

Sacrifice in African ecofeminist films: an exploration of *Pumzi* (2009, Kenya) and *This is not a Burial, it's a resurrection* (2017, Lesotho)

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Pumzi (2009) is a short science-fiction film set in a post-apocalyptic desert wasteland where life can survive only underground. *This is not a Burial, it's a Resurrection* (2017) is a feature drama that explores destruction and forced displacement provoked by the construction of a dam. Aside from water being the common denominator signified in both films either by its absence or its looming destructive force, the sacrifices of the main female protagonists drive both narratives. The experiences brought by global capitalism and its extractivist logic are interwoven with the personal suffering and ultimate sacrifice of the protagonists. In this talk, I propose to explore how the characters' resistance to environmental destruction articulate the visceral link between their bodies and the land/earth. Through this, I argue that the spiritual journeys portrayed in the films echo an African ecofeminist outlook on exploitative practices and their consequences, and can be seen as expressions of spiritual ecologies in African contexts. That said, while the narratives invite us to review the spiritual, physical and epistemological relations between nature and peoples, another concern will be to explore whether the films, primarily their form and aesthetics, manage to transcend the idea of these relations as *Eden* – balanced and pure – but firmly situated before the colonial/environmental fracture.

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