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A Necromantic Hauntology of the Void in the Canary Islands: In/Re-Surrection

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ABSTRACT. My wrestling with (not) belonging, which started almost a decade ago with my arrival to Aotearoa/New Zealand, was prevalent during my re-turn (Barad, 2014) to my birthplace, the Canary Islands, seeking to revive my connections to the land, its histories and its/my Indigeneity. My engagement with te ao Māori ('the Māori world') was essential to (re)connect with the whenua ('land') in a way I had never done before, as an ancestor, cradling (non-)descendants of the Indigenous Canarians (see Ramirez & Pasley, 2022; Ramirez, 2024). The im/possibilities of the in/determinacy of Canarian Indigeneity's nothingness/openness (Barad, 2012) require an engagement with our Indigenous Canarian inheritance beyond Western thinking. While questions that emerged during my re-turn produced more questions, my travels also offered strategies to move forward. Developing a Canarian onto-epistemology is imperative not only to decolonise the Canary Islands but also to save what is left (cultural and (hi)storical preservation) and save the whenua (from unstainable tourism). This begins with initiating necromantic hauntological practices of the void to 'heal' wounds left in the Canary Islands by colonisation and subsequent colonialities. The *pasados que (nunca) fueron y futuros que (nunca) pueden ser* ('pasts that were (not), futures that can (never) be') that materialise in the current culture, language, peoples and institutions (legal and educational), revive and reconfigure my relationship to the land, its histories and its/my Indigeneity. A process of in/re-surrection started. It is now that I am un/becoming Indigenous.

Keywords: Canary Islands; guanche; Indigenous Canarians; coloniality; te ao Māori; hauntology

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> How do I learn my whakapapa ('genealogy') if I do not have my elders, my reo ('language')? And, also, how do I get to know the stories of my own ancestors? Who do I turn to? (Dunn, 2022)

Preludio | Prelude

This manuscript presents key realisations from my travels around the Canary Islands, Gran Canaria and Tenerife, which catalysed critical developments in my journey toward un/becoming Indigenous (see Ramirez & Pasley, 2022). *Huesos* ('bones'), a waiata ('Māori song'), *las islas olvidadas* ('the forgotten islands'), im/posibilidades ancestrales ('ancestral im/possibilities'), prácticas necrománticas ('necromantic practices') and *Indigenismo canario* ('Canarian *Indigenismo*') each demanded what I have come to call *necromantic hauntological practices of the void* (Ramirez, 2024), resurrecting the spectres of *pasados que (nunca) fueron y futuros que (nunca) pueden ser* ('pasts that were [not] and futures that can [never] be'). These techniques of revival emerged from my diffraction of Barad's (2017) void of im/possibility, which speaks to how certain realities are rendered (at least temporarily) impossible by histories of in/justice and Derrida's (1994) hauntologies, which acknowledge that each moment is entangled with all other im/possible pasts and futures (Ramirez, 2024). The Indigenous wairua ('spirit') that lives in the whenua ('land'), whānau ('family'), whanaungatanga ('the cultivation of extended family-like relationships'), languages spoken in the islands and cultural practices were rendered tangible, offering up the possibility of *in/re-surrection*. The simultaneity of this *in/re-surrection* speaks to the persistent colonialities, the haunted nature of (not) belonging as Canarians and the decolonial strategies employed to resurrect the ghosts of future pasts and reclaim our Indigenous ancestry.

As I have described in earlier works (Ramirez, 2024; Ramirez & Pasley, 2022), this journey would not have been possible without my engagement with te ao Māori ('Māori worlds') in Aotearoa/New Zealand and remains essential in my ongoing wrestling with what it means to (not) belong to my birthplace, its colonial history and my ancestry. Significantly, the struggle to form my pepeha ('Māori introduction') sparked within me a conflict with my Spanish identity and the colonialities I inherited as a Canary Islander. I reiterate my eternal gratitude to te ao Māori, which provided me with a new paradigm that disrupted my colonial indoctrination, offering strategies for decolonisation. Subsequently, throughout this piece, I use te reo Māori ('the Māori language') to name vital concepts, as te reo is fundamental to te ao Māori. Furthermore, my travels and encounters summoned an oral tradition of knowledge transmission and exchange as a way of honouring ancestral Canarian practices. These traditions continue to be upheld through the names, narratives and essences of everyone involved, which are woven into the text.

Huesos | Bones

Las lágrimas que brotaron sin control al ver el trato a los ancestros las sentí como puñaladas, gota a gota, mientras desgarraban la fina piel de mi alma desangrándome de impotencia y pena…. Déjenlos descansar, repetía….

My account begins with the overwhelming full-body affect I experienced as I looked at what colonial 'scientific' extractivism (Todd, 2016) has reduced to 'human remains,' bones. While my initial reading had fuelled my indignance at the injustice of colonial violence (Ramirez, 2024), bearing witness to it in person stoked my rage. All I could see were ancestors: 'My sorrows welled up irrepressibly, stabbing like wounds. Witnessing the treatment of the ancestors, I felt the tearing of the thin skin of my soul, draining my blood from impotence and pain.… Let them rest, I repeated again and again.' This approximate translation fails to recreate the full extent of the emotions in my original Spanish expression, as is often the case with translation. Likewise, my written sentiments in English are limited as whatever part of my brain connects to my ancestors' spectres is not mediated by this foreign tongue. I am grateful for the help of Dr Kerry Manzo,89[1] without whom this approximation would not have been possible. Dr Manzo's engagement with the work of Gloria Anzaldúa – a Chicana lesbian feminist writer, theorist and activist from the United States of America – allowed him to channel the pain I was expressing in Spanish.

My re-turn to the Canary Islands confirmed my fear that museums in the Canary Islands are not simply haunted by the past/futures that were/will never be. Instead, they reproduce the Western obsession with archiving and displaying human remains, reducing bodies to artefacts, as if these were objects intended for scientific knowledge and learning. This visceral response compelled an array of questions: Even if they emerged from an era of morbid colonial curiosity, why must they remain on display once 'studied'? What learning does staring at human remains offer? Why am I the only one (in proximity) who seems to find this disturbing and disrespectful? Why are these remains not allowed to be returned to their original resting place or at least to a sacred resting place? Preservation and deprivation, linked by a common suffix (-ation, to enact a state of), call attention to how maintaining colonialities requires the ontocide of the Other forced into existence under erasure (Warren, 2017).

Echoing other postcolonial territories (Piñón Escudero, 2020), Canary Islands museums are positioned as places of 'learning' about the past and those before us.

However, this is limited to biological, genotypical and archaeological archives of Indigenous Canarians, telling an incomplete account of those who once lived on the land, based on 'stories from the perspectives of the curator, researcher or explorer, and not the expert community members' (Macdonald, 2022, p. 9). Canarian children go to museums to learn about the ancient inhabitants of the Canary Islands, removed from the possibility that this might entail connecting with their ancestors or understanding their ancestral ties to the islands. Instead, employing scientific and anthropological lenses, the Western narrative severs observers from the possibility of understanding themselves as descended from or connected to these bodies. To add insult to injury, one of the museum stores sells children's t-shirts, adorned with cartoon versions of the skulls and other human remains, as merchandise, embodying the twisted entanglement of Modern/coloniality and the capitalist realities it birthed (Quijano, 2000).

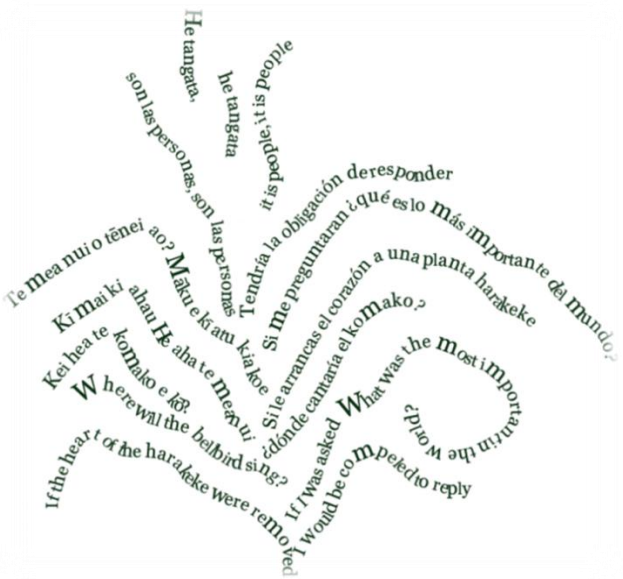
In line with Macdonald (2022, p. 15), decolonisation entails 'a collective practice…, a community effort …[that] must be led by the wants and needs of the community.' Therein lies an opportunity to not only Indigenise the histories of the Canary Islands but to foster Canarian onto-epistemologies (Ramirez, 2024), offering alternate futures for new generations of Canary Islanders through the revitalisation of relations with these pasts. To afford this, it is imperative to 'acknowledg[e] coloniality in museums [and] therefore assume that decolonisation is an ongoing process that involves restitution and rehumanisation' (Brulon Soares & Witcomb, 2022, p. 1). Ancestral ties are essential for the Canary Islands to rekindle connections with Indigenous stories and the whenua; therefore, archaeological and anthropological praxes in the Canary Islands need to be Indigenised (Farrujia, 2014). Moreover, these changes must be embodied in museums, ensuring manaakitanga ('practices of care') for past, present and future Indigenous worlds.

Weaving Myself, Indigenous Histories and Ancestors through Waiata

The ongoing inculcation of new generations/descendants into the sanctioned ignorance (Spivak, 1999) around Indigenous Canarians, from whom all present-day inhabitants of the islands inherit their worlds, lies at the heart of the infuriating state of in/determinacy of my identity as a Canary Islander. This wrestling with (not) belonging sparked profound discussions with Taituwha King,[2] whose work is dedicated to the revival, preservation, reclamation and perpetuation of te ao Māori. Our conversations were essential before my travel to the Canary Islands, as they helped me understand my positionality, helping me understand myself in relation to te ao Māori, the Indigenous heritage of the Canary Islands and my role as an ancestor, including the legacy I want to leave behind. After listening to my struggles, Taituwha talked to me about the waiata (song), *Hutia Te Rito*, which embodies mātauranga Māori ('Māori knowledge') in relation to whakapapa ('genealogy') and whānau ('family').

Hutia Te Rito explains that the plant survives when you remove the lower leaves (tupuna) of the harakeke ('flax') plant, which embody the grandparents or

ancestors. The plant will also survive when you remove the middle outer leaves (‘awhi rito’), embodying the parents. However, if you remove the plant’s core – the young shoot (rito) that embodies tamariki (‘children’) – the plant dies. This waiata resonates with the Indigenous heritage of the Canary Islands because Canarian children continue to be denied knowledge of (how they are connected to) the histories of their ancestors, which impedes the re-generation of Canarian identity. Taituwha’s response to my struggle was to gift me the privilege of singing ‘Hutia Te Rito’ until I find a waiata for my ancestors. I provide a visual representation of how this waiata exists in my mind, like a harakeke plant, through te reo Māori, Spanish and English, weaving the spectres and haunted histories of the different worlds these languages express. This visual representation was inspired by Manal El Mazbouh’s[3] depiction of Maya Angelou’s (1978) poem, *And Still I Rise*, using a website for visual poetry[4] to give it the shape of a tree.



This waiata helped me ask questions, even though I knew I would not always find answers. Where would the bellbird (*Anthornis Melanura*: ‘mielero maorí/campanera de Nueva Zelanda’) sing if the heart of the harakeke plant was removed? Where will the memory of the Indigenous Canarians go if the heart of our heritage (the descendants) does not learn, forgetting the Indigenous histories of our whenua? It will be forever lost. This is why, as an ancestor, I need to (re)imagine ways to foster connections with *pasados y futuros* (‘pasts and possible futures’), understanding the responsibilities of borrowing the future from my descendants. This connection goes beyond ‘“land” as location and property [referring to] a relationship with the ancestors and the land that goes beyond geography and humans (living or not)’ (Ramirez, 2024, p. 20). Prior to my re-turn to the Canary Islands, I

was actively trying to find ways to embrace my in/determinate identity to decolonise my 'haunted self.'

The essential role of te ao Māori was reinforced during my visit to the Canary Islands, enhancing my wrestling with (not) belonging and making evident how my 'origin and identity have been rendered indeterminate by coloniality' (Ramirez, 2024, p. 16). Being in/part of the whenua guided my continuous decolonising process by (re)connecting and (re)planting my whakapapa ('ancestry'), resurrecting the ghosts of Indigenous Canarian ontologies that haunt the current culture(s) and different Canarian varieties of Spanish (Ramirez & Pasley, 2022). The indeterminacy of the identity of Canary Islanders might be a permanent characteristic unless the future generations are consciously cohabiting with and connecting to the land and our Indigenous heritage. These descendants of/in the whenua also require understanding the importance of preserving and communicating our Indigenous heritage to the new generations. They must acknowledge their responsibilities as future ancestors pursuing to provide a possible future for those to come. We need children to know who they are in relation to the Indigenous histories and stories of the Canary Islands; otherwise, where will the bellbird sing if the heart of the harakeke plant is removed?

Im/Posibilidades Ancestrales | Ancestral Im/Possibilities

When this research project was still in its infancy, I started to (re)connect with the whenua through conversations with my whānau ('family, community'). In a serendipitous way, which I called 'ancestors' paving the way,' Amanda Siworae,[5] a photographer, artist and friend, introduced me to one of her family friends, Enrique Vivancos Sola.[6] Enrique is an example of an elder from/in Tenerife who is committed to preserving what is left in the Canary Islands. What is left encompasses the (im)material remains and histories of the Indigenous cultures and peoples of the Canary Islands. He still travels throughout the Canarian archipelago, giving conference talks and sharing ancestral knowledge. Once Enrique learnt about my journey back to the islands, he opened his home to me and organised walks to see carved rocks by *guanche* (Indigenous Canarians from Tenerife). Over several encounters, he provided me with historical and ancestral knowledge and *guanche* rituals.

Throughout our walks, I could (re)imagine and (re)take the steps taken by Indigenous Canarians centuries before. Time stopped: there was no past, present, or future, yet all time was simultaneously interconnected. There was me, the whenua, rangi (sky) and everything in between, including the spectres of those who were (not) before me and those who will (not) be. Indigenous Canarian ancestral knowledge and wairua became intelligible, travelling backward into the future, where ancestors and descendants lived in the physical and spiritual worlds (Rameka, 2016, p. 395). Te ao Māori provided a lens that allowed me to see through the colonialities I had inherited. The in/re-surrection within had started, and I started to actively engage with my haunted identity, the spectres in/of the land, the

colonialities that haunt and endanger the Indigenous wairua and the multiple ways I imagined resurrecting the ghosts of future pasts to reclaim our Indigenous ancestry.

The lines in each one of the carved rocks not only represent what their authors intended but also all the *pasados que (nunca) fueron y futuros que (nunca) pueden ser* ('pasts that were (not) and futures than can (never) be'). Although Indigenous Canarian ancestors were erased through death and assimilation at the hands of *conquistadores*, for those of us engaging with the indeterminacy of our 'Canarian' identity, their carvings are reminders that the void we were left with is not empty – 'it contains what could have been but was not' (Ramirez, 2024, p. 12) – however, through sanctioned ignorance, silence and neglect, our ancestors' last intelligible and tangible traces are exposed to further erasure.

My commitment to being a good ancestor and descendant compels me to find ways to protect what remains despite the passivity and ignorance of politicians who are not doing anything to protect the last Indigenous ancestral treasures in Tenerife. My re-turn and (re)connection involved learning about and participating in ritualistic ceremonies adapted to present times, asking Tenerife and ancestral wairua to guide me towards finding means to save what is left.

The *im/posibilidades ancestrales* ('ancestral im/possibilities') present a means to imagine the whakapapa of Canarian Indigeneity and the first ancestors who arrived on the islands. The multiple theories about the origin of Indigenous Canarians, speculating whether they had the technology to navigate and whether they arrived voluntarily or were abandoned in the islands, are examples of ancestral im/possibilities. For example, when discussing a photo of a carved rock in Almogaren de Cuatro Puertas, Gran Canaria, he explained that the carving resembled Arabic, which suggests the presence of Arabs or Morisco slaves the Spanish brought to the islands. When I showed the image to Manal, I asked if the carving looked like anything in Arabic. She indicated that it somewhat resembled the word لبنان Lubnān, Lebanon; however, without the dots, it was not possible to confirm. That made me speculate on the early contacts of Indigenous Canarians with Phoenicians, (re)imagining ancestral im/possibilities of connections between the Phoenician heritage of

Lebanon (Kaufman, 2001) and that of the Canary Islands. However, as Enrique (personal communication, 2024) says, 'unless there are proper studies about this carving, all we can do is hypothesise.' Such speculative imaginaries are necromantic practices, invoking spectres, affording a dwelling with the haunted histories of the islands and enabling a continued search for understanding, keeping Canarian Indigeneity alive.

Las Islas Olvidadas | The Forgotten Islands

'[T]he history of the Canary Islands and their Indigenous heritage is largely left out of African histories (reduced to a strategic location for European colonisers) as well as the critical role in the history of the Americas (both in terms of enabling colonisation and the Indigenous Canarians as slave labour).' (Ramirez, 2024, p. 19)

Prior to my re-turn to the Canary Islands, I spent a month in Chile as part of an educational exchange and opportunity to connect, which not only provided me with the chance to resurrect the Indigenous histories of the Canary Islands but also introduced me to Taituwha and Dylan Verdonkschot. During my travels through Chile, it became evident that the Indigenous histories of the Canary Islands are not known to those I engaged with. After my talks, people from the audience approached me, surprised and horrified at what happened in the Canary Islands and their subsequent unfortunate role in the atrocities in Abya Yala ('America') and Alkebulan ('Africa'). Despite this lack of knowledge, the close ties of the Indigenous Canarians with Abya Yala are evident through shared surnames, still haunting descendants in the American continent (García-Talavera Casañas, 2016).

Despite the problematic 'biologising narrative' (McKittrick, 2021) of blood quantum to 'measure Indigeneity' (TallBear, 2013), DNA testing has resurrected the histories of the forgotten enslaved Indigenous Canarians who were taken to the 'new continent.' For example, Anthony Ramos, an actor and singer from the United States of America, recently discovered that his 15th great-grandfather was a *guanche* (an Indigenous Canarian from Tenerife) enslaved by Fernandez de Lugo, a Spanish conquistador, and taken to Abya Yala. Ramos learned about this important aspect of his heritage thanks to the show 'Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr' (PBS, 2024). While TallBear (2013) astutely recognises that investing in blood quantum in these ways reinstitutes colonial orders, these resurrections illustrate how the ethics of these complicated dynamics cannot be

determined outside of relations. However, resurrecting Canarian Indigeneity must extend beyond blood quantum because '[b]lood will not resurrect [Indigenous Canarian] ghosts' (Ramirez, 2024, p. 11). The attempted erasure of Indigeneity in the Canary Islands means that reclamation of what was is limited. Instead, we must use what remains to foster new ways of knowing and being with the islands and their (Indigenous and colonial) histories to un/become Indigenous.

My conversations with most Canary Islanders I interacted with were discouraging because they barely knew the islands' histories and the complexities of our heritage. Most repeated the same narrative – that assimilation meant there is 'no one left' – trapping Canarian Indigeneity in the past (Ramirez, 2024) while disabling connections to those pasts. Ironically, they would assert such 'Truths' while possessing an Indigenous Canarian name, dwelling in an Indigenous Canarian-named town, or partaking in an Indigenous Canarian cultural practice, such as eating *gofio* (a flour made from roasted/toasted grains). It was particularly discouraging (and frustrating) listening to how their sole identity was often reduced to European/Spanish heritage, disregarding or refusing to engage with the fact that they were born in African islands, which bear a brutally colonised past.

Interestingly, walking through the whenua, I also found what I read as *narrativas de resistencia canaria* ('Canarian resistance narratives') in the form of graffiti, Tamazight (the North African Berber language) and Indigenous Canarian symbology, which open portals to reclaim ancestral ties to our African and Indigenous heritage. Salmond (1984) explains how, in te ao Māori, taonga ('treasures') collapse (distance in) space-time, connecting pasts, presents and futures, fusing ancestors and descendants, not unlike the necromancy I was invoking to resurrect Indigenous histories.

Music also offers a means to reclaim and reconnect with the African heritage of the Canary Islands. Arife ⴰⵔⵉⴼⵉ, *calima* ('haze, intense heat') in Tamazight, is a band seeking to foster unity across the *pueblos* Imazighen (Imazighen communities and peoples), including Indigenous Canarians, as we are connected geographically and historically, sharing common roots as *pueblo* Amazigh (Amazigh peoples). Their music is a fusion of languages and folklore from the Canary Islands, Sahara and Morocco. Through their music, they raise the memories of our elders, weaving our Indigenous Canarian heritage into the experiences of the new generations of Canarians. Their song, *Arife* (2022), reminds us of the ongoing life of struggle and sacrifice that Canarians have endured. We are reminded that our ancestry is all over the world but that we have forgotten our African origins:

El tiempo fue trabajo y la historia supervivencia,
no hubo frontera para el isleño hicimos el viaje de vuelta.
La isla se hizo grande aunque nunca fue pequeña,
repartida por el mundo está nuestra descendencia.
Trajimos y llevamos de la costa al desierto
todo aquello que era nuestro hoy ni lo recordamos.
Solamente lo más viejos lo recuerdan con anhelo.
Una vida tan sufrida que vivieron como un sueño.

Arife ⴰⵔⵉⴼⵉ (2020) opens and closes the song with two messages: We travel like wind and *calima* ('haze')/We make history with/through our hands:

Zund aḍu d urifi nkkni nmmudda.
ⵣⵓⵏⴷ ⴰⴹⵓ ⴷ ⵓⵔⵉⴼⵉ ⵏⴽⴽⵏⵉ ⵏⵎⵎⵓⴷⴷⴰ
Viajamos como el viento y la calima
Nskr amzruy s ifassn nnɣ.
ⵏⵙⴽⵔ ⴰⵎⵣⵔⵓⵢ ⵙ ⵉⴼⴰⵙⵙⵏ ⵏⵏⵖ
Hacemos la historia a través de nuestras manos.

The ghosts of futures past are resurrected, calling into being what could have been if the Canary Islands had not lost its language(s).

Likewise, employing digital technologies, several Canarians have engaged with our African heritage, creating content that helps viewers connect with the physical and cultural similarities between Africans and Canarians. For example, traditional costumes from different Canarian islands closely resemble those of Morocco, Argelia and Tunisia. Similarly, @nacioncanaria (2023) partook in the celebration of Africa Day (May 25) by using Tifinagh (alphabet for Berber languages) in their comment: Feliz Día de África ⴰⵙⵙ ⵏ ⵜⴰⴼⵔⵉⴽⵜ ⴰⵏⴰⵎⵎⴰⵔ, accompanied by Felo Monzón's (1933) painting, *Mujer con Gánigo*, which depicts the African and Indigenous heritage of the Canary Islands.

The *narrativas de resistencia canaria* exist in tension between having always existed and their ongoing attempted erasure. However, resistance appears to have

gained momentum in response to the socio-political struggles Canary Islanders are experiencing in the face of unsustainable tourism, affecting the local population economically and socially and damaging the whenua. A desire for independence from Spain has been awoken in some Canary Islanders who criticise, among other things, the unaffordability and inaccessibility of housing and other social resources/ services because of unsustainable tourism (Rubio, 2024; Vega, 2024).

These sentiments are compounded by stereotyping and prejudice towards Canarians and the Canary Islands from the continental Spanish population (León Álvarez, 2021; Molina, 2024), fuelled by racialised narratives that denigrate African association and propagate the colonial fiction of European supremacy (Quijano, 2000). Furthermore, ignorance around Canary Island histories is perpetuated structurally in various ways. For instance, 52.9% of teachers who have passed the public exam and were assigned a teaching position in the Canary Islands are non-Canarians (Artiles, 2024). Non-Canarian teachers' lack of knowledge of local histories and failure to engage with the cultural practices means that new generations

cannot access these important situated knowledges. Moreover, the imposition of non-Canarian accents, coupled with the denigration of non-dominant dialects, endangers the Canary Islands' variety of Spanish. These dynamics need to be understood as part of broader processes of (re)colonisation of the Canary Islands by Spanish and European tourists.

In 2000, the iconic Canarian Hip Hop and R&B band *Soul Sanet* ('brother,' in Indigenous Canarian, *guanche*) released the song *Llámame por mi Nombre*, which retells the story of the islands, recalling the struggles of our ancestors, the Indigenous Canarians. This song exemplifies necromantic practices whereby, as descendants and ancestors, we can draw upon (partial) histories to explore the void maintained by coloniality in the Canary Islands and its im/possibilities. The song begins by telling us it is a chant for the survival of what is left of the Indigenous Canarians and their language(s): 'Esto es un canto a la supervivencia de lo que queda de una raza, de una lengua.' There is an emphasis on learning about the battles against the conquistadors, fallen kings, enslaved people and the lost and conquered language: 'Enseña la historia, escucha lo que cuenta la leyenda sobre una tierra que un pasado encierra. Testigo del caído, del rey vencido, de raza esclavizada, lengua olvidada y conquistada.' *Soul Sanet's* (2000) lyrics implore us to return to our ethnicity and strength as islanders and to remember and appreciate the bravery of our ancestors. We are asked to fight for the echo we can still hear of the *mencey/guanarteme* (the Indigenous word for 'king' in Tenerife and Gran Canaria, respectively) who did not submit to the Spanish, ending his life by jumping off a cliff.

Esta es mi casa,
Esta es mi raza.
Regresa a la etnia, a la pura, a la fuerza isleña,
a la altura, presa de orgullo, hermosura.
Lección de bravura, de corazón, bendición,
remedio y cura de maldición.
Lucha por el eco que aún se escucha,
del Rey insumiso que murió, que al barranco saltó.

We are also asked to renounce being captive (just like the king) and to resurrect the Indigenous peoples, maintaining what survived forever. This image of resistance by the Indigenous Canarian King and our duty to remember forever resonates with Rewi Maniapoto's 'Ka whawhai tonu mātou, Ake! Ake! Ake!' ('We will fight on for ever and ever!') during the land wars in the 1800s in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Rewi Maniapoto, from the Ngāti Paretekawa hapu (sub-tribe) of Ngāti Maniapoto, was a leading supporter of the King Movement, and, '[a]lthough he may not have spoken these words at Ōrākau, his attitude to the British invasion was well known' (Henare, 1990).[7] Hoskins and Jones (2021) highlight how this speaks to the fundamentality of maintaining ongoing relations in the face of injustice.

We must be proud of our heritage and the Indigenous blood that flows through our veins: 'Orgulloso de mi raza y de mi descendencia, sangre aborigen fluye por mis venas' and remember that it depends on us as Canary Islanders. The Indigenous

soul/identity does not disappear: 'de ti depende que el alma guanche no cierre sus puertas.' Indigenous wairua is still alive in mundane practices (Ramirez, 2024; Ramirez & Pasley, 2022), such as the Indigenous Canarian names that *Soul Sanet* (2000) invoke – *'Ruimán, Acaimo, Ayoze, Guacimara, Yaiza'* – as the saviours of our Indigenous language. Every time this song plays, it performs a ritual that invokes the spectres haunting the Canary Islands. The line 'Mi vida y mis costumbres, mi sangre dividida. Mi tradición, mi nombre, mi identidad perdida' (my life, my customs, my divided blood; my traditions, my name, my lost identity) resonates with my wrestling with (not) belonging. However, there is a shared longing for understanding who we are as Canary Islanders, ongoing and growing.

This song also resonates with the work of Robe L Ninho, a Cuban rapper, cosmetician and director of *Barber's Street Cuban Hip Hop*, who has recently released a track entitled *Cimarrón* (Robe L Ninho, 2024) as part of his album, *Negro Transparente*, reflecting on the black history of Abya Yala. This song provides a critical and explicit account of the atrocities carried out by the Spanish conquistadores against the Indigenous peoples of Abya Yala and the Africans they enslaved, including how they rebelled and fought back:

1492 ¿Qué pasó? Que, a Abya Yala, Cristóbal Colón llegó
con la banda de ladrones y asesinos genocidas,
violadores y secuestradores que lo acompañó.
A su arribo la vigencia de nativos presenció,
y en guerreros aborígenes resistencia encontró.
Los esclavizó, masacró, casi los extinguió
para después salir diciendo que América descubrió, ¡tan hipócrita!
Al esclavista esto no le bastó, y así a África el genocidio extendió.
Africanos secuestró, trasladó, como animales vendió,
pero el negro se le reveló y las cadenas rompió.

The song retells the story of the events that led to the founding of San Basilio de Palenque, Colombia, the first African free town in Abya Yala, about 200 years before its independence from Spain (Lema & Fernández, 2023). The founders of San Basilio de Palenque were slaves who ran to and hid in the mountains: 'voy pal monte, río arriba, contra la corriente … soy un cimarrón y me voy pal monte.' This echoes the story of those Indigenous Canarians who retreated to the mountains to survive and not assimilate to the Spanish rule. Their isolation preserved some Indigenous Canarian language and cultural practices/customs (Pérez-Camacho, 2019). Likewise, the spectres of the *muiscas* in Colombia were invoked and weaved in my conversations with Carolina Peña[8] when the histories of our Indigenous peoples connected in their survival because they ran away from the colonisers to the mountains.

Robe L Ninho's (2024) song is also an example of how the Canary Islands are the *Las Islas Olvidadas* ('The Forgotten Islands'), left out in a song that talks about the same colonial power that oppressed and destroyed peoples from Abya Yala and Africa (including the Canary Islands). 'Al esclavista esto no le bastó, y así a África

el genocidio extendió, africanos secuestró, trasladó, como animales vendió,' draws attention to how the atrocities committed in Abya Yala were not enough, so the conquistadors extended their genocide to Africa, kidnapping, transporting and selling Africans like animals. It is also true that the genocide and enslavement of Africans under the Spanish 'Empire' had already been happening 100 years before Colón set foot in Abya Yala, with Indigenous Canarians as slaves. The genocide and enslavement of Africans should also include the Canary Islands, Africa.

Like *Soul Sanet's* (2000) *Llámame por mi Nombre*, Robe L Ninho's (2024) *Cimarrón* is a reminder never to forget. Robe L Ninho also reminds his listeners that the history of Africa did not start with slavery, nor did the history of those enslaved. His music offers a means of decolonising our minds, unlearning and *afro-sembrando* ('afro-planting'). This is a relevant example for Canary Islanders seeking to engage in their own decolonisation and reconnection to our African ancestral ties and *in/re-surrection*: 'Yo vengo de la madre continente.… Estamos resignificando, dignificando, desaprendiendo, afro-sembrando … con el poder del conocimiento nos vamos reivindicando.… Descolonización mental. Enseñándoles a desaprender. Afro-sembrando.'

Prácticas Necrománticas | Necromantic Practices

Prior to my re-turn to the Canary Islands, I assumed that there was nothing to reclaim and no one to resurrect, so my own decolonial practice would require 're-learning from and reconnecting with the land, invoking and resurrecting the ghosts and spectres that inhabit our land, languages, art and cultural practices' (Ramirez, 2014, p. 15). I assumed that the only way to engage with a necromantic hauntology of the void was through the spectres that inhabit the whenua: its memories, geography, heritage sites, historical archives and unencountered spaces. I reduced these potential spaces to the Canary Islands, ignoring that the spectres and wairua of my inheritance also haunt me. Moreover, I presumed kanohi ki te kanohi ('face-to-face') engagements with Canarians would provide the only possibility for (re)establishing relationships with the whenua and the socio-political matters that cannot be found beyond peoples' memories, knowledge and experiences, given that these are not recorded in news or academic articles.

My conversations with everyone mentioned in this manuscript (and those whom I could not include) were all fundamental to this journey of (self-)discovery of the Canary Islands, exploring the necromantic hauntology of the void while helping me imagine ways to 'resurrect' the ghosts of futures past. Without realising, I have been practising necromancy, summoning Indigenous Canarian wairua of my ancestors by engaging with historical documents, returning to the whenua and (re)stor(y)ing 'an oral tradition of knowledge transmission, honouring ancestral Canarian practices' (Ramirez, 2024, p. 16). Through conversations with Canarians and non-Canarians alike, I have raised the spectres from the void left behind in the Canary Islands (Ramirez, 2024).

One of the several conversations with Dylan Verdonkschot,[9] who has recently become my Research Assistant at Auckland University of Technology, gave me a deeper understanding and interest in exploring Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its potential to offer 'tangible' new possibilities for the Canarian collective imagination. We are currently exploring ways to 'visualise and picture what we (can) imagine but seems impossible to 'manifest' in intelligible and tangible ways…[and] reconstruct Indigenous narratives and (hi)stories' (Ramirez, 2024, p. 16). Technologically enhancing extant accounts, we are exploring what it might mean to produce realistic images of Indigenous Canarians. As AI can create images from prompts (for example, the image above was AI generated with *Midjourney*), the writings around Canarians can be used to help resurrect them and restore their 'humanity,' engaging/initiating/intensifying an Indigenous in/re-surrection in the Canary Islands.

Indigenismo Canario

Serendipitously (or what I like to think of as 'ancestors paving the way'), when I went to Agaldar ('Gáldar'), Gran Canaria to visit the *Cuevas Pintadas* (an archaeological site that preserves a unique Indigenous Canarian settlement, including a painted cave with geometric shapes), I also visited the *Casa-Museo Antonio Padrón*. Antonio Padrón was one of the last artists of the *Indigenismo Canario* movement, which portrayed the ethnographic characteristics of the history and peoples of the Canary Islands, criticising the paradisiacal vision of the narratives about the Canary Islands and revealing new liberatory possibilities:

> la que de forma más explícita se propone desvelar un nuevo carácter para el isleño como estrategia liberadora. En su denuncia de la visión paradisiaca que había transido siempre las narraciones sobre las islas. (Villarmea López, n.d., paras 2-3)

The *Indigenistas Canarios* wanted to immortalise the complex ethnic heritage of the islands: Indigenous, African and European. Furthermore, this movement resisted the tradition of painting the bourgeoisie, which mainly portrayed European-esque people and their customs (Casa-Museo Antonio Padrón, 2024, personal communication). For example, the paintings from two of the *Indigenistas Canarios*, Felo Monzón and Antonio Padrón, illustrate the focus on local populations (regardless of whether they were descendants of Indigenous Canarians or not), including the country people, such as peasants and shepherds. Learning about this artistic

movement was vital, providing me with ways to engage with the void and an opportunity to (re)imagine what im/possibilities the present-day islands offer. Notably, in the *Diccionario de la lengua española* ('Spanish language dictionary'; *Real Academia Española*, the official royal institution that oversees the Spanish language), none of the entries account for this movement, presenting yet another example of the attempted erasure of Canarian Indigeneity.

The Canarian movement resonates with the ethos of the *Indigenismo* in Abya Yala, which started in the early 1900s (although resistance was brewing during colonial times). However, it is important to highlight that these two movements are not synonymous, with considerable contextual and ideological differences. 'Nuestro Indigenismo artístico tuvo, pues, un nacimiento bien temprano y en él pueden detectarse indudablemente los primeros intentos de descubrir y formular nuestra verdadera identidad canaria' (Rodriguez Doreste, 1976, p. 12); the *Indigenismo Canario* sought to discover and formulate the true Canarian identity. Notably, *Indigenismo Canario* had an idealistic and tokenistic conception of the Indigenous past, which has impacted the current collective imaginary of the islands (Farrujia de la Rosa, 2019). This may explain the intrinsic need of some Canary Islanders to engage (through art, social media, activism, etc.) with what it means to be a Canary Islander; an identity that does not currently relate to our Indigenous inheritance. Indigenous Canarians are generally understood to be 'those people' who dwelled in the islands first, before us, rather than the ancestors we descended from.

It is important to state that the *Indigenistas* from Mexico or Perú have been actively fighting for their right to exist as peoples, including access to resources and protection of their sacred lands (among other things), which is not aligned with the *Indigenistas Canarios* or Antonio Padrón. For example, in this unfinished piece (Women with Idol, 1961), Padrón painted a woman with typical Canarian physical attributes, surrounded by *Indigenous Canarian* elements: inside a cave, holding the Idol of Tara (symbolising fertility), next to a stone grinder to make *gofio* (flour made from roasted/toasted grains; Casa-Museo Antonio Padrón, 2024, personal communication). While this painting shows an appreciation of Indigenous existence, it is hardly a claim to the right of Indigenous Canarians to exist.

While such portrayals leave something to be desired, one way to decolonise our minds and learn to unlearn is to resurrect the *Indigenismo Canario* in a way that helps us engage with a necromantic hauntology of the void, summoning the ghosts of futures past. One of the first resurrections should be the *Indigenismo Canario* in a way that addresses our haunted identities, histories and the socio-political needs

of our current realities. A *Renacimiento del Indigenismo Canario* (Canarian *Indigenismo* Renaissance) could offer a space to un/become Indigenous, engaging with the im/possibilities of who we are, (could) have been and might (never) be. While we should be careful not to appropriate spaces and socio-political movements that do not pertain to us, *Renacimiento del Indigenismo Canario* could be a starting point for developing our own Canarian onto-epistemology (Ramirez, 2024). The void presents us with the opportunity to (re)create, (re)imagine and, ultimately, (re)claim our wrestling with (not) belonging.

From *narrativas de resistencia* ('resistance narratives'), the possibility of an onto-epistemological shift emerges, offering new strategies to un/become Indigenous through in/re-surrection. This work has afforded a short list of important portals that are being used to raise the spectres of Canarian colonialities, drawing on and re-generating Indigenous Canarian wairua ('spirit') in our quest to reclaim what it means to (not) belong to the Canary Islands. To recap, these include the following:

1. musicians such as Arife ⴰⵔⵉⴼⵉ (2022) and Soul Sanet (2000), (re)counting and resurrecting our histories and Indigenous cultural elements;
2. academics such as Farrujia (2014), claiming that archaeology and anthropology in the Canary Islands need to be Indigenised;
3. elders, like Enrique Vivancos Sola, who are the protectors of ancestral knowledge and spectres in the whenua;
4. Canary Islanders who are protesting and fighting to preserve our culture and islands against processes of recolonisation by tourists and mainland Spanish pursuing an affordable insular paradise, demystifying the idea of the Canary Islands as paradisaic through their struggles;
5. Canary Islanders whose online presence disseminates our Indigenous cultural and linguistic roots;
6. educators who ensure Canarian children learn about our ancestors, ensuring they do not lose the Canarian variety of Spanish and fighting against recolonisation via teachers from mainland Spain who do not know/learn our histories and impose their linguistic varieties; and
7. descendants of those part of *la diaspora canaria* ('Canarian diaspora'; Suárez, 2018) in Abya Yala who have not forgotten and nurture their roots,
8. and others, like me, who were uprooted at an early age and are now (re)connecting with and resurrecting the spectres of the Canary Islands and (re)learning the Canarian Spanish variety as an act of resistance and decolonisation.

> 'Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua. I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past' (Dunn, 2022)

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Images
1. *Ancestros*. Four photos of human remains from two museums in the Canary Islands.
2. *'Hutia Te Rito' Harakeke*. Visual representation of the waiata 'Hutia Te Rito' in te reo Māori, Spanish and English, in the shape of a harakeke ('flax') plant.
3. *Tierra y Estrellas*. Two photos taken during walks in Tenerife of landscape and stars.
4. *Ancestral Legacies*. Two photos of two carved rocks in Tenerife.
5. *Ritual Guanche*. Two photos taken performing a *guanche* ritual in Tenerife.
6. لبنان *Lubnān*. Photo of carved rock in Almogaren de Cuatro Puertas, Gran Canaria.
7. *Entangled Whenua*. A reconstituted map layering the Canary Islands, representing the entanglement of the Canary Islands Abya Yala ('America') and Alkebulan ('Africa').
8. *Narrativas de Resistencia en Paredes*. Six photos of graffiti of resistance narratives on walls, taken during walks in Gran Canaria and Tenerife.
9. *Indenpendencia*. Six photos of the independentist flag and resistance narratives, taken during walks in Gran Canaria and Tenerife.
10. *Tangible Possibilities*. AI-generated image using Midjourney.
11. *Encuentro con el Indigenismo Canario*. Photo of Antonio Padrón's unfinished piece 'Women with Idol' (1961), taken at Casa-Museo Antonio Padrón in Gran Canaria.

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Notes

1. Dr Kerry Manzo is an Assistant Professor of Global Studies at Purchase College in the United States of America who specialises in queer and feminist approaches to contemporary literatures of West Africa, India and the United States-Mexico borderlands. His current project is concerned with discourses and material practices of heterocolonial modernity in (post)colonial West African literary and publishing circuits.

2. Taituwha King is a lecturer at the Auckland University of Technology in Aotearoa/ New Zealand and is an expert in Māori customs, protocols and language, specialising in haka, waiata and mōteatea. Taituwha is a cultural leader and ambassador for Aotearoa/New Zealand and a talented composer of waiata.

3. From Lebanon, Manal El Mazbouh is a doctoral candidate at Waipapa Taumata Rau/The University of Auckland. Her research interests lie in educational technology, with a current focus on the whys and hows of the implementation of educational management information systems (EMIS) in development contexts and the implications of the rise of a data-driven culture that seeks to 'quantify' education.

4. Manal employed the site www.languageisavirus.com to create this pictorial embodiment of Maya Angelou's poem *And Still I Rise*, which I also used to produce my harakeke.

5. Amanda Siworae is a talented illustrator, graphic designer and artistic photographer, with a commitment to develop emotions and feelings connected to nature, inspired by the Celtic and Japanese cultures. Her art is available on https://www.instagram.com/amanda_siworae_art/

6. Enrique Vivancos Sola is a curious researcher and tracker of (in)material remains of Indigenous Canarians' cultures, focusing on those of the *guanches* (the Indigenous peoples of Tenerife, the Canary Islands). He is a retired primary school teacher, specialising in Human Sciences, who completed a Bachelor of Arts in History.

7. Ampersand Pasley, co-editor of the Special Issue 'Wrestling with (Not) Belonging,' suggested Rewi Manga's quote when they were reviewing my manuscript. I embraced Rewi Manga's involvement in the New Zealand Wars and his resistance to surrender, which should be known by all and never forgotten.

8. Originally from Tunja, Colombia, in the western range of the Andes, Carolina Peña is a doctoral candidate at Waipapa Taumata Rau/The University of Auckland. Her research interests focus on the relationships between place and body from the perspectives of Indigenous knowledge and Global South epistemologies. Additionally, she explores walking as both a research method and a political practice.

9. Dylan Verdonkschot has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Digital Cultures. Dylan specialises in blending psychology, digital culture and technology to create intuitive and engaging user experiences. His passion lies in leveraging artificial intelligence and innovative design to enhance human interactions and drive impactful solutions.

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