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## PRAXIS

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# PRAXIS

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PEACE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE

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## PREFACE

Praxis is born out of critical discussions and reflections on violence, justice, and peace, taking place in a classroom at Lund University in a course led by Barbara Magalhães Teixeira and Christie Nicoson (shoutout!). It is the result of frustration linked to the current global state of affairs, as well as the colonial and patriarchal legacies and continued practices within the field we seek a place in. Mostly, it is created from our optimism and sentiments of solidarity in our quest to find viable ways forward and our aspiration to take concrete action in order to contribute to change. Each and everyone of us are students of global politics in some form. Whilst we are an international class, of various backgrounds, we also note that we are all students of the Global North and we acknowledge the perspectives, biases, and privileges which that entails. We do not always agree with each other on these topics, but what we do agree on, and what we strive for, is to create a space for discussions, to engage in critical reflections, and learn from both each other and others. We have different understandings of concepts such as violence, justice, and peace and our communal goal is to widen the debates on these matters in order to break past patterns of narrow conceptualizations. Praxis is our attempt to look beyond our worlds of imagination and to engage with broader critical peace studies and practices. This is our attempt to act, *instead of to react*.

We refer to Praxis as a creative, illustrative academic paper. It is filled with our reflections on violence, justice, and peace from wide-ranging perspectives. It includes critical reflections on the origins of peace research, case studies on conflicts as well as peace practices, in-depth examinations of various forms of violence, practical educational materials, and anything else we find informative, inspiring, or fun. We view the premise of our contribution in line with a feminist, critical approach that rather than attempting to once again write authoritative stories, make hard-edged conclusions, and decide what qualifies as valid knowledge, we partake in open-ended conversations and we hope to never quit doing so. With that in mind, our creation is also an encouragement, to listen and to learn. It is an invention to question our assumptions about the world and how it is allowed to be considered and studied.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION,  
CLASS OF PEACE IN THE 21ST CENTURY, 23'



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THE PEACE PRAXIS PLAYLIST THE PEACE PRAXIS PLAYLIST

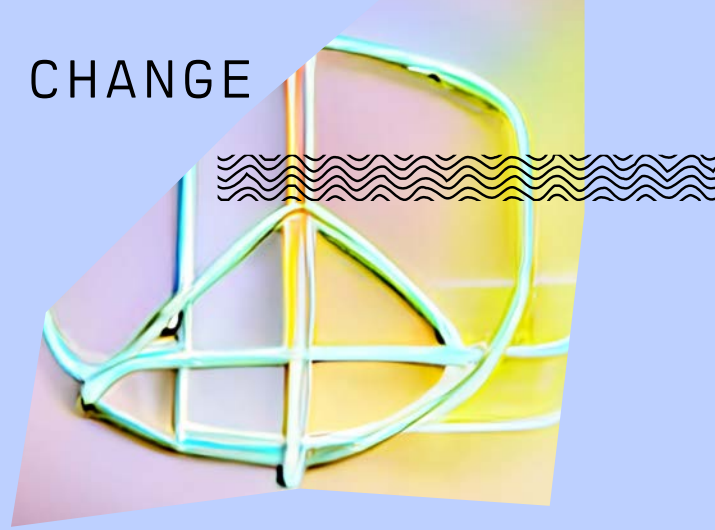
# CALLS FOR A PARADIGM CHANGE

Peace and conflict studies (PCS) have been normative from the onset (Bright & Gledhill 2018: 4). Although its origins, methodologies, and ideologies have been widely debated and shifted throughout its development, the objective has been clear: to produce knowledge on the prevention of conflict and the conditions for peace (Rapaport 1975: 43). If the purpose remains and is to be achieved, the field of PCS needs to address its roots still upholding and reinforcing unsustainable power relations and structures. This essay explores the history of the present in the field and draws on critical feminist and decolonial approaches to find viable ways forward.

## MAPPING PEACE- AND CONFLICT STUDIES

Numerous scholars and researchers have attempted to map the development of PCS (see Aji & Indrawan 2019, Bright & Gledhill 2018, Gleditsch et al. 2014, Kelman 1981, Maihāroa et al. 2022, Rapaport 1975). I will not attempt to regenerate a full genealogy of the field, for it is a precarious task. Drawing on the words of Annick T. R Wibben in the “Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research” (2021: 17), reviewing the development of an academic field, while it may give insights as to what kinds of efforts have taken place within it, will always offer only a partial history. As academic journals and institutions function as gatekeepers, in the past as well as present, along with the tendency to privilege certain types of experiences and knowledge, it is always important to look beyond the official genealogy to tell more complete stories (Wibben 2021: 18). Further following this critical feminist approach, we can choose to partake in open-ended conversations, instead of attempting to write decisive histories of a field (Wibben 2021: 19). With this in mind, I will instead turn to the critiques directed at the field. Which stories have been erased within the field of peace and conflict studies? Whose voices have been allowed to dominate the space, thus further impacting the practices of peace? By reading the silenced margins, we inevitably also paint a picture of the dominating narratives of the field.

First and foremost, why is this of importance? Today, there are hundreds of research institutes, journals and academic departments dedicated to the studies of peace and conflict. Students, scholars and professors accordingly produce a large body of research on the topic that impacts also the non-academic world. The ideas and research generated inform policy discourse and shape decision making amongst key international actors (Bright & Gledhill 2018: 2). As decades of exclusionary systems have constrained the boundaries of the academic field, deciding what knowledge matters, thus privileging certain understandings of peace and conflict, the realities of people are affected by narrow productions of knowledge (Smith & Tickner 2020: 2).



## THE WHITE EUROPEAN MAN'S STUDY OF WAR

A growing body of scholars has called for the need of a paradigm change within PCS (Azarmandi 2018; Paffenholz 2021). The critiques of the field have related to its failure to recognize the existing logic that engenders and maintains injustice as well as the way current peace practices reinforce hierarchical structures and power relations (McLeod & O'Reilly 2019: 12). This concerns the core of liberal political theory, referencing political, economic, cultural, and social systems as well as institutions, ideologies and norms. As a result, the theories and practices associated with the field of PCS are undergoing a major critical evaluation (Richmond 2010: 1).

In “The Racial Silence within Peace Studies” (2018: 77), Azarmandi highlights the structures of injustice inherent in the field, naming the current paradigm “a colonial system that is racist, capitalist, heterosexist, and ableist”. In “Decolonizing Peace and Conflict Studies through Indigenous Research”, Maihāroa et al. (2022) assert that PCS as an academic discipline clearly emerged out of a Western context, from scholars based in the United States and Europe. Evolving from International Relations (IR), Ling (2017: 4) maintains that the discipline sustains a protestant-based, realist/liberal mode of interacting with the world, pinning North America and Western Europe as the center of it. Ling further names this paradigm ‘Hypermasculine-Eurocentric Whiteness’ (HEW), that effectively translates into a set of social, institutional and epistemic legacies. On that note, Smith and Tickner (2020: 1) describes the traditional canons of global politics as rooted in the perspectives and experiences of white, European men. Accordingly, several scholars criticize the ‘Eurocentrism’ of PCS, which, withstanding that there are numerous understandings of the concept, can be described as the limitations generated by theorizing from a narrative on European experiences to study the rest of the world, further reflecting the core themes, theories and efforts within a field (Smith & Tickner 2020: 7). Linked to the logics of colonialism, Azarmandi further argues that ‘coloniality’ can be used to explain the current paradigm of PCS. Coloniality is described by her as a concept that has developed through processes of colonialism, which recognizes that ‘the colonial condition’ still exists, rather than describing it as something that belongs in the historic past. It refers to a system of power in which political, economic, racial, cultural and gender hierarchies that were established as a part of the colonial administration remain embedded in existing power relations (Azarmandi 2018: 72).

Connecting this to the current paradigm of PCS, conceptualizations of ‘violence’, ‘conflict’ and ‘peace’ are then seen to have strong Eurocentric, colonial underpinnings, whereas it constantly continues to reproduce and sustain colonial configurations (Azarmandi 2018: 76). With this framework, Azarmandi contends that peace has never been extended to the colonized and that the violence disproportionately targeted at people of color is upheld by the same discourse that claims to oppose it (Azarmandi 2018: 77).

Moving on to the described hypermasculinity of the field, PCS has been found to be “highly gendered”, not only referencing the scholarly gender gap but effectively the male bias that informs what is researched (Maihāroa et al. 2022: 7). In “Peace research - just the study of war?” (2014: 153), Gleditsch et al. examine the (binary) division of men and women within the field, concluding that male scholars have been overrepresented in PCS in the past as well as the present. The article touches on “gendered structural violence” (Gleditsch et al. 2014: 153), which here refers to gendered power relations within the discipline where institutions and journals have privileged male scholars, thus maintaining a strong male bias (Maihāroa et al. 2022: 7). While the name suggests ‘peace and conflict studies’, concerns have been raised that the field predominantly focuses on war and conflict. In “A divided discipline? Mapping peace and conflict studies” (2018: 22, 24), Bright and Gledhill examine the distribution of research on peace and war in the discipline, concluding that research on violence holds a dominant position. This is relevant from a critical feminist perspective as the article, additionally, advance that male scholars were twice as likely to study ‘conflict’ as opposed to ‘peace’.

Feminist researchers have, in relation to the male bias shaping the discipline, called for the need to move away from ‘malestream’ perspectives, highlighting the problematic way in which experiences of men are seen as universal and ‘non-gendered’ (Solhjell 2013: 3). Additionally, Väyrynen et al. (2021: 4), suggest that the narrow scope of analysis in PCS has caused it to suffer under fixed notions of peace and violence, thereby not sufficiently recognizing how social categorizations such as gender, race, class and sexuality shape aspects of peace and violence. In line with this, they further highlight the limitations of viewing peace and violence as a strict dichotomy, rather than as an entangled phenomena. With such an understanding, patterns of everyday violence in what is described as peaceful societies, such as domestic violence, is neglected (Väyrynen et al. 2021: 5). The reluctance to consider violence and peace as a continuum has been further problematized, as it fails to acknowledge how violence is legitimized through gendered institutions or through existing peace practices (Väyrynen et al. 2021: 5). This provides only a glimpse of critical feminist peace research which has worked to dissect hegemonic understandings of peace and violence. Nevertheless, it represents a feminist urge to problematize basic assumptions that prevail in PCS, further suggesting that understandings of peace(s), justices, and violence need to be ‘rescued’, ‘reinvented’, and ‘reimagined’ (Väyrynen et al. 2021: 4). The underlying logic that guides the current paradigm of PCS

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UNDERPINNED BY COLONIAL LOGIC, LIBERAL PEACEBUILDING ENTAILS ‘PACIFICATION’ OF WAR-SHATTERED STATES, OFTEN LOCATED IN THE TERRITORIAL SPACE OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH, ACHIEVED THROUGH THE ENFORCEMENT OF WESTERN RECIPES FOR STATE BUILDING, SUCH AS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION

informs research as well as peace practices (Tickner 2020: 133). With narrow conceptualizations and understandings, existing peace practices have been criticized for not adequately considering the impact of power relations. There are several layers to this. Firstly, the dislocation of decision-making from the context in which conflict is embedded has been recognized as a major weakness. Secondly, claims of universality based on Eurocentric assumptions result in standardized, top-down peacebuilding that promote Western sociopolitical norms and neoliberal economics. This has been particularly recognized in relation to the ‘liberal peacebuilding paradigm’, with claims that it has been captured by neo-colonial agendas and hegemonic interests. In this sense, liberal visions of peace have reflected exclusion, cultural insensitivity and technocratic rationality (McLeod & O’Reilly 2019: 12). Links have been drawn between the ideology of liberal peacebuilding and colonial powers’ ‘civilizing mission’, which aimed to assimilate colonized populations to Western modes of civilization and ‘modernity’ through various forms of violence (Väyrynen et al. 2021: 6). Underpinned by colonial logic, liberal peacebuilding entails ‘pacification’ of war-shattered states, often located in the territorial space of the Global South, achieved through the enforcement of Western recipes for state building, such as political and economic liberalization (Bereketeab 2021: 19). With a Eurocentric perspective on peacebuilding, including the underlying colonial assumption of the ‘Southern Other’ as inferior, technocratic solutions become ‘rational’ undertakings. As a consequence, fundamental issues of relations of power and hierarchical structures are completely ignored (McLeod & O’Reilly 2019: 12, Tickner 2020: 129). The result is seen as an a-cultural, conditional, and coercive form of peacebuilding, working to reinforce dynamics of power rather than to disrupt them (McLeod & O’Reilly 2019: 12).

Finally, various strands of critical researchers underline that these critiques of PCS cannot and should not be analyzed as isolated issues. Here, the feminist idea of intersectionality is often highlighted. Intersectionality can be understood as a way of recognizing how systems of oppressions based on gender, race, ethnicity, class and sexuality intersect, work highly interdependent and mutually reinforcing (Tickner 2020: 131). With a standpoint in intersectionality as a methodological approach, critical feminist peace researchers aim to destabilize all rigid classifications by examining the ways in which oppressions intersect in shaping structural and political aspects of violence and peace. As the field of PCS has been slow to recognize the entanglements of violence and oppressions, the decentering of static classifications and boundaries is seen as particularly important, as it makes the connection of power, politics and violence visible (Väyrynen et al. 2021: 5).



## HOW DO WE GO FROM HERE?

By directing our focus on some of the criticism aimed at PCS, we have evidently also outlined the framework of the current paradigm. Drawing on the earlier mentioned insights of Ling (2017: 4), the current paradigm could be described as HEW - Hypermasculine Eurocentric Whiteness. Or as Azarmandi (2018: 69) describes it: "a colonial system that is racist, capitalist, heterosexist, and ableist". PCS is entrenched in epistemic violence; Eurocentric and neocolonial conceptualizations determine what is considered valuable knowledge which further impact what theories and themes dominate the field. With an overrepresentation of male scholars and a highly gendered research bias, the assumptions informing the paradigm have been limited, employing the experiences of white men as universal with little to no regards to intersections of oppressions. In addition, the widespread undertakings of the liberal peace paradigm have failed to acknowledge the colonial condition, the power structures at play in the academic field as well as within peace practices, consequently generating culturally insensitive and technocratic peacebuilding that ultimately work to reinforce hierarchical structures. With insights as to why calls for a paradigm change have been made, the question stands: how do we go from here? If the objective of the field is set to produce knowledge on the prevention of war and the conditions for peace, but insofar have failed to do so - what needs to change?

Again, I turn to critical decolonial and feminist approaches to PCS. In the "Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research (2021: 1), Väyrynen et al. assume the standpoint that any solutions to global issues are partial without critical and interdisciplinary feminist analysis. Applying critical and intersectional feminist analyses is seen to enable innovative thinking, permitting broadened conceptualizations of multiple forms of peace(s), justices and violences as well as the entanglement of oppressions, erasures and marginalization. They further propose to study the topic of conflict and peace holistically, applying various methods and partaking in conversations across academic disciplines, extending the search for peace beyond strict dichotomies of peace and violence (Väyrynen et al. 2021: 2).

Azarmandi (2018: 74) argues that in order to move forward, the field of PCS needs to question precisely how recognized ideas and theories come into being as well as how we have historically, as well as presently, imagined peace and violence. Additionally, she states that any paradigm shift that is blind to the entanglements of violence and oppression risks further perpetuating violence. Specifically, she underlines the importance of incorporating race as a conceptual category and as an analytic tool, as it structures global relations. Along those lines, she argues that recognition of subjugated discourses is as much of a paradigm shift as imagining radical futures (Azarmandi 2018: 76-77). As such, PCS needs to engage seriously with coloniality, not viewing it as something of the past, but as a matrix of power that continues to uphold structures of injustice. This further relates to wider demands of decolonizing academia, aiming to reveal how power relations

are ingrained in traditions of knowledge (Björkdahl & Mannergren Selimovic 2021: 41). Decolonizing theories and methodologies of peace and violence have the potential to challenge the traditional (HEW) productions of knowledge that dominate the field (Väyrynen et al. 2021: 12). Of importance to this is the task of decentering PCS, moving away from Western-centric accounts of PCS that create a disconnect between the theories used to examine global politics and the lived realities outside the Global North (Smith & Tickner 2020: 2). This endeavor includes recognizing a variety of histories and experiences, and acknowledging a multiplicity of theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions that transcend Eurocentrism (Smith & Tickner 2020: 3-4).

On a final note, I believe it is important to underline that there is not only one way forward. As critical decolonial and feminist readings sustain, we need to move past monolithic narratives and understandings that prevail in our field. The suggested approaches, as well as the issues highlighted in this text, are merely a selection made within a limited amount of space and words. Further suggestions of debates include the Queering of peace and violence, climate colonialism, and activism as a form of resistance. Ending where I started, I remind myself, as well as readers of this, that no narrative or piece of history should be considered authoritative and that we should always strive to include as many voices as possible.

BY JOHANNA RASMUSSEN

‘ASKING THE OTHER QUESTION’

### WHAT?

A practical approach to intersectionality introduced by Mari Matsuda, law professor and advocate, in her article "Beside My Sister, Facing the Enemy: Legal Theory out of Coalition" (1991).

### HOW?

Matsuda explains: "When I see something that looks racist, I ask, "Where is the patriarchy in this?" When I see something that looks sexist, I ask, "Where is the heterosexism in this?" Working in coalition forces us to look for both the obvious and non-obvious relationships of domination, helping us to realize that no form of subordination ever stands alone."

### WHY?

The approach of 'asking the other question' is an easily used tool to help understand the interconnectedness of all forms of subordination and recognize how various forms of oppressions are interlocking and mutually reinforcing.



## FURTHER RECOMMENDED READINGS

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# ON VIOLENCE



CHAPTER I. CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON VIOLENCE

# DOES SWEDEN NEED NATO FOR PEACE, OR DOES NATO NEED SWEDEN FOR WAR?

Opponents of the Swedish membership in NATO have been dismissed in the public debate, and portrayed as idealistic, Putin-loving naïve traitors (SVT 2022). Yet, what truly seems naïve is the unadorned non-debate of such a membership in the Swedish public sphere. The majority of elected representatives in the Swedish Parliament, including Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, views the Swedish membership of NATO as a quasi-insurance policy for Sweden's security and peace (Kristersson 2022). This begs the question: is it actually Sweden that needs NATO for peace and security, or is it NATO that needs Sweden for war? I argue that a Swedish NATO membership promotes violence and hinders peace on a deeper, structural level.

## NATO AND LIBERALISM

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance founded in 1949 to provide a counterweight to Soviet soldiers stationed in central and eastern Europe following World War II (Britannica n.d). NATO describes itself as a liberal transnational military alliance with the primary purpose of ensuring peace and security in the 30 member states (NATO 2022). Additionally, if deemed necessary, operations outside of the member states territories might be conducted. The alliance further describes an ambition to contribute to the international community's efforts to project stability and improve security beyond NATO territory (Ibid). NATO's latest Strategic Concept (2022) states that the idea of achieving peace and security is about cooperation and interdependence on the one hand and promoting liberal values such as democracy and individual freedom on the other (Tickner 2020, 121). Correspondingly, Sweden underscores the significance of safeguarding Swedish values through international cooperation (Utrikesdepartementet 2022, 21 & 23). However, from a critical standpoint, I ask myself how a military alliance can claim to work for security and nevertheless peace. And whom is this notion of "peace and security" intended to include? In critical theory, it is highlighted how institutions and conventions linked to diplomacy, commerce, and warfighting historically were formed and used to institutionalise the European liberal order, which was eventually disseminated throughout the world (Smith 2020, 82). This global order is in turn based on Western and male exceptionalism (Tickner & Smith 2020, 1). With a standpoint in critical theory, I next critically examine NATO and a possible Swedish membership.

## STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IN NATO THE COLONIAL HERITAGE

The canon of global politics has taken shape from the outlook and lived realities of white European men, which leaves out large parts of the global population in public International Relations (IR) (Tickner & Smith 2020, 20). As a consequence, other knowledge and values become secondary in the shadow of Western knowledge production. This form of epistemological violence contributes to the glorification of the "civilised" West and the idea that the rest of the world is a passive recipient of Western charity, thus depriving a large part of the world's population of their agency (Hobson 2020, 222). By doing so, the West maintains the self-image of the enlightened white man, justifying the imposition of Western values in order to "save" people outside this sphere of knowledge. In relation to this, the words of Paulo Freire is of importance: real liberation should not be for people, but with them (Freire 2000, 48).

It is from this ideological standpoint I assume NATO is acting, and justifies military and political interventions in states outside the territories of its member states. My thesis is further strengthened by the words of NATO itself, expressing that it is necessary for the alliance to "project its values further afield" (NATO 2022). This goal is entrenched in harmful Western hegemonic assumptions about "the Southern other". The historical background of NATO and its member states is of particular interest when analysing the purpose and undertakings of the military alliance. If one just takes a swift glance at the nations that are members of NATO, it becomes evident that many of them have historical and cultural backgrounds that reflect colonial power relations (just to mention a few: The United Kingdom, France, the United States of America, Belgium and Portugal). These states are former colonial powers which have exploited other countries for cheap labour and resources, and for this reason, it is not farfetched to consider NATO as an extension of the colonial tradition that offers protection to the colonial powers in Europe and North America. In parallel, it is possible to argue that NATO's military is de facto used to maintain political and economic dominance over the rest of the world. The alliance can thus be seen as part of the global system of power and subordination, and NATO's actions can be interpreted as a form of colonial oppression and exploitation. To illustrate, NATO interventions in territories outside of its member states can be regarded as a way of maintaining Western dominance with no consideration of the destabilising and conflict-generating effects that these operations have. As an example, NATO's intervention in Libya has been criticised as an effort of neo-colonialism (Terry 2015, 168). Some critics argue that NATO's intervention was a violation of Libya's sovereignty and that it reflected a broader trend of Western powers using military force to advance their interests in the Global South.

Albeit, the intervention had been authorised by the UN Security Council, claims have been made that it exceeded the mandate of the use of force which was given to protect civilians. Critics contend that NATO's bombing campaign went beyond protecting civilians and was aimed at toppling the regime of Muammar Gaddafi, ultimately leading to his death and the destabilisation of the country (Terry 2015). As illustrated, Western values are favoured at the expense of other parts of the world and NATO is a crystallisation of this hegemony. The collective defence of its member countries has led to the West being able to cooperate around a mechanism which promotes the political and economic interests of the West in the world. Naturally, NATO becomes a platform for spreading norms and strengthening the global influence of the West.

## MILITARISM AND WOMEN'S (IN)SECURITY

The patriarchal structure which dominates mainstream IR has meant that the greatest focus has been placed on the male-coded public sphere, while the female-coded private sphere has been written off as less important (Tickner 2020, 130-131). This gendered relationship has played a role in the production of knowledge related to global and local politics, as evidenced by the perpetuation of male hegemony (Ibid, 130). The patriarchy, which in its absolute essence is a violent and oppressive structure, promotes hypermasculinity. It might express itself in the form of militarism; euphemising and legitimising the use of force (Tickner 2020, 130; Hoogensen Gjorv 2021, 158). Militarism is also intimately linked to the idea of nationalism. Nationalism itself historically rests on gendered norms portraying men as protectors and women as nation-bearers in need of protection, ultimately constructing the nation as a male concern (Tickner 2020, 131). The problematic romanticisation of violence perpetuated by the patriarchy, not only legitimises and rationalises the use of force but normalises and systemises it (True 2020, 85). In turn, this normalisation of violence disproportionately targets women as it projects destructive gender norms which foster systematic violence against women (Väyrynen, Parashar, Féron & Confortini 2021, 3).

For transparency, it should be noted that NATO has committed itself to the UN resolution 1325 on Women, peace and security, which recognises women as direct victims of war and violence as well as active actors in society (United Nations Security Council 2000). Yet, one must admit that it is fairly ironic that an organisation that is built upon masculine, militaristic norms claims to be feminist. As NATO expresses its commitment to women's issues and recognises the historically vulnerable role of women in conflict, the alliance articulates that "representation of women across NATO and in national forces is necessary to enhance operational effectiveness. NATO seeks to increase the participation of women in all tasks throughout the International Military Staff and International Staff at all levels" (NATO 2022). This statement suggests an instrumental use of the UN resolution, ultimately working to incorporate women in a militaristic structure that is directly harmful to women and which jeopardises women's security. It is in other words, a perfect example of ignorant pinkwashing.



## ON PEACE

The issues of gender inequality and racial inequality discussed above, shed light on structures that are not only inherently violent in relation to individuals' potential but also maintain and increase the risk of direct physical violence. It is against this background that we need to broaden our understanding of what peace means, and acknowledge that peace and security are not two mutually exclusive phenomena. Peace should not be interpreted solely as the absence of direct violence, or as the prevention of war. Instead, peace and conflict should be considered as something that flows constantly; horizontally, and vertically at local and global levels (True 2020, 87). Peace and peacebuilding need to incorporate intersectionality as a tool to understand the power relations that influence these processes (Kappler & Lemlay-Hébert 2019, 161). In order to build sustainable peace we need to recognise the experiences of local communities as well as acknowledge the power imbalances that may rest within.

## SWEDEN IN NATO?

Finally, against the backdrop of the above discussed, what are the risks of Sweden joining NATO? Firstly, NATO's perception of peace and security is based on a narrow conceptualisation of such. If Sweden's interests align with this limited form of security, joining NATO is a perfectly reasonable decision. However, it needs to be recognized this understanding of security is built on the exclusion of certain groups and the maintenance of a small power elite, and if Sweden wants to build sustainable peace and security on state as well as global level, more discussion needs to be held about NATO's aims and methods.

In relation to the post-colonial tendencies in NATO's activities, I argue that a Swedish membership in NATO would reinforce global insecurity, further affecting Swedish security. It would mean maintaining a global system of inequality and power imbalance, building the security of the West upon the insecurity of the Global South. If Sweden is involved in operations outside the borders of NATO members, it further risks increasing polarisation and mistrust between Sweden and countries in the Global South. From a post-colonial perspective, it is essential to examine the consequences that a Swedish NATO membership may have for countries and people of the Global South, but also to ensure that their rights and security are not compromised by increased military involvement by Sweden. Furthermore, I would argue that it lies in NATO's interest to maintain the highlighted structure of violence, and for Sweden to join NATO is to be an accomplice in such global inequality. For, as Freire points out, it is in the interest of the oppressors to change the consciousness of the oppressed and not the situation or structure that oppresses them because it benefits the oppressors (Freire 2000, 74).



The militarism that is part of the patriarchy's beautification and promotion of violence means that a Swedish NATO membership can be considered utterly problematic. Increased militarisation also means maintaining gender roles that give men agency and see women as passive victims, robbing women of their potential. To add to this, NATO's presence has in some cases spurred violent conflicts. As armed conflicts have different consequences for men and women, and as women are at a higher risk of sexual violence in conflict, NATO's presence could increase the risk of such gender-based violence.

Sweden should thus take unequal power relations into account when entering the military alliance NATO. Both postcolonial and feminist critiques of a Swedish membership in NATO underline the important and detrimental consequences of such membership. Those critiques also help us understand that peace, violence, and security are not vastly different concepts that should be placed in separate boxes, but they exist constantly in parallel to each other. Peace practices therefore need to recognize and work towards dismantling detrimental structures in seemingly "peaceful" societies as violence and uncertainty also exist in times of peace.

In the debate which has surrounded the Swedish NATO membership, it is clear that the form of peace and security that is being discussed is not meant to include everyone. It is an understanding of peace and security that maintains structures that are violent against certain groups. This conceptualisation of peace and security is about preserving the order of power that favours a small, but powerful, group in society. For Sweden to truly contribute to building sustainable peace and security, for its citizens as well as the global community, is to recognise and work against these structures, which will not be achieved by joining NATO. My initial question, whether or not Sweden needs NATO for peace, or if NATO needs Sweden for war is, of course, a rhetoric simplification of a complex matter. Yet, it captures the essence of the risks of Sweden joining NATO. I maintain that a Swedish membership in NATO is an act of violence, and not a stance or action for global peace and security, for the global includes more than white Western men.

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# THE BORDERS OF SOLIDARITY

## THE VIOLENCE IN THE UNEQUAL TREATMENT OF UKRAINIAN REFUGEES AND NON-EUROPEAN REFUGEES IN THE EU



This shows the way international refugee protection systems should work in times of crisis: countries and communities welcome refugees with solidarity and empathy, unnecessary security and border controls are avoided for vulnerable people, their flight is made as safe as possible for them, and refugees are not penalized for entering countries without valid travel documents (Global Detention Project, 2022: 2). However, this generosity with which Europeans have welcomed Ukrainian refugees stands in stark contrast with the Global North's general treatment of most contemporary refugees (Ramji-Nogales, 2022: 150). The efforts of governments, education institutions, and citizens are definitely progressive and also important to learn from in the future, but the fact that these privileges have so far been denied to most refugees points to a certain double standard. It is certainly difficult to compare different crisis situations and urgencies, but the discrepancy between their treatment is striking. In the Harvard International Review Esposito (2022) comments: „[the extensive efforts] send a painfully clear message to non Ukrainian refugees excluded from benefits: that they are less deserving of aid and acceptance.” It seems as if the war in Ukraine has created two classes of refugees in Europe. Also do the initiatives to support Ukrainian refugees enjoy strong support among the European population, while the reception of refugees from, for example, Syria, Afghanistan or Eritrea has so far strongly polarized the public (Lehmann, 2019: 29). As an explanatory approach for this unequal solidarity and treatment of the refugees, the argument of proximity is often used meaning that the conflict in the Ukraine is closer to us than conflicts before. Is it really only the geographical proximity which is decisive for whom we show solidarity and to what extent? What conditions solidarity with refugees and migrants and where are its limits?

### INTRODUCTION

Following the Russian invasion of the Ukraine, which started in February 2022, and is still ongoing, a huge wave of solidarity erupted all over the world and especially in Europe. Blue and yellow flags were hung on numerous house walls and government buildings, mountains of relief supplies were collected, and in the spring of 2022 more than 100,000 people were demonstrating for peace and against the Russian aggression in Berlin alone (Reiber, 2022).

Especially the public and political support given to the refugees from Ukraine is unprecedented in Europe. Just two months after the war began, more than 5 million people fled their country and Europe experienced the largest and fastest movement of refugees since World War II. In Reaction volunteers offered free language courses, went to the borders to help refugees, and many even opened their own homes to take in Ukrainian refugees (Ramji-Nogales, 2022: 151). In addition to the support of the population, European refugee policy also opened existing barriers to them. Ukrainian refugees were able to enter some countries without papers as well as use public transport and phone services free of charge throughout Europe and most importantly, for the first time since its introduction in 2001, did the EU activate the Temporary Protection Directive for Ukrainian refugees. This protection status guarantees them temporary rights without having to go through the whole asylum procedure including a residence permit and access to the labor market, education, social welfare, medical care and housing. Furthermore, the Temporary Protection Directive repeals the Dublin Regulation, which means that Ukrainian refugees can choose their own destination in Europe and do not have to apply for asylum in the first European country they enter (Ramji-Nogales, 2022: 151).

### MIGRATION AS A THREAT

To understand why the reactions to Ukrainian refugees differ from past and other contemporary migration movements it is important to look at how the Global North usually portrays migration and the violent structures that result from this framing. According to Messari (2020: 259), migration today in Western countries is mostly perceived as a threat to national identity and a burden for a country. The view which is dominant in our understanding of the world today is that nation states need to protect their borders and regulate who gets to cross them and who does not. People have been moving around since the beginning of time searching for better lands and living conditions but also fleeing from oppression or epidemics but what is new, is the context in which migration takes part today, namely the nation states and the borders which are separating them. Borders are inherently violent as they can be seen as a “tool of founding violence to assert, maintain and spread political power.” (Brambilla and Jones, 2019: 4).

Drawing borders is an act of separation and is closely linked with the idea of Western civil society and capitalism, which is based on enclosures, private property and the possibility of ownership of land. The idea of static lines on a map, eliminating human complexity, as an instrument for exercising exclusive authority over a given land was spread throughout the world by Western nation states through colonialism (Brambilla and Jones, 2019: 4).

For some time now, the trend has been toward an increasing securitization of migration and borders and thus an expansion of exclusionary practices (Messari, 2020: 271). These developments are contrary to the growing globalization and the heightened awareness of social processes overflowing national borders. Political decisions made by one nation state can have an impact on people living in other countries in the same way that actions of large investors, transnational corporations or currency speculators can have global consequences (Fraser, 2009: 69-71). People are aware that nation states are not individual actors but when it comes to taking responsibility and acknowledging the reasons for the increasing displacement of people, especially in the Global South, the Global North responds with further closing of its borders. The embodiment of this general direction in Europe can be seen in the building of walls, the establishment and continuous strengthening of the border and coast guard agency Frontex, agreements with third countries to prevent “irregular migration” and in violent illegal pushbacks happening at the EU external borders (Morrisce, 2022: 251). An exemplary illustration of the portrayal of migration as a threat is also a map produced by Frontex showing the routes migrants take to reach Europe with multicolored arrows, which reminds one of the maps that usually show how military troops invade a country (Messari, 2020: 265).

In reality and from a migrants' point of view it is however the other way around: the crossing of borders into Western Europe and the host societies can become a threat to them because of the violence that is used against their arrival and remaining in a country. When applying Galtung's concept of violence (1969; 1990) to the case of migrants fleeing to Europe it becomes apparent that migrants are exposed to all forms of violence and that it does not stop once they have crossed the border. Galtung makes a distinction between ‘direct violence’ meaning physical violence, ‘structural violence’ that can be seen in structures that uphold injustice and oppression, and ‘cultural violence’, by which he understands the ideologies, theories and discourses used to legitimize violence “in its direct and structural form” (Galtung 1990: 291). It is likely that displaced people have already been exposed to some form of direct or structural violence in their countries of origin, whether due to armed conflict, environmental degradation and climate change or social, racial and economic inequalities that have driven them away from their homeland. The violence they then experience during their flight can be seen by the number of migrants who lose their lives trying to cross the borders to Western Europe through either the Mediterranean or Balkan route while legal border channels are being closed, as well as in the direct violence, through harsh treatment by security forces at the borders.

The structural violence continues in informal camps, where there is a lack of material and medical aid, poor sanitary conditions and generally bad living conditions (Esposito, 2022). Even after arriving in a host country, migrants are exposed to structural violence that can persist for generations in the form of unequal life chances, such as discrimination in finding employment or housing. The normalization of exclusionary and hostile treatment of migrants in a country can be seen as cultural violence, which according to Galtung “makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right – or at least not wrong” (Galtung 1990: 291). Summarized it can be said that displaced people are primarily the victims of migration and as Messari (2020: 268) stated:

" [ D I S P L A C E D   P E O P L E ]  
D O   N O T   R E P R E S E N T   A  
S E C U R I T Y   T H R E A T   T O  
T H E   N O R T H ;   R A T H E R ,  
I T   I S   T H E   N O R T H   A N D  
I T S   P O L I C I E S   T H A T   H A V E  
R E P R E S E N T E D   A   L I F E  
T H R E A T   T O   M I G R A N T S ”

Since the 2015 crisis of the European Migration System, the structural approach to violence has prevailed as the focus of migration has shifted from humanitarian aid and control to containment and withholding aid (Igonin, 2016: 111). However, Hajir and Kester (2020: 517) bring forward valid criticisms in connection with the use of the concept of ‘structural violence’ in academia: “The term is a general abstraction that can obscure the ethical and moral dimension and the individual personal responsibility at play in this category of violence.” It is true that it is still the people and citizens who maintain the exclusivist structures of their countries. They were the ones helping far right-wing parties such as the AfD (Alternative für Deutschland), the French Front National, the Italian Lega or the Sweden Democrats to record high election successes in 2015/16 and thus making it easier for the governments to push through stricter anti-migration regulations and closing their eyes to what was happening at the borders (Steinmayr, 2016: 2). At the same time, it is also the European population that back in 2022 welcomed the Ukrainian refugees with open arms and demanded supportive measures from their governments. Why is the solidarity and the framing of migration suddenly so different when it comes to Ukrainian people?

## SOLIDARITY WITH THE “OTHER”

To answer this question, it is important to look at the concept of “othering”, which is a process of dividing lines between who we consider as ‘us’ and ‘them’ in a society (Amoore and de Goede, 2014). This is important because solidarity fundamentally presupposes a sense of belonging and connectedness (Karakalyi, 2014: 112). The basis for acting in solidarity is that people identify with the community and feel emotionally connected with each other. This then creates a sense of mutual moral obligation between individuals and their community (Bayertz, 1998: 13–15). What therefore distinguishes solidarity from other universal norms, such as equality or justice, is that the term implies a certain demarcation.

It is not a universal norm since it distinguishes between those with whom one is in solidarity and those with whom one is not (Kersting, 1998: 413–415). But how is such a demarcation of the community of solidarity constructed?

This is where the concept of "othering" comes into play, as a certain special status is created for those who "belong to us" (Bayertz, 1998: 13). The sense of belonging is based on socially constructed ideas of shared culture, values and a general way of life. People act in solidarity to preserve or enforce the interests of the community (Bayertz, 1998: 23). This is problematic because the special affection for certain people simultaneously presupposes the existence of people who are not shown the same affection and attention (Bayertz 1998: 13). The way European society reacts to refugees from the Ukraine compared to other refugees, mostly from the Global South, seems to indicate such a demarcation of solidarity to the outside. "Othering" and excluding someone from the community of solidarity therefore becomes a precondition of violence or applying violent structures. This is especially true because of the close link in the Global North of "othering" and racism. Race is a social construct and Azarmandi (2018: 70–72) sees the process of racialization as a way to determine in society who belongs to a group and who does not. In order to justify colonization, white Europeans constructed a perception of the indigenous "other" as different and inferior to them and based their superiority on the process of dehumanizing people of color. Still today, racism continues to be a defining characteristic of Western societies and their structures and hierarchies are built on "power and race produced by colonization." (Azarmandi, 2018: 72). The capitalistic system we live in today requires inequality and racism serves as its realization.

The discrepancy between the response of European societies and governments to white Ukrainians compared to other contemporary refugees is rooted in the "othering" and dehumanizing people from the Middle East and the African continent. This is a form of structural violence because it denies culturally and socially marginalized people, namely non-white refugees, the opportunity for physical, as well as emotional well-being (Anglin, 1998: 145). At the same time, it is also a form of cultural violence, as the biased norms and social practices are deeply integrated into our societal structures. For Galtung (1990), racism is an example of cultural violence and therefore how violence against migrants is legitimised, which becomes evident when Western countries try to justify why they are more involved with Ukrainian refugees because of identification and proximity. Diffuse fears of foreigners, xenophobia but also islamophobia have been on the rise in Western societies, making the situation for non-European refugees more difficult (Hövermann et al., 2011). Almost a 100 years ago Du Bois (1925: 442) wrote those words that still apply today:

"THE CURIOUS, MOST CHILDISH PROPAGANDA DOMINATES US, BY WHICH GOOD, EARNEST, EVEN INTELLIGENT MEN HAVE COME BY MILLIONS TO BELIEVE ALMOST RELIGIOUSLY THAT WHITE FOLK ARE A PECULIAR AND CHOSEN PEOPLE WHOSE ONE GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENT IS CIVILIZATION AND THAT CIVILIZATION MUST BE PROTECTED FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD"

Right-wing populist parties take advantage of this and reinforce the dominating "propaganda" by presenting the "other" as an issue of social conflict. They generalize the culture and "otherness" of Muslim refugees in particular, reinforcing the mechanism of dehumanization and the fact that they are not seen as individuals with their own stories (Akkaya, 2019: 16–18). The Western media also play a crucial role in this, with the way they portray the conflicts and the people affected by them. They reinforce the stereotypes of the Global South being a "hub of violence while turning a blind eye to the macro geo-political context and the involvement of regional and global powers in the conflict." (Hajir and Kester, 2020: 516). While they usually dismiss their countries' role in conflicts in the Global South, the media frames the conflict in the Ukraine now as a problem of all of Europe. This, combined with the large media presence of the war in Ukraine also on social media makes the conflict seem much closer, which makes people get more emotionally affected by it. In addition, the coverage about Ukrainian refugees is more individualistic overall and similarities to their culture are deliberately emphasized in order to increase the empathy for them. During the migration crisis in 2015, media often referred to refugees as a "wave" or "flood", making individuals and their suffering more invisible and abstract to Europeans, which reduced their relatability to them. However, as mentioned earlier, it is precisely identification and emotional relatability to a person that are important factors when it comes to the solidarity shown to that person, which leads in the end to the different treatment of refugees.

## DISCUSSION

The increase of transnational interdependencies and growing numbers of displaced people makes the strengthening of global solidarity connections necessary. The public and political will in spring 2022 has shown what is possible when there is a genuine human-based response to large numbers of refugees arriving (Morrice, 2022: 251). However, this is not possible in a world where nation states in the Global North are going towards further securitization of their borders, in order to exclude people fleeing from poverty, natural disasters or armed conflicts (Messari, 2020: 265). It is also not possible in a world where racism is "engrained in the very fabric of our social structures" (Azarmandi, 2018: 70). Since solidarity is conditioned by the recognition of similarities, racist stereotypes and prejudices play a crucial role in delimiting communities of solidarity. As long as people are excluded and discriminated against because of their skin color or religion, it



will hardly be possible to extend solidarity to all refugees. The problem of the unequal treatment and solidarity towards refugees is not the proximity to the conflict. This becomes apparent by the fact on how people of color fleeing the Ukraine were discriminated at the borders, while white people did not face the same obstructions and violence (Global Detention Project, 2022: 2) and as Esposito (2022) writes, “the differential treatment even among refugees fleeing the same conflict, suggesting that European solidarity is skin-deep.”

When studying violence and question current systems of power, we must acknowledge that racism is pervasive and that it is not a static concept, but rather something that has shifted over time to create in- and out-groups. It is a system of oppression and privileges, in which whiteness comes with a set of privileges that depend on the oppression of people of color (Azarmandi, 2018: 74–75). We must fight these violent structures because as long as our frameworks and senses of belonging are based on racism, our world will never be just.

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LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM, NO. TOO MUCH TIME TRYNA FIGURE OUT WHY, TOO MUCH TIME TO  
I LOVE, CAUSE WE KNOW THEM NUH CARE ABOUT US. WHITE MEN CAN'T JUMP BUT AT LEAST  
ALIVE. BOTH FEET ON THE LINE. BY ANY MEANS I WILL FIGHT FOR YOU, FOR YOU.  
AN EYE FOR AN EYE. AND WHAT IF WE CHANGED THE WORLD? WE RISE FROM  
ONE LAST CHANCE AND YOU BLEW IT. ONE LAST DANCE IN THE RUINS

# VIOLENCE

## IN A "PEACEFUL" STATUS QUO

HIGHLIGHTING THE VIOLENCE  
EXPERIENCED BY TURKISH CYPRIOTS  
IN NORTHERN CYPRUS THROUGH A  
CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE



SO GO AHEAD AND FIX YOUR CROWN, THEN WATCH IT ALL BURN IN SMOKE. GO AHEAD AND STAND YOUR GROUND, WERE ON THE  
I TAKE PRIDE IN THE THINGS THAT WE'VE DONE. SIDE BY SIDE IN THE REVOLUTION. WON'T STAY SILENT FOR THINGS THAT  
YOUR EYES. I CAN SEE THE CHANGE, FEEL THE HEAT OF THE FIRE. IF YOU CAN FEEL THE PAIN, THEN YOU KNOW YOU'RE  
BUT I HAVE CRIED FOR THE LAST TIME. BUT KNOW WHAT HAPPENS. SEE YOU WOULD BE BLIND IF IT WAS JUST  
REDEMPTION IN THE STEPS WE TAKE. SAY, ONE LIFE AND I'M GONNA USE IT. INNOCENT TILL I'M PROVEN

SO MUCH HATE IN YOUR MOVEMENTS. TOLD ME I COULDN'T PROVE IT. ONE LAST PRAYER FOR THE  
THE FLAMES THE VICTOR. IT'S FAR FROM A PERFECT PICTURE. I KNOW WERE SINFUL BUT WE ARE HUMAN.  
I'VE SPENT TOO MANY DAYS IN MY HEAD NOW. DID YOU THINK WE COULD FORGET, HOW? TOO MANY DESTINIES, TOO  
BE PATIENT. ALL THIS TIME YOU BEEN FEEDING US LIES, AIN'T NO TRUTH IN YOUR STATEMENTS. TOO MUCH PAIN IN THESE  
THEY CAN RUN. BROKE THESE CHAINS JUST TO PUT OUR HANDS UP. THEY CAN NEVER SEE THE KINGDOM COMING. YOU

WANNNA SEE US LL AMOUNT TO NOTHING, NO. I CAN SEE YOUR FACE, SEE THE LIGHT IN  
MANY SENTENCES, READ NOW. READ NOW, SEE ALL THE PAIN IN THE HEADLINES  
WOULD YOU BE GRATEFUL IF YOU TOOK MY PLACE? SAY MY NAME. THERE IS  
SINNERS. YOU ONLY LEARN WHAT YOU WITNESSED. - JORDA SMITH

# VIOLENCE

## IN A "PEACEFUL" STATUS QUO

# HIGHLIGHTING THE VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED BY TURKISH CYPRIOTS IN NORTHERN CYPRUS THROUGH A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE



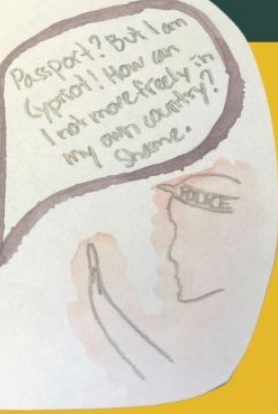




# BACKGROUND

During the autumn of 2022 I had the opportunity to meet, talk and listen to several Turkish Cypriot people, activists, scholars and academics when assembling a report on the current situation in northern Cyprus. The way they talked about, described and discussed the situation and the experiences of themselves and the Turkish Cypriot people in northern Cyprus has stuck with me since. It has led me to question how can this situation Not be violent, and how can these experiences Not be ones of violence? This is my attempt to explore that question and unveil the violence hiding behind the traditional, liberal and Eurocentric narrative. A narrative that then in itself becomes epistemic violence by not listening and engaging in dialogue with the Turkish Cypriots but only imposing a specific kind of knowledge about the situation. I want to highlight their voice, listen to them, and not put their words through the Eurocentric lens that it is usually forced to go through in the name of objectivity.

Forget "objectivity", they deserve to be heard, their voice, experience and knowledge worthy



The island and country of Cyprus has been de facto divided (by the so called green line) since 1974 due to a longstanding conflict between the Greek Cypriot majority and the Turkish Cypriot minority and an invasion and occupation of the island by Turkey. Consequently, the northern third of the country has since its establishment in 1975 been a de facto Turkish Cypriot state that has adopted the name Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus "TRNC" since they issued a unilateral declaration of independence in 1983 (Britannica, 2023).

Despite the ongoing occupation and protracted conflict, the status quo in Cyprus is often described as "peaceful" or "non violent" due to very few instances of direct violence arising from the conflict and occupation since 1974. When talking to Turkish Cypriot activists, scholars and academics, however, there is a different picture being drawn. When listening to the Turkish Cypriots and when applying critical perspectives of violence, we can uncover the vast violence that is de facto experienced by Turkish Cypriots in northern Cyprus in the "peaceful" status quo.



"what peace looks like from the perspective of these marginalized actors, rather than from the perspective of the most powerful actors" - True, 2020: 17





# Violence?

## Violence as physical and manifest

In the traditional conceptualisation and understanding of violence within Political Science and (Western) society, it is usually thought of in a physical, direct sense, emphasising collectively mobilised and politically motivated violence such as military violence in war. The relationship between war and politics being central to the study of violence. (Clausewitz, 1832; Galtung, 1969 & Buzan et al., 2003; Tickner & Smith, 2020; Tickner, 2020; True, 2020) Most would agree that this is violence, but is it all there is to violence, or all there is of importance to violence?



## Broadening violence- applying a critical perspective

However, looking at the situation in northern Cyprus, how can only the visible, physical, direct and manifest forms of violence be violence? How cannot systematically imposed oppression, economically, socially and politically be violence as well? When only conceptualising and understanding violence in terms of direct, visible violence, a lot is missed. One cannot only see the visible violence, but has to also shine light on the invisible violence that exists in and through systems, structures, processes and continuums, to truly understand the violence existing and being experienced around the world, and be able to begin to grasp violence in its complexity and vastness. To understand violence, the conception needs to be broadened to incorporate all of its shapes and forms, which we do by applying critical theory. (True, 2020)

## Galtung's (1969; 1990) three categories of violence

### Direct Violence

Direct violence is the more visible form of violence. It includes the manifest forms of violence, the physical violence, and is often related to and thought of in terms of battle related violence and armed conflict, however it also includes violence such as murder, sexual violence and hate crimes.

### Structural Violence

Structural violence is less visible and more invisible forms of violence in the shape of injustices, oppression and inequalities emanating from the structures and systems that rule and shape our world, actions and interactions. It can come into expression through for example economic, gender, racial or social inequalities. Thus, structural violence can be seen as a part of the normative fabric of social political life, both during and outside times of war. Furthermore, beyond oppression or exploitation, it is a systematic expression of power and the suffering of the powerless.

### Cultural Violence

Cultural violence is even more invisible and constitutes aspects of culture, the ideologies, norms, theories, social practises and discourses that allow for, normalises and legitimises structural or direct violence. It is the larger context and systems of for instance, capitalism, heteronormativity, patriarchal values and Eurocentrism that in turn produces and establishes the structures of inequality and oppression. Cultural violence includes epistemic violence, the act of imposing a particular knowledge on other parts of the world, silencing and, or erasing of alternative perspectives through processes of the hegemony's dismissal, a form of cultural and psychological domination through systemic exclusion of knowledge systems and productions.

### Feminist approach:

One way that the feminist approach broadens the conceptualisation and understanding of violence is through seeing organised violence as a reflection of a predictable and explicable pattern of violence which has its basis in social structures and gendered power relations shaped by intersecting axes of oppression coexisting at different levels and embedded in language and social institutions. This approach uncovers the structures shaping hierarchies of who and what count for security and questions the boundaries of violence. Violence is conceptualised as a process rather than a system or structure in the form of a continuum of violence and peace where these are not opposites but where violence exists in a continuum within peace. This conceptualisation shines light on the complexities and contestations behind violence as a social practice and we can see how different forms of violence are made possible through power and gender relations, and how these in turn rely on violence for their reproduction. (Confortini, 2006; Tickner, 2020; True, 2020)





Turkish Cypriots are living under difficult social, political and economic conditions which are closely related to the fact that they live under occupation, in isolation from the rest of the world.



North Cyprus or "TRNC" is outside of international law and as such has no one to answer to (except Turkey, whom nowadays in many ways de facto is TRNC), no mechanisms of accountability. This has led to bad governance, damaging policy, corruption, infringement of human rights and complete disregard to the opinion of the people (Turkish Cypriots are feeling watched, and not free of opinion). The TRNC economy is close to collapse and there are not many good jobs, high unemployment and people live in poverty under deteriorating living standards. The education and healthcare systems are broken and severely insufficient.

Division and isolation has led to a sick relationship with Turkey where TRNC are too dependent, creating a damaging imbalance in the relationship that is only getting worse. The situation for Turkish Cypriots (in the state that is supposedly upheld by the occupier/protector for their safety) is so difficult that many Turkish Cypriots have felt forced to leave. Furthermore, Turkey is forcefully taking over most of the ownership of land, labour and capital. The climate in the TRNC is furthermore defined by increasing militarisation (once again in the name of protecting Turkish Cypriots) producing fear, a feeling of unsafety and of not being free (directly through increasing military presence etc. and indirectly by prioritising and spending resources on national military security rather than human security aspects such as social services (Buzan et al. 2003; Matthew, 2013)). It is the Turkish Cypriots that are occupied, living under occupation.

These pressures and inequalities are harmful, causing a lost sense of community, voice and identity. Turkish Cypriots are bombarded by the deteriorating situation and they feel as if they cannot stop or resist it "we are grass with two elephants (one being TRNC authorities and Turkey and the other being the Republic of Cyprus "RoC" and the international community) fighting on us, what chance does the grass have?".

This demonstrates the systematic expression of domination and suffering of the powerless that defines the experience of Turkish Cypriots and leaves them with constrained agency and unequal life chances. Structural violence is built into the systems of power connected to the status quo and the marginalisation of Turkish Cypriots, producing large inequalities constantly affecting the community and denying them the opportunity of well-being and fulfilling their potential. (Abimbola et al. 2021; Anglin, 1998; Davis, 1983; Du Bois, 1925; Farmer, 2003; Freire, 1996; Galtung, 1969) Furthermore, we can see how the structural violence is upheld by processes of othering, preconditioning the violence by excluding Turkish Cypriots from the "we" of the international community, and by patriarchy, prioritising and producing militarisation (Amoore & de Goede, 2014; Davis, 1983; Du Bois, 1925; Freire, 1996; Tickner, 2020; True, 2020). As with other marginalised communities and groups, the inscription of oppression and domination is violently trying to erase them, in thought, identity and replacement (Du Bois 1925; Freire, 1996; Whyte, 2017).







This has led to burnout and fatigue, as well as growing distrust in the international community and disappointment in politics. Hope is running out among Turkish Cypriots but the little hope left remains mainly in the international community (especially the EU and international law). This despite the rejection and the violence that the international community has caused, which we might understand through the paradox described by Freire (1996), where the oppressed in a way idolise and want to become their oppressor. Turkish Cypriots feel a need for stability, as well as support and recognition for their struggle (that they fear is nearly lost). The Turkish Cypriots hope and call on the international community to use their power and play a bigger and tougher role towards Turkey (and in extension the TRNC authorities) to keep them accountable. Furthermore there is a worry regarding tendencies of the EU to leave entirely due to lack of progress which would end the last hope and strength to resist, thus pressuring Turkish Cypriots to earn their staying and support when it is them that are the victims of the situation. They question: Can you not discredit the leadership but still support the people and our resistance?

Later is a privileged timezone

How we imagine the future guide our present actions (Whyte, 2017). The future does not appear bright to Turkish Cypriots. They are fed up but left with a sense of hopelessness and fear, the situation keeps deteriorating and no matter how much they scream (or are not able to scream) the state, the Republic of Cyprus "RoC" and the international community does not seem to listen. RoC does not care much what is going on in the north, especially not about the situation for the Turkish Cypriots. There is much more awareness from Turkish Cypriots about what is happening in the south, because for them the violence of the status quo makes solving the Cyprus issue the top priority, for them it is life or death. They are fighting, fighting for their lives to preserve freedoms, rights and democracy, to save the life of their community. They, however, feel like they are losing the fight. Because it is an unfair fight in an unfair relationship of domination and

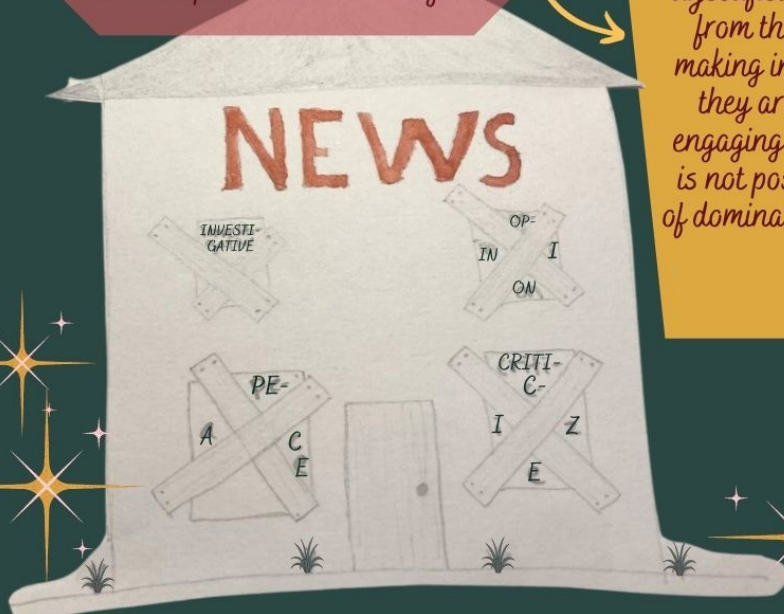
oppression. In the unfairness of the fight, causing a sense of hopelessness, we can once again see the violent power structures of the status quo (Abimbola et al., 2021; Anglin, 1998; Farmer, 2003 & Galtung, 1969). Additionally, this story clearly shows us processes of othering, as well as cultural and epistemological violence that normalises the violence perpetrated against Turkish Cypriots in northern Cyprus and allows the continuation of the structurally violent status quo. We can clearly see that the Turkish Cypriots are left out of the "we" and kept out of the hegemonic discourse, dismissing and erasing the alternative perspective of Turkish Cypriots. The voice and knowledge of the community are systematically being excluded in the hierarchy of knowledge and of what and who count for security, narrowing the boundaries of violence. (Amoore & de Goede, 2014; Du Bois, 1925; Freire, 1996; Galtung, 1969; Hajir & Kester, 2020; Spiwak, 1988; Tickner & Smith, 2020; Tickner, 2020; True, 2020; van Santen, 2021) Moreover, the EU and international community impose, or deposit, their Eurocentric, patriarchal, liberal narrative on Turkish Cypriots of what to be and think, as well as how to act to be "right" and deserving of support and being heard in an exercise of domination to adapt to oppression (Freire, 1996). All of this decides what is made possible in global politics, what can be said and done and what kind of response can be formulated, it provokes some responses whilst quietly preventing other action from being taken (Abimbola et al., 2021; Amoore & de Goede, 2014; Sultana, 2022).



Turkish Cypriots feel they have no voice, they are silenced and the only voice allowed is that of Turkey and the TRNC authorities. Economic and political pressure is silencing journalists and influencing what they can and cannot write about. Expressing criticism, opinion or conducting investigative journalism comes with the risk of being shut down, receiving travel restrictions or being arrested. Smaller newspapers are disappearing and news now mainly comes from the same one agency, based in Turkey. Furthermore, pressure is being put to restrict and dismantle unions, who have been a powerful source of opinion and resistance and openly critical of Erdogan, Turkey and the TRNC authorities.

The Turkish Cypriots feel like their wings are clipped off to speak out in their community. The repercussions posed on people for expressing their opinion has caused fear among the community, they do not dare or feel safe to speak their mind or take part in different projects in the situation that pertains out of fear that it might have a negative impact on them, their families and futures. The opinions of the people are being dismantled and the state policy established by Turkey is being imposed on the community and all sectors of society, going against the peoples' want of reunification and reuniting with the international community. Turkey is creating a roadmap for northern Cyprus to follow, curbing freedoms, criminalising criticism and changing the constitution and political and societal landscape in their own image.

The limiting of freedom of expression, thought and opinion depicts cultural and epistemological violence in relation to the TRNC and Turkey. There is only one particular narrative allowed in the discourse which is being imposed or prescribed through cultural and psychological domination. Once again the alternative perspective of the Turkish Cypriot community is systematically disregarded and silenced to adapt to the oppression. (Freire, 1996; Galtung, 1969; Hajir & Kester, 2020; Spivak, 1988; Tickner & Smith, 2020; True, 2020; van Santen, 2021) Turkish Cypriots are violently objectified by removing them from their own decision-making in a situation where they are prevented from engaging in dialogue, which is not possible in a relation of domination (Freire, 1996)





*Many children of mixed marriages in northern Cyprus are not being given their rightful and natural (according to international law and the RoC constitution) citizenship, making Turkish Cypriots feel like second class citizens. Not granting this right is severe discrimination, and children, who are technically Cypriot and EU citizens, become practically stateless, statusless, a dark spot in the EU without any good justification.*



*This story clearly shows us the processes of othering that normalises the violence perpetrated against Turkish Cypriots in northern Cyprus and allows the continuation of the violent status quo. By not granting these children their rightful citizenship RoC (and indirectly the EU) draws a clear dividing line between us and them, who is accepted and part of the "we", as opposed to who is different (and dangerous). These lines drawn are violent as they shape the world in which we live, preconditioning violence, thus indirectly affecting livelihoods and futures, as shown in the structural violence of inequality and the feeling of hopelessness depicted throughout this text. (Amoore & de Goede, 2014; Freire, 1996; Sultana, 2022; True, 2020)*





# THIS IS VIOLENCE

*Violence is more than direct violence. It is structural violence, cultural violence, and it exists in the everyday structures of life and society within a continuum of violence and peace. The traditional narrative and framing of the situation and "peaceful" / "nonviolent" status quo hides the violence experienced by Turkish Cypriots. When listening and engaging with Turkish Cypriots through a more critical perspective and dialogue we see the violence constantly produced and lived, as well as the coexistence of violence and peace, that there can be both peace and violence, coexisting along the continuum.*

DONT LEAVE, HEAR ME, SEE ME, LISTEN, ENGAGE

BY ELLEN JOHANSSON



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# ON JUSTICE



CHAPTER II. CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON JUSTICE

# THE QURAN BURNINGS IN SWEDEN

## WHAT ABOUT VIOLENCE AND JUSTICE?

In 2022, Sweden unlike its neighboring countries, approved the burnings of the Quran by the Danish politician Rasmus Paludan. This personally made me question the Swedish government, police, democracy and peace. Sweden self-identifies as one the most peaceful countries in the world, with over 200 years of peace, and as this humanitarian state which the rest of the world should consider a role model (Sveriges Radio, 2014; Försvarsmakten, 2019). Following the Quran burnings, the Swedish media covered the violence which erupted as a consequence of these events, and the amount of resources it cost the Swedish state (Antephol, 2022). The police further escorted Paludan to burnings in order to protect his security (Nordgren, 2023), which made me debate how we as this 'peaceful' society can legitimize the police employing resources for such a thing. Is it just or fair that the Swedish police escorts a man that burns someone's holy, sacred religious text, further life philosophy? What consequences does this have for Swedish muslims, and does this not work to delegitimize muslims living in Sweden? Is this a case of freedom of speech as some argue, or is it a matter of hate speech directed towards Muslims in Sweden? According to Sweden, its police and legal system, it is a case of freedom of speech, as the burnings are accepted. For me, it caused me to question the Swedish constitution, and the Swedish state's understanding of security, democracy, violence and justice.

Turning to the international context, we can begin by looking at the international political, economic and social systems existing today. They are all heavily based on western values and principles developed from the colonization era, further from the beginning of the liberal peace and the liberal politics the world has adopted, which has heavily influence today's international institutions such as the UN, EU and NATO (Van Santen, 2021). Together, these systems create no space for lives outside of Western ideas and norms (Van Santen 2021: 345). Important to remember are the events unfolding after 9/11 2001, such as the US declaration of war "War on Terror" which has heavily affected Muslim populations around the world as the US linked terrorism with Islam (BRÅ, 2021). In this text, I will further discuss aspects of violence and justice concerning the Quran burnings in Sweden, by looking at cultural violence, intersectionality, justice, and the use of violence as a means for liberation. The text will begin by examining violence and then discussing the relation between justice and violence.

## UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE

This brings us to the question: what is violence? Scholars in the field of peace and conflict have different understandings of violence. Johan Galtung, who has been a key influence in the field, has developed a three dimensional understanding of violence. He considers violence as divided into three different categories; direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence (Galtung, 1969). Galtung's understanding explains the nature of violence as being both visible and invisible and by dividing violence in these three categories Galtung shows the ways violence can be both visible and invisible. In attempting to broaden the understanding of violence, recognizing the Quran burnings as violence, I will employ the structural and cultural theory of violence by Galtung. To extend Galtung's theory, the concept of intersectionality will be addressed to further highlight structural challenges in society. As Kappler and Lemay-Hébert (2019) recognize, the peace and conflict research field is heavily based on the liberal peace paradigm, which often neglect inner struggles and therefore concepts as intersectionality can help deepen the study of peace and conflict (Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2019: 160-162). The concept of intersectionality help understand how individuals experience and understand events and challenges differently because of different circumstances and perspectives (Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2019: 168). According to Kappler and Lemay-Hébert (2019) intersectionality enables us to understand the deeply rooted discriminatory power relations that are existing in society today (Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2019: 162). Furthermore the authors argue that intersectionality can explain why some voices in society are marginalized while others are not (Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2019: 162).

Intersectionality is a concept that is developed from the many layers of identity an individual consist of, which is socially created through layers of personality traits (Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2019: 168). The individual layers of a person entail different privileges upon which society is ordered into different hierarchies, whereas some individuals are marginalized and others are not (Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2019: 168-169). These layers are based on such as gender, race and class (Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2019: 169).

Galtung's definition of cultural violence can help us understand why burning the Quran is a type of violence. Cultural violence is when cultural aspects of life, like art, language, religion, ideology, empirical science and formal science are being used as tools for the legitimizing or delegitimization of direct and structural violence (Galtung, 1990: 291). Galtung explains this type of violence changes the moral color of an action from being red/wrong to green/right or yellow/acceptable (Galtung, 1990: 292). Violence create violence, and direct violence is not the only response, rather it most often result in feelings of hopelessness, deprivation and frustration. Most often these feelings are contained and become a trauma rather than an outburst of direct violence as the elites make sure the oppressed are kept under control (Galtung, 1990: 295). Cultural violence is thus further when the elites portray the victims of the structural violence as aggressors when responding to violence (Galtung, 1990: 295). Direct, structural and cultural violence work together. Galtung illustrates this with the example of the slave trade where African people were captured, killed and forced to America (Galtung, 1990: 295). The direct violence turn into structural violence when white people became the elites and black people were

subordinated which fuelled cultural violence in the form of racist ideas (Galtung, 1990:295). To connect this with the burning of the Quran in Sweden, we can first look at the moral coloring Galtung discusses, which describes the outcome of producing cultural violence in the form of accepting something that you normally wouldn't (Galtung, 1990:292). By looking at the news in Sweden, the storyline of looking at the costs of the events and looking at the violence used by the protests are a way of producing a new storyline that goes beyond just looking at the burning in itself. It could be argued that Galtung's argument about beginning to change perception about the case can be traced in this example, by now producing news that changes and uses other perspectives on the violence and blaming someone else for the aggression. As Galtung discusses, the elites use narratives to change the view on who is the aggressor and oppressed to legitimize their behavior and actions (Galtung, 1990:295). The debate changed focus from the actual burning towards other factors like the costs, which change the red color to a more yellow/green. In the case of Sweden, in some cities the police have stopped the burning in the legal argument of public safety (Aghamn, 2023), since the burnings have ended result in direct violence, but in the idea of Galtung's theory of cultural violence this could be argued to be the elites legitimizing the violence used by Paludan and delegitimizing the others and criticize their use of violence and punish them as aggressors, which would be a form of violence according to Galtung (1990:295).

As I have mentioned in the introduction the contextual perspective can add to the discussion, by looking at the "war on terror" statement made by United States, the narrative can be viewed as a beginning of the structural violence globally directed towards the Muslim population in the world and that this narrative made by the US have continued to developed towards a cultural violence where hate towards muslim and politically invented "other" have been produced. This development can showcase an example of how this case can be applied on the circle of Galtung's dimensions of violence and his idea that direct, structural and cultural violence developed together at all times (Galtung, 1990) this brings us to the concept of intersectionality and if we look empirically on Sweden, reports from the Swedish National Crime Convention indicate that Muslims living in Sweden have high chances of being exposed to violence and hate crimes and that violence against Muslims is a growing problem (BRÅ, 2021:12). The amounts of reported cases of violence have more than double between the years of 2009 and 2018 (BRÅ, 2021:12). The report indicates that the percentage of violence towards Muslims in Sweden has heightened after the 9/11 attacks 2001 and that the media constantly have a negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims, strongly connected towards terrorism, crime and violence (BRÅ, 2021:24-25). This divide in the Swedish population and the creation of an "other" that Galtung discusses can by Kappler and Lemay-Hébert (2019) be described as the marginalization of Muslims in Sweden. By illustrating the hierarchical structure that has been created in Sweden which makes Muslims more prone to exposure of violence and oppression than the rest of

the community, which is a violence in itself described by Galtung (1990).

## VIOLENCE AND JUSTICE

Can non-Muslim Swedish citizens really argue on what type of violence or how much violence is okay to use or not, when defending your own identity, belief and way of life? In an article written by Mohammed El-Kurd (2022), he discusses the violence used by the Palestinians population towards Israeli soldiers, which the surrounding world have been delegitimizing because they find the violence used by Palestinians excessive and unjustified but the Israelis violence is totally fine, even though the Israelis are occupying Palestinian ground (El-Kurd, 2022). El-Kurd wants to emphasize the importance of understanding violence and what violence really means, much of the western world sees violence as for example a punch or gun use, but the west does not see the violent structure that delegitimize the Palestiniann land and population (El-Kurd, 2022). Similar discussions can be found by looking at Angela Davis and the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States. In an interview, Angela Davis said, when being asked if she thought the violence used in the protests that were happening, was justifiable or not:

"WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT A REVOLUTION, MOST PEOPLE THINK VIOLENCE, WITHOUT REALIZING THAT THE REAL CONTENT OF ANY KIND OF REVOLUTIONARY THRUST LIES IN THE PRINCIPLES, IN THE GOAL THAT YOU'RE STRIVING FOR, NOT IN THE WAY YOU REACH THEM. ON THE OTHER HAND, BECAUSE OF THE WAY THIS SOCIETY IS ORGANIZED, BECAUSE OF THE VIOLENCE THAT EXISTS ON THE SURFACE EVERYWHERE, YOU HAVE TO EXPECT THAT THERE ARE GOING TO BE SUCH EXPLOSIONS. YOU HAVE TO EXPECT THINGS LIKE THAT AS REACTIONS" (ANGELA DAVIS, 1972)

Davis (1972) is emphasizing the importance of understanding that violence may be the only way to try to create a change and show that there isn't just one type of violence that exists. As Davis (1972) says, "you have to expect that there are going to be such explosions", it is just a reaction to the violence used against them, it is not an isolated event, it is a reaction to a violent structure and already used violence (Davis, 1972). Which is connected to the thought written by El-Kurd (2022). To bring Davis and El-Kurds ideas and feelings of violence together and an awareness of the complexity of violence you can add a perspective of justice, like Nancy Fraser (2005) theory of global justice. Fraser highlights the importance of representation. Fraser means that in a society with a clear inclusion and exclusion bias, who is really entitled to decide on what justice is and what justice is not (Fraser. 2005:75). Fraser discusses the importance of bringing the understanding of representation into the context of justice, since in many theories of justice today representation and the political context is not included in the theories (Fraser, 2005).



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As I have mentioned earlier, Muslims could be seen as an excluded group with high risk for violence because of their religion (BRÅ, 2021) and fear of violence have been reported (BRÅ, 2021). Then how just is it that non-Muslims discuss how much the burnings in Sweden cost, when the people discussing the subject in media is not Muslims? When they are not the individuals facing the violence.

"It is nothing but a demagogic practice that promotes hatred and racism and serves the agendas of extremism and terrorism." (Al Jazzeria, 2023). This was the words of Somalia's Foreign Ministry in an announcement about the burnings in Sweden. As Paulo Freire said regarding liberation of people, the dialogue between the oppressor and the oppressed is key and the only ones really understanding the oppressions is the oppressed (Freire, 2014:45). Freire says that for liberation to happen, the oppressed can never just wait for the oppressors to stop, but they need to fight for it (Freire, 2014:45). This makes the violence used by the people protesting against Paludan and the burnings, legitimate use of violence. Another quote from Angela Davis, that I found to be a good way of ending this discussion is: "If Black people had simply accepted a status of economic and political inferiority, the mob murders would probably have subsided. But because vast numbers of ex-slaves refused to discard their dreams of progress, more than ten thousand lynchings occurred during the three decades following the war" (Davis, 1981:171). This quote is also an example of the oppressed being forced to use violence as means for liberation.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, firstly the discussion on what violence is showed Galtung's approach on cultural violence and how this can be applied to the empirical case of the Quran burnings in Sweden. The concept of intersectionality can help to address the obstacles Muslims in Sweden are faced with on an everyday basis and give some contextual background to the problem of not seeing the burnings as violence. Secondly, the essay discusses the importance of understanding the use of violence and brings a perspective of justice and how this approach can broaden the understanding of the violent act of burning the Quran. With all these aspects, it's interesting to think about the peace in Sweden and if Sweden really can define itself as peaceful, since the cultural violence is highly visible as you can see in the case of the Quran burnings.

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ANGELA DAVIS 1999:  
"ON BECOMING AN  
ACTIVIST"

# THE JUSTICE DILEMMA

## SÀPMI IN A NEOLIBERAL ERA

It started with a discussion I had with my father just recently. A man who has spent his entire adult life in the world of finance. At the heart of this debate was the conflict between the rights, culture and values of the Sámi people of northern Sweden and the state's interest in developing mining in these areas. For me, continued exploitation equates to a serious violation of the Sámi by the Swedish government, because of the sacredness of these places for the people and the fact that they form the basis for their reindeer herding. For my father, this was not such a big deal. Even though the land of the Sámi would be entirely destroyed by mining, it was still the most rational thing to do, he reasoned, as it would bring a large income to the country and thus benefit the vast majority. Then, he asked me: "Why should the whole country of Sweden come to a halt for the sake of the traditions of the Sámi?" This made me think. With this article, my aim is to step out of the box of mainstream International Relations (IR) theories when analysing the past, present and future treatment of the Sámi population by the Swedish state in terms of justice. I begin with a brief description of the neoliberal paradigm, followed by a definition of justice according to Nancy Fraser's three-dimensional understanding of the term, and then use this conceptualization in the case of the mining conflict in Gállok.

### THE LAND OF SÀPMI – A HISTORY OF MISRECOGNITION

Dating more than 2000 years back, long before national borders were drawn, the indigenous Sámi population inhabited northern Scandinavia (Samiskt informationscentrum). Already during the medieval times, the Swedish royalties conceived "the land in the North" as the colony of Sweden, whose richness of resources had to be exploited in every conceivable way. The samebyar – "Sámi villages" – are not traditional ones, but complex administrative and economic unions within a specific area, where its members have the right to fish, hunt and engage in reindeer husbandry. Among the 51 Sámi villages in Sweden today, Sirges in Jokkmokk is the largest one (Swedish Institute).

Historically, the Sámi reindeer herders' way of life has been a nomadic one. This mobility as nomads was strongly disapproved of by the Swedish state. It was threatful. During times of warfare, the territory of the north was not in safe hands. Therefore, the only solution in the eyes of the Swedish government was to move farmers up north to these wastelands since cultivating the lands made it easier to claim ownership. Thus, the colonisation process had begun. The colonial state legitimised their actions by describing the Sámi as primitive savages doomed to fail. For their own best, it was claimed, they needed to be controlled. This idea took hold during the last decades of the 19th century with the introduction of race biology in Swedish Sámi politics. It proclaimed that the Sámi were born with certain "racial characteristics" that made them inferior to the rest of the population (Samiskt informationscentrum).

The Swedish state introduced new reforms in the 18th and 19th centuries which still have a major effect on Sámi livelihoods. The Reindeer Grazing Act of 1886 was such a reform, concerning the recognition of Sámi customary rights. It stipulated that only those who were reindeer herders, thus only one-third of the Sámi population, were covered by these rights to land and water. Thus, the misrecognition of Sámi occupations held by the non-reindeer herding Sámi, such as handicraft, hunting and fishing practices, resulted in a gradual

loss of the customary rights for the Sámi to use their land and resources (Persson, Harnesk & Islar, 2017: 22). In conjunction with the first industrialization in Sweden, the exploitation of the rivers for hydropower began. For the common goods" was the leading principle, making invisible the Sámi and their rights. This exploitation of the landscape, without the consent of the Sámi, resulted in large difficulties for the reindeer herding, caused forced displacement, dammed large areas, complicated reindeer migration paths, destroyed fisheries and flooded Sámi settlements (Samiskt informationscentrum).

In 1977, the Sámi was acknowledged as indigenous by the Swedish parliament. Therefore, as a way to grant the Sámi cultural autonomy and influence, the Sámi Parliament was established in 1993 (Lantto & Mörkenstam, 2007: 38). Even though this was an important improvement of the Sámi movement, the institution was – and is still – limited in its legal capacities in national decision-making processes. Finally, in 2011, the Sámi received constitutional recognition as a "people" (Persson, Harnesk & Islar, 2017: 23).

### THE NEOLIBERAL PARADIGM AND THE MINING SECTOR IN SWEDEN

Neoliberalism achieved its global dominance during the 1970s with its emergence as the principal reading of politics and social order. It proclaimed individualism, privatisation of public enterprises or social services, free trade, and commodification of social services (Cepeda-Másmela, 277: 2020). Among all its diverse manifestations, it is best defined as a form of political rationality, spreading the market logic of cost-benefit to all spheres of society, including political institutions, economics, law, security and cultural industries.

In particular, cost-benefit calculations profoundly impact our social and daily life as they govern our thinking and behaviour. This has contributed to increased inequality, lack of solidarity among social groups, the growing power of transnational corporations and accumulation by dispossession (Ibid). Combined with the process of globalisation, the negative effects of neoliberalism as a political rationality are becoming increasingly visible.



Not seldom, it manifests as structural violence as neoliberal governments normalise the socio-economic inequalities of global capitalism, which prevents people from enjoying their political, cultural and social rights (Van Santen, 2021: 345).

The above goes in hand with the Swedish government's view of the mining industry. It has been, and is still, portrayed as crucial for the creation of employment and as a main driver of Sweden's economic growth (Persson, Harnesk & Islar, 2017: 23). Meanwhile, the promotion of the mining industry by the state actors during the neoliberal era is yet another way of marginalising the Sámi people. Simply, it introduces competing land uses at an increasingly rapid pace while neglecting the issue of Sámi property rights.

### A THREE-DIMENSIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF JUSTICE

Universal to all human beings is the desire to be treated with justice. But what exactly is just for each and everyone is often personally or contextually anchored, since the view of justice differs across time and space and between individuals and groups. One way of conceptualising justice is offered by Nancy Fraser (2005), where justice, in a general sense, is equivalent to "parity of participation" (Fraser, 2005: 73). This approach enables a problematization of both the substance and procedure of participation in social arrangements. Furthermore, it exposes the unjust background conditions to decision-making and the undemocratic procedures that generate substantively unequal outcomes (Ibid: 88). Thus, it manifests the co-implication of democracy and justice, which is greatly needed in today's era of neoliberal governments.

As indicated above, one cannot talk about justice without referring to contexts of injustice. According to Fraser, overcoming injustice means dismantling institutionalised barriers that prevent some people from participating on an equal basis. To question how justice is framed in a globalising capitalist society, she suggests a three-dimensional concept that incorporates the political dimension of representation, along with the economic dimension of recognition and the cultural dimension of redistribution since all three dimensions are interlinked regarding justice (Fraser 2005: 73).

Representation is a political matter of belonging and thus an issue of inclusion and exclusion in the social community (Fraser 2005: 73-75). Likewise, misrepresentation occurs when some people are denied the possibility to participate in political arenas on an equal footing with others due to certain political boundaries. Consequently, those who suffer from misrepresentation are vulnerable to injustices of status and class. Recognition corresponds to the cultural dimension of justice, and thus the acknowledgement of legality or existence. Misrecognition is where people can be prevented from participating in terms of parity due to institutionalised hierarchies of cultural value or identification. Finally, redistribution is the economic dimension of justice, which includes the act of distributing something differently and, in particular, more fairly than before (Cambridge Dictionary).

### GÁLLOK – A CONFLICT OF POLITICS OF RECOGNITION

A textbook example that illustrates the implications of the neoliberal Swedish government's view of justice towards the Sámi, is the ongoing mining conflict in Gállok, an area belonging to the municipality of Jokkmokk. Gállok is also a part of Lapponia, one of the largest unexploited nature areas left in Europe, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO (Naturskyddsforeningen 2022). But since 2006, the area has turned into a battlefield. Iron ore was discovered deep under the surface of Gállok during test drillings by a British mining company. Unsurprisingly, the Swedish government quickly approved the extraction. Along with the facts that iron ore is a major export commodity and Sweden is the EU's leading iron ore producer, the government argued that allowing the extraction would increase Sweden's security and self-sufficiency, create new job opportunities and be of great importance for infrastructure (Government decision 2021/22:402). These arguments are purely economic and security related, and hence, do not take into consideration the losses of the Sámi people. According to Naturskyddsforeningen (2022), a mine in Gállok would split the territories of the Sámi village of Jåhkågasska, affect reindeer herding paths, cause horrific environmental destruction with a 400-meter-deep open-cast mine that will swallow a whole lake as well as the surrounding forest of high nature value (Sveriges Natur 2022).

Beginning with Fraser's perspective of recognition, it becomes clear that the Swedish political landscape is shaped by an institutionalised misrecognition of the Sámi (Persson, Harnesk & Islar, 2017: 21). Even though the Sámi received constitutional recognition as a "people" in 2011, the Sámi are still overruled by the government and mining companies in the Gállok mining conflict. Despite the petitions carried out and the legal reviews requested by surrounding municipalities, NGOs, the Sámi Parliament and individuals, the efforts are all deemed incorrect or substandard by the Swedish government (Naturskyddsforeningen). This obvious unwillingness to accommodate the Sámi interests can be traced back to the Swedish legal framework which does not take into account the full rights of the Sámi as indigenous. This is highly paradoxical since Sweden is regarded as a "peaceful society" that often promotes human and indigenous rights internationally (Väyrynen et. al, 2021: 4). But the government's reluctance to change Sweden's Sámi policies is ever-present. Unlike many other countries in the world with large indigenous populations, Sweden has not yet ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO 169) which recognizes indigenous peoples' ownership and possession rights (Lantto & Mörkenstam, 2007: 27; Fraser 2017, 73; Persson, Harnesk & Islar, 2017: 23). This standstill has received extensive critique internationally from the UN, OECD and the Council of Europe. Until this day, the Sámi suffer from structural violence in the sense of status inequality, cultural domination and misrecognition. From the perspective of redistribution, impacted samebyar cannot expect to have a share in the benefits of the mining projects. The Mineral Law does not stipulate any royalty but acknowledges that landowners may make a small profit by obtaining the mineral fee or striking a deal with the project proponent by

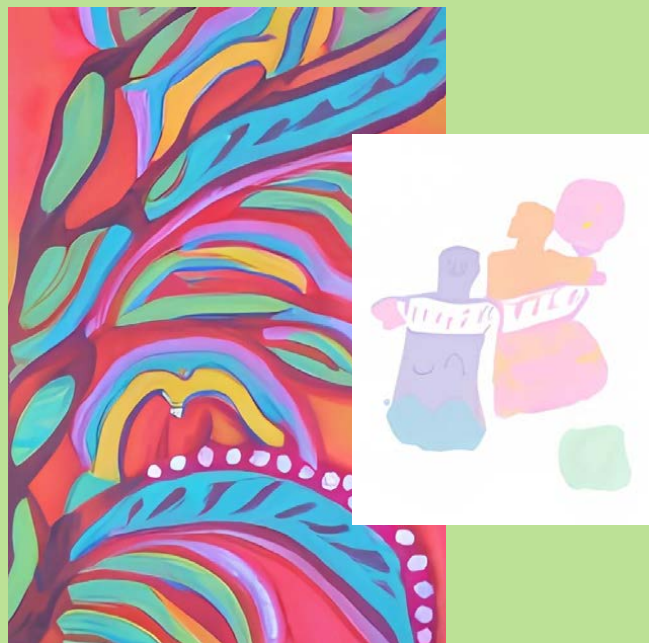
selling or leasing the land (SFS 1991:45). In the eyes of the Sámi Parliament, it is exclusively a law of exploitation since samebyar, on the contrary, does not hold such formal legal possibilities of sharing the benefits of mining (Sametinget, 2014: 8). Consequently, they do not have much to gain financially by welcoming a mineral project on their pasture lands rather than hoping for some kind of compensation for the destruction of their living environments (Tarras-Wahlberg & Southalan, 2021: 239-247). The discriminatory reality of these mining projects explains why the Sámi Parliament and the affected samebyar essentially oppose all mining-related projects, even in cases where the effects could be beneficial for the wider society.

Lastly, Fraser's third dimension of justice highlights the level of Sámi representation in the Gállok mining conflict. Given the Sámi's historical presence on their lands, and the devastating consequences for their livelihoods if mines were built, one would assume that they are key participants in the official discussions concerning iron ore extraction. But they are still excluded. Even though the Sámi Parliament is the political body whose task is to represent the interests of the Sámi communities, it is not endowed with any actual political influence or real power (Lantto & Mörkenstam, 2007: 39). It lacks the right to participate in decision-making, veto-rights in administrative decisions and legal status as an institution to be referred to for consideration on Sámi issues. As a result, the Sámi are left without a fair say in the so-called "democratic" procedures (Persson, Harnesk & Islar, 2017: 26). The media is also to blame for this misrepresentation, being one of the major actors that create institutionalised cultural norms. Questions about mining in Gállok have routinely been excluded by the media since there are not considered sufficiently "newsworthy". Thus, a part of the Swedish population is rendered invisible, which also prevents them from raising public opinions and debates. In the case of Gállok, it was not until the protests reached the attention internationally that the issue started to gain importance within the Swedish borders (Sveriges Natur). Thus, as Fraser points out, there can be no recognition or redistribution without representation (Fraser, 2017: 78).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

In Sweden, the knowledge of the Sámi – our own indigenous population – is almost absent. They are mentioned in history lessons during elementary school, but apart from that, not much. This makes me ashamed and frustrated because, instead, the neoliberal paradigm got us in its grasp and controls our reasonings.

The lack of critical thinking about the injustices brought by neoliberal logic goes in hand with the "banking concept", coined by Paulo Freire (Freire, 2014: 72-86). In short, the banking concept describes the teacher-student context in which students are passive objects while the educational process "belongs" to the knowledgeable teacher with no room for problem-posing practices. Thus, the banking concept manifests how we (the "students") have come to learn and



understand reality through the neoliberal lens (the "teacher"). In turn, all other kinds of systems that depart from this logic are perceived as irrational, for example, the traditional close-to-nature lifestyle of the Sámi. This ignorance of other alternatives can also be viewed as a "colonisation of minds", where oppression embedded in "neoliberal" institutions and structures (such as colonialism and racism) is silenced. These governance structures, imagined solutions and discursive framings only contribute to a reproduction of the ongoing coloniality of the Sámi lands. Furthermore, these discourses and practices justify sacrifices made by samebyar to allow their exploitation (Cepeda-Másmela, 2020: 286; Abimbola et. al, 2021: 13; Sultana, 2022: 1). In this regard, the affected samebyar can be seen as so-called "sacrifice zones" where the neoliberal government rationalises the injustices against the Sámi as unavoidable to ensure their own safety (Abimbola et. al, 2021: 6-7).

Despite the grim situation of injustice towards the Sami, I would like to end on a positive note: the Sámi struggle has received increasing media attention from within and outside our national borders. But there is more to do. As fellow Swedes, I argue that we also have a responsibility regarding the preservation and support of our indigenous population. Therefore, I suggest that the three dimensions of justice in terms of recognition, redistribution and representation, as proposed by Nancy Fraser, should be the guiding lights in this process. Expanding our knowledge of the Sámi will contribute to a wider recognition of them as a people by the public – and hopefully by the Swedish state – since it helps us realize their view of the world and thus their situation in the world (Freire, 2014: 96). Moreover, it is essential that we replace the image of the Sámi as an obstacle to mining projects (as is often portrayed in the media and by politicians) and instead realize how their vulnerability is utilised to exploit their lands and thus their right to redistribution and compensation. For all of this to happen, representation is fundamental. Therefore, that is why the struggle over a mine in Gállok is just as much a struggle for more representation (Persson, Harneska, Islara, 2017: 27).

Now I will have my father read this paper.

BY LOVISA ANDERSSON



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# JUSTICE IN OUR TIME

## ZAPATISTAS AND ROJAVA

BY ANTON JANZÉN



## WHAT IS JUSTICE?

To explore the complex understanding of justice we will try to answer these questions: What is our current justice failing to do? What can alternative ways of looking at justice contribute to? How does an alternative system of justice look?

The primary type of justice that I will explore on this journey to understand justice will be social justice. However it can be argued that legal justice, for instance, being is the prominent justice in daily life, cannot be separated from social justice since they both have the base what is commonly referred to as “morality”; a sense of what is right and wrong. This “morality” is socially constructed and not objective, it is simply based on societal views and norms. That is why, when discussing justice further on, I'll simply use the word “justice”, with the precondition that this not only means social or legal justice but implies a much broader meaning.

## AN OUTDATED VIEW ON JUSTICE

I will use Westphalia as a word to describe an outdated view on justice, a view of justice as binary and simple, a view of justice being for all but ultimately, only for some. When using Westphalia in this way, it is a reference to Westphalia peace and the Westphalian assumptions which was the peace treaty that ended the 30-year-old war. Westphalian justice could also be described as the justice of the global north, the liberal world, or even the capitalist system. This does not mean that we assume that the whole global north or the whole capitalist system shares the same view on what justice means. It simply means these societies are built on this type of justice, and that these societies, to a large extent, practise this type of justice. The peace treaty of Westphalia itself is of less importance. The importance lies in the solidification of the four “rules” of the treaty.

1. National self-determination
2. Precedent for ending wars through diplomatic congresses.
3. Peaceful coexistence among sovereign states as the norm
4. Maintained by a balance of power among sovereign states and acceptance of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other sovereign states.

(Fraser, 2005: p.2 footnote 1,2,3)

This is the basis for how we view states and national sovereignty today, and in extension also the Westphalia justice system which will be explored further in the following segment.

The Westphalia justice is mainly played out between citizens within the nation-states. This justice is dependent on the existence of the state, and the security and control this entails. This is one of the pillars of the Westphalia justice, of the laws of that time, that the nation-state has a right to exist, which then is considered “natural” law. This is explained well by Susan Opatow who describes that the concept of justice is fluent and to a great extent is governed by the “natural” laws of that time (Opatow, 2016: 3). Nancy Fraser also discusses this as she describes how this “naturalness” of states has been solidified and has become accepted bounds for justice. She also argues that this also carried over the idea of the people as subjects in the governing states. She explains this further by saying that the question of “who” should be the server of justice in a Westphalia framework is the nation-state (Fraser, 2005: 3-4). From our understanding of Opatow and Fraser, one should see the nation-state as the centre of deciding what justice looks like and also being the one delivering the justice. I would argue that this is an outdated way to look at justice. In the next segment, we will look into other ways of interpreting the concept of justice and how these can “solve” the problems posed by the Westphalia concept of justice.





We will now look into what is called the “ethics of care”, an alternative way to view justice. The ethics of care is based on the assumption that care is a fundamental part of life and can or should not be disregarded. Care is essential, and therefore should guide the concept of justice (Robinson, 2013: 132). Robinson discusses ethics of care against distributive justice, which is what I above called Westphalian justice, or to elaborate, one might consider distributive justice to be the answer to the problems of the Westphalian system. In distributive justice, the injustice of inequality is dealt with by redistribution, which according to Robinson does not fix the problem. It only firmly fixes the norms and structures that uphold injustice (Robinson, 2013:135). Care ethics on the other hand sees the solution beyond the Westphalian system of states and what Robinson describes as the “capacity of people to fulfil their day-to-day responsibilities to particular others” (Robinson, 2013:134). Robinson makes it clear that there are some problems with the Westphalian justice system, but where care ethics has some of the answers.

Instead of seeing the crooked economic distribution in the world as the problem, the idea of ethics of care asserts that injustice is the denial of giving and receiving care to or from one another. Injustice according to care ethics is also manifested through the exploitation of care, the abusiveness of lack of care, and institutions which uphold this injustice. Robinson gives the example of how care works in richer countries is done primarily by women from poor countries (Robinson 2013: 137). Furthermore, she discusses how poor caregiving women are seen as less worthy of having that job, but at the same time, how the rich women who have given the “practising of care” away is being stripped of their humanity (Robinson 2013: 138). In this case, care ethics highlights a problem of injustice that otherwise would have been seen as acceptable in a Westphalian justice sense. One could argue that Freire is using arguments similar to those of care ethics when he is discussing the forming of oppressors and oppressed since he writes about the hindering of self-affirmation that according to him should be seen as violence (Freire, 1970:10). This resonates well within the ethics of care. The devaluation of care and the disregard for human relations must be seen as injustice and violence. This quote by Freire adequately sums up his stance.

The dehumanization resulting from an unjust order is not cause for despair, leading to the incessant pursuit of the humanity denied by injustice (Freire, 1970 :64-65).

Care ethics' way of looking at injustice steps away from individualistic ways of Westphalian justice, and looks instead at how we can change the structures. Also, these structures are not based in nation-states, they exist on all levels, from the family level to the global level. This way, it also relates to the two broadly used feminist terms of the personal as political, and the personal as international. Liberal feminism argues that women must do paid work to free themselves. This is then perpetuating the caregiving to other women, often women of the working-class or migrant workers. Instead of trying to change the structures which constitute that caregiving should be seen as valuable as having any other job. Angela Davis discusses this in the last chapter of “Women, Race & Class”(1982). She writes that the liberation of women from housework cannot come through the exploitation of the working class. Instead, she argues that housework or care work must be revised from being female work, and by extension, work that is being seen as less worthy (Davis, 1982: 223).

This highlights a problem when discussing care ethics, which is how are we to separate care from being correlated to womanhood, and at the same time raise the value of care? There is no simple answer to this question, but having this in thought when discussing justice can provide some guidelines for how justice might be reached. These structures are political and international, and care ethics helps to highlight this and change the way one perceives injustice and justice in the world. This framework of thoughts will be used further when discussing the praxis of the Rojava and Zapatist movements.

We will now use a feminist perspective to discover what justice looks like inside these movements. The main focus will be on how these movements have tried to construct alternatives in dealing with justice and injustice. It would be interesting to discuss how these movements have dealt with injustice towards them, but for now, we will focus on how justice is with inside these groups.

Zapatistas have become idolised for showing the world that there is an alternative to capitalist, neo-liberal and exploitative societies. Therefore, this part will start with a word of caution taken from the book “A Beginner's Guide to Building Better Worlds – Ideas and Inspiration from the Zapatistas” by Gahman, L. et. al. The authors state that the Zapatista's way does not have to be the only way and might not work in other situations. Therefore, it should be regarded as an example and to be merged into the place in question (Gahman, 2022: chap 2 part 6). One could argue that the Zapatist society is built on their concept of justice, and strives to reach this to a higher degree in comparison to the rest of the world. The Zapatista's justice starts from the grassroots, and its crucial that it is based in the community. Zapatismo “ideology”, as it is called, has many points, but the one that this I find most interesting – and that relates the most to justice – is number :“To serve, not to serve oneself”(Gahman, 2022: chap 2 sub chap 5).

One could argue that serving is a large part of the Zapatista justice. The right to serve, but also the humanity in serving as a part of a group. López and González Torres write that service is a part of everyday life, and something that is not economically compensated but done for oneself and the community (Orozco López and González Torres, 2020; 9). López and Torres further state that the service to the community also serves as a way to resolve conflicts and create solidarity between each other (Orozco López and González Torres, 2020; 9). When looking for retribution for committing an illegal act, a different kind of direct justice (compared to Westphalian justice) exists. When committing “small crimes” within the Zapatias community, for example, stealing, the property is handed back and a warning is given. For “bigger crimes”, communal service is the go-to response. Helping society is hence not an act of punishment but as a way of reconciling (Kostantopoulos, 2019).

This view on reconciliation and justice is very interesting, and it resonates well with a part of Paulo Freire's thinking regarding the oppressed becoming the oppressor. Freire sees this as the centre of the dilemma, specifically, how one can escape the oppression and at the same time avoid becoming an oppressor (Freire, 1970:18-19). It should be said that resistance against oppression should not be seen as oppressing someone else, but that this is only a defence from previous violence. Zapatistas, in this case, are trying to step away from this cycle of injustice. Instead of treating crime with incarceration and dehumanizing, they try to figure out other ways of dealing with the injustice that does not reproduce more injustice.

This bears a lot of resemblance to how the ethics of care would engage in a situation of injustice, putting the values of what makes a person human at the forefront of the discussion, and from there, look for answers (Robinson 201, 140). Robinson describes this well in the following quote regarding ethics of care in global injustice.

THUS, AN ETHICS OF CARE IS ABOUT  
RECOGNIZING OUR OWN NEEDS FOR CARE  
AND OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS  
FOR CARE, BUT IT IS ALSO ABOUT  
UNDERSTANDING THAT OTHERS HAVE  
DIFFERENT – YET NO LESS IMPORTANT  
– CARE NEEDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES,  
AND THAT WE MUST ACCOUNT FOR THESE  
IN THE MAKING OF MORAL JUDGEMENTS  
AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICIES.  
(ROBINSON, 2013: 140)

When looking at alternative ways of practising and viewing justice, Rojava is an interesting case. Similar to Zapatistas, it is an autonomous region that has been built within the border of a nation, namely in northern and eastern Syria, and is more or less self-governing (Kakaee, 2020: 27). At the beginning of this text, I stated that legal and social injustice could be considered all the same since both stem from “morality” of society. My idea comes from the justice system of Rojava, where some of the injustices are dealt with by what is called a Peace and Consensus Committee. This committee deals with both legal injustice and social injustice and to a large extent in the same way. Miran Kakaee writes that the goal of the committee is to try and solve conflicts through resolution and not retribution (Kakaee, 2020: 28). There is also a different section of the committee, where some work on an individual basis while others work with the community when trying to reach consensus. There are also all-female committees with a focus on anti-patriarchal violence (Kakaee, 2020: 29).

Although these committees work inside the borders of traditional law, Kakaee writes that the law is seen as something separate and, to quote, “where law begins, the community ends” (Kakaee, 2020: 29). This is further evident in the way of dealing with patriarchal violence, where the committees have realised that the patriarchal structures will not be broken by sending a man to jail. Rather, other measures to deal with both the victim and perpetrator are being done with the help of the community. In the case of patriarchal violence, education is used, both in incarceration and outside as a way to change the structures (Kakaee, 2020: 30). Again, these justice structures from Rojava link back to Freire, who argues that dialogue is key in understanding oppressive structures (Freire, 1970 :64-65).









DIALOGUE, AS ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION, MUST UNDERLIE ANY COOPERATION. IN THEORY OF DIALOGICAL ACTION, THERE IS NO PLACE FOR CONQUERING THE PEOPLE ON BEHALF OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CAUSE, BUT ONLY FOR GAINING THEIR ADHERENCE (FREIRE, 1970:141).

To finish the segment on Rojava and Zapatistas I would like to put forward a theme that has been a part of this text but has never been addressed. The way of looking at justice within these movements can partly be attributed to the injustice that has been done to these groups. I believe the violence that these groups have faced, both from global structures and direct violence, has created a deeper understanding of justice that is absent in the global north. I do not believe that these movements are perfect, but they show how the oppressed are in a position of knowledge that deserves more attention.

#### WHAT DOES JUSTICE LOOK LIKE?

Rojava and the Zapatistas movement provide good guidance in how one should look at justice. But are these views on justice applicable to our daily lives? I would argue that the reason that these types of justice work in Rojava and Zapatistas is because they have – to some extent – stepped away from the global north and chosen alternatives available in their communities. However, I would argue that practising justice is still possible within the boundaries of the global north. Practising justice by seeing beyond how the media and the government scream for violence.

In the everyday life of students, we are bombarded with information about justice. Justice for the environment, justice for victims, justice for wronged students. How can a more progressive standpoint on justice be incorporated into our daily life? In life, one might try to look at our system from a critical standpoint. When someone argues for longer prison sentences for crimes, one might wonder if that is beneficial for the victim. And is it beneficial for the perpetrator? Why are not money or resources instead aimed at helping the victim and the perpetrator to reconcile if reconciliation is not possible, why not help the victim get the care that they need, as well as help the perpetrator make amends in helping society? Why does not the perpetrator also deserve care? Is shoving people in prison and depriving them of all communities the solution to our problems? Why is our world based on punishment or non-punishment as the only options? Is an 8-hour workday for 50 years justice? Is making enough money to be able to pay a babysitter justice? There are a lot of questions, and not nearly enough answers. I will argue that, even for a poor student in Lund, putting care at top of the conversation and in our mode of thinking, brings new things to light.

BY ANTON JANZEN



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# Is the west really always best..?



By Olivia Hanke





# ON PEACE



CHAPTER III. CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON PEACE

# THE PLACE OF VIOLENCE IN RESISTANCE:

## FAVOURITISM IN THE GLOBAL NORTH, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSPECTIVE

### INTRODUCTION

I think it is important to begin by stating the obvious; we live in an age of neoliberal globalisation. The neoliberal structure permeates from the global level deeply into the local and the lived experiences of individuals. Privatisation, commodification, individualism, free-trade; these are the hallmarks of a neoliberal world, a capitalist system that dominates world hegemonic order. This hegemonic order has also reinforced the dominance and power of the Global North over the Global South (Cepeda-Másmela, 2020). The Global North has imposed neoliberal structures and policies onto countries in the Global South in the form of structural adjustment, free-trade agreements, the creation of international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), all in the name of so-called 'development' and economic growth (Cepeda-Másmela, 2020). Regardless of intention, the current global structure is responsible for the vastly unequal concentration of world power and wealth (Cepeda-Másmela, 2020), and growing social inequalities (Hickel, 2015). The structural violence of neoliberal globalisation impacts communities and individuals right down at a local level; indigenous land becomes commodified without their consent (Dell'Angelo et al, 2016), entire countries are promised to another by colonial powers, arbitrary borders are drawn to pursue neoliberal agendas which rip apart families and communities whilst erasing histories, and masses of people find themselves without access to fundamental healthcare or education due to rapid privatisation (Nogueira, 2020).

Whilst this neoliberal agenda continues to be pursued from the top down, it is no surprise that resistance movements have risen from the bottom up and fought back; the Black Panthers in the United States, the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, the Palestinian Arabs fighting Israeli occupation, and the Arab Springs across the Middle East. Resistances have used both violent and non-violent methods to successfully challenge neoliberal impositions, capitalist structures, and legacies of colonialism and patriarchy. From the materials I have explored, and the critical reflections, conversations, and debates I have engaged with recently (as part of the course which led to the creation of 'Praxis'), I believe that both violent and non-violent forms of resistance will continue to be vital in undermining the legitimacy of neoliberalism. However, from the ivory towers of the Global North and Western perspectives, a favouritism and idolisation of non-violent resistances exists, whilst violent forms of resistance tend to act as a deterrent for our solidarity and support (van Santen, 2020). This piece will show that the favouritism for non-violent resistances comes from the neoliberal system it seeks to address, and the removed and often privileged stance of Western centric solidarity and

activism. This piece first considers the practice and effectiveness of non-violent resistances for marginalised communities, which is followed by an analysis of the concept of violence itself, and how this can relate to our perceptions of violent resistances. When discussing the role of violence in resistances, I will refer to the ever-inspiring words and theories of Angela Davis and Ghassan Kanafani. The piece concludes with a comment on Paulo Freire's idea of praxis, and a prompt for critical reflection.

### THE FAVOURITISM OF NON VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Pacifism or non-violent resistance is not only a popular strain of discourse in the academic world, but also a frequent conversation in the world of social media activism, in mainstream media reporting, and in the norms and biases of civil societies. Particularly in the context of awareness campaigns that can quickly become popular on social media, pacifism or non-violence as a buzzword can be an easy concept to support, especially if the opposite position would make you a 'non-pacifist' or even 'pro-violence'. These discussions around non-violent resistance versus other types of resistance are often divisive. For example, after the murder of George Floyd in 2020 the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement was strengthened, and the protests that took place were attended by tens of thousands of people, in hundreds of cities across the United States and around the world (Al Jazeera, 2020). This support for the movement was echoed on social media, with online campaigns creating a space for education, accountability, solidarity, and social change. However, whenever protests turned to riots or violence (albeit on very rare occasion) (ACLED, 2020), the support and solidarity from the international community would waver. A common rhetoric re-emerged across social media platforms that violence should not be faced by violence, that the protesters use of violence was hypocritical, and even that resorting to acts of violence was pointless, given that non-violent resistances are often said to be more effective (see Chenoweth and Stephan, 2008). Waves of activists and solidarity campaigners became unsteady at signs of violence from the resistance movement, and those who did not support the BLM movement used the violence as rationale for their opposing views (see Frey, 2020; Taylor, 2021; S.Robbins, 2023).

As already mentioned, it is a strain of discourse in the field of global politics and international relations that non-violent resistances are more effective than violent forms of resistance in achieving social and political change (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2008). A paper by Chenoweth and Stephan (2008) is



an often-cited example. Their paper argues that nonviolent campaigns are more effective than violent campaigns for two main reasons: nonviolent methods increase domestic and international legitimacy and support for a campaign, and regime violence against a nonviolent resistance is more likely to backfire than against a violent resistance. Chenoweth and Stephan discuss how both international support and domestic public support is important for any form of civil resistance, but that it is more likely to be afforded to a nonviolent campaign, which are perceived as “physically nonthreatening” (2008, p.13).

However, in a study on ethnic identity and non-violent resistance, Manekin and Mitts (2022) ask ‘Effective for whom?’. Their study shows that when the variable of ‘ethnic identity’ is accounted for in research regarding the effectiveness of non-violent versus violent resistance methods, non-violent resistance only increases the success of a campaign for the dominant or majority group in society. Regardless of the method of resistance, minority ethnic groups were perceived by the general public as more violent than majority groups, and their protests were also seen to require more repression and police presence. In simple terms, not only are non-violent resistances no more effective for minority groups than violent resistances, but they are perceived as violent even when practicing non-violence. As discussed, Chenoweth and Stephan (2008, p.13) state that being perceived as “physically nonthreatening” is important for any resistance but is something that comes alongside nonviolent campaigns. However, as Manekin and Mitts (2022) show, this is not a guarantee for minority groups practising nonviolent resistance. The social and political barriers ethnic minority groups face in resistance, such as stereotypes, biases, prejudices, state repression, and pre-existing modes of structural and cultural violence, mean that there is no incentive for ethnic minority groups to engage in non-violent resistance for their campaign success, other than the act of violence itself. The question then becomes who determines the place of violence in resistances, and how should violent resistances be viewed? To understand this, I turn to Angela Davis and Ghassan Kanafani.

## NON – WHITE PERSPECTIVES ON VIOLENCE IN RESISTANCE

Both Angela Davis and Ghassan Kanafani are icons of resistance, and although both fought for liberation in different parts of the world, they have similar theories and perspectives on the place of violence in resistances. The answers they gave in two separate interviews remain as relevant today as the day they were spoken.

In an interview during the 16 months that Angela Davis spent in prison, (in which she was wrongfully charged and after a momentous solidarity campaign, later released), she was asked if confrontation and violence were a method to achieve revolution (The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975, 2011). Her response was as follows:

When you talk about a revolution, most people think violence, without realising that the real content of any kind of revolutionary thrust lies in the principles, in the goals that you're striving for, not in the way you reach them. On the other hand, because of the way this society is organised, because of the violence that exists on the surface everywhere, you have to expect that there are going to be such explosions, you have to expect things like that as reactions...

...When someone asks me about violence, I just find it incredible, because what it means is that the person whose asking that question has absolutely no idea what black people have gone through, what black people have experienced in this country since the time the first black person was kidnapped from the shores of Africa (The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975, 2011, 56'16").

An interview with Palestinian author and revolutionary Ghassan Kanafani in 1970, two years before his assassination by the Israeli Mossad, is equally relevant (Revolutionary Archive, 2021). The interviewer ignorantly asks Kanafani in a series of questions why his organisation (the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP) will not engage in peace talks with the Israelis, “why not just talk” for the purpose of stopping the fighting, misery, destruction, pain, and death (Revolutionary Archive, 2021). To this series of questions, Ghassan Kanafani had a powerful series of responses:

Ghassan Kanafani: That kind of conversation between the sword and the neck, you mean? ...People usually fight for something, and they stop fighting for something ...Talk about stop fighting, why? ... [For] the misery and the destruction and the pain and the death of whom? ...Of the Palestinian people who are uprooted, thrown in the camps, living in starvation, killed for 20 years, and forbidden to use even the name Palestinians?

Interviewer: Better that way than dead though?

Ghassan Kanafani: Maybe to you, but to us, it's not. To us, to liberate our country, to have dignity, to have respect, to have our mere human rights, is something as essential as life itself (Revolutionary Archive, 2021).

Both Davis and Kanafani address the ignorant and privileged perspective on the use of violence clearly implied by the interviewers (in both cases a white man from the Global North), and theorise violence as a continuum, existing outside of only the physical form.

## CRITICAL THEORIES AND CONCEPTS OF VIOLENCE

Consider the three forms of violence proposed by Johan Galtung (1969); structural violence, cultural violence, and direct violence. These three basic forms of violence exist in a visible and invisible sense, some forms of violence are more obvious in that we have a conventional understanding of it: fighting, domestic violence, terrorism, armed conflict, riots, and physical

violence. This is what Galtung (1969) sees as direct violence. Structural and cultural violence are invisible forms of violence. In simplest terms, structural violence is the unequal power dynamics built into structures that create unequal distribution of resources and opportunities (Galtung, 1969). This usually transpires as racial inequality, gender inequality, socioeconomic inequality, or also as coloniality and oppression. Galtung (1969) sees cultural violence as the aspects of culture which legitimise direct and structural violence, such as societal norms, biases, or practices. These three forms of violence are not exhaustive, and Galtung's understanding of violence is only a starting point to understand its deep complexities. Insight from scholars from the Global South, from activists, feminists, revolutionaries, and especially lived experiences, show the forms and intersections that violence embodies.

Cruz (2021) discusses the impact of epistemic violence in existing theories of peace, and how Western centric academia has shaped the narrative for peace around the world. Wiebke Wemheuer-

Vogelaar (et al, 2020, p.19) defines epistemic violence as "imposing a particular (in this case Western-centric) knowledge on other parts of the world". Accepting only a Western-centric view on peace contributes to a colonialist legacy and hegemony, and Cruz (2021) explains how this epistemic violence can recreate the structural and cultural injustices that have created the very instances of direct violence and injustices they sought to amend. If we once again consider the interviews of Davis and Kanafani (The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975, 2011; Revolutionary Archive, 2021), we see how epistemic violence plays a role in how the use of violence in resistance movements is viewed. To the interviewers, the visible direct and physical forms of violence that the resistance movements engage with are clearly less acceptable than the invisible structural and cultural violence that both Davis' and Kanafani's communities have faced for generations; a hierarchy of violence appears to exist from the dominant Western perspective. The interviewers, representative of a Western-centric perspective on peace, also appear ignorant to the long histories of direct violence these communities have faced as a result of systemic and cultural violence.

The danger of focusing on Western perspectives of peace and violence is seen in Jacqui True's concept of violence as a continuum (True, 2020). She highlights that when the perspectives of marginalised actors are ignored, so too are their unique experiences of violence. With a singular Western perspective on violence, so-called peace times which have ignored marginalised perspectives still include violence (True, 2020). For example, the experiences of men in peaceful settings does not represent the experiences of women in peaceful settings; in Australia, a country absent of war and internationally recognised as 'peaceful', one woman a week is killed by her partner (True, 2020, p.87). It is also true that throughout war and conflict, recognised 'peacetimes' include systemic and direct violence against women, including sexual assault and rape (Pankhurst, 2010). From an intersectional

feminist perspective, there is no possibility of considering these events as 'peace'. Davis' and Kanafani's (The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975, 2011; Revolutionary Archive, 2021) theories of peace and resistance similarly show that instances of violence in resistances are in response to a full continuum of violence, while preferences for nonviolence focuses solely on direct violence. The findings of Manekin and Mitts (2022) discussed earlier demonstrate how this materialises: the benefits of public preference for nonviolence, such as increased solidarity, legitimacy, and backfire when violently repressed, are not enjoyed by the minority groups who experience a full continuum of violence which alters the way they are perceived. Hence, the favouritism for practising nonviolence to resist in fact becomes a favouritism for majority groups practising nonviolence to resist. Anyone who resists from minority groups (even non-violently) is subject to cultural and systemic violence, and this excludes them from the inherent privileges of nonviolent resistance.

## BRINGING 'PRAXIS' INTO THE CONVERSATION

As students of global politics, it is often hard to envision a place for all the readings and theories we engage with; how can it be applied to the world we encounter each day, to alleviate oppression or to contribute to our perceptions of peace and community? Paulo Freire (2017) talks about a praxis that encapsulates the connection between theory, action, and reflection. He emphasises that theory alone cannot possibly liberate the oppressed, and yet actions without any serious reflection cannot liberate the oppressed either (Freire, 2017, p.38). In the context of this paper, the oppressed are those who resist, and to elevate our theories and conceptualisations of violence and resistance to a level that can contribute to liberating oppression, we must critically reflect on why the dominant strains of discourse surrounding these topics exist, and let this reflection influence our actions. These actions include choosing the resistances that we offer support to, both as socially conscious individuals and as members of a dominating Global North shaped by Western perspectives. There are examples the world over of international support for resistances which challenge the neoliberal framework of peace; for example, the Zapatistas in Mexico were supported at large in their critical resistance against neoliberal globalisation, and they continue to pursue their own vision of peace. In terms of the favouritism the Global North possesses for non-violent resistances, praxis encourages new conclusions about which resistances 'deserve' support.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

This piece is neither a critique nor appraisal of violent methods of resistance, simply an observation that violent methods of resistance should not act as an immediate repulsion to the onlooking solidarity supporter or activist from the Global North. Critical reflection is vital to understanding the structures of oppression and violence that already exist for those who resist, and understanding the danger of a single perspective is a first step toward rejecting the privileged stance of Western centric solidarity and discourse. It is continuously necessary to engage with different theories of peace and violence, and to critically reflect on our own biases and positionality, as well as the imposition of neoliberal globalisation in society. Angela Davis' and Ghassan Kanafani's theories of violence existing deeply in culture, history, and society links to many hidden of the discussed perspectives of violence often ignored by Western rhetoric. Reflecting on these theories, as well as conceptualising violence as a continuum, is important for creating a deeper understanding on the use of violence in resistances. From here, we can critically decide when a certain vision of peace, may include violence.

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# IS PEACE AN UTOPIA?

AND WHY WE NEED IT ANYWAY



This is a common question I get from both general audience and colleagues when I present my work on peace and the environment. This is because, for me, and for the communities that I work with and that I am committed to helping through my intellectual work, it is impossible to build peace in a truly liberatory way without understanding its connection to nature. Here, it is necessary to rethink the way peace has been used as a way of further oppressing people and nature.

To start discussing different ways of understanding peace, it is first necessary to set some things clear. The first one is that "peace is not a neutral concept, but inherently political, ethical, and ideological" (Jaime-Salaes et al 2020). This means that peace means different things depending of the actor evoking the idea of peace - what I mean to say is that, whenever there is talk about the need for "peace" the actor evoking that need already has a set of strategies and tools to promote that type of peace; and, since the end of the Second World War, the promotion of peace has always been tied to processes of democratization, liberalization of domestic markets, institutionalization of relations, and expansion of capitalist frontiers.

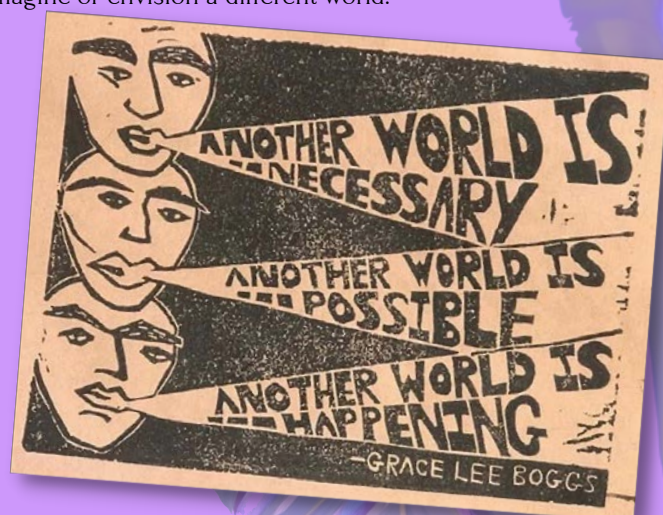
Peace has come to be understood in a liberal sense, in which activities and programs towards building peace have become entrenched with a "civilizational project" of bringing the chaotic peoples and societies of the Global South into the path towards modernization, development, progress and... peace. In this sense, 'building peace', or 'peacebuilding' as it became known through its institutionalization into the UN and other international agencies and donor countries, has become an industry that not only fails to build peace, but actually produces and reproduces structures of violence towards both people and planet.

My aim is to move away from this (neoliberal) idea of peace that has in itself a 'hegemonizing impulse' to transform all "convulsive areas of the Global South" into civilized, modern, and Eurocentric societies (Roohi in Wibben et al 2019, Lahiri-Dutt 2006). My goal is to move our understanding of peace away from these ossified Eurocentric patterns of domination and assimilation, and to rethink in connection with local communities of the Global South, especially the most marginalized like Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, about what peace really is, and what it could be.

This is of course where peace starts to look like an utopia for people within the academia and in the West, because the type of peace that is interesting and desirable by peoples from the Global South is not one imposed through neoliberal reforms and hegemonization processes, but is a type of peace that is liberatory towards both people and nature. This becomes difficult for Western people to understand because they cannot

imagine a world where poor underdeveloped people from the Global South do not want to live a life like theirs, do not want their societies to look like theirs, do not want to suffer anymore under capitalism for nothing in return.

This makes me think of this quote from Fredric Jameson where he says that "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism". And this is exactly what I think is going on here. People are unable to imagine and envision a world in peace and in equilibrium with nature away from capitalism. We are so caught up in believing that the way we live our lives right now, and how we organize our societies and our economies based on the exploitation of people and nature is so "normal", that it becomes impossible to ever imagine or envision a different world.



However, it has become impossible to sustain the world we currently live in. Indeed, as inspired by the questions from Ailton Krenak (2020), an Indigenous leader and intellectual from Brazil, when we talk about the need for sustainability nowadays to fight climate change, what actually do we want to sustain? A violent and imperial way of living of the West (Brand and Wissen 2013) based on exploitation and domination of both people and nature? Based on infinite extraction and consumption? Based on economic, social, and political inequalities that produce and reproduce violence?

This is where we need to take inspiration from different peoples and societies across the planet that have been historically resisting both the expansion of capitalism and the destruction of the planet to (re)learn how to redirect our relationships with people and nature towards reciprocity and care and away from extractivism and exploitation. This is why I invite you to rethink together how we can transform and recreate our world away from destructive and violent structures and create other worlds where people and planet are liberated. To do this, we need to rethink how we know and understand violence and conflict, as well as how we understand the possibilities for peace.

BY BARBARA MAGALHÃES TEIXEIRA



# THE CONTINUUM OF VIOLENCE

In order to rethink the possibilities for peace, we need to first rethink how we understand violence. It has become the standard in peace and conflict studies to see peace and violence in a dichotomy, as one being the opposite of the other, or peace being the absence of violence. However, different authors have criticized this binary understanding of peace and violence, and have turned to visualize violence and peace in a continuum, where they can both coexist at the same time - there can be peace at war time, and violence during 'peace time'. From a feminist perspective, it is very important to name different types of violence that might become naturalized in our societies, and that are not seen as violent or as oppressive because they harm the most marginalized groups in our societies. It is important to name and understand how these violences interact, so we can have clearer visions for how we can overcome them.

Building from the categorizations from Johan Galtung, we can place the three different types of violence in a continuum from 'more visible' to 'more invisible'.

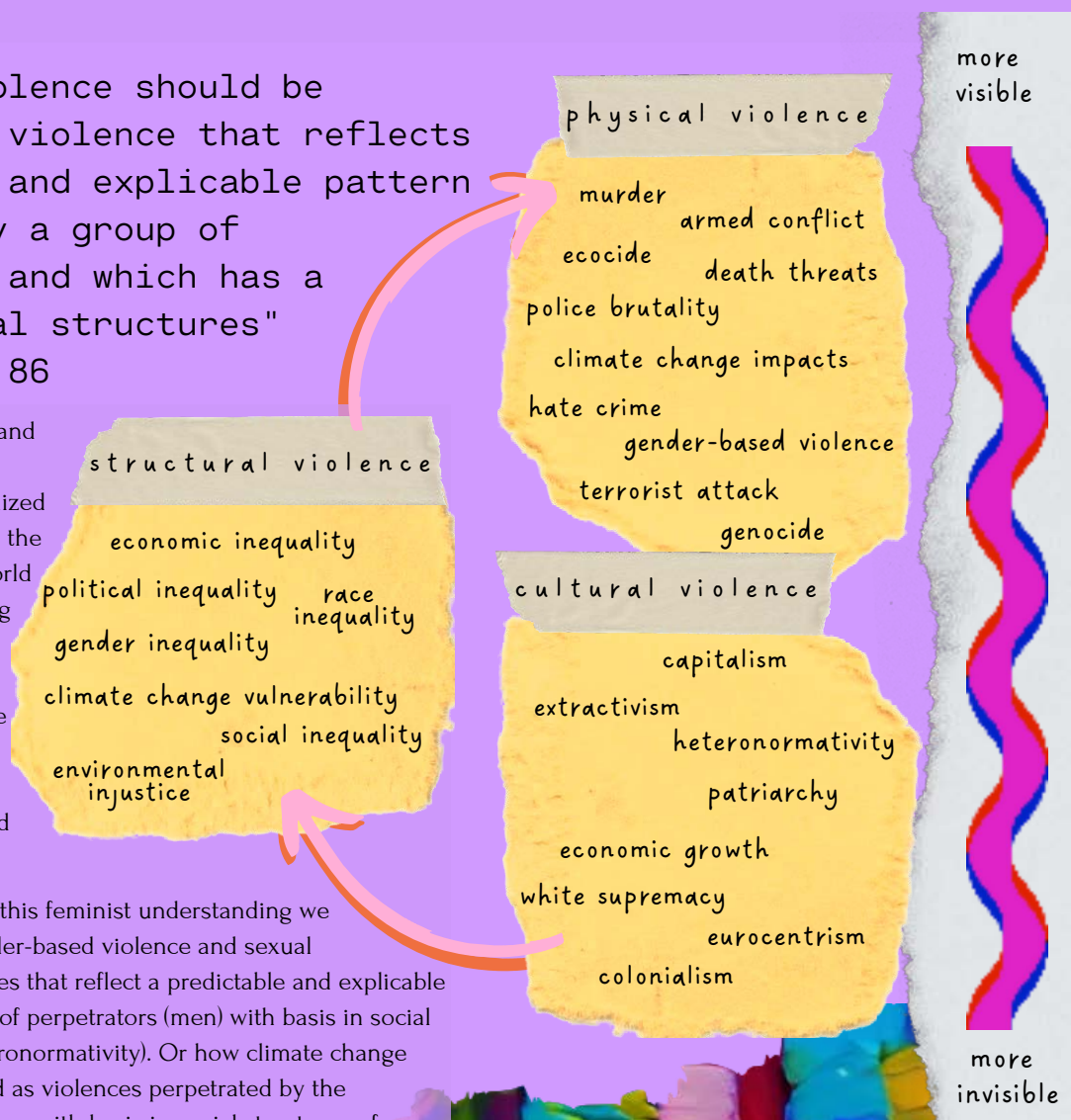
The first type of violence, physical and/or direct violence, is the most visible type of violence because we can easily observe them and their effects. Moving along the continuum, the second type is structural violence, which are violences that are built into the structures of our society and that have become naturalized and are seen as 'normal'. In this category, we have different types of inequality, like social, political, and economic, as well as vulnerability to climate change - which happens at the intersection of the other inequalities. The third type is cultural violence, which consists of the values, norms, and ideologies that serve as the basis for the structures in our society and can legitimize different types of structural and direct violence. This is because it is impossible to understand these violences as happening in a vacuum and/or as isolated cases. A feminist understanding of violence shows us that physical violence happens because of structural patterns of violence that are legitimized by cultural values, norms and ideologies that are violent in their nature.

"Organized violence should be understood as violence that reflects a predictable and explicable pattern of violence by a group of perpetrators, and which has a basis in social structures"

TRUE 2020, pg 86

Here, it is important to understand how physical and structural violences have become normalized in our day-to-day lives through the narrative of "that is how the world works". However, understanding violence not as individual and isolated events but as a complex system, means that we can also identify the explicable patterns of violence, as well as its basis in social structures and norms and values.

As True (2020) argues, through this feminist understanding we can see how, for example, gender-based violence and sexual violence are organized violences that reflect a predictable and explicable pattern of violence by a group of perpetrators (men) with basis in social structures (patriarchy and heteronormativity). Or how climate change and ecocide can be understood as violences perpetrated by the economic system and billionaires, with basis in social structures of capitalism, extractivism and economic growth.







# THE COST OF "PROGRESS"



Understanding physical and structural violences as being embedded in a complex system of cultural violence that legitimizes them necessitates questioning ideas, values, and norms that we take as "normal" and "natural". To do this, I would like to discuss the narrative of "development", which makes many societies hostage in the Global South under the imperative of extraction and export of natural resources in order to generate economic growth towards the dream of becoming developed. However, it seems that "development" never arrives, and instead, communities are left with a destroyed and polluted environment, poor health conditions, and rising inequality.

I come from a mining region of Brazil where natural resources have been exploited since colonial times. At the time of colonial occupation, the most important resources were precious stones, silver and gold. Nowadays, rare minerals like iron ore, aluminium, and uranium are used to power domestic, but mostly international industry. My home region is known for its natural beauty and the chains of mountains that decorate our horizons. However, every time I go home I am always shocked to see how our mountains are being eaten by the hungry monsters of capitalism and extractivism under the banner of development, economic growth, and progress.

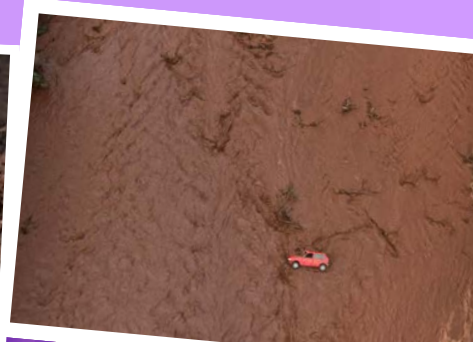
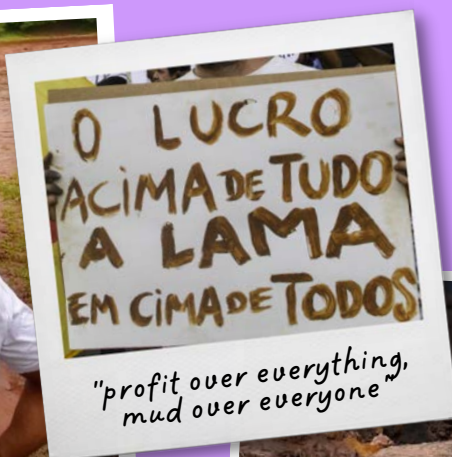
"The environmental conflicts in the region arise from the existence, in time and space, of different projects of appropriation, use, and signification of the material world, and show the existence of different ways of defining, conceiving and interacting with the environment that deserve attention. The intensification of the mineral exploration in the region, inspired by development models and policies, is based on a rationality that conceives nature as a resource, that is, as a "raw material" to be transformed into a commodity" (Ordúz Rojas et al 2019)

So far, 270 people have died as a direct impact of the dam collapse, where 259 have been officially confirmed dead, while 11 people are still considered missing. The violent impacts of the dam collapse are also seen and felt in different ways by the family members of the affected and the survivors of this horrible event. After the immediate deaths caused by the mudflow, the surviving population is affected by polluted water and nature, high levels of toxic metals in their blood, as well as rising numbers of dependence on antidepressants and suicide attempts (Oliveira 2022). Marina Oliveira, a close friend of mine and a resident of Brumadinho, recounts the day of the disaster as something that she could only compare to a war: "I don't know how it is in an open war, but I think that there is also no time to save your loved ones or your belongings, or even pictures."

She continues..."there was no shooting, no bombs, or machine guns. We had no enemy army, the enemy we had was Vale (the mining company) that had been exploiting our territory for decades without giving us anything in return." The people were not the only ones affected by this violence; the collapse of the dam released 12 million cubic meters of toxic mining waste into the local rivers, killing all local fauna, and making the water undrinkable.

The environmental agency has considered the river "dead" as it is unable to sustain life given the toxic levels of heavy minerals. The local population has been left with no source of water, and even now, 4 years since the collapse, the city is dependent on the consumption of bottled water. Given the high level of destruction of extractive activities in the region, the local population has been active in resisting the expansion and the opening of new mining sites. There are several points of environmental conflicts in the region, which pit the local communities and environmental defenders against the interests of multinational companies and the government. The search of the mining companies for profit, and of the government for development, gives no regards to the lives of the local communities and the protection of the environment, as it not only is violent towards their existence, but also creates a dangerous environment for opposition - with many activists being criminalized and persecuted.

An even more cruel reflection of this destructive activity is the collapse of the tailings dam in Brumadinho in 2019. The collapse of the dam created a mudflow that destroyed the mine's offices and cafeteria during lunch time, as well as roads, farms, and villages nearby. The siren that is suppose to alert the employers and the local community of any impending risk from the dam did not sound.





# WHAT IS PEACE THEN?



As I asked Marina once, whether we could say that we live in peace in our region and in Brazil at large, I could see a puzzled look on her face. To her, it was impossible to describe the situation of total destruction of her community and the environment, as well as the attacks suffered by them from both the multinational company Vale and the government of Brazil as "living in peace", even though there was no overt war. Indeed, the situation for Marina became so risky that in the fall of 2022 she had to leave Brazil and join a program for protection of environmental and human rights defenders given the several death threats against her and her family. While the security situation for environmental defenders in Brazil has always been risky (Brazil always ranks high in the number of deaths of environmental defenders (Global Witness 2020)), the situation had been exacerbated during the Bolsonaro government.

Given this context of both physical and direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence - all present in a context which does not characterize war - how then can we understand peace? How can we understand peace not as the opposite of war, and not restricted to armed conflicts, but related to the everyday violent conditions of our societies?

If violence is to be understood in a continuum, and as part of a complex system that produces and reproduces itself, how then do we overcome it?

Or better yet, how can we transform this complex system of violence into a radically different system that promotes peace instead?

As I see it, peace should be understood through the point of view of people that are most affected by the 'lack' of it. This means centering the experiences, the hopes, and the visions of marginalized groups in our societies when it comes to developing strategies and action plans on how to build peace. First, what does peace entail? Is it only the absence of violence, or should it be something more? Something regenerative, something that reproduces life?

Different people, and different groups, will definitely have different understandings of what are necessary systems and structures to make peace possible. As mentioned before, concepts of peace are deeply political, ethical, and ideological, and can reflect the larger goals of people or groups enunciating their visions of peace.

Based on this, the vision of peace that I am committed to studying, researching, teaching and working towards is a peace that is deeply focused on the sovereignty of peoples to decide their own pathways and their own futures, in a way that centers reciprocity and circularity in our daily lives and relationships, as that moves us away from systems of oppression and domination.





# THE UTOPIA CRITIQUE

Does understanding peace in this very hollistic, positive, and comprehensive way mean that it is an utopia? And more than that, does it mean that peace as utopia is an impossible thing to accomplish?

Is utopia even a bad thing? I used to think so... and I definitely feel that whenever people argue that my interpretation of peace is very utopian, it means that it is 'useless' for both research and political action. But where does the critique of utopia come from? Why are people so scared to think freely and to creatively imagine different worlds where peace and protection of the environment are possible?

I believe all of this comes down to a lack of imagination. Or that imagination and creating positive and hopeful visions for the future are, again, 'useless', or childish and immature. That once you 'grow up' and learn 'how the world works' that you understand that these things are impossible and that we should accept them and even work with them. However, I am inspired by the tireless spirit of the people from my region that have been resisting extractivism and fighting to build new societies where nature and people are not seen as commodities. I am also inspired by the struggles of Indigenous, Black, and campesino communities in resisting violence everyday of their lives and still believe and work towards a different, peaceful, and free future. If the people at the frontline of these fights are not giving up and accepting how the world works, why would I, in the comfort of my home and my university office not do the same? Not support their struggle in any way I can?

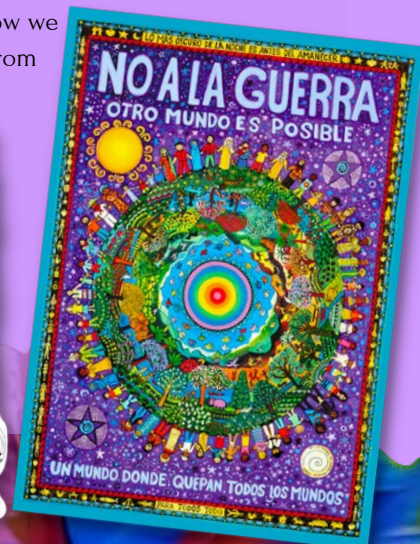
This is how I came to study utopias. Here, utopia is not understood as a magical world with rainbows and unicorns flying around, but as a set of real and concrete political actions, plans, and strategies that can allow us to create preferable systems to the status quo. While utopias are about using our imaginations and freeing ourselves from the determinisms of history, it is built on concrete examples of societies that do live and practice alternatives to the current system. Here, it is important to understand the historical determinism that makes us believe that the past is proof of the future: just because "peace" has never existed, it means that it will never exist.

First, there was a time where women's and worker's rights did not exist, but now they do. So this argument already loses power right here. Second, "peace" has never existed before because this type of peace that is supposed to exist inside the boundaries and structures of the capitalist and Western/Eurocentric mold is impossible, since this system is made of violence, so peace can never exist in its true

liberatory form. This is where we can turn to the field of geography where there have been attempts at "revitalization of utopianism" in which utopias are used to "think the possibility of real alternatives... and galvanize socioecological changes (Harvey 2000), encouraging a foregrounding and naming of different futures (Swyngedouw 2010). In this context, utopias are used in an astrategic way in order to help us broaden our imaginations away from historical determinism and from the modls of the capitalist society, to envision what our lives, our societies, our worlds could be like if they were centered around care and reciprocity, for example, instead of economic growth and profit.

Here, it is very important that ideas of utopia that are connected with visions of liberation for people and planet do not fall into the trap of technological advance to fix all our problems. Utopia here is not to be understood as highly automated societies with robot workers and flying cars either. This is because we are already living in a world where we are investing on technological advances to save the climate, like betting on electric cars and solar energy, instead of addressing the root of the problem of capitalist mode of production, consumption, and accumulation.

Instead, utopia here serves a productive purpose of helping us redirect and reorient how we imagine and envision a future of peace and environmental justice. To do this, it is not necessary to "reinvent the wheel", to completely transform the world based on uncertain technologies and political plans. Instead, we can turn to and learn from the processes and structures of grassroots organizations and movements, especially of communities of Indigenous, Black and campesino peoples that have been creating, recreating, and living "utopian alternatives" on their day-to-day activities. In this issue of the magazine, we can learn from the Sami communities in Northern Sweden, from the Zapatistas in Mexico and the women in Rojava, as well as from Puerto Ricans and Brazilians resisting extractivism. Now I want to introduce you to the amazing work of the Movimiento "Bem Viver" and how we can learn how to build peace from their experience.





# BUILDING PEACE

# THROUGH "BEM VIVER"

The Movimento Bem Viver is a grassroots social movement in Brasilia, Brazil, fighting for the ecosocialist revolution and the construction of a society of 'bem viver'. The movement has a holistic approach and understands that it is impossible to avoid ecological breakdown without a complete systemic rupture that moves away from capitalism and towards societies of reciprocity and care. The movement gathers the different struggles from the peoples of the city - urban movements, homeless peoples movements, recycling workers, and street vendors -, from the rural areas - farmers from landless workers movement -, and from the forest - indigenous, quilombolas, and traditional communities - and understands that they are all connected.

While the movement is very strongly tied to the territories where they fight their daily struggles, they are deeply committed to international solidarity with oppressed peoples around the world - from Cuba to Palestine - focused on building relationships based on the horizon of autonomy and emancipation of the peoples through the cosmovisions and epistemologies from the Global South.

The Movimento 'Bem Viver' is inspired by the idea of 'buen vivir' which is present in different indigenous cultures in Latin America - like sumak kawsay' in quechua, 'suma qamaña' in aimara, or 'tekó pora' in guarani - that can be loosely understood as 'living well'. In a more What these ideas represent is the core of indigenous cosmovisions and the relationship between humans and non-humans. It is commonly developed as a political proposition that tries to promote wellbeing of all peoples and of the planet through social responsibility and our relationship to Mother Nature as a way to break with ideas of infinite consumption and economic growth, and to promote alternatives to traditional models of economic development.

The 'buen vivir' is based on the development of communities and relationships of reciprocity and care that is balanced and respectful and that does not treat nature as a commodity but as a living being.

To reconnect with nature and with territory, the Movimento do Bem Viver in Brazil develops programs of 're-existence' in order to re-signify relationships of production and consumption, to regenerate ecosystems, to provide organic and healthy food for resistance communities that are highly vulnerable. They bring the question of food sovereignty to the center of their political struggle to build a new type of society.



"We dream of a world free from all types of exploitation, oppression, and destruction of violence! And we know that to make this new reality true, we need to radically transform the world!"

In their struggle to fight all different types of oppression, they are actively embodying a strong commitment to building peace. Peace in this sense is not about ending overt fighting and civil wars, but it is about breaking with structures of violence along the whole continuum - from physical, to structural, and to cultural - in order to reshape our patterns of relationship to each other and with the world. Through their struggle, the comrades of the movement are showing the world that it is possible to create different networks of solidarity between different territories in struggles, and to connect all of them to the desire of building a society of 'bem viver', where both people and planet are taken care of and are able to live with harmony and respect.

Peace, in this context, is about breaking down the structures of violence and domination that harm both people and nature, and building new structures and societies based on the diversity, the strength and the beauty of different cosmovisions of the peoples.



follow them on  
instagram @movbemviver  
and support their work!



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# AND FURTHER READING

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## IMAGES

AI Generated Art with Crayon.ai

Illustrations from Canva.com

"Another World is Possible" by Hannah Lewis

Pictures from Brumadinho by Isis Medeiros

"Otro mundo es posible" by Beatriz Aurora

"Contra todas las guerras capitalistas" by Claudia Fausti

Author's pictures from the Movimento Bem Viver

## FURTHER READING & WATCHING

*The Dispossessed* by Ursula Le Guin (science fiction book)

*A Story of Love and Fury* by Luiz Bolognesi (animated movie)

## SUPPORT THE COMMUNITIES & ORGANIZATIONS

MAB - Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens (Movement of People Affected by Dams) - [mab.org.br/@atingidosporbarragens](mailto:mab.org.br/@atingidosporbarragens)

MAM - Movimento dos Atingidos por Mineração (Movement of People Affected by Mining) - [mamnacional.org.br/@mam.nacional](mailto:mamnacional.org.br/@mam.nacional)

MST - Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (Landless Workers Movement) - [mstbrazil.org/@movimentosemterra](mailto:mstbrazil.org/@movimentosemterra)

APIB - Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil) - [apiboficial.org/@apiboficial](mailto:apiboficial.org/@apiboficial)

Movimento Bem Viver (Agroecological Communities of Bem Viver Movement) - [comunidades.bemviver.org/@movbenviver](mailto:comunidades.bemviver.org/@movbenviver)

Marina de Paula Oliveira @marinaoliveirx



# BUILDING A WORLD IN PEACE

*"IT'S EASY TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE AGAINST, BUT QUITE ANOTHER TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE FOR."*

This is a quote from Damien O'Donovan, in the movie *The Wind That Shakes The Barley* (2006) that talks about the Irish War of Independence of 1919-1921 and the Civil War that followed. In 1921, the nationalist party Sinn Féin signed a treaty with the British that allowed for the creation of a free state of Ireland and for the remaining of northern Ireland in the union with England. Defying the status quo and embracing radicality in order to reach final objectives is an over-present thought when we are to study peace and conflicts.

As Jacqui True states in her *Continuums of Violence and Peace: A Feminist Perspective* (2020), there is more to peace than just the absence of war between states. The feminist perspective on violence is that it is a continuum in which war is just one small aspect. Violence exists within the household, in public and private spaces alike, is exerted through social structures, ideologies and political organisations. There is a fundamental need to understand and analyse these structures to be able to understand what peace actually means and how to reach it. Peace from a feminist perspective is broader, and emphasizes the end of violent and centuries-old social structures that are generating and enforcing these violences. But it is then necessary to realise the truth from Damien's quotation: if we know what we're against, do we know what we want? What would a peaceful world look like? What would be its structures? How would it be organized? What would be the conditions to ensure peace? These are the questions this article wants to answer. But asking these questions also underlines the importance of the political solutions and ideals that are necessary to mobilize in order to attain peace. This article then also aims at linking and articulating academic findings and political and social theories and writings as well as revolutionary experiments both past and present in order to imagine a world in peace.

In order to do so, we must analyse first the violence continuums to understand the main problems, how they relate to each other and how they make small changes and reforms useless. From there, we can analyse past and present revolutionary and radical movements and political theories and articulate them with the problems we identified to imagine political, economic and social structures that could be the basis of a world in peace.

And so as we just said, the first step of our thought process is to identify the main structures, their relations and the extent of one's ability to reform the broad system when desiring to achieve peace.

Of course, we are to start by designating the structural obstacles to peace and the first one we can talk about is the Class structure of our society. The understanding of the society in social classes is a very old concept, even though it evolved over time. Cast systems existed and still exist all around the world and even the European feudal society was organised in different orders representing people's roles and functions. However, the current class organisation we're living in is capitalism as it was described by Karl Marx in *The Capital: A Critic of Political Economy*, published in 1867. Capitalism is a social and political organisation that has the society divided in several social classes among which we can find the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat. The Bourgeoisie is a class mostly characterised by its ownership of the means of production (factories, corporations) and so its control over the economy, over capital and its exploitation of other people's labour force to amass wealth. The Proletariat, on the other side, was an emerging social class when Marx was writing. It was characterised by the total absence of any property of any kind. Certainly not owners of any means of production, with very low salaries for the sell of their workforce, they are the ones producing all the wealth yet receiving but a fraction of what they are actually producing. This fundamental inequality is of great importance in the understanding of how societies work.

Later works by a lot and a lot of authors expanded on these notions: Antonio Gramsci in his *Prison Notebooks* in 1926 explained how the bourgeoisie, as a social class, was exerting its domination over the whole society by expanding and imposing its own culture, language and philosophy through almost any means possible, with the consequence of making a potential revolt against them less likely.

On the side of sociology, French author Pierre Bourdieu explored these class dimensions especially in *La Misère du Monde* ("The World's Misery") that was published in 1993. In this book, he explores the reality of poverty, its everyday violence, how people feel humiliated, abandoned and how they are torn apart between unity and rejecting the situation's fault on another.

Another fundamental structure we have to talk about is, of course, racism and colonialism. The question of race and racial hierarchies has been disregarded for a long time by many thinkers and actors of all sort. However, William Edward Burghardt Du Bois advocated in *Worlds of Color* (1925) for considering the first and most fundamental question in regard to economic policy to be not the labor problem but the color problem. Through this formulation, he means that the most prominent question, before even class, is the division between the colonisers and the colonised. This problem is kept alive up to this day as Gustavo Esteva states in *What is Development?* (2010). What has been called “development” and all the different “development policies” have been ways for western countries to keep colonising and exerting their imperial influence over “non-developed” countries. All of this is tied to a more general domination like the one Franz Fanon describes in *Black Skin, White Masks* that was published in 1952: racial domination is interiorised even in the colonised’s mind. They see their culture as inferior, will tend to address to colonisers as superiors and will admire their cultures but won’t have the same relation with their own. Racism is still a fundamental data in our world and never stopped being one.

Finally among the main social structures that are generating the most violences in our society we can address patriarchy and gender discriminations. Perhaps the old social system of the three we talked about so far, patriarchy is a system that create gender roles and associates hierarquical status with these. From a Marxist Feminist perspective, Silvia Federici says in *Patriarchy of the Wages: Notes on Marx, Gender and Feminism* (2021) that women are actually at the bottom of the economic organisation of the society, even below the proletariat, of which they are a very large part. Workers are selling their workforce to capitalists and they then go home where all domestic tasks are realised and conducted solely by women. This unpaid and unrecognized work is at the origin of the reproduction of the workforce that then allows the whole capitalist system to keep working. As such, without even talking about all the consequences of that system on gender, bodies, sexual harassment and rapes and so much more aspects of patriarchy, it is one of the most fundamental social structure of our societies.

From there, one could be tempted to support reform of these social structures, small and incremental changes to improve the situation and reach a better society. But this might actually not be feasible. Indeed, the first thing that is very important to take into consideration is that none of these social structures are independent one from the

other. On the contrary, there is an intersectionality of all the different sections, classes, oppressions and dominations. Angela Davis addressed this issue in *Women, Race & Class* (1981) that gathered several essays about the situation of women, the institution of slavery, of class struggle and of the socialist movement in the US. For instance, she talks at one point about the history of women and of the labour movement and she says how, within the labour movement (supposedly representative of the proletariat), male domination was so strong that very few women were integrated in key structures of it, except when they were self-organising. In the same way, she talked about racism in feminist movements or the relation between racism, slavery, reproductive rights and so much more topics. Stefanie Kappler & Nicholas Lemay-Hébert expand on these general ideas of intersectionality in their article *From power-blind binaries to the intersectionality of peace: connecting feminism an critical peace and conflict studies* (2019). General approach to peace, even in some feminist perspectives, try to think in term of dichotomies but these approaches don’t work in practice as structures of class, gender and race are intertwined and need to be taken as a whole to be able to understand the different power imbalances an properly address the problem.

And if this general complexity and inter-relationship were not enough to understand that mere reforms and small changes can’t really help at reaching a proper peace, another aspect is to be taken into consideration: the system’s ability to defend itself as soon as a concurrent model of society starts appearing. This can be seen everywhere, at any given period and at any scale. Any change, revolutionary and moderate alike, if it starts threatening the status quo, will be met by a fierce resistance. We saw that with the repression of the Paris Commune in 1871 when around 20 000 persons were slaughtered by the french army. It happenned in Germany in 1919 when the Social-Democratic Party (SPD) allied itself with the far-right Freikorps to repress the communist revolution that had started and to murder its leaders (Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht). It happened in Chile in 1973 when the elected communist leader Salvador Allende was pushed to suicide by a military coup supported by the USA. It happens again today with the examples of the Exarcheia community in Greece or the police repression of the Black Lives Matter. All these exemples explain the fundamental question of relation to violence, to local/global scales and to preparation of revolution in socialist circles as it has been a common experience to all reformist or revolutionary movement: the system does not accept change and will fight against it.



As we now know, the three main social structures we identified are all intertwined and can't be treated separately and any attempt even very moderate to challenging the system as a whole might be addressed with the fiercest repression. This leads us to the conclusion of the necessity to build a new society through revolutionary and global change and so to imagine new structures from both past and present experiences and past and present political theories.

According to what we just said, we'll start by analysing past and present radical political experiences to gather any insight they could give us in regard to more stable and so peaceful social, political and economic organisation of the society. From a chronological perspective, we can begin by talking about the oldest revolutionary experiences that might bring us informations. In first is the Paris Commune of 1871 which was described by Karl Marx as probably the first dictatorship of the proletariat that ever was. The city was governed by elected delegates and pursued radical policies in regard to citizens' participation, welfare state, workers ownership, and feminist activities. More or less the same experience was seen during the first years of the russian revolution with new forms of democracy relying on delegates within the Soviets. However, as the civil war started and kept going, the bolchevic led more and more authoritarian and sectarian politics in regard to other revolutionary groups or among themselves through what they called "War Communism". This led to the bureaucratisation and so abolition of democracy within the party. A call against bureaucratisation was made clear by the Declaration of the 46, written by many authors among which one was Trotsky, that was sent to the Communist Party leadership in 1923 and that asked for a return to democracy. Another very interesting exemple of alternative model can be found in the Spanish revolution of 1936. After the beginning of the civil war, the anarchists of the CNT-FAI and the anti-stalinian communists of the POUM started a process of revolution, especially in Catalonia. This is told by George Orwell in his book and testimony *Homage to Catalonia* that was published in 1938 and that described how the revolution was happening. In Barcelona, factories, bars, restaurants, hotels, every possible mean of production were taken over by their workers. Markers of social inequalities were erased from the language and the people started to perform and live equally far more than before. But beyond that were other examples of radical social changes like in Burkina Faso during Thomas Sankara's presidency: people's assembly were created and the population was made to participate more and more in political affairs. Women's right were strongly

defended and traditional structures challenged. Private property and capitalist were denounced as the country was aiming at full agricultural autonomy to get rid of imperialist influence. In the US, Angela Davis herself was an affiliate member of the Black Panther party that led several exemples of very efficient and important direct actions like vaccination campaigns in black neighbourhoods, scolarisation and much more actual social services that the black community, economically marginalised, enjoyed.

In present days, there are two situations that can be seen as revolutionary and that can bring us some important insight: the situation in the state of Chiapas, Mexico, where the Zapatista army is in control of around half the state and where it built an alternative form of society built on agricultural and indigenous peoples communities against the violence of the Mexican state. In another region of the world, in north-eastern syria, the YPG (syrian branch of the Workers Party of Kurdistan) adopted a new-ideology called democratic confederalism and established a territory on three regions that rely on participatory democracy, cultural autonomy, religious pluralism and a very strong emphasis on women own emancipation.

From now on, we'll need to imagine and represent potential alternative way to organise and lead the society and the first way we will do that is by touching the question of the economic organisation and ownership within the society. One of the first thing that seems to be a recurring notion across both theoretical and pratical experiences is the rejection of capitalism in favor of a more democratically organised system. According to Jampell Dell'Angelo, Paolo D'Odorico, Maria Cristina Rulli and Philippe Marchand in their *The Tragedy of the Grabbed Commons: Coercion and Dispossession in the Global Land Rush* (2017), the practice of common land ownership is actually a very old practice. Most societies in the world actually had this type of social organisation before the capitalist organisation came and privatised the land in a new wave of enclosures. This actually ties into what we can learn about revolutionary kurdistan, called "Rojava", in the book *La Revolución Ignorada* (2015) written by many authors as we learn that it is estimated that 75% of property in Rojava is common ownership. More precisely, it is said to be user property meaning a mean of production belongs to you when you're using it. It is said to be linked to the pre-capitalist social organisation of land in the region. The Paris Commune had their systems of common ownership of shops and workplaces, the russian revolution had the soviet system in which workers self-organised at least in the beginning.

In 1921, in support to the opposition within the Communist Party, Alexandra Kollontai wrote down Worker's Opposition in which she support common ownership of the economy through direct trade-unions control over it as a mean to planify the economy. This emphasis on planification through democratic means can also be found in Albert Einstein's Why Socialism? (1949) where he says that the best path to progress and stability would be the transition to a planned economy but specifically one that would not be bureaucratic in any way and so would be democratic.

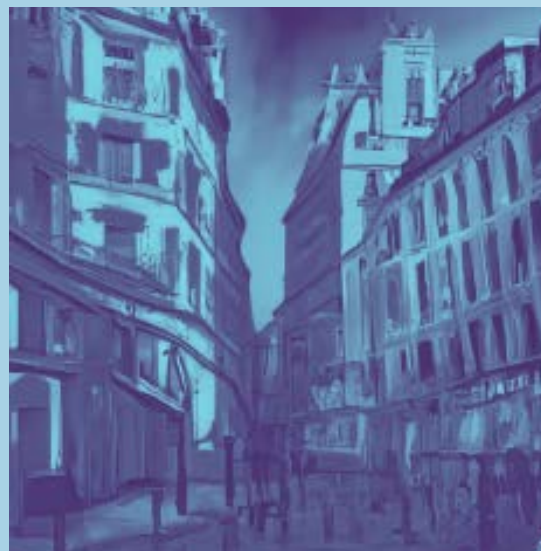
Once the economic question is solved comes the next closest, the question of political decisions and democracy. We saw that since the Paris Commune there was as a prominent idea the replacement of representatives by delegates and so the addition of a permanent control from the population on the persons it is electing. This ties into what Paulo Freire talks about in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) as by controlling their own fate both politically and economically, the oppressed will already regain more humanity that was stolen to them by the oppressors whose material support is already heavily diminished. By integrating more and more people into political discussion, it also helps at the discussion he advocates for in order to make people regain their humanity. In the end, it relates to the Democratic Confederatism that Abdullah Öcalan wrote about in 2011: making of democracy a part of the everyday life through associations, councils, congresses and much more instances. Something that is even more true if we consider the economy to be democratically planned too.

Finally, there is also a need to challenge and overcome patriarchy and the racist and colonial world order. On the question of gender, marxism offered a criticism of the family as an institution since Friedrich Engels' Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State (1848) where he considered family to be the origins of both private property and the state and so the need to move beyond that. This was also quite common in collectivist communal experiments in the 20th century like the Falanster. These critics regarding gender as a structure continued over time and with Monique Wittig it took another dimension as she called for the abolition of the social category "Women", something that will happen after equality is ensured and the "Men" social category had disappeared as everything that is not masculine is automatically feminine and so femininity does not exist without masculinity. She shares in her The Straight Mind and Other Essays (1992) a marxist and materialistic perspective on feminism with Silvia Federici.

In the end, there is also the question of the colonial order and for that, one of the potential solution is to count of the oppressed population's self organisations that were created to fulfill social objectives the state could not or would not do itself. That's what we can understand from Hilda Lloréns Making Livable Worlds (2021) in which the question of popular groups to counter states' lack of reactions to a natural catastrophe highlight the capacity of community-based solutions to be more effective than state-wide ones. By relying more on popular and community organisations, and less on imperialist and capitalist states to ensure services, there might be a far more peaceful society.

To sum up, we identified three main social structures of oppression and violence: capitalism and social classes, patriarchy and the gender system and racism and the colonial world order. Too intertwined, none can be treated separately and attempts at reforms would just trigger a counter-reaction against it. In the end, we can gather a lot of insight and structural ideas from different areas especially the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution of 1905 or the revolution in Rojava in todays world. From there and with political theory, we can imagine a future of common ownership of the means of production, through user's ownership or trade-unions direction, always in a democratically planned economy. A new political system based on delegates, congresses and permanent democracy is also a fundamental idea. Social structures like the family, genders and heteronormativity are to be challenged and destroyed to be replaced with new structures and with a new focus on community-based and popular-organisation led solutions.

BY ARTHUR PATOU





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BELL HOOKS 2004:  
"THE WILL TO CHANGE"  
CHAPTER ONE







# SOLAR CELLS, TAMARIND TREES, and HOPE

Stories of transformation from Adjuntas, Puerto Rico

By Christie Nicoson

*With excerpts from Reflexiones sobre paz, medio ambiente y género: Entrevista a Alexis  
Andrés Massol González*



# contents

With this zine, I explore themes of hope and transformation. I share stories and insights that emerged from fieldwork in Adjuntas, Puerto Rico in 2022 and 2023 as part of my PhD project *Peace in a Changing Climate*. In the following pages, I venture into utopian imaginaries in action and research on climate change.

I include historical vignettes that give context and form important parts of the current situation because these histories are not confined to the temporal past. The history of colonialism in Puerto Rico (presented in part I) is not a story of long-ago conquistadors or early US development. Colonialism, yes, stretches back centuries, but also is made and remade daily.

In Part II, I share the history of Casa Pueblo – an example of the many ways that Puerto Ricans not only powerfully resist colonialism, but also create livable alternatives. The story shows Casa Pueblo started as a movement against extractivism and has grown a process of *autogestión*, community self-governance. Solar panels play an important role in this: as tools of an energy insurrection. This insurrection moves the community in Adjuntas away from an import-dependent and centralized fossil fuel-based energy system toward a system that draws energy from renewable resources and evolves co-constitutively with the social fabric of the community.

I take a moment away from the story telling in part III to consider the ongoing work in Adjuntas as an instance of utopianism from a more theoretical point of view. Here, utopia does not mean a fantasy or specific idealized future. Instead, utopia is understood as a hopeful vision that extends beyond imaginations, into present constructions of alternative ways of living.

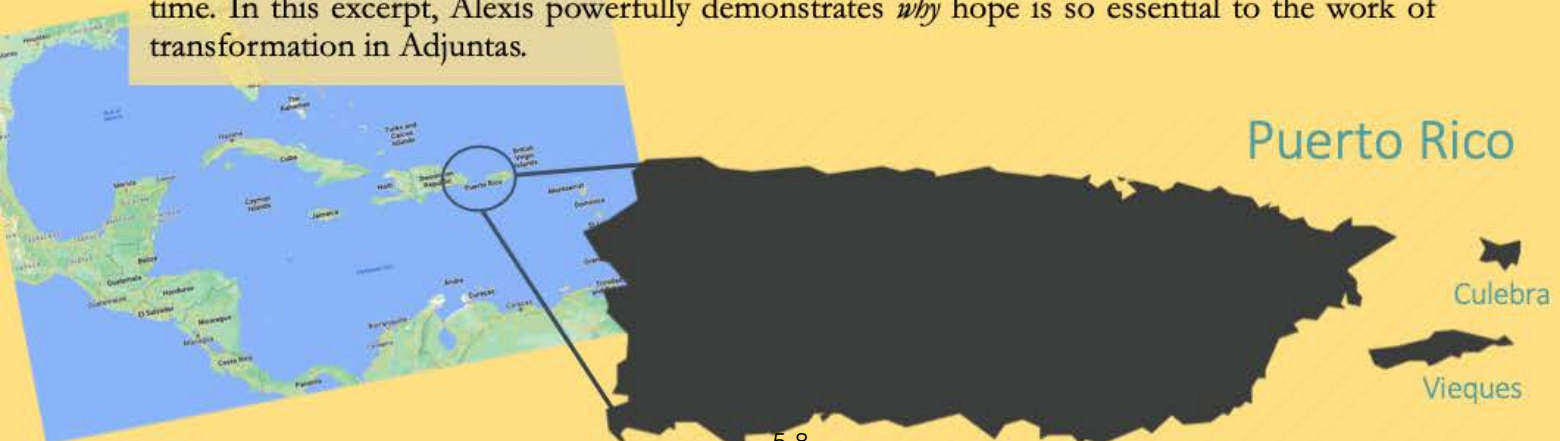
Finally, part IV comprises excerpts from an interview between myself and one of the co-founders of Casa Pueblo, Alexis Andrés Massol González. By sharing and reflecting on the story of Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral, Alexis gives another example of a history that is not linear or static. The story of Gabriela Mistral and the tamarind tree she brought to Lares, Puerto Rico illustrates powerful solidarity that reaches well beyond the occasion's location and time. In this excerpt, Alexis powerfully demonstrates *why* hope is so essential to the work of transformation in Adjuntas.

Part I: 500 years of Colonization

Part II: Casa pueblo & autogestión in Adjuntas

Part III: transformations toward utopia

Part IV: Gabriela Mistral & constructing utopias





## Part I: 500 years of colonization

Taino figure of the beloved *cagu*



Stories of society in the Puerto Rican archipelago begin with the Taino people, estimated to have made the islands home six or seven thousand years before first European contact. The 'discovery' of Taino land by Christopher Columbus in 1492 marks the beginning of one of the world's oldest Spanish colonial projects.

Spanish invaders committed genocide against the indigenous peoples, and enslaved peoples kidnapped from around the Caribbean and from Africa to work sugar plantations, which formed the backbone of the colonial economy (Cruz Soto 2006). As part of the 1898 Treaty of Paris that ended the Spanish-American War, Spain ceded Puerto Rico and other colonial territories to the United States. The islands remain under US colonial power to this day, as an 'unincorporated territory'.

El Morro  
16<sup>th</sup> C. Spanish fort



In the 1930s, the 'economic development' program Operation Bootstrap catalysed industrialization (Lloréns 2021; Cabán 2002; Santana 1998). Local government and US powers imposed *la operación*, a racialized mass sterilization campaign under the guise of family planning and poverty alleviation (Womack 2020). The imperial government quelled political resistance, by attacking and incarcerating nationalist and independence leaders (LeBrón 2019).

As a result of US policy, Puerto Rico bears an 'unpayable' debt of 72 billion US dollars in bonds and 50 billion in pension obligations. This debt results from economic recession as well as the implementation of exploitative austerity instruments that dismantle public services while benefitting investors (Morales 2019). The US also has long occupied land, air and water with military stations and activities, contaminating the environment and assaulting humans and nonhumans through, for instance, live military exercises and chemical weapons testing (Cruz Soto 2008; Sheller 2020; Dickerson 2015). The case of Vieques, the second largest island in the archipelago is well known for numerous health and environmental effects of chemical weapons, live munition, dropping bombs – the land has been used since WWII for storage, bombing range, military training site (Sheller 2020) and this occupation extends beyond to medical experiments, sterilizations and other 'health' campaigns, food insecurity, disassociation (Cruz Soto 2006).



# ADJUNTAS, PUERTO RICO

Part II : *Casa pueblo y autogestión in Adjuntas*

In Adjuntas, a town sitting amidst the central mountains of Puerto Rico's largest island, you find the community group Casa Pueblo.

The group formed in the 1980s, as a people's movement in opposition to a plan for open-pit mining in the region. The movement grew from fewer than ten supporters to tens of thousands. In 1986, thanks in part to the efforts of their protest, the government dropped plans for the mining project.



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Septiembre- 7:30 P.M.

MONUMENTO HISTORICO  
EL SOL DE ADJUNTAS



After preventing the mine construction, the group turned to each other, asking, 'if not the mine, what instead?' Alexis Massol González recalls asking: 'Is dreaming not allowed? Where is our sense of hope?' (2022, 42) He, along with Tinti Deyá Díaz and others, raised funds to open a headquarters and establish Casa Pueblo.



**FAUSTINA "TINTI" DEYÁ DÍAZ**  
the heart and soul of Casa Pueblo



GROWING  
HOPE

# SEMBRANDO ESPERANZA

Today, Casa Pueblo leads a process of *autogestión*: 'management of an organized group of people who voluntarily unite [...] to defend the common interests of those who are looking to achieve a better quality of life and a better future' (Massol González 2022, 98).



The organization self-sustains through sales from their Café Madre Isla coffee roastery and an artisanal shop. They designated a people's forest in place of the proposed mine and operate a forest school to connect people and natural ecosystems. The house hosts art and cultural events like choir concerts, painting of murals, theatre performances, gallery exhibits, and film screenings; and educates in science and music classrooms. Since 2017, they have been busy installing solar infrastructure to generate energy. The solar projects power businesses, communal spaces, and households to foster energy independence from the unstable and fossil fuel-based central energy system.



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as de solar

nos fuimos moviendo a medidas con intervenciones de carácter permanente. Queríamos atender necesidades, pero también impulsar un cambio... dejar saber que podemos hacer las cosas diferente para vivir mejor", dijo.  
Fue así como 10 casas en el sector El Hoyo fueron equipadas con "sistemas de resguardo con energía solar" para energizar neveras y máquinas de te-



# 'No' a la explotación minera

OPOSICION



Hope becoming  
ecológico

30 PUERTO RICO  
EL NUEVO DÍA • elnuevodia.com

CASA PUEBLO DE ADJUNTAS

# Cambian el paisaje en

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nos fuimos moviendo con intervenciones permanentes. Queríamos atender necesidades, pero también dejar saber que podemos hacer las cosas diferente para vivir mejor", dijo. Fue así como 10 casas en el sector El Hoyo fueron equipadas con "sistemas de resguardo con energía solar" para energizar neveras y máquinas de te-



Carlos Medina, en Adjuntas.

## SEGUNDA FASE

Asimismo, el director asociado de Casa Pueblo agradeció las donaciones de "cientos" de individuos, artistas como Brenda Hopkins y la diáspora boricua en Nueva York, Filadelfia (Pensilvania), Los Angeles (California), entre otros lugares.

Organizaciones como Miranda Foundation, JPB Foundation, Oxfam, Lutheran World Relief, Boston Grassroots y Red de Fundaciones también dieron subvenciones (grants) de filantropía.

"En la medida que vamos avanzando en la agenda, más personas



El cine solar ofrece una cartelera sabatina gratuita.



# Pulseo por el presupuesto

tradas entre  
La Fortaleza

Uno para el pueblo



Contralor: inflado el último presupuesto de Rosselló

## Bosque Escuela La Olimpia Ariel Massol Deyá

Casa Pueblo invita: **¡IMPLANTACIÓN de un "sueño hecho realidad"!**  
sábado 17 de AGOSTO, 10:00 AM  
ubicación: Centro Casa Pueblo



que no tenían acceso a la energía. Hacer la barbería, por ejemplo, es una demostración de que es bueno energizar en el punto de

instalar un punto de energía en Casa Pueblo. La organización también es completando el diseño de dos corrales, incluyendo una des



**Christie:** There are many examples of Casa Pueblo's work against environmental harms and resisting repression. However, you are also known for not only standing *against* something, but also *for* an alternative; *against* a violence or injustice, and *for* greater wellbeing and a better future. Do you see this as peace work?

**Alexis:** Peace has never existed. That is why we are building peace processes. You do it in phases. Peace is when we are in company, in togetherness; respecting women, respecting men in a process that is not easy. It is a relationship, a task of peace, happiness, of equality. The way I see peace, it necessitates that we abandon charity and take up processes of justice. When we have justice, we are going to have peace.

There is a saying by Bertolt Brecht, "Hay hombres que luchan un día y son buenos. Hay otros que luchan un año y son mejores. Hay quienes luchan muchos años y son muy buenos. Pero hay los que luchan toda la vida: esos son los imprescindibles."

That is how I see it. Because, for example, to win the fight against the gas pipeline, there was a march of 30,000 people here. Those people are indispensable. We are facilitators of social power. Sometimes there are brilliant people here, of course there are, because we have people from many places. But Casa Pueblo is not the best thing ever, we have limits and faults, too. If we are alone, we can't do much. We have to be with the people, and that is the social power.

indispensable ones.

The path also leads us to solutions. When we agreed to designate the mining area as a forest, we knew where we were going, but how do we do it? One says it will be one thing, a specialist says another... There was a meeting with many people looking for an economic alternative. There were a lot of people. We all met and talked about what can we do for Casa Pueblo to have independence. One person said, "the alternative is there", pointing. The mountains! We looked at the mountain, but what was it? "The alternative is there." When our friend said, "The solution is there, the coffee," everything kind of opened.

The other thing is that we must not stop dreaming of utopia. For example, in the resistance against the gas pipeline, to say "no" to the gas pipeline is not enough. We need pedagogical arguments to educate and present alternatives. Casa Pueblo believes that an alternative Puerto Rico has to be on that agenda. We have to discuss and practice self-decolonization. It has to be constructed, as a base, like a foundation. We believe there has to be a praxis from the bottom up to build the alternative.



## Part III

# Model of UTOPIA as transformation

I use utopia to study ‘educated hope’ of a (potential or actual) collective, recognizable through engagement with what it might become (Nicoson, forthcoming). Rather than as a fantasy or a blueprint, neither a specific goal nor method, utopia here is a way to critique the present as marginalizing, exclusionary, oppressive, and violent alongside political imagination and active struggle toward envisioning alternative ways of living (Muñoz 2009). Utopia points to societal processes that contribute to knowledge through a “re-reading the present from the standpoint of the future” (Levitas 2013, 218).

### Example from Casa Pueblo for theorizing with UTOPIA

Knowledge about the *current situation* (during the anti-mining movement) came from scientific and experiential knowledge about the water aquifer and natural environment in Adjuntas, and its connection to the rest of the island. This informed the group about immense threats to human and more-than-human ecosystems posed by the mining plan.

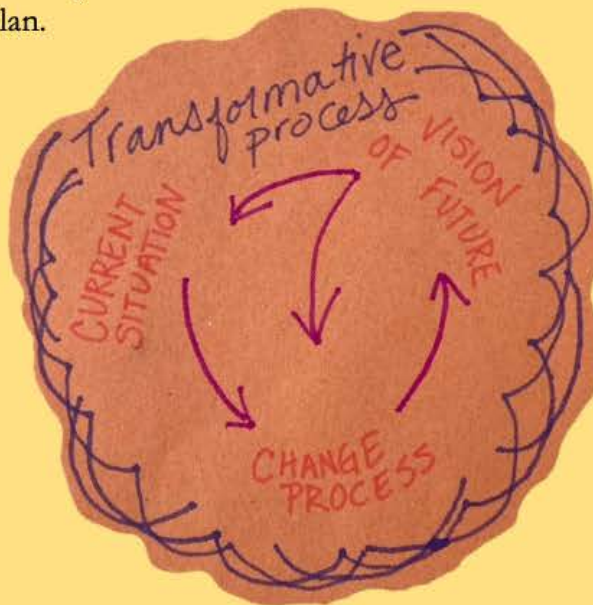


— Alexis Massol



A *vision of the future* emerged and continues to evolve based on community values and needs, such as:

- Enabling people in the community for living well (for instance, access to electricity and community),
- Sustaining healthy ecosystems (such as moving from a fossil fuel-based energy system to one driven by renewable energy, and protecting forests to maintain biodiversity and water resources)
- Preserving place to sustain the culture and identity of Puerto Rican people at home in the archipelago and in the diaspora (including by centering interests of Puerto Ricans rather than multinational corporations)



*Change processes* (during protests and throughout the life of Casa Pueblo) grew and continue to grow, maintaining and providing for anticipated needs to avert the harm of the ‘current situation’ and work towards the envisioned future.

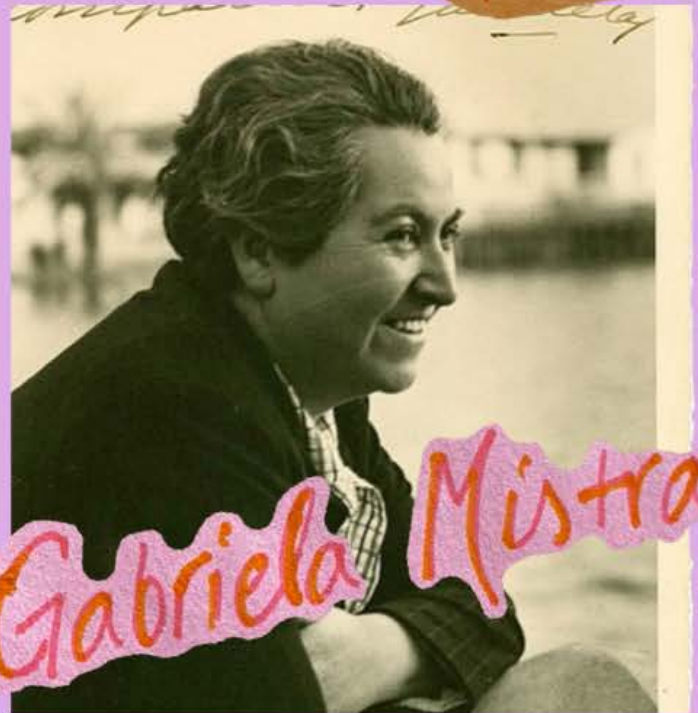




## Part IV : Gabriela Mistral & constructing utopias

**Christie:** This work that Casa Pueblo has been doing for so long adds to a long history of fights for environmental justice. If we can reflect for a moment on the context in which efforts in Adjuntas take place, would you like to share the story of the poet Gabriela Mistral? Just as she drew together different struggles against imperialism and for self-sufficiency of the people and care for the environment, she also drew together different struggles across Latin America.

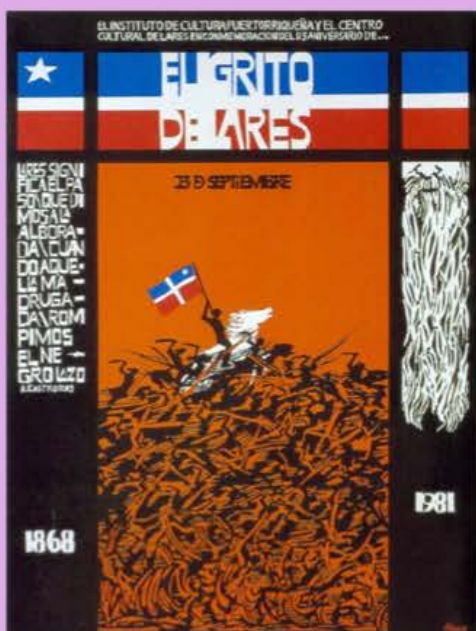
**Alexis:** Gabriela Mistral was an extraordinary woman who loved this country and this country loved her, so much so that throughout Puerto Rico there are many public schools that bear her name. She was a resident professor at the University of Puerto Rico and, for example, supported the patriot Don Pedro Albizu Campo when he was imprisoned for ten years in the United States. Another great act of Gabriela Mistral was in commemorating the first major revolt against Spain in Puerto Rico, called el Grito de Lares ("The Cry of Lares").



During the armed uprising, they took the book where ranchers recorded obligations of the workers; they took the book and burned it! This began on September 23, 1868, when different sectors of Puerto Rico came together and declared the independence of Puerto Rico from Spain and also declared the abolition of slavery.

Excerpt (translated from Spanish), *Reflexiones sobre paz, medio ambiente y género*

## El Grito de Lares



"grito" = 19<sup>th</sup> C. declaration of independence in Latin America

In 1868, an armed insurrection began in Lares, a region of active coffee haciendas. About 1,000 men gathered the night of September 23 to storm the town. They set-up a provisional government for a Puerto Rican Republic, abolished the regime of the day laborer's passbook, and established freedom for enslaved peoples who fought and for the elderly disabled. The rebellion prompted Spain to allow formation of some political parties in Puerto Rico in 1869, freedom of press and assembly, and laid the groundwork for eventual abolition of slavery and day laborer regime in 1873.





**Alexis:** In 1932, Gabriela Mistral came to Lares with a seed of a tamarind tree, which she brought from the home of the liberator of Latin America, Simón Bolívar. She brought the seed along with soil from twenty-one Latin American republics, and Don Pedro Albizu Campos planted it in recognition of the deed of Puerto Rico's freedom in 1868.

I tell this story not only because it commemorates such an important day, but also because the tamarind tree has so much symbolism for me. It is something political, it represents an effort to connect Puerto Rico with other struggles, to break our isolation from the rest of Latin America. This tree connects our homeland with the earth, with the territory where we live.

Almost a century has passed but this living thing, not a statue, but a tree on earth still holds so much symbolism. It holds meaning for the ongoing fight in Puerto Rico. We fight to break chains of dependency, and we fight to stay connected with each other in this country and with the rest of Latin America.

*Excerpt (translated from Spanish), Reflexiones sobre paz, medio ambiente y género*



**Alexis:** As we said before at Casa Pueblo, “no to the mines, yes to life.” We say yes to humanity. Such a process, guided by love and respect, this can integrate us on a route to peace – a route of peace, because I see peace as a process and this process needs us to be integrated, it needs us to work in connection with one another.

I’ll tell you another story. When we bought this house where Casa Pueblo now stands, we began little by little to repair the house. On the day when we opened the doors to the town, we planted a tree in the front of the house. It was a Maga tree, the national flower of Puerto Rico. We celebrated this following the example from Lares: we planted the Maga tree with soil from all the towns of Puerto Rico to symbolize unity with the country of Puerto Rico.

We work together to transform ourselves and to form an alternative country. In action together and in understanding each other, this is where we can start to imagine different futures.



Tamarind tree, Lares



So, if there is one group working on gender equality and another fighting for the environment, we might have different themes, we might do different things. Yet we can see our fights as different trees that connect beneath, in the soil. You know, trees talk to each other; they care for each other through their roots.

It is like this with our fights for justice; we might be growing differently or in different directions, but by recognizing our common roots, we can continue to support each other in a process of building peace.

Excerpt (translated from Spanish), *Reflexiones sobre paz, medio ambiente y género*





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# On Education: violence, justice and peace



ACCORDING TO THE CONSTRUCTIVIST EPISTEMOLOGY OF JEAN PIAGET, KNOWLEDGE IS AN ACQUISITION PROCESS WHERE INFORMATION IS ASSIMILATED INTO OUR PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES OF THE WORLD. THIS PERSPECTIVE PRESUMES THAT KNOWLEDGE IS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT AND DOESN'T EXIST OUTSIDE OF THE CONFINES OF LANGUAGE AND THE SOCIAL SUBJECTS WHO USE IT (PIAGET, 1976: PP. 11-12). AT THE SAME TIME, FREIRE DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN THE SECTARIANS AND RADICALS APPROACHES TO KNOWLEDGE, WHERE THE SECTARIAN IS DOCILE IN THEIR CONCEPTION OF KNOWLEDGE, WHILST THE RADICALS' KNOWLEDGE IS A CONSTANT DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE SUBJECTIVE, LIVED EXPERIENCE, AND THE OBJECTIVE REALITY PRESENTED FOR ANALYSIS (FREIRE, 2017: PP. 38). IN THIS SENSE, THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION CAN INHIBIT THE KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION PROCESS, THROUGH WHAT FREIRE DEFINES AS THE STYLE OF BANKING EDUCATION. THIS TYPE OF EDUCATION PUTS THE TEACHERS IN THE ROLE OF DEPOSITORS OF KNOWLEDGE, AND THE STUDENTS AS THE DEPOSITORIES OF THE TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF THE WORLD (FREIRE, 2017: PP. 69). THIS PRODUCES DOCILITY FROM ITS RECIPIENTS, AS THEIR SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE IS SET ASIDE AND REPLACED BY THE 'OBJECTIVE' REALITY THAT THEY'RE TAUGHT.

THIS WAY OF EDUCATING CAN IN MANY CASES SERVE TO PROTECT THE STATUS QUO, AS IT PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR WHAT KNOWLEDGE IS AND CAN THUS DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN WHO IS AND WHO ISN'T CONSIDERED TO BE EDUCATED. ESTEVA MENTIONS IN HIS ARTICLE "WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?", HOW HISTORICALLY COLONIZERS DESCRIBED THE PEOPLE, ON WHOSE LAND THEY COLONIZED, AS 'PRIMITIVE' AND 'BACKWARDS', THEREBY JUSTIFYING THEIR ATTEMPTS TO IMPOSE 'EDUCATION' AND 'CIVILIZATION' ONTO THOSE SOCIETIES (2018: PP. 5). THIS, SIMILARLY TO WHAT FREIRE DESCRIBES AS THE BANKING EDUCATION, DOESN'T ALLOW FOR THE SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SETTLED THERE BEFORE. THUS INHIBITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT ON THEIR OWN TERMS. SIMILARLY, JUAN DANIEL CRUZ DESCRIBES IN THE ARTICLE "COLONIAL POWER DECOLONIAL PEACE", HOW EDUCATION HAS SERVED AS A REPRODUCTION OF COLONIALITY IN LATIN AMERICA. THIS THROUGH THE FORCED APPLICATION OF A EUROCENTRIC PERSPECTIVE ON PEACE, MODERNITY AND HISTORY WHICH DISMISSES OTHER POTENTIAL OPTIONS. REGARDING THE CONCEPT OF PEACE, CRUZ DESCRIBES THE EUROCENTRIC PERSPECTIVE AS PUSHING THE IDEA THAT IT IS TO BE CONDUCTED THROUGH TOP-DOWN LEGISLATION AS THE LEGITIMATE ACTOR IS THE STATE, THUS PRODUCING 'PEACE' THROUGH AN ELITIST HEGEMONY. CONCURRENTLY, EUROCENTRIC

PERSPECTIVES ON SCIENCE TRY TO FIND HOMOGENEITY IN THE CONCEPT OF PEACE, THEREBY ELIMINATING THE POSSIBILITY OF PRODUCING PEACE BY OTHER MEANS (2021: PP. 277-281).

## VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE

EDUCATION REGARDING PEACE OFTEN INCLUDES CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE CONCEPTS OF VIOLENCE AND JUSTICE. VIOLENCE IS OFTEN CONSIDERED TO WORK AGAINST PEACE, AND JUSTICE PLAYS A ROLE IN REPARATIONS FOR EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE. THEREFORE THE ABILITY TO DEFINE VIOLENCE CAN DETERMINE FOR WHOM PEACE WILL BE CONDUCTED, AND IN WHAT WAYS, JUSTICE WILL BE SERVED.

FREIRE PROPOSES THAT VIOLENCE IS WHEN 'A' CONDUCTS VIOLENCE ON 'B' BY STRIPPING 'A' OF THEIR RIGHT TO SELF AFFIRMATION, THROUGH DEHUMANIZATION, BY DISMISSING THEIR SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF LIFE (2017: PP. 55). AS THIS BROAD DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE COVERS MANY EXPERIENCES, OTHER THINKERS PROPOSE MORE PARTICULAR AREAS OF FOCUS IN DISCUSSIONS REGARDING VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE. FOR INSTANCE JACQUI TRUE PROPOSES IN THE ARTICLE "CONTINUUM OF VIOLENCE AND PEACE: A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE", THAT THERE'S AN OVERRELIANCE ON THE BATTLEFIELD DEATH STATISTICS IN DETERMINING LEVELS OF PEACE IN DEFINING CONFLICT. THIS, ACCORDING TO TRUE, CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AS A FOCUS ON THE PATRIARCHAL EXPERIENCE OF PEACE, WHICH DISCOUNTS OTHER TYPES OF VIOLENCE THAT MIGHT ARISE. SUCH AS DOMESTIC ABUSE, IN OTHERWISE 'PEACEFUL' COUNTRIES SUCH AS AUSTRALIA, WHERE ONE WOMAN IS KILLED BY HER PARTNER EACH WEEK (2020: PP. 86-87).

ADDITIONALLY DAVIS MENTIONS IN CHAPTER 11 OF WOMEN, RACE & CLASS HOW VIOLENCE WAS EXPRESSED IN THE US THROUGH THE MYTH OF THE BLACK RAPIST. IN THE EXAMPLES DAVIS PROVIDES SHE SHOWCASES THAT BLACK MEN WERE WRONGFULLY VILLANIZED FOR THE EPIDEMIC OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE WHICH PERCEDED IN THE US AT THE TIME. THIS WAS IN PART DEMONSTRATED THROUGH THE LYNCHING OF OVER 10 000 BLACK MEN, WITH THE JUSTIFICATION THAT THEY HAD BEEN ACCUSED OF RAPE, THEREFORE DISALLOWING THEM THE RIGHT TO JUDICIAL TRIALS (2019: PP. 165-166). SIMULTANEOUSLY, RACIST BELIEFS ABOUT BLACK WOMEN PREVENTED THEM FROM SEEKING JUSTICE THROUGH THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM PAIRED WITH THE LOOMING THREAT OF LYNCHING FOR FALSE RAPE ACCUSATIONS (2019: PP. 164). DESPITE BLACK MEN AND WOMEN OPENLY CONDEMNING THE VIOLENCE THAT THEY WERE FACING, THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM'S WHITE SUPREMACIST AND PATRIARCHAL LEANINGS HINDERED THEM FROM SEEKING JUSTICE.



SIMILARLY, A DISCUSSION ABOUT LABOR WOULD INCLUDE WHETHER UNEQUAL EXCHANGE COULD CONSTITUTE A TYPE OF VIOLENCE. OVERALL JAGGERS ARTICLE "A FEMINIST CRITIQUE OF THE ALLEGED SOUTHERN DEBT" IS A VALUABLE INSIGHT INTO HOW LOCAL ECONOMIES HAVE INTEGRATED INTO GLOBAL TRADE. THESE LOCAL ECONOMIES HAVE OFTEN BEEN EXPOSED TO STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMS AND THESE POLICIES ATTEMPT TO RESHAPE LOCAL ECONOMIES TO FIT INTO THE GLOBAL TRADE. THUS PRODUCTION IS GEARED TOWARD GLOBAL TRADE AND NOT PRODUCTION TO SATIATE THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. AT THE SAME TIME, THESE COMMUNITIES ARE OFTEN RELIANT ON NORTHERN PRODUCTION OF MACHINES AND FERTILIZERS IN REGARDS TO AGRICULTURE. THE EFFECT OF THIS IS THAT THE LOCAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES RELY ON NORTHERN-PRODUCED MACHINERY WHILST SIMULTANEOUSLY RELYING ON SELLING THEIR OWN LABOR, RAW MATERIALS AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS FOR CHEAP, TO NORTHERN INDUSTRIES. THIS INEQUALITY HAS PROVIDED THE NORTH WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO GET RICHER, WHILST THE SOUTH GETS POORER (2002: PP. 120). THIS DISCREPANCY CAN SIMILARLY BE IDENTIFIED IN MARX THEORY OF LABOR PRESENTED IN CAPITAL, WHERE HE PROPOSED THAT LABOR CAN BE OBJECTIVELY MEASURED BY HOURS OF LABOR TO PRODUCE A PRODUCT. LABOR IS VALUED THROUGH LABOR POWER, WHICH IS THE AMOUNT OF HOURS OF WORK NEEDED TO PRODUCE A LIVEABLE WAGE. THE ISSUE MARX PROPOSED, IS THE SURPLUS OF PROFIT EXTRACTED BY CAPITALISTS WHICH ALLOWS THEM THE ABILITY TO EXPLOIT WORKERS BY MAKING THEM WORK MORE HOURS THAN NECESSITATED BY THE POWER OF LABOR CALCULATIONS (2013: PP.112-119). THIS EXPLOITATION OF LABOR CAN BE TIED IN WITH THE AFOREMENTIONED DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE PROPOSED BY FREIRE. AS IT COULD HINDER WORKERS FROM REACHING SELF AFFIRMATION ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL, AND IN THE CONTEXT OF JAGGERS ARGUMENT, WHOLE COMMUNITIES COULD BE KEPT FROM REACHING SELF AFFIRMATION.

ANOTHER WAY OF CONCEPTUALIZING VIOLENCE CAN STEM FROM THE MANY VICTIMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS. TRUE MENTIONS HOW FRAMEWORKS FOR PEACE RARELY CONSIDER THE SLOW VIOLENCE AND DISASTERS INDUCED BY CLIMATE CHANGE, WHICH WILL IN MANY CASES, CAUSE MORE DISPLACEMENTS THAN CONFLICT-SITUATIONS (2020: PP. 86). ADDITIONALLY CLIMATE CHANGE IS A PRODUCT OF COLONIAL ATTEMPTS TO EXPAND US AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIES THROUGH THE OVEREXPLOITATION OF GLOBAL NATURAL RESOURCES. THUS ANTHROPOGENIC CLIMATE CHANGE INCREASED ALONGSIDE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN THE ARTICLE "RACISM AND CLIMATE (IN)JUSTICE" ABIMBOLA ET. AL. MENTION THE VULNERABILITY OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND PEOPLE OF COLOR WHEN IT COMES TO THE EFFECTS

OF CLIMATE CHANGE (2021: PP. 12). THE ARTICLE ALSO INCLUDES CRITICISM OF THE LACK OF INITIATIVES TO RESTRAIN EMISSIONS AND PAY REPARATIONS FOR THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE, FROM WHICH THE GLOBAL NORTH IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE (2021: PP. 6, 9-11). ABIMBOLA ET. AL. FURTHER RECOGNIZES THAT APPROACHES TO REDUCING THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ARE OFTEN SEPARATED FROM THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNITIES PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE. THIS MEANS THAT ATTEMPTS TO ALLEVIATE THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, THROUGH DEVELOPMENTAL POLICIES, STEM FROM WHAT MULTILATERAL OR BILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS DEEM TO BE IMPORTANT. IN ADDITION, POLICIES PROPOSED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WILL OFTEN NEED TO BE ADAPTED IN A WAY THAT FITS POTENTIAL DONORS (2021: PP. 12). THIS WILL DISABLE LOCAL VULNERABLE POPULATIONS TO DEFINE THEIR EXPERIENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE BUT ALSO DISABLE THEM FROM CONDUCTING POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS .

AS NANCY FRASER CONSIDERS IN THE ARTICLE "REFRAMING JUSTICE IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD", IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD, THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE STATE AS THE CONDUCTOR OF JUSTICE CAN HINDER DISCUSSIONS ABOUT JUSTICE FROM NON-TERRITORIAL ACTORS. FRASER SPECIFICALLY NOTES THE PROTECTION OF TRANSNATIONAL PRIVATE POWERS SUCH AS FOREIGN INVESTORS AND CREDITORS, TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS, GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND INTERNATIONAL CURRENCY SPECULATORS (2005: PP. 78, 81). IN THE DISCUSSION OF CLIMATE CHANGE, NON-TERRITORIAL ACTORS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE AS CORPORATIONS PROFIT OFF OF THE OVEREXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS THAT ARE PARTICULARLY HARMFUL GREENHOUSE GAS EMITTERS (CUOMO 2011: PP. 702-703). BUT IN ATTEMPTS TO SEEK JUSTICE THE WESTPHALIAN LOGIC REGARDING THE NATION-STATE CREATES AN OBSTACLE BY HOLDING THE COUNTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISASTERS WHICH MIGHT OCCUR WITHIN ITS TERRITORIAL LINES. THIS RENDERS OTHER CULPRITS LIKE TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS EXEMPT FROM REPERCUSSIONS, SUCH AS HAVING TO PAY REPARATIONS. SIMILARLY FRASER MENTIONS THAT THE ACTORS UNABLE TO PRESS TRANS-NATIONAL FIRST ORDER CLAIMS STRUGGLE AGAINST MALDISTRIBUTION AND MISRECOGNITION IN THE GLOBALIZING JUSTICE FRAMING (2005: PP. 80). THIS TIES INTO JAGGER'S ARGUMENT REGARDING THE UNEQUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GLOBAL NORTH AND GLOBAL SOUTH IN OPPORTUNITIES GARNERED BY THE GLOBAL MARKET. AS A RESULT THESE INEQUALITIES WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO REPAIR, AS LONG AS THE PERSPECTIVE ON JUSTICE REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE METROPOLE (FRASER, 2005: PP. 82).

## ON EDUCATION; VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE

IN SUMMARY VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE ARE MALLEABLE CONCEPTS THAT CHANGE OVER TIME AND PRESENT DIFFERENTLY IN A VARIETY OF CULTURAL CONTEXTS. AS A RESULT, CONTROL OF THE DEFINITION OF THESE CONCEPTS CAN PROVIDE FRAMEWORKS FOR THE CONTINUOUS EXPLOITATION AND DISREGARD OF MANY INDIVIDUALS' LIVED EXPERIENCES. THIS IS ESPECIALLY NOTABLE WHEN THESE CONCEPTS MIGHT BE DISCUSSED IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS FROM ONE PARTICULAR PERSPECTIVE. AT THE SAME TIME, THE EDUCATIONAL SETTING COULD PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS CREATE AVENUES FOR NEW IDEAS TO FLOURISH. THIS COULD THEN ALLOW RECIPIENTS TO DISCUSS CONCEPTS THROUGH THEIR SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCES, THUS LIBERATING THEMSELVES AND GAINING CONFIDENCE IN THEIR KNOWLEDGE BY IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS THEY FACE AND CONSTRUCTING SOLUTIONS (FREIRE, 2017: PP. 37-38).

### TEACHERS GUIDE

NOW THAT THE PURPOSE AND NECESSITY OF THIS MATERIAL'S PRODUCTION HAS BEEN ARGUED, A PROPOSAL ON WAYS TO CONDUCT IT WILL BE PRESENTED. IN OPPOSITION TO THE BANKING STYLE OF EDUCATION, FREIRE DEVOTES CHAPTER 3 OF PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED TO DISCUSSING THE DIALOGICS APPROACH TO EDUCATION. THIS APPROACH EMERGES FROM DIALOGUE AS A FUNDAMENTAL STEP TO TRANSFORMING THE WORLD, THROUGH PRAXIS. FREIRE DEFINES PRAXIS AS THE PRODUCT OF REFLECTION AND ACTION, BUT WARNS OF THE RISK OF LEAVING ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER. REFLECTION WITHOUT ACTION BECOMES IDLE WORDS AND ACTION WITHOUT REFLECTION BECOMES IDLE ACTION WHICH SIMILARLY LOSES ITS TRANSFORMATIVE POWER. THEREFORE, THE CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENT OF EDUCATION MUST INCLUDE PRAXIS THROUGH REFLECTION AND ACTION ON DIFFERENT CONCEPTS. THROUGH PRAXIS, EVERYONE HAS THE ABILITY TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD BY DESCRIBING DIFFERENT FACETS OF IT THROUGH THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES. DIALOGUE PLAYS THE ROLE OF MEDIATING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES, THEREBY GARNERING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND ITS NUMEROUS COMPLEX REALITIES. DISALLOWING AN INDIVIDUAL FROM DEFINING THE WORLD IS AN AGGRESSION ACCORDING TO FREIRE, THEREFORE DIALOGUE MUST EXIST BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE WILLING TO ATTEND TO OTHER PERSPECTIVES (2017: PP. 60-61).

SO, IN WHAT WAY CAN THIS APPROACH BE PROMOTED IN A CLASSROOM SETTING? CONSIDERING THE VARIETY OF EDUCATIONAL MEANS THAT DIFFERENT SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS PROVIDE, THIS GUIDE AND MATERIAL WILL PROVIDE A CHANCE TO START DIALOGUE. THIS MUST THEN BECOME A CONTINUOUS

PROCESS WITHIN ALL FUTURE FACETS OF DISCUSSIONS AND TOPICS IN WHICH STUDENTS WILL LEARN. THIS BEING SAID, THE MATERIAL PRESENTED BELOW TOUCHES PARTICULARLY ON THE CONCEPTS OF VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE.

### SUMMARY OF MATERIAL

THE EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL PROVIDED BELOW CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS;

#### CHARACTER CREATION GAME AND REFLECTION.

THE FIRST SECTION GIVES THE STUDENTS A CHARACTER, WITHIN A COMMUNITY, IN WHICH THEY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR.

THE SECOND SECTION WILL LET THE STUDENTS PONDER ON A VARIETY OF DILEMMAS IN WHICH THEY CAN DEVELOP CREATIVE SOLUTIONS, THIS PART IS ROAD TO UTOPIA. THESE DILEMMAS ARE TIED TO DIFFERENT CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE, THEREBY PRESENTING DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES OF HOW VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE CAN BE DEFINED. CONCURRENTLY, THE DILEMMAS ARE INSPIRED BY REAL EXPERIENCES AND PROBLEMS THAT EXIST IN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES.

THE THIRD PART, CREATION OF UTOPIA, ALLOWS MORE FOR THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF THE INDIVIDUALS PLAYING THE GAME TO DEFINE AND CONSTRUCT A REALITY IN WHICH VIOLENCE, JUSTICE AND PEACE IS CONTROLLED IN THE WAY THAT FITS THEIR IDEAL WORLD. THIS IS RECOMMENDED THROUGH CREATIVE MEANS, LIKE CREATING A POSTER OR MIND MAP THAT SUMMARIZES THE GROUP'S DISCUSSIONS.

### TEACHERS ROLE

THE TEACHER'S ROLE WITHIN THIS MATERIAL IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE AS THE TEACHER IS PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH ALLOWS FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE STUDENTS AND THE TEACHER AND STUDENTS. AS A RESULT OF THIS, THE TEACHER MUST ALLOW FOR CREATIVE AND IMAGINATIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS WHILST ALSO ENTERTAINING QUESTIONS THAT WILL APPEAR. ALSO IMPORTANT IS AVOIDING THE DEPOSITOR ROLE AND ENGAGING IN THE DIALOGUE PERSONALLY TO DEEPEN KNOWLEDGE THROUGH SUBJECTIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING.

*By Olivia Hanke*



# Road to Utopia

## Players Handbook

You're a citizen in the community of **Pleasant valley**. Your community is diverse with people from all across the world, of all ages and backgrounds. In your community the population is 10 000 where 82% are currently working and 22% are studying, or both.

**Pleasant Valley**, like any other community, faces problems on a daily basis. One day, you decide to sit down and write out some of the issues you have identified, on a journey to making it a better place for everyone.

### Creating your character

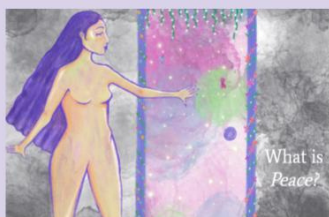
In order to get started, you first have to create your character to determine your level of **influence** and **wage**. To determine these stats, each player must roll ten 6-sided dice for each stat. For each six you get for that dice roll is a point to that stat. (See the examples below.) (10D6 = 10 dice with 6-sides)

- Emily is going to determine her character's **"Influence"** to do this she rolls **10D6** and gets the result of four sixes, this means that her **"Influence"** is **4**.
- Patrick is going to determine his character's **"Wage"** and does this the same way Emily determined her **"Influence"** in the previous example. He rolls **10D6** and adds the total amount of 6s to determine his **"Wage"**.

### Dilemmas

Secondly, each player must roll **3D6** which will determine which dilemma they will get. (See the example below)

- Emily has now determined her stats and has to roll **3D6** to determine which dilemma she brings to the table. She therefore roll **3D6** and get the results **3**, **6** and **2** add those up **3 + 6 + 2** which equals **11**, this means that Emily now has to tackle **Dilemma 11**



### Solving the dilemma

During the game you will be solving dilemmas equal to the number of players. Each player will have a dilemma that they need to solve, though it is encouraged to help each other to solve dilemmas with dice rolls and ideas! Solving the dilemmas will rely on your creative solutions, think outside the box about the ways you could create change.



When solving the dilemma, you will come up with creative solutions and fit them with the **pretext** listed in the table below. Any solution that is costly, requires a **Wage**-roll and any solution that requires persuasion requires an **Influence**-roll. It's also worth noting that helping another player solve a dilemma with dice rolls, requires you to be in the same dilemma space on the board.



### Calculating Dilemma solution success

Discuss together with your group members to what pretext the solution best fits:

| Pretext                    | Wage | Influence |
|----------------------------|------|-----------|
| Small construction (W)     | 5    | 2         |
| Big construction (W)       | 8    | 3         |
| Small organization (I) (W) | 3    | 3         |
| Big organization (I) (W)   | 6    | 6         |
| Small event (I) (W)        | 3    | 3         |
| Big event (I) (W)          | 6    | 6         |
| Small petition (I)         | 2    | 5         |
| Big petition (I)           | 3    | 8         |

(Once a roll on wage/influence has been initiated, it can't be abandoned til the total sum of the number required is reached\*)

## The flow of the game

After all players have created their characters and everyone has a dilemma it is time to determine a **secretary** and a **game leader**. The **secretary's** task is to document the dilemmas and the created solutions. The **Game leader's** task is to control the conversation and to act as a form of leader during the playthrough. After these steps, it's time to start playing the game.

The game is divided into turns which means that each player may perform one action before moving onto the next player. On your turn you can perform one out of the two following actions:

- Roll for **Influence** or **Wage** to solve or work on a dilemma
- Move up to 1 space on the board.

After a player has performed an action, the turn goes to the next player in clockwise order. This keeps going until all the dilemmas have been solved and you have reached **Utopia!**

## Dilemmas

### Dilemma 2

10% of your community's population are victims of domestic violence by a romantic partner. How will you ensure that this will end?

### Dilemma 3

20% of your community's population do not have access to the local bus station. This has caused problems for these individuals as they cannot comfortably get to the grocery store, school or pharmacy. How will you ensure that these people can reach their destinations comfortably?

### Dilemma 4

Dentistry is expensive to 13% of senior citizens in your community refrain from seeking care in regards to problems with their teeth. How will you ensure that these senior citizens can get the care they need?

### Dilemma 5

15% of students leaving the obligatory school system in your community, do not have the required grades to attend higher education. How can you ensure that these students have the opportunity to pursue the future they want?

### Dilemma 6

15% of people in your community do not eat nutritious food. How will you ensure that they can?

### Dilemma 7

5.1% of the working population in your community work within the transportation-industry. With technological advancements, their job leaps a high risk of being replaced by self driving vehicles. How will you solve this?

### Dilemma 8

20% of pregnant people in your community will have to travel a significant distance to get to a hospital when they're in labor, therefore increasing the risk of complications during birth. How can you ensure that these people have the opportunity to get to a hospital?

### Dilemma 9

10% of 15-34 year olds in your community are socially isolated. How will you ensure that they can feel a sense of belonging?

### Dilemma 10

10% of the full-time working population in your community do not have enough income to cover their monthly expenses. How can you ensure that they do?

### Dilemma 11

The popular public park in your community is being bought up by corporations, leaving fewer places for people to intermingle and get to know one another. How can you create opportunities for socializing?

### Dilemma 12

59% of reported discrimination happening in the workplace, in your community, is faced by people with ethnic-minority status. How can you ensure that these people won't be discriminated against?

### Dilemma 13

1% of people in your community release 10% of toxins released into nearby rivers, since there is no legislation or policy on the polluted molecules. How can you ensure that this will end?

### Dilemma 14

10% of the population of your community struggle with the transition from physical to digital money. How can you ensure that they feel more comfortable?

### Dilemma 15

60% of your population believe that they cannot competently contribute to the political discussions in your community. How can you ensure that they feel like they can?

### Dilemma 16

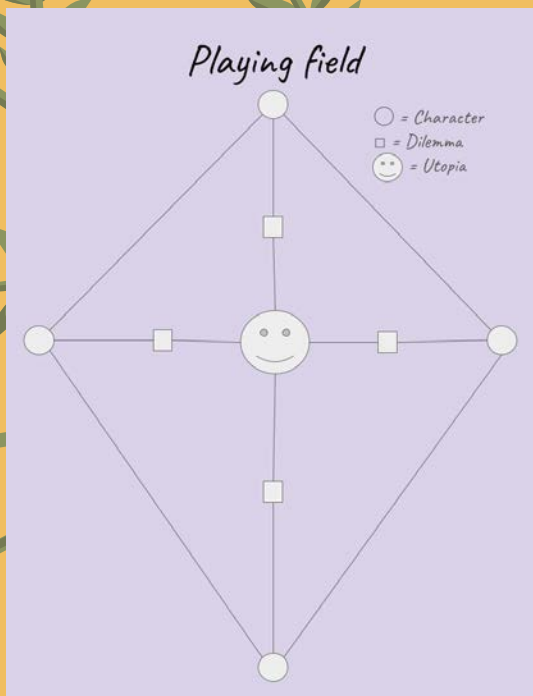
20% of people in your community do not believe that humans can impact the climate. How can you lower that 20%?

### Dilemma 17

In your community 1 out of 10 girls between the ages of 15-19 have been harassed over the internet. How can ...

### Dilemma 18

Local businesses are struggling in your community. How can you help them?



## CREATION OF UTOPIA

*Congratulations you have reached Utopia!  
Now it's time to construct it.*

*Reflect on the solutions and thoughts you have pondered during the playthrough of Road to Utopia. Similarly reflect on the experiences you have in the world when you create, draw and reflect the following questions.*

*"How do you create peace in Utopia?"*

*"How do you reduce violence in Utopia?"*

*"How do you produce justice in Utopia?"*

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"FOR APART FROM INQUIRY, APART  
FROM THE **PRAXIS**, INDIVIDUALS  
CANNOT BE TRULY HUMAN. KNOWLEDGE  
EMERGES ONLY THROUGH INVENTION AND  
RE-INVENTION, THROUGH THE  
RESTLESS, IMPATIENT, CONTINUING,  
HOPEFUL INQUIRY HUMAN BEINGS  
PURSUE IN THE WORLD, WITH THE  
WORLD, AND WITH EACH OTHER"

PAULO FREIRE, *PEDAGOGY OF THE  
OPPRESSED*, 1970