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A guiding frame for much of my activism is contending with the juxtaposition of how the world is and how I believe the world ought to be (i.e. just). I also think deeply about how our research practice can create the conditions to get there (i.e. to a just world). Within this process I have found that justice flourishes within frameworks of care, generosity, and a heart-centered approach.¹ These acts of kindness and care are radical within the (settler) colonial frameworks which inform, code, and maintain archaeological practice in most of the world today: a world in which care is coded as unscientific and biased. It is important to recognize that it is precisely in those spaces of care and kindness that transformative practices emerge.² These gestures have the capacity to become healing balms for the many bodies of difference who experience the violence of the institution and academy.

“It is precisely from this audacity to produce, apply, and effect care despite dark histories and futures that its radical nature emerges. Radical care can present an otherwise, even if it cannot completely disengage from structural inequalities and normative assumptions regarding social reproduction, gender, race, class, sexuality, and citizenship.” (Hobart and Kneese 2020)

These are the political stakes of my own practice and are guided by a desire for equity and justice in the world. In order to recognize these inequities, I follow the steps of those before me such as CRT legal theorist Mari Matsuda’s invitation to always “ask the other question” (Matsuda 1991: 1189–1190), indexing the interconnections of all forms of subordination. This means that if we are in a situation in which there is an issue about coloniality, I ask about patriarchy, if there’s an issue about patriarchy, I ask about race, if I am confronted with an issue about race, I ask about homophobia, etc. We must acknowledge that our struggles are linked and they are inherently intersectional.³ By recognizing and acknowledging those linkages, we open up the space to care for one another and work on healing through practice.

These frameworks have always been well informed by anti-racist, anti-colonial/decolonizing, and feminist/queer scholarship. As a social scientist, my queries about the ancient world are not produced in a vacuum, but rather in conversation with those who exist within the spaces where antiquity is a lived experience. This involves acts of translation; it includes the many ways we translate while working with the archaeological record within all of those contexts. In some deep sense, I have found the work of being a translator integral to being an archaeologist. The act of translation creates space for change; this is in contrast to the act of transliteration, which, in most of the Global South, is how archaeology is practiced. Transliteration transfers utterances from the sound of one lexical register to the text of another. The sound of the first remains as a trace, as a holding, as an artifact of where the word/concept/universe came from. We may think of the word *pajama* in English that came from Persian/Urdu or the word *archaeology* in Urdu that came from English (clearly, some transliterations carry more baggage with them). Translation, on the other hand, provides some space for interpretation, for a shift of tone, an amplification of

1 I am using Kisha Supernant’s “heart-centered approach,” in line with theories laid out in *Archaeologies of the Heart* (Supernant et al. 2020).

2 These conversations around archaeology, decolonization and care have been swirling in my mind and world for a while. This is seen in my articles such as Rizvi 2016, 2017.

3 This is also the framework used in the book *Abolition. Feminism. Now.* (Davis et al. 2022). I used this intersectional framework as a guide for *Heritage Practice: The Politics of Race/Gender/Sexuality* (Rizvi 2020).

a different aspect of the same.⁴ That opening, that space is important for any possibility for transformation, which is often the root of our activist claims. Moreover, it is often in those spaces that research questions are formed, and thus inform the episteme of our research.

In addition to the space of transformation, I have found myself thinking a lot about scale, and in this regard have found adrienne maree brown's *Emergent Strategy* (2017) and *Holding Change* (2021), to have within them some key points that are relevant for archaeology in the contemporary moment. I consider these texts invitations to consider reconceptualizing what we have been taught and perhaps to redirect, reimagine, or remind ourselves that there are so many other ways to do the work that we do in the world. In particular, I have found her focus on scale to be of particular interest, in particular the focus on how smaller-scale endeavors resist the capitalist impulse to scale up all the time (brown 2021: 14). Small scale, relation-building projects create the conditions within which radical care can be enacted.

Important also is figuring out how such work can be sustainable over our careers, as such work is a process, a constant, and not an end point. Activism within archaeology must be an ongoing way of thinking, doing, and being with research. This recognition liberates us from the capitalist push within the academy to quickly finish projects and publish results. I prefer to resist that push, slow research down, spend time with materials with care, and publish process. It is important to recognize that the division between "process" and "content" is an artificial division – and for decolonial scholarship, process is content. The lab I facilitate coproduces knowledge in Global South contexts, maintaining at its core anti/decolonial, feminist, and respectful practices through community-based participatory action research. In the Laboratory for Archaeological Visualization and Heritage (LIAVH), we create conditions within which capacity building and transferable skill sets are a part of the research design.⁵ We write about what we do as methodology, theory, practice, and analysis. We are deeply committed to considering alternative ways to do archaeology in a practical sense, as a logistical conundrum. Archaeology is not just about excavation, in fact, we argue that that should be the last resort for knowledge production.

We have followed that model throughout our practice in LIAVH. Rather than follow a colonial extractive model of research, in which we only read and work in order to take and control information, we are in step with the guidance of Kisha Supernant, who speaks carefully about how one must visit with and understand what it means to be in relation to everything around us, seen most clearly in the work she directs through the Institute of Prairie and Indigenous Archaeology. We are also inspired by the practice of Olo Be Taloha Lab, led by Kristina Douglass, and their commitment to inclusive and co-produced research. Our work in LIAVH has also been profoundly influenced by feminist and anticolonial labs such as CLEAR, headed by STS researcher and discard studies scholar, Max Liboiron.⁶ These scientific labs and methods have proven to be spaces of radical care. These spaces provide us with the evidence that science resides in respectful practice, with heart-centered work, and as an anticolonial, feminist practice.

And so what does such activism look like within the (archaeological) academy, and how might we all work towards a different kind of future?⁷ We stand on the shoulders of generations of scholar/activists, and we are part of a growing cohort of folx informed by anti-colonial/decolonizing, anti-racist, anti-casteist, and queer/feminist scholarship. Within this new world of scholarship, how might we hold change and move intentionally through the world of scientific research? Holding change is about an activation of space. "To hold change is to make it easy for people with shared intentions to be around each other and move towards their visions and values (facilitate), and/or navigate conflict in a way that is generative and accountable (mediate)" (brown 2021: 7). And so for me, at this

4 I've written about the significance of the opening of such speculative space in *Archaeological Encounters: The Role of the Speculative in Decolonial Archaeology* (Rizvi 2019).

5 LIAVH makes connections between technology, archaeological data management, and heritage practice. We are a feminist, anticolonial, and antiracist platform focused explicitly on undoing colonial harm through generative, rather than extractive, interdisciplinary archaeological research. See liavh.org (last viewed 2.3.2023) for more information.

6 Max Liboiron's work in Discard Studies is brilliant. But I wanted to take this footnote to enact, as they say, "good relations within a text, through a text." This appears in their first footnote in the 2021 book, *Pollution is Colonialism* (Liboiron 2021). Thank you, Max, for all the work that you do, and everything that you inspire. Thank you, Kristina, and thank you, Kisha. Your labs, practices, and care have influenced and transformed how I work in the world.

7 Given all the work that has happened in the last five years, the future for archaeology in North America is bright. Some of the texts that provide that future-oriented look include: Odewale et al. 2018; Franklin et al. 2020; Flewellen et al. 2021.

moment, the most important thing is to figure out how to hold space and hold change. There is such momentum from our junior scholars and researchers that it is important to find ways to keep this energy centered, and be intentional about how we support their visions of the future. Recently, at the American Anthropological Association meetings (November 2022), in a panel entitled, “Emergent Collaborations: Unsettling Archaeology and Radically Reorienting the Discipline,” we saw some of these new worlds that are being made, how they were supported, and how they supported each other, and it was truly beautiful. It had some of us in the audience in tears. As time has passed, I recognize that the language, vocabularies, concerns, and ways forward have shifted. I am not claiming the wisdom of being an elder, but I am saying that I can see the wisdom in creating the space and support for those who are building new just worlds, rather than insisting that they live in the one we created. And perhaps that may be the most radical gesture of care we can make within archaeology.

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