspeople; second, a rigid mindset would have run up against the great need for flexibility in the face of participants' varying levels of engagement and prior experience as well as being challenged by the limited availability of materials and resources. Within such a collaborative dynamic, designers needed to be willing to go outside of their comfort zone,

Figure 8.3 Anne Marchand and Atikamekw artist Jacques Newashish printing a large-format piece.

Source: Photo by Collectif Tapiskwan; from a 2018 workshop in Montreal.

question and be critical about their role and assumptions, adopt a 'learning' mindset and be ready to change their plans, as things would inevitably have to be adapted on the ground. Indeed, collaborators need to develop a synergy that promotes contribution and creates conditions that foster the pooling of resources in order to enhance the potential of the communities to take charge of their local and regional development (Awashish, 2013).

Establishing the very basis of the collaboration by using a creativity-based method from the start of the project contributed to alleviating some tensions and unproductive dichotomies within the team, such as the supposed oppositions of design versus craft, tradition versus innovation, trainers versus trainees and experiential knowledge versus formal or expert knowledge. Such co-creative activities strengthened participatory engagement and supported the construction of the collective design process. Indeed, these creativity-based methods helped foster a collaborative dynamic that generally contributed to recognising a diverse set of experiences and the range of expertise amongst the team members, as well as positioning designers as both 'mentors' and 'learners'.

With all of this said, we still must return to the central issue that is at the heart of this book: decolonisation of participatory research through art-based methods. More

specifically, we need to ask an essential question: What reflections on decolonising participatory practices emerged from our experience as collaborators in the Tapiskwan project? Notwithstanding all of the important teachings the project generated, including those we have shared in this chapter regarding creativity-based activities as a way to build relationships of mutual respect, we believe that it is important to also make explicit what was *not* decolonial about the project and its structures. The following section discusses some key points about that aspect that should be considered.

Fitting a Circle in a Square: Reflections on Decolonising Participatory Design

In itself, Tapiskwan's overall objective of perpetuating intergenerational transmission and sharing Atikamekw art and culture in Canada (and the world) goes against the colonial grain by affirming cultural sovereignty and making Indigenous presence on the land more visible. Nonetheless, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, we use the term decolonisation carefully and specify that Tapiskwan was not developed with 'decolonising' as an explicitly stated goal. The project having only recently started its transition from a participatory research project to a community-led one, decolonisation could become a more central aspect of Tapiskwan in the future. In the meantime, writing this chapter has allowed us to begin to delve below the surface of this difficult and complex topic. Ultimately, decolonisation requires change on a structural and systemic level. Tapiskwan allows us to investigate some of the challenges and opportunities of addressing colonial models on a micro level. It allowed us to think and learn about the dynamics of university–community collaborations, and how these can be shaped by colonial world views and policies even within a project that attempts not to reproduce them. When discussing this topic, Karine described the experience as 'trying to fit a circle in a square' as the project was developed in Canada's structures and policies that enforce settler colonialism (Côté, 2019). We thought this metaphor summarised some of the obstacles we encountered. With a certain distance from our involvement in the project, we hope to be better able to grasp the structural ins and organisational outs of Tapiskwan's participatory action research framework and how it remains influenced by colonial institutions and state structures, and reflect on what adopting a more deeply decolonial approach would look like in the future.

Limits on the Structural Level: Who Has the Power? Who Has the Money?

Discussing decolonisation in the context of the Tapiskwan project brings up questions about the leadership and the structural frameworks that limit how much change can happen on the ground. This was reflected, for instance, in the rigid financial structures of research grants. In Canada, the funding agencies address their call for projects to the universities, leaving it up to the researchers to initiate collaborations with community partners. This bureaucratic model does not encourage the process to occur the other way around, setting the stage for issues of power. If the funding agencies created programmes for projects initiated by Indigenous communities themselves, these partnerships would likely look quite different. Furthermore, under the current model, universities are typically the ones managing the research funds. This almost instantly creates a hierarchy of roles by giving greater control to those who hold the financial resources. In Tapiskwan, this was seen as an ongoing obstacle to developing real trust

with Indigenous collaborators, and often imposed the very same hierarchies that we were trying to challenge in these collaborations. Other challenges encountered in relation to money were those tied to the capitalist market for which we were developing products. For instance, the latter created some production and distribution constraints that were antithetical to community members' practices and upheld Western intellectual property laws rather than Indigenous ones.

Furthermore, projects must include enough time in their timelines to develop their relational activities: 'A decolonising project dwells on time and moves at a different pace' (Schultz et al., 2018, p. 93). As many community-based participatory design research projects exist through funding calls, developing proposals should ideally begin at the very start and in a cooperative way. On a similar note, projects should also involve thinking about the future of the project, such as determining what happens after the funding ends and how the community will benefit from it in the long run. As these participative research projects are often made possible through funding opportunities, they often come with short, fixed timelines. This project existed for several years as a research project before taking on its new identity as a community-run project; this transformation was made possible over time and because there was, in fact, the time to build trust amongst parties and develop strong ties for the collaboration and the transition afterwards.

Decolonisation as an Ongoing Process

As acknowledged previously, this chapter was principally developed from the perspective of designer/researchers and collaborators who represent only a few of the many individuals engaged in this long-term project. While not all voices in the project are represented here, we wanted to emphasise that there is a need for non-Indigenous individuals to recognise the role they must play in changing things in their own practices and the structures within which they operate. Schultz et al. (2018) highlight that:

> Decolonizing design does not aim to create an opposition between 'decolonized' and 'colonized' designers or design practices. Rather, it promotes the ontological changes that will allow us to design more time for ourselves in this world. It is a project of incompleteness, of persistently un-learning and re-learning to see the world. We must constantly interrogate not only the field but also ourselves and our own practice.
>
> (p. 94)

Thus, as (mostly) non-Indigenous researchers, we see this still incomplete reflection on decolonisation as a contribution to the process of unlearning and relearning for our future practice (Côté, 2019; Schultz et al., 2018). Karine also reminds us that her perspectives do not represent those of all her community, either. Although our reflections are a crucial part of the equation, we also judge that it would be impossible to truly address the topic of decolonisation in the Tapiskwan project without engaging in profound reflections and dialogues with most of our Atikamekw collaborators. In our discussions, it was also highlighted that Indigenous peoples in Canada are busy (re)developing themselves and that the burden of educating the dominant society on decolonisation must not also be put on them.

Along the same line of thought, we see it as crucial to further locate the Euro-centrism of our own design education, to identify areas that could be challenged in order to acknowledge and deconstruct the unconscious dominance of Western paradigms

and to acknowledge and include 'design with other names' (Akama et al., 2019, p. 11). Socio-historical realities that have entrenched university–community relationships in colonial and otherwise hierarchical and ethnocentric models are not always explicitly addressed in this type of project, yet they can strongly influence its dynamics and, ultimately, the success of its outcomes. Moreover, exploring new ways to adapt design methods to different cultural settings is essential: for instance, finding ways to value the expertise, skills and knowledge possessed by some of the participants and stakeholders to the same level as the professional designers involved. Designers must be aware of the 'consequences of misplaced enthusiasm for design thinking toolkits for beginners that emphasise a bias for action, without due process and consideration for duty of care, safety or ethics' (Akama et al., 2019, p. 4). We see that using a holistic approach to art, design and crafts within participatory processes allows much more potential, and that it is more appropriate for the work with our Atikamekw collaborators and participants. Looking out to the future, there is still a lot of work to be done:

> The challenge for us now, as practitioners, researchers, and educators of design, is to carve out ways for respectful, reciprocal, and relational co-designing for social innovation that is premised upon a pluriversal view.
>
> (Akama et al., 2019, p. 23)

Thus, this chapter merely sets the table for continuing this discussion with more collaborators of the project to delve deeper into this topic of decolonising participatory practices, with Tapiskwan as the starting point.

Conclusion

To this day, frameworks for designers and design researchers working in community-based participatory design projects are few and far between. In this sense, we are still entering new areas within the practice of design. The Tapiskwan project has exemplified this well, as many challenges persisted, even within a formalised partnership between a university and a community. However, a methodology that draws on art, design and crafts in a holistic way greatly helped in building relationships that have made the project survive for many years. Considering this, we argue that there is distinct value and potential in such creativity-based methods for developing the relational dimensions of participatory design and collaboratively building a design process and innovative outcomes. With regard to the idea of 'decolonising' participatory research with arts-based—or, in this case, creativity-based—methods, we do believe that Tapiskwan aims to generate such opportunities for transformation by building relationships that challenge hierarchies and by conducting activities that call into question Western ways of knowing and doing. Tapiskwan is indeed shaped by our collective efforts, hand in hand with our Atikamekw partners, to integrate 'meaningful decolonial practices, strategies, and sensibilities' into our approach (Roth, 2019, p. 308). However, this does not, in our view, make the project an example of a fully 'decolonised' endeavour, as we acknowledge that some significant colonial biases and the several limitations of colonial structures have affected the project in significant ways. Moving forward, our hope is to find ways to carry with us the lessons we learned about the power of creativity-based methods and the relationships we built, thanks to these methods, to further contribute to the decolonisation efforts of our community partners.

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9 Navigating Uncertainty

Developing the Facilitator's Role Through Participatory Service Design Workshops

Maija Rautiainen, Michelle Van Wyk and Satu Miettinen

Introduction

The facilitator role in participatory service design workshops is central to developing trust with workshop participants. The core of facilitating and understanding various impacts of the workshops is in recognising the complexity (Kingsbury, 2017) of and various challenges in developing decolonising practices within a sensitive context (see De Lima Costa, 2013; Maldonado-Torres, 2011; Nakata et al., 2012) that employ arts-based methods (ABMs) and how to utilise them with the underserved youth and communities. This is done through creating a keen awareness of important factors that facilitators might be unaware of but need to keep in mind when preparing and conducting workshops within these communities. Poor access to public services, such as basic education and healthcare, and a lack of opportunities in the job market are the realities the communities face. Sensitising processes of the facilitator include gaining a conscious sensitivity and an informed approach to the realities and complexities that the locals encounter in their lives (Istratii, 2019).

The facilitators' sensitising process, actions and ABMs were reflected in the 'Participatory Development with Youth' (PARTY) project, which sought to advance human development and assist in reducing youth unemployment by increasing the involvement of young people in service development. In working towards these aims, the project researchers used service design methods in the participatory arts-based workshops where ABMs were used such as visual arts, design, video production and theatre. In the workshops, we experienced some positive impacts on youths' self-esteem and empowerment, which have been discussed elsewhere in more detail (see e.g. Miettinen et al., 2017; Sarantou et al., 2018). The PARTY project aimed to utilise and build on the creative potential and tacit skills (such as drawing and craft-making) practised by youth, embracing the tradition of storytelling and tacit knowledge about coping in marginalised circumstances that historically have been present in their communities and the greater society. The ABMs drew on embodied action, such as arts and creative making or performing roles for team building with youth, which, in turn, created a sense of community and learning. These participatory service design workshops were conducted in youth communities based in Grabouw and Platfontein, South Africa, and Windhoek, Namibia.

By responding to the needs of youth to foster self-appreciation through recognition of their skills and talents, ABMs can increase the youths' ability to confront, process and confront the challenges in their complex circumstances (Miettinen &

www.ulapland.fi/ArtsBasedMethodsForDecolonisingParticipatoryResearch/Chapter9

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Sarantou, 2019). One of the main benefits of ABM is that it supports grassroots actions where youth can share their opinions, be heard at some level within and outside of their community, and develop greater confidence when engaging in dialogue with stakeholders in the public space (Miettinen et al., 2016). Furthermore, ABMs stress the ownership of youth in different development processes through participatory action. Arts-based research (ABR) practice is at the core of this kind of development work (Leavy, 2015). Thus, ABM and ABR work hand in hand (see e.g. Chapter 13).

There are many different types of challenges in developing decolonising practices through ABMs. One of the most important lies in ensuring that the facilitation process is respectful and ethical and that the facilitators are culturally sensitive (e.g. Smith, 2013, pp. 9, 178), which requires that they understand the complex structures within the contexts in which the people live. Sensitising is essential in recognising and acknowledging the tensions, inequalities and social injustices in the local context, and it is the requisite first step when working with local communities (van Stam, 2014). This includes acknowledging the inevitable blind spots facilitators may have. Sensitising is a process whereby there is appropriate consideration of the ethical processes and contextual knowledge of the youths' circumstances (Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011; Shivayogi, 2013). For example, San youth face marginalisation and trauma as a result of large San communities having experienced assimilation and relocation from Namibia to South Africa. These traumatic life events have generationally affected the self-appreciation of the youth, as well as caused transitional trauma.

The importance of understanding colonial history and its continuing impact on the everyday lives and experiences of people and communities cannot be overstated. Besides broader historical and structural issues, awareness of local cultural practices is very important, as, for example, when navigating the issue of obtaining participants' consent, it needs to be acknowledged that it often must also be verbally granted by the elders in communities. In the participatory service design workshops, the facilitator's goal is to help navigate the complex tensions between the participants and stakeholders, such as potential future employers, political governing bodies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that work in the communities. With tools made available through ABMs (see Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Yassi et al., 2016), inclusive atmospheres can be created, but tensions will inevitably exist despite workshops being designed in collaboration with local partners. The participants may come from different backgrounds and experience different kinds of challenges in their lives.

The facilitator best navigates and addresses these potential differences by respectfully addressing emotions that may surface during the workshop. This is best approached by being aware of several perspectives and knowledge sets with which to inform the atmosphere of the workshop and by acknowledging the value each one brings to it. In the case of the PARTY project, the facilitators were from different cultural backgrounds, and this impacted their understanding of how behaviour, gestures and expressions would be interpreted by the participants and vice versa. In this context, the facilitators were operating within European Marie Curie secondments that totalled 255 secondment months. This meant a high rotation of people and constantly changing faces which, as we noted in hindsight, affected establishing trust within relationships with youth and fostering commitment and motivation to participate in the workshops.

To better prepare the European facilitators for their role, it was essential to sensitise them, making them aware of possible challenges and ensuring that they had a realistic understanding of the actions, workshops and goals before arriving in Namibia and South Africa, as they were not as knowledgeable about the central issues as the local facilitators. As important as understanding the challenges ahead was, it was crucial to understand the expectations that the facilitators themselves held without being aware of the cultural differences between the facilitators and participants, and how these unintentional expectations would potentially impact their experiences, judgements and responses in certain situations. To explain these challenges, this chapter sets out to examine and detail the work done in the workshops conducted in Namibia and South Africa, which highlighted the uncertainty of the facilitator's role and the development of decolonising practices.

Theoretical Framework

ABMs can play a role in enhancing capabilities that enable empowerment and dialogue. Savin-Baden and Howell-Major (2013) have pointed out that ABR draws on ABMs to steer the moral commitment for participating communities. This process includes the participants creating artefacts that foster their personal transformations and serve as means to communicate with their audience and researchers. ABMs can use stories, storytelling and artefact making, which help the participants to process their emotions on a deeper level. By sharing them through processes of artefact making and storytelling, communities can draw on reflexivity to process difficult issues. The activity presents the participants with opportunities to critically reflect on their circumstances and life experiences (Miettinen et al., 2016). Artistic skills are not the focal point of the activities; rather, the outcome is expected to be the initiation of an individual empowerment process, which may involve the inclusion of the entire community and the identification of possible solutions for their everyday challenges.

As Leavy (2015) has noted, community-based participatory research concentrates on finding solutions to problems and finding collaborative and social actions that enhance trust amongst participants, community, researchers and stakeholders. ABR combines multiple research methods. It is experiential and flexible, and applies methods in dialogue with requirements for transforming the development processes of communities. According to Leavy, ABMs can also cultivate empathy and self-reflection through the disruption of dominant narratives by exploiting the powers of performance and storytelling. In the case of the PARTY project, the use of artistic methods, especially storytelling, enabled both the participants and the facilitators to better understand one another and create a dialogue through stories. These methods do not draw on expertise; hence, they encourage participation and collaboration on more equal levels.

Service design is a participatory methodology used for creating new or improving existing services (Bowen et al., 2010). It has a strong collaborative and human-centred focus that fits well in the context of community development (Gill et al., 2011). Service design offers a vast selection of participatory methodologies to include individuals and communities in the process of developing their services. This promotes concrete and more democratic participation in the process of designing service production and delivery. In the context of the PARTY project, it was essential to develop new ways to include the voices of the Indigenous youth in the dialogue about their needs and

wishes concerning their futures and practical circumstances within and outside of their communities.

The Facilitator's Role in the Context of Decolonial Thinking and Doing

Decolonial thinking and doing emerged in the Global South as a counterpoint to the very foundation of modernity/coloniality. Modernity is a consequence of colonial structures and processes. Decolonial concepts and actions involve critical thinking about Eurocentric power systems and limits to their hegemony (Mignolo, 2011). ABMs and research strategies are used to promote participatory, respectful and inclusive collaboration between researchers and communities. In this research case, art and artefact making—for example, the creation of posters, storytelling and performance such as using theatrical methods or storytelling templates—were applied as approaches to process emotions through creative expression. Understanding the importance that these approaches play in Indigenous communities (see e.g. Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011; Flicker et al., 2014; Hammond et al., 2018) can support the potential usefulness of ABMs in the facilitation of decolonial processes. These reflect the impact of the research regarding the community and its stakeholders, as well as various power relations that are attached to the research process (Smith, 2013) and facilitation of arts-based activities. Furthermore, it is important that the research outcomes are discussed and interpreted with the communities (Braun et al., 2014), thus not offering only the researchers' interpretation or viewpoint.

Yet, even with sensitisation and learning about the historical and political context, there are some uncertainties in the facilitator's role that could not be prepared for. The 2015–2016 student movement, known as #FeesMustFall, started at Wits University and soon spread across government-funded universities in South Africa. #FeesMustFall was one of many protests against what South African youth saw as systemic oppression birthed by colonialism and apartheid (Hendricks, 2018). The movement started off as a protest against increasing 2016 university fees but grew to become the unheard voice of many underlying issues pertaining to higher education in South Africa. Due to growing anger at the government's ongoing non-responsiveness to issues that were raised, the #FeesMustFall movement eventually turned violent, resulting in many universities being vandalised and student activists being arrested (Langa, 2017). The #FeesMustFall movement was preceded and underpinned by the #RhodesMustFall movement that had taken place a few months earlier, where students protested against the statue of Cecil John Rhodes situated on the University of Cape Town's main campus. #RhodesMustFall drew attention to the visible presence of colonial structures on campus, in essence echoing the colonial nature of university systems and approaches to education (Langa, 2017; Mavango, 2019). Students protested the unaffordable fees that prohibited access to education and curricula that are Eurocentric, offering little support and relatability in a pan-African context. Hendricks (2018) describes universities as 'rigged spaces' in that the notion of transformation has been communicated in the way that universities position themselves, but noted that no shift in power, orientation or forms of knowledge production had occurred. This is problematic because the fundamental building blocks of universities in South Africa have been formed from what Hendricks has described as 'norms, values, cultures, and epistemologies of the West' (p. 18). Keet et al. (2017) reflect on the 2015–2016 student protests in South Africa in their editorial, pointing out the contradiction between

social justice and social reality as one of the obvious reasons behind the protests. The authors support Hendricks's (2018) point about the lack of decolonial thinking, concluding that it is often only a theoretical concept, and it is not effectively transferred into practice.

These student protests took place during the PARTY project and impacted both the realisation of the project and the facilitators' mindsets. Some of the workshops were cancelled, as some youth found it very important to participate in the protests, fighting for a future that they needed and wanted to be a part of. The facilitators fully understood and supported this, and they were appreciative of the fact that they could see the agency that students had in applying decolonising practices. Due to these student movements (#FeesMustFall, #RhodesMustFall and #PatriarchyMustFall), now often collectively referred to as the Fallism movement, unprecedented changes have taken place in fee structures, access to education and student accommodation, workers' conditions and institutional culture that addresses relevance in taught curriculum content (Booysen, 2016; Mavango, 2019).

Self-reflection is an essential component of sensitisation when working in any workshop context involving marginalised communities. The facilitator can often represent the colonial power structures of the past and carry out the legacy of the colonial trauma that has been suffered, thus impacting how one relates to the other. This highlighted the need for understanding and processing one's being in this political context for many of the facilitators during the PARTY project. It also created difficulties and uncertainties in adapting to the facilitator's role and raised the question of how to address this uneasy relation with the 'other'. Reflection on power structures impacted the experiences that came about during the workshops, as facilitators were keenly intent on not reinforcing colonial practices. A practical example of this was the effort to renegotiate research protocols to be inclusive of community practices. This included such things as the facilitators understanding the hesitance around signing printed documents (consent forms, which are stipulated research criteria) and treating the process of obtaining consent with careful awareness. Thus, a simple verbal explanation of the terms of consent and facilitating such verbal communications were essential in achieving respectful research.

One of the main goals of the PARTY project was to understand how to support empowerment. The complexity of facilitating empowerment without creating the perception of hierarchy and imposition, which are associated with colonial practices, is an additional challenge that facilitators face. Also, language plays an important role in workshops with marginalised communities, as English is often not a mother tongue but another remnant of foreign colonial systems. This, in turn, can affect self-confidence in communication with facilitators. Facilitation is not forcing people to do something, but rather enabling people to use their energies in a creative way (Jenkins & Jenkins, 2006). Engaging in a common goal in a workshop is a voluntary action and requires the commitment of the participants (McInerny, 2016). When working with communities, it is always very helpful to have a native speaker to assist with the interpretations of communication between participants and researchers. It is also a sign of respect. It is important to fully acknowledge and take into consideration the participants' culture and strive for equality in the communication.

The facilitator is more easily trusted and able to lead a successful workshop when perceived as a neutral actor and not someone in an authoritative position who controls the participants (see Di Russo, 2016, p. 149; Schwarz, 2002; Wilkinson, 2012).

This means that the facilitator cannot be part of the group or have a role as a designer in the workshop, as the group itself works as the core design team (Di Russo, 2016, p. 149; Schwarz, 2002). Facilitators need to put their egos and personal points of view aside (Wilkinson, 2012), as their task is to encourage the creativity of the group by using participatory and collaborative methods (Di Russo, 2016, p. 149). This may often practically take the form of creating room for their lived experiences to take precedence.

Understanding how to behave or how behaviour is interpreted by becoming aware of cultural differences constituted the sensitisation of the facilitators. In the case of the PARTY project, some facilitators were from European countries. It is important to recognise and understand that multiple cultural viewpoints frame personal lived experiences, have an impact on us and influence how we see our realities. These go beyond one individual in the role of facilitator. Yet, we, as facilitators and designers, can play an important role through respectful design (Steen et al., 2011; Tunstall, 2013) by considering the framework (Reitsma et al., 2019) for this, namely: the 1) role of leadership; 2) utilisation of power; 3) ownership of process, outcomes, ideas and material culture; and 4) the role of the Indigenous community and its knowledge. Facilitators need to gain several skills, including developing qualities, methods and roles to balance the work as a facilitator and understand the concept of respectful design. The role of facilitators involves encouraging the participants, keeping focus, energising others, getting things started, closing, recording, building consensus, managing dysfunctions, and preparing and challenging the participants in order to keep the workshop flow going (Schwarz, 2002). The facilitator can have many roles, such as motivator, guide, questioner, timekeeper, organiser, teacher, interpreter, communicator and activator, where the focal point is to reach a result that is created, understood and accepted by all participants (Wilkinson, 2012). All the actions and roles of the facilitator are aimed at enabling the participants to work towards solutions and results (Hjalmarsson et al., 2015). Thus, facilitation is a guided process of moving things forward and acquiring relevant knowledge through activities (Horsfall & Cleary, 2008).

Research Design

The research design described in this chapter was based on long-term participatory action research (PAR) (Kemmis et al., 2015). Teachers and researchers worked as facilitators during their secondments in South Africa and Namibia, forming the focus group for the research. In the European focus group, there were one male and five females whose expertise was in teaching, technical support and research for the project. The focus group included two authors of this chapter, who had extensive knowledge of the PARTY project, one of whom had long-term experience in facilitating workshops with vulnerable communities. All the focus group participants had concluded several fieldwork visits where they facilitated service design workshops in Namibia and South Africa. The use of focus group discussions (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009) generated more informal discussions and reflections on each other's learning, where participants could respond to comments and ideas, which resulted in rich multivocal data sets. In addition, workshop sessions were reported after each fieldwork period. These reports were also analysed, and they offered us significant insights into the fieldwork experiences and feedback from youth who participated in the workshops.

The selection of the specific PAR was driven by a strong motivation to have an impact on the role of the facilitator in the context of service design as well to address decolonial thinking and doing. PAR seeks to influence service design communities of practice (Kemmis et al., 2013) that work with vulnerable or marginalised communities. Focus group discussions served as reflexive learning tools for collecting data about the facilitators' experiences in the field (Parker & Tritter, 2006). The reflexive discussions supported the purpose of the action research to develop the practice with the community. The research design was constructed around several research cycles where both documentation and analysis of data were conducted. These cycles were divided into fieldwork periods for working with facilitation and reflective focus group discussions. One focus group discussion took place during the project and one after the project. The research process (Figure 9.1) followed these phases: 1) sensitising and ethical and service design training for fieldwork; 2) fieldwork, facilitating the workshops and reporting; 3) focus group discussions and the content analyses; 4) fieldwork, facilitating the workshops and reporting; and 5) pre-task, focus group discussion and content analyses.

The first focus group discussion was formed around research questions about the role of facilitators and their experiences, emotions and activities before and during the workshops, and their experiences after the workshops. The discussion lasted two hours. The second focus group discussion was constructed around a set of preparatory questions as a pre-task. These were focused on one's role as workshop facilitator. Participants were asked to choose a photograph taken during the workshops that would visually illustrate their role in a chosen situation. They were directed to consider the following questions: 1) How do you interact with the youth?; 2) What does the picture tell you?; 3) What kind of role do you have?; 4) How do you accommodate youth's needs and concerns?; and 5) How do the ABMs help facilitate the interaction and decolonise workshop structures? The second focus group discussion had four of the same participants as in the first interview. The second discussion was conducted a year after the PARTY project had ended, which made it possible to reflect on experiences further along in time. This focus group discussion took two hours. One of the authors facilitated the discussion.

The analysis of the data documentation of the focus groups followed (Wilkinson, 2011). The theory-based data analysis (Aneshensel, 2002) focused on the verbal communication of the focus group discussions, transcripts of the focus group discussions

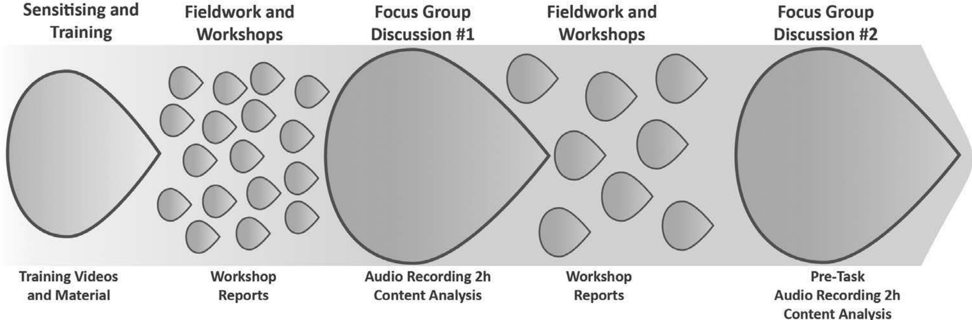

Figure 9.1 Research process in self-reflections of the focus group in the PARTY project.

and written reports. The theoretical framework and data analysis process included the following steps: 1) first focus group discussion on the thematic elements of the PARTY project; 2) thematic analyses of the discussion and defining the theoretical framework; 3) second focus group discussion alongside the theoretical framework; and 4) theory-based data analyses of the second focus group discussion, workshop reports and self-reflection tasks. The workshop reports included feedback from the youth who had participated in the workshops. The focus group visited Namibia and South Africa separately and partly together a total of 25 times over 19 months. The duration of the secondments varied from two weeks to two months, and a total of 20 workshop reports were produced from these activities. The research design enabled the development of the facilitator's role in the service design workshops.

The Sensitising Process for Facilitators

The sensitising process in the PARTY project included: 1) ethical training sessions that were managed by a representative of the South African San Institute; 2) service design and workshop facilitation training sessions that were conducted by the PARTY project manager; 3) documentaries related to San culture; 4) selection of reading materials; and 5) an ethical check on the completed workshop reports. In-depth sensitising was highly dependent on the participants' interest and motivation, as these actions could not be forced. The goal of the sensitising process was to increase the facilitators' awareness of the colonial pasts of Namibia and South Africa, as well as the historical marginalisation of the Indigenous San people (Francis & Francis, 2010). It was important to make facilitators aware of ethical issues related to working with Indigenous communities (Tunón et al., 2016). Ultimately, the most important part of the sensitising process was that the facilitators considered their own attitudes and expectations related to how youth live and what kinds of skills they have. This was essential, as false expectations can produce simplified perspectives and negatively impact the outcomes.

Ethical training sessions were conducted at the University of Lapland for the project researchers and facilitators. They were conducted by representatives of the South African San Institute who had been working with the Indigenous San communities for long periods of time and who had gained a trusting relationship with the communities as well as extensive expertise on ethical issues relevant to the San communities. Their expertise was related to the problems that had occurred in the earlier research projects and provided the opportunity to establish good practices and respectful attitudes required to work with the San youth. They had been involved in publishing the San Code of Research Ethics (Schroeder et al., 2019; South African San Institute, 2018). Ethical training sessions were documented by recordings so absentees could obtain the same information as the participants. The key point of the training was to increase awareness and understanding of the actual circumstances and challenges in the context, as well as to create informed action with the workshop participants with whom the researchers were in contact. In the workshops, awareness and understanding of the context were created through the stories shared about local histories. Moreover, it was important to promote dialogue between the facilitators and the participants to create relationships amongst people coming from different backgrounds and contexts.

The training sessions on service design and workshop facilitation introduced the researchers to some basic principles of service design and practical issues related to workshop organisation, such as the contents, timetable, workshop methods and

different roles during the workshops. The use of embodied action and participatory service design methods were discussed as approaches for joint activities that could be conducted in an inclusive manner. Such a manner was, for example, accomplished by the facilitators considering ways to increase equality and reduce hierarchical workshop structures such as the more traditional teaching set-up that often has the teacher, who is higher in the hierarchy, in front of the classroom giving a lecture, and the students, who are lower in the hierarchy, sitting down. To change this set-up, the facilitator can consider where they locate themselves in the space, and if they are sitting down or standing (Cui, 2019). There are also cultural meanings related to standing up and sitting down. For example, in certain contexts in Namibia, it is considered rude to stand while you are waiting. Through one's own actions, the facilitator can gain multiple benefits by reducing hierarchy and decreasing tension in the workshop. The thoughts about embodied action, such as football playing, of the youths and facilitators were discussed in the training sessions. The aim to act with respect towards the participating youths and their culture was clarified by a set of questions, such as: Do I act like local participants? Do I play football during the break with the local participants? Will I observe and participate in local customs—and, for example, eat—in a traditional way? Embodied action—for example, in playing games together—can facilitate the dismantling of hierarchies and enable decolonial doing (Butterwick & Selman, 2012).

The inclusion of youth in the planning of the workshop content was important. A significant part of the sensitising process was learning and adapting participatory service design methodologies (Yang & Sung, 2016). Participants should know what the workshop is about, what the goals are, what they would gain from it and what outcomes or results will be coming from it. The consent forms should be simple and clear so that the participants understand to what they are giving their consent. Moreover, it has to be considered that the consent form itself can be seen as a colonising 'tool' because the benefit of it is clearly for the researcher and not as much for the participants. This is related to practices that are not usual for them and/or if they do not necessarily recognise it as a form of protection and understand how to use it for this purpose. Recording consent videos in the participants' spoken language during the project was an effective step we took to eliminate this problem and the tensions related to it. Participatory methods provide more opportunities to encourage youths to commit to the workshop. Amongst the methods, it should be noted, is to allow enough time for meaningful discussions and writing in their native language and to create room to unpack any possible challenging experiences. One aspect to consider is that many of the roles to be fulfilled during the workshops can also be given to the youths. This changes their role from that of participant to an organiser, which highlights the importance of their agency within the workshop. Also, 'leave behinds', such as community posters, printed photographs and access to video footage taken during the activities, are an important part of the workshop so that they can partake in, and feel ownership of, the results.

The focus group emphasised that the sensitising process made it easier to be aware of the responsibilities that come with the facilitators' role. The facilitators experienced that they could plan the secondments and workshops as much as they wanted before the secondment, but the reality of what worked in workshops and the circumstances at sites only became validated in action. Sensitisation to the colonial legacy was affirmed by each secondment and during the time spent with the youths and other

partners at the sites. An effective decolonial practice would be to offer opportunities and provide alternatives to the community, and design and plan together with them, and then conduct the workshops based on their specific needs and interests. Often, actions such as introducing pre-planned ideas into a community that had no say in the development or design of the activity can be seen as colonial practices. Decolonial planning practices should include planning with the community in real time and then running the workshop with them.

The Facilitator's Role and ABMs in Participatory Service Design Workshops

The overall theoretical framework followed the themes that had already been investigated and found important during the PARTY project of 2015–2019. In the first focus group, the main themes that were frequently discussed included: 1) The role and the content of service design workshops—*how the service design methodologies and process were used in the project* and *how the participatory actions were designed and implemented during these workshops*; 2) the role of ABMs—*how the ABMs were experienced as impacting the equality and power relationships, as well as the atmosphere and interpersonal relationships, in preparation of and during the workshops*; 3) the facilitator's role during the workshop; and 4) the role of decolonial thinking and doing in the workshop actions, and activities and their experienced impact—*what different types of power structures and overall problems were encountered during the fieldwork visits and what the impact of the practical doing was during the workshops*. The themes were discussed, and it seemed that, for some of them, the facilitators had more questions than answers. The sensitising process, the fieldwork periods and the focus group discussions provoked self-reflections and enhanced sensitivity in understanding the power structures, past historical context and societal challenges related to the realities of Indigenous youth.

The Role of Service Design and ABMs

The facilitators found that the ABMs contributed towards a more equal and participatory workshop experience. They tried to construct their roles not only as facilitators or tutors, but as collaborators who could be met and engaged in discussion on a more equal level. ABMs were experienced as a way to apply decolonial thinking and doing, rather than relying on outdated or even colonial power structures in education (Kerr, 2014). We also found that the ABMs enabled the facilitators and the workshop participants to familiarise themselves with each other. The ABMs contributed to creating more relaxed feelings, and embodied action, such as roleplaying or craft- and art-making, contributed to more balanced and equal relationships between the facilitators and the workshop participants. After the workshop, the facilitators noted that relaxed and free discussion was easier. This felt empowering for both the facilitators and the participants, and it enabled social interaction amongst individuals who were from different cultural backgrounds. Both the facilitators and workshop participants were able to reposition themselves and self-reflect on their roles through embodied activities during the workshops. Moreover, the arts-based and embodied activities were diverse and numerous during the PARTY project: working with artistic interventions in the communities, team building activities such as playing football, mindfulness

activities and drama and storytelling activities, as well as learning different textile and craft-making techniques.

The focus group discussions highlighted the relevance of encountering youth as well as the interaction and communication for creating trust, empowerment and dialogue. The workshops had the aim of consciously raising the self-esteem of the participants, which was one of the challenges indicated in prior studies (see Chennells, 2009). The action was intended to enhance possibilities for youth self-empowerment. The interpersonal relationships from person to person, without their stepping into more detailed, previously planned roles, were essential in encouraging and fostering the commitment of the participants to participate in the activities, and the facilitators were responsible for reflecting on the attitudes and unconscious communication they brought to the workshop. Mutual respect enabled possibilities for assuming a human-centred focus in the workshops. It encouraged genuine concern about and awareness of multiple life experiences and the significance of individual life encounters. The focal point was to understand the circumstances. Hierarchy and power structures were difficult to overcome, but through the use of ABMs, it was possible to create at least some opportunities for dialogue and more equal encounters to emerge between the facilitators and the workshop participants.

Participatory service design methods and ABMs aided the facilitation of the workshops in constructive ways. The methods fostered the creation of an atmosphere whereby the participants could feel they were welcome and taken, as best as possible, into consideration. Cultural differences were reflected on and carefully considered in the planning of the workshops. Although the facilitators made a detailed plan for the workshop in advance, it was impossible to know how the plan would play out in practice. However, their comprehensive understanding of the service design methods allowed them to quickly adapt their plans at times when flexibility was needed. There were opportunities for youth empowerment by providing them with the chance to teach something to others, including the other participants and the facilitator. The feedback received from the participants showed that reversing the roles gave them a sense of equality and a sense that they were contributing as individuals. This required input from the facilitators' side, in that they had to encourage and support the mutual learning process, and be open to new experiences.

According to the feedback the participants gave after the workshops, the participants and the facilitators believed that stories and storytelling were at the core of ABMs. The influence of using stories was considered powerful in many ways. In their feedback, the youths mentioned that stories enabled them to express themselves and be seen by the group members in a new way. The empathy created through storytelling diminished the perceived hierarchy between the facilitators and the workshop participants, which is also related to stories being often valued and helping with feeling, hearing and understanding the storyteller, facilitator or participant (see Gair, 2012). The facilitators understood, in the very practical process of doing and learning together with the participants, the significance of reflecting on the stories told in an empathetic, respectful and accepting way, as well as appreciating the stories.

The main result of using participatory design and ABMs was engagement with others through diverse means. This transformation affected participants, facilitators and the entire group. Participants had gained new perspectives, which increased their ability to see value in their own actions, regard themselves from another perspective and feel proud of their contributions and roles. This was demonstrated, for instance,

in the 'poster intervention' conducted with San youth, when they were engaged in sharing their concerns with the community by drawing posters and displaying them anonymously in public spaces. According to their feedback, the youths believed that this action provided them an opportunity to voice their ideas and feelings to the community and gauge the community's impact from the message. The facilitator also experienced the transaction as rewarding and informative and as a means to generate the ability to critically evaluate her own actions. The workshops produced bonding between the facilitator and the participants as well as amongst the participants themselves, which in turn strengthened their commitment to each other and improved the facilitator's understanding of the youths and their communities.

The youths' impressions and reflections after the workshops showed that they considered them an opportunity to process their problems, emotions and issues. Amongst the youths, art was seen as a method for healing. Thus, these methods enhanced self-confidence and developed the patience needed for processing complex questions. They discovered that the ABMs could be used to broaden the possibilities for life choices, exploring possibilities and perspectives that relate to their life situations by using their art to communicate their views on the challenges they face in the community in which they live, and to the NGOs that work with them, to address some of the challenges they face. Art practices helped them to again recognise the value and importance of their arts and crafts, traditions and rituals, as well as their own cultural and historical roots. They experienced that art could be used as a method to start the discussion on certain problems within the community. However, there were also some obvious limits to the impact of the use of ABMs. The workshops could not even come close to solving many of the serious challenges in their lives, but they did provide them with some new perspectives and means to learn how to approach these in different ways.

Namibia's painful colonial past of slavery and apartheid can be considered the foundation for many current societal problems, including widespread inequality and lack of access to opportunities. The youth participating in the workshops believed that, while a lot had already been achieved, Namibia had not yet been able to break free from the colonial legacy. They expressed their concern about critical societal challenges such as the lack of free education, high unemployment numbers and poverty. The ABMs helped them to discuss these complex issues in their society. As a result, they felt more confident in challenging their role as a minority. They stated that the arts gave them a voice and that art made it easier to process feelings, emotions and abstract issues as well as provided them the opportunity to say freely what they felt. Freedom was mentioned as an essential part of being able to express themselves through art, as it was a very unique means to express their voice.

The Facilitator's Role in the Context of Decolonial Thinking and Doing

Historical tensions in society, workshops and everyday life caused uncertainty in the facilitators (Chambers & Curti, 1996). The fieldwork sites were based in communities that experienced poverty, unemployment, racism, lack of opportunities for education and even scarcity of food. This made the facilitators aware of the difficult and complex circumstances facing the participating youth. The facilitators felt unsure and critical about their own contributions and understood how insignificant their impact would be on the lives of these young people. This resulted in them self-critically evaluating and questioning the purpose and meaning of the workshop actions. Facilitating

workshops and getting to know these youths had made it necessary for the facilitators to process and reflect on their own attitudes and intentions. The role of the facilitator was ideally seen as that of a neutral actor, but at the fieldwork sites, it became clear that the facilitators needed to understand the complex tensions related to the role of a facilitator, as it was strongly influenced by colonial power structures in education (Kerr, 2014).

One of the key structural challenges of the PARTY project was that the overall funding instrument (MSCA RISE) was Eurocentric, as the main beneficiaries of the project were European institutions. The funding instrument positioned the African partners as 'third country' representatives. This affected the relationships amongst the PARTY consortium partners and resulted in questioning—rightfully and justifiably—the project values as participatory, tolerant and inclusive in respect to the actual collaboration. These issues were openly discussed amongst the collaborators, who as such could not eradicate the existing power imbalance, but it did nevertheless provide the possibility for the partners to present their criticisms and reflect on the situation which was considered unfair by many of them. Despite this and other challenges, some of which were caused by the particularities of the funding instrument, the project was also able to produce positive impacts. For example, the sensitising process and self-reflections of the facilitators succeeded relatively well, which made it possible for the workshops to be organised in a collaborative manner, and also some advancement was made in developing decolonial strategies for the project and fieldwork periods. The most essential means to negotiate the technical constraints of the funding instrument, as well as the broader structural issues in the context of this project, were personal relationships, encounters, collective discussions and reflections amongst those involved.

For the facilitators, their role in the workshop was not limited to technical facilitation. Many steps had to be taken before a workshop could be organised, as the facilitator needed to recognise and understand their own positionality in light of the political and colonial history, societal challenges and even demonstrations during the fieldwork periods, as well as economic and disadvantaged opportunities amongst the partners.

The facilitators discussed and reflected on their roles and actions through the preparatory task that they were assigned before the focus group discussions. The facilitators' role changed as they needed to carry out multiple roles during the workshops. Even though the facilitator was always placed in the role of the guiding authority, the workshops were designed and carried out in such a way that it made it possible to offer a participatory experience for all involved. The ABMs used for advancing equality and implementing the participatory approach included the personal actions and histories of the participants. This helped in developing closer and more personal relationships with youth. On the basis of the youths' feedback, it seems that they especially enjoyed embodied actions such as playing football, role playing, arts-based activities and storytelling. The fact that the facilitators showed interest in their experiences and stories was regarded as an opportunity for them to be heard, and it was also important that they were encountered as individuals, as this created a sense of caring and engagement. The relationships were further developed each time they met, and it was seen that embodied actions created trust between the facilitator and participants. The focus group discussions concentrated on the ways in which the experience had impacted the facilitators' mindset and resulted in more critical processing and self-reflection on understanding the ethical considerations. For the facilitators, the

learning experiences were rewarding, but also challenging. The personal abilities of the facilitators impacted how well they coped with challenges and uncertainties. Continuous assessment of capacities for handling complex situations in different contexts and the added need for flexibility resulted in the facilitator's role being characterised by uncertainty. Often, this means not really knowing how to act and carry out such a role. Unfamiliar power structures create uncertainty about how actions would be interpreted by the participants, especially in a context with which the facilitator is not fully familiar—in this case, a postcolonial context (Matlosa, 1998).

All focus group participants experienced uncertainty in a similar way. There were tensions, power structures and polarisations amongst the different communities and between male and female representatives, and between European and Southern African institutions. For the facilitators, some hierarchies and power structures were challenging to perceive. During the course of the project, it became clear to the facilitators that their contributions were bound to be very minor as they were not involved in aid work and could not through their role have large impacts or effect structural change. Simultaneously, it was very important for them to be able to manage the expectations of the youths to avoid potential disappointments caused by unrealistic expectations. Facilitators sometimes felt there was a lack of trust and oversight in the local context. In fact, they had very little communication outside of the workshops with the participating communities. These tensions were addressed in discussions between facilitators and local actors (partners, communities and NGOs) to enable critical reflections on the facilitator's role. The reflective approach and dialogue contributed to clarifying the role of facilitators and workshops as contributors to local innovation, new perspectives and collaboration. The focus group discussions were an important way for facilitators to critically self-reflect on their roles in the fieldwork and develop their understanding of ethical engagement, local culture, colonial history and power structures.

Discussion and Conclusion

The use of ABMs in the service design workshops had clear benefits for both the workshop participants and facilitators. The facilitators could use the ABMs—especially the embodied action such as craft-making, roleplaying and gaming—in the workshop plan, which created a more relaxed, open and inclusive attitude during the workshops. Critical reflections on these approaches after the workshops were useful to explore their value in decolonial thinking and doing when possible cross-cutting approaches in workshop settings. This was demonstrated, for example, through the activities where workshop participants could take a leadership role and use their creative potential, as well as storytelling abilities, and create positive and empowering outcomes in the workshops.

As in all group work, diverse tensions between the participants or between the facilitator and participants will exist. In postcolonial contexts, the facilitator needs skills and competencies to understand complex issues and face tensions that are historical, social, political and cultural, and those related to contextual hierarchies and power structures. Critical reflections on the attitudes of the facilitators in a postcolonial context can assist them in processing their experiences of uncertainty in such contexts. Embodied actions can be used to release tensions related to interaction between facilitators and participants, and to create a more equal and welcoming environment

to encounter each other in a participatory service design workshop. Sensitivity to and awareness of circumstances play essential roles in the process of creating long-lasting interpersonal and institutional relationships, as well as respectful mutual experiences and learning processes for workshop facilitators and participants. Facilitators can set an example and lead the workshop by their actions to promote open dialogue and reflection, drawing on creative energies within the workshop setting. In openly and honestly acknowledging that oversights can occur unintentionally, facilitators can learn from their experiences in facilitating workshops with vulnerable communities and increase their confidence in conducting future workshops that require careful ethical engagement.

In vulnerable communities, the benefits of using ABMs in facilitation can be realised when facilitation takes place carefully and respectfully. The feeling of succeeding in something or in some activity can create trust and empathy amongst the participants. The ABMs provided possibilities to carefully consider all participants' needs and interests, and to reduce hierarchy and create new ways to understand and encourage interaction amongst individuals. The stories and storytelling were used in several workshops, and they created engagement and empathy in the workshops that presented the participants with more means and methods to process and manage the challenges in their lives and communities. The workshops could not significantly impact any large societal issues, but on the basis of the feedback, we found that, within their actions, some empowering transformations in participants were achieved. Thus, we concluded that ABMs (Leavy, 2015) have the potential to contribute to decolonial thinking and doing (Mignolo, 2009). This chapter has focused specifically on creative and embodied activities that aimed to contribute towards the development of open and reflective dialogue between the facilitators and participants, and at times, also enabled the inversion of their roles.

There are limitations to this study. It focused primarily on a very narrow sample of Finnish facilitators representing their cultural context within the PARTY project. This study was qualitative and descriptive by definition, and it sought to initiate and continue dialogue. While the study and workshops have been able to identify some youth perspectives, there remains much more to be done in this area, both in terms of research and youth involvement. The PARTY project offered some new opportunities for developing facilitation in a multicultural context, but more opportunities need to be developed for conducting longitudinal research and investigation that includes youth perspectives.

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Section III

Artistic Research and Practice

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10 Decoloniality of Knowing and Being

Artistic Research Through Collaborative Craft Practice

Nithikul Nimkulrat

Introduction

> Experimentation is . . . one of the oldest methods with which artists have always worked, as central for them as it is for scientists.
>
> (Nowotny, 2011, p. xxiv)

Both artists and scientists carry out experimentation in their respective fields. In the research context, both research in the arts and that in the sciences may utilise experimentation as a method in their research inquiry. While this can be a key method for research in both disciplinary realms, one major difference lies in the aim of the experimentation. In scientific research, the aim is to witness the repetition of the results of the experimentation, whereas artistic research does not have such aim, as artistic experimentation tends to yield plurality of the results. Another difference would be the context or the 'site of knowledge' (Koskinen et al., 2011, p. 55) in which the experimentation takes place. In science, a laboratory is the site in which a thing or a phenomenon is brought from its natural environment to a controlled space for the researcher to focus on, one at a time. On the contrary, the site of knowledge of artistic research is a studio which is the real world in which an artist makes things. While the artist/researcher may study one thing at a time, a studio is not a controlled space as such, meaning that several factors may influence the artist in the shaping of the thing. Nevertheless, the concept of the laboratory as the site of knowledge is useful for artistic research. Even though the artist/researcher may not be able to turn their studio into a controlled space to function as the site of knowledge, by being aware that the studio is the site of knowledge, the artist/researcher can be critical of their own making and document it as if the making would have taken place in a laboratory. This may be one way to align artistic research with scientific research so that artistic research can be better received and accepted by the academic world at large. However, questions have arisen from this line of thought: Why should artistic research be conducted using normative methods of scientific research, when the arts have artistic or creative practice embodying tacit knowledge that may, in turn, be demonstrated through tangible objects in addition to textual communication? As transferability and rigour are indispensable merits of research in academia in general,

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are there ways or approaches to artistic research that would not place it in a position inferior to scientific research?

With these questions in mind, this chapter seeks to demonstrate how practical and local forms of tacit knowledge generated from within artistic research may overcome the state of being subordinate to scientific research by the very nature of artistic research practice that involves artistic production and art objects. It does so by examining collaborative craft practice as a way of approaching a research problem and driving the artistic research process and its role in the decoloniality of knowing and being. Artistic research encompasses other disparities in process and output that can present challenges to non-arts researchers and university systems seeking to understand this research within their own scaffolds of reference of the research process. This chapter starts by considering the development of artistic research in the creative and performance arts and the arts-based research (ABR) in social sciences in order to compare and contrast their approaches. The role of collaborative craft in the decoloniality of knowing and being is exemplified through my artistic research in which I collaborated with mathematicians. Working collaboratively with researchers from a completely different discipline also sheds light on how arts-based methods can foster pluralism, lower disciplinary hierarchies and increase multivocality, thus situating artistic research in the praxis of decoloniality (Mignolo, 2018).

Development of Artistic Research in the Creative and Performance Arts

Artistic research identifies scholarly research that intertwines artistic activity that is a mode of knowledge production inseparable from artistic practice (de Assis & D'Errico, 2019, p. 3). Its focus is on practice being conducted by researchers who are practitioners, e.g. artists, designers, writers, dancers, musicians, architects, etc. The practitioner/researcher participates in discursive formations stemming from their art practice which includes the works of art, the artistic actions and the creative processes. Although art practice can be a subject matter or topic of academic research in general, what makes art practice distinguishable in artistic research is the central role it plays in the research process (Nimkulrat, 2009, p. 51) as a vehicle for theoretical inquiry (Nimkulrat, 2012). The aim of artistic research, as Borgdorff (2011) puts it, is to 'convey and communicate content that is enclosed in aesthetic experiences, enacted in creative practices and embodied in artistic products' (p. 45). In general, artists may say that their work involves research that they use to inform their art production. However, in regular art production, artists do not need to define and justify their methods or express themselves contextually. The need arises only in research in the sense of seeking dialogue to develop ways of working and knowing (Lilja, 2015, p. 58).

De Assis and D'Errico (2019) succinctly describe the artistic research process and the way in which knowledge is produced in artistic activities:

> An artistic research process always starts with the choice of specific working materials which implies knowledge of and a sharp focus on their contingent modes of existence, including their history and their temporal, geographic and cultural situatedness. Second, the scholarly dimension is fundamentally intertwined with the material and affective dimension of art. It is then not simply a matter for a practitioner to 'double' as an observer of his or her own practice or artistic production; rather, throughout its development and renegotiation, practice

> generates discourse, and can in turn be steered, communicated, and reflected by the discourse.
>
> (p. 3)

Due to artistic research's subjective and situated approach, its tacit and intuitive processes, the experiential and emergent nature of its methodologies and its intrinsically interdisciplinary dimension all are derived from material and social relationality (Barret & Bolt, 2007). While the artistic research process seems methodical to some extent, Bolt (2016) points out that, in academia, 'artistic research continues to be seen as lacking credibility because the methods cannot be replicated exactly' (p. 137). Replicability and correspondence in findings between studies are principles of *scientific* research. However, the *performative* principle of artistic research demonstrates that iteration can never produce the same result. This is considered a unique characteristic of practice-led research in which creative practice can 'disrupt the status quo and allow [researchers] to explore new scenarios', and a consequence of such disruptive quality is a novel dimension to interdisciplinary research (Rust et al., 2007, p. 57).

Development of ABR in the Social Sciences

ABR emerged as a novel methodological genre during the period from the 1970s to the 1990s (Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1226). According to Leavy (2015), ABR encompasses 'a set of methodological tools that adapt the tenets of the creative arts in order to address social research questions in holistic and engaged ways in which theory and practice are intertwined' (p. 21). Within social science research, art processes may be used to generate data, to conduct analysis and interpretation or to present findings. The intention for using arts-based tools, as Greenwood (2019) points out, is:

> to open up different, and hopefully more empowering, options for exploring the specific problem or issue, and for expressing participants' perspectives in ways that can bypass participants' discomfort with words or unconscious compliance with dominant discourses, or perhaps to present findings in ways that better reveal their dynamics and complexity than written reports.
>
> (p. 7)

ABR seems to be human friendly in a way that participants may not be able to articulate their experiences. The process of making offers the participants the opportunity to express more truthful complex feelings, reactions or beliefs than answers that may be given as words in an interview, regardless of the language command of the participants (Greenwood, 2019, p. 9). ABR therefore creates opportunities for enhanced engagement amongst research participants. Healthcare researchers, special education researchers, psychologists and other researchers dealing with human participants have increasingly turned to arts-based methods for their therapeutic and empowering qualities (Leavy, 2015, p. 26). ABR often involves collaboration between academic researchers and artists or participants who may not possess artistic ability or training. Although the aesthetic quality of the resulting artworks made by amateurs may not be comparable to professional artists, they can still be powerful with respect to expressing emotion and meanings (p. 196). In addition, ABR practice does not belong to the domain of a single discipline, but rather has an ability to expand on existing disciplines

and establish synergies amongst disciplines (Chilton & Leavy, 2014, p. 406), thus contributing to transdisciplinarity (Osborne, 2015).

Artistic Research and ABR: Differences and Decoloniality

Artistic research and ABR are similar in their practice being geographically and culturally situated in a specific context or the 'site of knowledge' (Koskinen et al., 2011, p. 55), e.g. a studio or a workshop in a location, and principle of including art-making as a research method to generate, analyse and interpret data or to present findings. In general, a research question posed in artistic research or ABR tends to arise from within the researcher's own practice, being art or social sciences. The major difference lies in who makes art, the aesthetic quality of the artistic outcomes and the disciplines in which the research question is situated. In artistic research, the researcher has the role of an artist/researcher, carrying out research through their own professional art-making, the outcomes of which are expected to be of a professional standard. On the other hand, it is not necessary in ABR that the researcher is a professional artist, and the aim of art-making is not about achieving works of art of a high aesthetic standard, but works of art that function as tools for empowering the research participants to express their ideas and/or feelings and promoting their opportunities to engage themselves with one another. The relationship between the researcher and the research participants in ABR and that between the artist/researcher and the material in art production in artistic research are both non-hierarchical, meaning that they are equal partners in the research conduct and epistemic hierarchies are eliminated. This non-hierarchical relationship that may potentially unlock local or situated knowledge can be looked at from a decolonial perspective that has arisen from opposition to liberalism in the Industrial Revolution during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

During the Industrial Revolution, changes and new demands upon the individual and the political system were made. The Western *modern* state was shaped by liberalism that 'focuses on the individual, who has the capacity to reason . . . and to attain this potential through education, through a systematic form of organizing knowledge, then it became possible to debate these ideas in rational and "scientific" ways' (Smith, 1999, p. 59). Knowledge systematically organised in the West is local yet perceived as universal. Western discourse and ideology of modernity hence constitute coloniality, representing its fundamental aspect called the 'colonial matrix of power', which involves the control over four interdependent domains: economy, authority, gender and sexuality, and over knowledge and subjectivity (Mignolo, 2011, pp. 8–9). Coloniality recognises 'knowledge and understanding, controlled by a local imaginary [sic] that poses as universal, and that includes sciences, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, religion, and . . . economics and politics (e.g. Eurocentrism)' (Mignolo, 2018, p. 127). In his decolonial thinking, Mignolo proposes acts of 'epistemic disobedience', which involve the process of 'delinking' from Western Eurocentric colonial knowledge systems, as the decolonial option to 'place human lives and life in general first rather than making claims for the "transformation of the disciplines"' (Mignolo, 2009, p. 178). The decolonial option, or an act of delinking from the rhetoric of modernity and the logic of coloniality, becomes a non-normative space, as a space open to the plurality of alternatives (Mignolo & Vazquez, 2013). Mignolo's decoloniality signifies a practice, as distinguished from theory, that dismantles and reinvents methods, systems and logics—the transformation of knowledge and its institutions. It differs

from decolonisation in that, unlike decolonisation, decoloniality does not negate the colonial rules nor refer to the transfer of sovereignty from a colonising society to an Indigenous one.

Although the methodologically radical development of artistic research is not generally concerned with a decolonial scaffold as such, it grapples with decoloniality at the level of methods that does not conform with methods in the scientific research sense.

> [C]oloniality describes the hidden process of erasure, devaluation, and disavowing of certain human beings, ways of thinking, ways of living, and of doing in the world—that is, coloniality as a process of inventing identifications—then for identification to be decolonial it needs to be articulated as 'de-identification' and 're-identification,' which means it is a process of delinking.
>
> (Mignolo as cited in Gaztambide-Fernández, 2014, p. 198)

Delinking here in relation to the art world means that decolonial artists, curators, etc., are not aiming to achieve recognition but rather to delink from the following factors influencing art that consider modern Eurocentric aesthetics as universal ones: first, the market—where art is converted into commodities with market values; second, the altermodern (Bourriaud, 2009)—where art is considered as having artistic and intellectual values within global common artistic discourses; and third, de-Westernisation—where the value of artistic practices is based on the aim to dissociate from the imperial supremacy of Western artistic values (Mignolo as cited in Gaztambide-Fernández, 2014, p. 204).

The next section presents my artistic research carried out in collaboration with mathematicians that shows how I become a decolonial artist who delinks my craft practice from the previously mentioned three factors. It also demonstrates how I attain decoloniality, learning to unlearn colonial epistemology as a researcher and a textile practitioner by giving up established notions of expertise and disciplines and opening up to other decolonial options (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, pp. 19–22). Delinking, epistemic disobedience and learning to unlearn not only 'question and deconstruct coloniality as a hegemonic pattern of Western domination . . . [but also] seek for and support the establishment of alternatives by promoting other modes of knowing and experiencing' (Siegenthaler & Allain Bonilla, 2019, p. 6). My collaborative craft is expected to exemplify a new mode of knowing and experiencing, thus playing a role in the decoloniality of knowing and being.

Decoloniality of Knowing and Being: The Case of Collaborative Craft-Mathematics

Academic knowledge is organised around the idea of disciplines and fields of knowledge. However, a research question that arises from within a particular practice may go beyond its disciplinary context, such as the research project to be presented in this section. In this project, I played the role of both a researcher and a textile practitioner, who has used knotting as a technique for over a decade to create large-scale installations. The material was paper string, which was locally found and has been historically significant in Finland, the country in which I started adopting knotting, which I actually learned during my childhood in Thailand, as the main technique to construct

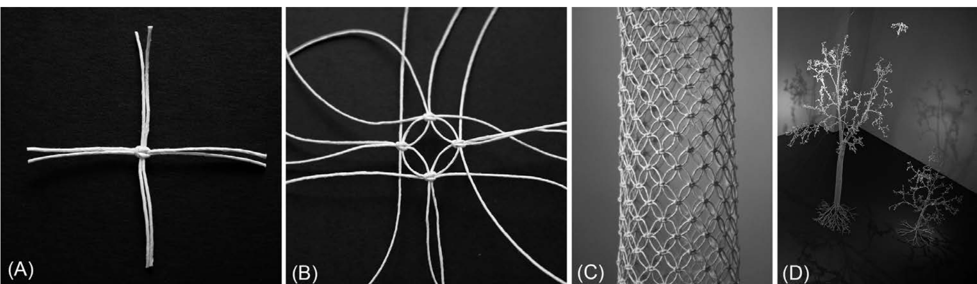

Figure 10.1 From left: (A) a single reef knot with two additional central strands passing through the centre; (B) a group of knots forming a circle; (C) a lacy structure; and (D) an installation with knotted elements named *The White Forest* (2016).

Source: Photographs by Nithikul Nimkulrat (2013–2016)

the repetitive lacy structure. The only type of knot used was the reef knot with two additional central strands passing through the centre that allow more reef knots to be connected, forming a circular shape and subsequently the lacy structure (Figure 10.1).

Prior to collaboration with mathematicians, my work had been monochromatic, as dealing with the positions of multiple strands intuitively did not facilitate the incorporation of more than one colour. Sketches were usually made to imagine the form and the overall installation, but never the structure. Seeing diagrams from mathematical knot theory that appeared as if they were visualisations of my knotted structures suggested to me the possibility to expand my practice further to incorporate colours in order to create new patterns and to initiate new research that asks: (1) whether craft and mathematical knots share comparable characteristics; (2) whether knot theory can examine the mathematical properties of knotted textile structures; and (3) how knot theory can facilitate the design and production of knotted textiles. To answer these questions, the expertise and knowledge of a textile practitioner/researcher alone are not sufficient. Therefore, moving beyond the disciplinary boundary is inevitable. For me, this was the start of unlearning in order to learn.

An iterative research process was developed between me and my collaborator, a South African/British mathematician. The process included initiating a discussion to set goals, working individually, working together, articulating relevant observations, questioning and setting goals for the next iteration (Figure 10.2).

The mathematical characterisation process shed light on the differences between textile knot practice and mathematical knot theory (Table 10.1). Pattern development for knotted structures was explored, envisaged and modelled through the iterative process of a textile practitioner and a mathematician working together (Figure 10.3).

After achieving new knot patterns and answering the initially established research questions, the project expanded to an area of mathematical tiling as both my mathematician collaborator and I recognised its potential in constructing new knot patterns and, possibly, new structures in a more systematic way. How mathematical tiling can be adopted as a tool for designing knot patterns and structures became a new research question. Another collaborator, a Finnish mathematician, whose expertise is in mathematical tiling, was therefore invited to join the project. Based on the knotted samples and a tiling concept, he identified 16 possibilities of two-tone coloured, four-strand

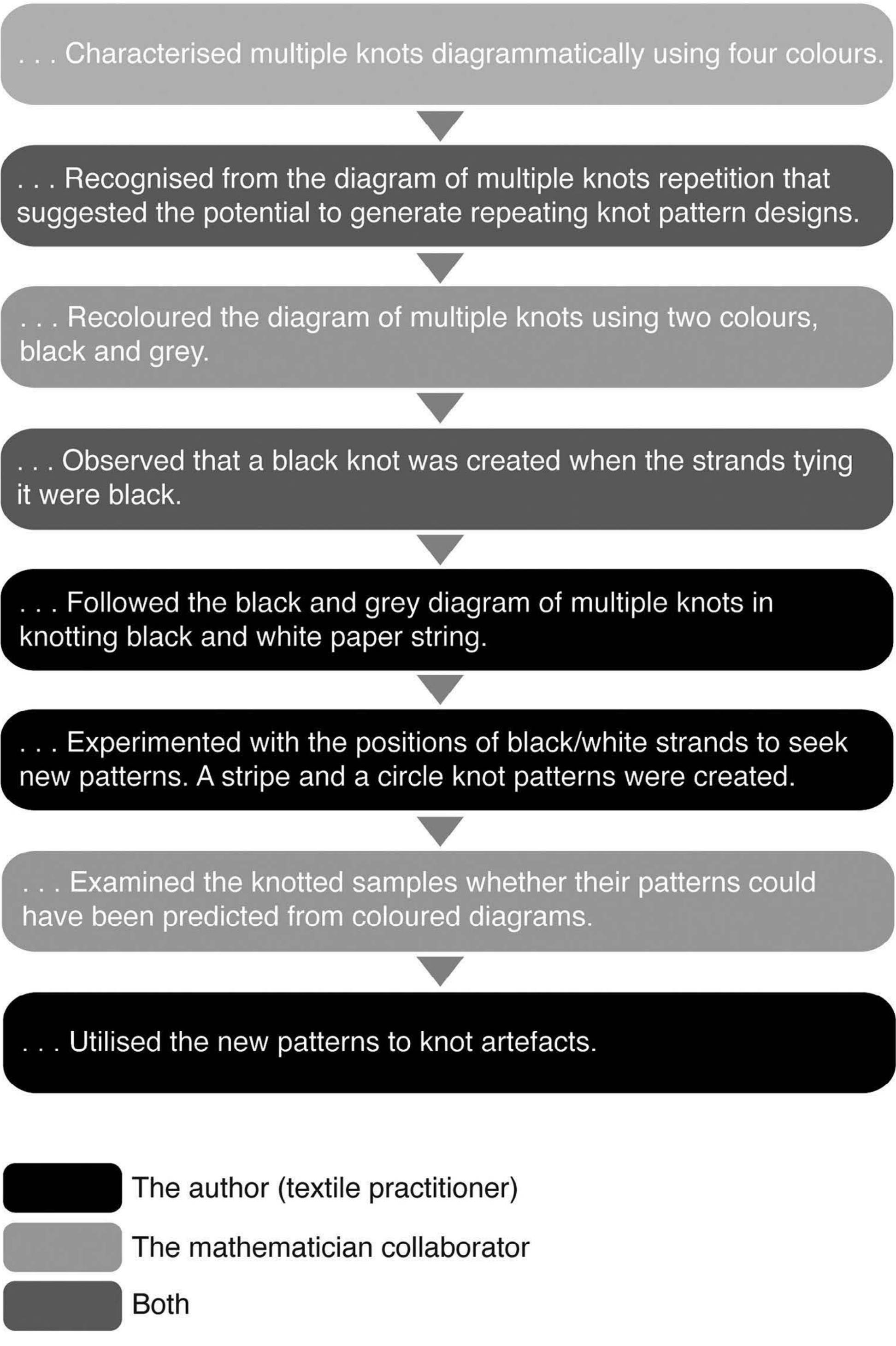

Figure 10.2 Collaborative process between the author and her mathematician collaborator.

Source: Diagram adapted from Nimkulrat and Matthews (2017, p. 71)

Table 10.1 Differences between textile knot practice and mathematical knot theory

Property	*Textile knot practice*	*Mathematical knot theory*
Ends	May have loose ends.	Continuous curve with no loose ends.
Material	Material dependent. The appearance of a knot is governed by material properties and dimensions.	Not concerned with materiality. Cross-section of strand deemed to be a point.
Tension	Tension-dependent. Internal and external spaces are pertinent.	A tight knot has the same representation as a loose knot, so they are considered equivalent.
Form	The addition of extra loops changes the appearance of a knot.	If a knot may be simplified to the same representation as another knot, they are considered equivalent.

Source: (Nimkulrat & Matthews, 2017, p. 64)

reef knots defined as unit cells that, hypothetically, can be tiled together, following the matching conditions that touching edges must have the same colour, to create a countless number of knot patterns (Figure 10.4). I followed this matching rule to explore the possibilities of tiling two-, three-, four- and five-unit cells from the 16-tile set. Numerous tiling notations were created; all of them were knottable. Figure 10.4 shows examples of knot patterns and samples created based on the use of three tiles.

In this collaborative partnership, the interaction between my mathematical collaborator and I differed from the previous partnership, primarily in that there was no period of working together synchronously. We both worked in different countries for the entire study period; when one finished their exploration, the result was handed over to the other for verification according to the researcher's disciplinary knowledge and expertise, i.e. the mathematician collaborator produced tiling notations based on a certain tiling concept and sent them to me to prove their knottability by physically knotting them using paper string. While I was open to adopting the working process that followed the essence of mathematics, which is about 'proving propositions', my mathematician collaborator was willing to accept a non-mathematical approach (i.e. craft) to prove the propositions. In this case, the mathematician came up with the proposition that tiling notations of identified unit cells were knottable and then transferred it to me to prove it through actual hand knotting. Once the proposition was proven to be true, I presented the knotted samples to the mathematician to examine, contemplating ways to apply other existing theories to analyse the physical knot again and/or discard some principles/rules and coming up with a new proposition for me to prove.

Though both researchers were each rooted in their own disciplines, we had to use an inter/transdisciplinary approach to counterbalance disciplinary limits to mediate discussion when working collaboratively on the same project. We had to go beyond our disciplinary boundaries to explore a new, unknown territory. In an unknown territory, our expertise and knowledge only were not enough, and a plurality of knowledge sites became essential.

Discussion and Conclusion

When artistic research has a scientific attribute, collaboration between an artist and a scientist is natural. Bringing together expertise from the artistic and the scientific

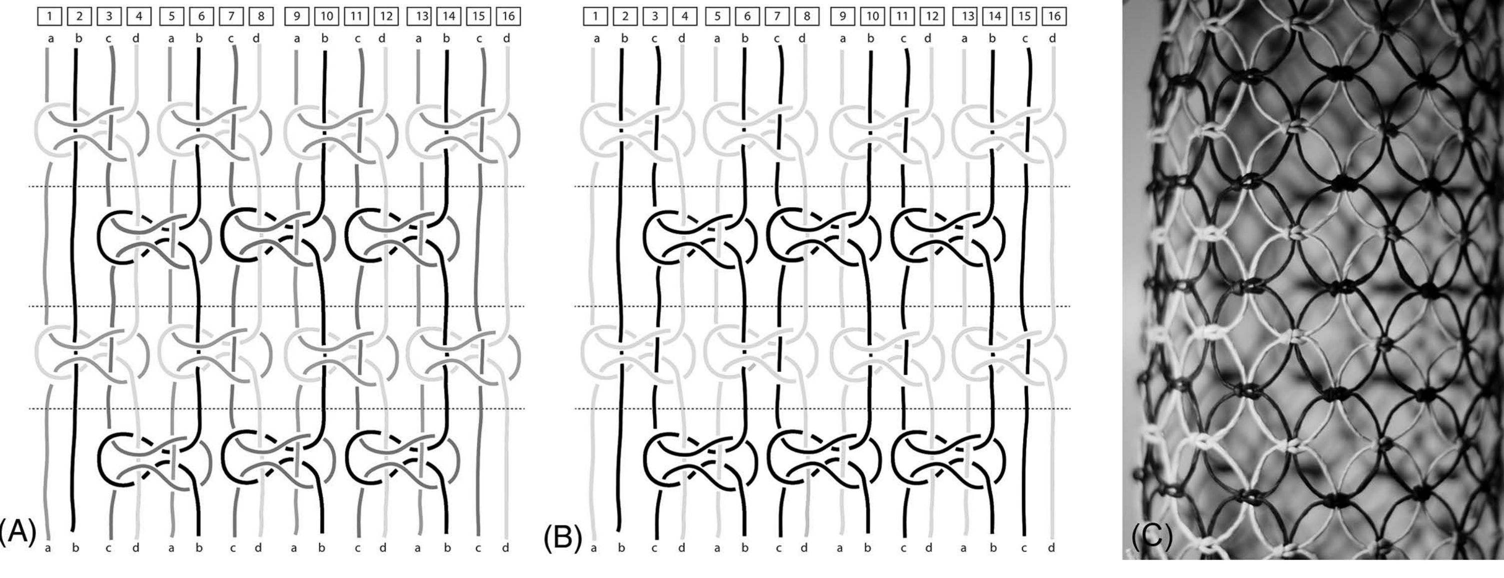

Figure 10.3 A mathematical characterisation process that results in a new knot pattern. From left: (A) a diagram of multiple knots using four colours; (B) a recoloured diagram using black and grey; and (C) a circular knot pattern of knotted paper string based on the black and grey diagram.

Sources: Diagrams by Janette Matthews (2015); photograph by Nithikul Nimkulrat (2015)

Figure 10.4 Left column: the 16 knot units that were mathematically identified. Right panel: 24 two-tone knot patterns, each produced from knot units shown in the left column. The pattern number indications with asterisks show that the same set of knot units can be tiled in multiple ways to create variations of knot patterns and structures.

Sources: Diagram adapted from Nimkulrat and Nurmi (2019, p. 20); photographs and notations by Nithikul Nimkulrat

worlds can lead to innovative findings and inspiring insights. Borgdorff (2011) suggests two different forms of multidisciplinary collaboration between artists and scientists: 'the scientific research serves or illuminates the art; or the art serves or illuminates what is going on in the science' (p. 53). However, neither form of multidisciplinary collaboration between artists and scientists, according to Borgdorff, corresponds to the collaboration in the artistic research exemplified in this chapter. While mathematical concepts illuminated and transformed my craft practice, the mathematicians did not conduct scientific research as such to do so, but rather implemented their mathematical knowledge in a new territory which was also new to me, a textile practitioner. Working in a new territory resonates with Pye's (2010) notion of craft as

> workmanship of risk that uses any kind of technique or apparatus, in which the quality of the result is not predetermined . . . The essential idea is that the quality of the result is continually at risk during the process of making.
>
> (p. 342)

In this case, the transdisciplinary method of working together required delinking from the model of knowledge production from both disciplines and dismantling the hierarchies amongst knowledge in different fields. In the collaboration presented previously, there is no power hierarchy, no knowledge hierarchy, no discipline hierarchy. The mathematicians and the artist worked together collaboratively and unlearned their established notions of expertise and disciplines in order to learn from one another, through this collaborative experience, new ways of knowing and practicing their disciplines which could be considered 'decolonial options' for their disciplinary practice.

All forms of knowledge are connected in one way or another through unlearning and learning. In this artistic research, I unlearned my way of knotting intuitively and learned a new way of knotting based on knot diagrams and tiling notations used in mathematics that were outside my textiles discipline. Knotting intuitively here means the hand and the mind working synchronously to construct lacy knot structures that can be learned by doing, through trial and error, or by observing an expert's demonstration. In my case, I had learned how to knot as a child in scout camps in Thailand. Knotting that I had known in my childhood naturally returned to me in 2004 when I conducted my PhD research (Nimkulrat, 2009), in which I examined the expressivity of material (i.e. paper string) and intended to experiment with the material without any tools. I unlearned weaving, which had been my specialisation, in order to learn a material that was new to me at that time; this resulted in my learning how to knot intuitively using only my bare hands to interact with the material that led to the lacy structure I have used since. This past experience of mine also supports the aforementioned statement that all forms of knowledge are connected through unlearning and learning, and also confirms that knowledge is embodied, experiential and accumulative. In the case of the mathematicians, they unlearned their way of proving propositions through equations and learned a new way of doing it through a visual and craft method. '[T]he decoloniality of knowledge is concerned with asserting multiple sources and sites of knowledge, transcending empirical observation and scientific reasoning', according to Kasturi & Goitsione (2019, p. 142). Working collaboratively with researchers from a completely different discipline also shed light on how arts-based methods can foster pluralism, lower disciplinary hierarchies and increase multivocality, thus situating artistic research in a decolonial context. Being respectful of

each other and of what the other knows are key to a successful collaboration in the decoloniality of knowing and being.

This artistic research has established a new standing for me as a 'decolonial artist' in that my knot practice that served as a research method delinked me from all 'colonial options' that Mignolo points out (as cited in Gaztambide-Fernández, 2014, p. 204). The knotted works did not aim at achieving value from the market, the global common artistic discourses or de-Westernisation (i.e. value of artistic practices that aim to dissociate from the imperial sovereignty of Western artistic values). Rather, they functioned as evidence of research results and outcomes of the methods that do not conform with methods in the scientific research sense. According to Mignolo (2018, p. 125), de-Westernisation is an 'interstate-led project that disputes the control and management of the colonial matrix of power but doesn't question its very foundation'. By detaching from de-Westernisation, not only did the artistic practice in this research free itself from the colonial matrix of power; it also focused on knowledge creation rather than the Western state and capitalist economy.

My new standing as a decolonial artist/researcher differs from my previous position as an artist/researcher in that in my previous artistic practice, although carried out as a method in artistic research, I still situated the resulting artworks in the art world by exhibiting them in contemporary art galleries. By being featured in a gallery, the artworks are inevitably attached to values—i.e. 'colonial options', in Mignolo's term—that are not essential for being the evidence and outcome of research that aims at generating or enhancing knowledge. One important implication of my learning and unlearning during this project is that my future work in decolonial research will depend heavily on collaborators who have mutual interest, trust and equity, and none of whom will play the lead but will be willing to work together and learn from one another.

The knowledge creation of making two-tone craft knot patterns and structures gained in this collaborative research was situated and embodied. As the methods used were dependent on the researchers involved, they cannot be replicated exactly. If other researchers were to conduct this research based on the same research questions, the methods would differ; hence, the results would not be the same. This explains how subjectivity cannot be eliminated from research as long as researchers are living beings.

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11 The Flying Ants and the Beauty of Ice

Heidi Pietarinen and Eija Timonen

Flying Ants and the Beauty of 'Ice'

In Lena Tsueb's embroidered work *Flying Ants* (2016), the ants emerge from their nest after it rains. The ants are embroidered using colourful cotton yarn and translucent glass beads against black fabric. Tsueb, a member of the *Ju/'hoansi* San community from northern Namibia, relates how people collect and eat ants after it has rained. The embroidered language is culturally, visually and materially distinctive. Tsueb's beaded artwork *Porcupine* graced also the cover of an art book, *Namibia, Land of Memories and More* (2014), which presented 140 Namibian artworks exhibited at Venice Biennale 2015. At the same time, in the northern part of Finland, the artist Eija Timonen explored cracks, shapes and rhythms in frozen water through photography. For her part, her colleague Heidi Pietarinen was inspired by the tactile and colourful qualities of Timonen's photographs and wove her impressions into jacquard woven textile. Both artists were wondering how to connect the North and South through collaborative art-making practices, across cultural and geographical boundaries—proceeding from two- dimensional photographs to tactile and three-dimensional textiles. Inspiration was coming forth from Tsueb's *Flying Ants* and *Porcupine* artworks.

At the beginning, 'Ice' described Timonen and Pietarinen's artistic cooperation based on the theme of ice, but later on, it developed to mean cross-cultural cooperation amongst Timonen, Pietarinen, eight *Ju/'hoansi* San beaders and the Omba Arts Trust. The joint 'Ice Project', a border crossing, started a non-verbal conversation. The emerging narrative (the conversation) was not only thought of solely as written history; rather, the emphasis was on the creative process and the works of art developed during the process. The artefacts played a vital part in building an understanding of processes and local resources, such as craft skills and locally available materials. The beaders embroidered at their own pace in their own homes and produced unique pieces of bead art. The inspiration the artists drew from one another and their different environments or elements was coming forth from the beaders' artworks. Otherwise, the patterns, topics and materials were free for them to choose. The outcome was a series of embroidered works encompassing an interesting combination of cultural and historical layers. These included images of northern ice, Namibian rock art and ostrich eggshell beads.

www.ulapland.fi/ArtsBasedMethodsForDecolonisingParticipatoryResearch/Chapter11

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This study focused on how different artists worked in response to the same theme and what kind of artefacts, material choices, themes, colours and other design elements came into play during the process. Our reflections on the study findings also revealed how multidimensional narratives and multiple cultural influences are conveyed by hand-woven and embroidered textiles and how powerful non-verbal communication comes about. The art-led method created in the project made it possible to observe the dialectic between cultures and identities. The target beneficiaries were San and Finnish women, for whom the project sought to provide opportunities to increase their creative engagement and highlight what they considered distinctive about their cultures while drawing inspiration from the ice-themed photographs. The aims of this study and the project were the same—to develop a method for multicultural artistic cooperation.

The creation of a border-crossing working culture between artists in northern Finland and a *Ju/'hoansi* San beader community in eastern Namibia was based on principles such as visibility of the authorship, mutual respect for knowledge and working methods, and challenging typical stereotypical conceptions by reimagining, e.g. the categories of the South and North. While we were not very familiar with the theme of decolonising at that point, later we learned that these are essential aspects when designing research practices from a decolonising perspective (e.g. Ridanpää, 2019; Sheehan, 2011; Tunstall, 2013, 2019). In order to give the works of art visibility and ensure that the names of the artists were acknowledged, the works were exhibited in Finland during the period 2016–2018.

Timonen has worked with Arctic art for over ten years. She has held a number of exhibitions and authored numerous research articles in this area. She has photographed both abstract structures and ice forms, mostly in the lake district of Eastern Finland, and has done still-life installations based on ice. The varying forms, structures and phases of ice play a major role in her photographs and paper collages, which are either colourful or black and white tapestries and resemble white, 'lacy' winter landscapes (see www.lightofice.net).

Pietarinen was inspired by the tactile qualities of Timonen's photographs. The colours under the frozen surface are natural, dark, rich and intense. Pietarinen wanted to incorporate both tacit knowledge (such as textures, weights and materiality) and three-dimensional woven structures into her design thinking, even though she was working from two-dimensional photographs. The photographs were like doorways to the narrative character of ice. She was also curious about the historical creative potential of the jacquard technique. With this technique, the yarns can be woven into an unlimited range of designs and multicoloured effects, bringing a great sophistication to the weaving process.

The 'Ice Project' may be understood as offering us a viewpoint to the aesthetic of postcoloniality. By this, we mean that we understood the process of multicultural artistic cooperation as equal and respectful design work that valued different starting points and aesthetics. To understand the aesthetic of postcoloniality, we needed to learn how to listen to the narratives and ideas of postcolonialism that originate from the South, but that can be connected to/with the North, for example, through collaborative art-making practices. The aesthetic of postcoloniality, in addition, is a specific referral to the postcolonial realities and context that most Namibians live in (Smith et al., 2020). People in the northern parts of the Nordic countries experience ice as a physical, multisensory and aesthetic facet of everyday life. As the aesthetic

understanding of an environment has both individual and culturally shared meanings, there can be many interpretations of ice. One aim of this chapter is to explore how to continue the idea of multicultural artistic works and to inspire one another. A second focus is to analyse how different artists and practitioners were able to develop a design method and techniques at the intersection of different cultures. We have striven to pay particular attention to material differences that the 'Ice Project' provided. The photos, textiles and embroidered bead works were used as the material of artistic practice, rather than as functional design. We situated our material practices in the galleries and promoted reflection on ideas about identity and culture that hold our visual records of the past, present and future (Hemmings, 2013, pp. 24–26, 42; Sheehan, 2011, pp. 68–80). We were interested in what kind of perceptions ice would evoke in a context where instead sandy deserts characterise the natural environment.

Our research showed that the perception of ice was shaped according to the local culture. The art processes transcended language and cultural boundaries, referring to the ideas of artists drawing inspiration from one another's works, enabling more space and flexibility for making and expression that was informed by the experiences of the beaders. The results presented in this chapter are based on a series of open discussions on artistic themes between Timonen and Pietarinen about ice in the context of art and design during the years 2016–2017. A summary of the conversations revealed four themes: cultural understanding, spatiality, multisensory and colour. During the same years, the 'Participatory Development with the Youth' project (PARTY, 1 February 2015–31 December 2018) at the University of Lapland gave Timonen and Pietarinen an opportunity to collaborate with the Omba Arts Trust in Namibia. The project focused on developmental cooperation through research and innovation, staff exchanges, as well as sharing of knowledge amongst researchers, San beaders, other local actors in Southern Africa and international aid organisations (PARTY, 2017).

The PARTY project and the Omba Arts Trust, a registered Fair Trade organisation (FTO), helped the photographer, a textile artist and *Ju/'hoansi* San bead embroiderers share their interpretations. Pietarinen spent a two-month period in Namibia during the years 2016–2017, when she visited the Omba Arts Trust and had discussions with its director, Karin le Roux. The purpose of the interview data collected from Le Roux was to, through the Trust, understand the cultural and environmental contexts. The artefacts were used as the data and visual analysis to interpret the work of the beaders. The data was embedded in the artworks. The key elements in this research were the following: the Trust is a growing company, has a Fair Trade mark, is a not-for-profit organisation, fosters a sustainable development model, improves women's life conditions and promotes textile design. The Trust supports the sustainable livelihood of marginalised communities through development, sales and marketing of unique Namibian handmade arts and crafts. For the past 20 years, it has collaborated closely with remote ethnic groups such as the *Ju/'hoansi* San community (Karin le Roux, personal communication, 9 November 2017; Omba Arts Trust, 2020).

Our approach was multimethodological, comprising multimodal image analysis (Räsänen, 2015, pp. 234–237, 367), thematic discussions (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000) and concrete art-making. The research framework consisted of interpreting the processes in terms of cultural-based design (Walker et al., 2018). The aim of the research was to develop a method for multicultural artistic cooperation. Participants engaged in collaborative and art-led research that reflected a spiral of adaptable steps (see Table 11.1).

In what follows, we first present the background of the art-making processes and the theoretical choices. Second, we examine the outcomes of the thematic conversations. Third, we discuss the artefacts created in light of the themes and designs. Fourth, we then go on to consider the economic and cultural context in which the artefacts were produced. Finally, we present conclusions, findings and insights gained.

Pearls of the Kalahari

Ju/'hoansi San beaders' artworks often include hand-carved ostrich eggshell beads, also referred to as 'pearls of the Kalahari' (Sarantou, 2014, p. 142). The beaders have no formal training, but rather convey insights into their unique culture and everyday life. The composition and range of colours in their bead art affords a unique view into their day-to-day life.

There are over 34,000 San living in Namibia, and they remain one of the most marginalised communities in the country. The San are Indigenous inhabitants of Southern Africa, and today the majority of the San live in Namibia, Botswana, South Africa and Angola. They belong to a group of hunter-gatherer peoples called the San or Khwe, meaning 'first people' in most cases. Their ancestors roamed the southern part of the continent for thousands of years, leaving a legacy of rock art, and their history has been widely documented and studied (see Hemmings, 2015, p. 210; le Roux, 2004, p. 2, 2014b, p. 276; Sarantou, 2014, p. 138).

Karin le Roux has worked in the craft sector since 1991. With support from the Omba Arts Trust, community members fashion intricate handmade and Namibian-designed artefacts, such as jewellery, woven baskets, and Art-i-San printed fabrics (the name of Omba Arts Trust's textile and jewellery collection, as well as accessories and contemporary Namibian Bushman art in various media including lino prints, beaded art and paintings). These artefacts hark back to distant ages in Indigenous history, one example being the use of beads made of ostrich eggshells, which archaeological studies indicate is a 40,000-year-old tradition. These age-old craft-based traditions have typically produced works for the community's own use (le Roux, 1993, 2014a, pp. 86–89, 2014b, pp. 276–277; Karin le Roux, personal communication, 9 November 2017).

This specific group that we worked with, *Ju/'hoansi* San women, live in Drimiopsis, in the Omaheke desert, but their artworks are marketed and sold in two stores located in the Old Breweries Craft Market (Garten Street) in Windhoek. When visiting the Craft Market, one cannot avoid thinking that 'This is cultural superficiality', because a wide variety of Namibian artefacts from different cultural groups are for sale in one place. This suggested that people have certain strong preconceptions about Africa, just like they do about northern exotics. Although Indigenous craft-making, such as bead work, in Namibia is rooted in *Ju/'hoansi* San beaders' methods of production, many artisans have surrendered to the demands of tourists to depict ideas about the region not necessarily associated with an Indigenous San beaders' style. Thus, the question would be: What would the signifiers of the beaders' art look like? In our case, bead art is a tradition that multiple cultures lay claim to originating, so it provides an articulate critique of the notion that any identity, human or material, can be narrowed down to a single source (Caley, 2019; Hemming, 2013, p. 33). However, Namibian art and craft markets can be seen in a wider perspective if one visits the village of Penduka in Katutura Township in Windhoek, Karakulia weavers in Swakopmund and the Visual Arts Department at the University of Namibia. Embroidery in Penduka (meaning

'wake up') is practised by Namibian women's groups in various styles and uses a variety of techniques. Karakulia weavers produce high-quality carpets from karakul wool, and university students display their printed fabrics proudly in university galleries (Hemmings, 2015, p. 218; le Roux to Heidi Pietarinen, personal communication, 11 November 2016; Sarantou, 2014, pp. 24, 99, 102–103).

Perhaps, due to the limited market that exists in Namibia, the main market for the Omba Arts Trust's products is the US. Most of the materials are sourced from the 'natural' Namibian environment, so the vulnerability of Namibia's environment, the country's poverty and the lack of materials often figured in discussions with le Roux. Pietarinen decided that materials with cultural and locational significance, such as hay and ostrich eggs, would not be used in this project; this was one way in which sustainability was considered. The Omba Arts Trust's remit was to provide materials and equipment, such as printed photographs, glass beads, threads, fabrics and needles, through which the San could express themselves in their art. The beaders' materials choices for their work were purchased by the project, so they used contemporary art materials and techniques. One might ask why *Ju|'hoansi* San beaders were interested in co-operating with us when they could have made products for tourists. We had promised unconditionally to buy all the beaded works made as part of the project, regardless of the outcome. However, as our project emphasised experimental design, it set no systematic production targets. This arrangement and the promise that we would buy the final artefacts provided the San artists an opportunity to experiment with colours and styles, such as thematic combinations between rock art and Arctic motifs. These limited resources contributed to the creation of unique artefacts in small quantities.

Sustainability can be seen in the beaders' choices of materials, which had been recycled, as well as in production, which was linked to everyday life and thus offered an opportunity to socialise, share personal issues and receive emotional support from other members of the community (le Roux, personal communication, 5 October 2017). The process drew on local resources such as craft skills and locally available materials. These reflected from their everyday life, were collectively articulated and given a specific surface design for beaded artworks. (Fletcher, 2008, p. 141; Omba Arts Trust, 2020; Sarantou, 2014, pp. 134–135, 138; Smith et al., 2020, p. 97)

Art-Led Research

The art-led research method (Smith & Dean, 2009; Vaughan, 2017) adopted in the project offered possibilities to explore the relationship between materials and the crafters' artistic expression. Accordingly, the focus of the 'Ice Project' was the interplay between the researcher-practitioners and the design or crafting processes. The emphasis was on the creative process and the works (photographs, textiles, beaded artworks) that emerged from that process: the artefacts played a vital part in the new understandings we gained of practice and designers' design processes (Akimenko, 2018, pp. 9–10, 32–33, 194–198; Nimkulrat, 2009, pp. 27–32, 36–37; Timonen, 2019; Tunstall, 2019, pp. 240–245).

Le Roux invited the eight beaders from the same village in eastern Namibia, a group consisting of Mara Britz, Anna Doeses, Katrina Kous, Martha Kavandjinje, Cristofina Noues, Josefina Stuurman, Magdalena Stuurman and Lena Tsueb. Despite differences in age within the group, each member was responsible for her family, making the work a serious undertaking financially as well as artistically.

The beaders used glass beads to create embroidered works reflecting their interpretations of Timonen's photographs (Figure 11.1) and Pietarinen's jacquard textiles, an example of an interpretation of Timonen's (2018) photography of ice (Figure 11.2). The first series of eight embroidered artworks (25 cm × 35 cm) were finished as of March 2017, and the second series as of June 2018 (Figure 11.3). The eight beaders each made one work at a time.

The making processes resembled a multimodal image analysis, which involved the recycling of visual culture products—other images and artefacts—as the starting point for one's own design and production. The interpreting of existing illustrated pictures is motivated by the underlying perception of post-modern art theories that images are generated from images (Räsänen, 2015, pp. 234–237, 367). The jacquard textiles and beaded artworks embodied personal interpretations of photographs by the textile designers and beaders. This did not mean they sought to imitate the photographer, but rather, that they endeavoured to convey the meanings through new images that came to mind during the art-making process. Neither Pietarinen or the San beaders copied the images directly, but instead edited, replaced or omitted parts of them in the design process. This kind of conceptual process transformed Timonen's photographs into other images; that is, jacquard textiles and beaded works. This required an ability to find analogies and present things in a new way.

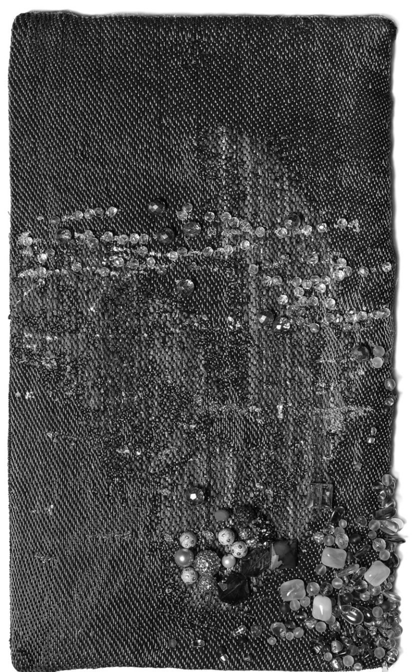
The multimethodological approach allowed Pietarinen and Timonen to play an active role in collecting visually and tactually interesting surfaces and to embrace culturally significant designs, narratives—that is, beaded artworks. The artworks themselves were the data. The aim was to investigate design and crafting processes that would enable us to help the beaders become actively engaged in the project by providing them with a platform (bead work) and inspiration (photographs). The mixing of qualitative data collection techniques, such as interviews, and content analysis of culturally significant Namibian craft, textiles and photographs was vital to gaining an understanding of the shared theme. The experience of putting together the exhibitions 'Kalahari Highway' in Rovaniemi (2018) and 'Icy Metamorphoses' in Joensuu (2018) showed that different artworks could be presented side by side, and that all the stakeholders were presented in the same space at Gallery Valo in Rovaniemi (2018).

The participants engaged in collaborative and art-led research that reflected a spiral of adaptable steps: 1) thematic conversations between Pietarinen and Timonen exploring a shared theme (ice) that was inspired by the Namibian artist Lena Tsueb's work; 2) developing an action plan (trips to Namibia in 2016 and 2017); 3) reflecting on and investigating the ice (photographs, textiles and beaded artworks); and 4) implementing the plan (exhibitions). The same kind of structure can be seen in Cassidy's Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Cassidy, 2018, pp. 277, 285). PAR assisted Pietarinen and Timonen in developing strategies for collaborating with the San beaders in order to reconstruct the meanings and values of the traditional knowledge and skills that the group shared and to provide avenues to explore and understand the cultural significance, meanings and values that were shared in the project. The exhibitions were documented by photographing them and keeping working diaries, which focused on materials, colours, structures and other elements of design.

Table 11.1 shows how the present art-led research unfolded as a visual and tactile investigation into the photographs created as part of the project.

Neither ethnographic approaches nor participatory research (MacIntyre, 2008) proved applicable in the present project due to the lack of contact. Pietarinen did

Figure 11.1 Eija Timonen, *If Kiss . . .* (2014), colour pigment print, diasec, glossy, 90 cm × 60 cm and *A Safari* (2016), colour pigment print, diasec, glossy, 80 cm × 54 cm.



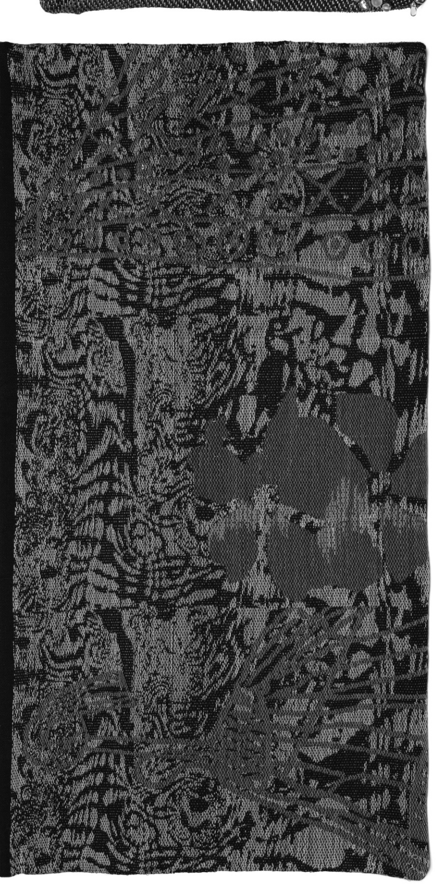


Figure 11.2 Heidi Pietarinen, *Red Lips* (2016), jacquard woven textile, 50 cm × 30 cm, based on Eija Timonen's *If Kiss . . .* photo, and *Africa* (2016), jacquard woven textile, 50 cm × 100 cm, based on Eija Timonen's photograph *A Safari*.

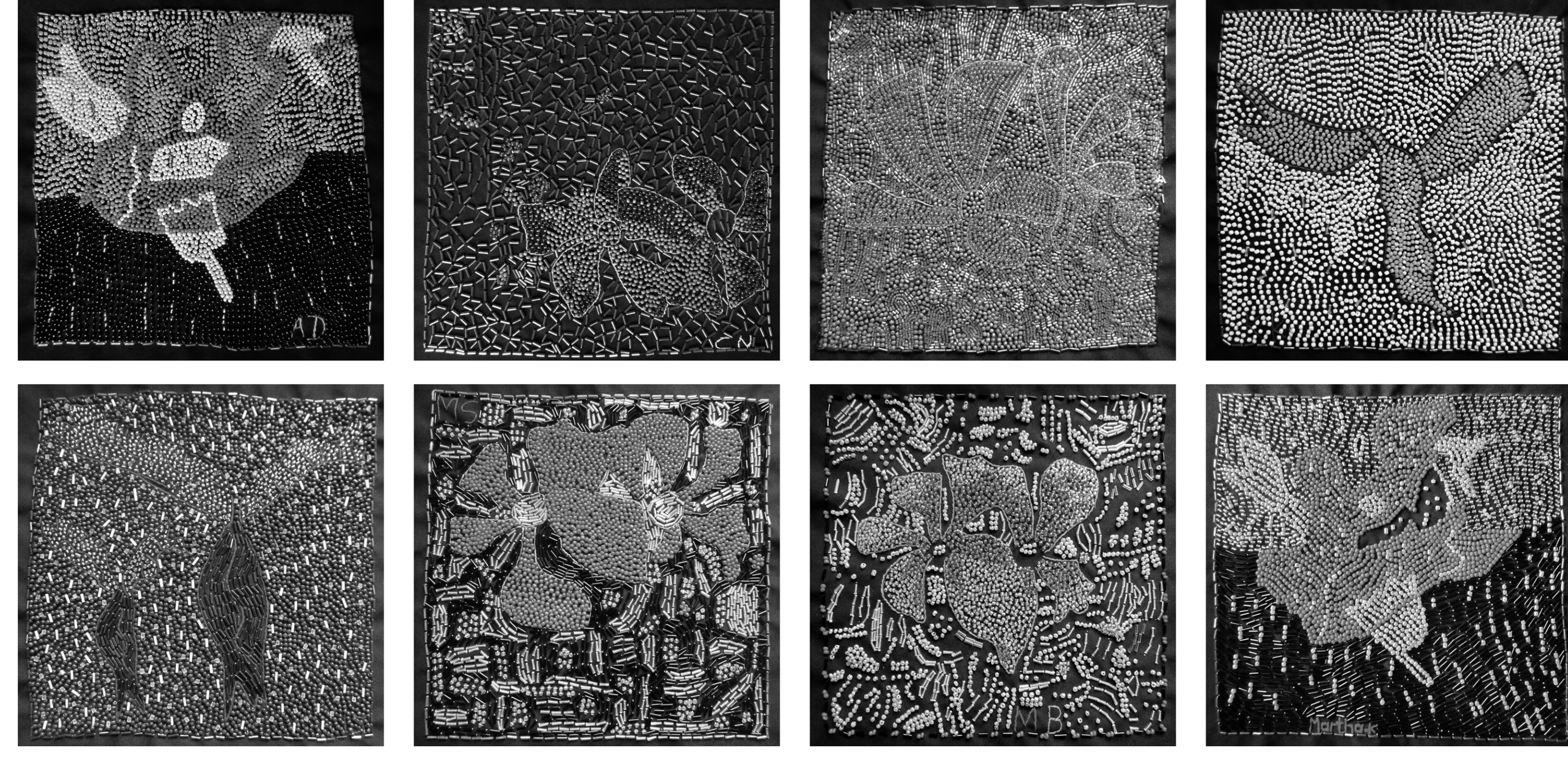


Figure 11.3 Martha Kavandjinje, Mara Britz, Anna Doeses, Katrina Kous, Magdalena Stuurman, Cristofina Noues, Josefina Stuurman and Lena Tsueb's *Beaded Art Works* (2017) and beaded panel, 35 cm × 45 cm.

Source: Omba Arts Trust

Table 11.1 The present art-led research as a visual and tactile investigation into photographs, woven textiles and beaded artworks on the theme of ice

1. DEFINITIONS	2. DISCUSSIONS	3. ARTWORKS	4. PRESENTATIONS
Eija Timonen Ice photos	Reading	Cultural understanding	
	Making		Artworks
Heidi Pietarinen jacquard woven textiles		Colours	
	Implementing and refining the plan		
Omba Art Trust *Ju/'hoansi* San beaders	Reflecting on and investigating the issue	Spatiality	Exhibition
	Developing an action plan	Multisensority	

not interview the participants—the San beaders. The artworks themselves were the data and visual analysis that refers to signifying were used to describe the beading art. This decision was made for practical reasons: Timonen did not visit Namibia, but Pietarinen spent short periods of time in Namibia (two one-month visits), and le Roux's trips to meet the beaders did not coincide with these. The San people live and work in isolated conditions, and access to Drimiopsis, in the Omaheke desert, is possible only by four-wheel-drive vehicles after a lengthy drive on a gravel road (Malan, 1998, p. 108; Sarantou, 2014, pp. 30, 137). So, textiles and photos were the most portable materials and could be moved relatively easily, compared with the other artefacts, such as ceramics and jewellery. San beaders believe that they have always communicated with each other inside and outside of their community through artefacts. This dimension of communication is called 'fabric tell[ing] a story' (see Shineshine, 2017). This addressed the 'situatedness of the author' and therefore sought to address power relations within design practice. This created a space of mutual understanding whereby the photographer, textile designer and San beaders were fully engaged and were able to share their own experiences in the design process (Smith et al., 2020, p. 98). Accordingly, in this case, communication through textiles could be described as invoking a tradition and using fabric to tell a story. Textiles have received little attention in post- and decolonial studies, despite the ability of textiles to capture and convey cultural, national and individual identity. Within the hierarchies of power that rule the visual arts or the market value of art, textiles are often regarded as a marginal art form (Hemmings, 2013, pp. 24–25).

Cultural Understanding—Ice, Culture and Rock Art

Culturally shared aesthetical and metaphorical experiences of ice are part of everyday life in Finland. Our personal experiences of walking, playing, skating or skiing on ice

have a great impact on how we observe and interpret ice. Ice is a richly expressive element in the Finnish language, poetry, literature and design. Ice has been an inspiration for many Finnish designers, one being textile designer Elsa Montell-Saanio. Both Finnish designers and beaders' creativity sprang from a desire to observe nature and to see sky.

For obvious reasons, ice was difficult to interpret for the San beaders. In Namibia, one cannot visualise real ice; the only image that exists in this context is that of an ice cube. The weather is generally fair and sunny, with an average of 300 days of sunshine annually. The beaders' works drew on materials and textures: different materials (fabric, yarns, beads), structures and colour combinations dominated the surfaces. Another dominant feature of the surfaces was geometrical shapes, which were simple and elemental against the black background. The variations of the bead directions shaped motifs from fine to rougher textures. The tactility and three-dimensionality of the bead artworks were highlighted by using shiny, matte and translucent beads in the same work. The visual and tactile image of a densely or sparsely embroidered surface served to evoke a fragile ice or snow crust, while flower-like images in the ice were transformed into the wild plants that the beaders actually gather. The beaders found it challenging to interpret the transparent, white ice flowers in the photographs; ultimately, these became bright red, pale yellow and night-blue flowers. Initially, the beaders also found the random cracks of ice challenging to translate into bead artwork. When embroidered, the angular shapes of the ice in the photographs were rendered as geometric forms, such as triangles (Figure 11.3).

Mara Britz, Magdalena Goieman and Josefine Stuurman were especially inspired to explore the rock art and engravings of their ancestors—the oldest dated at 27,000 years—that are found all over Namibia. Rock art is a proof of the cultural heritage of the San and tells the story of the Bushmen's hunting, mythology and shamanistic rituals. Even though these three beaders had not literally seen the rock art, they still used it in their art to express themselves. The bead artworks included animals such as elephants, giraffes and zebras, which were dancing freely on the surface of the panel, similar to paintings on rock. The patterns they embroidered were visual representations of their daily life—animals, plants and everyday life in their home village (Coulson & Campbell, 2001; Forssman & Gutteridge, 2012; NASCO, 2019). Later on, the beaders began to develop their own imagery, and the results were presented in a landmark exhibition of contemporary Namibia San Art called 'Roots of the First Tree' in the National Art Gallery of Namibia in 2019. This part of the project clearly demonstrated the elements that the San beaders considered to be distinctive about their culture: the stories passed down from their elders or their daily existence.

Through such cultural processes, the images of northern ice and southern rock art were intertwined: our project unified the designers and makers with the environment and the body of the work. The beaded art that was produced could be understood as a story from the beaders' community in which they sought to share significant elements of their reality (Sarantou, 2014, pp. 136, 138; Wood Conroy, 1997, p. 2).

The flower patterns in the ice prompted a number of other complex questions that are not easy to answer. Was the project, which originated from a foreign society, alienating San beaders from their own way of making beaded art, or was it reinforcing creative processes that relate to their communal life? Did the project maintain or violate their cultural authenticity? After all, they had to survive by making a living from their bead art.

Spatiality

Spatiality took many different forms both in the discussions between Pietarinen and Timonen, and in Pietarinen's field notes (material-based travel diaries) in Namibia. Walking on a frozen lake surface during the wintertime or in the sand in the Kalahari desert enables one to visualise very clearly how the three-dimensional natural scenery of a northern winter landscape or a African sandy desert can be seen or felt. A wide, icy lake and a huge desert area open up freely to the horizon and frame the sight without any impediment in the landscape. The feeling of the spatiality is strong. The ice and sand become intimately mixed with the multisensual experiences. Pietarinen also collected and saved the sand to be able to later choose the right coloured yarns for weaving. In our conversations and material-based travel diaries, these two- and three-dimensional experiences were mixed together. What is more, as a material, the ice in a frozen lake and sand in a desert are experienced three-dimensionally: they have depth, width and length. But, when saved as image files, seen on a computer screen or printed on paper, photos of ice or sand are two-dimensional, even though they refer to a three-dimensional world. The ice and sand are like multilayered woven textiles: ice and sand reveal something about their different layers, about having diverse options and about the past. This can be seen, for example, in Pietarinen's (2018) *Sirocco* jacquard.

If one looks at the surface of woven artefacts in a photograph, it is two-dimensional, whereas a jacquard textile evokes three-dimensionality with its uneven surface. This two- and three-dimensional association raised the question of how to translate Timonen's photographs *If Kiss . . .* (2014) and *Safari* (2016) into jacquard textiles. Pietarinen started by developing colour, construction and texture palettes to compose images and a TC-1 loom for weaving. The rough surface created shadows and accents, elements of drama in what was seemingly a flat woven surface. The three-dimensional spatiality of colours was impressive. However, colours cannot only be seen as a two-dimensional surface in a rug, but also enhanced by the warm red colour in different shades. The final weavings were based on the original photographs and material samples (e.g. sand, swatches, shells), because Pietarinen used these as a source to weave from, taking note of colour, balance and proportions and going on to recreate these in a woven fabric. Pietarinen may have worked with colours, layers, filters and all sorts of enhancements along the way to do the photographs and material samples justice, but the last step was the flattening and conversion of the design file into a single two-dimensional layer of black and white pixels (see Schlein & Ziek, 2006, pp. 25, 47; Selby, 2011, pp. 11–23). Woven structures were drawn together from different two- and three-dimensional sources (such as wintry environments, photographs and woven textiles) with the photographs *If Kiss . . .* and *Safari* used as starting points.

Just like the textile artist Pietarinen, San beaders also found it challenging to interpret and convert images into bead art, as they also had to ponder questions of two- and three-dimensionality. The San visual language is culturally unique. They have worked with beads—either ostrich eggshells or glass beads—for centuries, and today, bead art is still given as gifts to promote friendship and social harmony (le Roux, 2014b, p. 276). San women have a visual language of their own. They are keen on decoration, such as coloured and textured beads, but the purpose is not decoration as an end in itself. The patterns also form an integral part of bodies, functional items and the social fabric of the *Ju/'hoansi* San culture. The pattern conveys a strong local

identity, which references animals, plants or objects as a way to explain daily life (le Roux, 1993, pp. 20–21). The final beaded artworks were flat but had a graphic quality to them—just like that seen in Art-i-San screen-printed textiles—which made the images instantly recognisable (see Hemmings, 2015, pp. 213, 217–221).

As the shape of the photographs and textiles was naturally not uniformly square, an embroidered image could represent part of the source image. A sufficiently large piece of fabric (35 cm × 35 cm) and a substantial number of beads turned out to be better for interpreting the image, because it was difficult to embroider details in a smaller panel. The basic idea was to give simple objects (photographs and textiles) and artefacts (beads) to self-educated designers and work with them to visualise new designs; that is, interpretations of ice. The input that came from self-educated designers became a form of 'designing with', as the beaders' work was based on their knowledge, understanding of local culture and environment and was a fully creative endeavour on their part—as designers (Kolko, 2012, pp. 42–47). This part of the process was also an example of shifting from one space to another. Walking on a wide frozen lake or desert creates an experience of wideness, while embroidering or weaving a textile often gives an experience of smallness.

While San beaders were unfamiliar with typical Western textile design conventions, such as the tone-to-tone colour system, the system of repeating patterns or the logic of striped and checked patterns, they obviously knew very well their own local traditional conventions, learned in their own society. There is a long history of the production of traditional textiles in Namibia—for example, basket weaving (Cunningham & Terry, 2006)—but often the textiles referred to as 'traditional' in Namibia include 'trade cloth' introduced by European traders and missionaries as they were adopted into use in traditional costumes, such as *ondelela* (a striped cotton fabric), which is used in Ovambo traditional clothing (Caley, 2019; Sarantou, 2014). Yet, Indigenous people prioritised Indigenous aesthetics, such as pattern and colour choices when selecting textiles from traders (Caley, 2019; McBrinn, 2017, p. 112).

Textures and surfaces are not merely seen optically; instead, the interaction between cultures is intertwined in the visual process. The real value of this 'designing with' process is not only the final results (beaded artworks), but also its value in underpinning this interaction and the most important aspects of cultural dialogue. The cultural dialogue involved various artistic expressions, from embroidery art to jacquard weaves and photography, and continuous—yet evolving—cultural and environmental interpretations by all the artists. Designing in multicultural context provided the opportunity to enrich design with new perspectives, which was one of the bridging powers throughout the project (see Smith et al., 2020, p. 97). For example, Pietarinen found how the emptiness of space or fullness of colours would change when women of various ethnic groups inhabiting parts of Southern Africa, such as the Ovambo, San or Herero were walking on the street or entering a room (Shoup, 2011, pp. 235–236). The Ovambo dresses are made from a distinct material with bright pink, red and black stripes. Herero women wear voluminous Victorian-style dresses, complemented by horn-shaped headgear which fill the whole entrance to a room. The San people's dresses are much lighter—tanned springbok skins peppered with elaborately embroidered beads. San and Herero women look very different. A female garment, a dress with a voluminous, oversized silhouette, decorated or dyed, is used to emphasise the physical presence of the wearer, but can also be used as a tool for visible self-assertation.

The Colours and Flavours of North and South

Can the slow movement from a fuchsia to a tangy red express the aroma of the red lingonberry or the bitterness of its taste? As we know, synesthetic experiences of the senses convey stimuli to all the senses involved. Sound may appear as colours or flavours (Haverkamp, 2013). As a textile artist, Pietarinen was thinking of synesthetic experiences when searching for possibilities to interpret the colours and translucency of Timonen's photograph *If Kiss* . . . . Ultimately, she decided to follow the colour scales in the photographs, but the challenge was how to translate millions of colours into the limited number of colours available in the yarns.

The experience of ice in the photograph *If Kiss* . . . differs from the experience of ice in the wild. Ice offers multisensory and deeply aesthetical experiences and has multisensory features, such as smell, sound, feel and taste. For example, in the hands of a textile artist, the red shades of *If Kiss* . . . are like the different shades of red Tencel yarn, which is a soft, silky, shiny material which does not wrinkle easily and feels soft against the skin. Materiality can be described in terms of a concrete material or the countless tools that guided the photographing, weaving or embroidering in the 'Ice Project', examples being cameras, shovels, brushes, loom, yarns, a whiteboard and image processing programmes (see Barrett & Bolt, 2013; Bolt, 2009; Siukonen, 2011).

Materiality is also associated with material thinking. Knowledge of materials guides the design and work of professionals. This work is guided by working processes and conditions. Material is associated with knowledge of the substance, identifying connotations and cultural meanings and being familiar with the relevant methods and tools. Thus, materiality is multifaceted and multilayered, with tangible materiality and abstract materiality being intertwined (Barrett & Bolt, 2013; Mäkiranta & Timonen, 2015).

Natural ice is associated with the colour white because an icy lake is mostly covered with snow. White brightens other colours in photographs, but in a woven fabric, a white warp may extinguish the colours in the weft, which then become more or less opaque pastel colours (see Rihlama, 1997, pp. 110). Natural ice changes reflections. In the sunlight, the surface of ice brings out the entire colour spectrum and reveals the world under the icy surface, with its colourful stones and plants. Pietarinen studied the main colours of Timonen's photographs and reduced them to a woven format. Both literal and metaphorical conversations on colours between Pietarinen and Timonen revealed that translucency, the colour spectrum and reflections were the most important features for understanding the colours of ice.

The Namibian context offered a particular opportunity to see colours. The colours in Namibia evoked an affinity in Pietarinen's mind of the natural world. The wooden or organic art and craft objects (palm leaf baskets, wood carvings, etc.) are coloured by an earthy palette of natural materials, with tans, browns, ochre, ebony and ivory. Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, and its surroundings, such as Katutura, the old apartheid township, revealed the colours of burnt orange, a mixture of blue and green, hot apricot and the brown of dry sand. These brighter colours are seen in the Omba Arts Trust's palm leaf baskets, bead art and printed textiles, which are dyed, embroidered or printed with bright blue, green, red and orange colours. Words hardly capture the feel of the colours of Namibia or ice because the visual, tactic, kinetic and emotional experiences are difficult to translate into words. Indeed, the understanding of colours is linked to the environment and to the surrounding culture. These

also guided interpretations of ice—from the northern transparent ice flowers to the southern blossoms.

Conclusions—Future From Tradition

This study focused on how different artists worked with a shared theme. The inspiration the artists drew from one another and their different environments or elements, such as material choices, colours and other design elements, were used in the art process. We used multimodal image analysis, thematic discussions and concrete art-making to find out how different artists work together employing a shared theme. Their attitudes and ways of defining or making differed because they came from different cultural contexts. In fact, the project could have failed at an early stage because of the many potential uncertainties stemming from different cultural considerations.

In the beginning, the beaders were confused because they had received the photographs and materials but there were no clear guidelines. Due to the very nature of the project, all the interpretations and technical implementations were left to them to freely choose and decide on. When they had negotiated this phase of the process, they were excited and strongly engaged in the project. An openness was a crucial part of the approach because we worked at the level of the individuals and wanted to build relationships of accountability with the beaders. Also, one of the most important values of the project was respectful design (Sheehan, 2011). The authors did not give instructions but trusted that the *Ju/'hoansi* San beaders would choose materials, colours and forms in accordance with their culture. We structured the project so that we could work with the beaders through a process in which they would navigate through a narrative tradition. We designed the conditions of storytelling without words, using fabric to tell a story. The photos, textiles and beaded works deserve a close reading, which should be understood as more than textual, because they merit scrutiny, just like any other materials, design methods and multisensory disciplines (touch, taste and smell) (see Hemmings, 2013, pp. 24–25; Tunstall, 2019). Perhaps, there is a moment when researchers should listen 'around and beyond words' (Daniels, 2011, p. 10; Jansen, 2019). We appreciated the Omba Art Trust's visual way of thinking instead of thinking with words. As San designer Bertha Christof stated in the exhibition 'Roots of the First Tree', organised in Namibia: 'We see culture in these pictures' (NASCO, 2019, p. 24). The project operated as a cultural 'agent', challenging the stereotypical conceptions by reimagining, e.g. the South and North, the emptiness of space on ice or in a desert or the fullness of colours of specific cultures in a novel and atypical way. Similar observations have been made as well by cultural geographer Juha Ridanpää (2019, p. 132; see Sheehan, 2011).

The works of art shifted from traditional to innovative embroidery art. It was fascinating to see how our views were thoroughly shaken. We were so caught up in our own way of interpreting ice that encountering a different aesthetic refreshed, amazed and, at the same time, laid bare our own cultural conventions. What would many European cultures even be today without the historic influence of transnational textiles? Ridanpää's (2019, p. 137) postcolonial perspective requires eliminating the obstacles to being creative from one's own cultural point of view. This view is also supported by Tunstall's (2013, p. 240) views about 'mutual borrowing that happens among value systems and cultures'. Design innovation has been argued to extend colonial and imperialist traditions; for example, Tunstall (2013) highlights how design innovation

practices uphold artificial divides between art, craft and design. By engaging in Tunstall's (2013, pp. 238, 244) guidelines for a decolonising approach, which she titles 'design anthropology', the project acknowledges its 'aesthetic objects' as 'repositories, transmitters and vehicles for the exploration and construction of knowledge'. The project refers, although only partially, to Tunstall's (2013) design anthropology, by additionally acknowledging that borrowing between the northern and southern cultures occurred, that unequal circumstances between the cultures existed, but that the project sought to engage in small steps to mitigate some of the inequalities (Tunstall, 2013, p. 241). The project acknowledged the cultural dynamics involved, as well as the benefits and drawbacks that eventuated through the new creations (p. 240).

Our primary goal was to meet the artists from diverse backgrounds and address a common theme with them from different perspectives. After we first had ourselves interpreted the work of the Namibian artist Lena Tsueb's *Flying Ants* in our artistic work, we became interested in what kind of expression the Arctic theme—ice—would create in the desert environment. Our research showed that artistic expressions of different environments were bound to the local culture. In the desert environment, ice appeared as a colourful element and as a part of its flora and fauna. Despite not having common language, the artists were able to work cooperatively across continents. Art-making transcended the linguistic and cultural boundaries. As a result of this project, the authors of the chapter learned about multicultural artistic collaboration and gained important experiences that can be utilised and developed further in future projects when working with artists from diverse contexts.

The San beaders' embroidery process allowed us to gain an insight into their world in ways that observations and interviews could not have allowed us to do. Especially this refers to the art-making process. It was linked to everyday life and offered an opportunity to socialise, share personal issues and receive emotional support from other members of the community. When people can use their own expressions and languages, it is empowering and may help in addressing social injustices. This is a dynamic way of making meanings in contextual environments (Daniels, 2011, p. 13). The starting point—what we have previously called a 'decolonising perspective'—enabled cooperation on an equal footing, whereby all the artefacts made by the artists were equally valuable keys for intercultural dialogue.

The combination of beads, colours and embroidered accents gave each of the eight works an individual character. Each was made from beginning to end by one woman, who embroidered her initials, for example, 'LT', on the front of the panel. On the back of the panel, there is a short story about the women of the *Ju/'hoansi* San community and a label with 'Omba Art' and the name of the woman who made it, an example being Lena Tsueb. All the participants were free to choose the materials, colours and sizes of the beads they used.

The 'Ice Project' has a contribution to make to a wider multicultural discussion. Collaboration between Finnish designers and the Namibian *Ju/'hoansi* San community marks a step forward in crossing international borders, bridging language and cultural boundaries with colours, materials and visuals (photographs, woven and embroidered textiles). This is a particular kind of a commitment and demonstrates a deep understanding of what a shared theme is about. The project is an example of how *Ju/'hoansi* San women designed as members of a multicultural team and produced works representing something different to 'exotic' arts and crafts. Indeed, during these times of globally shared habits and meanings, respect for rich, locally-based

traditions, rituals and symbols is called for (Carlson & Richards, 2011; Kuure et al., 2016, pp. 104–129). We could look even further and consider values, such as authenticity, originality and aesthetics.

The 'Ice Project' is also a good example of how the term 'cultural heritage' has considerably changed in respect to content in recent decades, partially owing to the instruments developed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The cultural heritage includes traditions and living expressions, such as oral traditions, social practices, rituals, knowledge and practices relating to nature and the skill of producing traditional crafts (UNESCO, n.d.). The cooperation described here between Finnish and Namibian *Ju|'hoansi* San artists has shown how our interpretation of the surrounding nature is linked to our perceptions of the environment and culture.

The meeting of cultures described here can be captured metaphorically in a pearl. Textiles underlined and highlighted the three-dimensionality of the ice in the photographs: Pietarinen wove textures that were transparent and rough, whereas the beaders used colourful glass beads of equal size. The beaders' form of expression was different due to their varied experiences of ice. Together, however, they built polyphonic representations that were underpinned by their local knowledge. The works of art were results of communication-based readings of photos and textiles; a material reality about the photographer, textile designer and beaders' experiences and knowledge, not conceptual aspects of it. The artists produced multicultural and collaborative material representations based on the values of their respective creative visual cultures. It taught the authors how to explore cross- and interdisciplinary encounters between art, craft (skills and material practice), design and knowledge emerging from multicultural sharing experiences by using remote—but shared—connections. The authors also learned that narratives should not be thought of as mere written or spoken history, but as avenues for doing and in thinking. In the future, a new functionality of materials displayed digitally may increase access to unique cultural materials, and bring together artists across social and economic boundaries. Different cultures can teach us how to recognise and appreciate the forms and contrasts of materials, colours and textures. This may enable us to create shared futures through the sharing of traditional knowledge.

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12 Paint That Place With Light!

Light Painting as a Means of Creating Attachment to Historical Locations—An Arts-Based Action Research Project

Nina Luostarinen and Kirsi MacKenzie

Introduction

This chapter explores whether participatory light painting workshops conducted at cultural heritage sites can increase the participants' emotional attachment to those sites. 'Lights On!', funded by the Central Baltic Programme and active from 2015–2018, sought to create a joint network of historical tourist attractions in Finland and Estonia. Altogether, 'Lights On!' included eight sites rich with cultural history from the Central Baltic Sea region. All of the sites had previously fallen into disrepair and were largely ignored by the public. The structures had ceased to fulfil their original purposes long ago.

Our goal was to familiarise a larger audience with these sites by means of novel inclusive approaches. Several creative and interactive techniques were piloted during the 'Lights On!' project. One of the most successful endeavours was a series of light painting workshops organised at all the sites during 2017. The concept was to create images with light painting that would illustrate the historical events and legends associated with each location. Each location's unique ambiance had an intuitive influence on the participants, and the resulting stories and images illustrated an ongoing reaction of decolonisation linked to the various sites.

This chapter is based on art-based action research (Jokela, 2019) and positions itself within the theoretical framework of place attachment by means of participatory art-based playfulness. The authors argue that light painting as an art-based method has great potential in developing place attachment. The project proposes that by performing participatory art-based action—light painting workshops—historical locations can attract new enthusiasts and visitors. The participants developed emotional bonds to the heritage sites by giving new meaning to them after having visualised stories in them, and later, the shared images transformed the vista of the sites.

'Lights On!' was a project designed to develop a joint network of historical tourist attractions in Finland and Estonia. The sites chosen for the 'Lights On!' project all have interesting histories, but these were unknown to wider audiences. All eight of these historical sites are manifestations of colonial power on both sides of the Gulf of Finland. Their histories illustrate how domestic and foreign powers, colonisation and political intrigue have shaped Estonia and Finland throughout the centuries. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) states, history is mostly about power. It is a story about the powerful, and how they use the power to dominate others (p. 34).

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Prior to the advent of Christianity, a tradition of worshipping nature and natural spirits was pursued in both countries. The advent of colonisation brought with it a wave of Christianity which sought to convert the population of the occupied countries from their pagan beliefs. Thus, the use of light painting techniques in historical settings opens a conversation between the past and present, re-energising folktales by illustrating their narratives.

Nature has begun the slow and steady reintegration of these historical ruins, thus opening another time-related topic of discussion focusing on the nature of existence: life, afterlife and the brevity of the lifespan of any human undertaking. As these relics inexorably decay, nature reasserts its dominion and inevitably seeks to heal scars, altering her complexion.

This transitional phase of the different sites affords a look back through time while also allowing a glimpse into the future. The superimposition of light painting features over the different ruins hints at a post-apocalyptic world, as vestiges of ancient cultures that remain are explored by various energy elements. This exploration of spaces and landscapes by light 'beings' allows for the creation of canvases that blend fantasy with reality.

Moving light shapes can literally be painted in the air to create striking images. Relying on imagination and trial and error, participants work collaboratively to produce creative effects to enhance the photographs of these mythical and historical locations. Playfulness is a key element in this process as the light painters, models and photographers interact, suggest, negotiate and ultimately achieve a form of consensus which generates a pleasurable feeling and an emotionally engaged mindset. The various costumes, elements and tools used in the light painting are akin to toys found in the play boxes in children's playparks. The participants are enticed by the possibilities originating from their choices, and they inevitably ask themselves: 'What should we try next?'

Our idea was to investigate whether participating in the light painting process would help foster attachment to these forgotten and unused historical sites, giving new meaning to them by bringing tales, myths and beliefs to life via light painting fantasies. We also wanted to establish that light painting workshops could be conducted to help unearth the forgotten pagan traditions which have been eradicated by successive waves of colonisation.

Following sections of this chapter are structured as follows, beginning with the introduction of the project that frames these participatory art workshops. This is followed by a section introducing the background then a section discussing light painting workshops as participatory art methodology. The subsequent two sections analyse samples of the light paintings produced during the workshops. The results of the qualitative questionnaire are presented in the next section, and the final section is a discussion of our findings and future possibilities.

The Project and the Locations

The 'Lights On!' Project

The goal of the Finnish–Estonian project was to improve visitor experience and turn these little-known historical sites into viable tourist attractions. During the project, infrastructure improvements were made with new trails, high-quality information

points and boards posted with site-specific cartoons that would keep the tales and legends alive. The name of the project was not just a clever pun: the project literally brought permanent lighting to four project sites. The intent was to substantially prolong the tourism season and improve the visitor experience.

The cross-border 'Lights On!' project developed innovative marketing tools, as well. It used fresh approaches, such as gamification, and invited visitors and local people to a series of light festivals and re-enactment events. The goal was to increase visitor numbers, attract new visitor groups and encourage visitors to travel amongst the sites.

The owners of these sites, Metsähallitus and Estonian State Forest Management Centre (RMK), carried out the infrastructure work, whereas the new experimental methodologies for these sites were developed by the cultural management educators: Humak University of Applied Sciences and Tartu University Viljandi Culture Academy. The ideas for the engagements were developed by the project group and by the participants of international student camps. The idea for the light painting workshops was developed by the authors in the autumn of 2016.

The Project Sites

The 'Lights On!' project aimed to include four Estonian and four Finnish ancient monuments that symbolise power. Many of these sites are monuments of settler colonialism (Wolfe, 2006) erected by Swedish, Russian or Danish military regiments. The project illuminates seven castles, hillforts and forts, as well as one manorial park. Together, the history of these eight fortresses of power draws a continuum from the twilight of prehistory into the twenty-first century (Metsähallitus,n.d.). What follows is a summarised version of the key points of the history of the Finnish sites (as only the Finnish sites are addressed in this chapter) written by historian Georg Haggren (2016) for the purpose of the 'Lights On!' project:

> In a similar way, the past of the hillfort of Rapola (Finland) is mostly based on guesswork even though several hillside burial sites from the Iron Age have been excavated by archaeologists. The Rapola castle fort is a nature destination surrounded by a one-kilometre long stone wall left over from the original castle. The first people arrived on the Rapola ridge during the Iron Age, probably in the 5th century.
>
> The medieval bishop's castle of Kuusisto (Finland), founded in the late 13th century, was both a stronghold and an exclusive residence. During the middle ages, there was a manor in Kuusisto where the bishops, who at that time were influential political leaders, could stay. The castle and its estates belonged to the Bishop of Turku, the leader of religious life in Finland during the Middle Ages.
>
> The Castle of Raseborg (Finland) was founded as a stronghold of the Swedish Crown as well as to serve as the administrative centre of Western Uusimaa in the late 14th century. The first written mention of the castle was in the year 1378. The castellans of Raseborg kept watch on the trade over the Gulf of Finland. They were also responsible for the defence of the southern coast of Finland.
>
> Vallisaari and Kuninkaansaari (Finland) have protected the city of Helsinki through the centuries and, beginning in the 19th century, they protected St Petersburg, then the capital of Russia, as well. In the beginning, the islands were not

> very fortified but later on they became an eminent part of the Fortification of Sveaborg, and later still, a part of Peter the Great's Naval Fortress. Soon after the Crimean war (1854–1856), the imposing Alexander Battery was built in Vallisaari, to demonstrate Russia's military might.
>
> (p. 1)

However, in all the history and stories related to the sites, there is a remarkable gender imbalance: thus, we needed to imagine the female characters and history, since there was hardly any written evidence that women even existed. The existing narratives of the sites are the narratives of the conquerors and invaders: the Danes, Swedes and Russians. The stories of the Indigenous tribes were often considered of minor importance or even seen in a negative light. These attitudes and tales were passed down from generation to generation. By creating these visual images, we wanted to reimagine and redesign the history of these sites. Our goal was to appreciate the regions' cultural heritage and harness their creative energy based on the concepts of Enquehard and Clair (2015): 'culture is not just a frozen legacy of a historic past, but a vibrant present which can be reinvented for contemporary audiences' (p. 6). 'Contemporary processes transform the meaning of cultural elements of the past and invest new values in them' (Birkeland, 2015, p. 163), and as 'an act of geographic imagination' (Howitt, 2001, p. 165) with an ability to read place as the complex records of interaction and interrelationships.

Background

> It's as though there's a wonderful secret in a certain place and I can capture it. Only I, at this moment, and only me.
>
> Walker Evans (Freeman, 2007, p. 137)

This project positioned itself within the theoretical framework of place attachment by means of art-based playfulness. Playfulness is a fundamental element of art, and approaching a participatory art-based activity as play instead of art, enables the participants to act more freely without restrictions: everyone knows how to play from his or her own childhood experiences, whereas creating art is a term laden with the burden of responsibility which can lead to feelings of inadequacy. We refer to Thuli Gamedze's (2015) thoughts, which are linked to art-based action research:

> We can expand art to the extent that when we talk about art, we are speaking of a conscious, creative approach that is in response to images, and through response, creates its own images. Art thinking, art behaving, art conversing, art writing—these are activisms of art production that make use of our innate creativity in decolonising and re-imagining our space.

Light Painting

Light painting is a creative form of night photography in which the photographer uses different light sources to illuminate objects or scenes while capturing a long-exposure photograph.

In his book *Night Photography and Light Painting: Finding Your Way in the Dark*, the renowned night photography expert Lance Keimig (2016) details how to capture creative and eerie photographs in low-light conditions. In addition to discussing the wealth of opportunities nocturnal photography offers, in this edition of the book, he also introduces light painting and drawing techniques. He adheres to the common usage of the general term 'light painting' which refers to lighting added by a photographer and combined with a long exposure to make an image. He also gives clear definitions of other light painting terminology:

> Light painting includes both using added light to illuminate a scene, and any lights pointed back toward the camera to create patterns of light. The term 'painting with light' is defined as the use of a handheld light source that is usually moved during the exposure to light part or all of the scene in a photograph, and the term 'drawing with light' is used when a handheld light is pointed back toward the camera to create shapes, text or abstract designs. In painting with light, the added light illuminates the subject. In drawing with light, the light added by the photographer actually is the subject. Light painting includes both painting with light and drawing with light. (p. 5)

According to Jason D. Page (2018), the history of light painting stretches back to the late eighteenth-century photographers who used artificial light in their images for scientific rather than artistic purposes. The great surrealist photographer Man Ray made what may have been the first photographs using the technique of drawing with light for artistic expression in 1935. In his series *Space Writing*, he used a small penlight to create swirls and lines in the air as part of his self-portrait. The self-taught photographer used stroboscopic light to capture the motion of everything from dancers to jugglers in a single exposure. His photoflash techniques are still very much used today in light painting photography. Gjon Mili used this technique to study the motion of dancers, musicians and figure skaters. In 1949, while on assignment for *Life Magazine*, Mili was sent to photograph Pablo Picasso at his home. While there, Mili showed Picasso some of his light painting photographs of figure skaters. Picasso was immediately inspired and took a penlight and began to draw in the air. Mili set up his camera and captured the images. This brief meeting yielded what would become known as Picasso's 'light drawings' (Page, 2018).

All these artists used light painting creatively, which gave their work a timeless quality. Creativity, surrealism and the element of surprise continue to be features of the works of contemporary light painting artists around the world.

During a long exposure, the camera records moving light sources, allowing shapes to be painted in the air to create striking images. There are numerous light painting techniques, each of which provides different results. Light painting can utilise a variety of tools, anything from mini flashlights to steel wool, enabling limitless creativity. The final images are not the result of photo manipulation involving the alteration of a photograph in post-processing. There is no trickery—all the effects are created on location in the moment by reacting to the location and atmosphere. The images are captured using long exposures. There are limitless possibilities to be explored with light painting; what makes it fascinating is that it always involves some trial and error. It requires not only moving lights in the dark, but also illuminating the setting. Orbs, circles and electroluminescent wires function as storytelling tools.

The Playfulness of Art

Broaching a topic as sombre as the historical effects of colonisation on Indigenous populations could be a rather intimidating venture. The subject is rife with disheartening realisations, which can easily be disconcerting when reflected upon. Yet, playfulness allows us to engage with serious topics in a light-hearted manner.

The modern study of play can be traced back to Dutch historian Johan Huizinga's groundbreaking study *Homo Ludens* (1955). Huizinga states that play is the primary formative element in human culture, a free activity done for its own sake. However, in spite of this element of freedom, play can create structure. Huizinga introduced the idea of the 'magic circle'. Magic circles are temporary worlds within the ordinary world, dedicated to the performance of an act apart. In a very basic sense, the magic circle of a game is where the game takes place. To play a game means entering into a magic circle, or perhaps creating one as a game begins (Salen & Zimmerman, 2003). The concept of the magic circle has also suffered a number of criticisms (cf. Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2008, pp. 24–25). Despite some confusion about how the term is defined, it is useful when describing the difference between play and non-play. It engages one's mind in a creative way and obviously creates enjoyment in a place and time distinct from the normal perceived reality (Lammers, 2011; Mainemelis, 2006). Art, as a form of play, can uplift and raise us beyond our everyday existence if we surrender ourselves to its particular rules (Dönmez, 2017, p. 174), so art and play can draw magic circles.

Ellen Dissayanake proposes a biological explanation for the origin of art: the creation and appreciation of art more generally are advanced adaptive behaviours that are key to social survival. In her book *A Hypothesis of the Evolution of Art from Play* (1974), she describes the common characteristics shared by art and play: both involve imagination, surprise, non-predictability and self-satisfaction. Her art theory is based on the quality of art: it is essential to ask how art affects one's life and why the arts are important to humans. The relationship between play and art is considered phylogenetically—art is said to have originated as a kind of play, gradually over millennia acquiring its own independence and individuality.

Light painting encourages role playing and leaves space for creativity and imagination. It enables the representation of invisible worlds and characters, as well, such as spirits and ghosts. Participants seem to experience states of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), which often include affective, cognitive and physical immersion while doing the actual light painting, no matter which role they are assigned. Time becomes irrelevant as the participants drift into an imagined reality. In Csikszentmihalyi's view, flow is a state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience is so enjoyable that people will continue to do it, even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.

Being photographed in a chosen role can also lead to empowerment and increased understanding of one's strengths (Savolainen, 2009). Savolainen's workshop was based on the idea of empowerment and the belief that everyone has the right to feel unique and special. The fairy tale or imaginary quality of the photographs often reveals a truth obscured by daily life. Accepting one's own portrait, even though taken when playing a chosen role, is a metaphor for accepting one's own personality.

From the decolonising perspective, a playful approach might look bold or even foolhardy: How dare we play with such a grim topic? We suggest that these images,

created intuitively and through playful processes, turn remorse and shame into empowerment and contribute to creating a manifesto for a new narrative, a new vista. And, we are not alone: there is evidence supporting how both playing and photography have therapeutic capacities (Bratchford et al., 2018; Horovitz, 2015; Kopytin, 2008; Martin, 2009; Ward-Wimmer, 2003; Tonkin & Whitaker, 2019). South African artist Anthea Moys refers to the concept as 'playful decolonisation' in which one strives to play with history in alternative ways and remake it (Carvalho, 2018). Combining this information with a sense of discovery and a desire for knowledge might contribute to generating the change needed to create new methods for creative placemaking (Beck & Taft, 2017; Borrup, 2016; Redaelli, 2018), especially in rural and heritage contexts. Even though, as Matahaere-Atariki (2017) points out, it is not culture itself that requires revitalisation but the values that underpin culture; she also argued that cultural revitalisation is an inadequate term for the right to continually remake our culture and identities in ways that we may yet not even imagine.

Place can be viewed as the chorus of a place which includes the summation of a place's events, environments, actions and its horizon of possibilities (Häggström, 2019, p. 1335). In order to reimagine and remake a place, we might search for conceptual help from surrealism. According to Maggie Ann Bowers (2004), surrealism and magical realism both explore illogical or non-realistic aspects of humanity and existence. Surrealism seeks to express the subconscious, unconscious, repressed and inexpressible. Magical realism, on the other hand, rarely presents the extraordinary in the form of a dream.

Surrealists believed that art is created in the unconscious mind's blending of serendipity, irony and play. The French poet André Breton wrote the *Surrealist Manifesto* to describe how he wanted to combine the conscious and subconscious into a new 'absolute reality'. The central themes of surrealist art are motion and stagnation, the energy of colours and imaginative forms in its never-ending search for the power of dreams (Uzzani, 2010). Surrealism's depiction of the anomalies of everyday life offers unexpected twists and forces us to think differently (Kaitaro, 2015, p. 80). The exploration of randomness was a crucial creative strategy for many artists who associated themselves to the concepts and artistic methods of surrealism. These concepts represented a release from the constraints of the rational world and had parallels with their interest in dreams (Gale, 2018).

Many visual and methodological ideas open up a time channel to an earlier time 100 years ago, to the birth of surrealism or the moments just before it. With their colourful lighting and blending of physical elements, light painting images take on ethereal qualities. Light painting, full of spontaneity and unpredictability, reveals fairy tales, fantasies and dreams.

Place Attachment

The study of feelings that people develop towards places is a relatively new research field which has been brought to prominence in recent years by environmental psychologists. Place attachment can be defined as an 'affective bond or link between people and specific places' (Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001, p. 274), or a positive emotional bond that develops between individuals or groups and their environment. Emotional interaction with a place leads to satisfaction and attachment (Low & Altman, 1992; Mesch & Manor, 1998) or emotional engagement (Russell, 2013) to that place.

Päivi Granö (2004) suggests that a playground is formed by the relationship between play and space. When someone later brings those images from the past into mind, they become personally meaningful. In a similar way, art-based methods can create a stronger attachment to places. We also suggest that light painting works as a possible action methodology for the playful mapping of a place by enabling encounters with space, place and culture to stimulate flow, ingenuity and creativity (Playful Mapping Collective, 2016). In many Indigenous cultures, time and space have no distinct words as in Western thinking that views space as being divorced from time (Smith, 1999, pp. 50–52). Thus, through the art of light painting, we intended to present narratives that would call forth and enact connections amongst people, places and practices in time and space (Sundberg, 2014).

Increasing migration and urbanisation have led to rootlessness and longing for feelings of connection to places. Also, while organised religions continue to lose members, there is increasing interest in new forms of spiritualism and traditional beliefs. By recreating the myths and legends of heritage locations, we are aligned with these two current megatrends.

Place attachment is not something people are necessarily aware of. Even fictional mythical worlds—such as Oz, Narnia, Middle-earth and Westeros and Essos—provoke empathetic reactions amongst their audiences. This has led to an unexpected rise in the popularity of the real-world locales used as settings for those imaginary worlds.

Playfulness unleashes the imagination. It enables one to see the invisible and, by illustration and animation, to bring it to life. It can help recreate the hidden and forgotten past, making it visible once again. A meaningful place, whether imaginary or not, engages us emotionally by means of storytelling. We understand life and places through stories.

Light Painting Workshops as Participatory Art Methodology

We used an art-based participatory methodology centred on collecting stories, visual storytelling, conducting workshops and assessing responses to a qualitative questionnaire. Subsequently, we applied a semiotic-based analysis, and for the qualitative questionnaire, a content analysis. As Mirja Hiltunen (2009) states, art-based participatory action research is predicated on encounters amongst environment, history and participants, and the aims are to increase the understanding of oneself and to make a change.

One of the most exciting endeavours of the 'Lights On!' project was to arrange light painting workshops in April 2017 at all four sites in Finland. Altogether, about 35 participants took part in the workshops. There were no restrictions on participation: the workshops were free, and there was no prerequisite knowledge or skills needed—just a curious mind.

The idea was not to show how ruinous these seats of power look these days, but rather to evoke emotion and revive the sites with light and images. The participants learned the basics of light painting and then went on to work in small groups. Some of the participants had previous experience with light painting and were able to create very impressive photos using the lights which had been brought to the site for the workshop.

With live models, it was much easier to make history come alive through the creation of our ghostlike light portraits. Light painting was also used to highlight architectural details and to capture the movements of the ancient spirits as well as to add dramatic touches to the scenes. Real characters from the past were also brought to life by light painting.

In these light painting workshops, participation in stories was experienced collectively.

Before the workshops, all the participants were informed about the history of the sites to increase understanding of the past and to become part of the process (Jokela, 2018, p. 96), and they were told about the dignitaries who had influenced the sites and who had wielded power there, as well as all the legends surrounding the sites. It was hoped that these stories would fuel the participants' imagination, allowing them to see the sites from a new perspective; hence, the primary aim here was to revitalise the perception of the places. They had to review each image after taking it and make mental notes about potential improvements. It was often necessary to take several photos until all the elements came together. It takes time and effort to master light painting techniques to achieve the desired effects.

When we engage in light painting, Pentti Sammallahti's (2019) concept about how 'a photograph is given, not taken' comes into play. Mustonen (2019) suggests that providence can also play a role: how the pure chance of having been there to witness the magical moment is of utmost importance. Aina Landwerk Hagen (2017) suggests that the interplay of nature, serendipity, humans and technology results in works of magic we call art; or, they can even result in re-enchantment (Elkins, 2008) and esotericism (Kokkinen, 2019). The most rewarding part of all the workshops was the various groups' dedication to working together to create the images. The workshops exceeded all expectations and produced many remarkable light paintings.

Key elements of playfulness can be found within this art-based participatory activity (Holm et al., 2018; Leavy, 2009), and as usual in participatory art, the journey always matters as much as the destination (Matarasso, 2019, p. 17). Also, creativity, artistry and playfulness can be beneficial in finding equal ground (Van Klaveren, 2018). Using lights as play objects necessitates openness and experimentation, and extends beyond the production and interpretation of images into sensations and light movements as it engages with the material environment (Kullman, 2012, p. 6; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 104).

In our workshops, we created a space for participants to experiment, take risks and break the rules. There is no right or wrong way of doing things when either playing or light painting. This method of art-based action encourages the—often hidden—playfulness in adults. There is a strong element of surprise—you never know what the actual light painting will look like until you see it. The familiar sites might look completely different under starry skies, with ephemeral elves, ghosts and spirits wandering about. Playing reveals hidden, slightly surrealistic insights: the ruined structures are visible, but by playing with light, we open doors to magical realism and make the surreal and imaginary levels of these places visible (Figure 12.1).

The light painter remains invisible even though he or she can either paint the environment or stand behind the model while holding a light sword and drawing shapes with lights. People tend to take considerably more risks in front of the camera when they know they are not going to be visible in the final image. The same can be said from the models' point of view: wearing period costumes, posing in historical sites, not being themselves, but being hidden in a role, allows them to be more playful and spontaneous.

In light painting, the physical dimensions are totally different than in traditional painting and drawing done with oils and watercolours. All traditional painting is based on a two-dimensional canvas, whereas in light painting, the painter is able to physically step inside the canvas. The whole world, all three dimensions, can be used as a light painting surface.

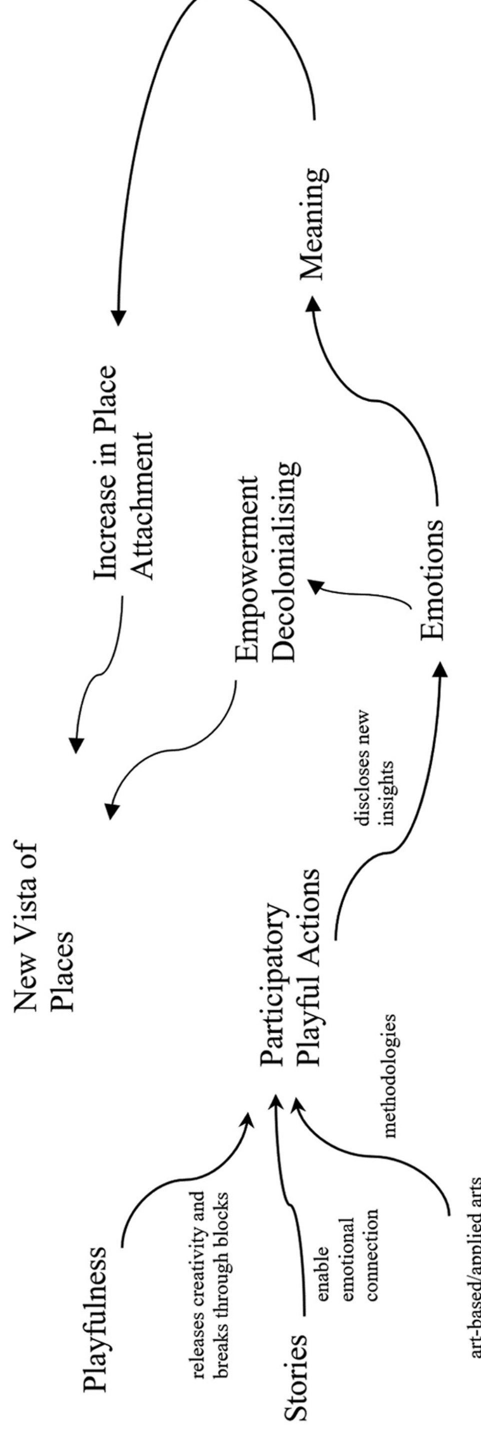

Figure 12.1 Mind map depicting an increase in place attachment as a result of art-based activity.

The Light Painting Images

The images presented here are the artistic outcome of the creative processes employed at the workshops. Five examples of light painting photographs created during these four workshops are analysed here using a semiotic approach (Barthes, 1977; Fiske, 1994; van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). By using the Barthesian distinction, we are able to open up (the) denotations and connotations of each image to determine how the light painting process might have increased the participants' emotional attachment to the respective sites.

We also showed the same photographs to a limited number of non-participants and studied their answers to a questionnaire within the framework of reception analysis (Hall, 2009), in order to understand the communicative power of these photographs as an end result of the creative work.

Methodology and Analysis

All of the historical sites are vestiges of colonisation, which exhibit the visible remains of occupation by foreign powers. Thus, one of the goals of the 'Lights On!' project was to delve deeper and attempt to uncover the invisible history hidden beneath a layer of factual eradication.

Viewers can perceive multiple interpretations of the same image. Our mission was to entice the viewers to come up with their own interpretations. Each image attempted to tell a story. The viewer had to keep an open mind, but there were no wrong responses. Knowing the history of the location was important for constructing reflective images. In our interpretation of the images, we were mindful of Kalha's way of interpreting surreal photographic fantasies in early-twentieth–century postcards (Kalha, 2016; Kalha & Tahvanainen, 2017). Roland Barthes describes the 'chain of associations' or signs that make up a picture's narrative: 'the text loads the image, burdening it with a culture, a moral, and imagination' (Barthes, 1977, p. 26). We invited people to experience the images, to let them resonate in their mind. We offered our insights and interpretations to guide this journey.

Each photograph included here will be analysed using three different approaches. First, we will describe the techniques that were implemented to realise these light paintings. Composition is one of the most important skills for any photographer to master. A good composition is essential to guide the viewer's eye towards the most important elements of the image. Second, we will discuss important composition elements in each image in more detail. All our light paintings can be seen as literary tales. There is a story, a theme and a specific setting. Third, we will give our own interpretation of what the picture expresses.

We offer one possible interpretation of each image. However, inside the mind of each viewer, other unique interpretations are possible.

Between Two Worlds

1. Two different techniques were used for this light painting. The first light painter lit the walls of the building with a multicolour flashlight, illuminating various areas of the buildings from the side and changing colours while moving along the courtyard. The second light painter created orbs using a light sword with a flashlight that had colour filters inside. The sword was held at arm's length, and the light painter drew small circles in the air while spinning his arm in a circular motion to draw a bigger circle. The photographer set the exposure setting to ISO

100 with an aperture of f/5.6 to achieve the best possible quality. This was the last image of our evening, and we were delighted that everything finally went as planned (Figure 12.2).
2. There is something about the number three which works well in compositions. It was obvious right away at the beginning that we would need to do three similar spinning wheels in order to make the image interesting and visually striking. The wonderfully rich colours and abstract forms created a surreal effect.
3. In this image, on the denotative level, you can see a red brick wall, which is part of the most important landmark in Vallisaari, the Alexander Battery. The wall has been lit with different light sources and colours. In the foreground, you can see three concentric circles floating in the air. Even though these fortress walls illustrate excellent Russian brick masonry work and architecture, the image suggests a series of questions. What on earth is happening? The secondary meanings, connotations, emerging from this image lift the image to a different level. The connections we make are both cultural and societal.

This abstract light painting combines elements from the tumultuous historic past and the present day. The spinning wheels appear as portals to another world, blending fantasy and reality, bringing forward the silent stories from the past.

The Spirit of Raseborg Castle

1. For this light painting, the light painter circulated around the courtyard and climbed up the staircase with light sticks, creating interesting ghostlike shapes which represented the ancient spirits of the castle, and the photographer used a

Figure 12.2 Between Two Worlds (2017), light painting by Jani Lainio and Martine Sarret-Talvela; photography by Kirsi MacKenzie (ISO 100, f/5.6, 167 s).

flashlight to light the walls of the castle afterwards. In order to achieve the depth of field needed, the aperture was set to f/10 (Figure 12.3).

2. We see the dark castle walls, spacious inner courtyard and even some stars shining up in the night sky. The simplicity of composition gives the image a powerful impact. The elements and framing become a part of the picture's denotative message.
3. There is something magical about historical sites and castles. Castles are symbols of enclosure, dominance, power, safety and wealth. They are also associated with wandering spirits and restless ghosts. One can immediately feel the spirit of ancient times and even sense spirits on the castle grounds. In this image, light encompasses a spiritual quality. Fluttering bands of light might symbolise spirits returning to revisit their old stomping grounds. This transitional phase of the castle thus affords a look back through time while also allowing a glimpse into the future. The superimposition of light painting features over the ruins seemingly hints at a post-apocalyptic world as vestiges of ancient cultures that remain are explored by various energy elements. This exploration of space and landscape via light painting allows for the creation of canvases that blend fantasy with reality.

An 1874 article in *Suomen Kuvalehti* [The Finnish picture magazine], a weekly Finnish language family and news magazine published since 1873, mentioned that prisoners' cries, wails and moans could be heard emanating from deep down in the castle's cellar. It also mentioned that mysterious figures could be seen, particularly the White Lady, wandering about in archways and on embankments (Raseporin rauniot, 1874, p. 224). Thus, this image could be taken to represent the White Lady leading the oppressed native communities out of the prison to freedom so that their voices may finally be heard.

Figure 12.3 *The Spirit of Raseborg Castle* (2017), light painting by Kirsi MacKenzie; photograph by Sari Vahersalmi (ISO 100, f/10, 45 s).

Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us

1. This light painting is a relatively short exposure. While the photographer captured the image, the light painter moved behind the bishop with a light stick, creating a halo surrounding the bishop's head (Figure 12.4).
2. The triangular composition, reminiscent of the Holy Trinity, depicts the power hierarchy of the Church and subordinate position of the devoted in relation to it. A resemblance to religious imagery in icons, altarpieces and stained glass can be observed.
3. A bishop, or perhaps a simple priest, leads the faithful, guiding their prayers. The holy man is the vessel transmitting God's message to the followers gathered on their knees. One supplicant, traditionally covered, sees her appeal acknowledged by the bishop. The uncloaked body and fiery mane of the second woman casts her as a rebellious presence who the holy man turns away from, ignoring her pleas. Perhaps her pagan, matriarchal, ancient faith, deeply rooted in nature and place, has now come under scrutiny as she is being forced to adapt to the patriarchal beliefs of the conquerors. The image portrays traditional Catholic male dominance, which remains pertinent in present-day Catholic countries and regions. Kuusisto was formerly a Catholic bishop's castle.

Figure 12.4 *Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us* (2017), light painting by Eki Tanskanen; photograph by Matti J. Niemi (ISO 100, f/22, 2.5 s).

The Burning Woman

1. We had wonderful models in Rapola, dressed in authentic Iron Age dresses and holding old traditional instruments. Several steps were involved in creating this light painting. First, the model was lit by a flash; second, the light painter created fire with a light tube around the model who was by then gone; third, the background was lit with a flashlight (Figure 12.5).
2. The central placement of the woman makes the image strong. Her yellow dress and the fire contrast against the dark background, drawing the viewer's eye to her. Symbolically, fire represents both productive energy and destructive power.
3. A woman, seemingly on fire, is situated in the middle of a clearing at dusk, preparing to launch into her final song. Cleansing flames contrasting with the peaceful setting belie the hidden drama which brought her to this point. The darkening path leads us to wonder whether an unseen presence, perhaps Cuningas de Rapalum himself or one of the wolf hunters, lurks somewhere in the shadows. The image has a slightly surreal quality evoked by the circular clearing stretching around her peasant throne.

Or is this a depiction of a witch-hunt? A woman with too much power and skill was considered a threat, and sometimes treated as an abomination whose inner demons needed to be expunged. Her smile may indicate that she is unafraid of what comes, perhaps confident of a heavenly future, or maybe relieved to be released from her torment.

Ghosts

1. Here, the light painters used electroluminescence (EL), which is an optical and electrical phenomenon in which a material emits light in response to the passage of an

Figure 12.5 The Burning Woman (2017), light painting by Jani Hannuksela; flash by Erkki Penttilä, photograph by Kirsi MacKenzie (ISO 100, f/8, 127 s).

Figure 12.6 *Ghosts* (2017), light painting by Jukka Laine and Jani Lainio; photograph by Kirsi MacKenzie (ISO 100, f/3.5, 45 s).

electric current, or to a strong electric field, to create ghosts and a flashlight to light the background afterwards. A large aperture (f/3.5) was used in order to create a relatively shallow depth of field with the main subjects in focus (Figure 12.6).

2. The composition of the image draws the viewer's eye first to the ghosts and then to the architecture, across the geometrical shapes in the vault framing the central elements. A combination of warm red and cold blue creates a contrasting effect.
3. Two diaphanous lights illuminate the vault. With little prompting, the figures are easily perceived as ghostlike spirits, transporting the viewer into the realm of fantasies, dreams and fairy tales. Ghosts live in Vallisaari. The tale of a headless colonel who was hanged in 1906 from a massive linden tree on the road leading to the Alexander Battery has circulated for over 100 years amongst the inhabitants of the island. The other version from the lore is that the ghost haunting the fortress is A. D. Notara, who was shot during the Viapori mutiny (Kairulahti & Kouvola, 2018, p. 49). This light painting has captured both of these ghosts who gathered to share a brief encounter and escape their loneliness.

Follow this link to more enchantment: www.flickr.com/photos/154016370@N03/albums

Qualitative Questionnaire

The selection of workshop respondents was based on convenience sampling. Convenience sampling (also known as availability sampling) is a specific type of non-probability sampling method that relies on data collection from population members who are

conveniently available to participate in a study. This type of sampling can be done by simply creating a questionnaire and distributing it to the targeted group (Dudovskiy, n.d.).

We interviewed participants, who had acted in different roles, as models, photographers or light painters, about their light painting workshop experience. We also interviewed people who had neither participated in the workshops nor visited the sites, in order to find out how they perceived these places after having viewed the photos.

We decided to send the questionnaire to only 14 participants, concentrating in the first part of the questionnaire on those participants who had been involved in many of the four light painting workshops and who could be easily reached. The questionnaires were sent by email and completed independently by 12 participants. The information gathered by these questionnaires had to be useful and easily interpreted. Thus, we used open-ended questions, as we wanted the respondents to express their ideas and feelings without restrictions. Since the respondents could freely express their ideas, there was also a risk of receiving less pertinent information. However, most of the respondents answered all the questions despite the effort and time it took. While sorting through the answers, we identified common themes.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part, we wanted to determine the participants' reactions to and feelings about the workshop experience. In the second, we wanted to know what kind of thoughts and emotions the light painting images produced in the viewers. The questions can be seen in Appendix 12.1.

Discussion of Questionnaire Responses

We deliberately chose convenience sampling as our method here. Farrell stated that convenience sampling is helpful in the generation of hypotheses, but vulnerable to selection bias. The most important benefit of open-ended questions is that they allow you to find out more than you anticipate: people may share motivations that you did not expect and concerns that you knew nothing about. Thus, you can gain unexpected and significant information (Farrell, 2016). We managed to gather some insightful, reflective responses and learned several things we did not expect (Figure 12.7). In fact, some spontaneous reactions that we received surprised us the most. All respondents expressed satisfaction with having participated in the workshop, while some mentioned not having enough time to carry out the activities.

> These places can't be forgotten anymore (Respondent 1).

Certain themes recurred in the open replies. From a technical perspective, there was discussion about textures, shapes, tricks and how to technically accomplish a shot, but also philosophical thoughts about light painting being a forgiving activity which enabled the participants not to have any fear of failing, and how it inspired new experiments which reflected their own personality. The most repeated words in the replies were words describing enthusiasm: 'inspirational', 'interest', 'curiosity' and 'intriguing'. Based on this, we concluded that the workshop had truly promoted a sense of playfulness and feelings of liberation: one cannot fail either when playing or when creating light painting. The participants had also used the camera as a toy and had been inspired by the endless possibilities, while seeing how the other participants visualised their impressions of the place (Figure 12.7).

Out of all of these pictures, the images where you can see something built a long time ago (for example a stone wall) are the most interesting pictures. In my mind, these light painting images serve as a link between distant past to something abstract in the future. On the other hand, if you just think about the heyday of these places, the light painting images could be seen as mystical supernormal powers which would be difficult for people to understand. (Respondent 6)

I became mostly curious about how some of these light paintings had been technically carried out. I would be interested in trying these tricks too. (Respondent 5)

The place was great because it was possible to do light painting both inside and outside. Wartime buildings in low-light conditions and tales about the history of the island gave a lot of inspiration for light painting images. (Respondent 3)

The places look mystical, interesting and visually stunning. Absolutely worth visiting! (Respondent 4)

The places in these images appear beautiful, dramatic, romantic, mythical and even a bit mystical. The images have the power to tell a story. One starts to wonder what life was like in those places and what the history of those places is. What kind of role did these buildings play in the lives of people? What did these buildings look like when they were new, just after they were built? Probably these buildings made a huge impact then on contemporary people – at the time Raasepori was built there weren't a lot of stone constructions in Finland. The images don't only arouse interest and curiosity, but also emotions – they make you realize how short life really is. These images will make you want to visit the places, especially Vallisaari, which I had never visited before. (Respondent 1)

I felt like I was capturing a theatre play with my camera. The project was inspiring and interesting. I was full of curiosity to see the final images. (Respondent 2)

The places look mystical and totally different from the traditional tourism marketing brochures. Usually all the images you see from these places have been taken in daytime. After seeing these images, I would also love to visit them at night. (Respondent 3)

It was a great experience indeed meeting new people who all share the same interest. You can't really fail in light painting – it's a very forgiving activity. That's why it's very inspiring and also liberating. Light painting focuses on innovative approaches and the element of chance – a great way to bring out your creativity. The magic happens when you capture something you didn't expect – surprises are always part of the process. Of course, you have to figure out how to technically accomplish the shot also. Everything you learn inspires your next experiments. The excitement continues and keeps growing until it's time to go home. It's also interesting to see how other people approach light painting. It inspires you to try similar techniques. But, what you do choose to try reflects your own personality and is usually in line with your own vision. (Respondent 1)

No. I don't have any particular historical or cultural attachment to these buildings. Maybe, it's different for Finnish people. For me, there are just so many intriguing subjects for light painting because you can bring out their textures and shapes when illuminating them from certain angles. (Respondent 3)

I love the way light painting brings old buildings to life. For me, it's different because I see all historic or abandoned buildings through the eyes of a light painter. I imagine what I could do there. For a regular person who has never seen these buildings, it can trigger interest, particularly for Finns interested in history. But they should know that if they visit during the day time, it's going to be very different! (Respondent 2)

These places can't be forgotten any more. I've been involved in doing something extraordinary, creating visual images connected to these chosen places. I'm pretty sure that in the future, if I see or hear anything related to these historical sites I'll probably hear myself thinking: Oh, this particular image was created on this site, what historic event took place on this site again…? The conclusion is, the images created on these sites definitely increased my attachment to them. The images created on these sites will have their own history, one-of-a-kind moments which can't be duplicated anymore.I'm probably going to visit Vallisaari more during twilight hours if that would be possible. For me, it's a way more fascinating place in the evening and at night than walking around in the day time in a crowd of tourists. I hope it would be possible to photograph Vallisaari all night long and late in the autumn when the nights become darker earlier. (Respondent 1)

Figure 12.7 Selected direct quotes from the participants describing their workshop experiences.

The most significant question in our survey was whether participating in the light painting workshop changed the participants' relationship to the location. This question attempted to elicit anecdotal experiences from participants, trying to stimulate and provoke people's memories and to elicit instinctive responses (Snowden, 2018).

The responses were varied, as some participants did not feel an emotional connection to their place of residence or adopted country, while others did. Four respondents specifically mentioned that their attitude had changed. Their responses showed that, through these images, we had created memories through fascination, and this indeed increased attachment to the places. We read statements relating how 'These places can't be forgotten anymore' (Respondent 1) and how 'The images have the power to tell a story' (Respondent 1).

With our final question, we wanted to discover whether people saw these places differently through light painting and whether they were likely to visit these places after looking at the images. These questions were also answered by people who had not participated in the workshops. It was surprising to learn that just seeing the images inspired and aroused the curiosity of viewers who had not participated in the workshops.

This idea of curiosity could be linked to either colonising or decolonising effects, depending on the vantage point from which we direct our gaze and what we use these images for. On the one hand, this is not surprising: images and photographs have a long history of being used to advertise places (as in tourism promotional material) and to change attitudes towards locations (attitude manipulation or even propaganda). More recently, the power of social media has also been utilised in a decolonising context (Young, 2014). As Smith and Donnelly (2004) declare: seeing is believing. It is our choice to make: Whose story will be told, and in what kind of light will these sites be re-illuminated? Should we concede the narrative to uncaring authorities, or is there room for polymorphous interpretations of the sites based on the folklore and playfulness of the imagination? To guide our choice, we could learn from the research by Laura Kim Sommer and Christian Andreas Klöckner (2019) which showed that art can change our feelings when it encompasses a hopeful message, something containing colourful depictions and inspired solutions. We also wondered if, by applying the concept of decolonising nature by T. J. Demos (2016), light painting could become an effective and multifaceted tool in the effort to revitalise places.

The implementation of convenience sampling may have introduced bias into the answers. In addition, the small number of answers made it difficult to obtain conclusive, statistically significant results. But, combined with the visual message, we were able to perceive from the images that the actual light paintings themselves and the results pertaining to increased place attachment were very promising. The photographic explorations revealed a surrealistic quality, one that flowed from the creative and imaginary input of the participants.

It was interesting to note the upsurge of curiosity and interest the light painting images evoked when shown to people who had not participated in our workshops and who did not have prior knowledge of light painting. Successfully arousing people's curiosity can be counted as a positive achievement directly related to the original purpose of the 'Lights On!' project from a tourism perspective. The stillness of a photograph allows our minds to move freely and build associations. What makes a picture powerful lies completely within the mind of the beholder. It is subjective, not objective. It is personal, based almost entirely on the experience of the viewer.

Conclusion

With this art-based action research, we aimed to determine whether participatory light painting workshops conducted at cultural heritage sites could increase the participants' emotional attachment to those sites. Based on the results gained during this research, it seems that light painting works well for this purpose. The results might even be improved upon if the activity were to be further developed into a longer process (a weekend-long intensive course, or regular meetings over months) because learning the techniques and interpreting the stories proved to be quite an undertaking for one night, even though some participants continued working into the small hours.

Based on our experience and findings, we propose that an increase in place attachment leads to a greater desire to act on behalf of these places, enhancing people's willingness to visit the places and to support their existence. Using art to bring forth silenced voices would work well as a revitalised placemaking method for forgotten places by giving them an impressive visual representation in order to redesign the vista of a place and thus work towards the eradication and the 'unlearning' of the 'wrong' history. There seem to be numerous possible adaptations of this methodology for other purposes, as well. This kind of participatory art-based activity with light painting could easily be transposed to other settings and groups of participants, such as working with immigrants or marginalised groups, thus creating magic in their local settings. In light painting, everybody can succeed in spite of age or disability. For example, if you are not able to draw because of physical limitations, you can still do light painting by attaching different light sources to your wheelchair. Light painting is a group exploration which is best conducted collaboratively.

These images can work as a bridge between the forgotten past and a more empowered future. In these times when modern civilisations pursue the rampant destruction of nature, more than ever, we need people who are strongly emotionally attached to places: primeval forests, heritage sites and pristine Indigenous landscapes. Light painting workshops and collaborative forms of creating light painting art represent a viable method to animate visual stories that enhance emotional attachment. By interpreting the folklore and myths of a specific place, by role playing or dancing with light in order to create a unique artistic representation, participants might also gain new insights into themselves. In the future, before initiating these kinds of activities, it would be good to consider taking a quiet moment to kindly ask for permission from the places as well, so as not to be guilty of perpetuating colonialising attitudes.

Acknowledgements

When planning these workshops during fall 2016, we thought that April 2017 would be the perfect month to hold them since the nights would be pleasant and warm. We were wrong. April was unusually cold in Finland. Despite the cold weather, however, we managed to entice many individuals to take part in our workshops. We are grateful to them for joining our journey into night photography and light painting. There were a lot of discoveries and innovations while we experimented with different light painting techniques. Some of the workshop participants had prior knowledge and experience with light painting, and with their help, we were even able to attempt a few more complex light paintings. There are many individuals to thank, but we would like to especially acknowledge our most active and experienced light

painters—Jani Hannuksela, Jani Lainio, Martine Sarret-Talvela, Eki Tanskanen and Anna Tanskanen—for their technical expertise, creative input and vision.

There are many light painting artists who are fuelled by the desire to make something truly original and unique, taking the art form to the next level, such as Jukka Laine, Janne Parviainen and Hannu Huhtamo, who together form the light painting art group Valopaja. We were pleased to have Jukka Laine leading one of our workshops in Vallisaari. Jukka also teaches light painting to children and various groups with special needs including the blind. He is an inspirational force who has been able to combine light painting with socially engaged community work.

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Appendix 12.1

The Questionnaire

Light Painting Workshops

What was your role in the light painting workshop?

- photographer
- light painter
- model
- other

What was your relationship to this place/location prior to the light painting workshop?
Describe your experience of the light painting workshop.
Did your participation in the light painting workshop change your relationship to this place? If yes, how?

Light Painting Images

Look at the following pictures. Do you recognise any of these places?
Did you see these places differently through light painting? Would you be more likely to visit these places after looking at these images?

13 John Savio's Art as a Part of Early Sámi Decolonisation in the 1920s and 1930s

Tuija Hautala-Hirvioja

Introduction

The objective of the chapter is to discuss the woodcuts made by the first Sámi artist John Savio (1902–1938), who was educated in Western traditions in Norway, and his use of art as a means of decolonisation. His art was inspired by the natural beauty of the Arctic region and Sámi culture, and the Sámi way of life which depended on reindeer herding, fishing and hunting. Savio's art reflected strong personal feelings. He belonged to a minority culture himself. He lived at a time when racism played a central role in science and society in Europe. The decades before the Second World War were harsh for the minorities. The state leaders of Norway wanted all to speak only Norwegian and live the way of the majority. Thanks to his teacher, the Sámi activist Isak Saba (1875–1921), Savio knew about the earlier artists who had depicted the Sámi people and their culture and bravely represented the minority.

John Andreas Savio was born in the small village Bugøyfjord on the shore of Varangerfjord in 1902, but spent his early years in Kirkenes in Finnmark in the northernmost county in Norway. He was descended from Kven and Sámi people (Berntsen & Parmann, 1980, p. 16). Kvens are an ethnic minority in Norway descended from Finnish peasants and fishermen who emigrated from the northern parts of Finland and Sweden to northern Norway in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The culture of the Kvens is based on Finnish culture and language (Lähteenmäki, 2004, pp. 146–147).

Sámi are the only ethnic group in the European Union to be recognised as Indigenous people. They live and are a minority in four countries: Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. There are between 60,000 and 100,000 Sámi, depending on the way they are counted. Sápmi, a Sámi region, extends from central Norway and Sweden across northern Finland to the Kola Peninsula in Russia. There are nine Sámi dialects or languages, and all the Sámi languages are endangered (Lehtola, 2002, pp. 9–11). Two important features related to Sámi culture are traditional handicrafts, *duodji*, and the Sámi costume, *gákti*. The Sámi garment is a symbol of a Sámi person's identity. Hunting, fishing and reindeer herding have always been the basis of Sámi culture. Traditionally, Sámi aesthetics and a sense of beauty were joined with practicality and expressed in handicraft, *duodji*, which was firmly connected with the spheres of life and livelihoods (Lehtola, 2002, pp. 9, 114). The Sámi scholar Veli-Pekka Lehtola emphasises the importance of nature in their culture: 'The Sámi have always relied on

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nature. Nature has provided the sources for both their material and spiritual culture. This base sets Sámi culture apart from industrial or agricultural civilisations' (Lehtola, 2002, p. 88).

When Savio was only 3 years old, his parents died. His grandparents took him into their care. Thanks to his grandparents' wealth, he was given good schooling (Abiel, 1993, p. 3). In the autumn of 1920, Savio moved to Oslo to complete upper secondary school. At the same time, he made drawings in day and evening classes in the State College of Crafts and Design. However, he could not graduate because he contracted tuberculosis and one of his lungs had to be operated on. After surgery and a period in the hospital, he returned to Kirkenes in 1921 in order to regain his strength, and he stayed in Finnmark until the autumn of 1922 (Nerhus, 1982, 54). After that, he lived for a couple of years in Oslo and later in several villages in Finnmark from 1926–1928. The next years were years of wandering. He lived again in Oslo but visited various parts of Norway, took a trip to the neighbouring countries and later went on a trip to Europe. In the autumn of 1932, Savio had his first solo exhibition in Tromsø (Rasmussen, 2005, pp. 89–90). In 1933–1934, he studied art in Paris, and he held his second solo exhibition in the summer of 1936. In the spring of 1938, the tuberculosis of his early years returned, and he died in Oslo at the age of 36 on 13 April 1938 (Moksnes Gjelsvik, 2012, pp. 43, 144).

Savio worked with many techniques, using both watercolour and oil. He became known for his graphic prints. His main motifs were reindeer, the Sámi and the power of nature. Most of the art in the Savio Collection in Kirkenes is graphic, consisting of a few linocuts with the majority being woodcuts. Both are relief printing techniques. The images are carved into the surface of a plate of wood or linoleum, leaving the printing parts higher level than the surface and removing the non-printing parts. Then the printing parts are coloured with ink, which in Savio's case was black, and printed onto paper (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 14). During the study years at the State College of Crafts and Design in Oslo, Savio learned the methods and history of Western fine art. However, his cultural background had been deeply influenced by minorities, and his native language was Sámi (Bang, 2002, p. 10). In Bugøyfjord, the people spoke Sámi and Finnish, as well as a mixture of Russian and Norwegian due to Russian Pomor trade. In secondary school, fine arts and the Sámi identity became stronger, and the teacher Isak Saba encouraged Savio to continue painting (Moksnes Gjelsvik, 2012, pp. 22–25). By heritage, Savio was Sámi and Kven, but his education and artistic training were completed at institutions set up by national majority populations.

This chapter is organised as follows. After this brief introduction to Savio's life, I present the major themes of the chapter. I then explain my subject position and overlapping multimethodological approach. Due to Savio's art being situated in the contexts of Norwegian art and Norway's minority policy, I expand on these issues by dealing with racial ideology and the colonial language question, as well as Savio's mentors who contributed to his Sámi and artist identities. In the last section, I analyse his art and focus on the decolonisation aspects of it. The conclusion argues that Savio was a decolonising pioneer who opened the way for contemporary Sámi artists and that the same kind of decolonisation with art occurs today among other Indigenous people.

Exploring the Concepts and Subject Position of the Researcher

This research is based on an approach that combines Indigenous and Sámi research with that of art historians such as Ernst Gombrich and Erwin Panofsky on iconography

and Mieke Bal on semiotics and narratives. Today, it seems to be possible to connect both traditions—Indigenous knowledge and Western academic approaches—to knowledge creation (Ahvenjärvi, 2017, p. 54). Sámi scholar Elina Helander-Renvall (2016, p. 141) writes: 'Contacts between science and Indigenous knowledge can be referred to as postcolonial moments. . . . During postcolonial moments, cultural and human diversity has been taken into account, and even respected'. Savio's background was in the Sámi culture and its world view. He studied Western fine art and knew Western art history well. The picturing of different subjects, such as a landscape or a human being, is linked to learning and earlier ways of seeing and picturing, as well as the current ideological and social history and other relevant contexts; thus, a picture is always a subjective creation. The artist's cultural background and individual life history is included in it: his or her memories, emotions and experiences form a subjective relation to the subject to be pictured (Panofsky, 1972, pp. 5–17). The means of expression chosen by the artist is also one of the essential factors: a drawing or graphic depicts different objects as lines, but a relief print consists of masses and often is in black and white. A style or mode of expression is also involved; this requires an artist to study the subject from a certain point of view (Gombrich, 1991, pp. 73–75). Thus, Sámi and Indigenous research, coupled with critical art history, enriches interpretations. According Bal (2020), the confrontation with traditional art history makes the tensions and collaborations between semiotics and art history more productive than would either a slavish traditionalism or a total rejection of such a tradition.

According to the Indigenous and Sámi scholar Rauna Kuokkanen (2007, p. 146), decolonisation refers to a process that seeks to dismantle various forms of power, such as the hidden means of power in institutional and cultural structures. However, decolonisation also refers to the intellectual situation whereby the majority and the dominators' ideas caused the colonised minorities to feel inferior (Waziyatawin et al., 2005, p. 2). This refers to the conception of the colonising of the mind described by the Kenyan novelist and postcolonial theorist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in his book *Decolonising the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature* (1986). He emphasises the importance of language, which is an inseparable part of a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world. Kuokkanen discusses the same situation that occurred with how the colonial power dealt with Sámi languages and culture. This inner or mind colonisation of Indigenous and Sámi people had been a long process. Thus, it became necessary for the minorities to have the right to use their own language and have the opportunity to build up their own culture and identity (Kuokkanen, 1999, pp. 96, 109).

Considering the aforementioned background, an overlapping multimethod approach that combines Indigenous and Sámi research methodologies and art history is the most appropriate way to interpret Savio's art. Theories such as feminist, posthumanist, race and class theories share the same perspective as Indigenous research in that knowledge in itself is not seen as the ultimate goal (Wilson, 2008, p. 37). All these novel critical ways of thinking enrich and broaden traditional scientific understanding and interpretation of art.

To improve my understanding of Indigenous research, *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook* was a good work to start with. I learned to identify and avoid hidden colonial aspects by answering the questions in the handbook, which I considered particularly important. Colonisation also refers to the situation of Indigenous people, when the colonisers' power came at the expense of Indigenous lands, resources, lives and self-determination (Waziyatawin et al., 2005, p. 2). The concept

'Indigenous peoples' was introduced in the 1970s within the struggles of the American Indian Movement and the Canadian Indian Brotherhood. Indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012, p. 7) writes: 'The term has enabled the collective voices of colonised people to be expressed strategically in the international arena'. She also comments that Indigenous people belong to a network and continues:

> They share experience as peoples who have been subjected to the colonisation of their lands and cultures, and denial of their sovereignty, by a colonizing society that has come to dominate and the shape and quality of their lives, even after it has formally pulled out.
>
> (p. 7)

However, the facts are that colonisation is still going on, established states continue to control Indigenous peoples' lives, and decolonisation remains a significant problem (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 146).

When applying and using Indigenous research as a perspective or method, it is ethically correct to present one's background, relationship to the research subject and motives (Chilisa, 2012, pp. xix–xx; Kuokkanen, 2007, pp. ix–xxii; Smith, 2012, pp. 222–232). This is essential because all ideas, knowledge and interpretations are developed through relationships. One of the most critical aspects is the ethical responsibility to ensure that knowledge and people are not exploited (Kovach, 2010, p. 36; Wilson, 2008, p. 134). Researchers must understand that their own experiences, education and world views influence their research. It is always necessary in Indigenous research to understand and articulate one's own place and limits (Seurujärvi-Kari, 2011, p. 35). One must position oneself to show the interpretative lens, to open up one's intentions and to be able to reflect (Chilisa, 2012, p. 177; Kovach, 2010, p. 46).

My paternal ancestors were Sàmi, but their Sámi language changed to Finnish at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the following generation built a farmhouse in Alakurtti. After the Winter War (1939–1940), Finland had to cede to the Soviet Union the eastern part of Salla (in northeastern Lapland) and the area where my father's family lived. After the Second World War and until his death in 1970, my grandfather was a fisherman on lake Inari in the Sámi area. I was born in Oulu, about 500 kilometres south of the Sàmi area. Since 1970, the Sámi language has been taught at the University of Oulu. Before my art history studies, I studied in Oulu at the Teachers' Training College (1976–1979), and I had Sámi fellow students. During my years of study, my methodological thinking has evolved based on a qualitative humanistic tradition. At the end of the 1970s, I became aware of concepts such as otherness, hegemony, Eurocentrism and, shortly afterwards, feminist art history and other critical voices that are part of the humanities. I studied art history and ethnology, which also dealt with the Sámi cultures of Finland. In 1984, I moved to Rovaniemi in the Arctic Circle area of Finland, not far from the Sámi area.

Through writing my doctoral thesis, *Lappi-kuvan muotouminen suomalaisessa kuvataiteessa ennen toista maailmansotaa* ['Shaping the Image of Lapland in Finnish Visual Arts before the Second World War, 1999'], I became familiar with how Scandinavian artists depicted Sámi people and their lives. I got to know art created by the Swedish painter Johan Tirén (1851–1911). He saw the hard life and subjugation of the Sámi and depicted the Sámi appreciatively. He felt sympathy for the Sámi and pictured some of their tragic events, such as in his *Efter snöstormen* [*After Snowstorm*]

(1885). With his political painting *Lappar tillvaratagande skjutna renar* [*Sámi Capturing the Shot Reindeer*] (1892), Tirén wanted to defend the Sámi right to herd their reindeer in the traditional fashion. At that time, it was legal for farmers to kill stray reindeer. Thanks to his painting, the law was changed, and it was then forbidden to kill reindeer (Hautala-Hirvioja, 1999, pp. 46–47). I continued my academic research by concentrating on art and culture in the Euro-Arctic region. I was an active member of the Sámi Art Resort Project (SARP) at the Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø (2010–2016), and I published some articles about Sámi visual art. I was one of three curators of *Saamelaista nykytaidetta, Dálá Sámi dáidda, Sámi Contemporary* (2014–2015).[1] I studied Sámi research (2017–2019) at the University of Lapland to improve my knowledge and understanding of Sámi culture. In spite of all my studies, however, my position in relation to Sámi culture remains that of an outsider.

Towards Overlapping Approaches to the Research

I have learned to understand Sámi history and culture, and their special relationship with nature and land through literature published by Sámi scholars, such as Elina Helander-Renvall, Veli-Pekka Lehtola, Päivi Magga and Irja Seurujärvi-Kari, and through lectures given by Sámi researchers including Rauna Kuokkanen, Anni-Siiri Länsman, Sigga-Marja Magga, Klemetti Näkkäläjärvi, Rauna Rahko-Ravantti, Jarno and Sanna Valkonen, and many others. Panofsky's iconology has three levels: the first and second levels concentrate on description and interpretation of visual art, while the third level enables one to identify the meaning of an artwork. Here, the researcher must look for more contexts, such as the social, educational and political systems and the religious, symbolic and mythical atmospheres that existed during the artist's lifetime.

The researcher must also possess the synthetic intuition to draw conclusions (Panofsky, 1972, p. 66). Indigenous research requires the presence and understanding of symbolic and metaphorical representations. For me, semiotics offers a more interdisciplinary version of iconology, an extended way of asking questions about what works of art mean and how they go about creating or expressing these meanings (Bal & Bryson, 1991, p. 178). In addition, it is reasonable to approach traditional knowledge and Indigenous art through the senses and intuition (Kovach, 2010, p. 41; Wilson, 2008, p. 55). The third level of my analysis relies on a piece of research respecting Indigenous society (Wilson, 2008, p. 59), and my study aims to benefit the Sámi and other Indigenous people and offer the new knowledge about early Sámi fine art.

Therefore, my goal has been to offer new knowledge about Savio's art and his intentions. To do that, I have had to gain a holistic understanding of the life of Indigenous people. In their world view, human beings are part of nature, equal with all living things on the earth without distinction. In contrast, Western philosophy considers humans and nature to be in opposition to each other. Christian belief has separated the body and soul, and considered the individual as the basic building block of society (Smith, 2012, pp. 50–51). The Indigenous scholars Shawn Wilson (2008, p. 59) and Margaret Kovach (2010, p. 47) have offered the principles needed to follow Indigenous research and to respect the Sámi world view by adhering to ethical responsibility and sensitivity. Open discussion is considered by many Indigenous and Sámi scholars, such as Bagele Chilisa (2012, pp. 203–211), the best method for collecting research material. Equal, honest and respectful dialogue creates the best opportunities to understand one another well (Helander & Kailo, 1999, pp. 21–23; Valkonen & Valkonen,

2018, pp. 19–21). In my case, this open discussion will occur between earlier research on and interpretations of Savio's art and my interpretation of his art.

Although Gombrich wrote about Western art, he presented some general ideas that also apply to handicrafts, folk art and Indigenous art. He posited that there is no reality without interpretation, that our eyes see the world in the same way our ancestors did and that our brains interpret nature and objects like the brains of earlier generations (Gombrich, 1991, p. 21). Panofsky developed a method for interpreting Renaissance art and found that analysis is comparative when looking for similarities and differences amongst artworks. An important aspect of iconological analysis is comparison with textual sources. With the rise of new critical theories, scholars of art history began to reject the traditional methods. In particular, they criticised iconological analysis arguing that it was limited and descriptive in nature (D'Alleva, 2005, p. 25). According to Bal (2020), questioning traditional iconology makes the collaborations between semiotics and art history more productive than they would be with either a slavish adherence to traditionalism or a total rejection of such a tradition.

As a flexible humanist, I employ some of Bal's ideas about a hermeneutic approach to interpret art, looking for and testing different contexts. This is known as a hermeneutic cycle where interpretation of details affects the interpretation of the entire phenomenon. The reviews of these interpretations deepen our understanding of the content of art (D'Alleva, 2005, p. 128). The same occurs in Indigenous research, as the scholar Shawn Wilson notes (2008, p. 102): 'things have to be put into context', and their context must be respected in order to understand 'how the knowledge is hermeneutic'. The second level of Panofsky's iconology, which is dealing with subjects and their symbolic meanings, requires familiarity with the artist's culture (Panofsky, 1972, p. 54). Thus, my knowledge of Sámi culture and history has been helpful in conducting this study.

The Sámi—An Ancient Relic and the Norwegianisation Policy

Savio lived and produced his art during the difficult years before the Second World War. At that time, a racist attitude and ideology promoted the belief that ethnic groups of humans possessed different behavioural and intellectual traits depending on their physical appearance and that humans could be categorised based on the superiority of one race over another (Isaksson & Jokisalo, 2005, p. 18). In Scandinavia, the Sámi and Finns were thought to belong to the Mongolian race. As early as in 1871, the Finnish writer and geographer Zacharias Topelius wanted to separate the Sámi and the Finns. Twelve years later, in 1893, he wrote in his book *Suomi 19:nnellä vuosisadalla* [*Finland in the 19th Century*] that was aimed at foreign readers: 'They call themselves Sámi and think themselves as relatives of the Finns. The Finns do not want to accept this relationship which is rather distant. A Sámi is not a step-brother of a Finn, or even a cousin' (Topelius, 1898, p. 56). This was indicative of the situation in all the Scandinavian countries: the position of minorities was inferior.

The descriptions of the Sámi were stereotypical in the books written at the end of the seventeenth century, and particularly in the travel books during the eighteenth century. Later in the classical racial classification, the Sámi were assigned to the Mongolian race and were described as being a degenerated or malformed, non-European race (Isaksson & Jokisalo, 2005, pp. 62–64). The basis of this attitude was an oversimplified version of evolutionary theory. This so-called vulgar Darwinism was characteristic

of the colonial spirit and became visible in the public debate and was accepted as part of everyday life (Solbakk, 2006, p. 70).

A strong, systematic policy of assimilation was pursued in Norway at the beginning of the nineteenth century; its aim was to assimilate minorities into the majority population (Isaksson & Jokisalo, 2005, pp. 206–207). In 1851, all schools received orders to use Norwegian as the language of instruction; only Bible-based religious education could be conducted in Sámi and Kvens. From the 1850s onwards, teachers were paid a bonus in addition their salary that depended on how well they succeeded in their Norwegianisation work and teaching Norwegian to their minority pupils (Solbakk, 2006, pp. 69–70). Lehtola (2002, p. 44) stated: 'The power of Norwegianization policy lay in the fact that it extended into the realm of legal application'. Assimilation policy in Norway and Sweden was also part of a broader nationalistic political strategy. The Sámi and Kvens were thought to be a menace to security. First, both countries were afraid of the influences of Russia and later communism and the Soviet Union (Solbakk, 2006, p. 72).

In 1898, a new law in Norway prohibited the use of the Sámi language in schools and in student boarding houses. This law was only repealed in 1959 (Lehtola, 2002, p. 45). The law on land ownership in 1905 connected to language by assigning a Norwegian name to properties and linked ownership to language proficiency (Ranta & Kanninen, 2019, p. 28). All people had to learn Norwegian and take Norwegian names to be able to buy the lands which they cultivated or used. In keeping with the active colonialist beliefs, minorities had to be assimilated into Norwegian society. Passive or implied colonialism meant that, by civilising these minorities, it would be possible to absorb the Sámi and Kven people into the Norwegian culture and substitute the Norwegian language for their native languages (Lehtola, 2002, p. 45).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the protomorphic theory of the Sámi became the prevailing theory in Scandinavian race science, especially as it was supported in Norwegian anthropology (Isaksson, 2001, p. 381). It was a part of Darwin's theory of evolution, according to which the Sámi were regarded as a cultural and biological remnant in the history of evolution like a relic from prehistory, where higher cultures had evolved further than the Sámi. At the same time, there was the belief that it would be possible to educate the primitive Sámi and to elevate them to the same level as Norwegians. From the end of the nineteenth century to the Second World War, intermarriages between the northern Scandinavian race—to which the Norwegians, Swedes and Danes belonged—and the Finns, Kvens and Sámi were rare. Moreover, the Finno-Ugrian peoples[2] were believed to be simple and weak people because of their Mongolian roots. Mixed race people were considered as degenerate and weak (Isaksson, 2001, pp. 164–170).

The Norwegianisation policy was strong and intensive in Savio's home area in Finnmark, where he had spent his childhood and youth. The first main trend was settlement and economic policy; the aim was to establish Norwegian agricultural colonisation and farming in the eastern part of Sápmi, the main Sámi area (Lehtola, 2002, p. 44; Solbakk, 2006, p. 70). Another aim was to strengthen Norway's power in Finnmark because the area was strategically important in its relations with Soviet Union. The main reason was to have a genuine and reliable Norwegian population living in this border territory. That is why the Norwegianisation policy was directed not only towards the Sámi but just as much towards the Kvens (Solbakk, 2006, p. 71). The second main trend of the Norwegian government was to establish an education policy to eliminate the Sámi language from all schools (Lehtola, 2002, p. 45).

At the same time as this severe Norwegianisation was being imposed, the Sámi began to understand the significance of pan-Sámi national cooperation. In Norway, five local Sámi associations were founded in the south. In the 1910s, Sámi organisations began to be established in Finnmark, Savio's home county (Lehtola, 2002, p. 46). On 6 February 1917, the first Sámi National Congress was convened in Trondheim in Norway (Solbakk, 2006, p. 75). Today, that date is celebrated as the Sámi national day.

Savio's Mentors and Models

John Savio's first drawing teacher was Isak Saba, who was an editor, writer, Sámi activist and politician. Saba is considered to be the national poet of the Sámi. He wrote the lyrics of *Sámi soga lávlla* ['Song of the Sámi People'], which was made the Sámi national anthem in 1986. He was the first Sámi to be elected to the Norwegian Parliament, where he represented Finnmark from 1906–1912. Saba tried to promote the affairs of Sámi and inform his people about the discussions and activities of the Parliament (Kent, 2014, p. 75; Kulonen et al., 2005, p. 370). He fought all of his life for the sake of the Sámi. He tried to awaken the Norwegian people to take responsibility for the cultural oppression of the Sámi. At the same time, he was equally committed to the Sámi themselves taking up the fight against injustice and oppression (Store Norske Leksikon, 2020).

Teachers like Saba were important, but also early Sámi writers were an integral part of Sámi awakening (Lehtola, 2002, p. 46). Lehtola (p. 48) pointed out their position:

> Although in their works, Johan Turi, Pedar Jalvi and Anders Larsen depicted the situation in Sápmi each in their own way, they also created a new concept of Sámi thought and self-image—for outsiders and for Sámi themselves. Through their literary means they tried to awaken Sámi to the recognition of their own uniqueness.

Thus, as a result of Saba's teaching of an influence on Savio, he became proud of his Sámi background and culture. According to Savio's good friend Hans Nerhus (1982, p. 31), especially in Oslo, the artist wanted to be known as a Sámi man.

Saba was also a family friend of Savio's grandparents, and he knew that they hoped their daughter's son would become a priest. The grandparents were believers, and they belonged to the Laestadian religious movement, which is a Nordic religious movement bearing the name of its founder, Sámi minister Lars Levi Laestadius (1800–1861). According Sandra Wallenius-Korkalo (2014, p. 111),

> the movement originated in the northern parts of Finland and Sweden around the mid-1800s and rapidly spread through the North Calotte among the Indigenous Sámi population, as well as among the Finns. . . . Laestadianism has had a profound religious, cultural and social impact in the area.

Even today, Laestadianism is a popular and very strict and conservative revivalist movement. It opposes the liberation and ordination of women, sex before marriage, birth control, movies, theatre, opera, alcohol, dance, television and make-up, and even competitions are forbidden. They believe that a human being has to be humble before God's eyes (Alho et al., 1999, p. 258). As Lehtola (2002, pp. 38–39) states: 'The

Laestadian faith has from its beginning been an important part of Sámi culture. . . . In the strict Laestadian world view, many Sámi found a solution to the difficulties brought by the insecure times'. Laestadianism seems to have been a protest against the official church, although the movement remains inside of the official Lutheran Church and its government. Many Sámi still recognise Laestadianism as their spiritual home (Kulonen et al., 2005, p. 170).

Savio's grandparents encouraged him to create art; it was a good hobby. However, to be an artist was not considered an acceptable occupation. The artist's profession and way of living were considered bohemian and too liberal, which made it suspicious and sinful. After becoming aware of Savio's gifts, Saba encouraged him to try the visual arts. Savio admired his teacher, praised and often thanked him (Moksnes Gjelsvik, 2012, p. 25). Nerhus (1982, p. 39) recalls their relationship:

> These two Sámi art characters were completely different but from the very beginning there was a warm feeling of togetherness. Savio admired his sympathetic and understanding teacher and older friend, and Saba had no lack of admiration and great hopes for his young friend and pupil.

Savio moved to Oslo at the age of 18 and started to study art, partly in school and partly on his own. At that time, the woodcut technique was not taught in art schools in Norway, so he must have become acquainted with it on his own. During his childhood, he had learned to use a knife. Every Sámi boy was taught to make *duodji*, the old, traditional Sámi handicraft. The hard materials of *duodji*—wood, bone and antler—were for men and were decorated by carving with the tip of a knife or another sharp object. Carving was done by drawing a groove or by engraving a hole or dot with the tip of a knife (Kulonen et al., 2005, p. 75). It was quite easy for Savio to engrave wood and lino plates. However, to make art is different than producing practical objects, and Savio began to study the graphic art of Albrecht Dürer, but he was interested in both older and newer graphic art, as well as Japanese wood engraving (Lorck, 2002, pp. 19–21).

In Norwegian art of the 1920s and 1930s, the woodcut was not a popular technique. Only two Norwegian artists, Edvard Munch and Nicolai Astrup, made woodcuts and used relief print techniques, and they became important models for Savio's graphic work. Munch had learned graphic techniques himself, and he studied Japanese wood engraving. He had lost his mother as a child at the age of 5, and later her two sisters passed away. Loneliness, sickness and pain were present in Munch's life and art (Stang, 1980, pp. 31–33, 127–128). Savio had similar experiences in his childhood, so it was easy for him to identify with Munch's themes and expression. Astrup lived most of his life in Jølster village, a local agricultural community. With the exception of a few pictures, his motifs were all from his home region. He began to make colour prints by using only one plate. His art was considered regional or local (Danbolt, 2001, pp. 219–220). Astrup's artworks inspired Savio's interest in graphically depicting his northern home area and the life of local Sámi people. Later, Savio developed his woodcut technique and studied Malcom C. Salaman's book *The Woodcut of To-Day at Home and Abroad* published in London in 1927 (Lorck, 2002, p. 23).

Savio became acquainted with the first Sámi writer, Johan Turi (1854–1936). In 1910, Turi published *Muittalus samiid birra* (*An Account of the Sámi*). In this book with illustrations, he presented a comprehensive and understandable look at Sámi life.

As Kathleen Osgood Dana (2003, p. 201) writes: 'To discuss the Sámi, Turi chose a discourse that effectively forced him to negotiate between dominant Western textual paradigm and the Sámi oral tradition'. Turi (1979, p. 13) had a clear purpose in his book which he stated at the beginning of the text:

> I have thought that it would be a good if there is a book in which had been told everything about Lapp[3] life and circumstances. . . . Everything is twisted for the Lapps when there is trouble between the farmers and the Lapps in Norway and Sweden. In the book everything must be written and explained so that it is clear to everyone. And it will be good for the Lapps themselves to hear the circumstances of the Lapps.

His original intention seems to be to inform the authorities about Sámi life. With his book, Turi showed that art and culture are good tools for changing colonised minds and restoring the sense of self-worth and the dignity of the identified.

Turi's book is unique in terms of both its language and content. It was the first non-religious book written in the Sámi language by a Sámi person. Turi wanted to correct the mistaken ideas about the Sámi and show all the essential aspects of the Sámi people's way of life, such as hunting, fishing, life with reindeer and summer and winter migration. The text of his book is complemented by a picture atlas drawn by him. Turi's pictures have been noted as containing features of traditional Sámi engraving and prehistoric rock art. He depicted people and animals as stylised signs, but he managed to create an authentic atmosphere that captured the essence of Sámi life in his drawings. Later, Turi published more two books and continued to paint until he died in 1936 at the age of 82 (Hautala-Hirvioja, 2014, pp. 15–18).

Turi's illustrations have been evaluated in the canon of Western art history. During the last decade, his art has been reinterpreted in terms of its perspectives on Sámi life. It has been noted that Turi was a great observer. His way of depicting reindeer with small details is considered to be excellent. According to the art history professor Svein Aamold (2017, p. 74), 'The size of their antlers, their calving, or details of the surroundings such as open or frozen rivers and lakes, the presence or absence of snow on the ground, the herders' equipment, etc. are all depicted in Turi's work'. Savio developed his engraving technique to be able to present nature, animals and humans in a detailed and expressive but credible way. Surely, Turi's art encouraged Savio as an artist and as a Sámi.

Landscape and Nature of Finnmark in Savio's Art

Savio also painted with watercolour and oil, but his main technique of making art was the woodcut, and he is known for his relief graphic works. This choice may be due to the Sámi culture, in which *duodji* traditional handicraft is the important cultural mark of identity. Carving or engraving is one of the oldest ways to decorate tools and artefacts. This method was present in Savio's life and is still in use today when a *duodjare*, a Sámi craftsman, decorates hard material, such as bone, antler or wood, to create artefacts (Sunna, 2006, pp. 7–9). I have heard that, for a Sámi boy, a knife was the first gift, and learning how to use it and whittle was the first skill.

A total of 151 motifs or versions are known, according to the Savio Museum (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 14). Of this, only a few are linocuts, while the majority are

woodcuts. His main themes are scenes from Sámi and north Norwegian life, the interplay between humans and nature, and landscapes. There are some landscapes from the southwestern region of Norway because, in 1933, Savio lived for a short time in Trondheim (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 90). Many of his watercolours and oil paintings were destroyed during the Second World War, when the cities Bodø and Narvik were bombed, and at the end of war when the whole of Finnmark was burnt by German troops (Nerhus, 1982, p. 78). Luckily, most graphic collectors lived in the big cities in southern Norway and abroad.

Savio's main motifs were Sámi people in a variety of situations and northern animals with the Arctic and northern landscapes as a background. In addition, the villages, sea coasts with fishermen and their boats, and the fell scenery of northern Norway, but also the mountain scenery of Romsdalen in southwestern Norway, were depicted in his work. Landscape and nature are important and essential for Sámi identity. The modern world with mining companies, tourists and expanding agriculture has challenged the former and traditional lifestyle. There were more and more conflicts between the economies of the majority and minority populations (Hautala-Hirvioja, 2014, pp. 30–31). The traditional Sámi way of life began to change at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Nature and Sámi culture, which had important roles in supporting the identity of Sámi people, were significantly affected by the advance of the modern world.

Finnmark, especially the coastal area of the Sea Sámi culture, was Savio's milieu during his childhood and youth. As a young adult, he lived in the fell area in Karasjok and Tana, and he was acquainted with the way of life of the Reindeer Sámi (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 89). Savio was a cultural insider in Sáminess and the Sámi relationship with nature and land. Despite the fact that Savio lived some years in Oslo and travelled abroad, he always returned to the north. According to Sámi scholar Elina Helander-Renvall (2016, p. 65), 'On their own lands the Sami feel themselves safe and experience a continuation of life through generations. . . . Those places or lands, to which Sami are traditionally connected constitute a home and an important identity marker for them'. The nature of the Sámi has been learned in everyday practice and as part of the community, so there is no difference or contradiction amongst knowledge, actions and values. Thus, no distinction has been made between nature and culture, which is why the Sámi lifestyle is a nature-conscious, nature-sensitive and site-specific nature–culture (Valkonen & Valkonen, 2018, p. 9). It was in this culture that Savio grew up.

According to the traditional Sámi world view, man is not the centre of the universe nor can he stand above nature, but he is part of nature and dependent on it. The relationship is equal and respectful (Helander, 2000, p. 171). For a Sámi person, a landscape is not only an object for viewing or acting upon, but also his companion, such as another person. According to SIIDA National Museum of Finnish Sámi researcher Päivi Magga (2013, p. 11), a landscape is not valued on an aesthetic basis; rather, its beauty and goodness are dependent on its profitableness—a beautiful lake is full of fish, and a beautiful slope is easy for reindeer and humans to walk. A Sámi landscape also includes an invisible and immaterial dimension arising from the Sámi world view. Magic landscapes—sacred places, sites of sacrifice and graves—have connections with religiousness. A mythical landscape conveys stories about the birth of different types of landscape, amongst others. Together, they form a cognitive landscape, which helps humans to interpret and understand a landscape. These experiences have been passed from one generation to another through Sámi oral tradition (Magga, 2013, p. 11).

In Savio's landscape woodcuts, such as *Godveir* [*Fine Weather*], *Forsommer gida* [*Early Summer*] and *Sommer Geassi* [*Summer*], the landscape is beautiful because the weather is good and life after the cold winter is easy. *Miljö I* [*Environment I*] represents harmony between the Sámi and nature, but also reflects the positive connections between two different Sámi ways of living: that of the Sea Sámi and the Reindeer Sámi. Both groups lived in close connection and relation to nature: one was based on fishing and the sea, and the other reindeer and the fells. In the woodcut, the Reindeer Sámi with his dog, reindeer and sled stands on the top of the hill on his way to meet the Sea Sámi by the coast. In the 1920s and 1930s, there was the advent of the existential question in art: What is the meaning of life, and what is the position of human beings? (Danbolt, 2001, p. 230). Savio confronted the same question but from the Sámi point of view: When is a Sámi feeling his deepest existence and harmony? It appears that Savio believed that a Sámi person seemed to be happiest as a part of nature when the weather is good. Sometimes, however, the relationship could be dangerous or require a lot of hard work with reindeer herding or fishing and hunting.

Savio found the ways to describe what he felt were the important places, memories and experiences through his Sámi life and nature, but also through Western art. Artist Nicolai Astrup's regionalism and the examples of his graphic prints encouraged Savio to depict the Arctic and north landscapes, sea coasts and small cities. The strong, expressive and vivid compositions of Edvard Munch's woodcuts influenced Savio's carving and prints. The atmosphere and content of Savio's landscapes and depictions of the villages are unique as in his *Israel Lønbomsplass* [*Israel Lönboms Square*]. The woodcut offers a description of everyday life in Kirkenes drawn from the veranda of the Heimen hotel in 1937. There are also village views from Svolavaer on Lofoten and from Tromsø (see illustrations in Abiel, 1993; Berntsen & Parmann, 1980; Rasmussen, 2005). Savio was an insider as a describer of the identity of these cities and villages. This existential involvement is the most profound kind of sense of place: Savio experienced a place to be his own, and he felt he was a part of the experienced place (Relph, 1986, pp. 49–50). This was a natural outgrowth of Savio having grown up in a home deeply rooted in Sámi culture and the Arctic landscape (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 12).

Sámi and Their Way of Living in Savio's Art

In many woodcuts, Savio depicted scenes and events from everyday Sámi society. The people are in a variety of situations, working in reindeer herding or spending their leisure time playing cards or drinking coffee beside an open fire. The interplay between human beings and nature is a recurrent motif in his artwork, with the Arctic landscape as a background (Gullickson & Lorentzen, 2014, p. 11). In Savio's art, the Sámi have their traditional costumes which are possibly the most important mark of their culture and identity. The costume has been said to be another skin for the Sámi, and it is one of their most distinct symbols. Lehtola (2002, p. 12) states: 'The design and decoration of the clothing differ for each place. From general distinguishing features of the garment, a Sámi traditionally identifies the other's home area and, from subtle differences, even their home village and family'. In earlier times, the Sámi wore their traditional costume every day, but that eventually changed to where they only wore them for their celebrations (Kulonen et al., 2005, p. 53).

The Sámi were often stereotypically portrayed as either an innocent people of nature or as a primitive and vanishing nation, and they were mainly depicted only in terms of being the objects or romantic themes of art and literature. Savio wanted to show them as human beings and depicted their everyday life with both positive and negative emotions such as love, trust, anger, frustration, jealousy, loneliness and hope.

His *Sameganda* [*Sámi Boy*] represents a child in Sámi costume sitting with a reindeer horn, perhaps playing with it and at the same time learning the skills he will need as an adult. In the woodcut *Gandak suopanin* [*Boys With Lasso*], older boys are training to use a lasso, which is one of the most essential skills in reindeer herding. Three boys are running with a reindeer horn on their heads and one tries to rope them. Savio made many woodcuts which showed Sámi working with a lasso. Compositions of these pictures are vivid and full of movement, and even the surrounding landscape and sky add to the dynamic situation. Almost always, there is a dog to help the reindeer herder. Savio also created images of skiing and wandering Sámi, and the Sámi always have a loyal and trusty dog with them. The Sámi families had several dogs to help to take care of reindeer, but they were also treated as friends and even as members of the family.

The landscape with Sámi reindeer herders has been described as an open and unrestricted space surrounding people, animals and the entire culture. A sense of timelessness—but also the past, present and future—exist on the highlands and fells. Landscapes and open spaces are important for the Sámi. Expanses open places and spaces, and the wind moves air, smells, sounds—the presence of life—through these expanses (Bergmann, 2009, pp. 154–155). The woodcuts of the Sámi people in nature with their reindeer or moving from place to place can be interpreted as Savio's intention to show that their livelihood and way of living is closely associated with their special skills and knowledge of nature. According to the curator Sigrun Rasmussen (2005, p. 13): 'In *Gumppet, sápmelas, heargi* [*Wolf, Sámi, Reindeer*], this is shown in the man herding his flock; he is wearing a *kofte* [*Sámi Tunic*] and carries his work tools: knife, lasso, staff and gun'.

With the choice of this motif, Savio wanted to show the versatility of Sámi culture. Of course, he also wanted to represent the reindeer herder's work as an equally important part of life amongst the Sámi people as the life of Norwegian workers and farmers. The Sámi people he portrayed are strong and skilful in their work. In the 1920s and 1930s, the so-called social romance movement prevailed in Norwegian art, and according to this style, the main theme was the handsome, young and strong worker (Danbolt, 2001, p. 284). In addition to his other aims, Savio wanted to challenge the stereotypes and misrepresentations of race theory and to describe the Sámi as anything but deformed, lazy, naive and primitive. He depicted the work of reindeer herders; for example, catching and herding reindeer, or driving away wolves.

Savio also portrayed adult Sámi in their leisure time sitting by a campfire, being friends or being in love as in the woodcuts *To Guoktes* [*The Sámi Pair*] and *Gánda ja Nieida* [*Boy and Girl*]. These two woodcuts appear to be portraits of marriages as the couples are wearing better clothes. Such rites were an important part of community life. However, it is difficult to trace the manners and traditions of old Sámi religious beliefs because of Christian missionising in the 1600s and 1700s. Many old elements continued to survive even until the 1800s, but during that century, they apparently disappeared (Lehtola, 2002, pp. 28–29). The Christian rites of passage which change an individual's social status—such as baptism, confirmation and marriage—became

important ceremonies. In the *Konfirmanter* [*Candidates for Confirmation*] woodcut, two girls and two boys walk towards the church over a wide snowy valley. The confirmation ceremony transformed the youth to adulthood, and new Sámi costumes were purchased for this rite of passage. In his *Kjaerlighet på pinne* [*Love for Icicles*], he depicts two children and a young boy who wants to lick ice. It has been sunny, but the nights are still cold. Yet, the winter has passed, spring is near, the atmosphere is calm and the children are enjoying a simple pleasure of life.

Savio lived his childhood and youth in the village which was highly influenced by the Laestadian movement, and alcohol, playing cards, *yoiking* [singing the Sámi way] and many other things were held to be sins and, they were told, would lead them to the flames of hell. Drinking and gambling were common problems for Sámi and Kven men. Savio clearly depicted such vice in his woodcuts, such as *Aqua vita*, where in the foreground of the composition, two drunk men are walking, empty wine bottles are in the snow and two men shown as black silhouettes are walking away with liquor bottles in their hands; and *Friends*, where again two men with liquor bottles are shown under a full moon lighting the polar night. However, in *Card Players*, he created a scene of summer fun with five men sitting in a circle, where the atmosphere is focused and intense. Savio wanted to show a range of feelings and behaviour in the Sámi and that, as in any group of people, there were both good and bad individuals. There could be deep anger, as in his *Rivaler* [*Rivals*], or deep feelings of inferiority, such as in the woodcut *Sjalusi* [*Jealousy*]. The shapes of both of these woodcuts are sharp and angular, the sky and surroundings are black and the mood is oppressive.

Sometimes, Savio had to deal with his own feelings, especially with his experience of loneliness. He often felt alone, as he represented a double minority: his mother was a Sámi and his father a Kven, and he was a teetotaller who had been educated by his religious grandparents. Savio was not a bohemian artist at all. He did not drink alcohol, he believed in God and he was an outsider in Oslo's art community (Nerhus, 1982, pp. 66, 91). When he was in Finnmark, people felt him to be too educated and therefore avoided him. His own loneliness can easily be seen in his woodcut *Okto* [*Alone*], where the lonely reindeer stands on the top of the hill and the sky behind the reindeer is in flames. A similar atmosphere exists in the woodcuts which represent a lonely and single tree on a windy and rough slope of the fell. Savio used nature to depict and reflect his own emotions and internal spaces of the soul and the experiences of other human beings.

The theme of many of Savio's woodcuts is the wolf: for example, *Gumppet ja bohccot I* [*Wolf and Reindeer I*], *Gumppet, sápmelas, heargi* [*Wolf, Sámi and Reindeer*], *Jompa gumppiin* [*Jompa with Wolf*], where a Sámi is fighting with a wolf and *Badjeeatnamiidda* [*Crossing the Plains*]. The wolf motif has been interpreted to represent the Norwegianisation policy which threatened the life and existence of the Sámi people (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 13). A reindeer is a symbol of the Sámi culture. The Sámi did not accept cultural subjugation, but they continued on with their own lives and culture, as evidenced by taking good care of their reindeer and driving away the wolves. His portrayal of the life of the Sámi people could very well be a sign of Savio's search for his own identity and his desire to make the Sámi visible and strengthen their identity.

In 1934, Savio stayed for some time in Munich and Cologne on his way to Paris, where he lived until the summer of 1936 and possibly studied art (Rasmussen, 2005, p. 90). It had to be a shock to him to realise there was a negative reaction against the art of the German expressionists and Edvard Munch, whom he respected highly. In

1934, Adolf Hitler declared that there was no place for modernism and critical contemporary art, and they were banned in Germany and called *entarte Kuns* [degenerate art]. Those who were identified as degenerate artists were subjected to sanctions. These included being dismissed from teaching positions, being forbidden to exhibit or to sell their art and, in some cases, being forbidden to produce art. Degenerate artworks were eliminated from the German collections and museums, and, for example, 38 artworks produced by Munch were sold off in 1937 (Stang, 1980, pp. 278, 282).

Savio was multilingual: he could speak Sámi, Finnish and Norwegian, and understand Swedish. He had studied English and German (Moksnes Gjelsvik, 2012, p. 29). He had experienced minority contempt and was familiar with the harsh Norwegianisation policy. Visiting Europe in the mid-1930s, he became aware of the Nazi government's actions against art and the racial theories they supported. However, laughter and irony alleviate fear and frustration and add to resilience. Savio had a satirical or ironic attitude against racial ideas when he made the woodcut *Hoppla vi lever!* [*Happy Days!*], where naked Black people dance on the beach somewhere in tropical Africa. Similar to the African tribes, the Sámi were considered as relics and primitives, incapable of intellectual abstract analysis and philosophy. These Aboriginal people were thought to be innocent and unaware, just like happy children.

Conclusion

My main question concerned how Savio used his art as a tool for decolonisation in the 1920s and 1930s, and I attempted to answer it using interdisciplinary research. My research choices proved to be effective, and the Indigenous research offered me the ethical guidelines and tactics for determining my own position in relation to the Sámi culture. Different perspectives on art history—such as the iconological, semiotic and narrative—supported the analysis of Savio's woodcuts and offered historical and societal contexts. Sámi research was a necessity for understanding the way of life and culture of Sámi people. Unfortunately, I have only studied the basics of the Sámi language, and I know only the grammatical structure of the language. Better knowledge of the language would have deepened my understanding of Sámi culture.

The portrayal of the Sámi in Norwegian art has been and remains an exception, and artists have only been interested in depicting fishermen of the Arctic Ocean, the rugged coastline and mountain scenery. Savio was the first artist to focus on portraying the Sámi in Norway. He showed courage in this, and he never took the position that the Sámi were racial victims by selecting them as the subject of his art. Instead, he wanted to prove that Sámi culture was worthy of preservation and further development, and to influence the opinions of the public and get them to feel empathy for the Sámi and their culture. He did this during the early decades of the 1900s. However, at that time, there were also increasing conflicts between the economies of the majority and minority populations—a growing industrial community with increasing class polarisation, dependence on global business and, during the Nordic governments' active assimilation or isolation policies, the awakening activism of the Sámi people.

Savio's artistic work of that time and the political activity supported each other: if Sámi issues had not been discussed, art would not have been discussed, either, and it was important to the Sámi for their art to become more prominent and widely known. Art increased the Sámi people's feelings of solidarity, creating and strengthening their identity. It also made clear that the Sámi were not a primitive relic, but a

people capable of producing culture and art, who had the right to an existence and a language of their own. The critics of his exhibitions were positive. Like the art of his role model Turi, Savio's woodcuts originated from the inside, as they were subjective and expressive.

With his art, he positioned the Sámi as subjects. He depicted Sámi people as actors, not only as anthropologically interesting objects. Even though he died young, Savio showed that a Sámi could become a professional artist and find respect for his art, and that his works could become part of museum collections: in 1994, the Saviomuseet [Savio Museum] was established in Kirkenes. Savio's art is just as important for contemporary Sámi artists. Today, many Sámi artists, such as Marja Helander, Outi Pieski, Máret Ánne Sara and Anders Sunna, highlight in their art the problems of land ownership and fishing rights as well as the effects of climate change on the lives of Indigenous peoples. Anders Sunna described his painting *Colonialism Inc.* (2016, painting, 244 × 600 cm; see Skancke Pedersen, 2016, p. 110):

> In this painting I also want to quote an artist that I looked up to as a child. I inserted the woman from the woodcut *Gánda ja nieida* [*Boy and Girl*] by John Savio. A time travel, but by different means of transport. To move forward you need to have looked back.

Notes

1. The exhibition was taken to Finland, Norway, Sweden and Germany. The curators also edited the exhibition catalogue.
2. The Finno-Ugrian peoples or Finno-Ugric peoples are the peoples of Northeastern Europe, North Asia and the Carpathian Basin. They speak Finno-Ugric languages or languages of the Uralic family. The Uralic languages form a language family of 38 languages spoken by approximately 25 million people. The Uralic languages with the most native speakers are Hungarian, Finnish and Estonian, while other significant languages are Sámi and the languages spoken in Siberia like Erzya, Moksha, Mari, Udmurt and Komi (*Uralilaiset kansat. M.A. Castrén seura*, 2020).
3. Lapp is the old name of the Sámi given by others. The English word Saami refers to all Saami languages, and Sámi denotes the most widely spoken of these languages, North Sámi. Saami is based on the word Sápmi, which exists in all Saami languages and means Saami, Saami language and Saami land (Ranta & Kanninen, 2019, p. 21). I am using the word Sámi, because John Savio spoke North Sámi language.

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