Reworld*Zing Peace

Towards Anti-Imperial Visual Poetics of Collective Unlearning



Collage made with doodles and notes from all participants of the Coloniality and Violence of Peace Workshop, by Astrid Jamar, 2025

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Towards Anti-Imperial Visual Poetics of Collective Unlearning

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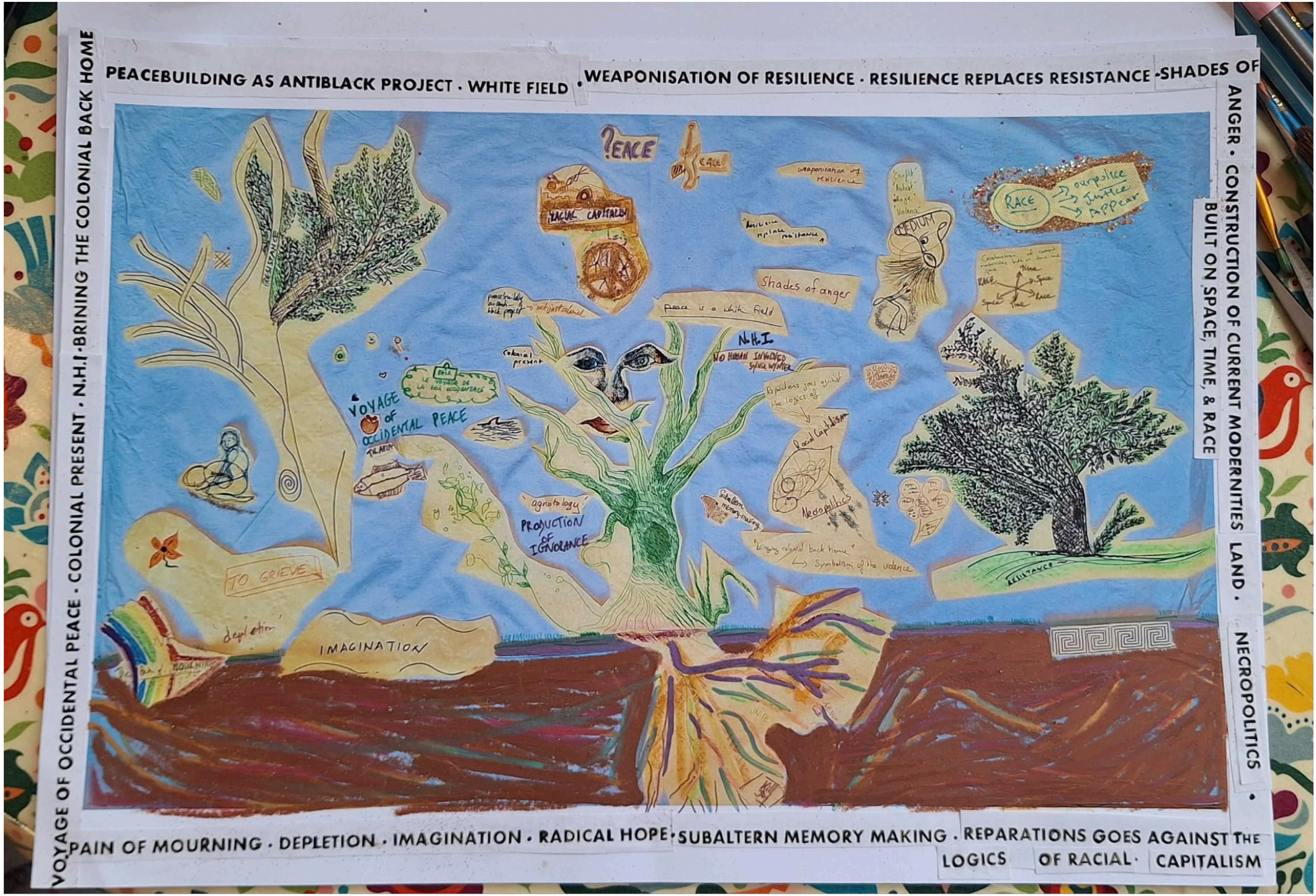
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PEACEBUILDING AS ANTIBLACK PROJECT · WHITE FIELD · WEAPONISATION OF RESILIENCE · RESILIENCE REPLACES RESISTANCE · SHADES OF ANGER · CONSTRUCTION OF CURRENT MODERNITIES LAND · BUILT ON SPACE, TIME, & RACE · NECROPOLITICS ·
VOYAGE OF OCCIDENTAL PEACE · COLONIAL PRESENT · N.H.I · BRINING THE COLONIAL BACK HOME
PAIN OF MOURNING · DEPLETION · IMAGINATION · RADICAL HOPE · SUBALTERN MEMORY MAKING · REPARATIONS GOES AGAINST THE LOGICS OF RACIAL CAPITALISM
?EACE
RACIAL CAPITALISM
RESILIENCE
Shades of anger
peace is a white field
No H.I.
VOYAGE OF OCCIDENTAL PEACE
colonial present
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PRODUCTION OF IGNORANCE
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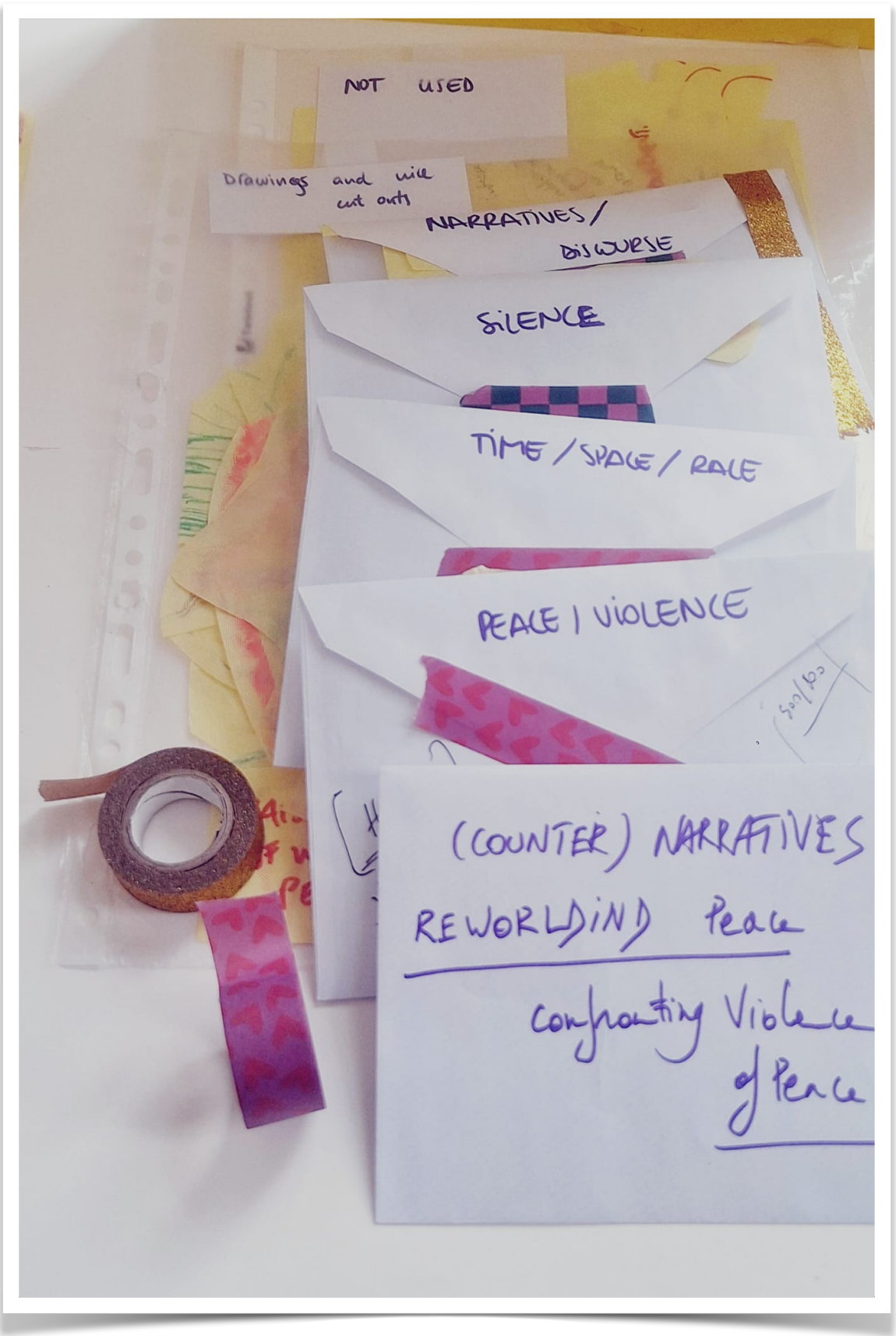

NOT USED
Drawings and wire cut outs
NARRATIVES / DISCOURSE
SILENCE
TIME / SPACE / RACE
PEACE | VIOLENCE
(COUNTER) NARRATIVES
REWORLDING Peace
confronting Violence of Peace

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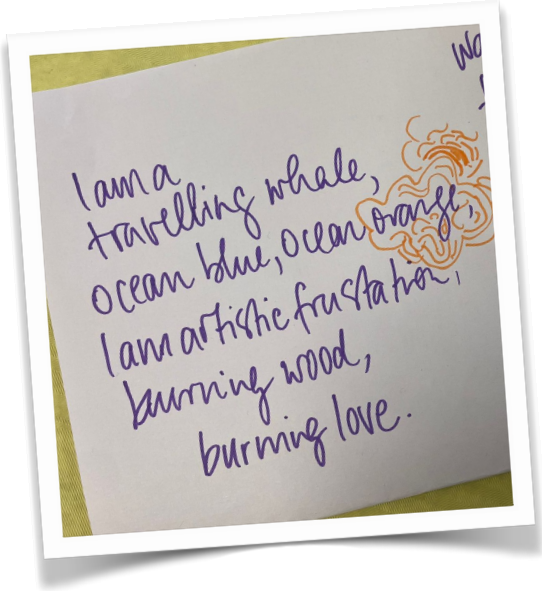
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I. Introduction

by Astrid Jamar, Selbi Durdiyeva & Jülideda Sezer

Over three days in June 2025, twenty of us, critical researchers, practitioners, and activists in the fields of peace, (de)coloniality, and conflict transformation, met in Antwerp, Belgium, to reflect collectively on how to capture, make sense of, as well as confront colonial and violent visions of peace across contexts. Together, we crafted what most of us felt was a much-needed critical, caring, and creative space from which we could spark critical conversations, foster transnational connections, and reflect on the need for new approaches to critical pedagogical intervention. Over the months spent preparing and exchanging ideas on the unfolding process, we engaged in a process of collective unlearning through visual poetics and the co-production of collages made from notes and doodles created during this activist research workshop. Gradually, this led to the production of this *Reworld*zing Peace,* a zine committed to reworlding.



This intervention revolves around the process and outcomes of the workshop dedicated to collective knowledge-making with relevance outside of academic ivory towers, addressing the pressing real-life consequences of the coloniality/violence of peace. Our *Reworld*zing Peace* is not a summary of exchanges that took place during the workshop, but rather a canvas that accommodates textual, visual, and sensorial forms of knowledge prompted in this collective space. With an emphasis on collective reflexivity and knowledge sharing, we wanted to create an antidote to the monotonous, sometimes numbing or boring, mainstream academic space.



In our respective scholarly and/or activist engagements, we delve into entanglements between armed violence and the coloniality of peacebuilding across a variety of colonial

contexts. An increasing number of critical peace and conflict scholars are exposing the coloniality of peace theory and praxis – by documenting historical colonial entanglements with attempts at pacification, the silencing of anti-colonial struggles, or by tracing links between 'liberal' peace interventions, imperialism and racism. Moreover, a growing number of decolonial thinkers are showcasing alternative activist responses to hegemonic peace processes. Yet whilst such debates are becoming more visible within specialised fields, uncovering ways in which colonialism and liberal militarised peace interventions continue to undergird peacebuilding practices as well as (re)produce mass violence in various parts of the world needs wider critical attention.





Since our initial conversations, we sought to bring together people committed to decoloniality and to transcend usual scholarly binaries and hierarchies. Our programme clearly indicated that we wanted to avoid the traditional academic format: poetry readings and poetry writing were used as an introduction instead of formal academic introductions highlighting one's own research and institutional affiliation. We consciously didn't schedule any keynote speakers, commentators, or timed presentations. In preparing the workshop, we already encouraged insights from invited participants. With no functional separation between the organising team and

participants, we had envisioned rotating moderating roles to prompt collective reflexivity and knowledge-making, rather than presenting our latest research to each other. We appointed people in advance to share short reflections on six set themes to open conversations with everyone attending, in the room and online. The three days were also packed with actions, such as a film screening, a gathering with student activists, and two full sessions dedicated to articulating the concrete implications and next steps of our discussions.

From the get-go, we made sure there was enough space and time for creativity. This enabled us to address ethics without naming it or calling for it. It called for *senti-pensar*, feel thinking. We all brought our individual identities, trajectories, and positionalities, shared our visions and frustrations. By changing the format, we moved away from the usual allocation of theoretical, conceptual, and analytical dimensions, which we had learned to display and perform too much in academic settings. With kindness, we were upfront about academic complicity, the limitations of scholarly impact, and the need to learn/unlearn from/with activist spaces.



Collage by Fabrice Djuma, by Photo Junior Safari, 2024.

Follow-up discussions highlighted various ethical implications of doing things differently. These included the challenges of balancing radicality with academic constraints, the need for a research practice that is both persuasive and confrontational, and the intricacies of decoloniality, including the power dynamics that shaped that specific encounter and our respective trajectories, as well as the colonial contamination of all spheres, including peace and feminist/decolonial activist spaces.

The event was hybrid, with some participants joining online. For those present in person, we dressed the tables with paper banqueting rolls, on which participants could write, draw, or doodle while listening, with extracts later transferred to the collage. This process encouraged intuitive sketching without overthinking or overly focusing on ‘art’ with a capital letter. Moving through each other’s different rhythms, timelines, and phases, we honored our diverse ways of expression, whether through silence, drawing, a shared glance, or written and spoken words. Whereas most of us engage with creative methodologies, none of us come from creative specialisms; this format (art, poetry, protest), in and of itself, is uncommon in the academic and practitioner backgrounds we come from, however multidisciplinary. Our drawings, texts, and notes on the table were visible to everyone in the room; they exposed our thoughts, ideas, vulnerabilities, sensorial experiences and doubts. They enabled a space for silent conversations and inter-subjective connections that

created a sense of collective reflection that went far beyond the commonsensical script and dialogue formats of usual academic events.

Rooted in socio-historical realities of the ‘moment’ of the gathering, it was a safe space to reflect on the scholarly, creative, activist, and personal engagements we are part of. We are inspired by Sara Ahmed’s feminist politics of emotion, with some of us feeling that the space we created collectively before, during, and after the workshop with this contribution allowed for rage, with rage being a ‘productive’ emotion that forces us to act and not only dwell (or Goddesses forbid, ‘feel sad’). Within this collective fabric, we found mutual care and a space that allowed us to create and move forward gradually, while grief, frustration, and rage might have dripped onto the drawings in front of us, desperation was nowhere in sight.

The rhythm our group presented mimicked the story of migrating geese sketched by Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar and writer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Noopiming: The Cure for White Ladies), where the flock actively gives each other space. Those of us who needed a slower pace moved to the back, and some of us virtually joined the flock, yet neither our collective body nor our destination changed. Our mutual commitment to a critical, caring, and creative decoloniality remained intact; physical borders and different timelines did not stop our movement.



Whereas we do not claim that the space was homogeneous and the degree of ‘investment’ in the project was equal, which is also reflected in the fact that not everyone had willingness/ capacity to continue the interaction, we, nevertheless, recognise the bonding and a sense of collectivity that the workshop and contribution created. This movement embodied a solidarity of becoming-with and making-with, an everyday practice emphasizing that although we are not the Same, and we are different, we are together. Despite an overwhelming ‘something’ that was shared, there was still space for irony, humour, contradiction, discomfort (not to be confused with neoliberal confrontation), self-reflexivity, learning and unlearning, and, as exemplified in the poem by Fabricio Rodríguez, it allowed for the ‘possibility to live with plurality.’ In the spirit of the work done, we hope that the reader will find something for them to take away, and perhaps, to spark rage and to find solidarity - and transforming possibilities - in rage, that will, in turn, inspire collective action.

05.05.2025

II. A letter to Peace Researchers

By Selbi Durdiyeva

Dear Un-Peaceful Not-Peace Researcher,

I am writing to you through what Paul Preciado calls “epistemic and political pain.”[1] And also anger as it became an implicit (or explicit) expectation or demand in liberal peace studies on victims to make peace with a perpetrator, to submit, leave, and non-exist.

Don’t write back against the empire, if you do, you’re a terrorist sympathiser, an unpeaceful threat to peaceful peace studies in the peaceful peace-loving Global North that is promoting its peaceful peace-loving peace at the peace-unloving unpeaceful underdeveloped majority who do not know how to live in peace, overload peaceful European gardens with unpeaceful mindsets and unpeaceful refugees and migrants. Happy coloniser wants peace (or to be left in peace?), but somehow racialised bodies are always angry and unhappy.

Peaceful peace studies scholars want academia without politics.
Political science, without the political.
Human rights, without humans.
International law, without law.
Memory studies, with amnesia.
Any reference to politics, human rights, or law makes you a culprit in the eyes of someone’s arrogant ignorance
So, I learned refusal.

1. Refusal of Liberal Peace Research

I never called myself a peace researcher; I am repulsed by peaceful peace studies departments that platform colonisers and censor the colonised, in the name of whitesplaining what peace, both-sidedness, and nuance are. I embrace refusal. The refusal of peaceful peace research. I follow Ruiz and Vourloumis’ call not to use things properly, to refuse to admire the coloniser’s words and worlds.[2] Refusal means being Sarah Ahmed’s killjoy. We are not the problem; we point to the problem, but somehow we spoil the mood at a happy, peace-loving, peace studies dinner table. Refusal means being June Jordan’s menace. Refusal means disrupting peace in peaceful peace studies.

I also embrace the refusal of colonisation in the past tense. Preciado wrote about it, arguing that neither patriarchy nor coloniality is a historical event. They are

[1] who are actively conscious and against the colonial, heteropatriarchal, capitalist world order

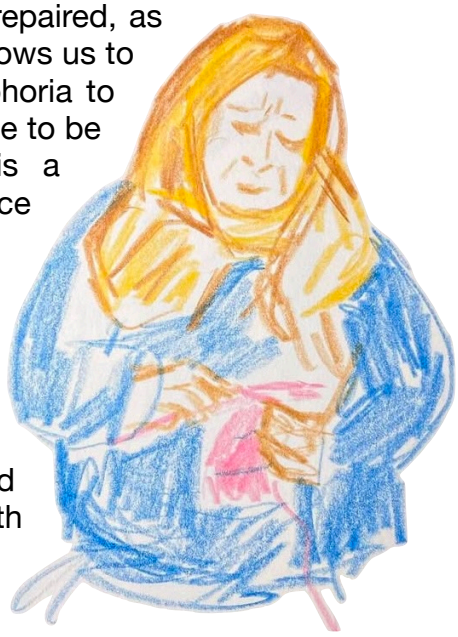
epistemologies and ‘technologies of power’ that continue to operate today.[3] Sylvia Wynter wrote in 1994 about the acronym NHI - No Humans Involved that was used by Los Angeles police to refer to cases involving jobless black young people and people of colour and justify brutality against them. Decolonisation was never about the past tense - colonial infrastructure, in the mind and in material reality, did not go anywhere. I refuse to deny or to depoliticise decolonisation for what it is - fighting racism and dehumanisation.

I refuse empty slogans of ‘make art/love/something else, not war.’ War comes to the home of the colonised, with the aggressor, occupier, and coloniser. The pressure to make peace is put on the colonised, the occupied, and the oppressed, but never on those who colonise and oppress.

As Ariella Aïsha Azoulay put it, an international institutionalised human rights system was born of the world order when the colonisers escaped responsibility and took away rights in order to benevolently “give them back” to those who play their modernity game.[4] As a result, the oppressed are not only put into the system where they need to fight for survival, but where their mere survival is seen as a threat. Liberal peace then becomes conditional on annihilation and erasure of those who refuse to be erased and to non-exist.

2. So liberal peace studies became my dysphoria.

Although in queer and trans studies dysphoria largely points at something that needs to be modified, substituted, and repaired, as Preciado argues, dysphoria is also “[T]he intuition that allows us to know what needs to be changed.”[5] We can use dysphoria to seek change in what is called ‘peace studies’ as we refuse to be peace entrepreneurs and white saviours. Preciado is a dissident of gender, and I am a dissident of liberal peace studies.



I feel dysphoria with respect to the current conceptualisations of liberal peace because the coloniality of peace is not only about the production of victims, as Madlingozi put it,[6] but it is also about producing ‘perfect’ victims. El-Kurd reflects on the dehumanisation of Palestinian people, who are expected to be ‘peace-loving’ (i.e., defenceless, not biting back, with no right to anger, mourning, joy, or pain) to deserve space in the battle to be considered human, the entry into which is not guaranteed but might be allowed if they will be ‘defanged.’[7] Defanged, as El-Kurd argues, as in not only turning the other cheek, but also auditioning for humanity by displaying relatable signs of ‘civilisation,’ or “listen a little bit of Chopin, drink a little wine, have a little premarital sex.”[8] El-Kurd had to remove the part of the testimony of how his mother wanted to spit on those who stole her house because ‘peaceful’ and ‘peaceloving neighbours’ are not supposed to be angry. What the peaceful peace studies people want is the peace-loving defanged subject that El-Kurd brings up – a story of a man whose three daughters were killed by the occupation forces, but the father is lauded for not having a grain of hate in his heart. In the words of Noreen Masud, “The West makes a strange demand of the East: that non-white people

should somehow be untraumatized by things which would leave a white person reeling."[9]

Peaceful liberal peace studies departments rooted in whiteness adopt corporate language, 'peace entrepreneurs' invest in 'peace project,' and secretly (or not so secretly) despise decolonisation and depoliticise the very struggle on which they milk. Peace studies departments, as we have them now, produce the discourse and control the narrative that reinforces rather than challenges epistemic violence and (post)colonial hierarchies. Peace studies departments crack when the Global North vs Global South binary reveals that, in fact, the culprit is the former. If decolonisation is indeed about fighting racism and dehumanisation, why do the peaceful peace departments promulgate hierarchies of lives and deem some unworthy? The culprit is not named, and the 'perfect victim' is not perfect enough to deserve peace. As El-Kurd puts it, "[c]olonial logic gaslights us to believe that it is our shortcomings, not colonialism itself, that stands between us and liberation."[10]

3. Solidarity of the Shaken

Solidarity is not transactional; it's a place and space where we can listen and empathise, even if we don't have the same experiences or even if our frames of reference are fundamentally different. In our article with Tereza Hendl, we argue that solidarity cannot be built when epistemic violence, epistemic imperialism, and genocide are denied.[11] In a similar vein, the imposition of liberal peace on the colonised is yet another form of epistemic violence – it erases and disregards the voices who are currently undergoing genocide, so that peace studies people can research it later, in peace.

The danger of colonialism is that it leaves zero culprits. Colonialism and coloniality somehow do not have a perpetrator. Peace studies devoid of demands for accountability and justice for the colonised and those that do not name the coloniser, perpetuate epistemic violence as they normalise impunity. Solidarity means refusal of silence and apolitisation. Because, as Preciado put it, "We are not mere witnesses of what is happening."[12]



We are not merely refusing or dissenting from liberal peace studies; we want to imagine alternatives where we are not apolitical observers, plastic, sterile 'objective' scientists of peace and conflict in the past. We want to act in solidarity, be shaken by injustice, advocate for a cause, and confront the control of the narrative by peaceful peace studies centres that claim neutrality when, under the guise of both-sidedness, they platform the perpetrator and silence the oppressed. We lost jobs or resigned, lost friends and acquaintances, were uninvited to events, sacrificed careers and comfort to refuse to participate and to contribute to the hypocrisy of peaceful peace studies.

Jan Patočka argued that people who were shaped by the experience of resisting oppressive structures

change their previous convictions and worlds, creating a special form of solidarity, the “solidarity of the shaken.” “Solidarity of the shaken” involves abandoning the security and comfort of everyday life and surpassing individualism in favour of “the care for the soul.” It is not an easy fight fueled by hope, as, in the words of Joy James, there might be “no material conditions to sustain” hope.[13] Hope and solidarity have been shadowbanned in the past three years, if it hadn’t been for you, where have you been? James writes about Revolutionary Love that is built on sacrifices but fueled by the struggle, it is love that is capable of fostering “dialogue, debate, and transformational politics and maneuvres...” that we consider as a viable alternative to liberal peaceful peace studies.[14]

[1] Paul Preciado, Dysphoria Mundi (Fitzcarraldo Editions 2025) 20.
[2] Sandra Ruiz and Hypatia Vourloumis, Formless Formations: Vignettes for the End of the World (Minor Compositions 2021) 81.
[3] Preciado, 35.
[4] Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism (Verso 2019).
[5] Preciado, 468.
[6] Tshepo Madlingozi, ‘On Transitional Justice Entrepreneurs and Production of Victims’ (2010) 2 Journal of Human Rights Practice 208.
[7] Mohammed El-Kurd, Perfect Victims and the Politics of Appeal (Haymarket Books 2025).
[8] Ibid, 82.
[9] Noreen Masud, A Flat Place (Penguin 2024).
[10] El-Kurd, 113.
[11] Tereza Hendl and Selbi Durdiyeva, ‘On Collateral Damage, Selective Anti-Imperialism and the Path to Liberation’ (2025) 24 American Communist History 53.
[12] Preciado, 33.
[13] Joy James, In Pursuit of Revolutionary Love. Precarity, Power, Communities (Divided 2023) xvii.
[14] James, xxiii.



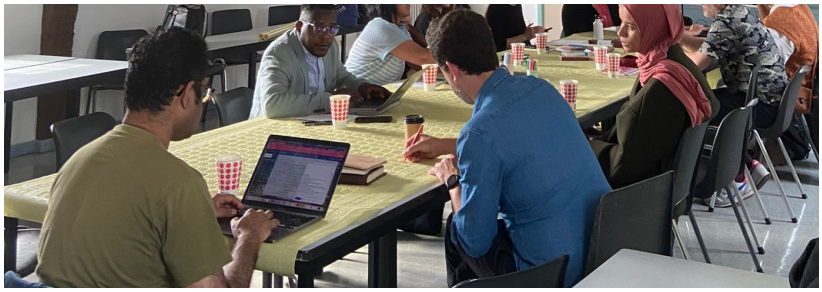
III. From Banqueting rolls to collegial collages: Collective knowledge-making Steps

by Astrid Jamar

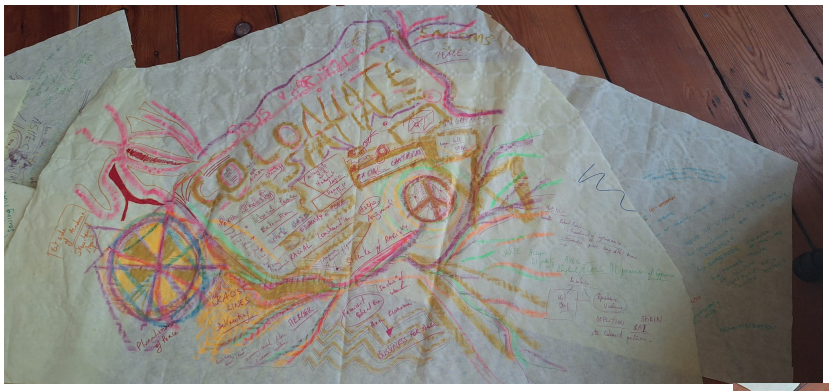


1. Buying banqueting rolls, colour markers, pencils, golden pastels, paint, and brushes

2.Collective free-style doodling and note-taking during a three-day workshop leading to the spontaneous production of 14 metres of decorated banqueting rolls



3. We were all impressed by the content on banqueting rolls, we archived the content through photos in a collective drive, and I brought the actual rolls back at home.





4.5.8.3. I spent quite a few hours looking at the banqueting rolls before deciding whether to cut and what to cut. First, I only cut the drawings, doodles, and artsy

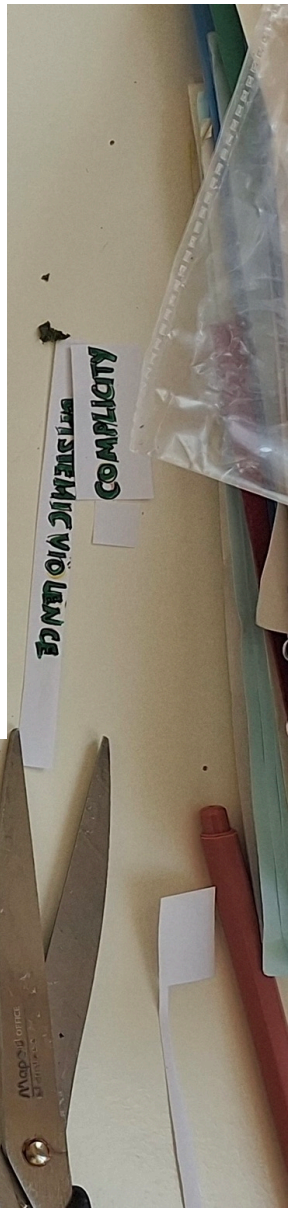


catchwords.

5.8.2.12.4. I then had to work out a way to display images and words in an intelligible way. This led to the creation of the first collage - the cover of our Reworld-Zing Peace.

6.To proceed, with Cira and Jean also based in Brussels, we met to discuss how to deal with the rest of uncut banqueting rolls. We identified the recurring and overarching themes. We divided the rest of uncut banqueting rolls among the three of us and cut them





according to the set themes.

7. 7,5. 7,8. We cut respectively at our home. Met again to discuss our train of thoughts on the cutting process.

8. We invited the rest of the group to write entries on set themes. I created videos and photos of all the

theme cuts, archived them on the drive so people abroad could also produced their entries with the visual material in mind.

0. 100. We exchanged spontaneously WhatsApp voice messages, photos to brainstorm on next steps, next ideas, and new thoughts.

9. -1. 10,5. We all produced our entries, shared them, commented, and edited them.



10. We met again in a hybrid format to think about how to weave entries with cutouts of the banqueting rolls, we got extra drawings from Clément and Selbi who participated in the initial workshop online.

11. Cira and I produced new collages based on entries and on what we felt needed to be emphasised upon.

12. The Reworld*Zing Peace was born!

IV. Time/Space/Race

Who owns the corridor of the future?
by Clément Basabose[2]

1. This is the voice of an activist–
this is the voice of a peacebuilder.

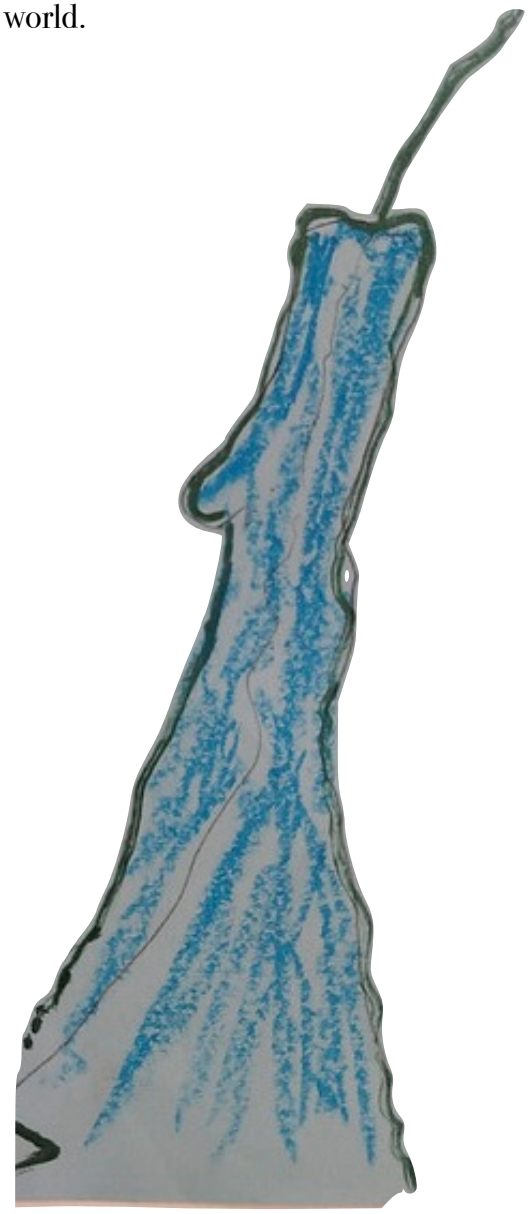
These are the cries of victims
in a pitiless, competitive, systemic injustices of the world.
I did not want to live in this period–
yet here I stand with peoples,
with tears of I did not choose to shed.

It is a time of senseless crimes.
Brothers and sisters turn against one another,
because the "boss" wants it so.
I did not want to cry,
but I have no choice.

Imperialism is not the end–
it is only a bridge
for capitalists to succeed.
In one way or another,
we are victims of rape,
we are victims of killings–
because this time is different.

This time is different:
diamonds, gold, cobalt, copper, coltan, fuel–
the earth has started speaking
in names of profit and demand.
This time is different:
technology has altered the command–
orders travel faster,
power delivers without footsteps.

This time is different:
the boss is invisible,
even when he is close.
Salaries are electronic–
wealth becomes a cloud,



[2] Artificial Intelligence was used to clean up and clarify ideas of this poem by Clément, whose first language is Kirundi.

and who can trace it
except the one who hides behind the screen?

You wear a “salvation” mask.
You are the single hope for victims–
because you are not seen with a white weapon,
not seen with an enemy sniper,
not seen with a gun aimed at the lives of the hurt.

You are shelter.
Your hand helps rebuild resilience–
you help rebuild,
you help reshape the future.

2. Different spaces, different gates:
here you walk, there you wait,
here you enter, there you are turned away.

Access is counted, rationed, guarded–
protected rooms for some, forbidden roads for others.

Once, the land was claimed like property,
a distant crown, a distant rule.
Now, new hands lock the door–
contracts, routes, and security take the crown’s place.

In mineral-rich places,
Katanga among them, the entry is “closed”:
not by justice, not by law,
but by interests that outlive promises.



Transnational engines feed on the earth,
while local lives are sidelined–
spaces extracted, boundaries tightened,
rights delayed behind fences of “need.”

So we ask, again and again:
Who decides who belongs to the land?
And how long will a nation live
as a visitor in its own home?

To enter the sites,
you need special authorizations–
a key stamped from faraway headquarters.

Even the head of state
asks for an access code,
borrowed from those who exploit the
minerals.

Around the borders of extraction,
peacemakers gather by the hundreds,
numbered like equipment,
arranged like a program.

Their helmets. Their gowns. Their guns.
Their tents. Their food—
all labeled "peacemaking missions,"
all sealed with branding language.

We live inside a lie
dressed as protection.

A world that looks gentle to the eye,
a shelter painted for the vulnerable,
while it serves the powerful—
the northern hands that profit in silence.

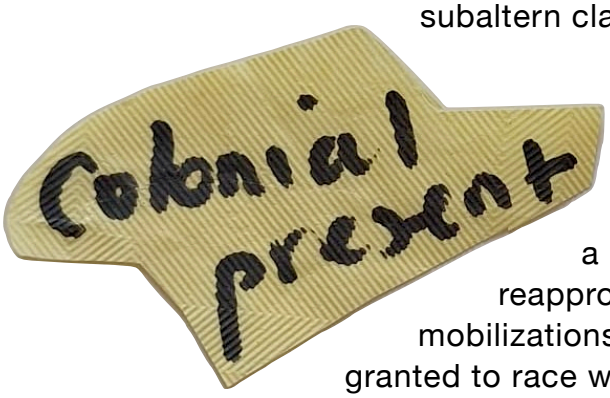
And so the question returns,
quiet but urgent as breath:
Who is peace for—
and who decides what peace will cost?

3. The asymmetries are everywhere,
The salaries are different for interventions agents,
Some are more treated because they are different,
Because they are born not in miseries but in superpower families,
The cheap life is not theirs, they have specific needs
The misery is not theirs, the intendance must be different,
Supremacy is clear from theirs bills,
They do not look alike the local,
Their mind is different, they fence to be more intelligent that the local,
They are the last to decide, they the sons of the boss.
Equal jobs-Equals salary is not their business, the labor low keeps the principles,
They must be some exceptions, because human rights are different.
Then the questions are:
Why those injustices for some and privileges for others?
Is it a natural rule that build this?
Egocentrism is not a crime but it nourishes crimes.

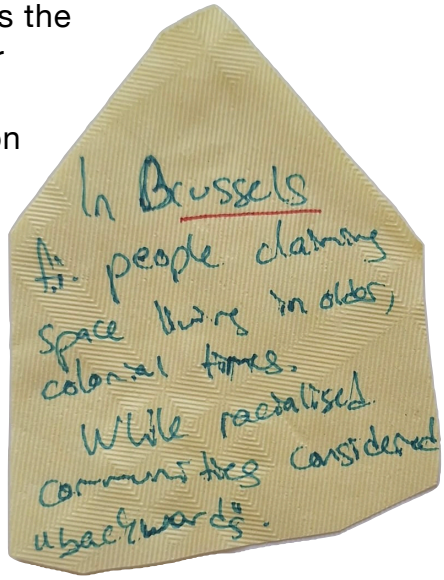
Where and When Race?
by Jean Illi

Reflections from the Belgium “decolonial momentum”

Public authorities tend to address racial inequalities only when confronted with the disorder generated by their contestation. Civil disorder produced by demonstrations or civil disobedience, epistemic disorder generated by critical discourses, political disorder provoked by the intrusion of subaltern claims into public discourse can each open a particular political temporality, a momentum whose scope is directly proportional to the disruption they generate.



In Belgium, the constitution of the decolonial as a public problem through critiques of coloniality, reappropriations of colonial symbols in public space and mobilizations have shed light on the place and temporality granted to race within Belgian society. Rooted in the long history of black and racialized mobilizations in Belgium, this process culminated in what some observers described as the Belgian “decolonial momentum”, a period of roughly four years (2020 to 2024) during which colonial history and decolonial critique moved to the center of public attention (Demart, 2013; Mestdagh, 2025). By challenging hegemonic discourses narrating Belgium “colonial past”, these mobilizations generated profound civil, epistemic and political disruptions.



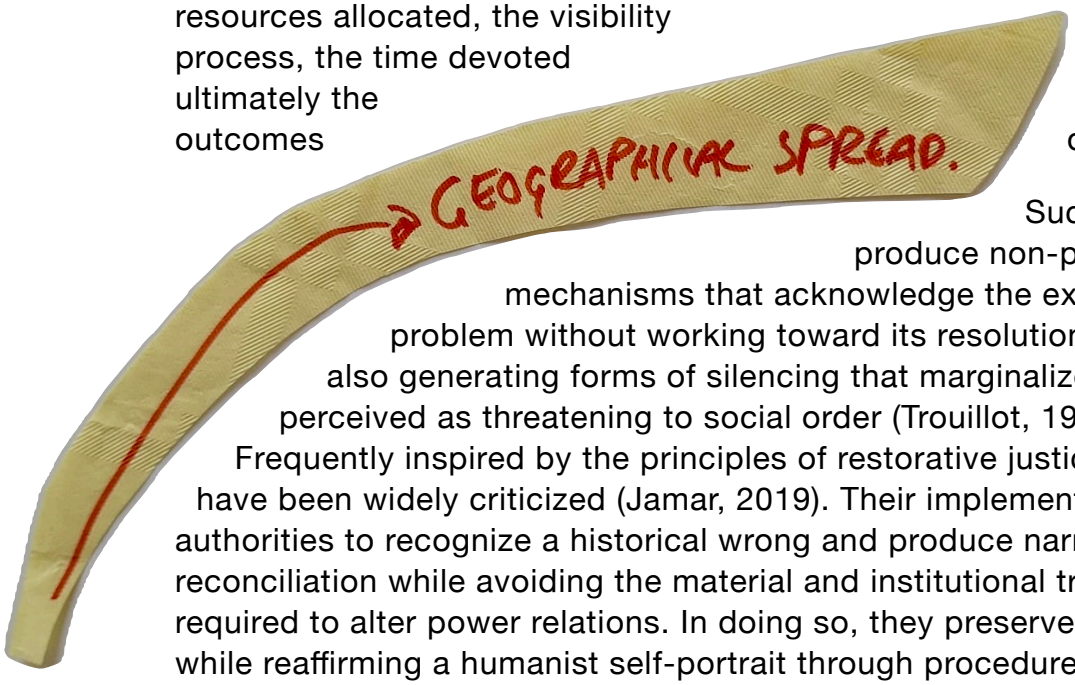
As several activists recalled, race, the injustices it produces, and the critiques it inspires suddenly became “trendy” following the Black Lives Matter mobilizations of June 2020. At that time, the schedules of those considered experts on the matter filled almost overnight. Beyond the outrage sparked by yet another police killing of a Black-Etatsunian citizen, these mobilizations disseminated a structural understanding of racial domination and the forms of necropolitics operating within Western societies. Political agendas, cultural programs, academic curricula, and media outlets could no longer ignore racial questions and their decolonial critique.

Yet this visibility remains temporally bounded. The institutional responses to subaltern claims are primarily designed to restore order, often under the positive banners of “social cohesion” or “vivre ensemble” in French. Rather than addressing the structural causes of contestation, public debate is

redirected toward what becomes its central concern: the pacification of disorder and the restoration of social harmony according to the terms of dominant groups.



This logic first operates through the framing of public debate. Expressions deemed too radical are disqualified, while the limits of acceptable are progressively defined. The pacification of decolonial debate thus reduces its conflictuality and with it, its transformative potential. Negotiations then emerge around the institutional management of subaltern claims. To become governable, critique must be translated into the categories, procedures, and constraints of public policy-making. This process depends on the interests of political representatives, civil servants, experts, and members of the associative sector involved in managing the conflict. It concerns the vocabulary used, the forms of expertise considered legitimate, the resources allocated, the visibility granted to the process, the time devoted to it, and ultimately the nature of the outcomes deemed acceptable.

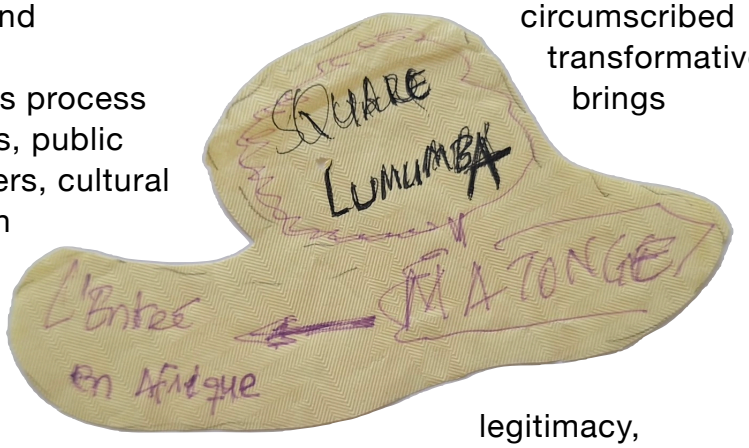


Such dynamics often produce non-performative mechanisms that acknowledge the existence of a problem without working toward its resolution (Ahmed, 2006), also generating forms of silencing that marginalize dissensual voices perceived as threatening to social order (Trouillot, 1995; Mills, 2007). Frequently inspired by the principles of restorative justice, these dispositifs have been widely criticized (Jamar, 2019). Their implementation allows authorities to recognize a historical wrong and produce narratives of reconciliation while avoiding the material and institutional transformations required to alter power relations. In doing so, they preserve Belgian coloniality while reaffirming a humanist self-portrait through procedures presented as progressive yet largely non-performative (Jamar et Bisoka, 2022). Reform rather than transform.

Contestation must be contained both temporally and spatially. In the Belgian case, the privileged site of public action regarding coloniality is public space itself. Long invested by subaltern critique, public space is particularly well suited to the institutional management of colonial controversies. The high symbolic return and relatively low economic cost of interventions targeting monuments, street names, commemorations, or public memory make it an attractive arena for public authorities. One that could function as what James

Scott terms as a “safe place” in which subaltern “fighting words” can be better managed by dominant groups (Scott, 1990).

While remaining one of the few arenas in which subaltern critiques of coloniality can be publicly articulated, public space also becomes the site where contestation is rendered governable, translated into the language of public policy, and circumscribed within interventions whose transformative horizons remain limited. This process brings together a plurality of actors, public officials, activists, researchers, cultural institutions, and so on, each pursuing specific interests while exchanging different forms of resources, including legitimacy, expertise, information, recognition, funding, and professional opportunities. Together, these interactions constitute what we can call a *decolonial economy*: a social field structured around the constitution of the decolonial as a public issue, in which moral and material resources circulate, redefining the performativity of the decolonial.



Despite their continuous effects, both on those they were built upon and those they were built by, the “ruins of the empire” (Stoler, 2013) only becomes publicly visible during exceptional moments of disruption, when civil, epistemic and political disorder temporarily destabilize hegemonic narratives. Through processes of pacification and translation, critique is progressively contained within specific temporal and spatial boundaries, while race continues to shape time, space and identities.

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V.

Narratives that Silence


Peace
Silence is Violence

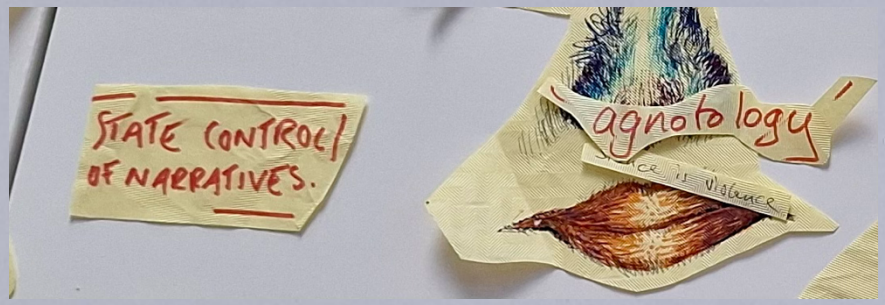
SILENCE IS VIOLENCE - ERASURES - OCCUPYING (KNOWLEDGES) - AMNESIA - PRODUCTION OF IGNORANCE - AGNOTOLOGY OPPRESSION

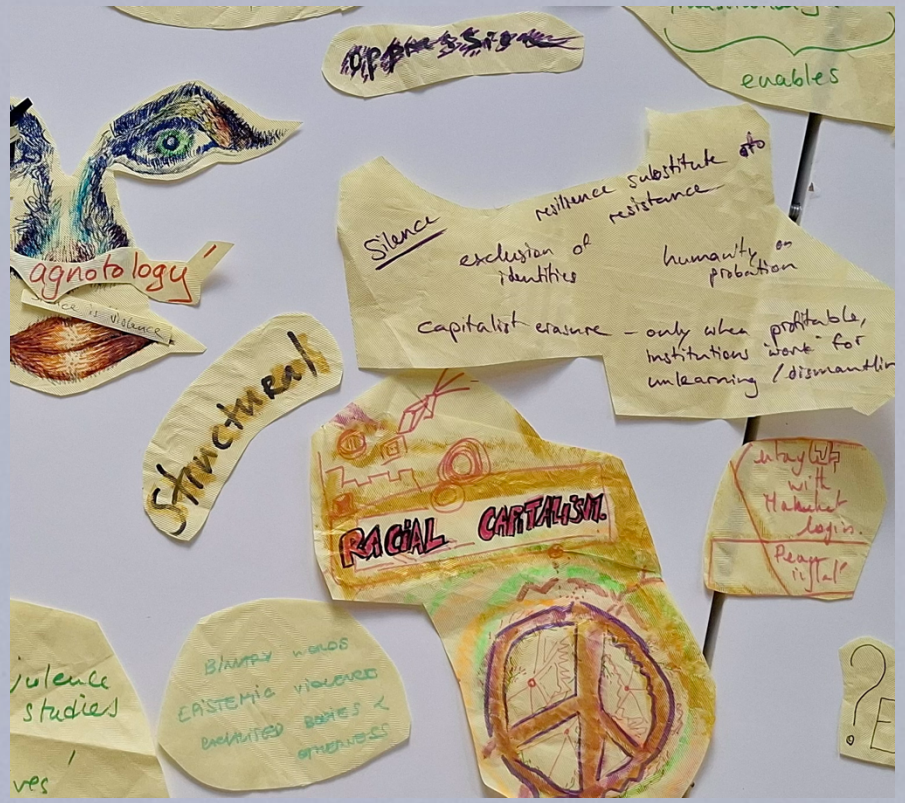
CAPITALIST ERASURE - INSTITUTIONS "WORK" FOR UNLEARNING /DISMANTLING ONLY WHEN PROFITABLE

SILENCE OF RACISM

NARRATIVES

CLASS IS THE PROBLEM - STATE CONTROL OF





STATES CREATE "ANGNOTOLOGIE" → PRODUCTION OF INGNORANCE - "STATE IS NOT THE RACIST TO THINK ABOUT" → THE WORKING

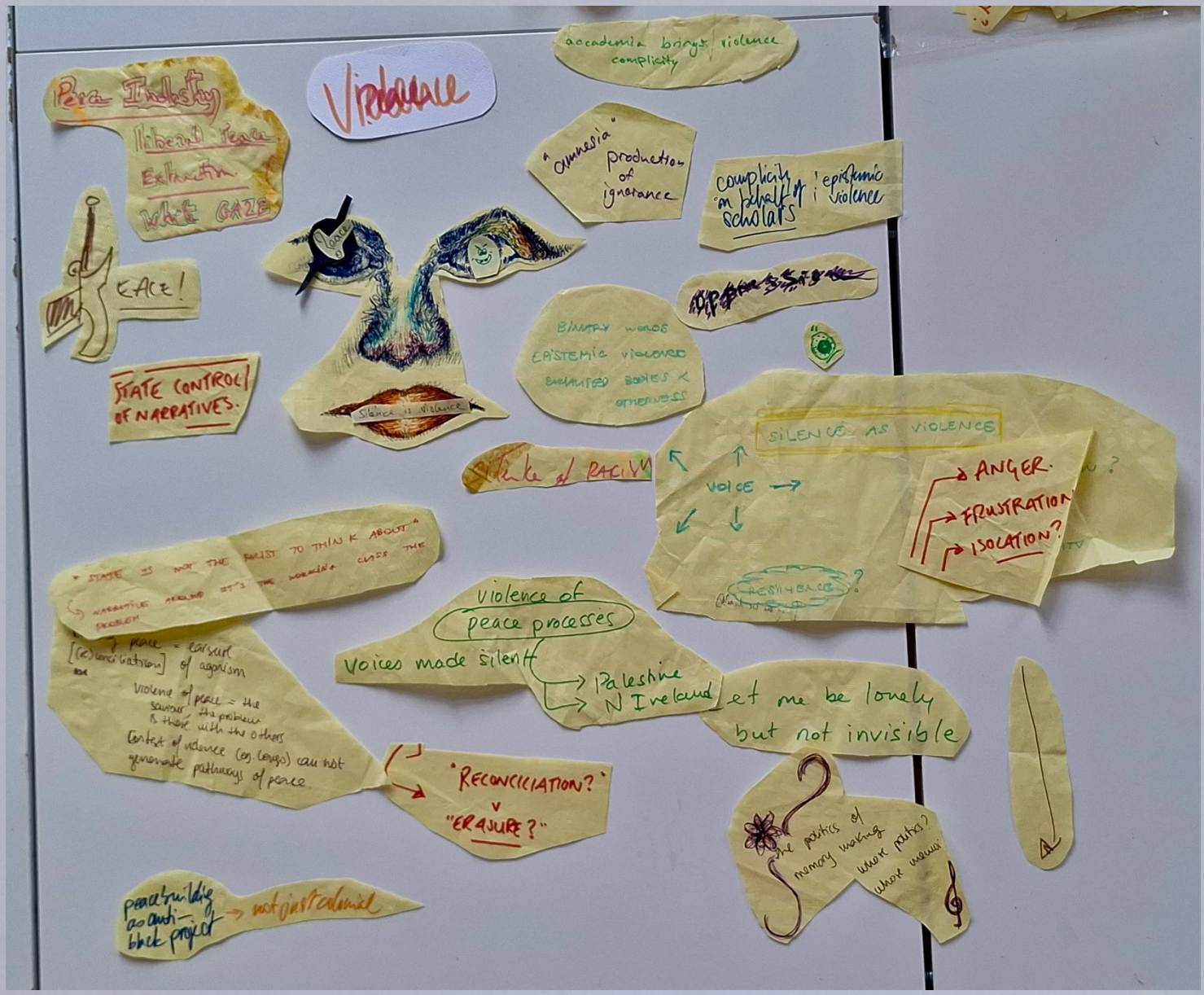
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SILENCE AS VIOLENCE

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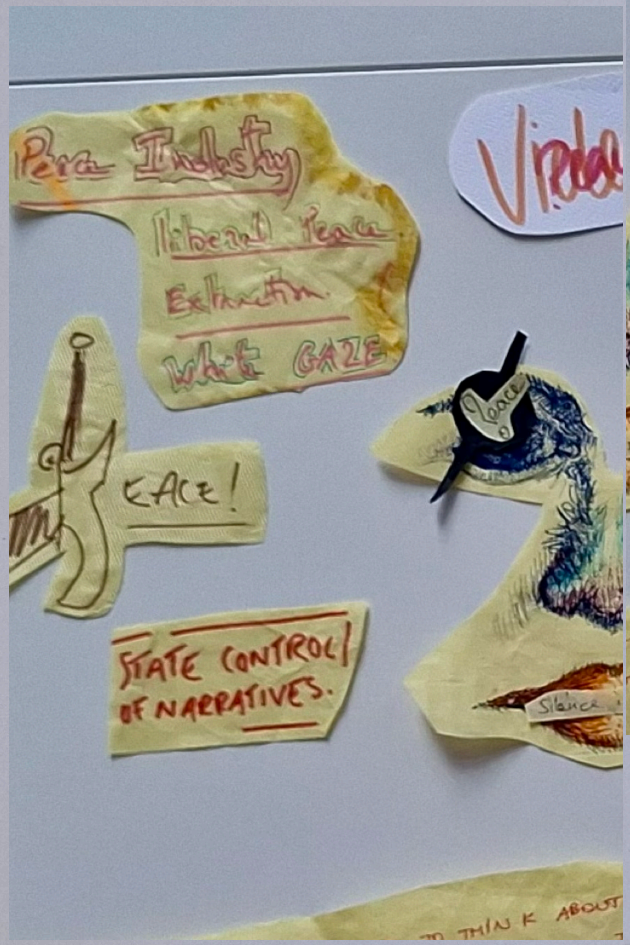
SILENCE AS VIOLENCE · BUILDING PEACE = ERASURE OF AGONISM · VIOLENCE OF PEACE = THE PROBLEM IS OVERTHERE WITH THE OTHERS ·

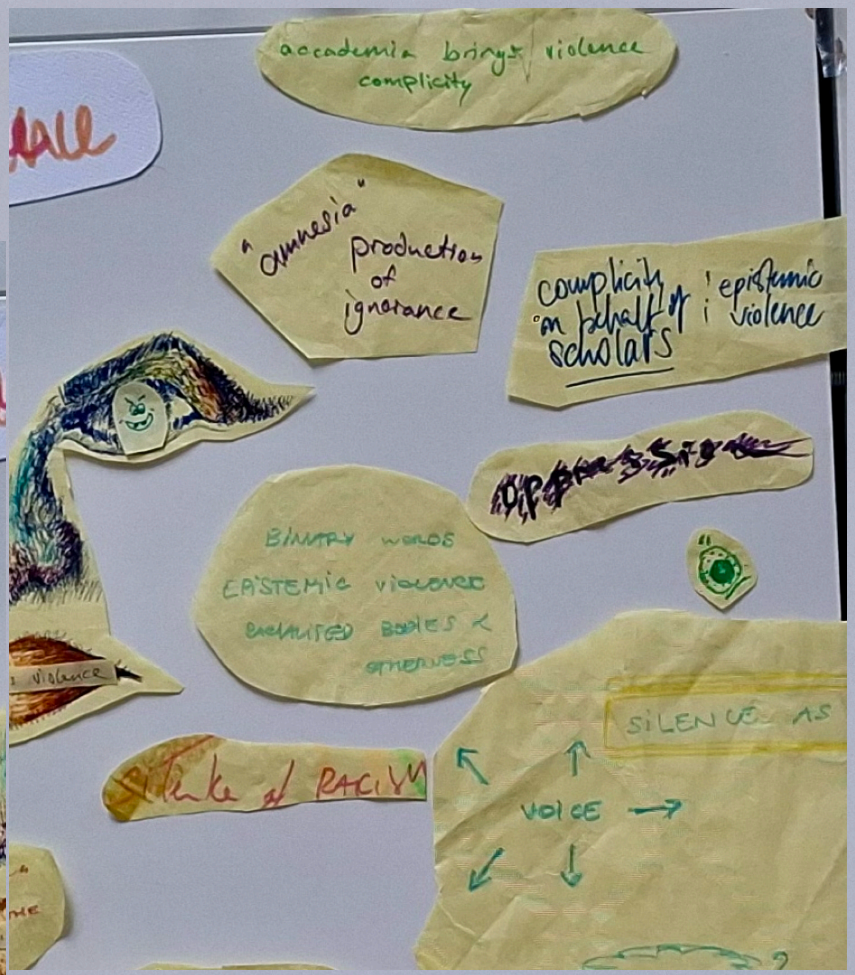
· EPISTEMIC VIOLENCE OF PEACE STUDIES

· COMPLICITY ON BEHALF OF SCHOLARS:

CONTEXTS OF VIOLENCE (E.G. DRC)

CONGO) CANNOT GENERATE PATHWAYS TO PEACE ·



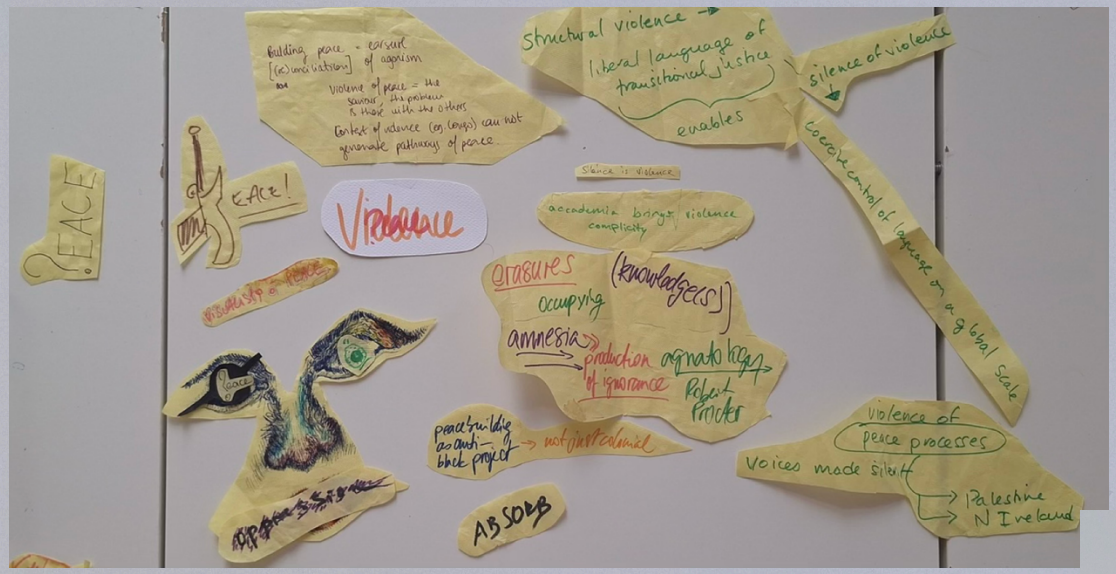


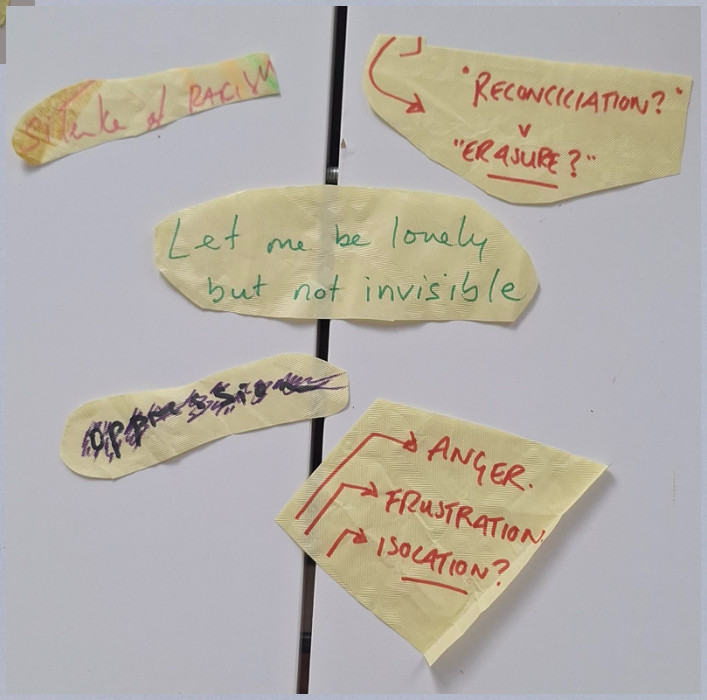
ACADEMIA BRINGS VIOLENCE

PEACEBUILDING AS ANTIBLACK PROJECT · NOT JUST COLONIAL

· BINARY WORDS · EPISTEMIC VIOLENCE · RACIALISED BODIES & OTHERNESS

SILENCE · EXCLUSION OF IDENTITIES · RESILIENCE SUBSTITUTES RESISTANCE · HUMANITY ON PROBATION · ANGER · FRUSTRATION · ISOLATION?





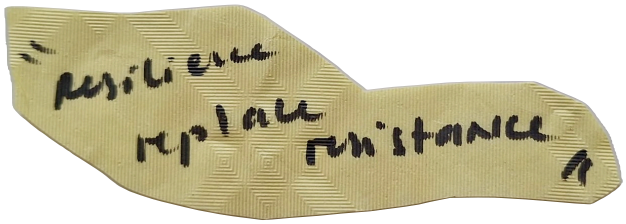
RECONCILIATION VS. "ERASURE?" · LET ME BE LONELY BUT NOT INVISIBLE

VIOLENCE OF PM OF PROCESSES: VOICES MADE SILENT IN PALESTINE, NORTHERN IRELAND

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE → LIBERAL LANGUAGES OF TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE ENABLES COERCIVE CONTROL LANGUAGE ON A GLOBAL SCALE


?EACE
Let me be lonely
but not invisible
Peace
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Violence

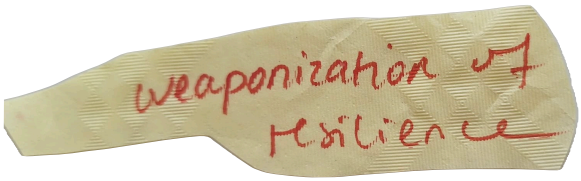
Resilience Replaces Resistance
by Malaka Shwaikh



In my contribution during the workshop, I spoke about a concept that has become highly influential in everyday discourse, particularly in the humanitarian sector: resilience. I argued that it can be dehumanising to expect people living through violence and hardship to be resilient – to cope with suffering and emerge stronger from it. The problem with resilience, as I explain, lies in the expectations attached to it. It is often expected of Palestinians and other struggling communities by people in more privileged positions.

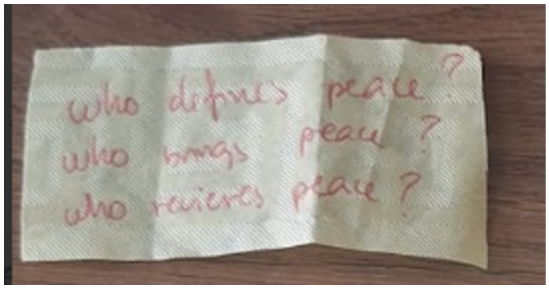
Resilience also reflects an individualising, liberal discourse. Those who are able – or choose – to cope with violence or emerge stronger are often celebrated as examples to follow, while those who cannot, or simply do not, are pushed to the margins because they do not fit a liberal model of success and resilience. In our conversations, we spoke about alternative ways of speaking about communities living under violence: ones that centre their voices, enable them to define their own experiences, and, whenever possible, give them the platform to speak for themselves.

Resilience is not an indigenous concept in the Palestinian context; it has largely been imposed from the outside. Since I began researching the concept, I have come across countless training programmes, workshops, and funding initiatives led by international organisations with the aim of strengthening Palestinian resilience. My concern is that this enormous investment in resilience effectively casts the role of international actors as helping local communities learn how to cope with the violence imposed upon them, while leaving the root causes of that violence untouched. This is deeply problematic because when the underlying causes remain unaddressed, the violence continues.



What local communities need is not to be taught resilience, but to be supported in resistance. We discussed the importance of resisting the liberal narratives imposed on us, of addressing the structural causes of violence, and of refusing to prescribe how people should respond to oppression. Only local communities have the right to decide how they respond. If they choose resilience, that choice belongs to them. But it is not for external actors to expect resilience from them, or to invest vast amounts of funding in encouraging them to cope with conditions that should instead be challenged and transformed.

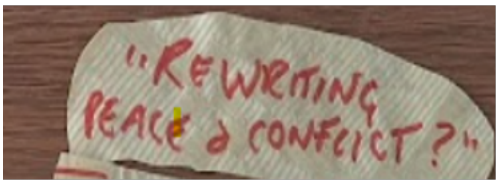




Narratives of Violence & Peace
by Cira Pallí-Asperó

In defining what counts as violence, choices are inevitably made about which events, experiences, and forms of harm are placed at the centre. These choices determine how the causes, antecedents, and consequences of such violence are understood, as well as who is recognised as a victim and who are the perpetrator. In doing so, the construction of narratives of violence influences the kinds of peace that are pursued by determining which experiences of harm become publicly visible and which remain silenced. While such choices are unavoidable, it is important to understand the conditions under which these narratives are constructed and how particular understandings of violence come to be recognised as authoritative.

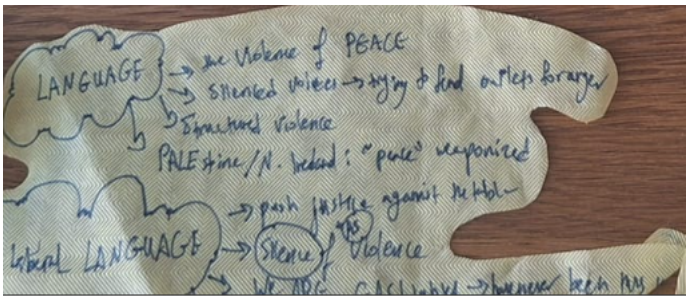
The logic behind narrative construction begins with a seemingly simple question: what is the starting point? Considering which temporalities are employed to define harm and violence raises questions about the implications of historical periodisation. Dominant Western historiographical periodisation, built on Eurocentric timelines, commonly divides history around moments of expansion, conquest, colonisation (and political independence), progress, and modernisation, at the expense of other understandings of time and historical processes (Rifkin, 2017).



The historical period or event that is taken as the point of departure matters. A while ago, in a conversation with Olivia Rutazibwa (Rutazibwa & Pallí-Asperó, 2022), she shared an example from her teaching in development studies that captures this well. She explained that in the introduction to the course, university handbooks often start in 1950 with modernisation theories, the different stages of development after the Second World War, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund:

'At some point I asked myself […]: Where do we begin the story [when we seek to understand the nature and origin of wealth, poverty and global inequality]? If you want to start the story about fighting poverty, you might also be interested in how we got to this super unequal world, right? So that's why I start now […] the introductory classes in 1492 rather than in 1950 with the Modernisation theories, [showing] where all the choices were made historically to extract wealth from one side of the world to the other, rather than immediately start with so-called solutions to that poverty.'

The forms of knowledge recognised as legitimate in documenting harm and violence are another building block of narratives of violence. This considers what counts as legitimate evidence, how it is collected and verified, and the implications of 'Eurocentric bias in knowledge production' (Rutazibwa, 2019, 66). By privileging written documentation over oral traditions, embodied memories, and other cosmologies, Western traditions have systematically sidelined alternative ways of knowing, determining which experiences of harm and injustice become part of the historical record and which remain unarchived.

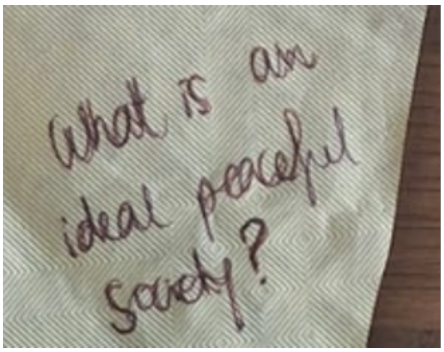


The Truth and Justice Commission in Mauritius offers an interesting example. The commission was established in 2011 to inquire into the ongoing consequences of slavery and indentured labour and to formulate recommendations aimed at promoting social justice and national unity (TJC Final Report, 2011). The commission included an oral history project that collected lived experiences of the Creole community. However, while these testimonies informed the commission's recommendations, Creole experiences became evidence supporting broader institutional interpretations about how the Creole community experienced the enduring impacts of slavery and indentured labour, and appeared in the report transformed into sociological categories mediated through the commissioner's analytical framework (Croucher et al., 2017).

This case also illustrates how language conditions the terms through which narratives are constructed. Language carries within itself ways of thinking, cultural meanings, and relations of power (Anzaldúa, 1987). While the oral history project was conducted in Creole and French, the final report was written in English. This translation across languages rendered whole knowledge systems invisible within the authorised narratives. Translation also occurred at a higher level, as privileging institutional and academic vocabularies contributed to the erasure of other epistemic frameworks, raising important questions about how experience is recognised and how events are represented.



What is preserved and how it is preserved is shaped by who has the authority and the institutional means to make themselves heard (Trouillot, 2015). The processes and mechanisms through which violence is defined, documented and investigated are often modelled on existing hierarchies that determine whose experiences and forms of knowledge are recognised as credible, and whose are sidelined or silenced (Madlingozi 2017). The construction of narratives is therefore inseparable from struggles over epistemic authority as the conditions under which knowledge is produced, validated, and circulated (Fricker 2007; Medina 2013) determines what counts as violence, who can be held accountable for it, and what forms of repair can be foreseen (Jamar, 2022).



Narratives of harm and violence shape how the key components of *peace* are defined. They define who will be the main actors in delivering it and who will receive it. They determine what type of peace is sought and, thus, what constitutes a peaceful society. They establish the terms under which societies ought to understand themselves as having "moved on" from violence and implicitly contain other forms of violence that remain structurally unacknowledged.

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V.
Counter(Narratives) that ReworldZ

We Are the Counternarrative
by Fabricio Rodríguez

Peace belongs to nobody,
peace belongs to all.
I need no validation
for human I am.
I need no validation
for human you are.

Yet here we are,
you and I,
counting rocks in the cracks,
carrying the aid,
seeing the evil,
too often stuck,
by the fence and the dust.

Unseen we go,
through the unseen we go,
one piece of bread,
half a litre of sea,
merging three tonnes of dreams.

From the sky they must fall,
into the land of the trees,
it is the land for my feet.
Lost at night, lost my love,
hear the children we mourn
– every soul we shall mourn.

We are the counternarrative.

We become text,
we sing songs,
try to live in the now.
We suffer
and cry.
We try to walk
and transform.

You turn our fears
into wings.
Through our steps
we can flow.
Our voices are loud.
in silence we're loud.

We are the borderland.
We are the land.
For in me there's no border,
for my home is the land.
Feel the stone
and the rose,
feel the rose,
heal the cold.

We are the color of peace.
We're the peace by the people.
Not the one on the news.
We're the peace by the people.
The one by those who survive.
- by those yet to arrive.
The one by the flowers.
The one by the tide.

Together we struggle.
Together we fight.
In the struggle
we grow.
In the struggle
we die.
In the struggle
we're born.
Through the struggle
we rise.
Through the struggle
we rise.

Can the Land Speak?
by Jülide Eda Sezer



I have been thinking about two important texts, "*Can the Subaltern Speak*?" by Gayatri Spivak and "*Permission to Narrate*," by Edward Said. They blew a gust of wind in the form of a whisper to those of us[1], reminding us to be always cautious that representation conceals the voice and presence of the racialized and sexualized Other(ed); that the discourse is power; and we should be wary of our position when we speak, to avoid speaking on behalf of the Othered, that every attempt to speak for the Other has a risk of disfiguring the figure. This whisper walks with us, making us notice, even in the mundane moments of everyday life. Those of us who are aware of this colonial game are also aware that this world is a pluriverse; thus, we are open to learning other languages and ways of expression beyond our own, or the forced (Eurocentric) human languages.

But what do we do, when the language of the objectified Other is not a human language? I trust that there are two paths towards hearing the sounds of the decolonial world: acknowledging the power of self-expression of the land and through the power of self-expression of the indigenous people to a land, who are its continuum. This stance, recognizing relationality, interconnectedness, and *vincularidad*, highlights that we are always in a form of relation with one another (including the nonhuman), and we are not detached from each other (including the land/nature). How, then, could we apply Spivak's suggestion of undoing representation and letting the subject speak, when the subject has been speaking all along? How do we listen? This requires a shift toward *sentipensar*: a collaborative feel-thinking that unlearns colonial binaries.

Path One: The Self-Expression of the Land as a Multispecies Collaboration Site

For the last ten years since my relocation to another land, I have found myself in the moments of involuntary memory sparks, and drawing olive trees on random pages. I believe, it might be a way of tuning into spatiotemporality of an olive tree, as one has to draw hundreds of leaves close to one another, one has to slow down, and notice that olive trees are everywhere. The trunk of the olive tree takes a unique shape every time. I find this to be a way of transition to a realm, a liminal one, which Gloria Anzaldua defines as *nepantla,* a daring space where we face our responsibilities and

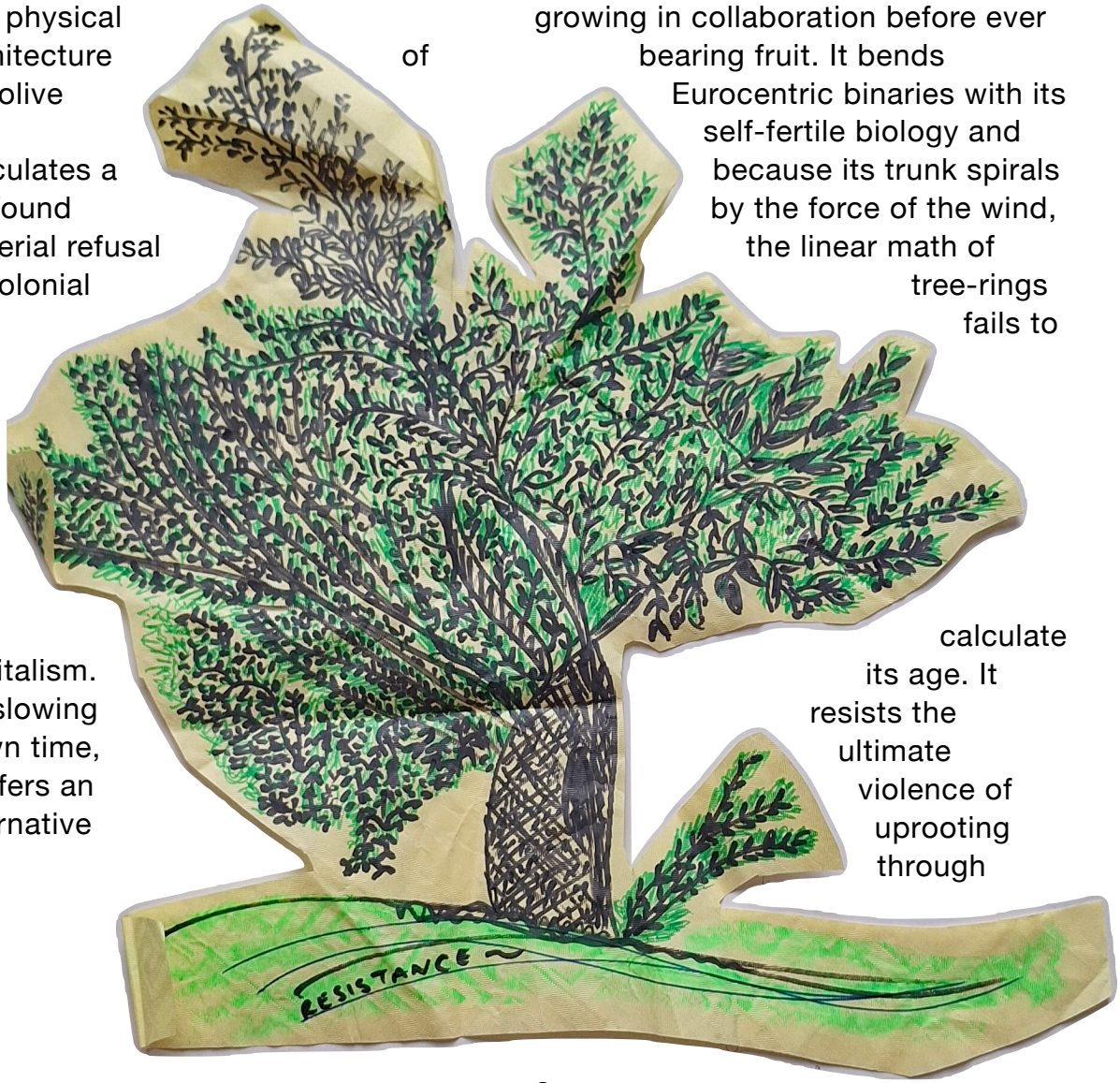


complicities, a place for our rebirth through radical hope and imagination.

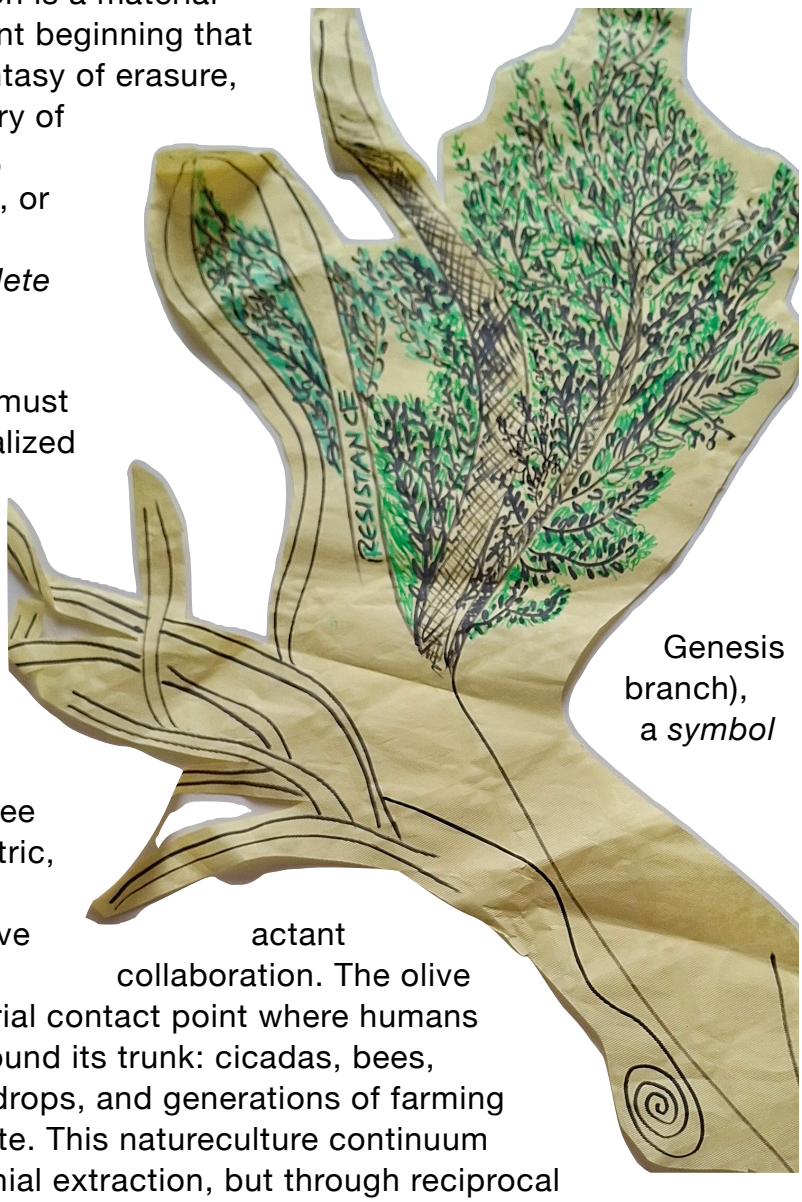
Nepantla is the borderland where the material and immaterial, the spiritual and the nonhuman, converge. By dwelling in *nepantla*, we activate a visionary state of consciousness where rebirth occurs, and where we recognize that the mind, body, and landscape are irrevocably attached. I see my way inwards through drawing and talking about olive trees, as a way of, I believe, finding my connection to home, to Earth and inviting people into that realm.

I keep thinking about what an olive tree represents, while drawing the leaves, all the sounds of cicadas, bees, rain, and wind come all at once, I insist against people who claim that olive tree is the silent witness, on the contrary, I believe it is the noisiest, messiest, most unpredictable, most patient and most stubborn one.

The physical architecture of the olive tree articulates a profound material refusal of colonial capitalism. By slowing down time, it offers an alternative spatiotemporality where productivity cannot be forced: it spends its first seven years growing in collaboration before ever bearing fruit. It bends Eurocentric binaries with its self-fertile biology and because its trunk spirals by the force of the wind, the linear math of tree-rings fails to calculate its age. It resists the ultimate violence of uprooting through a stubborn, subterranean insistence on regeneration.



In Decolonial Ecology, Malcolm Ferdinand conceptualizes the violent baseline of modernity, noting that "colonial inhabitation only begins from the moment that tree is fallen." Yet, when the olive tree is cut, it resprouts. This continuation of regeneration is a material resistance of life, a constant beginning that dismantles the colonial fantasy of erasure, whispering to the machinery of extraction and occupation, whether in Palestine, Syria, or Türkiye: Y*ou can delay my growth, but you cannot delete me.*



In the colonial wound, we must transition from instrumentalized human symbols to the living ontology of the land. Within Western epistemologies, from the waters of the biblical Genesis (Noah's ark and the olive branch), the olive tree is reduced to a *symbol of peace* for colonial discourse. Yet, the living tree exceeds these human-centric, Judeo-Christian scripts, presenting itself as an active actant and a site of multispecies collaboration. The olive tree attracts. It is a terrestrial contact point where humans and nonhumans gather around its trunk: cicadas, bees, butterflies, wind, sun, raindrops, and generations of farming families share a singular site. This natureculture continuum operates not through colonial extraction, but through reciprocal symbiosis (being with) and sympoiesis (making together).

Path Two: The Indigenous Voice and the Counter-Narratives

The second path manifests where postcolonial, decolonial and indigenous studies teach us that the voice of the land converges with the voice of its indigenous continuum. In the context of Palestine, it is almost impossible to find a testimony without mentioning an olive tree. In the *Absent Presence* Mahmoud Darwish states that the olive tree is not a metaphor, that it walked with Palestinians. It is such a tactful way to express indigeneity to the land,

highlighting the active force of the olive trees in the face of Zionist settler colonialism.

Such voice stands in opposition to the weaponization of the olive branch by colonial actors who use it as an instrument of erasure. We see this violent distortion in Türkiye's 2018 military invasion of Afrin in Syria. By naming a military campaign of invasion "*Operation Olive Branch*," it was purported to 'bring peace' to Syria with its military operation. A parallel logic of erasure defines Donald Trump's administrative *Board of Peace.* The board boldly brandished the aesthetic icons of the dove and the olive branch, yet excluded Palestinians from the room. Here, peace is reduced to administrative governance and is the ultimate instrumentalization of the olive tree, performing the physical and narrative erasure of the very people who cultivated it.

Yet, when Yasser Arafat took the global stage at the United Nations in 1974, he executed a radical reversal of this colonial game. Declaring, "I carry an olive branch in one hand and a freedom fighter's gun in the other. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand," Arafat held the discourse of peace on his own terms. By holding an olive branch, Arafat brought Palestine directly to the stage, as if saying: "*Here is the peace you claim to value, and it is anchored to my soil."* By retaining the action and narrative authority of peace, Arafat issued a clear warning: if the colonizer lets that branch fall through continuous occupation, they choose the resistance. The olive branch is thus reclaimed as a site of indigenous sovereignty.

And once a tree falls by the hands of the colonizers, life and resistance continuously begin ~

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Reworlding Peace - Articulating visions that break away from the coloniality of peace

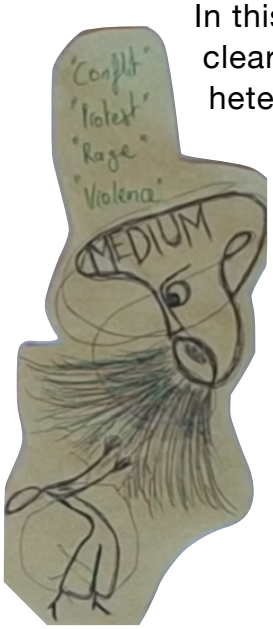
by Astrid Jamar



As we unpacked the various layers through which peace studies participate in reproducing colonial logics, we gradually threaded through how crucial issues left undressed within our respective specialized fields are connected to each other across contexts: the normalisation of dehumanization performed under the name of peace, peaceful expectations imposed on colonised people, the co-optation of resilient victims that set up "good societal examples", and evolving forms of police violence in Europe targeting these who are unable/unwilling to embrace colonial visions of peace. By weaponizing resilience, resilience replace resistance. Rewarding compliance, angry people are portrayed as unpeaceful. Reworlding peace entails breaking away from such coloniality and working towards delivering visions centred on dignity.

Drawing, writing creatively, reading poetry, sharing our lived experiences and most inspiring authors that practice and celebrate resistance, watching movies, meeting with student activists, we identified many dimensions we refuse to reproduce through our role of knowledge producers. At the end of the workshop, we wondered how to move forward: What are the conditions we need for creating transformative knowledges and practices? What are "peaceful societies"? What are the ways of creating narratives and counter-narratives? How do we work collectively to break institutional silences? What are our responsibilities towards reworlding peace as scholar activists?





In this space grounded with positions that embrace radicality, i.e. the clear rejection of militarised violence and its manifold racial capitalist hetero patriarchal underpinnings, we managed to address these questions in depth and with humility. For many of us, we are very often the one radical person in scholar and policy peace settings we evolved in. We have to push back because of our empirical observations disrupt too much the state of arts, because our theoretical claims push too far what is accepted as societal impact rewarded in European academic systems. Still breaking away from the coloniality of peace is not just theorising about the white saviour complex. We have to accept that we are



part of the problems, being embedded in privileged structures that enable and justify colonial violence. Sitting under the attic of the Brabantine Gothic[3] style central library of the University of Antwerp is an obvious reminder that the space is entangled in historical colonial wealth. The current rectorate office of the University of Antwerp is located in what once was the Belgian Colonial College[4].

Engaging with our respective lived experiences, including research and activist ones, in various regions of the world - namely Matonge (Congolese quarter in Brussels), Goma (Eastern DRC Congo), Ngozi (Burundian borderland city with Rwanda), Belfast in Northern Ireland, Gaza in Palestine, Kiev in Ukraine, or Quito in Ecuador, Veracruz at the Mexican Golf coast, the port of Antwerp, we learnt and unlearnt through the resonances of colonial traces across these various spaces shaped by colonial violence and wealth extraction. Through these resonances, I grasped not only more intricate ways in which western models of peace travel, but also all the ripple effects of transnational resistance. Resistance travels too. Scholar resistance to the violence of colonial peace implies participating in these ripple effects. This includes taking part in the revalorisation of discredited epistemic and ontological insights of liberatory praxes. Reworlding also calls to actively transcend the artificial binary between activist and scientific research; showcasing and taking part in re-imagining alternatives and policy not centred on militarised fears.



Seeking to wrap up our workshop with concrete steps forward, we proposed to set up a radical peace network to continue to nurture transnational connections. More importantly, going back and forward to punchy words cut out banqueting rolls confirmed the violence of peace has been confronted over and over, and continue to be, across continents. Academic systems might not reward such confrontations, if not chastise these who confront them. As research activists, reworlding peace consist in sitting, talking, creating, participating in

[3] https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/about-uantwerp/campuses/stadscampus/history/

[4] https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/diversity-and-inclusion/activities/previous-activities/aula-lumumba-inauguration/film-sous-letoile-dor/

subaltern memory-making,
Practicing Radical Hope,
Getting organised through the Power of Imagination,
through Shades of Anger,
We Need to be heard through rage, not despite of it.

Be a KillJoy with Amour!

Because **Confronting** the *coloniality of peace* might be challenging,
demanding, and *uncertain*,
it is more rewarding that trying
to ~~squeeze ourselves to fit in academic complicit boxes.~~



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VI. Tackling (de)coloniality upfront – Ethical Implications

On representations in Flemish spaces of enslaved persons
By Sarah Katz-Lavigne

In the bright church
of geometrical marble and wood

Coated in layers of sweat
on a searing day

The poem reader's voice
comes to me last
streaming into corners
dimmed by my dark glasses.

In the contemporary disquiet
this sea of pearly clammed-up faces

His voice is the long boat journey
that takes me through the curved river, the
yellow lines of her dress.

* * *

The artist has made her noble, Bridgerton style
her dress a featureless, sickly white

A reddish sash
flows downwards from her waist
the rinsed-out edges of a bloody cloth

Her eyes
etched whitely into her face
look over and beyond us

– "Accusingly," someone says.
I don't know about that.

Our whiteness twists and turns
but leads back to us always –
the minotaur in the labyrinth
lying in wait.

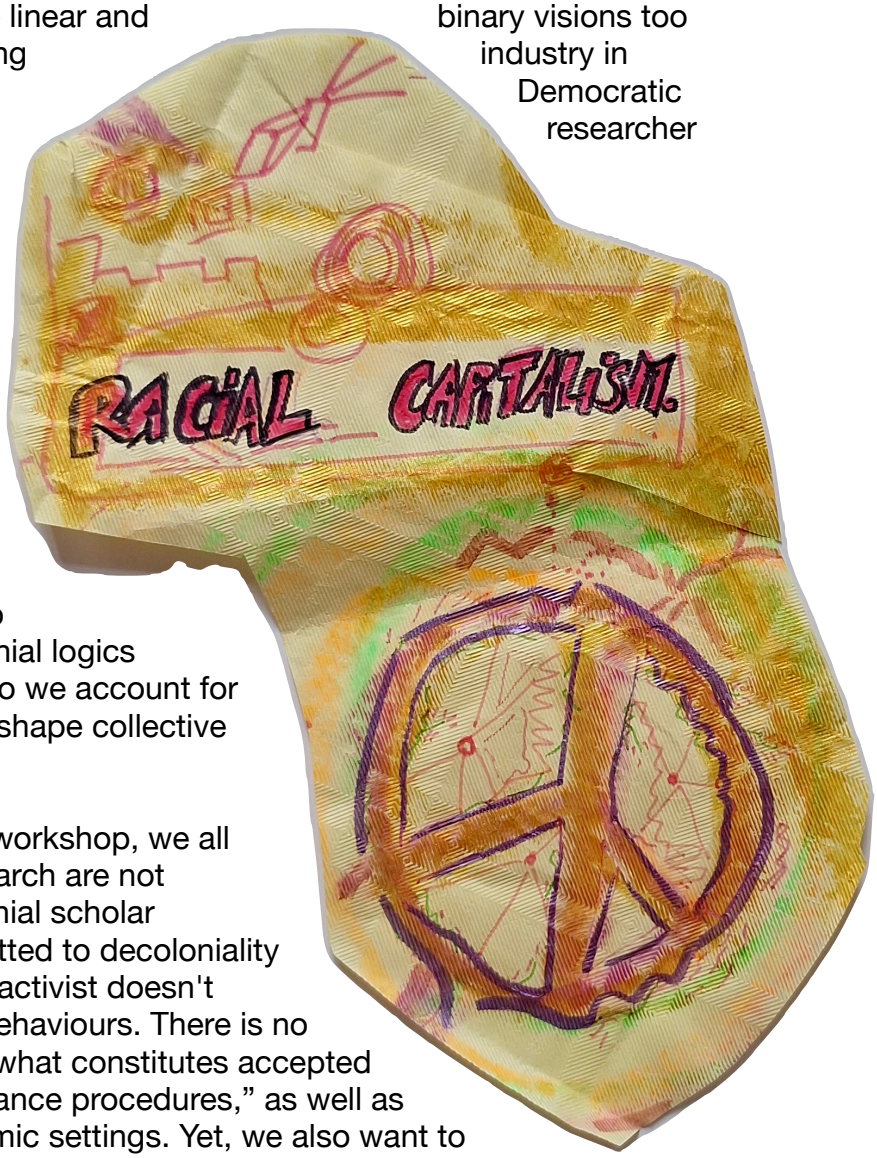
What does she see?

The groove on that worn path,
the blue of that piece of sky at midday
the banana trees that lead her to her love
and that she never saw again?

Against the Romanticisation of Collaborative Arts-Based Knowledge Making

by Astrid Jamar

Arts for Peace is a core tool of peacewashing, i.e. whitewashing through the imposition of reconciliation and erasure during/after the infliction of colonial militarised violence, often disguised behind a combination of over-specialised bureaucratic responses. Seeking to respond to the urgent need to appreciate alternative ways of knowing violence, my recent research engage with drawing as a methodology. I have organised and participated in dozens of drawing workshops seeking to confront the linear and binary visions too often deployed by the peacebuilding industry in Burundi and South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). As a researcher formally trained in political and anthropological methodologies, I found arts based methods offer much more effective ways to prompt substantive exchanges than interviews and conventional focus groups. I was equally confronted by ethical challenges that academia provide no adequate tool to address. If not extractive and not reproducing knowledge asymmetries, what is left of academic research? How do we react when neoliberal and colonial logics infiltrate reworlding efforts? How do we account for asymmetries and ambiguities that shape collective knowledge making?



Beyond this specific space of the workshop, we all have experienced that ethical research are not restricted to engaging with decolonial scholar debates; and equally being committed to decoloniality and being a decolonial researcher activist doesn't translate automatically to ethical behaviours. There is no doubt that we need to interrogate what constitutes accepted “ethical etiquette” or “ethical clearance procedures,” as well as rethink the word “ethics” in academic settings. Yet, we also want to highlight how decentring spaces are also entrenched in neoliberal power dynamics. Ethical challenges are particularly complex when creating, walking in and out of such spaces committed to break away from colonial logics. We don't need to romanticize them. Even in these spaces, some will come and take collective benefits to their own advantages. In some cases, snake-like attitude is blatant. It is (sometimes not always) coming from the people who contribute the least to

collective work. In other instances, it might feel like colonial-calculating logics when seeking to clarify who contributed to what. Being able to see power asymmetries does not result in willing nor being able to confront and reverse them. However, what is clear is that mainstream authorship ethical guidelines[5] are not fit for purpose when seeking to break away from the coloniality of knowledge.

Let's for instance consider the very exercise of preparing this collective poetic and visual intervention. The format of our workshop clearly broke with mainstream academic settings by not assigning keynote speakers or timed presentations. We had assigned jointly themes and session chairs to prompt group discussions. All previous short entries demonstrate the strength of arts-based approaches to contribute to reworlding knowledge about peace. The jointly set format deliberately took into consideration power hierarchies and citation politics that shape scholar knowledge production. The idea of collective collages only emerged with the unexpected richness of doodles and notes made by these in the room on the banqueting rolls. It took me three months to envision the first collage, proceed with cuts, and operate various tests to reach a combination that relay effectively graphic and textual dimensions. Then several more months to organise follow up discussions with those who could contribute. I sent several emails to the wider group who attended physically and online. Some participants never replied. I am the worst at emails, so no blaming here. It is just another indication of how this intuitive approach requires significant time; time unavailable to many in academic temporalities shaped by increasing neoliberal pressures. Investing further in collective knowledge making is not a cost that we can all afford. Then how do we write collectively documenting transparently specific credits when some contributors don't have the time to work on their contributions ? And how do we account fairly and transparently for collective conversations ? How do we attribute credits for ideas sparking from hard work undertaken in other spaces?

When twisting traditional roles and frameworks, even alternative authorship guidelines systems recommended for collaboration are not that practical. Being conscious about how my own positionality and research interests shaped my cutting process, we proceeded collectively for the second part of cuts. I suggested to these based in Brussels to meet. Three of us met in the park in front of the Royal Palace. We looked and commented together the dozens of meters of banqueting rolls. We agreed on themes and divided pieces of papers to cut at home respectively. We met again. Each commented their cutting processes. Besides thematic insights discussed above, I was particularly fascinated by individual overlaps and differences in note taking. Big parts I had no recollection of appeared here and there. It is quite possible that I got distracted, day dreamed and missed parts of the conversations. In addition, people were adding non-verbalised connections in their notes, applying core concepts of discussions to contexts and cases they are more familiar with, and/or getting side-tracked by more fascinating trains of thoughts! The much needed reworlding does inevitably spark out such unlinear ways.

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[5] See for instance, https://library.ed.ac.uk/research-support/publishing-your-research/fair-authorship-guidance or https://cdnsciencepub.com/authors-and-reviewers/community-engaged-research.

This zine in this current format does not count as scholar output that “matters” in academic ranking matrixes and consequent hiring and promotion systems. Does it mean that authorship does not matter? If we try to account for authorship, who do we assign sparkling ideas to? The chair of the session, the clearer note takers, the best doodler, only these who made punchy comments providing full references that I accurately recollect, the writers of the poem collection we read on the first day, or these who introduced me to such poetry? In addition to attribution of contributions, there is also a need to question differentiated and/or altered ontological framings and cosmological understandings, and implicit hierarchies and tensions that infiltrate this very process. When considering ethical acknowledgements, we are far from just blaming the co-optation of ideas from other presented papers. No single answer can tackle, confront, and redress the coloniality of knowledge production we are embedded in. Addressing these questions with care is not a given and again time consuming. It however a must for reworlding knowledge making steps towards dignified peace.

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VII. Abolition Liberation Policy Recommendations

Text Entry by Astrid Jamar & Selbi Durdiyeva - Visual Collages by Cira Pallí-Asperó

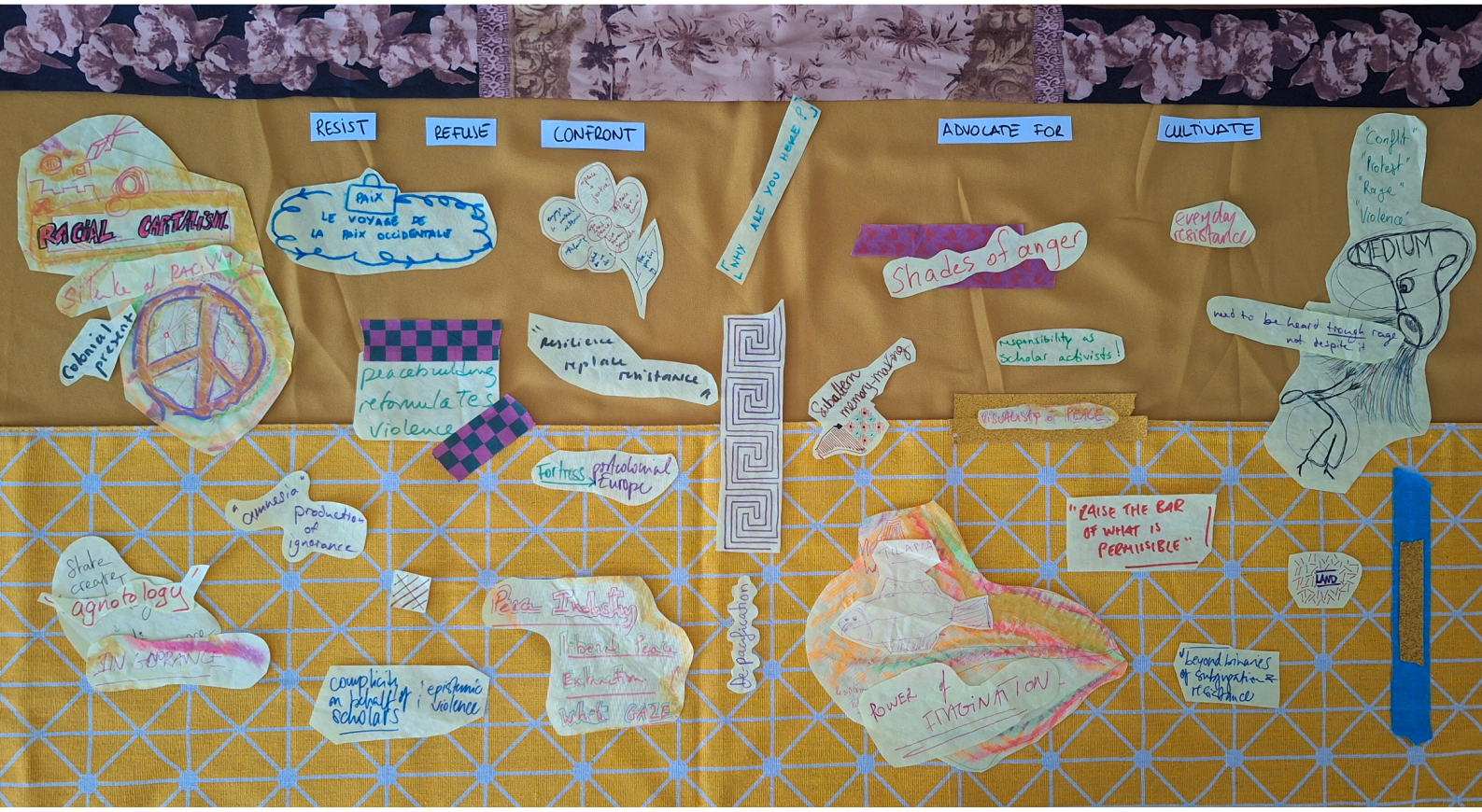
DE-PACIFY

- Maintain conflictuality – do not attempt to 'pacify' decolonial debates by silencing the subaltern. Do not reduce/remove space for contestation of colonial legacies by treating symptoms without addressing the causes ('restorative justice' without resolving the material reality of the subaltern). Do not silence the voices of dissent, rather, create a platform and safe space where dissent to colonial situations can be articulated, Only by 'unmasking' colonial legacies, however 'uncomfortable' it is for the coloniser, will allow transformation and repair
- Value diverging and conflicting views
- Avoid imposing consensus, positivity, cohesion, reconciliation
- Question places of power and how they value these who know the expected societal codes
- Reassess how race, class, and gender shape our reading and tolerance of affects

CONFRONT

- The Epistemic Violence of Peace Studies
- The normalised construction of current modernities built on space, time, & race. Namely avoid peaceful/war-affected binary geographic divisions of the world, and rather rethink which spaces produce violence, which spaces are more exposed to militarised violence and how are they connected?
- Capitalist Erasures of Sustained Colonial violence, i.e. call out when institutions are dismantling parts of their colonial roots because it is profitable for them
- Necropolitics, weaponisation of resilience, normalisation of dehumanisation and death of racialised people
- Liberal language of Peace – liberal language is hegemonic, yet unrepresentative of what constitutes peace. We need an avenue to challenge liberal hegemony in peace studies and open space for critical, intersectional, and pluriversal perspectives.
- Occupying Knowledges

RAISE THE BAR OF WHAT IS PERMISSIBLE



RESIST

- Liberal language of Peace – liberal language is hegemonic, yet unrepresentative of what constitutes peace. We need an avenue to challenge liberal hegemony in peace studies and open space for critical, intersectional, and pluriversal perspectives.
- Resilience – romanticisation of resilience needs to be stopped. People should not be put in situations where they are expected to demonstrate resilience. Resist narratives, recommendations, and scholarship that suggest it as a 'solution.' Victims already endure enough. Call out/refuse policy, grants, approaches that offer resilience-based 'remedies.' Centre justice and resistance instead.
- Depletion – policy and research should be directed at resisting depletion, which includes depletion of natural resources for capitalist gain, and psychological, emotional, physical depletion of racialised bodies. This involves articulating alternative ways of being as humans that is not based on endless capitalistic depletion at the expense of earth and racialised individuals and communities.

- Agnotology (production of ignorance) – agnotology refers to the study of culturally and deliberately produced ignorance. It has long been articulated in critical feminist studies that what we know and what we do not know, what we choose to know and what we choose not to know, is not apolitical. Policy and research should resist agnotology by asking uncomfortable questions, first and foremost unmasking unequal dynamics in knowledge production.
- N.H.I – an abbreviation used by Los Angeles Police to refer to violence against jobless young Black men, which stands for 'no humans involved.' Caribbean thinker Sylvia Wynter called out the use of the abbreviation in her 1994 speech, making connections to how structures of racism persist. Fighting racism is at the core of policy and research. Those in positions of power should use their privilege to resist any instances of racism. Policy responses should be articulated in a way that the burden of this fight is not placed on oppressed people alone.
- Colonial present – resist and refuse the narratives of 'colonialism in the past.' Settler colonialism is a contemporary reality; colonial relations and their enduring consequences persist in multiple forms, including settler colonialism, neocolonial economic relations, extractive relations, and the broader structures of coloniality. Educate yourself on existing instances of settler colonialism and resistance against it. Do not compartmentalise colonialism and indigeneity to 'history' – address colonial structures in the present, and allow space for indigenous futurity and alterity, that is, a possibility for indigenous people to articulate and imagine, re-articulate and re-imagine, existence beyond the existing structure. This should be reflected in the language of policy efforts dedicated to repair colonial present.
- Voyages of Occidental Peace – refers to historic Western liberal hegemony in peace studies, as well as their normative diffusions from the so-called "Global North" to the "Global South.' We need to open space and be receptive to de-centring knowledge production and consequent relevant "expertise", namely, who gets to define what peace is, from a Western-European-North-Atlantic orientation.
- Spatial and Identity Hierarchies – geographical and physical spaces are not neutral; nor are the categories of social identities based on social norms. We need to resist these hierarchies by first exposing and revealing their presence, and then destabilising and challenging them, and offering alternatives.

REFUSE

- Amnesia – a deliberate act of forgetting, dis-remembering, not remembering, and, on a broader societal level, choosing policies that silence experiences of historical injustices with a view to imposing forgetting. To fight collective forgetting, practices of remembering should be endorsed on embodied, daily, institutional, international levels. This is/ought to be done through challenging dominant narratives, confronting the violence of erasure, listening to testimonies of victims and those historically silenced, listening, caring, and centring people with lived experiences.

- Complicit Silences – refers to a choice not to voice resistance, look away, and find justifications for remaining silent, while those who speak up take the burden on themselves, and those who remained silent speak out when it is safe to do so. Complicit silence implies agreement with what is happening, siding with a perpetrator, and choosing not to support victims. We need to call out these behaviours. Your silence will not protect you. On a practical level, we need to expose the harm of complicit silence and show how harmful an illusion of consensus is when injustice is done. We have seen too much of it done in history. Uncomfortable topics need to be raised and discussed in order to prevent further harm rather than when the dust has settled.
- Substitutes of Resistance
- Binary Words & Binary Worlds – much has been written on how binaries (either/or, black-and-white thinking) are the fruit of white supremacist culture. There are various manifestations of binaries in different systems of power: imposed binaries of race, of gender, of epistemology (objective vs subjective, universal vs biased) and their (not-so) implicit hierarchies. Peace Liberal Language is full of them, i.e peace/war, victim/perpetrator, saviour/victim, national/international, man/woman, public/private forms of violence, etc. Such thinking should be exposed.
- Complicit Invisibility – a useful term in the context of decolonisation, as it refers to hiding in order to retain the status quo.
- 'Saving Lives' – ' White Saviourism' – depriving them of rights to later 'save' and 'grant' them, and be praised for generosity, is a classic colonial move. Assuming someone needs you to save them, without being asked to do so, is white saviourism. Assuming others are incapable of agency and you need to 'give' them voice (through your research, intervention, peacebuilding project, and other ingredients of liberal vocabulary) is white saviourism too. We refuse the language of charity, rather than rights and justice; rather than centring oneself, true allyship includes using your platform and privilege to speak up against injustice; centre local knowledge, practice cultural curiosity and humility, don't be a tourist; do not gaslight, westplain, talk over; allyship without solidarity is empty words.
- Putting Humanity on Probation
- Exclusion of Identities
- Isolation
- Bringing the Colonial Back Home – 'boomerang effect,' but in a truly full-circle moment, colonizers bring violence from places they dispossess ('laboratories of colonisation', back home, it takes multiple forms – police violence, immigration controls, asylum policy, domestic violence, just to name a few.

CULTIVATE

- Shades of Anger – anger is a feminist emotion. It is the opposite of 'feeling sad' or 'feeling sorry,' as it forces action and mobilisation.
- Land – decolonisation without return of land is empty talk. We've heard it many times and we repeat it here again. Land has beyond material meaning for indigenous people, their relationship to land is not static, we should not impose it and we should allow it to be shaped and reshaped by people belonging to land. To belong to land means stewarding it, nourishing it, rather than depleting it for capital gain and profit in an endless attempt to cultivate narratives of scarcity.
- Imagination – we ought to imagine the world and worlds beyond what we are taught to imagine and beyond how we are taught to do it. Mediums that help fostering it, such as sci-fi, are not esoteric hobbies, if approached with care, they can serve as helpful milieu to go beyond what was imposed on us by greedy corporations. AI cannot imagine.
- Radical Hope – is embedded in fighting injustice, in agency, it goes beyond wishful thinking, it is a verb, verbs, and embedded in actions. [CP1]
- Subaltern Memory Making – the spaces where historically marginalised make sense of the experiences, going beyond state narratives, hegemonic discourses. It is built in grassroots spaces, it honours embodied memory and experiential learning and remembering, it rectifies intergenerational harm, it assumes responsibility beyond constraints of borders and linear time.

ADVOCATE FOR

- Reparations Dismantling Logics of Racial Capitalism
- Feel Thinking
- Healing Pain of Mourning

VIII. About Us (Poetic[6] & Institutional Bios)

I am like a rainbow on fire
Flaming, Sparkling up, sometimes burning up.
I am a book with so many chapters.
Pages flying off, I enjoy strong winds.
J am the dream that keep waking up the ones that want to sleep.

Dr **Astrid Jamar** is a research activist affiliated to the Visual and Digital Cultures Research Centre (ViDi), University of Antwerp. Her current research focuses on border thinking, the coloniality of peace, transitional (in)justice, memory and mourning, including the traces, wounds, and continuities of Belgian imperialism in the Burundi-Congolese borderlands and in Mexico. Over the past years, she directed the projects "Capturing Fluid Borders and Pluriversal Visions of Peace on the Tanganyika Lake Coast," and "Dreams, Night Visions and Decolonial Aspirations across Burundian-Congolese Borderlands." She published widely about the interplay of transitional justice professionals, institutions, norms, aesthetics, and knowledge production from decolonial feminist perspectives.

overly ripen figs; smashed on the ground
small bees on vine flowers
when we return to nature
from jealousy, pain, overconsumption, synthetic, aesthetic, economic, iconic
heteropatriarchical colonial project
burnt plastic burnt land killed beings
i am a traveller inhabiting and inhibiting, trying to weave words and worlds,
still unable to knit, knead, and repair

Dr **Selbi Durdiyeva** is an independent researcher. Selbi obtained her PhD at the Transitional Justice Institute, University of Ulster. She is a former Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability (AHDA) Fellow, the Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University and Oxford Nizami Ganjavi Centre Visiting Fellow. Her research interests lie in decoloniality, transitional justice, postcolonial literature and memory, and socio-legal approaches. She authored a monograph, 'The Role of Civil Society in Transitional Justice: The Case of Russia' published by Routledge and several other peer-reviewed publications.

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[6] The initial workshop that prompted by the zine started with poetry reading and poetry writing. As we did during the workshop, we introduce ourselves here with short contemporary by kasàlà poems, that insist on connections, celebration of life, joy, metaphoric and vivid language.

I am a Sloth looking for excitment
I am stuck in the ceiling
and from there I am dreaming to to go back to the ground floor
So I can go out, pick the little plants, that I don't know the name of, and
blow their seeds in the air.

Jean Illi is a PhD candidate in anthropology at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (LAMC) and a researcher within the HERICOL project on colonial legacies in Belgium. His work explores how public authorities in Brussels—at both municipal and regional levels—engage with claims addressing Belgian coloniality, with a particular focus on public space as a site of contestation and negotiation.

I am a traveling whale,
Ocean Blue, Ocean Orange.
I am artistic frustration, burning wood, burning love

Dr Fabricio Rodríguez is a Senior Researcher at the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute (ABI) and Lecturer in Political Science at the University of Freiburg, specializing in critical geopolitics and development studies. He is a member of the BMBF-funded network Postcolonial Hierarchies in Peace and Conflict, which brings together critical perspectives on the coloniality of violence, security, and transitional justice. His earlier work examined how struggles over oil extraction and mining reshape spatial relations and reinforce global inequalities across Latin America. Within the Postcolonial Hierarchies network, his research focuses on experiences of state repression and violence, exploring how political protests transform the urban streetscape of Santiago de Chile into a contested space for negotiating popular memory and envisioning alternative forms of peace and justice.

I am the rain,
I am the wet soil,
I am moss that grows on the cold rock, covering its surface with my many
threads.
There is a dream somewhere, dreamt by someone. Dreamt by many. It may be a
radical one - who is to say?
What is it to dream if not to imagine what can become(?)

Dr **Cira Pallí-Asperó** is a senior researcher at the Institute of Political Science (ISPOLE) at UCLouvain and an affiliated researcher at the Justice Visions Team in the Human Rights

Centre at Ghent University. She is a historian specialising in contemporary political history. In her work, she engages with state politics of the past, examining how historical discourse is mobilised, legitimised, or contested in efforts to address the legacies of violent and contested pasts. Her research has mainly focused on state-sanctioned historical commissions as investigative mechanisms and infrastructures of public history, as well as broader questions of memory politics and historical responsibility. She authored a monograph: "Clarifying the past: Understanding historical commissions in conflicted and divided societies", as well as other peer-reviewed publications examining historical commissions across diverse contexts and their role in addressing questions of historical truth, clarification, injustice, collective memory, and the resignification of the past.

I am the sky-blue breeze carrying an ocean of deep serenity.
My breath is woven with jasmine, softening the hard edges of hearts.
I fly across shores to plant seeds of strength in barren soil until hope blooms everywhere

Jülide Eda Sezer is an independent researcher specializing in posthuman feminist theory, multisensory relationality, and decolonial ecology. Holding an RMA in Gender Studies from Utrecht University, where her thesis, *Sustaining Resistance, Cultivating Liberation: The Enduring Bond of Rooted-Resistance-Companionship between Palestinians and the Olive Trees*, was awarded the Hélène Phoa Gender Studies Research Master Thesis Prize, her work bridges academic inquiry and public scholarship. She curates bilingual theoretical online content and facilitates reading circles exploring literature, environmental humanities, posthumanism, and more-than-human agency.

A black pigeon perches in the middle of the hunts, only carrying the voice of peace.
I do not sing for "good morning"—I sing to alert, against violence, against the cruel asymmetry of power.

Clement Basabose is an activist dedicated to community engagement and addressing gendered asymmetries with over 15 years of experience in Burundi. As a focal point and translator the Capturing Fluid Borders and Pluriversal visions of Peace part of the Decolonizing Peace Education in African Network, he participated in developing borderlands pedagogies. Clement advocates for peace strategies that reflect local contexts, fostering genuine understanding among communities impacted by systemic violence around the Tanganyika Lake. As Project Coordinator, "One needs to know in order to heal"-MENYA UKIRE Project, he is working in delivering Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) strategies through intergenerational dialogues, constructive and inclusive

transmission of memories in Bujumbura province, promoting artistic and cultural initiatives of MHPSS.

Sarah Katz-Lavigne is the Research Coordinator at the University of Antwerp's Law and Development Research Group and is about to start a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) postdoctoral fellowship at Utrecht University. Her research focuses on knowledge production around and impacts of large-scale mining of critical raw materials in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She holds a PhD in International Relations from the University of Groningen and Carleton University.



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