# An Urban Political from the "End of the World": Dock Nine and its Technical Epistles

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ABSTRACT

*This essay explores some resonances between the measures taken by the intensely subjugated residents of an urban district in Jayapura, West Papua (Indonesia) and notions of the "technical" examined by multiple strands in philosophies of media/computation, as well as Black thought. It explores some of the collective orientations and practices deployed to address a context of intensive subjugation, emphasizing these practices as modes of technicity applied to sustaining ways of acting in concert in a situation that continually undermines social coherence and intimacy. This exploration aims to further an understanding of a Black urban politics; to encompass the orientations and practices of "resistance" as technical operations to mitigate the experiences of capture and foster a sense of indeterminacy in the dispositions of ongoing colonial rule.* [Keywords: urban politics, technicity, Blackness, collective life, coloniality, political ontologies]

*Here we are at the end of the world. But it is not our world.*
*But amber* (white folks) *say we don't have one anyway, so they bring*
*the only one we have.*
*For which we must start at the beginning. End of story*
*So beginning and end is not our story*
*Mother and father, who were they, broken into pieces, tossed in the air*
*Exposed to everything*
*Where did they land, or did they, as the land is also gone*
*Oh suffering, suffering, life beyond repair*
*Only laughter remains*
Bong Freddie (hip hop artist, Jayapura)

*But for these shores to take shape, even before they could be con-*
*templated, before they were yet visible, what sufferings came from*
*the unknown! Indeed, the most petrifying face of the abyss lies far*
*ahead of the slave ship's bow, a pale murmur; you do not know if it*
*is a storm cloud, rain or drizzle, or smoke from a comforting fire. The*
*banks of the river have vanished on both sides of the boat. What kind*
*of river, then, has no middle? Is nothing there but straight ahead? Is*
*this boat sailing into eternity toward the edges of a nonworld that*
*no ancestor will haunt? This is why we stay with poetry…We know*
*ourselves as part and as crowd, in an unknown that does not terrify.*
*We cry our cry of poetry. Our boats are open, and we sail them for*
*everyone.* (Glissant 197:7-9)

What are some of the ways in which people stay with poetry, far-flung in open boats in often forgotten parts of the world? How is this poetry a matter of technical operations running alongside symbolic orders, more than a matter of recuperating deep seated cultural knowledge? In situations of extreme precarity, with few discernible horizons, what is it that such poetical technicities do in relationship to subjugation? Technicity here refers to a mode of existence that develops according to abstract logics of invention and creativity that are separate from and do no always join up to the lifeworld of the human (Keating 2023). It entails the reciprocal shaping of distinct elements and processes that generate unanticipated capacities and are, as such "poetic" in that these are concretized in ways

that exceed the repetition of normative narratives or procedures. This essay is an attempt to sketch out how a rough hewn urban district attempts to do more than eke out a minimalist survival. That even in brutally implosive and claustrophobic conditions, a technically manifested poesis can create inexplicable yet concrete modes of collective existence beyond economy and value.

The essay will proceed initially as an extended story of a single neighborhood in Jayapura, West Papua (Indonesia), a city on the Pacific as it wavers in its geographical bearings and stands watch over "open seas." Working for a project on the formations of urban "Black" culture in Indonesia curated by an independent urban studies research center in Jakarta, I lived in Dock IX from October 2021-March 2022. The essay is thus based on a series of conversations with residents, mostly youth and mostly who in one way or another presented themselves as musicians, hip hop artists, and "hustlers." Few had any kind of steady job, and lived day to day off of various part-time work, theft, and the occasional gig in a club or hotel. Most had some kind of mixed ethnic genealogy. Even for the "strictly" ethnic Papuans, their parents had come from different places in West Papua—such as Biak, Serui, Wamena, Manokwari—thus operating outside much of the more rigidly defined Papuan ethnic geographies that characterize the Jayapura region. Some were involved in loosely configured Black power associations within the umbrella of #BlackLivesMelanesia—where they saw themselves as part of a larger Pacific entity enjoined through a commonly shared Blackness.

While a place like Dock IX might seem to be especially conducive to hip hop, the artists face many blockages, as residents more frequently turn anger against themselves then give voice to it. The current preference for the most saccharine, twangy songs of love gone wrong dominate the soundscape. But these renditions are heavily coded—i.e. on the one hand, they are safe bets in terms of military surveillance, but on the other hand, invoke the ambiguities of common words to indicate a refusal to be silenced. In the early stages of hip hop performance in Jayapura, youth eagerly appropriated the genre to deliver fierce and direct messages of resistance to the substantial Indonesian military presence. But there was fierce repression by the police and military in return, particularly in neighborhoods such as Dock IX where highly urbanized and largely unemployed youth were under constant scrutiny. So the musicians I know have extended themselves to a sustained experimentation with a vast repertoire

of fragmented knowledges and experiences that have been rewoven over the past years to materialize a perspective. This is a perspective of musicians looking at and beyond a specific terrain, and figuring out a way to experience that terrain looking back, as well as forward into a heterogeneity of positions where they *might* be, could be.

The story is geared toward amplifying the technical processes involved in configuring spaces and times of maneuver aimed not to accumulate or consolidate, but to navigate a suspension in motion in a "river" that has no middle. The story is followed by an extended discussion on the ways in which the practices engaged resonate with specific notions of coloniality, technicity, mobility, semiosis, and nonrepresentational materiality and computation. I emphasize "resonance" as a field of encounter between story, theory and engagement so as to deter inclinations to see the story as illustrating or embodying particular conceptualizations. The idea rather is to put in motion a more "open boat" of thinking. To experience how the resonance of specific stories, sensations, and concepts both intersects and diverges, with neither story or concept being quite sufficient for the other, always pointing to other difficult, unanswered questions along the waves.

Everyone is purportedly afraid of this Jayapura district, Dock IX. Including its inhabitants. The police are relentless in their arbitrary executions. Endurance is highly self-medicated. Life expectancy is less than fifty, in part because there are few medications on the shelves (Tioli et al. 2021). There is an overwhelming sense among residents across Jayapura of being cut-off, captured in a region where it is not possible to move except along a few limited routes, mostly by air and sea, and then only to a few destinations. So, "to live exposed" is commonly invoked as both the prevailing condition and the objective of everyday practice. Exposed meaning not hidden, not covering up some secret inclination, not parking oneself away from the rough and tumble that comes from a place largely left to its own devices. Exposed to the energies brought by a volatile climate, but also the soothing of sun and sea, of not having to deal with attitudes and behaviors that come out of nowhere. But also exposed to the prospects of death at any moment, the woeful absence of healthcare, of disputes that are terminated only by bloodshed, and then only temporarily. Exposed to the concoctions and invisible penetrations of sorcerers and a proliferating multiplicity of religious peculiarities.

The contention throughout this piece is that the technical can act as a poetics for mediating these multiple exposures, for heterogeneous forces coming from all over the place and crystalizing into a collective entity without precedent. But an entity through which diverse peoples are gathered up into a form of self-recognition beyond the familiar vernaculars of community or nation. This point draws upon Simondon (2017), who emphasized the ways in which matter does not pre-exist in discernible forms but rather finds and changes form through the coalescence of, reciprocal acting upon diverse elements, all of which at the same time have their "feet" in other places. Such positioning also registers effects on whatever is composed, but in ways that problematize genealogy. It is never quite certain, in terms of proportion or value, just exactly what does what to what, and in what quantity.

The use of the technical here is not meant to obviate other dimensions and vernaculars that might contest it or provide other orientations. It is not that Papuans have jettisoned emphases on cultural continuities and political imaginations. It is not that they have ceased to value the multiplicity of both cosmological and everyday practices of sustenance. But many of the young people I interacted with also expressed the willingness to live without them in a desire to focus on the "machines," as Emmanuel, a music entrepreneur, indicates. For him, these machines were not only mixers and synthesizers, but also ways of speaking and interacting that mixed and synthesized different styles of speech and everyday behavioral performance. "We need to keep them (the Indonesians) off guard, and speak in words without obvious meaning, and keep practicing all of the techniques that allow us to do that." This position resonates with the work of Chowdhury (2019) where the crowd is known to have a surplus of energy, which distances it from the people or the public, the enduring figures of democratic politics. Also salient here is Chatterjee's (2012) notion of vernacular politics as a mode of composition that draws together a wide range of speech acts, to upend questions as to who is eligible to appear in a public realm of contestation and under what form. Something that is largely a technical operation implemented to disrupt the predominant deployment of technical instruments to stabilize through counting and assessing.

As Marriott (2021) also argues in light of his extensive work on Frantz Fanon, the emancipation from subjugation is not the recouping of some idealized past life or future imaginary but an exposure to a seemingly

abyssal background. This background entails a willingness to suspend the judgment that what you see is what things are, an acknowledgement that beyond the immediacy of a person's context that there is a field of vision that can be grasped and composed in excess of what is presented, and a belief that this willingness to see in a different way, a way that does not tie everything together into a coherent image, will enable the person to better navigate the ins and outs of everyday urban life. These processes of willingness, acknowledgement, and belief are then often crystalized into a particular working image (Simone 2019). Methodologically, then, I am trying here to think about what this collective body, this background might look like, and thus fold the individual lives of Dock IX residents into a sense of an emerging, albeit amorphous collective operation. Here, the technical as poetics entails a repertoire of different modes of gathering—from watching to "strange" choreographies of public bodily positioning—all of which are oriented to something emerging as a political way of being in a situation of refusal (Simpson 2014), of a progressively closing window for transitioning from colony to nation, and a continuous and open-ended imagination of what a nation might be beyond the conventional tropes of sovereignty.

Etched along an enormous three-finger wide bay, residents of Dock IX are also exposed to the question of who really lives there. It is not just a matter of the deficiency of demographic accounts, or the perceived political danger of keeping an inventory on the seemingly constant shift of residencies and activities that transpire there. More to the point is the widely shared perception that human beings are in the minority. Where humans may have attempted to retain some kind of control by professing that they have themselves ceded control to a heterogeneity of inhuman entities, they also readily admit that they have little knowledge about what these non-humans are actually up to. What will be quickly unfurled in any engagement with Dock IX are the accounts of its positioning within a continuously updated but obdurate colonial situation whereby the nearly universal aspirations of an indigenous population for self-determination are brutally suppressed. Where the apparent ethnic and religious heterogeneity of the district, and its sedimentations of "internecine" struggles, the shifting deposits of earth in various stages of liquidity, its ruins and half-baked aspirations have been curated by oscillating intensities of surveillance and indifference.

West Papua has long sought to be an independent nation. This was an aspiration dutifully expressed according to international law in 1962,

when the peoples of West Papua were promised by both the Netherlands and the United Nations the opportunity to ratify their status as an independent nation. This failed in its realization due to the political mechanizations of Cold War politics that saw the United Nations succumb to the complicities between the U.S., Netherlands and Indonesia governments to postpone this process in the interest of deterring the supposed spread of communism (Kirksey 2012, Viartasiwi 2018). Indonesia was delegated control until a referendum on West Papua's definitive status could be held. Such did not occur until 1969, and only then involving some 1,025 tribal chiefs selected by the Indonesian military, who voted in favor of incorporation at gunpoint. As the sixty year hold of the Indonesian state over West Papua has worked its way through various iterations of military overkill, concessions to gestures of self-rule, and systematic attempts to alter the demographic complexion of the territory, the urban form of Jayapura has also shifted to reflect oscillating centers of economic and cultural gravity.

An attack on an Indonesian military installation in July 1965 commenced what is popularly referred to as the *great awakening* that would gradually work its way across all of West Papua's diverse terrain and populations in an enduring fight against Indonesian colonization/annexation and for national self-determination (Kusumaryati 2018). From then on in, from highland guerrilla movements, to the elaboration of Papuan epistemologies at schools and universities, from ministrations from pulpits to street-corners, to everyday subversions and refusals, to the intensive circulation of bodies, marked with all kinds of designations, across the territory and beyond (Chauvel 2007), an emerging sense of nation-time (Lele 2020, MacLeod 2015) was being constituted within the confines of what has been called "slow genocide" (Elmslie and Webb-Gannon 2014). An important aspect of struggles for national liberation under conditions of intense military occupation, targeted killings of Papuan militants, public intellectuals, students, and gangsters is the way in which growing urban areas are used as platforms for the reciprocal extensions of Papuan households and resources across the entirety of the region—a circulatory force to contrast an occupying one. Lives are less consolidated in place but rather are availed and avail to others the possibility of a differentiated positioning, a new angle, a surfeit of relationality.

Papuan cities become a crossroads in a multiplicity of exchanges that proliferate interfaces and points of contact with an exterior reached through a network of pathways, secret "highways" and interconnected

fields, streams, backroads leading in and out and toward different towns and settlements. This is not simply the product of a spatial imagination, but a temporal one as well, an ongoing project of "Papuan time," a time of extending lives to each other as the materialization of a nation not yet realized in terms of the prevailing tropes of sovereignty and recognition (Kusumaryati 2018, Rutherford 2003). Even as subject to the familiar civilizing missions that lead to little besides dejection, there is a sustained temporality of a refusal to cultivate the self as property even as the Indonesian apparatus tries to divide the Papuan body into increasingly finite micro-units, like that of digital time keeping.

So the continuation of this great awakening does not move toward some foregone conclusion, as the tropes of subjugation and liberation are changing. There may be an obdurate commitment to nationhood on the part of the Papuans, but just what this nation might look like is being rehearsed all of the time through experimental forms of gathering, which themselves reflect efforts to constitute "something else besides," right next to the predominant realities of suffering. Through the intersection of different trajectories of genealogy, inclination, labor, and subsidy, Dock IX is mostly a thick warren of wooden houses built on stilts along a narrow bay, as well as extending along several creeks moving toward the interior and up steep embankments. It long served as a small center for bartered trade extending as far as the Ternate Sultanate during the 19th century, and then as a contiguous backwater of dirty business for the growing Dutch settlement beginning in 1910. Thus Dock IX reflected the not-uncommon colonial positionality of a zone of liminality, a collection zone of multiple migrations and informal economies that usually accompanied the consolidation of European settlement.

The district has been settled by humans differentiated by origin, race, and institutional capacity but at the same time brought together through a common sense of hedging and provisionality. The Buton and Bugis peoples are commonly viewed as the district's main inhabitants, having come from distant Sulawesi many decades ago. They rarely build anything on land, committed or some might say trapped by a thorough orientation to the sea. The indigenous Papuans never followed suit to this degree, and having largely been evicted over time from the waterfront, nevertheless in spots here and there continue to fight for places on the shore. The intensity of the struggle on the part of different ethnic groups and their trades—fishers, traffickers, petty merchants, thieves, drivers, and waste collectors

reflect, all at the same time, the largely inhospitable rough terrain of much of immediate interior, the consolidation of land ownership in the hills of salaried bureaucrats, old elite families, and military outposts, and the maintenance of a territory in which different peoples are kept close to always figure out practical ways to deal with each other in an ethnically balkanized city, and thus a domain of concessions—ways in which different people and their activities avail themselves to each other. This process of offering mutual affordances is not only a way to manage the everyday tensions that ensue from disparate realities and aspirations of a heterogeneous population but also an economy itself—a world of small favors and collaborations, of perpetual rumors and information exchange, all buttressed by a commonly shared wariness, often hatred, of the Javanese—the *amber* (white people) who have long been viewed as one Bugis imam, Abdi, puts it as "those who think they can eat everything, everywhere."

There is a complicated racial dynamics at work in all of the transactions and orientations of Dock IX, and indeed in West Papua in general. Blackness has long been mobilized to denigrate the ineligibility of Papuans to assume self-rule, as well as to point to them as a form of infinite danger and inexplicability. It is mobilized by many non-Javanese as a way to defuse the distance claimed by Javanese as their right to rule—such as when Bugis and Buton will claim that "we are not Black," so on what basis do you, the Java, have a right to dominate the affairs of the country. At still other times, Blackness becomes the provisional modality of some tentative mutual recognition of commonality amongst the diverse peoples of Eastern Indonesia, who have long been dismissed on the basis of both being largely Christian *and* Black.

Blackness in Papua has oscillated between a concept of derogation that must be avoided at all costs, used at times to prove the ineligibility of particular Papuans from holding particular positions of authority, and alternately, an identity that potentially unifies diverse ethnicities and in relation to a larger "Black" world of the oppressed, but an oppressed with a particular mission and power. The solidity of any consolidation of ethnicities and regionalisms into a "Black identity" waxes and wanes, shows up and dissipates according to the situation or place at hand, and who and what is being contrasted or enjoined. It is particularly enjoined in attempts to counter the substantial state subsidized influx of Muslims for Java. But more importantly it becomes a vernacular of entanglements, of the ways in which youth of different backgrounds extend themselves to each other,

thus extending the compositions of those very backgrounds and constituting a particular territorialization of their being with each other. Here, there is an always fragile sense of Blackness being that which might be able to suture together powerful alliances among peoples from Ambon, Flores, Kei, Nusa Tengarra, and Papua, or at least a different means of operating in Indonesia besides each being a forlorn and marginal minoritarian grouping. Thus in Dock IX Blackness operates as an always ambivalent vernacular of exposure to both denigration and affirmation, in an interaction that has no synthesis. That which produces no visible collective body or identity. Just laughter.

Part of the generalized fear occasioned by Dock IX not only centers on the profession of residents having conceded the district to a panoply of non-human bodies, not so much seen as "spirits" or "ghosts" but material entities with a specific kind of flesh or connective tissue; a composite of existent human inhabitants, the buildings, and the sea which was seen as sentient. To them, there is very little work that seems to take place. To them they see the place as full of people just watching and waiting. Although this watchfulness might not be that of Sloterdijk's (2021) ontological sentinels, everywhere there are indeed people watching. In what seems an endless process of turn-taking, all kinds of residents will appear to hold watch, often according to the time of day—from old women, to schoolgirls, to largely male youth, as well as old men and entire families. They line the stone embankments along the only real thoroughfare that approaches the district from the center of the city. They watch from the maze of wooden piers that extend sometimes far beyond the waterfront along barely discernible tributaries; they watch from the rooftop of what passes for a supermarket; they watch from the rafts lined and interspersed a mere one hundred meters from the shore.

While the composition of the watch posts alters on nearly a daily basis, there is usually at least one person who repeatedly assumes the same watch, even though when I inquire as to whether this is intentional or indicative of some special status, Romo, a 17-year-old hip hop artist, pleads ignorance with apparent sincerity. "I have been asked, by someone I do not remember, to watch those who are watching us to watch them." Thus, there appears to be no special object of attention in this besides a self-reflexive act of mutual watching.

This is not to say that the district is devoid of activity. Throughout the day and night there is constant movement, noise, chattering; people

coming and going; stopping to exchange words, and more often an array of gestures; passengers jumping off and on three wheel taxis and motorbikes. There are goods here and there, and services rendered but only infrequently with cash passing hands. "What are people's jobs?" Joti, an accountant in the local government emphasizes with exasperation. "We know many men fish, but where is the catch? We know they go into the sea at night without nets or light, but nothing is unloaded. We know that some piers are turned into *puls* (store yards) piled high with cartons that rarely reveal their contents." The chatter on the streets across the city usually represents the district as a place of thieves, of broken families whose breadwinners ran off to more economic advantageous locales, of piracy and surreptitious sea trades funded by diverted funds from the Indonesian navy.

While all of this might indeed be the case, it is the surfeit of watchfulness that continues to trouble. Musalem, a dark skinned Buton covered in tattoos and faux gold teeth, strapped on both legs with hunting knives, will claim that while nothing in particular is being observed, or at most a circuit of witnessing is put in motion, what is important is that they who watch—whoever they might be—be seen as demarcating a space and time of the unknown operations that the district has conceded to entities of which residents are unable to consensually describe but whose actions they implicitly make possible. Not as a community of residents, not as a matter of government—but as a result of people's science (*ilmu).* This science includes a mathematics of exposure. Exposure here means degrees of vulnerability, of opening oneself to the world without having much of an idea in advance what is to be expected. As Romo emphasizes, "standing here in this spot is 67 degrees of exposure and influence; while over there (pointing to raft in the bay) is a negative 43 degrees, so say the Lord of hosts." To Romo these numbers mean both everything and nothing, in that they don't point to anything specific in terms of experience but yet embody a specificity, connoting a precision explanatory in its own terms. This is also true in terms of the force that has assumed sovereignty over the district. As Romo says, "people can say whatever they want to about it, and is neither true nor false; it is all of these possible things but also none of them." Whatever is the collective invisible non-human force that has been ceded control of the district, Dock IX's human residents are constantly being exposed to it in different ways. But whatever the differences of exposure, Romo says, "it remains our flesh and blood."

The quantities cited seem arbitrary, something made up on the spot, just as the application of justice by the city's authorities seems arbitrary, as Dock IX is subjected to periodic police raids without apparent justification. Young men, in particular, are rounded up on drug charges where the goods only materialize in front of the court; where indigenous Papuans are almost always the target but round-ups are always supplemented with a sprinkling of non-Papuans, both as a warning for them not to get too close to the "natives" and to emphasize that anyone could potentially be treated as one. So often people of status in the district are rounded up and then immediately let go.

While this arbitrariness may have little to do with the content of the mathematics deployed, what is important here is the sense of technicality that comes to the fore. Following the round-ups, no matter the person involved, the length of incarceration is usually short, for people are always being released on "technicalities" in terms of the law, allowing the policing system to do what it wants, which is to find a way of constantly announcing its presence and extracting what it can, without being morally culpable, with having recourse to specifications within the rules and procedures that weren't quite adhered to, and probably were not meant to be adhered to. But such a relationship to technicality is not only that of the police or the law. It also becomes a widespread practice on the part of petty bureaucrats and small businesspersons. In a context of apparent settler colonialism, rule and resistance to it are always be unsettled. Part of the seeming plan of efforts to domesticate Jayapura is that very little goes according to plan. Throughout the city, the possibility of cultivating or sustaining long-term relationships—to land, livelihood, cultural practices—are always being dismissed on the basis of technicalities, provisions in the schemes of things that possess little moral or substantive content about the things they are being related to as exceptions and qualifiers.

So it is through becoming a technicality then that residents in Dock IX operate in the interstices of things. They operate in a neighborhood that oscillates being a highly racially stratified territory and totally mixed up. As residents seem to have no work or accumulation and yet are still able to mark a time of economic endurance. Here Dock IX varies between being a place left behind in terms of the development trajectory of the regional economy and yet also far ahead in the apparent capacity to navigate the distant waters far beyond its shore. These are waters that are heavily

militarized, yet largely unknown and open to crossings of all kinds, even when there is seemingly no real place to go.

Johannes, a 24-year-old whose family migrated from Ambon and never having worked a day in his life, calls this logic of technicalities "a tsunami." Something that converts an apparently minimal activity, something otherwise obviating sustained commentary, into something momentous and constant. Rev. Gujira, a Papuan senior pastor at a local Methodist church—one of the "old time" denominations in a largely "evangelical" city—will patiently explain this watching as the conceits of a roiling density of residents. Residents who have long not only been disempowered by regimes which only care about extractions elsewhere—in the hills and forests beyond the cities—but also disempowering each other through stereotypical racial abuses, parochial claims, and Faustian deals with military thugs. "The community thus pretends that it is not on its own. Having expelled those (the Papuans) that knew so well every plant and eddy, every curvature of the terrain, they (the Bugis and Buton, the Muslims) have to live without God's grace, have to trade in the useless, have to leave their children only the overwhelming desire to get out." While this analysis may be the purview of what might pass for a local bourgeoisie, the youth I knew, albeit mostly the gregarious gangsters, rappers, and tricksters, did acknowledge the fallout of complicities and the absence of entrepreneurial imagination in face of growing destitution.

For them, they had attended schools where teachers rarely showed up. Although Papuans might have preferential treatment to low-level jobs in the municipal government, non-Papuans had no such opportunity. Even Papuans who had no connection to the few elite families also had little chance. Additionally, too many relied upon work in the available petty trades. Too many sold betel nuts or drove shared taxis; too many smuggled goods. The waiting list for jobs at the ports seemed to go on forever. Hip hop was an important form of rebellion and reputation formation, but one had to have tens of thousands of YouTube views in order to make any money.

Instead of thinking about the inhuman, amorphous body that many residents claimed was the real inhabitant of the city as some kind of psychological defense against the vestiges of repeated trauma, this entity was rather the invisible materialization of an indifference to whatever brutality was thrown their way. Johannes insists that "the deal we made was not with *loreng* (military) but with *cekakakan (*the laughter)." Laughter for him was a concrescence of an affective "fuck-you" that had long settled into

the district as a sentient body. What Bong Freddie referred to in the excerpt at the beginning as that which is all that is left to the Jayapuran poor. A body that in cutting itself off from the traumas of subjection, from the evaluation of efficacy, and from value in general, need not display itself as worthy, vindictive, or generative. "It does what it wants, when it wants; it does what it is." "We are asked only to watch, not to watch 'it,' not to detect its activities, but to mark a 'world' for it, not to trap or enclose, but only to mark a place where it can be without the need to do more, go further." As Romo describes, "we watch out for it, make sure it feels at 'home,' has a 'home.'" "We are where it lives, and we live with it."

For a district marked by its never ending accumulation of traumas—for those who have been displaced from once viable if minimal lives and those whose ancestors had come from afar to a place full of largely empty promises, a place where no one seems interested in putting down roots or allowing the building up of a sense of history—the materialization of a body that is called laughter does not so much displace the affective experience of those traumas but enables collective enunciations to be something else. It suspends the sedimentations in the hearts and minds of residents and in the environment in which they live; an environment that registers various stages of loss and failure. It turns them into apertures of images that do not represent anything in particular. Yet, these images nevertheless crisscross the apparent divides among ethnicities with lines of mutual implication, and, of course watchfulness. It is as if residents know that the military apparatus that really runs the city needs to ferment constant low-level ethnic divisiveness; know that residents are being played, but have little choice to exhibit ethnic solidarities and resentments above all else. At the same time, they know that everyone is further trapped by this.

It is said that the seamen of Dock IX make mysterious forays into the sea at night. Soft motors and leisurely embarkations and journeys, surreptitious less by intent than by practice. Some say these forays are without purpose; others will claim that there are nocturnal rendezvous with ghost ships carrying the remains of slaves, prophets, and white traders; others say that there are fleets of Chinese ships able to navigate the waters undetected and that liaisons are made with them to acquire goods and secret medicines. Still others claim that long journeys are made to the Bismarck Sea, long viewed as a place of mystical transformations. Jayapura is a very long way from anywhere, so stories of these forays are usually met with a fair amount of incredulity, thus referenced as a way of dismissing

perhaps more troubling indications that Papuans, Bugis, and Buton are steering these trips together.

In addition to the multiplicity of sentries, it is the *ancara* (gatherings) of Dock IX that also provoke unease across the city. For there will be moments, sometimes daily, other times few and far between, where mostly young men, mostly Papuan, but not by any means exclusively, position themselves in odd ensembles across the district. This is a tacit choreography that cannot be construed as festive, religious, political, transactional or even social within the familiar tropes. These are gatherings involving often hundreds of bodies responding to each other but with a language that is not theirs and with gestures that are almost mechanical in nature. These are not the fluid movements of ligatures and muscles, but something more angular, sharp, with pointed and jagged rhythms. There appears to be no objective, no overarching statements to be made, no rehearsal of an emergent communicative practice, no collective in the making. Yet it is a gathering nevertheless, but with a question about who might be directing who in this process, if indeed anyone is being directed.

In contrast to the sentience of a body of laughter—that collective entity that seems to play tricks with everything around—these gatherings are machine-like, stiff in their actualization. It is as if the participants are bodies deprived of a soul, deprived of the laughter they otherwise claim to live with. Is this a simulation of the personification of laughter in its inverse? When I ask if this is the collective body of the dead, of zombies, I am only laughed at. As Rodney, a 21-year-old Papuan hip-hop artist, explains,

Dead?, fuck no; we are moving to a different beat, all of the time. In fact, we are not even there (in these times you are talking about). What you see is not us, or more accurately, you just can't really see what is really there. We be rocking so hard beyond the speed of light, so every time you look, you just not going to see it. Cause you don't know how to watch, you don't know how to keep time. We have already moved on; to a different game; one that we can afford.

So where is it that you go, I ask—with Rodney's reply, "it all depends on the circumstances. But we remain Dock IX." Note that they remain not *in* Dock IX , but *of* it; affirming the meaning of the district itself as their movement without geographical correlates, even as we know that in most circumstances they go nowhere.

## Part Two: Resonances

What can be made of such ethnographic vignettes of a people and territory at what Bong Freddie calls "end of the world," in a place of intense, obdurate coloniality. Seemingly the more familiar tropes of the abyssal—a suspension of any discernible world or ontology—of resistance, mythic recuperation, or the pluriversal do not readily apply. Although it is possible to see elements of all of these in this brief account, I admit that this depiction emanates from a highly selective cut of life and actors in this district. Those who are most willing to tell stories will often take the opportunity to tell stories full of embellishments. But there were enough different interlocutors telling pretty much the same kind of stories to know that there is something worth pursuing that goes beyond the typical depictions of the marginalized and the usual accounts of their onto-epistemologies.

Dock IX orients its depiction of a lifeworld in terms of the technical. This is done in terms of the ways my mostly youth informants discover a mode of individuation that coincides with their reading of the situation. It concerns their willingness to divest, to dispossess themselves of an integral human body, both in conceding inhabitation to inhuman entities that are not them and aspiring to a capacity of enactment that exceeds their sense of what humans appropriately can do. Individuation is the provisional working out of problematics. And the individual is an embodiment of tensions and temporary resolutions (Simondon 2009) whose actualizations generate information that any particular stage of individuation cannot fully use or contain, and which provide possibilities of disjunction. As conditions and responses are remodulated, the *crystallization* of value—such as epistemic certainty as the way of orienting oneself in the world—becomes transduced into other arrangements.

This transduction takes place through a series of translations in which value acts as the consistency—such as the anchorage of the white individual as the determiner of his fate, who volitionally reflects on his situation as a matter of determining degrees of freedom. The white individual is the sovereign individual who can then only perform that sovereignty through its curtailment in others; exercising its prerogative as a self-reflecting entity with an interior life by defining some other whose entirety is read on the surface of the skin (Amaro and Khan 2020). Just as Amaro (2023) will go on to propose a Black technical object that disrupts this propositional structure, Dock IX attempts to individuate itself away from always providing the necessary undergirding of a privileged Indonesian subject (which in this

context functions as "white"—as Imam Abdi put it earlier), and which has successfully channeled and conquered modernity. Dock IX makes a deal with the intermingling of affective traces that are reconceptualized as some kind of collective agency whose operations are inexplicable, let alone documentable. But this doesn't mean that the deal makes no sense. Rather, it is a way of operating within the terrain of the incalculable that, nevertheless is availed a "home."

The residents I interacted with in Dock IX may not be interested in representing the details of its immanent futurity. They may know how the district got to be the way it is, but they are not interested in dissecting its various parts. They know that complicities and bad deals have been made; but that the deal with some inhuman force is not rendered into calculable bits and pieces. It is not recursive in the way that Lisa Lowe (2015:149) talks about racial capitalism as something that "expands not through rendering all labor, resources, and markets across the world identical, but by precisely seizing upon colonial divisions, identifying particular regions for production and others for neglect, certain populations for exploitation and still others for disposal." Even as the conventional social depiction of Dock IX would certainly confirm it.

It might be possible to view the technicities of Dock IX as a form of what Yuk Hui (2017a) calls cosmotechnics, as computational processes informed by indeterminacies. As Luciana Parisi (2021:37) emphasizes, indeterminacies do not simply demarcate how meaning can change through use but rather "*how techno-semiosis brings forward alien meaning or know-hows of another language that does not seek to match symbolic inputs with outputs.*" The running of algorithms is a process of recursive relationality. It concerns how different data affect each other as they themselves are continuously resituated in complex data fields. This process produces a surfeit of indiscernible and "strange" situations, beyond the estimations of correlation and probability. Algorithmic operations rely not only on the intersection of different ways of doing things but what Parisi calls a fractality produced in the operations themselves. Here, the components of computation veer off, positing the possibility of other trajectories. In contrast to computation being informed by logos, Parisi asks us to think of a machine epistemology where logical thinking originates in *technique*, in computational acts that syntactically mediate socio-technical meaning in more than two directions. Here, in Dock IX, the aim of speaking, witnessing, and transacting is thus less aimed at consolidating a particular way of

making sense or even of keeping the community alive. Rather, the emphasis is on rendering stories that seem to move in multiple directions, multiple narrative arcs all at once; to confound any clear determination of where things are headed or where they came from, of who does what to whom.

Here instead of confirming specific proofs, the interaction of variables and dimensions ramify across multiple trajectories of possibility. Parisi (2022) tells us that non-decisional practices in automated intelligence can be understood as "incomputables," or indeterminate complexity in sequential patterns. In such a domain of algorithmic patterning, the process does not render a decision based on the guided, programmed scrutiny of specific variables and parameters. Rather, it engages the incompleteness of computation to generate interactions among entities that are not previously defined, instead emerging in the continuous running of operations.

Youth in Dock IX will frequently talk about having solid economic futures. But what is the basis of such solidity? As Bong Freddie says in an interview, "Dock IX is somewhere between sea and land. And Papua is somewhere between heaven and hell—the hell of Indonesia and the heaven of all the countless churches promising salvation, what do we stake on?" While there may be a willingness to play the game with Indonesia and hope for some kind of advancement, youth also know that they are thoroughly expendable. And given the shaky sovereignties of New Guinea and other Pacific states, they know that there is no real international willingness to usher in yet another nation, especially with growing alarm about Chinese intentions. So instead there is a willingness to live in the background, without a coherent image of what efficacy in any effort might look like. What then might *something else besides* this conundrum look like, some place within and beyond capture, a kind of oscillating, unstable determinancy, neither here nor there, neither within rule and within practices of resistance, but in the ellipses of encounters, the availability of Dock IX to its own continuous re-arrangements in a play of the visible and invisible. The technical process of putting different bodies and things in touch with each other; adjusting to the outcomes that cannot be foreseen in advance. Romo: "If we mean nothing to them, what do we have to lose?"

This operation of indeterminacy contrasts with the fundamental premise of modernist thinking, which Black feminist theorist Ferreira da Silva (2017) describes as a situation "where knowing and all other activities of the mind are reduced to determinacy: namely, the assignation of value that refers to a universal (scale or grid), while the object of knowledge becomes

a unity of formal qualities (properties, variables, etc.), that is, an effect of judgments that produce it through measurement (degree) and classification (position)." In contrast, Hui (2017:29) argues that the user is not the director of operations, but always "recuperated back to the processes that establish its position in relation to them in advance." As such, users of computational processes are already "part of an algorithm" that is not only "part of a database" but is also, in part, constitutive of this algorithm's "executability." Rather than assuming the integrity of the user as a known, enclosed entity, computational processes design user positions as a condition of their capacity to do things. The execution of operations then designs the user in advance. As Simondon (2017) has indicated, technicities don't operate on the basis of the capacities of their designers, but with how they interact with a milieu that is always itself provisional and affected by those operations, as well as in a recursive relationship with their own actions. Thus, residents of Dock IX do not see themselves as the authors of the operations they do not even watch directly let alone orchestrate. So they deploy their subjective position as sentinels in order to mark a salient terrain of operation.

This corresponds with Yusoff's (2020:669) observation that the inhuman—in this case the very bodies and lives of the racially marked—can never ever "be incorporated into the political subject or being as such because of the material differentiation between figure (the political subject of juridical rights) and ground (the matter of resource to enable the becoming of the political subject, philosophically and materially)." As such, the lives of the residents of Dock IX, as indicative of those marginalized and subjugated within the obdurate regimes of coloniality, remain caught within the limiting terms of the human. This salient terrain of operation may be designated as that of the "inhuman"—a status which is the materialization of both a refusal and an impossibility to be either human, or a particular degree of being human or an entity denied humanity altogether. It is a space outside of the valuation of human life and the ways in which particular kinds of humans sought to define humanity exclusively in their image and defended this image by attributing to others various states of non-humanity.

Within Yusoff's point of view, the lives of the residents of Dock IX, as indicative of those marginalized and subjugated within the obdurate regimes of coloniality, remain caught within the limiting terms of the human. But perhaps the inhuman is more than this. Here, Moten's (2018)

fundamental question becomes crucial: what does life have to give up in order to escape loss/seizure? Whereas the metaphysics of relationality entails a separability of differences, as that between self and other, corporeal and technical, the "deal" of Dock IX retains the sense of differences. Differences that assume the level of real "difference," rather than being simply in opposition or contrast. It is the mark of divergence, without separability (da Silva 2017) or instrumentalized for one privileged use over another. As Romo had said, we only make the differences feel at home; we want nothing from them.

He also pointed out that that difference remains "our *flesh* and blood." Flesh is that unruly particularizing that takes place within a seemingly featureless mass, and the mass transformed into individuals and particularities that cannot be legislated, cannot be rendered an object of law or discourse. Flesh, with its cruel histories, perhaps, ironically, then points to a more viable "human." Flesh is what Hortense Spillers (1987) would call the "zero degree of conceptualization." It is the flesh that is exemplified within the contexts of Black subjection, where particular bodies are read and governed as outside the gradations of genealogies, functions, capacities and degrees of humanness. But these are readings, Alex Weheliye (2014) argues, which at a level of the body's fleshy substance, are by virtue of the very act of being read both inconclusive and insufficient, no matter how damaging they may be to the objects of that reading. Flesh lures the reader and then blindsides her at the same time; flesh exists to be read, but always read the wrong way. It compels not the analytical gaze, but attending to, of process of caring for not based on the definitiveness or instrumentality of the object of care.

Here, one finds an incessant re-arrangement of operations and of sense, as what these differences indicate exceeds clear valuation, even in a situation of perpetual watchfulness. For such watchfulness is not directed toward evaluation. It isn't deployed to assess imminent dangers. One might follow Chun-Mei Chuang (2020:3) and see these as intelligence operations curiously discovering complex linkages

> that are ambiguous, concealed, dark, secret, and challenging to see, continually rewriting internal and external boundaries, and forming ever more intricate molecular information evolution networks…diverse life forms, including those that were not regarded as life, or those that lacked independence, compose extended systems of

symbiotic, parasitic, and holobiotic feedback loops and shared information through various evolutionary events on all scales.

These are considerations informed by incessant processes of movement, of material transformations and distributions, of itineraries of circulation and emplacement, of continuous semiosis re-aligning what things point to, what implications they will have as they are constantly being re-positioned across different causal circuits and chains of signification. Such as, this tree with its roots intersects with various compositions of soils, neighborhoods of specific vegetation, alterations, cyclical and permanent in climate, the clearing of land, and so forth. A fluidity of multiple enactments of referentiality whereby being human is enunciated in the flow (Judy 2020), or what Berlant (2016) calls the multiplication of forms in movement. As Rodney says, "we have already moved on." But something is always left in the wake, whether a sign or a choreography of bodies clearly impacted by something that has moved them and moved on. The local authorities cited earlier are bewildered by all the busyness that does not seem to produce anything; that there is no real exchange value taking place. But in Serres' (2008) notion of the senses as exchangers, these bodies in motion continuously pass things along, extending relations. They do not mark an empty time, or wait for real development to occur, but ply the ambiguities of the shore, mixing up, redirecting the eddies and rivulets, the plait and the folds, unsettling their collective impact on the terrain. Making themselves unrecognizable. I had asked a stupid question as to whether the gatherings of the disjointed bodies in the streets of Dock IX were the movement of death. The response instead pointed to a people already having moved on into something not defined, with no guarantee of arrival or safety. The response raises critical questions about what movement does for the seemingly immobile or those constantly on the move one way or another.

Having both retained and moved out of their bodies, what kinds of connections are sustained? How do the residents of Dock IX retain residency in a home that they make for others and then live with in a situation that exceeds available social categories. If the technical is about making connections, and if the surfeit of technicalities in Jayapura forecloses long-term relationships among things, what is rendered livable in such a context? As Hui (2017a) points out, diversification of technologies also implies a diversification of ways of life, forms of coexistence, economies, and so

forth, since technology, insofar as it is cosmotechnics, embeds different relations with nonhumans and the larger cosmos.

It is not only that Papuans live in a diversity of situations and times. They continue to dream of national liberation, but also relinquish definitive commitments to narratives of progressive linear time which otherwise might seem to capture them in distorted versions of that liberation—such as the apparent autonomy of self-rule—or the modernist promise of development whose narrative they cannot control. They continue to try to keep their heads above the squalor of everyday economic conditions, doing everything they can to adhere to the acceptable trajectories of economic advancement, but at the same time they do not wrap a sense of self-esteem in terms of labor. They live in their churches and indigenous spiritual practices—they distribute themselves across seemingly divergent scenarios and contexts. But what is important here is that each occasion, context, and role becomes something else besides what is conventionally stands for. That their sense of technicity is a way of making every place and event something else untranslatable; a kind of *accompaniment* to their values, travails, and aspirations that they believe repositions themselves in the world. Something free from any discernible meaning but which allows themselves to feel free—not as a destination, but as a supplement to whatever is taking place.

In Dock IX some residents have learned how to live in several different times at once. Somewhere between the diurnal busyness of seeming non-accumulating economies, the nocturnal journeys into nowhere, and the gatherings of bodies as machines that adhere to their own spatial logics and temporal rhythms, bodies that occupy these gatherings may not be fully there, as they must always be on watch from somewhere whose geographies become increasingly indeterminate. As Massumi (2019) reminds us, whatever potential emerges from these decisions, these technical operations of connection are immediated by the different temporalities that are included in the transmission of such potential.

It has to ride the saddle of time…each occasion is differentially conditioned by the unique patterning of potential entering it through the immediate past. The model is of singularity reduplicating, rather than structure repeating. The re-enactive conformation of the present to the past is the transition to a new taking-form. The pattern of the past is infinitely variegated, and each present actualizes it differentially.

Since the overlap of the immediate past with the present is also that of the present with future aim, there is always a potential for variation: a way out of confinement by given circumstance. (Massumi 2019:536-537)

This is perhaps why every instance of *ancara,* of the gatherings of machinic bodies, is never the same, but yet, at the same time, is eminently recognizable as something that returns time and time again. They return not as reminder or afterlife, not as refigured trauma or potentials that are not over, but rather as the obdurate existence of matters unsettled that nevertheless can be addressed. Matters that can acquire a history, that are leading the people somewhere specific through repeated iterations. These are not just synchronic improvisations but a story line that builds upon past stories, a repositioning of all that is there in its reluctance or anticipation.

This, despite Rob Kitchin's (2018:32) warning of a temporality of assessment that aims "to know about now before now has happened." Where algorithmic and technocratic governance work to "prefigure, through predetermined, programmed responses and feedback loops, the unfolding of socio-spatial-temporal life" (Kitchin 2018:32). This has led Uprichard (2012:134) to posit a situation where the "present itself becomes more and more plastic, to be stretched, manipulated, molded and ultimately 'casted' by those who can access more of it in the supposed 'now.'" But as Romo said in relation to the timing of *ancara,* or even the forays into the sea, or the assumption of the duties of the watch, or when the "laughter" makes its presence really felt, "we know exactly when everything is going to go down; after all its written in the cards; we just not going to ever say anything about it; we don't snitch; we don't tell the authorities anything, ever; they just have to be prepared for everything all of the time; we not doing them any favors; everything already finished by the time they even get wind of it."

What transpires in Dock IX then resonates with what Laruelle (2010) posits as a materiality of life without ideal form. Where a "real" manifests itself without "giving it in the form of an Object or an Idea" (Galloway 2014:45). "The identity of the real is lived, experienced, consumed while remaining in itself without the need to alienate itself through representation" (as cited in Kolozova 2007:5). As Parisi (2022) indicates, Laruelle is concerned with how the real becomes part of a mediatic process of auto-impression,

which he also calls fractal vision. His notion of non-photography coincides with a fractal algorithm because it has a degree zero of self-reflection.

It is not a medium programmed to reveal the world or, even less, to self-regulate the human perception of the world, as a prosthetic tool that ensures constant adaptive feedback. Instead, the fractal algorithm of a non-transcendental image clones its own real image—a cloned image without original or copy—corresponding to a spatial surface that extends (or fractalizes) forever without uncovering any pristine form behind it. (Parisi 2022:330).

So there is more to the experience of an unreachable real than language (Kolozova 2014). As such, Colebrook (2019) asks us to consider the situation of a cinematic eye taking on its own relationality, even as it stems from and expands the eye and brain of the human body. An eye that cuts and combines images of all kinds as if they were not grounded in any sensory-motor apparatus; an eye capable of releasing unformatted, unframed sensations across worlds. "What might it mean to look at matters not as if they composed one great whole, but if they were thought of as forces beyond this world?" (Colebrook 2019:189).

Even as those of Dock IX, who are Dock IX, move within the world that they know, there remains an insistence upon clear borders that demarcate a near-infinite space of inexplicable operations. Where the territory is magically and continuously converted into something else. The refiguring of the watch and the choreography of the gatherings might be construed as aspects of what Judy (2020:336) calls *poiēsis in black.* This is a para-semiotics that "articulates the differentiation and so the subjects, who are in-relation-beside one another in a semiosis that is in-relation-beside the flesh…whereby multiple orders of referentiality converge without synthesis, entailing dynamic properties of infinite diffusion, according to the flow of which a function may be expressed in infinite divisibility" (Judy 2020:317-318). This poesis is being manifested in the sudden mobilizations of gatherings across Jayapura, where pick-up trucks make the rounds on routes that seem completely improvised, inviting, sometimes seemingly demanding, people to get in from their yards, roadsides, schools, and stalls, to gather at a place that will have only been announced by a WhatsApp message issued an hour or two before, and then for an event that will have food and drink, but no other apparent preparation except a constant leap of faith that something will ensue that is different from all that came before. Here, in other work and context, Newell (2018:12) describes an affective

magic that lies in the associative leap connecting the mysterious infinite potentiality of an undefined sign with the unexpressed excess of bodily sensation that allows affect to flow into the sign and give it life and "the sign to package affect into something that appears for a moment to be collectively intelligible."

Such movements of signification are to be delicately navigated in a world increasingly desperate for indigenous knowledge, where getting in touch with the radical alterity of those left behind promises a redemption for selves mired in media and automation saturated existences and faced with the eventual extinction of the earth. As Lillywhite (2008) warns, this fascination not only emanates from the exigency of the modern self to be reborn but to participate in that which is different, removed as self that is its own outside. So what is available or not becomes a fundamental political question, but also underlies the way in which shifts are made from within the mechanizations of signification itself.

Rather than such semiotic operations being limited to the ways in which things are constelled or taken apart, rendered into stable and identifiable components, there is the possibility of what Holbraad and Pedersen (2017) have designated as auto-substitution. Here, semiotic wholes make new wholes out of themselves. They do this either by unfolding the configuration outwards into the world through inventing new engagements and ties, or folding it back onto itself disrupting the logics of association and internal division. Citing Roy Wagner's work, they point out, for example, the ways in which the meaning of "men" and "ghosts" is not so much directed toward inventing these terms anew, but rather getting rid of the cultural coherence that ties together men and ghosts, thus bringing to the fore a different kind of relationship that in turn affects the original one, also invented. The conventional becomes the invented that becomes conventional only to be invented anew. Here, knowledge rests less in the specifics of a given content than in the technical operations that enable entirely new signifying systems to emerge that do not displace the past but continuously reorient and repurpose it.

So when Rodney talks about depending on the circumstances in identifying where people go or have gone when they seemingly vacate their bodies or perhaps more precisely repurpose and redeploy them, he and his neighbors tap into those moments when the terms of life as they have known them are being unfolded into a larger diffuse series of engagements.

And where at the same time, they are being folded back into the chore-ographies that resist easy categorization, but which nevertheless entail the transpiration of flesh upon flesh, of unprecedented constellations of social interchange. It is as if he is saying, we are here and there. Our being here is predicated on our already being somewhere else and something else, even as the here and now has an intensely tangible presence. Even as it is something infused with exertion and sweat, even if it is familiarly strange (or strangely familiar). For as McCormack (2017:3) emphasizes, circumstance is "a way of naming the extrusion of the impersonal forces excessive of a life into the worldly textures and trajectories of that life… not centred on the human experience of life worlds." At the same time, as Rodney indicates, there is something tangible, some affective force in operation, a way of bringing a momentary calm and stability to all of the brutal forces swirling around, lapping at any version of coherence of Dock IX (Serres 2008).

## Conclusion

The endeavor to seek resonances of the stories from Dock IX with strands of both critical Black thought and theorizations of the technical have not aimed for any one-to-one correspondence. They are not mutually illustra-tive but rather constitute an encounter aimed at opening up both the con-ceptual engagements with volatile worlds working their ways through the obdurate remaking of colonial and racialized rule and extraction, and with practices of signification that remain largely removed from these worlds.

Above all they attempt to address the ways in which a supposedly impossible situation is mediated through the technical as poetics—i.e., through a series of bodily orientations, practices, and gatherings that pro-visionally posit and rehearse a sensibility of national liberation otherwise foreclosed. It is almost impossible to imagine a situation where Papua will be freed of Indonesia and impossible to imagine a situation where Papuans would relent to their incorporation. This despite the ways in which the Indonesian state extends and intensifies the apparatuses of so-called au-tonomous governance—a process which in the last twenty-two years has created new provincial entities and thousands of jobs where Papuans basi-cally sit in offices without substantive responsibilities or authority.

In the ongoing process of a great awakening that long has attempted to stitch together a sense of national consciousness and resistance from

markedly different peoples and situations, the technical here is a means of figuring a sense of a collective to come (that is already here) from mediating their exposures to each other. As a minority in their own largest city and in the regions as a whole, to be Papuan is no longer a sufficient condition of arrival, of coordinating its scores of tribes and ethnicities. So here, Blackness returns as a locus of gathering up the loose ends. Not as a point of contrast, a locus of resistance, or even the melding of a sociality held in common by dark-skinned residents from Ambon, the Kei Islands, Alor, and Timor, which often share the same attribution of being Melanesian, and therefore, "Black." Rather, Blackness returns to open up Jayapura, to a larger world—a larger world that Dock IX already sees itself living within.

Through their technicities, the youth I know in Dock IX have gathered a motley assortment of people of various ages and backgrounds who consider themselves a part of Dock IX. But a part that is always somewhat apart from what passes for any empirical evidence, engaged in a process of putting lives together, quite literally. Working out the ways in which they use their respective positions to reach and be with each other. All in a process of making sense that is both rooted in discernible processes of signification but also that appear to exceed them. As Yance, a 25-year-old MC puts it, "Don't be tempted to think of us as some kind of radical thinkers, or having let down our communities with political laziness or fear." "What do you expect from us; we are just gangsters after all, men from the hood, but gangsters like you have never known, and never will." ∎

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**Foreign Language Translations**

An Urban Political from the "End of the World": Dock Nine and its Technical Epistles
[**Keywords**: urban politics, technicity, Blackness, collective life, coloniality, political ontologies]

从 "世界尽头" 来的城市政治： 第九码头与其使徒书信
[**关键词**: 城市政治, 科技城, 黑人民族性, 集体生活, 政治生态学]

Uma Política Urbana do "Fim do Mundo": Doca Nove e as suas Epístolas Técnicas
[**Palavras-chave**: política urbana, tecnicidade, Negritude, vida coletiva, colonialidade, ontologias políticas]

Городская политическая быль из «Конца мира»: Район Док Девять и его технические послания
[**Ключевые слова**: городская политика, техничность, чернокожесть, коллективная жизнь, колониальность, политические онтологии]

شكل سياسي حضري من "نهاية العالم" لدوك ناين ورسائله الفنية
**كلمات البحث:** السياسة الحضرية، التقنية، السواد، الحياة الجماعية، الاستعمارية، الانطولوجيا السياسية