04

Beach Play

Beaches of Hope, Beaches of Despair

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Foreword

One of the subjects that have been discussed recently in language and in linguistics is performance. Speech acts are performative, and language is thus creative; linguistics, the discipline that is concerned with exploring how this works, involves performance too, of the expert and the academic, for example. We have wondered what it might be like to literally perform linguistics, in a real play. This would combine practices of work (doing research) and rest (doing something playful). Since much of our professional life has been devoted to tourism linguistics, we thought it might be interesting to take the notion of 'rest' even more seriously and situate the play at the beach, a place that has strong connotations of leisure. We also wanted to create a holistic impression: work and rest should all be in the play, and so we used materials such as our data, texts we wrote, things we took notes about, talks shared in professional contexts, the comments of others on what we did, and snippets of sounds that surrounded us.

So our play is on beaches. Beaches of despair, beaches of hope. Because the people we met there, spoke to and talked about are also migrants and refugees who were looking for something there on these beaches.

Before we go on, a word of thanks is due: to Alison Phipps and Tawona Sithole for their generosity and inspiration, to Nico Nassenstein, Janine Traber and Fatou Cissé Kane for jointly undertaking all these projects together with us, to Ahmed, Festus Badaseraye, Bwana Kiboko, and a group of people who must remain anonymous who have greatly helped us to understand things, and finally to Chris Bongartz for providing a sense of certitude.

Black River

the Africans are in the text

M. NourbeSe Philip

This is a place of first times and last times, and one that defies time, whichever time it is. The first town in Jamaica – or perhaps even in the Caribbean – to have a telephone system (in 1883), the first town to be lit by electric light (in 1893), the first town in Jamaica to have an automobile (in 1903). Its last times, preceding these firsts are more difficult to name: human cargo, slavery, massacre.

We wondered who was still able to tell of what had happened before all these glorious firsts. Who would have remembered the stories that might have been told by the ancestors only a few generations ago? Did anybody want to remember, then?

Black River had been rich. It was the capital of its parish from 1773, and still is. In the past, its wealth was based on the trade in logwood, which is red, almost as red as the sunset on William Turner's painting *The Slave Ship* of 1840, when logwood was still an important good. Cloth dyed with logwood normally looks purple or blue, not red. There were other goods as well, such as sugar and pimento, cattle hides and rum. The traders and plantation owners built themselves elegant houses.

Their plantations and farms were worked by slaves who had been brought to Jamaica from West Africa as well as from other Caribbean islands, mostly via ports at the Bight of

Biafra, the Bight of Benin and the Windward Coast – Anomabu, Cape Coast, Calabar, Bonny. Many of the ships which called at these ports were British, and their owners wealthy traders from Liverpool. In Black River, those who survived the landfall were taken to Farquharson Wharf to be auctioned there; some old wharf buildings remain.

Slave ships were, James Walvin writes, pervaded by the practices of a culture of violence, all of which served the purpose of generating as much profit as possible:

> Though the history of the slave ships could be written in terms of violence meted out to the Africans, the real, fundamental cruelty of the slave ships was not so much *ad hoc* and personal, not so much the result of sadistic whim and capricious violence (though there was plenty of both), but rather *institutional* – the brutality was basic to the whole system. On board the slave ship, as on the African coast and on the American plantations, violence was deemed essential. Without the violence of shipboard management (the manacles, the guns, the daily regime) no slave ship could have hoped to survive. What this meant in practice was that on every ship there simmered a toxic human brew, an ethos and culture of violence, which infected every member of the crew, and which damaged or threatened every African on board. (Walvin 2011: 43)

The regime of violence must have begun prior to the visit to the African coast, in Liverpool, where the poorest and most wrecked men became sailors on these ships. Those who hardly had any choice went on the journey from Liverpool along the West African coastline, where they would often remain for many months. Slave ships were filled slowly, and many slaves had to endure up to a year locked in the lower deck, suffering in the most horrible conditions. Walvin writes that slave ships were identified from a distance not by their form but by their smell; that both sailors and slaves died in large numbers, first from diseases while waiting at an African port, then from epidemics and violent acts, as well as through suicide, while sailing across the sea; that Turner's painting, of a slave ship and of drowning bodies, was too hard for its previous owner to bear to look at, so it was sold; that the experience of the slave ship was so horrible that only a few were able to tell about it, even though captains and traders were not reluctant to describe their work and business; that the ways in which power and violence were organized continues to shape images of the African Other:

> Indeed the crew on every slave ship nurtured a real and deep-seated fear that they were handling people who could not be trusted and who could, in an instant, erupt and overwhelm them. […] From the early days of the Portuguese trade to the mid-nineteenth century – that is, for four centuries – merchants counselled their men to remain alert. […] It is safe to guess that the very great majority of the Africans hauled on to the slave ships had never seen white people before the initial contact with their captors. From that first moment of encounter onwards, the African's experience of white people was characterized by brutality and humiliation, which for some infused with their angry resentment; they simmered, waiting for the opportunity to strike back. But many simply gave up hope. […] The slave ship was the human crucible which poisoned relations between black and

> white throughout the history of Atlantic slavery – and long afterwards. (Walvin 2011: 35, 42)

Walvin's book is hard to read. One turns page after page, because there is so much to learn, and one fears that which is written on every page turned. The book is about slave ships, and one slave ship in particular, which became a court case that finally led to a change in the law. Walvin's book is hard to read because it describes so very clearly how the law to be changed first was not the law that permitted slavery, but insurance law. It was about the value of the cargo.

In 1781, Richard Henley, who worked as the captain of the *William* for William Gregson, one of Liverpool's most influential slavers, was able to buy the *Zorgue*, a Dutch slave ship that had been captured in Febuary of that year by another British ship. There were already 244 enslaved Africans on the *Zorgue*. They were bought together with the ship, which was renamed upon changing its owner, as the *Zong*. Hanley managed to assemble a crew and appointed the *William*'s ship surgeon, Luke Collingwood, as captain of the *Zong*. Even though the *Zong* was not a very large ship, more people were hauled on board. On 18 August 1781, the *Zong* left the African coast with 442 Africans and one British passenger on board, took provisions in São Tomé, and sailed West towards Jamaica.

In São Tomé, somebody must have failed to supervise the delivery of the provisions. In the Caribbean, someone must have mistaken the coast of Jamaica for that of another island. The captain by then was sick. The British passenger, Robert Stubbs, might have been given the command over the ship. Whatever was the case, it was not good. About a hundred miles west of Black River, the navigation error was realized. It seems that soon after, Stubbs and the crew realized that there was not enough water left.

On the ships of the colonial enterprise, the European phantasies of humanism and civilization ran aground. On the *Méduse*, the consequence of arrogant belief in the order of things resulted in cannibalism, and on the *Zong* the equally arrogant trust in the efficiency of bureaucracy resulted in mass murder. Do the famous paintings – the celebrated work of Géricault and Turner – that commemorate the bankruptcy of those phantasies still convey these horrors? Stories certainly do.

On 29 November 1781, the crew of the *Zong* threw 132 people overboard - alive, handcuffed and tied to one another by chains and shackles. Those who were still onboard, still alive, must have seen it all coming: "The killings took place in small, manageable batches" (Walvin 2011: 98). Noisy struggles, the sound of water. The ship reached Black River on 22 December. Captain Collingwood died soon after landfall in Jamaica. The Africans must have been kept briefly at Farquharson Wharf, where there must have been facilities to provide basic medical care and food to the survivors of the slave ships. After a short while, the nightmare continued, never to stop: "On 9 January 1782 a Jamaican newspaper ran an advertisement offering for sale 200 Africans from the Zong. These were the survivors of 442 Africans, squeezed into the *Zong*, when she had left São Tomé the previous August" (Walvin 2011: 99).

Figures survive. They are the basis of what was to follow. A particular legal affair, disturbing and haunting today, yet average practice then.

The case of the *Zong* in the first place is a case of insurance policy. Mass killings aboard

slave ships were nothing but a loss of cargo, and the value of cargo was protected by insurance bills. Gregson, the shipowner, therefore assumed that he would be reimbursed for the loss of human cargo, and in quite a profitable way. But this time the underwriters of the insurance policy did not agree: this had been a murder that was not of necessity, they claimed, and therefore these deaths were not to be covered. As a common practice, the case was taken to court, and this would all have remained a mundane legal affair, had not one man written to another: Olaudah Equiano sent a message to Granville Sharp about what he had heard on the case of the massacre on the *Zong*: killings of Africans in order to secure and maximise profit.

As the court case went on, the struggle for a change of the law moved into the focus of the public. Lord Mansfield, Chief Justice and famous for his expertise in the field of insurance law, saw a need for the reform of the regulation of the insurance of ships and their cargo. When would a shipowner be reimbursed for the loss of human life? It is precisely this effect that the massacre had initially, and that continues to haunt us today – that is was possible to treat mass murder merely as a problem of insurance; that those responsible for the deaths of 132 people got away with it; that this was common, normal and profitable.

They simply needed to prove that this murder was committed out of necessity – like cannibalism on a wrecked ship. The first mate of the *Zong*, James Kelsall, claimed that "Part of the Slaves should be destroyed to save the rest and the remainder of the slaves and the crew put to short allowance" (Walvin 2011: 97). At some point, this ceased to be credible to a larger public, and people like Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson spoke and wrote to and on behalf of many, who now believed that such shameful and horrible practices would eventually damage their own society. The *Zong*, or perhaps the court case and the stories that are connected to it, was the beginning of the end of the Atlantic slave trade.

The *Zong* continued to be used in the slave trade, under the new name of *Richard*, and mass killings on slave ships were committed on other ships later on. And "the real ghosts lingered on, and memories of the dead Africans from the slave ships survive right down to the present day, on both sides of the Atlantic: bleak reminders of the human disasters which the slave trade visited upon many millions of Africans" (Walvin 2011: 215).

In 2007, a small monument was erected in order to commemorate the massacre that was the beginning of the end. It stands near the modern market hall of Black River, not far from the jetty, from which the popular boat tours to the crocodiles leave, and not far from the site of the slave market and auction block. There are, for sure, different kinds of journeys that can be made from here. Marlene NourbeSe Philip, in an interview on her poetic work on the *Zong*,[1] speaks about a journey out of the void and out of the silence:

> The journey "back" has begun; it is a journey that will take me through the morass of language, European language, that is, and what its imposition has meant for us, the flotsam and jetsam of the transatlantic trade in Black bodies. Imposition because that is what it was, and simultaneous with that awareness on my part is the profoundly disorienting consciousness of that phantom linguistic limb, so to speak –

[1] https://jacket2.org/interviews/sycorax-spirit-and-zong

> there is no other language I can hide in, but it's there – on my phantom tongue, in my phantom brain where Wernicke and Broca have taken up residence.

Other journeys lead into louder silences and busier voids. Hardly any tourist gives the monument a glance, and it is equally easy to overlook the short note on the *Zong* massacre in the usual travel guides. Instead, they board the colourfully painted boats and go croc watching, and then move out into the sea a few miles in order to have a drink at the Pelican Bar. This place sits on a sandbank in the sea just outside of Black River, a structure made of driftwood and planks that stands on top of the waters not far from where the *Zong* must once have passed by. On a second sand bank there are flocks of pelicans. Occasionally, a dolphin carves through the clear waters. The waves do not seem to make any sound; all that can be heard is the music blaring out of the loudspeakers on the bar, and all the laughter and shouting of the excited people who have come to drink, smoke, eat and swim. The bar is a noisy setting that is all about representation – of earlier super-modernities, ancient overabundances of events, places and individual references that all went along with imperial ruination, forced migration and coloniality centuries ago: a tourist destination on the western coast of Jamaica. Hard to miss. With imperial ruination as an ongoing process and new forms of human trafficking and slavery playing into this setting, noise is a contemporary phenomenon there, which links non-places in Southern settings with those of the North.

Originally, the bar was created by the local entrepreneur Floyd in 2001, who says that he started building the structure on stilts after having dreamt about a bar in the water. The entire construction consisted of collected driftwood and was named *Pelican Bar* for the many pelicans using it as a resting place. In the first two years, the bar served as a resting spot for local fishermen, but it was soon discovered and marketed by nearby tourist resorts – especially in Negril, probably Jamaica's most consumerist and globalised tourist destination. The bar was from then on advertised in the brochures of most hotels in the region, in tourist guidebooks and on websites. In 2004, it was destroyed by a hurricane and – for financial reasons – not reconstructed by Floyd himself, but by hotel owners and tourism entrepreneurs. Since then, only a very few local fishermen visit the bar, which is now constructed in a more professional way, with planks, a fridge and a safe (even though tourism brochures still advertise the bar as a hang-out spot of the locals, constructing authenticity and uniqueness).

The bar is now the working place of professional service staff, including a cook, a barman, and ferrymen. The staff change on a fairly regular basis, as wages might be better elsewhere, the tourist season might turn out less busy than expected, and so forth. "Fun is hard work", a young man working on one of the boats said. Others who work at *Pelican Bar,* and who form an even more evasive group, are the young men who offer themselves as touts, guides and sex workers.

The bar is not home to any of the staff, nor to the loosely attached tourism and sex workers. It is abandoned at night, after the last guests have departed on their tourist boats. Nevertheless, it remains a busy place even then, serving as a good spot for pelicans in the evening. Inside, there is the constant noise of a loud diesel generator which supplies the fridge, a sound system, and lamps with electricity.

Another kind of noise is even louder. There is a cacophony of erasure, and of language that only speaks to itself. As if the idea of emptiness and nothingness is impossible to bear, any spot on this bar needs to be filled with language. Walvin mentions that *then* but a few words survived, "a brief, distressing exchange of words with one of the Africans about to be killed. No more than a mere snippet – only a few dozen words […]" (2011: 157), spoken by a man whose name is not known. Nameless, like all the others. At *Pelican Bar*, names abound. Nothing remains without a name. Tourists are brought to the bar by boats which bear suggestive names – *Caribbean Queen*, *Wow! She's hot*, *Enterprise*. They climb up to the bar on a wooden ladder that is covered with carved names; they walk under a thatched roof from which hang license plates with names of former newly-weds. and t-shirts with inscriptions of group names of spring-breakers; they sit on benches and chairs into which the names of those who visited the bar before them are engraved; and they place their feet on planks that are covered by the engraved names of yet more visitors.

What an irony, that the planks with the names don't tell the same stories which the planks of slave ships do, where engraved messages or counted days tell a history of despair, love and death. The engraved planks of Pelican Island are exchanged for new planks, fresh from the carpenter, and where the old ones go, nobody knows: maybe they are used as firewood, maybe they are ground down – words in sawdust.

The tourists stay about two to three hours, depending on what has been arranged with the captain of the hired boat. At the bar, they can order cold drinks (bottled beer and soft drinks) and fish for lunch, and as most tourists visit around midday, they tend to buy both drinks and food. Because of the noise of the generator and boat motors, the sound system and the loud talk and laughter of everyone around, ordering food does not allow asking about available options. A drink is automatically a beer, but shaking the head signifies that not beer but a soft drink is wanted. Food is offered by shouting "Fish!"

Consumption includes not only food and drink, but also joints and people. The bar serves as a spot where female sex tourists come with their temporary Jamaican partners for an outing, or where single women can meet young men and establish romantic relationships. Those tourists who are not single sit close to their companions, or have a swim next to the bar. The Jamaican sex workers don't talk much to the women they come with; each partner stares at a smart phone, at the plastic plate with fish on it, or watches the scenery around. The men ask whether they should buy more beer, or are told to get food. And then there is a man who can be hired to do engravings. He carves them into the planks, lasting love, *Sharon & John, Monique J, Nick was here, Babsi 15 August 2017 Bob, Jamaica ONE LOVE no problem mon*. The construction is entirely on offer to clients in order to inscribe themselves, their desires and presences into the wood. Once all the planks are covered with all this, they are exchanged for new ones. Do the tourists ever return in order to look at their names and commemorate their affection? Or are they yelling and shouting their presences into this turquoise void, hurling their happiness at the feet of those who lie beneath, since they were drowned in these waters? Or is this noise the mask that hides other lonelinesses?

And then they drink more beer and go down and have a swim and pee into the water and climb up again and buy a shirt that has a *Marcus Garvey* or a *Pelican Bar* inscription and then they say, "I'm so-and-so", and chat with another person so that there is no loneliness. And then people talk about coconuts and massages and beaches. The trip is very much recommended!

Of course, nothing is ever so simple. The driftwood the bar is made of, as well as the souvenirs and memorabilia on display, convey various messages. Driftwood tells stories about pirates, sex and tourists alike: about drifting people who come together at this place for a moment and are then swept away again to other shores. A story of adventure, but also of the dismantling of bonds and of the fickle existence of partnership and community here. Walvin writes that at the time of the *Zong* massacre, the text used for insurance documents was still characterised by medieval ideas about travel. One was insured against "adventure".

At the bar, hardly anything speaks of the destinations of adventure. The objects and inscriptions on display speak of the tourists' places of origin, of their real lives and social embeddedness: this is home, where we come from, where we will go back to (only five days left). But these things are not just signatures, they are the actual entry tickets to the non-place. As all tourism and social media websites provide the same instruction, namely that it is the tradition to bring a license plate from home and fix it onto the bar, tourists deliberately and obligatorily decorate the bar, thereby performing not just "linguistic landscaping", but proving entitlement: I'm following the rules, this is who I am, who I remain, while I indulge for the duration of the time arranged for by my hotel.

> I enter a different land, a land of language –
> I allow the language to lead me somewhere –
> don't know where, but I trust.

M. NourbeSe Philip's text on the *Zong* consists mainly of the words that are in the text of the legal decision. By moving into this text, she recovers the drowned and submerged. As the juridical text dissolves, language appears, often blurred and hardly visible, or frequently cast aside, but unmergeable. "Always what is going on seems to be about water", she writes (Philip 2011: 195)

Language at the bar is not about water, and doesn't sound like water. It consists of a few emblematic words, yelled, whispered, written. It emerges out of people's mouths and out of noisy objects, which are driftwood, smart phones, loudspeakers, souvenirs, and license plates. Around their wrists, people wear plastic ribbons that enable their wearers to eat and drink as much as they like at the resorts in which they stay. Having legitimated themselves by booking a day trip that includes the minibus transfer and the boat to the bar, they remain clients, who are guaranteed that they will be taken back to the resort when this is over, and back home when the vacation has been fully spent. Until then, they remain anonymous clients of an industry that aims, among

other things, to sell them fun, which only comes in a package with amnesia.

The slave ship entered without any ribbon, and without any guarantee. It was not anonymous; violence is not anonymity but erasure. And language? A snippet.

Diani

Old photographs of this beach, like of many other such beaches, show different trees. Not so many palm trees swaying in the breeze, no bougainvillea, not so many jacaranda trees. Instead, there are larger trees and sometimes even real forest. This seems to have changed wherever spacious resorts with all-you-can-eat buffets and poolscapes have been created. The fetid, moist woods have been replaced with more fragrant matter. Together with the old forests, the shrines and spirits went away, and so did the songs and stories that belonged to them. In the midst of palm tree decorations, jingles and *hakuna matata* tunes resound.

Diani Beach is a beach that stretches along the Kenyan coast south of Mombasa for about seventeen kilometres, from the Kongo River in the north to Galu Beach in the south. It is a

sight that invites us to dream and awakens our yearning for distant places and exotic pleasures, a beach that is the stereotypical image for a poster in a travel agency: a sprawling beach of white sand and palm trees that offers loneliness and *joie de vivre*. Loneliness. Emptiness. Problematic emptiness.

Kenya is known worldwide for its beaches and its wildlife, prototypically "African" attractions, as Wainaina (2006) observed. After independence in 1963, the country's economic activities in the coastal region were mainly controlled by European emigrants, especially in the tourism sector, initiated either by the government or by Europeans (Akama 2004: 145). In the 1970s, tourism increased in the area (Sindiga 2000: 73) and brought salaried positions in hotels and resorts. Yet neither the state nor other institutions engaged in any projects that would reduce the inhabitants' dependency on tourism and provide some form of sustainable employment. With the increase of population, unemployment and poverty became more and more common (Berman 2017: 68 ff.), forcing many people into migrant labour, or into investing in petty businesses such as temporary, unlicensed kiosks, while international investors dominated the more profitable businesses (Sindiga 1999). At present, only between two and five percent of the profit obtained in the tourism industry of the area reaches the local population, mostly through work in the hotels, resorts and bars, or through selling crafts and food (Akama 2004: 149). Unfortunately, and unexpectedly, incidents of crime and violence, as well as international terrorism, brought tourism abruptly to a standstill in 2008. Since then, tourist arrivals have stabilized but remain very vulnerable to any negative or worrisome news concerning the continent; Kenya seems to be conceptualized as a form of clichéd Africa, with even the outbreak of Ebola in Sierra Leone in 2014 proving to have consequences for its tourism industry. All of this is immediately felt by those who lack job security, opportunities and alternatives, namely people who live at or near the beaches that continue to be advertised as a holiday paradise, who now have to fight for every single client and for the sale of every item.

This present has no moorings. Everything seems to concern unpredictable disruption, from the past, from the future, and from other presences elsewhere. Diani and the adjacent stretches of beach sit encapsulated in a non-time, which makes no sense any longer. Development has passed this coastline, say the voluntary workers, who pass time, giving themselves a break in the German bakery. And yet development has inscribed itself into the beaches and palm groves, into the farmland and the remains of the *kaya* forests. Colonial ruination, Ann Laura Stoler (2013) argues, is a process that continues, because of its invisible historical moorings. The beginnings of ruinous time and ruinous relations are not visible any longer – imperial debris has piled up so that we cannot look back, just as the *Angel of History* in Gottfried Benn's last text is unable to see the beginning of time or the end of it. A strange kind of aphasia has befallen all those who have tried to turn around, in order to look at the other side, the future instead of the past. Violence is erased and removed from what can be seen or remembered. As a result, non-times and phantasies of development emerge. "There is virtually no future", Souleymane Bachir Diagne (2016: 38) writes, because a "future event" is a contradiction that does not hold against any reasoning about time. The future

leaves nothing but traces: of birth and of an end of something.

What then of Diani? Given all the development phantasies, the future is an important subject. The ramshackle souvenir stalls near the still operating hotels, the massage parlours built out of driftwood and leftovers on some unused plot, and the roadside, where drivers lounging in their decorated *tuktuks* waiting for clients look as if they might be traces of the future: phantasies have given birth, here, to huts and signs and offers. There are moments like that, small and fragile, and often too banal to seem worthy of further thought. At this stretch of beach, there is virtually nothing that remains untarnished by colonialism, which has never really ended here but continues, in the tourist resorts and in the absences of the people, animals and things that should be there instead. And while the currents change, as a result of sand mining out there in the sea, and reefs die as a result of overexploitation, the future gives birth in the form of little huts where massages are offered or beadwork is sold.

Talk about what might be (and not what might have been) fills our notebooks: possibilities and plans that are woven into the splendour of stories told at the beach. To a large extent, it is the language itself that keeps everything liminal. Only expressing what is not yet there, what might never have been and might never be, language has become not a tool of making the world inhabitable and employable, as Heidegger has once put it[2], but a tool of negation. Language is all around us, visible in almost everything that is there, and says nothing that could ever turn this world into a home. Being so completely turned into a commodity in this late capitalist system of global circulation, language itself turns into a thing that has a price tag on it.

A cup turns into an instrument for the transmission of wisdom, offering a language course while you sip: linguistic immersion for a few Shilingi. *Jambo – Hello / Kwaheri – Goodbye / Hakuna – No / Matata – Problem / Pombe – Beer / Asante – Thank You. Learn Swahili.*

We are not the only ones who study. "I swear they said this", a remark in our field notebook reads, obviously trying to justify our research results. They – the amazing, gifted beach vendors (who are locally referred to as "Beach Boys", in quite the colonial manner) who learn a language, inhale it, adopt it, make it their own and exhale it with a power that strikes back so bare, so naked that it hurts us – the researchers on the beach who try to understand their language, which is actually our language, inhaled with our parents' words. But who owns a language? Do they? Do we? Does none of us?

Suppose it is our language, then how do beach vendors use our language? How do they make it their own? Why do they use our language? And why and how on earth does it hurt us so much when we hear what we hear? We will make an attempt to convey the words, sentences, proverbs, registers and utterances which the beach vendors in Diani Beach own, later on, in the play.

Exploring the linguistic strategies of the beach workers requires participant observation. The first problem arises: as a participating observer at the beach in Diani one is not treated differently from any other tourist around. Even if one declares the intention of one's stay at the

[2] *Die Sprache ist die einzig erste Behausung des Menschen. Erde wird urbar, Welt wird zeugbar […]. Die Sprache behaust den Menschen, indem sie dem Gedächtnis das Wohnen in der weilenden Weite des Ereignisses gewährt.* (2010: 43)

beach, it makes no difference to the Kenyan beach workers. So how should one do tourism research in a paradisiacal location like Diani Beach?

We immerse. We are tourists, we dispose of our linguistic skills, our knowledge of Swahili, our critical thinking and dress in a bathing suit and a Kanga, moisturise our skin with sun milk, put on sunglasses and stroll along the beach in search of whatever might be deemed reality. And we are able to understand the immensely complex concept of authenticity of tourist motivations and experiences (MacCannell 1973; 1976), which has often been criticised by scholars, including Urry (1990), who argues that the concept as defined by MacCannel cannot explain all holiday intentions. Nevertheless, MacCannel's idea of "staged authenticity" becomes an important aspect with regard to the tourists' expected authentic experiences, when suddenly the invention of the object is necessary to collect all aspects of the journey which are "typical" of the visited holiday destination. Our experience of staged authenticity is there in every minute of our stay, whereby what is very often "staged" here is in fact constructed in the form of "stages", as in the Maasai dances in hotels or a small Maasai compound, but also in the form of walls, strings or lines drawn in the white sand, which demarcate the different stages: a beach vendor's stage, a tourist's stage – where one performs, the other gazes.

We have been doing interviews in various forms, all of which have revealed the precariousness of the beach vendors. One interview led to a melee due to the issue of fair payment. At least, we thought it was fair, but it wasn't. Words for sale, what else? More and more beach vendors joined the interview and later on requested a share of what we had brought. Not being able to make our point that we only wanted to pay the three men we had originally invited, the fight started and we could only flee because one of us had participated in the fight. Another interview was a little more orderly. We talked to a beach vendor under a small shed on the beach. He told us his story about how circumstances had made him a beach vendor. "How much is the interview?" "Well, normally I get 2000 Kenya Shilling." Normally? And what a price! 20 Euros! How often do researchers conduct an interview at the beach? Normally? Could he mean something else and just be telling us the price of the time which he normally spends with European women for whatever reason: interviews, sex, who knows? So we pay our price for the interview in the currency used for payments for sex. It has all become the same anyway. No problem, he says. *Hakuna Matata* is also printed on a cup we bought in a shop back home that specialises in Manga merchandise. The cup is decorated with the image of the warthog who is a hero in the Walt Disney production *The Lion King*. More recently, Walt Disney have prepared a copyright case on the *Hakuna Matata* phrase, which has become a globalised item (Mietzner 2018). Serenity from Africa is for sale, another thing that has been done as part of this continued invention of the Other (Mudimbe 1988).

What do we see when we turn the gaze to this commodified Africa that is devoid

of problems? When Urry (1990) wrote about the tourist gaze, he made it clear that a counterpart is necessary to reflect the authenticity which tourists desire. The tourist gaze plays an immensely important role in the success or failure of a holiday. For example, tourists are continuously offered packages that seem to guarantee that if one travels to Kenya one will see wild animals, the beach and Maasai villages. As many tourists will be disappointed if they leave Kenya without having seen all this, local tour agents, souvenir vendors and resort operators appear to sell exactly this – the "big five", the beach and "traditional Africa". This also has the effect that many Maasai migrate from Samburu land to the coast in order to amble along the beach, selling crafts, beads, necklaces and often searching for a European or American female lover (Meiu 2011; 2017). It doesn't matter, it seems, that they do not normally live on the predominantly Muslim coast; they are authentic to the tourists, after all those movies and novels on "Africa" that they – we – have consumed, and they make their African experience complete.

Tourists pay for authenticity in the form of buying items or paying for the Maasai dance performances in the hotels at night. They pay for a necklace made of imported beads and for the visit to a made-up homestead. Just across the street that divides Diani into a beach section and a shop/bar/office section is a small plot, hidden behind a bar. It is used by Maasai migrants in order to meet, talk, cook, relax together and also to show the Maasai culture to tourists. One is invited to experience a Maasai hut which was built amid concrete blocks especially for tourists in order to show them how the Maasai live.

In the interior, cow hides used as blankets are on display, and there is a small piece of paper on which Maasai words are written: some greetings, numbers and 'thank you', the words that are taught to those who visit the plot. The entrance fee is high, but at least this is about the authentic lifestyle, true Africa conveyed as well as possible. That the tourism work and sex work offered by the *morans* (warriors) triggers drastic changes back home in the Maasai or Samburu land doesn't seem to be of any interest to those concerned. The loss of respect for the elders of the villages, the spread of venereal diseases and the rise of new social inequalities are not issues on the beach:

> Mombasa morans often returned to Samburu with enough money to invest in livestock and live a "good life" for a few months before returning to the coast. Few men managed to develop long-term relationships with one or several foreign women who agreed to support them with substantial amounts of cash. […] Once they converted their dollars and euros into Kenyan currency, some were, in fact, millionaires. […] For locals, this wealth

> was spectacular. […] Along the same dirt roads on which the locals walked or biked for hours to reach market towns or relatives, rich morans drove Toyota Land Cruisers, Range Rovers, or motorcycles. (Meiu 2017: 157).

We wonder if the stories we have heard at the beach have been adjusted to our demands, as other things also were. And then, back on our secure academic pillow, we are asked about our methodology. And we are eager to list all what is required from us linguists: qualitative and quantitative studies, participant observation, interviews. And we somehow try to hide the fact that all these methods have led us nowhere, and that we only had one option: to be German tourists and potential clients of a global market in which everything is sold, from Swahili language course coffee cups to sex.

And yet, we got somewhere. What is to be learned from being scripted at and into this beach is how to question the reality of expert roles and of established methodology. What is an interview, after all, but a cue for a potentially profitable performance, potentially intrusive and always alienating, making an object of enquiry, an informant of someone who might simply be a conversation partner? We sat on the beach and talked about all the othering that happens in linguistic fieldwork and description, and how this never really seems to matter unless one assumes the role of an economically exploitable player oneself – a tourist at a beach that is going bankrupt, staring at a dead coral reef and chewing on pale fries.

In their book on the political anthropology of walking, Horvath and Szakolczai (2018) argue that our sovereignty in recovering our Selves and regaining the right to self-authorship needs to be restored, once again enabling us to encounter others as individuals and not in a performance of collective stance. The only thing they say is that we need to grow up again, which might, to some extent, involve some distancing from a set of highly problematic methodological issues:

> Walking *is* really simple. You just have to start putting one of your legs after the other, as you learned around age one, the single most important sign for any newborn of 'growing up'; and continue it. For quite a long time. It will help us all grow up again, after the debilitating infantilism of modernity, culminating in sitting, for hours and hours and hours, every day, increasingly sleepless, in front of flashing screens, pullulating with images of bodies, preferably naked or dying, and pushing buttons. Try to walk again.
> Just do it. (Horvath & Szakolczai 2018:185)

This is not merely a gesture of resistance or a form of stepping out. Other than producing ever more text on the Other, walking methodologies allow for the creation of encounters: sharing stories and experiences while moving along together for some time. The power of storytelling, the magic of the encounter are not in the preconceived interview, the questionnaire or the awkward participant observation, but here. O'Neill & Roberts (2020: 46-47) observe:

> Walking is, in fact, a criss-crossing of lines of travel and times we intersect with others at those "meeting points". To walk is to "experience" and "imagine". We walk through and within "places" moving in time, space, and with others (in a sense) from the past and in the present. In walking, we "move" through differing states of individual consciousness. Our

> environment informs our outlooks and perceptions – how our social, material changes are to be interpreted and understood.

One could hum while walking. Michael Taussig writes about humming that changes our view of reality. When a shaman lost the ability to communicate with the dead, he writes, "he lies on the ground and men in a circle sing around him for hours, humming

> *mmmmm nnnn mmmmm nnnn*

for hours" (Taussig 2015: 37). And as we pass by all those resorts that are now falling into ruins, deserted cottages and beach villas, massage parlours and small stalls offering soccer shirts, we look at the man walking in front of us wearing one of the t-shirts that are sold in the hotel. It bears a message reading

> *Lion – Simba / Leopard – Chui / Giraffe – Twiga / Zebra – Punda Milia / Elephant – Ndovu / Buffalo – Nyati / Cheetah – Duma / Hippo – Kiboko*

We walk and read.
For hours.

Balamane

In the back streets, there are still some of the old houses with small balconies and dusty porches, and some of them remain the well-kept homes of long-established inhabitants of the former village, while others seem to be deserted and are fading away in the sun. Still others have been turned into the modest homes of migrants who have come to stay for a while, a couple of years maybe, but not longer. Mostly coming from Senegal, but also Gambia and other West African countries, young men seek greener pastures in the tourist hubs of the island of Mallorca in Spain. They work as beach vendors and security staff, as cleaners and storekeepers. On a door leading to the small apartment, there are two identical stickers, blue with white letters. *TOUBA*, each of them says. Two times *TOUBA*. Touba is not only the name of a Senegalese coffee brand (dark roasted with ginger and other spices), but also the name of a town that is an important pilgrimage place for many Muslims in Senegal. The reason why the person who might live here has left all this seems to be explained by what is in front of the door: in the small yard, just in front of the entrance, stands a washing machine, and on top of it a pair of *Adidas* sneakers, newly cleaned. Two times *TOUBA* and a pair of sneakers: luck and prosperity that comes in doubles.

Towards the beach, things look different. The old place has been turned into a non-place there, into a built environment that only serves one purpose, namely the consumption of transgressive fun. This part of El Arenal is a popu-

lar destination for German tourists, who have renamed it *Ballermann*, which roughly translates into 'banging man' and is either a corruption of the Spanish word *balneario* 'seaside resort' or refers to a long-gone German pub. In his messages to us, Ahmed, a Senegalese migrant who has lived in El Arenal for several years, calls the place *Balamane*.

Balamane is located close to the island's capital, Palma, and to the airport, which easily facilitates short stays over a weekend. The massive presence of tourists has attracted many different people who have come for much longer stays, namely vendors of clothing (especially party t-shirts), who mostly come from India, Chinese stock traders and massage studio operators, West African beach vendors of cheap sun glasses and watches, and Nigerians who mostly work as taxi drivers, lavatory cleaners or in the sex industry (Nassenstein 2017, Nassenstein & Storch forthcoming, Storch & Traber forthcoming). Through the extensive media coverage of transgressive practices at these destinations, Mallorca has been inscribed into public discourses on tourism as a site characterized by over-tourism, unsustainable consumerism and destructive transgressive behaviour. In Germany, Mallorca, and in particular El Arenal, has been dubbed Germany's seventeenth state, due to the salient presence of Germans and German products (such as food and music), and it has often been portrayed as a site of lower class tourism (Szabo 2011, Mietzner 2017). Nationalist identity formations, working class aesthetics and transgression have been used to construct imaginations of ownership here, as a highly contradictory concept: that what is colonized and claimed as a nationalized vacation site of northern tourists on an island in the south is not colonized and claimed by a prestige social group, but by the lower classes, and in a noisy manner. Notwithstanding the fact that these sites attract clients from various social classes and from all age groups, their attractiveness and popularity are portrayed as "accidents" that happened through the uncontrolled consumerism of an irresponsible audience "gone wild" (Andrews 2009). Party tourism continues to yield high profits not only because of its focus on consumerism, but also because of a high number of precarious participants, such as go-go dancers, cleaners, waiters, and security staff who are very often employed on the basis of questionable contracts and very small wages. This strategy of the tourism industry has never remained unchallenged by local players. Already in the 1980s, Mallorcan activists and artists were protesting against the tourism industry.

Yet the party zone continues to receive visitors. Often, they claim that this is "cult", that they come for the sake of a tradition or that they are simply on a sightseeing trip that includes "weird" sites. While many artists playing party music are increasingly presented as "legendary" and the music itself is incipiently conceived as folk music and incorporated into "traditional" events such as carnival and après ski events in theAlps, the party site at El Arenal is being turned into a heritage site. Marketing strategies, as well as the decor of some clubs, now enhance feelings of nostalgia, belonging and the urgency of preservation of the site. Tourists take part in singing tunes in which the site is praised as a "home" that one returns to each year and that one doesn't "give up". Logo t-shirts are marketed in the fanshops of the clubs. The anthropologist Hazel Andrews, writing about Magaluf and Pal-

manova – destinations neighboring the Balamane – describes this kind of tourism site as limiting and imprisoning:

> On a surface level as well as a deeper symbolic level, there is an overt display of ethnicity. […] The feeling of enclosure that the boundaries to Palmanova and Magaluf provide is added to by the relationship to areas outside of them being limited or discouraged. (Andrews 2006: 223, 225)

When we first explored the Balamane, as linguists interested in heteroglossic practice as part of the diverse migration experiences taking place there, the fullness of the place drew us into the action, of which we would never have wanted to be a part of before, like an undercurrent at the beginning of low tide. We were drawn into the stacks of empty *San Miguel* beer cans, trash piled up like mountains, heaps of empty or half-empty *Currywurst* plates, garbage disposed of in and around the trash cans at the back of the party mile, drunk partiers on the beach wall and language overflowing everywhere. Diverse language, to be recorded, analysed and described. Or so we thought.

That linguistic diversity has been insufficiently theorized as the mere result of new forms of migration, transition, inequality, and so on, was demonstrated more than two decades ago, for example by Marc Augé (1992) and Michel de Certeau (1990). Observations of acceleration and overabundance – of migration, transition, inequality – have been central to their thinking, which today provides us with a framework that not only allows for a more helpful analysis of what actually happens, but also invites a critical debate on methodological and disciplinal issues, which is, as far as we are concerned, urgently needed.

Augé published his groundbreaking study on an anthropology of adjacency, the ethnographer's present and immediate Other, in 1992, in which he coined the term *surmodernité* – 'super-modernity'. The features that define Augé's super-modernity are largely similar to those that characterize our first experiences of the Balamane. But Augé makes an important point in terms of how these features have something to do with fundamental changes in making meaning of space, time, society and the Self: there is no radical subversion of hegemonial practices of the

construction of history and space, but rather an overabundance of events and places that complicate cognizance and communication. As dimensions of networks and the acceleration of travel increase, and visual and imaginary connotations multiply, places that seem dislocated in time and space emerge. Non-places are all-inclusive holiday resorts, refugee camps, malls, parking lots, roadsides and dumps (Farley & Symmons Roberts 2011). They are places where no sustainable connection can be made, sites of an overabundance of individual references, of the noise of particularity. And these overabundances give way to a fundamental political critique: to Augé, the place of the traveler is the archetype of the non-place, and this traveler is not a solitary wanderer but a figure resulting in complex processes of colonization. The non-place is well situated in the hegemonic order and is not marginal but metropolitan. However, non-places never exist, like anthropological places, as pure entities; within them, places are rearranged and relations reconstructed, and their inhabitants continue to adapt their "arts of doing" (de Certeau 1990) in and to them. This is precisely how practice results out of, or is created through presupposed multiplicities within non-places – through the power of words (which emerges out of the names of holiday resorts and shopping malls) and their readability as a landscape. At the same time, non-places are the opposite of Utopia; they exist but contain no organic community.

Those who work precariously in the tourism industry – maids, beach vendors, masseuses, street performers, waiters, dancers, sex workers and security staff – remind us of yet another reality of the non-place. Non-places, Augé argues, very often require an entry ticket, in the form of a valid passport, a boarding pass, credit card, hotel voucher or plastic ribbon. One has, upon entering them, to accept a contract, and in order to do so, one usually has to make one's identity known. After obtaining permission to enter the non-place by demonstrating innocence – not the ability to understand, make meaning, communicate – its users become anonymized clients. Those who work there do not. Their uniforms may include name-tags, and their appearances may evoke assumptions about origin: from Romania, Ukraine, India, Nigeria, Senegal, Brazil. The beach vendors selling sunglasses and party hats usually do not possess any means of proving anything at all, no document and no whereabouts, and yet they are constantly addressed, always, in the same way: *Helmut*. This only slightly old-fashioned German name is the epitome of non-place practice at the Balamane. In the party space, it might originally have referred to one of the artists playing their music there, Helmut Schafzahl, an Austrian entertainer. Then it became a nickname with which beach vendors addressed German men, and finally it was given back, like an unwanted gift, to the Senegalese men who had used it in playful performances. In an unsettling mimetic twist, those who have no permission to stay in the non-place in order to do what is required there – consume and party hard – are in a most ironic way named after those who do carry such permissions. Othered and exposed.

To Augé, language in non-places equals largely the rhetorics of others, even though words and symbols that have moorings to other places do circulate through them. Thus super-modernity is characterized by what has

previously been termed "contact" as the prevailing form of communicative practice and experience. In Augé's non-places, there is no triumph of one language over others, but the spread of a universally comprehended vocabulary into all languages alike. This vocabulary brings as much clarity as non-places might require – *Helmut* as a name that suffices in addressing any BLACK person; the remaining communication remains noisy and opaque.

The tunes that are played in the clubs and discotheques at the Balamane evoke performances that seem noisy and nonsensical. The shouted lyrics of the songs do not seem to make sense: *Hula Palu Hallo Helmut*. But the banality of the Balamane is calculated and by no means trivial. In contrast with what Crispin Thurlow and Adam Jaworski (2011) state, it is not the language of the traveled places that is prepared for consumption, but the language of the abandoned home, which in a paradoxical form is also a home brought home: *Mallorca, da bin ich daheim* 'Mallorca, this is my home' we hear the loudspeakers in the club blaring at us. The solipsistic architecture of the place that frames this noisy performance of home, like the song, is not something one seriously wants to consider otherwise: "For architects, the tourists are 'the others', people with slippers and white hats, roaring proletarians, roasted meat on the beach, shrill dressed bikers and behind the flag of the tourist guide mothers in health shoes. No trace of aesthetics" (Romeiß-Stracke 2010: 20; translation ours).

In other words, the Balamane is a theater of prosaicness, constructed for short immersions into inversion. *Helmut*, for a couple of days, does not refer to us but to the Other. The staged carnival uses a fake everyday landscapes and fake everyday names. In this place, one is permitted to behave in a way one does not at home – people walk on the streets almost naked, get drunk and publicly throw up, do not hide their bodily functions and keep no distance from others. The inversion of tourism seems to be the concept in everything that is offered to the clients at the Balamane, replacing the otherwise expected "culture" of the travel destination with whatever is reminiscent of "home": Vienna schnitzel instead of paella, intoxicated celebrations instead of silent contemplation of natural beauty, encounters with other Germans (preferably from the same town or region) instead of the experience of the Mediterranean. This triviality turned into exoticism directs one's gaze to oneself, and at the same time marginalizes everybody else who is present but who does not participate in the performance of German transgression; multiple refractions in a place that is an imitation of German everyday life.

There, where life leaves its usual tracks, where one can slip out of one's corset of do's and don'ts, where everything appears to be limitless, there is a forest of do's and a jungle of don'ts for other people. The street vendors, who always seem to be so funny and without concern when they promise "one hundred years of warranty" for sunglasses and watches – a lie indeed, because the watch that we bought broke after five days and we did not get a new one – are obliged to be funny and friendly and without any concerns, repeating the same joke for hours, posing for other people's selfies for hours, "cheap today, expensive tomorrow, a hundred years of warranty, hello Helmut hello Monika: different colour, different design," for hours. They do not even get any money for this, but a pat on the back, and a promise to always be pals from now on.

They have to put up with being left as new best pal, right there on the edge of the sidewalk, because the clients want to party with their real friends. This very sidewalk – especially the one in the street where most of the German clubs are – so clearly exposes the boundaries of the theatre of absurdities: a dirty gutter shows the street vendors up to where they are allowed. Not a step further. Many of them face boundaries in multiple ways, being locked up on the island and unable to leave, neither for holidays nor for business trips, and never for Senegal in order to bury a mother or to welcome a newborn nephew.

Here, we may take a few photos with the smartphone and try recording noise with the party megaphone, while our ideas about methodology and expert practice fail us. Utopia cannot be analyzed in a corpus with interlinear translation. The consequence of our own presence at the Balamane is that we, too, are included in the theatre. We are to join in, be in the midst of it all, have a drink, buy sunglasses, give tips in the toilet, be where people dance, participate in the performances on the ship of fools, which has been stranded in the beer garden.

Ahmed, who says *Balamane* instead of other names, has found his own way to nar-

rate the non-place (Ahmed 2017). Since we first met and exchanged phone numbers, we send each other images of what surrounds us. From time to time we meet, always at the Balamane, because Ahmed cannot travel, and we also send messages and images. Through the pictures he takes and shares, Ahmed tells his story about the non-place. What we get to see are clean and empty streets, beaches devoid of people, schools and hospitals with no one around. Taken very early in the morning, or off-season, these images tell a story about a place where there is nothing once the tourists and the noise have gone. A place where there is nothing. Is this even a place?

Understanding the entangled world of migrants, tourists and the things (broken and whole) that engulf them means understanding not only fragmented noise, but also silence, that which is not said. The space itself is full of words, sung or spoken. A permanent sound. Silence hardly occurs in conversations with the tourism workers. In quiet moments, the mask falls and a person can be seen. Ahmed, who for some time now has been searching for lonely and quiet places on the island, which has turned into a prison, takes occasional walks along the coast, away from the fun and up to the point where one can see far away. Then he is alone and looks at the island as it merges with the sea and at the sea as it merges with the sky. This is a limit.

The Lunacies of Repetition

Beach play in three acts and an epilogue

Costumes:

Hawaii shirt, Inter Mailand football shirt, hakuna matata motto-T-shirt, heute-billig-morgen-teuer T-shirt, krtek T-shirt, kanga, shuka, cap

Props:

Patwa wall hanger, sun blocker, plastic sunglasses, coconut, hakuna matata tote bag, sea breeze

Prologue: Words, Stories, Work and Rest

The words that follow are all our own. They have formed part of talks we shared recently and in the past, when we developed plans for papers and book chapters. They also come from stories we told about those we gazed at, with curiosity, indifference, sympathy and a sense of routine. Gazing at others and writing about how they speak (probably not what they say) is work. The words that follow are words of academic work, in other words. By transforming work into play, the brutality of all that is said becomes discernible. We find it cynical at times – but then: isn't linguistics cynical? Let us explore …

Intermezzo

Stage direction [static]

Angi: How do you want to achieve this?

Anne: Imagine, Angi, changing the genre. Data not in the repository, but in a play – theatre instead of analysis.

Angi: Oh! Data is labour, right? Are you suggesting that we turn our repositories into some kind of *Out of Africa* then? *Stars Above Africa. I Dreamed of Africa. I Returned to Africa.* Don't forget the diaspora! *Stars of the Caribbean. Mr Loverman! Jamaican Temptations.*

Anne: Sounds simply horrible. What's in the corpus?

Angi: Unfortunately that's quite similar.

Stage direction [unhappily turns Patois wall hanger in her hands]

Anne: Oh no. And here we are, wanting to reconcile our work – academic labour – and rest: the pleasures of playful language.

Angi: Forget it. From what I see here, this will be devastating. [puts on Hawaii shirt]

Anne: Should we still try, at least?

Angi: Yes. But let us begin with Jamaica then. Paradise.

Act I: Paradise (Jamaica)

Stage direction	[sea breeze, seagulls cry a bit here and there] [dress: Anne: Hawaii-Shirt, sunglasses; Angi: soccer tricot, coconut]
Tourist:	Hi.
Beach vendor:	Hi monn! No problem. No problem. [waving]
Tourist:	Yes. No problem. [smile]
	Ah, paradise.
Beach vendor:	Ya monn.
Tourist:	The fresh food is amazing just amazing. Mangoes, bananas. [sighs] You know, I really come here to detox.
Beach vendor:	Monn no problem.
Tourist:	Yes. Man. No problem.
Beach vendor:	No problem. I sell coconut.
Tourist:	Ya monn ya monn! Wow. Full of energy. Ya monn no problem. This is the true life. Fresh. Full. Alive. Coconut. You can drink it, eat it, carve it. So full of possibilities. The coconut is such a, such a, such a holistic plant. A thing for everything: cooking, eating, drinking, carving, building. A Kenyan poet, Sheikh Ahmed Nabahany, has written a poem only on the coconut. I'm nuts about coconuts.
Beach vendor:	No problem. Want some? No problem monn.
Tourist:	No problem no problem. Ya monn yaya. I like this beach. So many things to feel and smell. My senses need this healing you know. My healing of my senses. I want to recover. To detox digitally. Write a poem just like Nabahany. With ink, on paper. Switch off the smart phone. Compose a poem. Detox, be free.
Beach vendor:	No problem. Want some now? Monn!

Tourist: Oh I had this yesterday. Very good for the skin, nails, hair. No problem, no problem. I have this idea of writing a paper on coconut and detox and skin. Also on the taste of all this. The sea, the breeze and the mangoes. I mean. You know.

Beach vendor: Ya monn. Cool monn.

Tourist: So cool. Ya monn. Detox.

Beach vendor: Cool monn yaya. Buy now?

Tourist: No problem, no problem. We are in paradise. No worries. Just detox, just be fresh and vegan, just be fine.

Beach vendor: Ya monn but I sell this.

Tourist: No problem. This is so cool. I could live like that too. Just from one day to the next. This is so natural. The way we interact. Ya monn.

Beach vendor: What. No problem. But monn I sell these. He?

Tourist: No problem monn, so cool, so cool. Last year I was in Cuba.

Beach vendor: Ya monn, but you better buy this.

Tourist: Hey monn, no problem monn. Cool, so cool. Also can you tell me what is a conch? Conchconchconch. I heard this before I think. Oh yes, in Winkler's novels they eat conch. Do you ever eat conch? I mean I really want to lead a better life.

Beach vendor: No problem. Just buy monn no probs.

Tourist: What?

Beach vendor: Ya monn. No problem monn.

Tourist: Ah alright. Alright. A better life you know. Full of sunrises and sunsets and this breeze. And my skin so soft. I mean this scrub. Conch scrub detox green. I think I take all this back home with me when I go. All this. [sighs] Because monn my life will be so full. Do you know this kale smoothie?

Beach vendor: Ya monn.

Tourist: It's very good for your tummy you know. Monn. No problem. I want to be vegan. At least no red meat. Not on Fridays at least. I mean. Monn no problem no problem yayaya. Kale and conch and coconut. Nuts man nuts.

Beach vendor: No problem. But let me move, hey.

Tourist: No problem monn yayaya. I mean say where are you from?

Beach vendor: St. Elizabeth.

Tourist: Oh. Noproblemmonnnnn. Is this eh is this eh far eh where is this?

Beach vendor: Next parish monn. No problem. Welcome no problem.

Tourist: Ya monn. Next parish monn. There it is. Noproblemnoproblem. I really like this. Hiking in the open. Almost naked. Nobody asks, everybody is so friendly, always smiling, always so open. I feel so purified. So pure. Just … like in my childhood days, you know.

Beach vendor: Ya monn.

Tourist: No problem. I mean how do YOU feel about it. This lush tropical forest. Still full of pristine vegetation. Pineapples. Yesterday I saw pineapples. And pepper. And pristine lush rainforest. Primal … primordial. Prime. Premium. I mean I mean this is pure, pure premium. Experience the silence monn. THIS SILENCE. [stands still, listening] This is the real thing. Ya monn. The. Real. Thing. Really pure.

Beach vendor: No problem monn it is how it is. You can have the coconut.

Tourist: This noise of the north monn you know. Cars. So aggressive. And here so pristine. Also the rivers. Explore the rivers, not the roads. Discover the streams and how they run through the valleys between the mountains and cleanse the earth and help us recover our purity, our impeccable cleanliness. Cleansing. Travel on the rivers. Monn the rivers monn.

Beach vendor: Ya monn could be cool monn.

Tourist: This is paradise.

Stage direction [sea breeze again; both gazing at the sea for a minute, silently]

Beach vendor: [sighs] Ya monn, see you next.

Tourist: Yes. You see me. You really really see me. As I am I mean you know. As I really am. My whole life. Ya monn. St. Elizabeth monn. I'm stranded but no problem monn. This is so healing. Purifying. Caring. I had a massage at my hotel the other day. Frangipani butter and hot stones. I was reborn. Almost reborn. Ya monn. Ya monn.

Beach vendor: No problem. I think you know you can buy anything …

Tourist: Anything, but the best things are for free. The smell of this coconut, the sunset and the certainty that there will be a sunrise the next day. No problem, there is certainty. There is safety. We are free, almost naked. Truth loves to go naked. I feel this certainty. Of the coconut oil on my skin, the shea butter in my hair and the curing sea playing with my ankles. I feel this so much. I feel my detoxicating body and my liberated mind getting together, finally. Ya monn.

Beach vendor: No problem monn. Cool cool cool.

Tourist: What is life after all but pain? We need to get free. And this sea is helping us to liberate ourselves.

Beach vendor: Not so sure monn. [teeth kiss]

Tourist: Ya monn! Ya monn! [points at beach vendor's face] The problem is that the fibres of the pineapple always get stuck between the teeth. I've begun to have problems with fibres, also salad and this is the reason why I am so reluctant with red meat because the spaces between the teeth they change you know as you age but I have the solution, I have a solution for all this.

Beach vendor: Monn ya monn alright monn.

Tourist: No problem monn no problem no problem. You need to use this vegan coconut toothpaste. Healing and purifying.

Beach vendor: No problem. Cocopaste monn.

Tourist: Cocopaste. Ya monn. Copypaste. Oh this horizon, bring me this horizon! Endlessly gazing. Purifying you and me. Gazing at the sea, with its treasures underneath. This treasured ocean. Liberating. Monn no

problem. Free and pure and almost naked. Only what remains between the teeth. I must say I really liked the massage the other day. Also these sensitive and strong fingers. On my muscles. Up and down. Relaxing. Aloe vera lotion at the end. Tropical pleasures, unproblematic pleasures. Coolcoolcool.

Beach vendor: Ya monn cool. You know what?

Tourist: Monn! I know that I don't know. I'm just coming to a new understanding. Through all these sunbeams caressing my hair and skin, and through all the coconut and pineapple. A new way of being. I'm reinventing myself, from ignorant to knowledgeable. I feel this so much. Have you ever thought about sentimental education? This is so important. Education in general.

Beach vendor: [kiss teeth]

Tourist: Ya monn no problem monn.

Beach vendor: Hey you?

Tourist: Yes, my dear tropical friend: I hear you.

Beach vendor: May I stop this now?

Tourist: Of course you may. This is – anyway – a stereotyped imitation of the mimetic interpretation the Other makes of the Other.

Beach vendor: You mean I'm not real?

Tourist: You are not. But you are better that way. The copy of the copy.

Intermezzo

Stage direction	[stand there, static]
Angi:	Anne, stop for a moment. This is really unhelpful. This beach vendor comes across as a completely stupid person. Is this really happening?
Anne:	I don't know, Angi. Perhaps as the result of the commodification of everything. Like Patois on this souvenir [shows wall hanging with Patois vocabulary]: simplified and clichéd.
Angi:	Who is speaking here?
Anne:	Hm. Perhaps there is no speaking. No discourse. Simply categorizing others.
Angi:	Is there a difference between our data and blackfacing practices?
Anne:	It just felt as if there isn't any.
Angi:	Let's give this another try and use not only data, but also text from the linguistic analyses we published.
Anne:	Wow! For example our research on beach tourism in Kenya.
Stage direction	[change outfit: Anne: motto-T-shirt, cap; Angi: take off tricot; sunglasses, kanga]

Act II: Wellness (Kenya)

Stage direction [sea breeze again; both gazing at the sea for a minute, silently]

Beach Boy: *Jambo!* Hallo!

Tourist: Oh my god, I am here, finally. At least for 3 weeks I have escaped from my life of dullness and work and arrived in the land of magic, wilderness and adventure: Africa! What a wonderful country.
I have been preparing my journey very carefully in order to seize the paradise of Kenya without illness: injections against tetanus, diphteria, polio, yellow fever, whooping cough, medicaments against malaria, but also the mosquito sprays DOOM, NOBITE and AUTAN. Condoms against HIV and antiseptic tissues after handshakes and before toilet use.
And!!!! I prepared myself in terms of talking to the Beach Boys. I read so much about those men who linger around the beach and harass the tourists. But not me! I am prepared: *jambo, sitaki, hapana, pole pole …* This country is not easy to conquer, but I will manage.

Beach Boy: *Jambo! Hakuna Matata!!!!* [yelling from afar]

Tourist: Oh, a Beach Boy. My first Beach Boy. *Jambo*. My name is Angi.

Beach Boy: *Hallo junge Frau, wie geht es Dir?*

Tourist: Oh, you know my mother tongue? How did you know I am German?

Beach Boy: You look German and I know your language, because I love Germany. It is a paradise. Life is so good there. *Hakuna Matata*.

Tourist: *Hakuna Matata?*

Beach Boy: *Kein Problem*. No problem. Nothing is a problem here, look: everything is wonderful here, the weather, the beach and everybody is friendly.

Tourist: Yes, that is true. People are smiling although they are poor, they are satisfied with what they have and don't always ask for more, like in Germany.
On my way from the airport to the hotel, there were little children next to the road and they were playing ball with a ball made out of old plastic bags, tied together with a rope.
And they were laughing and having fun!!! Imagine!

Beach Boy: Yes, Angi. I can show you around a little and even show you my home. My mother will cook a traditional food for you. She really enjoys having guests. And you are a special guest, because you are my first customer today and you are from Germany. I speak your language.

Tourist: German is hard to learn. But *hakuna matata*, I will teach you a little.

Beach Boy: [laughing] And then you invite me to come to Germany.

Tourist: [laughing with a distance] Oh, Germany is cold and unfriendly. You should be happy to be here.

Beach Boy: I have a cousin in Munich. I went there once.

Tourist: Aha!

Beach Boy: Ja, Mama Angi. Let us meet every day and talk. I like you.

Tourist: Soso.

Stage direction [loud sea breeze: both gazing at the sea for approx. 10 seconds]

[change outfit: Anne: cap 1 to cap 2, different sunglasses]

[static]

Beach Boy: *Jambo!* Hallo!

Tourist: *Jambo! Jambo Bwana!*

Beach Boy: How are you? How is your day? My name is Anne. You don't have to be scared. I don't bite.

Tourist: [mouth open, as if speechless] Äääääääh …

Beach Boy: Yes Mama, *hakuna matata*. I am not a cannibal.

Tourist: Oh, no no [excusing herself with overloaded gestures] I am not scared of you. I am an Africanist by profession, I am totally critical and postcolonial.

Beach Boy: Fine! Whatever. [showing a coconut] Here is a wonderful coconut that I have carved all by myself. You know, Mama, I don't want to beg or steal. So many other Beach Boys betray, but me, I am an honest person. I need to make my living. I will give you a good price for the coconut.

Tourist: I am still shocked by your words. Why did you introduce yourself by mentioning cannibalism? In their work on *Forbidden Words*, Keith Allan and Kate Burridge think about the cannibal as a subject of linguistic taboo and censorship.
Not only in colonial and post-colonial contexts, but generally. They say "Behind every rule of table etiquette lurks the determination of each person present to be a diner, not a dish" (Allan & Burridge 2006: 187). The overwhelming presence of the inherent violence in turning animals and plants into food is, the authors suggest, the motivation for the taboo itself, which of course did not prevent people from turning other people into food throughout history (see Dixon 2017 for a different approach to linguistic memory on that).

Beach Boy: This seems quite relevant, but nevertheless it is the Northern debate about a Southern topic. I was not involved in this discussion. I am involved in making my living and for that reason I need to sell the coconut. I still give you a good price.

Tourist: But I felt guilty, when you addressed me like that. But you are right. Not speaking about cannibalism and making images of the cannibal and of the pot is something else; not a taboo at all it seems, but a matter of censorship.

Beach Boy: You got my idea, why I was addressing you like that! Making erasure visible and throwing the hidden back into people's faces, my words have the possibility to tell multiple stories – about the continuity of colonial images, and how the unconscious speaks back, the inability to address colonial experiences and legacies in an appropriate self-critical way, and – importantly – about the materiality of colonialism.

Tourist: But what did you intend by doing so?

Beach Boy: I want you to feel guilty.

Tourist: It works!

Beach Boy: And now?

Tourist: How much is the coconut?

Beach Boy:	400 Shilling
Tourist:	I will give you 600.
Beach Boy:	[smiling, looking at the audience] It worked! Again! *Hakuna Matata!*
Stage direction	[loud sea breeze; both gazing at the sea for approx. 10 seconds]
	[change outfit: Anne: shuka, take off cap, Angi: change sunglasses]
	[not static]
Beach Boy:	*Jambo!* Hallo!
Tourist:	*Mimi sijambo Bwana. Na wewe?*
Beach Boy:	*Unajua Kiswahili?*
Tourist:	*Hivyondivyo.* And you, how come you speak Swahili so well?
Beach Boy:	Because eeehhh because I was born here. Welcome to Africa! *Karibu tena.*
Tourist:	But you cannot be from here. You are from the hinterland. You are Maasai, I see it: you are a Maasai. Not so?
Beach Boy:	There are some Maasai here. Selling crafts.
Tourist:	[intensely talking to Beach Boy] This is a contradictory discursive space: visits to sites such as Maasai villages in Kenya (where warriors perform wedding or hunting dances, introduce audiences to stereotyped Maa language practices and sell exotic souvenirs) produce essentializing narratives on authenticity and allochrony, and they also – often at the same time – trigger ironic performances that aim at unmasking and mocking the seemingly orientalist and inadequate representations of the village.

Beach Boy: *Lakini* I have been thinking much about these contradictory impressions. Even though I felt deeply disturbed about the ubiquitous commodification of all there is – bodies, emotions, identity, language, taste, the sun, the water, the beach – I like the people I meet over here: there is irony, and distance, in spite of transgression and objectification. First, it felt like a lie; a performance of invented tradition, heritage business. But after a while I saw how relationships were established that could be meaningful in many different ways.

Tourist: Another contradiction. Authenticity is mediatized, constructed as being rooted in the past, and projects qualities of the Self onto the Other and vice versa. You are a walking contradiction, my local friend. This is paradise!

Stage direction [loud sea breeze; both gazing at the sea for approx. 10 seconds]

[change outfit: Anne: wear Maasai bracelet, Angi: change sunglasses]

Beach Boy: *Jambo!* Hallo!

Tourist: *Jambo! Jambo Bwana! Habari gani?*

I have seen you before. Maasai are well-known in the world. They represent the wild and uncanny warrior, the myth and the wildness of the continent.

Beach Boy: Really?

Tourist: It seems that you are the protagonist in what MacCannel 1973 calls 'staged authenticity'. It

is all a construction on the beach. You, the displaced Maasai, are a construction, and I am as well. And this is all due to the tourist gaze, as John Urry has named this important topic. "The development of the constructed tourist attraction results from how those who are subject to the tourist gaze respond, both to protect themselves from intrusions into their lives backstage and to take advantage of the opportunities it presents for profitable investment." (Urry 1990: 9)

Beach Boy: A quote from Urry. Aha. And how do I respond?

Tourist: The best would be to say *hakuna matata.*

Beach Boy: *Hakuna Matata.*

Tourist: And as a Maasai, you should also jump.

Beach Boy: [jumps]

Tourist: Oh, this is not as high as Maasai normally jump. I saw them in the hotel yesterday during the evening show. They were performing traditional dances and this is where I got my knowledge from. So I can tell: you are not a Maasai.

Beach Boy: *Pole sana Mama*. But tourists want to meet a real Maasai, this is why I dress myself like one.

Tourist: No way, Anne. I will go back to the hotel and relax. And anyway… there is water gymnastics at five.

Beach Boy: Angi, can you please buy this coconut? I have not sold one today.

Tourist: *Hakuna Matata!*

Beach Boy: Why do I have to say I sell coconut all this time. I can sell different things, do different things, like you. This play is so full of clichés.

Tourist: My dearest one-dimensional friend, don't worry. Be happy.

Beach Boy: You are one-dimensional too, by the way.

Tourist: Because I have been figured, scripted and named so much. Gendered, typified. A marginalized, stigmatized person in my own way.

[tourist applies some sun blocker]

Intermezzo

Stage direction	[gradually remove costume during dialogue]
Angi:	A conversation between two othered players. They both tried to find out how the Other thinks in order to reduce him to writing, right? Tried to find out how somebody reacts in order to be able to cope.
Anne:	But when I think of resting, not working (at the Kenyan beach, everything seems to be about work), I think of players who are not interested in knowing or saying anything at all.
Angi:	Are you thinking of Mallorca then?
Anne:	Yes, Angi! Tourists who sing along in the party space.
Angi:	And wear T-shirts on which the Other is scripted, right onto the body of the tourist.
Anne:	And where the tourists are reduced to the script just as much in order to be able to rest. This is a form of escape from daily routines.
Angi:	And this escape goes along with the loss of language.

Act III: Party (Mallorca)

Stage direction [change outfit: Angi: motto-T-shirt; Anne: blue T-shirt with mole]

Beach vendor: Well, what do you think about me?

Tourist: I write you into a play. You are what I make of you. A Caliban, a T-shirt inscription, the topic of a talk of mine.

Beach vendor: While I integrate you into this disintegrating world. Into your ruined world.

Both: [stare at each other]

Tourist: *Hodiyodiyo.* [singing with loud voice]

Beach vendor: I have sunglasses on offer, or other cheap souvenirs. Nobody needs such things, but they make good party gags. We can have a conversation while I try to sell this. And you can integrate yourself by being open and by teaching me some language. *Heute billig morgen teuer*. Cheap today, costly tomorrow. Written on your T-shirt. The way you copy my language, the language I have copied from you, however, is not very hospitable.

Tourist: *Shalalalala.* [singing with loud voice]

Beach vendor:

Hospitality. Hospitable language has no single voice; it is fundamentally dialogic and interpersonal. And words do not easily remain singular sounds – they need to follow upon something, and they are followed by something. But in order to make this more inviting, let us bring in a bit of material culture right now. Not this T-shirt. Let us think of a chair, of all the many chairs and benches and stools that are everywhere, perhaps not in the environments where people like you, linguists, normally are (urban environments that are filled with non-places, and that are spaces where one risks not having time), but everywhere else.

Tourist: *Hula Palu Hula Palu Hula Palu.* [singing with loud voice]

Beach vendor: Instead of this shouting I imagine a stream of words that form a humming sound, something that has no end, and obviously no beginning also, as there cannot be any first or last word in anything as shared as language. It is interesting to think of different kinds of hums emerging from time spent together. How intense does it get, and how polyphonic?

Stage direction [Anne throws plastic sunglasses at Angi]

Tourist: In any case, it should be a hum. Words flowing out of conversation. A continuous hum.

Beach vendor: Which is punctuated by the yells of those who lack communality and safety.

Tourist: Didn't you recently have a meeting with a neocolonial-sounding politician that created quite a stir in the media? And weren't you made ridiculous in public because you suggested there should be more epistemic hospitality and more generosity towards migrants?

Beach vendor: That's right. But did the data and linguistic analysis transformed into a leisurely play feel hospitable to you? I bet it didn't.

Tourist: By the way, are you going to the Pragmatics Conference this year?

Epilogue: Integrating each other

[El Arenal back row noise]

Tourist: Is this data from our corpus, by the way? From Mallorca research, at night, at the curb crawling sites near the beach? You: traveler, tourist, linguist!

Beach vendor: What data was this? Can you write this down, in a grammar, a sociolinguistic case study, a discourse analysis? Where do you put the stench, the panic in her eyes, the subversive smile in the corners of her mouth?

Tourist: The sight of what she spit out after he came? His hands?

Beach vendor: No, you will have to invent something else here – or remain silent, as you often do.

Tourist: But here, my disorganized friend, we approach the edgelands of language: noise, chaos, a yell.

Beach vendor: And here, my dispositive friend, there is nothing for you. *Caminante! No hay caminos, hay que caminar.* Wanderer! There is no way, there is only the continuation of your walk.

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