

Beyond Decolonisation: Transforming University Culture and Curriculum

What is decolonisation and what next?

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Post-colonial colonial violence's.

 **OCHA** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

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OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

Hostilities in Gaza and Israel are ongoing, and violence in the West Bank has surged. Millions of Palestinians struggle to live with dignity under Israeli occupation, facing coercive practices and Palestinian political divisions.

[CURRENT HOSTILITIES IN GAZA AND ISRAEL](#) [BACKGROUND](#)

REPORTED IMPACT SINCE 7 OCTOBER 2023

PALESTINIANS	ISRAELIS	DAMAGE AND IDPS
35,303+	1,200+	70,000+
Reported killed	Reported killed	Housing units destroyed in Gaza
MoH Gaza, in addition to 382 in the West Bank (OCHA) and ~1,000 in Israel, including people involved in the 7 October attack (Israeli authorities)	The estimate, which includes foreign nationals, has been changed by the Israeli sources.	MoPWH
PALESTINIANS	ISRAELIS	DAMAGE AND IDPS
~79,261	~5,432	1.7 million
Reported injured	Reported injured	Displaced in Gaza
MoH Gaza	Israeli authorities, including foreign nationals	UN estimation



Decolonising the University – Movement or moment?

1. Conservative: preservation and refinement of knowledge, cannons, traditions and elitism.
2. Libertarian: free enquiry, critical thinking, freedom of speech/right to offend.
3. Neo-liberal: training ground to develop the workers, technocrats, professionals, administrators for the knowledge economy.
4. Social Justice: space to develop and nurture ethical, critical and moral agency for a fairer, more humane society.

Exploring options for change

1. **Confine our ambition to a kind of performative decolonisation**, and updated version of multi-culturalism and diversity bolted onto the end of a Eurocentric model for the university.
2. **Accept that some institutions**, perhaps newer ones that are less wedded to tradition, or faculties, **will move much faster and bolder than others** and settle for a plurality of approaches and the preservation of elitism.
3. **Abandon the university all together** and establish new independent institutions build from scratch on the principles of decoloniality. This might prove to be an interesting experiment, but because such institutions will be subject to the neoliberal forces, they can never act autonomously.
4. **Problematise the current conception of decolonisation**, especially the suggestion that ideas attributed to European modes of thought, of justice, universality, reason, logic, dialectics, history, secularity and so on, are 'antithetical to decolonial project'.

Key Flaws in the current approach to decolonizing the University.

1. a poor understanding of the very forms of violence, oppression and exploitation that the anti-colonial movements sought to confront, many of which are ongoing;
2. the contradictory nature of the modern neoliberal university and their continual role in neo-colonialism, through internationalisation policies.
3. a failure to break free from the very systems of othering and classification of humans that were established to rationalise the colonial project in the first place.

How do we/should understand colonialism?

NEO-COLONIALISM IN AFRICA

Colonialism continues with another face!



1st STAGE
BETWEEN THE
16TH AND
19TH
CENTURIES
(300 YEARS!)

Westeners settled in ports in Africa's coastal areas, stealing humanitarian and material wealth in the continent through **the trade of slaves and precious metals!**



2nd STAGE
1885-1965
80 years after the **Berlin Conference** (1885), the whole Africa succumbed to the occupation of European powers.



3rd STAGE
FROM THE
1990s UNTIL
PRESENT

Even when the countries in Africa are officially seen as independent, **economic and political dependencies** continue in different forms.





Decolonialisation or anti-colonialism

- “Recognizing that the peoples of the world ardently desire the end of colonialism in all its manifestations ... Solemnly proclaims the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations”
- UN Declaration on Decolonialism (1961). Available at: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instree/c1dgiccp.htm>

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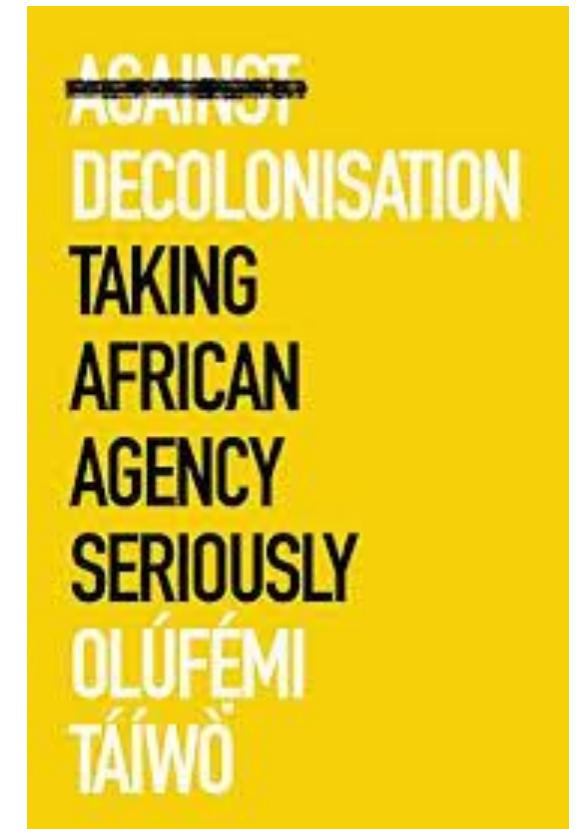
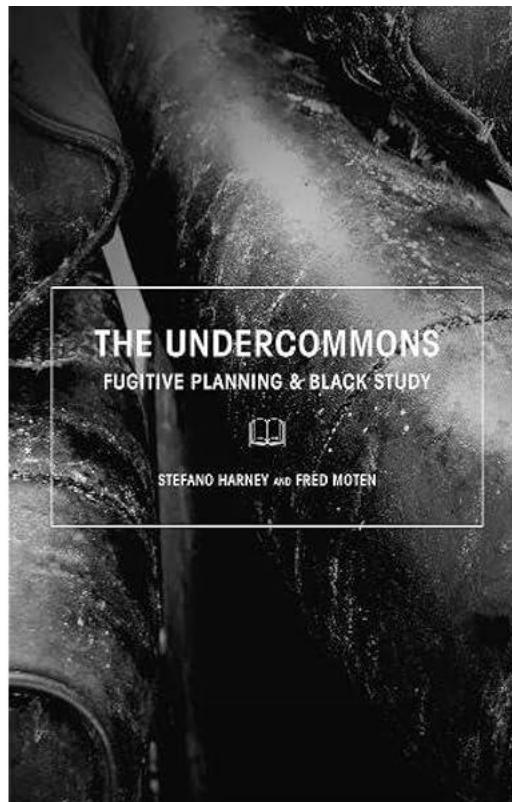
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Institutionalising the project of decolonisation



Decoloniality and reparations



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United States

Harvard sets up \$100 million endowment fund for slavery reparations

By Michela Moscufo

April 26, 2022 6:33 PM GMT+1 · Updated 2 years ago



Students and pedestrians walk through the Yard at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S., March 10, 2020. REUTERS/Brian Snyder/File Photo [Purchase Licensing Rights](#)

Slavery

• This article is more than 4 years old

Glasgow University to pay £20m in slave trade reparations

Institution believed to be first British university to set up restorative justice scheme



One of Glasgow University's former rectors was Robert Cunningham Graham, who spent two decades in the Caribbean making his fortune as a slaver. Photograph: Kay Roxby/Alamy

Glasgow University is to pay £20m in reparations to atone for its historical links to the transatlantic slave trade in what the University of West Indies has described as a "bold, historic" move.

University of Bristol

• This article is more than 5 months old

Bristol University decides not to rename buildings linked to slavery

Institution will remove Edward Colston's insignia from its logo and set up £10m racial inequalities fund



Bristol University's Wills Memorial Building has been the focus of student protests in recent years. Photograph: Adrian Sherratt/Alamy

The [University of Bristol](#) has decided against retitling its buildings that are named after people with links to the transatlantic slave trade, but has pledged £10m to help address racial inequalities over the next decade.

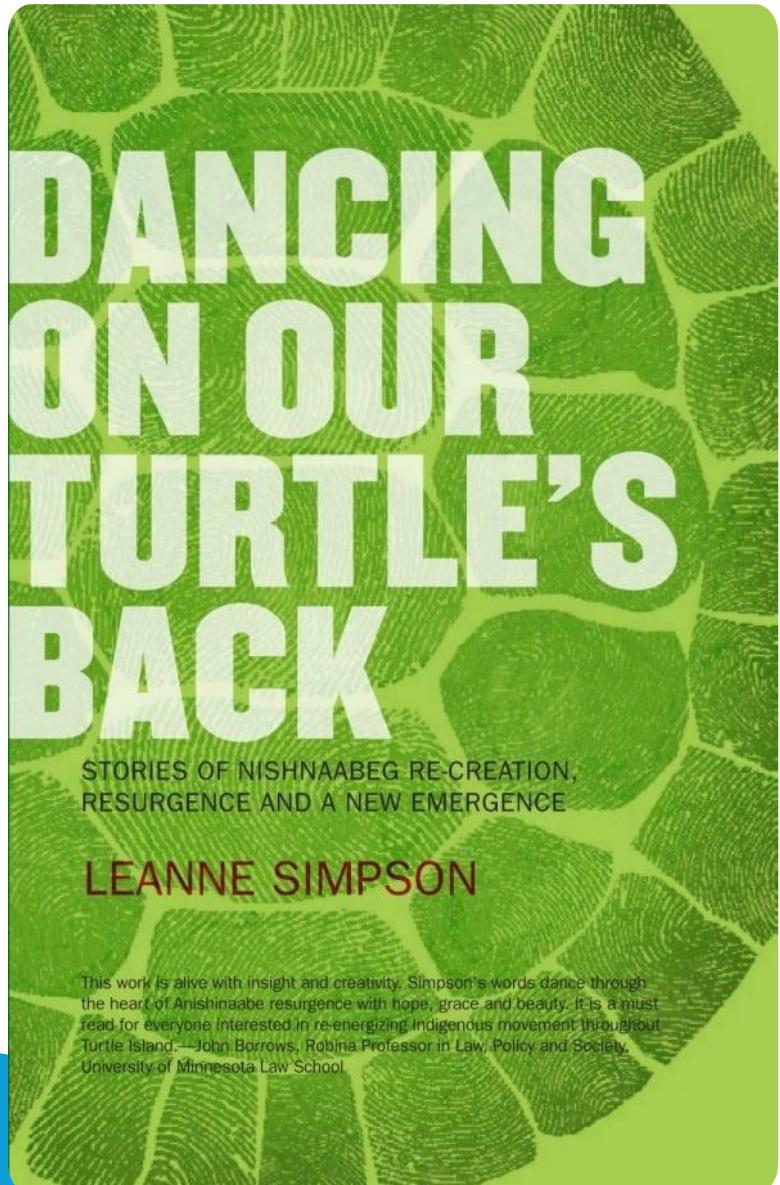
Sally Weale
Education correspondent

Tue 28 Nov 2023 15.20 GMT



Decolonisation and Identity Politics

- “Colonialism hardly ever exploits the whole of a country. It contents itself with bringing to light the natural resources, which it extracts, and exports to meet the needs of the mother country's industries, thereby allowing certain sectors of the colony to become relatively rich. But the rest of the colony follows its path of under-development and poverty, or at all events sinks into it more deeply.” (Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*)
- “Pericles on Democracy, Paine on the Rights of Man, the Declaration of Independence, the Communist Manifesto, these are some of the political documents which, whatever the wisdom or weaknesses of their analysis, have moved men and will always move them, for the writers, some of them despite themselves, strike chords and awaken aspirations that sleep in the hearts of the majority in every age” (C.L.R James, 1989, p197 – *Black Jacobins*.)



Conclusion

- I am not so concerned with how we dismantle the master's house, that is, which sets of theories we use to critique colonialism; I have spent enough time taking down the master's house, and now I want most of my energy to go into envisioning and building our new house (Simpson, 2011 p20)."