**Grada Kilomba:** **while I write**

(from the project “Decolonizing Knowledge – Performing Knowledge“)

Sometimes, I fear writing.

Writing turns into fear,

for I cannot escape so many colonial constructions.

In this world,

I am seen as a body, that cannot produce knowledge.

As a body “outside“ place.

I know that while I write,

each word I choose,

will be examined and maybe even invalidated.

So, why do I write?

I have to.

I am embedded in a history

Of imposed silences,

tortured voices,

disrupted languages,

forced idioms and,

interrupted speeches.

And I am surrounded by

white spaces

I can hardly enter or stay.

So, why do I write?

I write, almost as an obligation,

to find myself.

While I write,

I am not the ‚Other’

but the self,
not the object

but the subject

I become the describer

and not the described.

I become the author

and the authority

on my own history.

I become the absolute opposition

Of what the colonial project has preditermined.

I become me.

**Audre Lorde: The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action, p.43**

(In: Sister Outsider. Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde)

Each of us is here now because in one way or another we share a commitment to language and to the power of language, and to the reclaiming of that language which has been made to work against us. In the transformation of silence into language and action, it is vitally necessary for each one of us to establish or examine her function in that transformation and to recognize her role as vital within that transformation.

**Audre Lorde: Poetry is Not a Luxury, p. 37**

(In: Sister Outsider. Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde)

For women\*, then, poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change, first made into language, then into idea, then into more tangible action. Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought. (...) Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before.

**Gloria Anzaldúa: Gestures of the Body – Escribiendo para idear, p.5**

(In: Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro)

For me, writing is a gesture of the body, a gesture of creativity, a working from the inside out. My feminism is grounded not on incorporeal abstraction but on corporeal realities. The material body is center, and central. The body is the ground of thought. The body is a text. Writing is not about being in your head; it’s about being in your body. The body responds physically, emotionally, and intellectually to external and internal stimuli, and writing records, orders, and theorizes about these responses. For me, writing begins with the impulse to push boundaries, to shape ideas, images, and words, that travel through the body and echo in the mind into something that has never existed. The writing process is the same mysterious process that we use to make the world.

**Cherríe Moraga: Catching Fire. Preface to the 4th Edition, p. xxiv**

(In: This Bridge Called my Back. Writings by Radical Women of Color)

The very act of writing, then, conjuring/coming to "see" what has yet to be recorded in history, is to bring into consciousness what only the body knows to be true. The body - that site which houses the intuitive, the unspoken, the viscera of our being - this is the revolutionary promise of "theory in the flesh": for it is both the expression of evolving political consciousness and the creator of consciousness itself. Seldom recorded and hardly honored, our theory incarnate provides the most reliable roadmap to liberation.

**Felicia Rose Chavez: The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop. How to Decolonize the Creative Classroom, p. 98**

Writing is a relationship with the self, after all. It's a ritual of tuning in and listening to the language inside of us. Those words are power. Power to make sense of ourselves, by ourselves, independent of the system of white supremacy that tells people of color that we have no dignity, no history, no art, no voice.(…)
We dare to tune in and listen to our own words, in our own tongues, and translate them onto the page with our own fists.