

A vision for the future



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Our analysis of colonialism

Our vision of the future is based on a decolonial analysis of colonialism. Colonialism is a system of oppression, exploitation and dehumanization that organized the planet in two worlds: the world of the colonizer and the world of the colonized, the zone of being and non-being as Fanon puts it. Within these worlds the colonizers organized social relations using different mechanisms such as gender, sexuality, race and class.

Five dimensions of colonialism - 1

Our view of colonialism is based on an analysis of colonial institutions in five dimensions:

1. The **economic** dimension is about the process of production, distribution and financing of goods and services in such a way that wealth that is produced in the colonized world is transferred to the colonizers world.
2. The **political** dimension is about the process of the formation, institutionalization, perpetuation of power in a society. Power is expressed in control and administration of states and communities.

Five dimensions of colonialism - 2

3. The **social** dimension is about the process of organizing social relations of human beings and between humans and their natural environment. Before colonialism social relations were organized on the basis of social division of labour, gender, religion, natural environment and technology. Colonialism introduced three extra principles in organizing social relations:
 - The concept of race and ethnicity linked to the concept of superiority and inferiority of human beings.
 - The concept of the principle of the individual versus society as a way to organize social relations.
 - The organization of mass migration based on the needs of the rising world colonial order.

Five dimensions of colonialism - 3

4. The **cultural** dimension is about the process of production and dissemination of knowledge about nature and society and the material and immaterial expression of this knowledge. Culture is institutionalized in educational institutions that produce knowledge and institutions for the dissemination of knowledge. Culture is also institutionalised in material culture (clothing, food, housing, architecture etc) and immaterial culture (language, art, customs, rituals etc). Colonialism introduced the element of superiority and inferiority.

Five dimensions of colonialism - 4

5. The **geographic** dimension is about the process of the rise of a global society where interaction in the other four dimensions is expressed in the interaction between regions on a global scale.

500 years of decline of human civilization

This system of institutional colonialism in five dimensions has been built in five hundred years and presented itself as modernity, as an enlightenment, as the progress of mankind. Of us, the victims of colonialism, for the majority of the world population it was not modernity, but barbarism, not the progress but the decline of human civilization.

Our vision of the future

Based on this analysis of where we stand in world history we articulate a vision for a decolonial international: our vision is to create a new world civilization that destroys the institutional framework of colonialism in these five dimensions and creates a world in which human beings enjoy love, peace, welfare, respect and dignity in pluriversity and diversity.

Police violence

You might say: brother, we have a lot of problems fighting police violence. Why put this stress on our shoulders to build a whole new world civilization?

We take a long view of history

Don't stress. We take a long view of history. It took them 500 years to build a civilization with institutions of oppression, exploitation, racism, injustice and humiliation.

Why should we stress ourselves to build a new world civilization in 5 years?

We don't mind if it takes another 50 or 500 years. We can say that we restarted this weekend in a tradition of resistance that began 500 years ago.

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The question of organization

How do we organize with this vision for a decolonial international?

The concept of an international is to be found in the socialist movement where the different internationals were based on the formation of mass political parties.

The lessons of the different Internationals

- We took the lessons from these internationals to our heart.
1. We don't want to build one type of organizations, for example political parties. We want to build networks of social movements.
 2. We don't want to be a decolonial international vanguard. We want to be a decolonial rearguard that facilitates, connects and supports activism of different social movements.
 3. We acknowledge that each social movement operates under different circumstances in different countries. The decolonial movement in Venezuela deals with other issues than the decolonial movement in France.
 4. They will find their own answer to the question of organization. It may be a political party or an advocacy organization or a network organization or a mosque.
 5. There is not one philosophy of liberation. There are many and a decolonial international should create spaces for debate and discussion on these perspectives in a climate of respect and diversity.

The question of organization



Now on a practical note: how do start building a decolonial international? We use two principles formulated by Marcus Garvey, a founder of the theory of decolonizing the mind with the proposition: "None but ourselves can free our minds."

1. We don't wait for support of the governments we are fighting against.
2. We don't wait for rich capitalists to support our struggle against capitalism

We are going to do it ourself

DECOLONIAL INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

The Decolonial International Network was founded in 2012. But only two years ago three organizations decided to put resources together to set up a coordination for DIN: Islamic Human Rights Commission in the UK headed by Arzu Merali and Massoud Shadjareh, Global Dialogue led by Ramon Grosfoguel and the International Institute for Scientific Research in The Netherlands led by me. On a scale of a 1000 years this is a modest step. Our concept is: struggle is sacrifice. We sacrifice resources in order to build a decolonial international. If you want to get involved in building a decolonial international, but you are not prepared to sacrifice anything, please look for a hobby.

Three priorities

We have formulated three priorities in building DIN:

1. To build an infrastructure for communication and education.
2. To connect activists around the world both in the global north and the global south
3. To encourage a new culture of activism with a decolonial code of ethics base on a theory of love.

1. Infrastructure for communication

We have a monthly newsletter in English. We should have it in the colonial languages like French, Spanish, Dutch but also in other languages such as Arabic, Turkish or Hindi. We have just started. We are willing in the coming 500 years to work with anybody who wants to make a safrifice to produce a newsletter in other languages.

2. Infrastructure for education

1. We have the annual two week Summer School in Barcelona on Decolonizing knowledge, power and the mind and in Granada on Islamic Liberation Theology.
2. We are currently building the infrastructure for an online decolonial university. We want to extend to a cadres school that offer course on the level of secondary education

The problem with the academia

We have a problem with the academia. The language and arguments are sometimes so complex that you need a PhD to understand that you are oppressed and humiliated.

As the saying goes: any fool can make simple matters complex. It takes a genius to make complex matters simple. Malcom X is such a genius. We need to train a new generation of teachers in the spirit of Malcolm X to make complex matters simple. They should use their skills to produce knowledge that we can use in a practical way and becomes part of our canon of decolonial knowledge.

Your contribution

If you want to contribute to building a decolonial international and you are a teacher or a lecturer, make a sacrifice and join us in building the Decolonial Cadre School.

Connecting activists around the world

The Bandung of the North can not exist without a connection with the Bandung of the South. A decolonial international is a platform to link activists and social movements to each other. A lot of my time is spent talking to activists around the world and bring them together in this network. And in that process I learn a lot. Let me share just one example.

Elelwani Ramugondo



Last week I had a conversation with Elelwani Ramugondo from the University of Cape Town. 25 years after the legal abolition of apartheid in South Africa the Rhodes Must Fall movement brought down the statue of the racist criminal Cecil Rhodes, but the university was not decolonized. She was bypassed for the position of vice-chancellor and instead a white women from the USA with less qualifications than hers was accepted for that position. She is taking the university to court. She explained to me how the positions of power are arranged in post-apartheid South Africa. And guess what. When she demanded that the university respect the BDS movement and disengage with the apartheid institutions in Israel, it was the Zionists who mobilized against her move to apply for the position. A decolonial international is a platform to connect such

A new culture of activism based on a decolonial theory of love

We have a decolonial theory of oppression and we have a decolonial theory of love. I will not talk about our theory of oppression because a lot has been said already about this. Let me explain our decolonial theory of love.

We are human beings

In many social theories we are portrayed only as a actor of social forces without a will of our own. We are workers, or patriachs or the other. But we are human beings with the abilities and responsibilities to rise above the social forces that influences us. In order to do that we must realize our capacities to hate and to love. Malcolm X explains how both are connected. When he posed the question: Who taught you to hate yourself, he explained that the reverse side of self hate is love. Love for our community, love for the truth. In order to express that love, we must have the courage to stand up and fight.

Decolonial ethics

Finally I want to touch on a topic that should be put on our activist agenda. We need a code of decolonial ethics that instills in us the attitude of integrity, honesty and courage. We are not super human being, even if our minds are decolonized. We should acknowledge our weaknesses and act to correct them.

Gender in the decolonial movement

Let me take just one issue: gender in the decolonial movement. When sister Lousa Yousofi explains how racists use feminism to divide and weaken our community, the response of male activist can not be: great point sister and move on.

We have to acknowledge that there is sexism in our community, but we don't need white feminists to remind of that. We have to listen to the voices of our mothers, sisters, wives, girlfriends and daughters and react to these voices. When we engage in self-criticism it does not weaken our struggle. It strengtens us, because our reactions should be based on love: love for our mothers, sisters, wives, girlfriends and daughters. This is the kind of decolonial international that we are building.

DECOLONIAL INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

If you want to join us in building a decolonial international, click on your mobile.

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Thank you and enjoy the sun of a new world civilization.

Questions and discussion

