

Same Old Story: Agential Realism in the Study of Colonial Histories

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Abstract

What are the possibilities of accessing the reality of history? How can we read history, and what can we learn from it? In this paper, we contemplate these questions by putting our ongoing research-creation project, *Same Old Story* (2020-present), in conversation with feminist critiques of objectivity and current discussions on the construction of historical narratives by historians, philosophers and artists, including Antoinette Burton, Andreas Huyssen, Walter Benjamin Walid Raad and Forensic Architecture. Specifically, we elaborate on how Karen Barad's "agential realism" ¹ informs our engagement with colonial histories in *Same Old Story* and speculate on its broader relevance in research-projects that engage with historical narratives. To do so, we describe the process of creating the current iteration of our project and offer a theoretical framework based on a discussion of three main themes, Archive/ Memory, Architecture and Monument/Counter-Monument. Building from this discussion, we elaborate on how to expand our work further, focusing on the possibilities and limits of revitalizing embodied realities in historical events and learning from them.

Keywords

Historical Research; Archival Research; History of Colonialism; Agential Realism; Situated Knowledges; Embodied Observation; Architecture; Art Installation; Monument; Counter-Monument.

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Introduction

Understanding embodied realities in the study of different histories of colonialism is one of the main concerns of this paper. In "Meeting The Universe Halfway: Realism and Social Constructivism Without Contradiction," Karen Barad advocates for a particular form of realism that she coins "agential realism."¹ She argues agential realism does not reject objectivity but believes in an objectivity that is embodied. In this definition, the object of observation is always observed from somewhere and this observation is situated within language and culture. In other words, the observer understands the object from a certain perspective and there is agency associated with them (the object and the viewer). In this paper, we expand the concepts involved in our research-creation project, *Same Old Story* (2020-present), a multimedia art installation that engages with archival documents and architectural structures through drawing, text and sound, to investigate the possibilities of accessing the embodied reality of different colonial histories, informed by Barad's conception of reality. In *Same Old Story*, we use the frame of research-creation as a broad methodology to describe our engagement with historical narratives, to benefit from the diverse possibilities of combining image, text and sound in revitalizing historical events and to explore the different capacities of the archival material. By expanding on the theories involved in *Same Old Story*, this paper contributes to elaborating on the role of archives, buildings and monuments in the search for the embodied realities of historical events.

Both buildings and archives are material cultural objects² that are observable by artists and can be subject to research-creation and visual decoding. In this paper, we will expand on how *Same Old Story* proposes a model that puts diverse histories in conversation with each other through archival research and multimedia art strategies. The focus of this paper is to address the following: Can the model proposed in *Same Old Story* in juxtaposing diverse historical events result in an expanded understanding of the reality of those events?

We are specifically curious about the different histories of colonialism and the architectural structures associated with them, as buildings and monuments have always been used by the colonizers in their process of domination. Through a close reading of the architecture involved in colonial struggles, we aim to investigate the potential violence against the colonized that is carried in their materials and shapes.³ These buildings are marks

on the body of history that can contribute to the understanding of embodied objectivity and potentially guide historians to a form of agential realism.

The current iteration of *Same Old Story* (Figure 1) incorporates six different historical events focusing on the architecture of the places related to them. Through multilayered drawings and sounds, the work puts different histories of colonialism in conversation with each other to study whether this juxtaposition results in a deeper understanding of the power relations embedded in colonial struggles. The use of juxtaposition as a method is informed by Donna Haraway's critique of objectivity as described in her essay "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." Haraway argues that in comparison with dichotomous charts, "a map of tensions and resonances between fix ends,"⁴ better represents different politics and epistemologies, and therefore a better account of objectivity can emerge. In *Same Old Story*, we created a map of colonial histories focusing on their power dynamics. By incorporating a cacophony of voices and setting the stage for a conversation, the concept map proposed in *Same Old Story* attempts to avoid the certainty of monolithic historical narratives that each architectural structure depicted in the work imposes.⁵ Although this juxtaposition might not result in an objective account of realism, our goal is to revitalize some truth by depicting multiple instances of colonial histories through their architecture. This first iteration prompted us to continue to explore the use of juxtaposition as a historiographic, artistic and theoretical approach.



Figure 1. *Same Old Story* (2020-present), Laser engraving on canvas, six-channel sound installation, installation view

In what follows, we provide an overview of what we define as an embodied approach to historical research informed by the work of historians and philosophers Walter Benjamin, Edward Said, Andreas Huyssen, Antoinette Burton and Haraway, as well as members of the art research agency Forensic Architecture. They all argue for understanding historical narratives as situated

and always socially, culturally and politically contingent to the present. This discussion sets the framework for our engagement with Barad's concept of "agential realism" that we hope to develop further in future iterations of this project. To contextualize this discussion, we elaborate on the processes of creating *Same Old Story*, including a detailed description of the work and a discussion of three main themes that shape the project: Archive/Memory, Architecture and Monument/Counter-Monument. Ultimately, this paper proposes to contemplate acts of observation and conveyance in the study of history and the possibility of putting different historical narratives in conversation as a way to gain an expanded understanding of the embodied realities of the historical events under observation through research-creation.

Historical Research as Embodied Experience

In the study of history, the main objects of observation are past events, which makes its study specifically complicated because the objects of observation are highly fugitive. As Walter Benjamin asserts, the vanishing point of history is always the present moment; thus, construction plays a crucial role in historical narratives.⁶ Thinking about the role that memory plays in historical narratives, Edward Said refers to collective memories as frequently manipulated and intervened for the urgent purposes of the present.⁷ Similarly, in her study on how archives are assembled, Antoinette Burton argues that it is a fantasy that history can deliver the absolute truth. Instead, history is a highly interpretive act.⁹ Burton tells us that the construction of historical narratives results from a pressure "present-day politics place on the past."⁹ Echoing Burton, Said and Benjamin, for Andreas Huyssen, crafting historical narratives is a mode of representation that belongs ever more to the present.¹⁰ In tune with Haraway, these authors share an understanding of a certain perspective embedded in the construction of historical narratives and a view from the present that is culturally conditioned or situated.^{11, 12}

Informed by these assertions on the construction of historical narratives we ask: how can we expand the concept of agential realism to the study of history? What happens if we do not have access to the object of observation? Barad argues the point of reference in agential realism is from the permanent marks "left on the bodies which define the experimental conditions"¹³ and reality perpetuates itself on these permanent marks. What are the marks on the body of history? In *Present*

pasts: urban palimpsests and the politics of memory, Huyssen posits that our urban environment is saturated with monuments and buildings that represent "the material traces of the historical past in the present."¹⁴ For Eyal Weizman and other members of Forensic Architecture, buildings with strong marks from the past are "political sensors."¹⁵ They are historical witnesses. "People can lie or forget, but buildings don't" Weizman and Forensic Architecture have emphatically declared.¹⁶

According to Barad, another measure for accessing agential realism is through reproducibility. "Reproducibility is possible because scientific investigations are embodied, grounded in experience."¹⁷ History is reproduced through the multiplicity of narratives. All these narratives according to Haraway, incorporate visions that are situated.¹⁸ Historical narratives are reproduced through the proliferation of diverse forms of archival records and archives. Archives are not to be equated with an official institution or its holdings, archival records are found in domestic spaces and oral forms of transmission are considered valid archives, as Burton and others have demonstrated.¹⁹ As a result of this expanded understanding of what constitutes an archive, set in motion by what is referred to as the archival turn, official and canonical archives have lost their exclusive role as the only legitimate sources of history.²⁰

In this research we are curious about the narratives associated with people who, according to Burton, "believe that their histories have not been written because they have not been considered legitimate subjects of history."²¹ These for Burton include colonized people whose lived experience is not validated by official historical narratives or achieves.²² Dominant narratives legitimize the actions of the colonizers and perpetuate their hegemony. Hence, colonial and racial hierarchies are reinforced and reproduced through these narratives²³ as they are associated with policies that categorize colonized and marginalized groups as inferior.²⁴ In arguing about different perspectives in the study of knowledge, Haraway advocates for a vision from below the position of power and calls it a "better vision."²⁵ Following Haraway, *Same Old Story* supports this "better vision" through the use of diverse forms of archives, specifically online archives, to depict six different colonial histories. This vision from below characterizes a postcolonial tendency in our project and has led to the use of various unofficial archives. In the following section, we describe the process of creating *Same Old Story* and elaborate on the use of online image archives as references for the images depicted in the project.

An Account of Same Old Story

In *Same Old Story*, we are reflecting on the possibilities and limits of images (moving and still), texts (in any format) and sounds found online, to develop juxtapositions between different colonial experiences that can offer new insights into their histories. So far, we have included six different historical events in our work. The image component of the current iteration consists of six different superimposed renderings based on online archival photos of the sites of these events. The renderings are laser engraved together on one canvas (Figure 2).



Figure 2. *Same Old Story* (2020-present), Drawing component.

- The six different narratives that we have chosen are:
 - The anti-colonial speech of Patrice Lumumba (the first prime minister of The Democratic Republic of Congo) at the ceremony of the proclamation of the Congo's independence (1961) in the Palais de la Nation in Kinshasa.
 - The urban war that took place during the Battle of Algiers (1956-1957) as a part of the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) between France and the Algerian National Liberation Front, and the role of the Casbah neighborhood in these conflicts.
 - Secret negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization happening in Norway resulted in Oslo Accords (1993).
 - British Embassy in Tehran, a symbol of colonial interventions in Iran and one instance of this intervention: an oil concession between Britain and Iran that gave Britain exclusive rights to oil prospects for 60 years (1901).
 - The destruction of the Old Summer Palace, a complex of palaces and gardens and the main residence of the Emperors of the Qing dynasty in Beijing by Anglo-French forces during China's Opium Wars (1839-1842).

– The construction of the Tiny Houses in the path of the Coastal GasLink Pipeline in northern B.C. in Canada by members and allies of the Wet'swet'en Indigenous community: an expression of resistance against forced invasion of their ancestral territories. (2020-present)

Besides the theoretical framework already described, during the initial stages of the project two other important sources inspired the use of juxtaposition. Firstly, the Iranian traditional form of dramatic storytelling called *Pardeh Khani* (Figure 3). *Pardeh Khani* is a performance in which the performer stands in front of a large painted backdrop that includes several stories related to each other and narrates these stories.²⁶ The painting component of this performance inspired the composition of the laser-cut drawing in *Same Old Story*.



Figure 3. *Pardeh Khani* (a traditional form of dramatic storytelling in Iran)

Secondly, Eve Tuck and C. Ree's essay, "A Glossary of Haunting" informed our approach of putting distinct histories together as a form of resisting dominant epistemologies. In their essay Tuck and Ree advocate for violating the terms of settler-colonial knowledge production which, according to them, is based on "the separation of the particular from the general, the hosted from the host, the personal from the public."²⁷ In short, to break the terms of settler colonial knowledge we need to get rid of separation and categorization. In our work, we aim to emphasize the similarities of distinct selected events in terms of power relations: how colonial power is symbolically, covertly or openly mobilized against the colonized.

To add to the livelihood of the stories and to encourage an intimate connection to the work, we included sound in the installation as well. The audio element was composed using sounds sourced from online archives, similar to the image component. It consists of six audio channels playing at the same time, with each sound related to a single event coming from a separate speaker. The aim is to combine drawing and sound to encourage simultaneity among different narratives. The

presence of diverse narratives in different modalities (sound and image) in one work stimulates a fictional situation: it compresses time and space, creating an experience for the viewer in which all events are happening at the same time.

Finally, to provide some information about the events and to bridge between image and sound, we included some captions in a booklet as a catalogue for the work. This booklet includes a brief description of each event to provide some context for the viewer.

The current iteration of *Same Old Story* includes multilayered drawing and sound while written text, in caption format, acts as a complementary element to the work. The drawings are made of digital line tracing of a selection of photos. The photos are collected through an online search and depict places related to the events (i.e., Palais de la Nation in Kinshasa, Holmenkollen Park Hotel near Oslo, Casbah neighborhood in Algiers, British Embassy in Tehran, the ruins of the Summer Palace in Beijing and wooden Tiny Houses on the path of pipeline construction in the northern BC). After studying the photos collected, we selected five distinct images of each place showing spaces within and around the buildings from different angles. We traced the outlines of each photo and created a digital drawing of each. We experimented with their sizes and their positions on a 94 x 63-inch background. We divided the background into six areas, each dedicated to one of the events. In each area, we adjusted the positioning of drawings to create a desired superimposed drawing depicting a different perspective of the same place. (Figure 4 and 5) Through these superimposed and blurry image compositions, we aim to highlight the coexistence of a multiplicity of narratives about each event and the illegibility of history more broadly.

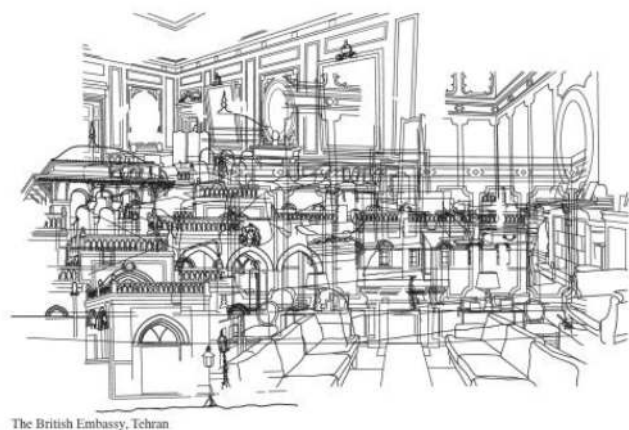


Figure 4 and 5. *Same Old Story* (2020-present), digital drawings

To create a physical version of our digital drawing, we experimented with a few techniques such as screen printing, digital printing on diverse kinds of photo papers, digital embroidery on canvas and muslin, etc. In the process, we came across laser-engraving. After running some tests with a laser machine on different kinds of papers, fabrics and canvases, we found laser engraving on raw canvas a befitting choice for the work both formally and conceptually. In experimenting with the laser machine, we could learn how to enhance the depth of drawing as well as how to set the machine to increase the possibility of burning the canvas, creating holes, and controlling their shape. We particularly like this specific treatment, as we found burning, destruction, and elimination to be in harmony with the history and trajectory of colonialism (Figure 6).



Figure 6. *Same Old Story* (2020-present), detail of the work

We used a similar approach in creating the sound composition for the installation. During the process of sound editing, and after making some samples, we realized that the type of connection between sound and image needs to be the same. By this we mean that if the connection to drawing happens instantly, the connection

to sound needs to be instant rather than delayed to achieve the same effect. This observation led us to select abstract (spatial or ambient) sounds rather than sound of a conversation, for instance. The sounds that we selected for the work are:

- An old oil jack pump drilling the ground.
- The sound of urban conflicts, including gunshots, explosions, footsteps, sirens, etc.
- The sound of applauding of the world's leaders in the ceremony of Oslo Accord One.
- The sound of the burning of a large building
- The sound of logging.
- The sound of Patrice Lumumba's anti-colonial speech.

Although the last sound (Patrice Lumumba's anti-colonial speech) is more recognizable and specifically linked to one of the events depicted, it is in French which was not the language of the first iteration of the project. It was used as background sound and was not intended to be followed or understood. During the selection process, we tried to find the actual sounds by searching the online archives related to each event, however, in a few instances, where we did not have access to the original sound, we hinged upon fiction and used an archival sound that we assumed is similar to the actual sound that belonged to the event. This process is informed by the work of artist Walid Raad who delves into fiction in his practice of creating archives in the absence of historical records²⁸ and Burton's ideas about the backstage of the archives and the role of construction in the process of their creation.²⁹ Later in this paper, I will discuss Raad's practice as well as Burton's ideas in more detail.

Same Old Story incorporates archival research and uses archival material in its creation. It engages with architecture by depicting the built spaces of the selected events, and the work itself has monumental qualities through its physical presence. In what follows, I will focus on the three mentioned elements of archive, architecture and monument in discussing the work and engaging with literature under the three themes of Archive/Memory, Architecture and Monument/Counter Monument. This discussion informs the methods used in the creation of *Same Old Story* for depicting different colonial histories to convey embodied realities about them.

Theoretical Discussion

In this section we expand the conceptual framework explored thus far through a discussion of the concepts of archive, memory, architecture, monument, and counter-monument. These concepts were selected to develop a more specific communication with Barad's ideas of accessing the agential reality of history through marks on the bodies (architecture and monument) and the reproducibility of phenomena (archives) that gives an embodied account of objectivity.³⁰

Archive/Memory

In the process of research for *Same Old Story*, our main sources of information are archival data. This research began during the pandemic when we only had access to the online archives. Therefore, our collected data is mainly from online sources. In researching the archives, we have been looking for evidence of historical events in the search for accessing the reality of those events. Concerning the archival evidence and the notion of truth, Burton argues that archives come into being as a result of political pressure. "Debates that engage the challenges of 'telling the truth about history' have had very real political and material consequences"³¹ as the use and the nature of the archive are not only about the past but about the present. Informed by these, the question that comes to mind is how to trust archives. Which archive is trustworthy? How the archives have been shaped? Who has made them? and what are the limits of the archive for accessing the reality of historical events?

As a reflection on these questions, in her edited volume *Archive stories facts, fiction, and the writing of history* Burton elaborates on the term "archive stories"³² as the stories of the formation of the archives that challenge their objectivity. She believes archives are the artifacts of history themselves and insists on looking at "the backstage of archives"³³ to investigate how they are constructed and manipulated. It is important to acknowledge that all archives are curated, thus there is power involved in their formation. According to her, archive-making is an "embodied experience,"³⁴ archives are historical actors, and they are made to speak to a specific audience. This notion speaks to Barad's idea that observation is embodied³⁵ and Haraway's consideration of the object of knowledge as an active agent and of knowledge production as situated.³⁶

Burton discusses how the access to digital technologies has made all of us archivists and archive consumers and as a result, more democratic versions of archives are emerging.³⁷ This condition has resulted in the

proliferation of online archives that has challenged the role of the official and canonical archives as the only legitimate archival source.

In our project, besides using institutional online archives (official and canonical), we used a variety of non-institutional online archival material and media resources including personal websites or sites not backed by governmental agencies or corporations. Because we are interested in studying micro-narratives of historical events, our attention is specifically drawn to the archives that deal with oral history. That is to archival sources that “materialize those countless historical subjects who may never have come under the archival gaze.”³⁸ As Bruton argues, postcolonial scholars renewed their attention to the archives while acknowledging the value of oral history and its relation to memory which have been traditionally outside the colonial notion of the archive.³⁹ For Burton, as for other feminist historians “Memory is always cast (and still is) in gendered terms,” and “the capacity of women to write history has been considered dubious until quite recently.”⁴⁰

Similarly, in discussing different visual systems, Haraway ponders whether the perspective of the subjugated is more trusting, she states: “there is good reason to believe vision is better from below the brilliant space platforms of the powerful.”⁴¹ Likewise, Michael Foucault, calls the official and national archives “documents of exclusion” and “monuments to particular configurations of power.”⁴²

Informed by these expanded notions of what an archive is and what counts as history, we collected most of our data from non-institutional online archives and personal narratives. We understand our work as an embodied process that incorporates specific historical events and does not claim to transfer absolute truths but rather our fictional creation that hopefully triggers the viewer's curiosity to continue thinking about the events depicted.

Architecture

*Every material object can be read as a sensor, but buildings might be among the best sensors of societal and political change. There are several reasons: buildings are immobile, anchored in space; they are in close and constant interaction with humans; they are exposed both to the elements outside them and to an artificially controlled climate within. And this besides embodying, of course, the political, social, strategic, and financial rationalities that went into their conception.*⁴³

Buildings are among the most stable witnesses of the past. Huyssen refers to them as “palimpsests of space,”⁴⁴ where the marks of presence are merged with traces and erasure left from the past. In *Same Old Story*, we follow Huyssen's ideas and focus on the architectural elements related to selected historical events. We are interested in the empty spaces loaded with the heavy lift of history, spaces saturated with marks and material testimony of those events, markings that can be used as leverage against the colonial powers that have shaped them.⁴⁵ Architectural elements serve as evidence that aid in gaining a sense of the reality of past events. This understanding of architectural elements is aligned with Barad's idea of accessing reality through the marks on the bodies.⁴⁷ The marks of the past have an active presence in our living environment.⁴⁷

Buildings play political role in history, Weizman from Forensic Architecture refers to architecture as a “political plastic”⁴⁸ where different forces are shaped into forms. For Weizman, “architecture is a material trace that can operate as an entry point into understanding larger processes... reading macro from the micro.”⁴⁹ The sites that we study are saturated with elements through which the dominant colonizers have tried to create, according to Said, “a sense of identity”⁵⁰ for them and the colonized. As Weizman continues to explain, material aesthetics are interconnected with all the things around them and bear marks of events.⁵¹ These sites are haunted spaces filled with historical trauma. Their visible sides contain traces of the invisible.⁵² While researching archival photos of the six events that constitute the work's central visual component, we identified elements that operate as “actors and agents”⁵³ in transferring a sense of domination of the colonial forces. We paid close attention to the details of the archival images of buildings to study how they can play a role in the power structures of colonial interactions. We emphasized certain elements in the drawings that, we believe, contribute to perpetuating colonial power relations. For instance, numerous tabletop and wall photo frames installed in the meeting rooms could indicate an interior design strategy supporting a certain sense of identity.

In our project, we seek to represent different types of architecture connected to colonial interactions or dominance. An example of the latter is the image of the Palais de la Nation in Kinshasa during the Belgian rule over Congo. An example of the former is the architecture of urban areas where the colonized population lives, often dense and ghetto-like neighbourhoods under heavy surveillance. The project depicts the Casbah neighbourhood in Algiers during the French occupation. In other cases, anti-colonial movements use architecture as a form of resistance

against colonial forces. This type of architecture is exemplified by the inclusion of the tiny houses that the Wet'swet'en peoples built on the site of the gas pipeline in northern B.C. to demonstrate their ancestral presence on those territories. Other architectural elements included in our project are ruins as traces of colonial power and scars on the land that can lead us to investigate different historical perspectives. The ruins of China's Summer Palace, destroyed during the Opium Wars directed by British and French forces against China, exemplify this architecture. In future iterations of our project, we will continue to investigate other forms of architecture that serve as traces of colonialism in one way or another.

Monument/Counter-Monument

In the process of developing *Same Old Story*, we came across the concept of monument and the monumentality of colonial buildings. We even discussed whether we wanted our work to have monumental qualities. As we delved more profoundly into monumentality and its implications, we came across the concept of counter-monument. In what follows, we reflect on this term and how it informs *Same Old Story* as a counter-monument.

In "Memory/Monument" James E. Young refers to the Latin definition of the monument as "things that remind"⁵⁴ to introduce his ideas on how monuments act as symbols of a specific historical era. He notes how agencies of power use monuments as a self-aggrandizing tool to dramatizing their achievements and create a sense of identity. The function of monuments is to generate a unifying, reductive sense of memory, serving the power and mythicizing its role in shared memory. However, in this process, monuments may not remind us of events so much as bury them beneath the layers of those myths they project.⁵⁵ Young argues if monuments are mediums at the service of power, a monument against power is a monument against itself, against its authoritarian role, and its "traditionally didactic function"⁵⁶ that reduces the viewer's role to a passive spectator. He coined the term "counter-monument"⁵⁶ to refer to monumental works of art that resist their traditional function.

Thomas Stubblefield further elaborates on the concept of counter-monument. In his essay "Do Disappearing Monuments Simply Disappear?"⁵⁷ Stubblefield argues for the potential of counter-monuments in revitalizing the past through exchanges between the viewer and the work. He

asserts that counter-monuments turn a site into a discourse by democratizing power relationships and avoiding official and singular narratives. In this manner, counter-monuments sidestep the monument's certainty of history and rigidity by transferring productive recreation to its visitors. Such a monument creates the possibility of confronting opposing ideologies and frees itself from imposing a top-down ideology. Counter-monument operates within the postwar art discourse that seeks "a relational and contingent identity by relying on the viewer for both the creation of meaning and the very construction of the work itself."⁵⁸

In *Same Old Story*, our aim is to avoid didacticism and the creation of reductive narrative of events. To achieve this, we tried to move toward abstraction, to keep our distance from any form of literal representation and avoid what Donna Haraway refers to as the "god trick,"⁵⁹ which is a view from above that erases difference. We used superim-position to create blurry images incorporating multiple perspectives of each historical site. As we further explore the concept of counter-monument we are reflecting on how to foster a more democratic relationship with the viewer. Stubblefield discusses interaction and ephemerality as two qualities of counter-monuments.⁶⁰ Following Stubblefield, in future iterations of this project, we will reflect on the possibilities of incorporating the viewers' input more meaningfully in the work and how to reduce the physicality of the installation to avoid imposing a fixed presence in the space. To do so, we plan to explore the affordances of immersive virtual environments.

Conclusion

This paper situates our ongoing research-creation project, *Same Old Story*, in conversation with Karen Barad and Donna Haraway's feminist critiques of objectivity and current discussions on the construction of historical narratives by historians, philosophers and artists, including Antoinette Burton, Andreas Huyssen, Walter Benjamin, Walid Raad and Forensic Architecture. Specifically, we provided an overview of Barad's concept of "agential realism" and Haraway's "situated knowledges" as central concepts that inform our use of juxtaposition of sound and image to put different histories of colonialism in conversation with one another to 1) offer a critique of objectivity in historiography and 2) investigate the possibilities of accessing the embodied reality of different colonial histories through research-creation.

We discussed how our project proposes an embodied approach to historical research through its theoretical frame-work, the process of making the first iteration of *Same Old Story*, and its installation experience, which offers a space where multiple historical narratives can be experienced simultaneously. Using images and sound, *Same Old Story* offers various historical perspectives rather than a view from above or a monolithic historical narrative. We further elaborated on our project's three additional themes:

Archive/Memory, Architecture and Monument/Counter-Monument. In future iterations, we will continue to theorize these concepts in relation to the work of Barad, Haraway and others to explore their potential in putting diverse colonial histories in conversations with each other to offer more nuanced perspectives of these distinct histories. To further explore whether the proposed model in *Same Old Story* of juxtaposing diverse historical events results in an expanded understanding of the reality of those events. Parallel to these theoretical explorations, we will study the possibilities of virtual environments and other technologies to facilitate a more active interaction from the viewer.

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