

# 9

## RELATIONAL BODIES OF MEMORY, TIME AND PLACE

Hauntings in salty Camissa waters

*Joanne Peers*

### **Sea-Place<sup>1</sup>**

*A long and far drive, not very often. A hot car.  
Eventually cold clear water; brown bodies everywhere.  
Excited that in Apartheid, I can take my three children to places. Even though  
it's not the whites only beach which we drive past or the whites only tidal  
pool which comes next, it's the lagoon, it is still the ocean water.  
We have a good time.  
I remember the feelings sitting there with you in the water.  
I feel proud of myself for being able to be in the water with my little girl.  
The lycra red costume creeps and carries sand.  
So many houses, no place to stay for the night, we travel back home.  
Sleeping, salty, sandy bodies on the backseat, mending in time.*

In increasing numbers people not classified as White visit Cape Town and its environs. It is difficult for them and even for Capetonians to know where they may go without offending some law or ordinance or regulation. It is even more difficult for them to know where they may go for entertainment, sport, and recreation.

*(Wollheim, 1969, p. v)*

### **Introduction**

South Africa is haunted. Disorderly ghostly matter/s surface, sink and drift in the ocean and shorelines. The sites of Camissa, *Ikhamisa*, translated as “place



FIGURE 9.1 1969/1985/2022. Photo: Joanne Peers' family archive.

of sweet waters”<sup>2</sup>, carry the history of colonisation and apartheid, characterised by segregation and exclusions. Camissa is not separate from global waters and land but always already a part of entangled violence of settler colonialism, land dispossession, slavery, transnational labour exploitation, extractivism and omnicides (McKittrick, 2006; Sharpe, 2016). One of the many violences expressed in law in South Africa was The Separate Amenities Act<sup>3</sup> in 1953 which built spatial borders, separating the land, water and relations between nature and black and brown bodies (see Figure 9.1). The presence of these borders and forced separation is a violent history that continues to wash up in the present and breathes into time, memory and space (Hofmeyr, 2019; Shefer, 2021; Shefer & Bozalek, 2022). Bodies digest, excrete and perspire with memories of colonial histories which forms part of the hydrogeological (Neimanis, 2017). With this in mind, this chapter washes over linear structure and presents a surge of multi-directional waves of time, space and memory. I trace the multiple temporalities that seep into my body through the watery memories of childhood, through my womb as a place of life and labour in my early twenties and into my salty hair. I find myself floating in False Bay, a part of Camissa, as a doctoral student in environmental<sup>4</sup> education. Experiences and inheritances of racism, the folding, unfolding and refolding of time uncover ghostly memories that float around as I pursue my PhD research. Applying a diffractive and hauntological hydrofeminist lens, this chapter surfaces injustices and violence[CE: violences] of the past/present/future through embodied engagements with ocean/s and memory.

## Relational bodies

### Sea-Place

*The spirit hovers over the deep  
What memories sing in the crevices of the surface?  
Where do they go when they rise?  
Who makes the bodies evaporate?  
Who listens to the marks of condensation on skins?  
When does the weight make it re-turn a precipitation?*

*Bodies being pulled, reclassified, removed.  
Dragging waves pulling bodies deep into the darkness.  
Hands stretching but the water doesn't flow over them.  
Breath is taken. The waves demolish the walls.  
These porous skins speak of these questions and tell these stories.  
Bodies erased. Bodies buried under the surface of colonialism.*

*She is 9, she is on a bus, my pa is the conductor, she gets onto the train with her mommy and 3 siblings and all their baggage and watermelon. They are breaking the law.*

*I am 38, I get into my car and I am not breaking the law.*

*I am a stranger, I am asked multiple times "Where do you come from?"*

*She is 9, she can't swim. She doesn't remember the tidal pool wall.*

*I am 38 and I can swim in a pool. I am petrified of the tidal pool wall.*



FIGURE 9.2 Genesis/1957/2018/2022. Photo: Joanne Peers' family archive.

*She is 9, she sits far away from the tidal pool. She is wet. She doesn't stay long because they see her and her family. She is back on the train.*

*I am 38, I stand on the borderlands of the tidal pool where the water meets the wall. I go underwater. I stay and keep going back. I keep swimming towards the wall.*

*The ones we no longer see, they are there and here.*

*They glisten with a saline shimmer.*

*The ones to come are calling.*

*My mommy, my body, more than two bodies*

*I swim because we can't keep drowning.*

My journey in water is wild with fear and misunderstanding and yet I keep finding myself in the ocean. As I struggle to trust the backwash pulling me into the expanse of the ocean, my spiritual sensibilities are awakened. As I notice the skins and wetsuits that speak about my difference, exclusions and access makes my palms sweaty. I am unclear about what to do with my fears and equally feel like the salty water welcomes my embodied complexities and questions (see **Sea-Place**). Do the wetsuits hold the memory of access to salty water for the bodies that have never been separated from the sea? I find it hard to breathe. I search for a place where the noise softens and reveals a map for calmer waters. I turn towards my research hoping I will find a language for the complex stories of bodies, land and water. I read and listen to different concepts and don't find a cognitive grasp or language to write or express my voice or thoughts. As I make way into deep ocean waters, I am taken up by Compostist Feminist scholar Donna Haraway's (1997) development of the metaphor of diffraction. I have heard this word diffraction so many times in reading groups, papers and seminars. In the waves and sensorial world of cold ocean waters, I become attuned to a growing expression of this concept of diffraction. It is gradual and slow.

Haraway (1997, p. 16) proposes diffraction as "an optical metaphor for the effort to make a difference in the world", one which disrupts the practice of making copies of originals and sameness. Diffraction concerns itself with patterns of interference and differences. For Haraway, diffraction records "the history of interaction, interference, reinforcement, and difference" (2000, p. 101). This concept begins to appear between the pattern of the tidal pool wall and the water. Karen Barad takes Haraway's work with diffraction into the world of physics with the bending and changing of waves (2007, p. 80). Continuing in this line of exploring, Barad (2007) argues that, "surfers know this phenomenon well, since they are sometimes able to catch really nice waves on the other side of a large boulder sitting offshore" (2007, p. 80). I have come to experience this myself when I am freediving and I rely on the way that boulders and kelp forests interfere with the waves which creates diffractive patterns. When diving, like in Figure 9.2, I am able to manoeuvre myself so that I travel to shore or to places in the water within the pattern that is created in the meeting of water, light, waves, kelp and boulders. Barad (2007, p. 80) explains this

phenomenon as “literally riding the diffraction pattern”. Diffraction happens when waves of any kind and interference occur under specific conditions. Barad presents a number of other everyday examples, like swirling of colours on a soap bubble, a layer of oil on a puddle of water or even the way that colours change on birds, butterflies or other creatures depending on the observer’s position (2007, p. 80). The phenomenon of diffraction deliberately ruptures and interferes as it performs as waves within the tides of my research process. I come to understand diffraction as reading theory, concepts, bodies, experiences or events through one another.

In the kelp forest the water, kelp, salt, boulders, jellyfish, sand and brittlestars seem to dance diffractively and relationally. In other words, they are not entities or contained bodies alongside one another or bound by physical position or skins but connected across space and time (Neimanis, 2020). Thinking-with Astrida Neimanis (2017, p. 65), I embrace bodies as “neither stagnant, nor separate, nor zipped up in some kind of impermeable sac of skin”. Bodies are vital sites of experimentation “rather than a fleshy container or an essentialized object that can be definitively known” (Fullagar & Taylor, 2022, p. 38). I find buoyancy in Haraway’s (1990, p. 220) question, “why should bodies end at the skin?” Feminist materialist theories and concepts emphasise unbounded and porous fleshy borders which draws attention to sensorial moves and modalities (Sharpe, 2016; Nxumalo, 2020; McKittrick 2006, 2021). These movements include swimming, diving, dancing, researching, stirring, walking, remembering, sweating and painting; movements that contaminate bounded notions of bodies. Bodies are relational beings dispersed, diffracted and materially threaded through one another. Most significantly for my brown porous skin, I am able to breathe using diffraction as a tool to unzip my body as a bounded subject or individual (Judge, 2021; Murriss & Peers, 2022).

I refuse to be zipped up in the in/visibility that accrues to brown bodies and draw on Neimanis’ (2017, p. 63) disruption of the perceived notions of bodies as individual subjects that are ‘zipped up’. I come to notice the entanglement with bodies in relation to difference, loss, wetsuits, access, place, time and memory. My choice not to wear a wetsuit cannot be reduced to a tactile defence as the zipping up of the thick rubbery skin is a closure and form of containment. A tight black costly second skin, pulling over, rolling on my skin, tightening my limbs and pressing my organs. The wetsuit suffocates my skin and restrictively makes me sweat. I am reminded of Sarah Ahmed’s “sweaty concept” which she explains as “one that comes out of a description of a body that is not at home in the world” (Ahmed, 2014, n.p.). With Ahmed, my difficult bodily experiences are a part of the effort and labour that drenches my writing process, especially when tidying up texts and using texts to write bodily stories (Ahmed, 2014). My palms are sweating as I type. My body responds to the wetsuit by resisting its grip and releasing the anticipation of sweatiness because there are too many other sweaty encounters for my brown skin to live through. Researching diffractively breaks the teeth of the zip in its forceful attempts to zip skins of bodies – or at least how Western philosophers have positioned bodies of all kinds: individualised and bounded. The notion of

unbounded relational subjects helps me remember and listen with my skin to the ungraspable entanglements with other bodies. Thinking-with bodies as relational and unbounded has become a method for me to wade through haunted waters and diffraction as a methodology where questions leak and drip to make murky the perceived transparent waters of research. In her PhD research, Judge (2021, p. 45) diffractively opens pores and space for the watery concepts to breathe and together we sediment:

...a world where brown bodies, othered through climates of singularity in the legacies of the anti-black apartheid regime, seek out how to become porous so as to breath better with oceanic multiplicity. This seeking of porousness within climates of breathlessness moves within the trouble of singularity and antiblackness posited by Sharpe, finding ways to world away from the trajectories of singularity. Even in climates of singularity, where the othered ocean is moved toward the black hole of non-life along with othered bodies of blackness, Peers' pores work toward finding breath. This is done through relations within the multiplicity of what is othered by singularity.

*(Judge, 2021, p. 45)*

## Hauntings in salty waters

### Sea-Place

*a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain*

*a time to love and a time to hate<sup>5</sup>,*

*A cold swim with shells under my feet, food in little bakkies in a basket and towel under me. My cup with the etching of my initials JKH under it balances on the tickling grass. The tracing of white salty lines shimmer on my drying skin. My skin is browning more from the rays of the sun. Darker and darker, more golden and more symbolic of its exclusion.*

*a time to keep and a time to throw away,*

*a time to search and a time to give up<sup>6</sup>,*

*Child me: Daddy, why are we here on the grass, why aren't we down there on the sand with the other people?*

*Daddy: It's sandy there. We are better here on the grass because the sand won't get into our food.*

*a time to be silent and a time to speak,*

*a time for war and a time for peace.<sup>7</sup>*

*I am ten, I am 1990, I am coloured, I am not allowed on this sandy beach, I am not allowed in this tidal pool. All around is a time to keep, I did not notice the*





FIGURE 9.3 Before time/2022/1820/1990. Photo: Cape archives.

*time thrown away until years later. This story is multiple; it belongs to more than me.*

*a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
a time to tear and a time to mend<sup>8</sup>,*

Settler colonialism is the system that determines certain bodies as killable and exiles them in chronological time to the past. For Eve Tuck and Ree (2013) these ghosts are not left behind, they are living in the bodies of the present and that continue to move through time in the bodies of future generations. “Settler colonialism is the management of those who have been made killable, once and future ghosts—those that had been destroyed, but also those that are generated in every generation” (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 642). Camissa reminds me that these ghosts are not only human bodies but include tidal pools, houses, rubble, signposts, sandy beaches, railway lines and societies (Zembylas et al., 2020; Judge, 2021; Tuck & Ree, 2013). Ghosts carry the memory of loss and erasure to haunt the world in its materiality. Ghosts are breathing and swirling in the world. Jacques Derrida suggests “hauntology” as a spectral domain where life and death are originally entangled (1994/2006). What vibrates is what might yet have been; imagining possibilities for living and dying otherwise. Hauntology for Derrida (1994/2006, p. viii) is “an ongoing conversation with the ghosts of the past; the aim of this

conversation is to invent a different future rather than fixing the past". The gesture of hauntological thinking offers a thickness to the meshwork of entangled lines and invites us to consider new imaginaries of the past/present/future (McKittrick, 2006; Sharpe, 2016). This concept of hauntology comes into being through the indeterminate relationship between now and then, absent and present, alive and dead. Furthermore, it is embedded in the legacy of living in post-Apartheid South Africa (Muthien & Bam, 2021, pp. 3–15; Judge, 2021). For Tuck and Ree, haunting is "the relentless remembering and reminding that will not be appeased by settler society's assurances of innocence and reconciliation. Haunting is both acute and general; individuals are haunted, but so are societies" (2013, p. 642). The ghosts dance across the borders of linear time; the time to dance and time to mourn is not in sequence (see **Sea-Place**). Haunting lies precisely in its refusal to contain, define or express the closure of a time to speak and time to remain silent. My writing drifts in the salty waters where "social life, settler colonialism, and haunting are inextricably bound; each ensures there are always more ghosts to return" (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 642). Haunting is not focussed on perceptions, or a hope of reconciliation, haunting concerns itself with acts of resistance and resolution. I re-turn to Derrida's assertion that "justice" or "justice-to-come" requires learning from ghosts and in order to do so, we have to be pulled by and open to their voices and receptive to their messages (1994/2006, p. 221). In other words, our "historical expression, oral history, community perspectives, imagination, nuance, and interpretation" with-in Camissa demands a radical listening and responding as an important entanglement to restorative memory (Camissa Museum, 2022). The past and history is not left behind but rather its materiality is felt in our bodies. How then can "learning to live with ghosts" in Camissa, haunted by racial and spatialized exclusions, uncover invisible questions of erasure and displacement and their relations with memory and place (Derrida, 1994/2006, p. viii)? I respond to this question by re-turning<sup>9</sup> to collective memory and remembering what we have been forced to forget.

In Barad's posthumanism, the past is not simply given, and re-remembering is not a subjective activity of the human mind, nor are ghosts only human. Remembering, a dis/embodyed reconfiguring of past and future, is larger than any individual, because past events are neither singular, nor locatable, and leave traces. Memories can never simply be erased, overwritten or recovered, because the past is not "closed" or "finished" "then" bleeds through "now" (Barad, 2018, p. 224). Memory is not a straightforward recollection of the past (Franklin-Phipps & Murriss, 2022). As I wander around in Camissa I recognise the insufficiency of memory defined as being in the past. I collect the ways that articulate and register "fluid, embodied, partial, and shifting" (Davies & Gannon, 2006; Morrison, 1987). All memories don't matter equally in remembering the past, "some people's memories matter so little it's almost as they do not even have them" (Franklin-Phipps & Murriss, 2022, p. 86). The past is not simply given and the act of remembering is not a subjective activity of the human mind. Memory is not a linear record of a



fixed past that can be ever fully or simply erased, written over, or recovered, but we re-member childhoods as an embodied reconfiguring of past and future that is larger than any individual (Barad, 2007). Memory is a pattern of sedimented enfoldings of iterative intra-activity.<sup>10</sup> In other words, it is written into the fabric of the world. Camissa ‘holds’ the memory of all traces; or rather, the world is its memory (enfolded materialisation). I find comfort in memory not owned by me or as a property of mine nor as a property of my parents, grandparents, great grandparents, but as a material condition and written into our flesh and the flesh of other more-than-human bodies (Barad, 2017b, p. 49). Who and what is able to remember? To re-turn? To restore? To breathe, to resist, to undrown? (Gumbs, 2020). I consider these questions in my entanglement with apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. I respond by tracing relations with time, memory, space and the ghosts (human and more-than-human) of South African’s apartheid and colonial past.

### **Bodies of memories**

My interest in imagining different ways of remembering<sup>11</sup> and following ghosts in Camissa has sparked my interest in finding out more about figurations (Bam, 2021, p. 106). In my earlier introductions to figurations, through feminist posthuman scholars such as Donna Haraway, Astrida Neimanis and Karen Barad, I was pulled in by the ways that figurations play de(con)structively with language, speak, describe the world and tell vibrant stories that sounded like the performativity of ghosts. The more I followed the allure that seeped in whenever I was in the presence of figurations in literature, the deeper I sank into the fullness of other features of figurations. I remember the pull and push in similar ways to floating in a tidal pool and feeling the pull and push of waves.

Figurations afford me an opportunity to see theory, practice, creativity and my faith as an ongoing worlding. Figurations are bodies that move, breathe and act beyond human notions of organising matter and bodies into systems (Braidotti, 2019; Haraway, 2019; Neimanis, 2017). Figurations produce other forms of knowledge which float through research and time. When it comes to research, theory does not precede practice or vice versa, but is a form of doing (Barad & Gandorfer, 2021). For Rosi Braidotti, figurations are conceptual beings which do not define the human condition, instead they offer an indeterminate, complex and ongoing process of subject formation (Braidotti, 2019, p. 36). The more I have explored different views and makings of figurations, the more excited I have become about the invitation to think, notice and witness unusual ways of thinking about the world. I swim in watery worlds with Astrida Neimanis and her idea that figurations are alternative concepts or bodies to think with and are present, “semi-formed and literally at our fingertips, awaiting activation” (Neimanis, 2017, p. 5). This does not mean that figurations are in the world waiting to be discovered, instead they arise and come into existence through specific conditions.<sup>12</sup> The material world becomes

more dynamic and entanglements more lively through figurations as bodies or concepts in the world. In my research endeavours figurations have waded into my thoughts, ideas, writing, swimming and making which has created new imaginative and dramatic possibilities for relational research.<sup>13</sup>

Figurations teach me that there is no outside that I can go to in my writing, no way of going outside of a chapter and diving into the next one. Figurations act against the theories of creating organised structures of hierarchical order that place the human above the sea or gender below land or any concept in a linear form. This performative way of writing and creating research lures my body into an unbounded multiplicity of matter, bodies, figurations, language, propositions and visual stories. I am sensitive to the many dynamic moments that absorb into my skin and how I need to continuously think about the bodies reading with and through my writing. Figurations invite themselves into my PhD, speak differently, ask unfamiliar questions and write themselves into existence.

In this chapter, I introduce you, the reader, to the figuration of **Sea-Place**. **Sea-Place** is entangled with Camissa, which includes its people (human and more-than-human), water and land, and cannot be defined by colour, features, race, ethnicity, colonial borders, constructed binaries and boundaries (Camissa Museum, 2022). **Sea-Place** draws on the presence, dynamism and performativity of Camissa as a “common experience of facing and rising above systemic adversity and a range of crimes against humanity—colonialism, slavery, ethnocide and genocide, forced removals, de-Africanisation and Apartheid” (Camissa Museum, 2022). I am implicated in this figuration, in my entangled relation with the water, place, race and bodies in South Africa. I see my implicatedness with **Sea-Place** as a move towards vulnerability through welcoming my personal experiences, theories and memories into writing. Figurations are a form of protest against and a response to haunted knowledges about bodies and historical acts on bodies. With the marks and cracks on my body I dive deeper into forms of response-ability in relation to time, place, memory and research in the chapters that follow. Response-ability means enabling responses and not holding to the idea of making meaning from the outside (Braidotti, 2019; Barad, 2007; Neimanis, 2017). I slow down in the presence of **Sea-Place** as I write with it, in order to keep reading bodies (e.g. my children, dogs, researchers, water, my mommy, supervisor, friends, community) immersed in the performative doings of figurations.

### Sea-Place

*Forced underground, the Camissa River still flows, lingers, burrows and rages, so do the bodies<sup>14</sup>. Flowing below the borders.*

*Neither eagle nor serpent, but both. And like the ocean, neither animal respects borders.<sup>15</sup>*

*“In one spot it was through the agency of the big moles of Camissa [change of term added] that I discovered rather considerable traces on the surface. Their*

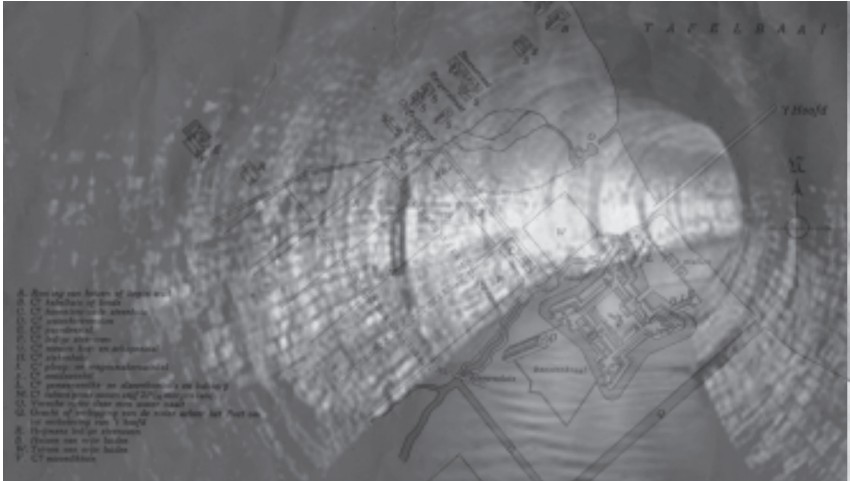


FIGURE 9.4 1900/2013/2020. Photo: Camissa website.

*burrows had undermined the sand everywhere, and each burrow appeared to have contributed in its excavation some chip or flake or shard which spoke of prehistoric occupation.<sup>16</sup>*

*Sandy dunes revealing watermarks and sites of unusual artefacts and occupation. The moles burrowing beneath the perceived land and sea divide and breaking the divide wide open. A breaking of the shoreline or beach and land divide.*

*There will be swarms of living things wherever the water of this river flows. Fish will abound in the Dead Sea, for its waters will become fresh. Life will flourish wherever this water flows.<sup>17</sup>*

*This is **Sea-Place**<sup>18</sup>*

**Sea-Place** continuously dislocates itself from being bounded by sea or place. It cannot be defined in geographical terms or through the movement of the sea. Instead, it is a figuration that moves through the relations of sea and place which includes the material presence of bodies, ghosts, time and memory. Figurations are tricksters in that they blur the lines and boundaries of definitive ways of knowing and thinking-with concepts (Haraway, 1988). The practice of troubling concepts like land and sea is central to this figuration. It dilutes the human-centric knowledge of understanding the world and offers newer forms of thinking about ways of knowing **Sea-Place** as a figuration that moves beyond the humanist organising of matter and bodies into systems so that other forms of knowledge float through research and time (Haraway, 1988; Tsing, 2015; Neimanis, 2017). It is more concerned with the generative relations and less interested in determinate responses to relations.

As a figuration, **Sea-Place** shifts the stable nature of research stories and murkies the singular ways of thinking about the world. As I re-member **Sea-Place** and travel with-in time, a restorying of memory as embodied and unbounded unfolds (Barad, 2017a; Murriss & Kohan, 2021). Memory of racial segregation is a moment in time and at the very same time it lives on forever. The **Sea-Place** stories and experiences cascade and flow through time, which is not about direction of flow but an entanglement of now, then or rather nowandthen. Time in this way is reworked and includes the generations before (not only my parents) and the generations to come (not only my childhood).

**Sea-Place** questions times' measure and participation in the goings on of learning and knowledge and of what stories we tell ourselves about relations. It also disrupts what it means to be a human (or a collective of humans) 'with' memories—moving as a fleshy unit 'in' space and 'through' time (the modernist notion of the self with, for example, individual agency and rights). Instead, living as porous human bodies without bodily boundaries implies that it is impossible to write 'a' history (e.g. of philosophies of time or an autobiography) objectively in the traditional sense as this would involve power-producing dualisms between self and world.

As a relational body, my skin, like **Sea-Place**, is open to absorption and recognising bodies as leaky. As I re-turn to memories and events in time, my brown skin follows. At times my skin is achy and at other times it is wrinkly, on many occasions it feels tender and it reminds me of how present I am within this writing process. The brown colour is an optical metaphor that diffracts with my writing and sensitivities in this process (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 2000). I am opening up the doing, hearing and sensing otherwise of who I am be-coming as a researcher. **Sea-Place** creatively illustrates ways in which my practice of playing and manoeuvring images, narrating dialogues with my parents, responding to scriptures and engaging with theoretical ideas are part of the creative process of be-coming researcher. **Sea-Place** invites different practices and is a part of the research making as it offers a space to make, remake, slow down the rushing of determinate ideas about time, memory and place.

**Sea-Place** and my experience of wild ocean water and exclusions then and now. In the case of forced removals of people, place, space and beaches in Camissa, hauntology responds to the ghosts of apartheid, colonialism, racism, and oppression that haunt our time. The ghosts which I am thinking-with are not only in human relations, but the relations that include other species (rockpool creatures) and places (tidal pools and beaches). These relational hauntings entangle, fold and reconfigure humans and more-than-humans.

### Sea-Place

*"I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb."*<sup>19</sup>

*We park where it is open, no price needing to be paid. We are at the park, we can see the water, hear the sea, feel the amniotic waters. Our skins are prickly*



FIGURE 9.5 2022/Gestation time/1980. Photo: Joanne Peers' family archive.

*with the salty breeze. You are my third, the whole of the street waits to know if you are a girl. Layers of fabric brushing the forming womb. You swim before you breathe.*

the tiny spaces between the words & footnotes  
or the bibliography marked expert scarce the range  
flesh and bone don't work that way  
blood is even more tricky, defiant of historical text  
here at the Cape somebody distilled you down to rape  
managed the magma & roughage transported on rivers,  
seas, across stone and sand to this thing

Coloured

It didn't carry sweet in the name

Coloured means secret

You live in the great sea of old ships with bloody  
secrets chained up in silent memory...

Single stories dirty the air where the lords of history  
have cut-throat passions

Coloured...

Nothing about it came cheap

She is the blood of untimely history  
 is a woman spread legs akimbo across Buuren and  
 Katzenellenvogen, they say  
 She is a devastated monologue on a ghost river tongue...  
 Where water murmurs from the clouds the name, Camissa  
 She is many skins of the ||Ammaqua...  
 Her name is Krotoa  
 Her name is Sarah, Susanna, Pieternella,  
 Johanna, Amosijn  
 Her name is Angola, Timor, China, Mozambique  
 Her name is Ethiopia  
 Camissa  
 is the tides that rolled in from every side of our great mountain  
 and river collecting blood and words  
 from the stone tablet of Hoerikwaggo's Rosetta  
 from Thoathoa to the Keiskamma, over land, over sea  
 to this place  
 come the children of ||Hui !GAeb  
 to unburden their stories from labels aggressive with....  
 this is a story as old as all stories as we shake the devil from our eyes  
 we love, we lust, we birth, we war, we move, we eat, we live, we die  
 this is our story  
 the story of all stories  
 |coab (blood)  
 We are the story<sup>20</sup>.

## Conclusion

Just as the Camissa River was covered over by layers and layers of city superstructure, but still flows vigorously below the surface, so too has been the identity and cultural heritage of the people born of Camissa. But like the river, our hearts beat strong and we are reclaiming Camissa and healing. One of the layers that has weighed heaviest in smothering the real story has been the term 'COLOURED' rooted in colonial and Apartheid racism.

*(Mellet, n.d., n.p.)*

**Sea-Place** is about situating myself in multiple temporalities which enfold, knot, entangle, complexify lines and slow down the very nature of ontological conclusions. Through temporal and spatial diffraction time leaks as I am always moving, swimming, thinking, considering, affecting and being affected which adds disturbances and interruptions in my research journey (Barad, 2007, 2011, 2020). This writing is not a representation of a moment from the past or revisiting **Sea-Place** as a bounded location locked in time. Writing with **Sea-Place** now is not an



event in time but a coming together of voices, stories and memory (see **Sea-Place** above; Heeger, 2021a, 2021b). In order for me to do justice to **Sea-Place** as an entanglement with Camissa I have to listen with my skin as it reads the stories and memories of my mother, poet, scripture, water and ghostly matter. I have to refuse the understanding of concepts of memory, research, theory, family, relationality and response-ability as separate concepts (Barad, 2007; Judge, 2021). This chapter is a performance of entanglements of ocean breeze, thoughts, porous bodies, memories and struggle. I am reminded about the intensity of its performance as the writing forces me to leave the keyboard and rush to wild salty water. I cling to the collection of re-storying of Camissa, the voyage towards greeting the ghosts and bodies who keep the tides from standing still. I feel the lycra red swimming costume, the way it would creep along my sandy skin when it dried in the sun. I wade in the places of oral memories of my mother and strangers to keep me afloat. My faith and spirituality is unbounded and continues to grow in embodied waves, “this is our story | the story of all stories” (Heeger, 2021a, 2021b).

## Notes

- 1 **Sea-Place** is figuration. It is imagined and actually brown. Working within the limitations of black ink on white pages for published books. Running through these restrictions **Sea-Place** bends and leans itself inside the writing of this chapter and presents its form in *italics* and at times in **bold**.
- 2 Camissa, meaning ‘place of sweet waters’, was the Khoi people’s name for Cape Town. The city once had four rivers, including the Camissa River, and 36 springs, all of which were channelled underground and drained out to the sea as the city expanded. **Camissa** is the creolised form of *lkhamis sa*, meaning “sweet water for all” in Kora the Khoe-language of the Cape. It refers to the river that flows from the *!areb* (mountain) *Hurilamma!kx’oa* (rising from the sea – Table Mountain) down to *hurilamma* (the sea) (lamma also means water). This river system has over 40 tributaries and springs. Today the river runs beneath the city of Cape Town. Symbolically, Camissa represents **life** because without water, life cannot be sustained. More generally, *lkhamis sa* is the Kora name used for fresh-water rivers across Africa (2022, Camissa Museum).
- 3 “Amenities such as beaches, parks, playgrounds, recreation halls and theatres which at one time might have been open to everybody irrespective of colour are today segregated and are available for use according to the race of the user” (Wollheim, 1969, p. v).
- 4 Crossing out environmental by putting a line through the text is not about erasing the presence of environmental education rather it draws attention to the categorisation of environmental education as a bounded subject within education.
- 5 New Living Translation (1996, Eccl. 3:1).
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 Karen Barad explains the difference between ‘returning’ and ‘re-turning’ through the familiar visual metaphors of reflection and diffraction. Returning is associated with reflection (how light returns from where it came once it hits the mirror), while re-turning is about diffracting (Barad, 2014, pp. 184–185). Thus, if returning implies a going back in time to what once was in linear time, re-turning in research involves always already being entangled with/in a world that is not at a distance.

- 10 For Barad, intra-action “signifies the mutual constitution of infinitely entangled agencies”, unlike the concept of interaction (Barad, 2007, p. 333). Interaction starts with things in relation to one another, whereas intra-action starts with relations.
- 11 An entanglement of being, becoming, researching, learning, encountering and thinking.
- 12 “All figurations are localised and hence immanent to specific conditions; for example, the nomadic subjects, or the cyborg, are no mere metaphors, but material and semiotic signposts for specific geo-political and historical locations. As such, they express grounded complex singularities, not universal claims” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 34).
- 13 “In some ways a figuration is the dramatisation of processes of becoming, without referring to a normative model of subjectivity, let alone a universal one” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 34).
- 14 The Khoe and the enslaved became the cornerstones of a new creole African population who would, from 1911, be formally classified as ‘Coloured’. Camissa Africans cannot be defined by colour, features, ethnicity, or race but by a common experience of facing and rising above systemic adversity and a range of crimes against humanity – colonialism, slavery, ethnocide and genocide, forced removals, de-Africanisation and Apartheid. Just like the Camissa River was forced underground, so were the Camissa Africans (Camissa Museum, 2022).
- 15 Gloria Anzaldúa (1987, p. 62).
- 16 Gooch (1882, p. 159).
- 17 New Living Translation (1996, Ezekial 47:9).
- 18 Sea-Place drifts beyond the confines of my PhD and this chapter through Judge’s eloquent expansion. Reconceptualising “the notion of linings by reconstructing the human as ontologically unbounded.” I do this through “a description of “seaplace”, wherein [my] “porous brown body” rejects categories of singularity that “haunt” [me] from Apartheid’s racial divisions. Here, seaplace is conceived of and embraced as a zone for entangled bodies that exist through ‘leaking time’, wherein bodies are not silenced as they exist through space, time and matter” (Peers, in Judge, 2022, p. 34).
- 19 New Living Translation (1996, Jer. 1:5).
- 20 Excerpt from Khadija Tracey Heeger’s poem ‘Camissa’ (2021b).

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