

**Agri/cultural Practices  
for Climate Justice:  
anti-racism, arts and  
ecologies -  
an experimental  
workshop guidebook**  
by Mojisola Adebayo  
and Nicole Wolf

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*'Are you interested in fighting racism and addressing climate injustice?*

*Would you like to explore how theatre, art practices and agroecology can work together? Are you Black, of African or Asian descent, an Indigenous person or Person of Colour, from a migration background or a white person actively committed to anti-racism?*

*If so - read on!'*

Welcome! This was the call-out, inviting participants to apply for the Agri/cultural Practices for Climate Justice: Anti-Racism, Arts and Ecologies Workshops, a series of three 4-day residential workshops (plus follow-up online talks). It is also our invitation to you! This workshop guide has arisen directly from our practical workshops. Here, we share our detailed workshop plans and facilitation notes with you, with examples from and reflections on, our work with participants. In this brief introduction, we outline some of the questions, starting points and conceptual thinking behind the Agri/cultural Practices for Climate Justice workshops, we then highlight who this guidebook is for, before going on to suggest how you might use it in your own anti-racist climate justice arts work.

## Framing questions

What might constitute anti-colonial relations to land and to cultivation practices? What is needed for anti-racist environmentalism, for processes, strategies and contexts that work towards climate justice? And how could all of this be derived from acknowledging the many different relations, associations and kinds of access to land, to soil, to grounds, to gardens, to rural sites, to agri/cultural knowledge and practices and crucially to very different experiences of past and present structural racism and violence? What embodied, collaborative ways of being and exploring on and with grounds could support the work towards repair and reparation, without solutions that forget the embeddedness of agriculture in racialised violence? What methodologies, what modes of inquiry do we need? How might we apply theatre games, exercises, improvisation and performance techniques, to learning and developing agroecology principles, designing spaces and engaging in debate and exchange about environmental racism? Can theatre enable us to rehearse for change, in relation to climate in/justice?

These are just some of the questions and political urgencies that form the background and drove the development of the experimental methodologies for Agri/cultural Practices for Climate Justice, a practice-as-research workshop model that we, Mojisola, a Black British theatre artist who trained in Theatre of the Oppressed and Nicole, a *white* German visual cultures scholar who also trained in Permaculture, initiated at Prinzessinnengarten in Berlin, 2019 and further developed at a site in rural Brandenburg, between 2022 and 2024.

What is still work-in-progress and a shared journey with many companions on the path, began as a casual conversation between us, noticing some of the similarities in approach of Theatre of the Oppressed and Permaculture. Although distinct disciplines, Theatre of the Oppressed and Permaculture are both evolving collections of principles and practical techniques, which aim to be inclusive and accessible, where the focus is on raising questions and finding solutions to problems, where critical observation (with all senses) is foregrounded and which can be applied/adapted to diverse contexts. Both fields, although extensively drawn from and informed by grassroots, Black and Indigenous communities, are often problematically attributed to *white* men (Augusto Boal in the case of Theatre of the Oppressed and Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the case of Permaculture). Our enthusiasm for these fields as well as our criticism towards them, inspired our conversations in equal ways.

## Starting points

We start with Permaculture, a term derived from permanent agriculture and permanent culture and defined as a sustainable design system, which works from three main ethics: Earth care - People care - Fair share. We appreciate Permaculture's non-anthropocentric approach that begins from attuned and multi-sensory observation, its enquiries into diverse environmental, (including social, political and economic) perspectives and the attention to patterns of relations and companionships in nature, that can be replicated for designing, building and sustaining multi-species ecosystems. We acknowledge Permaculture's system approach to design diverse, mutually beneficial and resilient relations that support *permanent* agriculture to ensure *permanent* culture, while questioning the very concept of *permanence* as a need and being wary of possible power structures within it. We are aligned with Permaculture, which works through a set of principles and techniques - rather than rules - that are adaptable. In this way, the principles and techniques respond to change and are arguably creatively speculative, keeping the design for co-existence of all species as their aim. We, however, also noticed many occasions where Permaculture is linked to *white* male practitioners who had the means to internationally distribute knowledge and practices that they originally observed from Indigenous communities, without these sources always being explicitly named or their livelihoods and struggles actively supported, leading to unacknowledged appropriation and continued practices of extraction. We were furthermore not surprised that *whiteness* structures how Permaculture knowledge is



systematised, who Permaculture theories and practices are attributed to and how access privileges white middle-class people who can afford to train in Permaculture, at least in the European context. We felt that active anti-racist and anti-colonial work towards climate justice as irrevocable practice was not evident.

Theatre of the Oppressed (often called theatre for social change, theatre for development, theatre for liberation etc.) is a collection of games, exercises, rehearsal and performance techniques including Image Theatre and Forum Theatre, that are informed and inspired by the dialogic participatory educational methodology of Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) and practically developed, systematised and published by Augusto Boal (1978). These practices grew from a Latin American context in the 1960s as a response to fascism and colonialism and in the fight for agrarian (land) reform and social justice. Since then, these techniques have been applied and developed in various community-based contexts around the world. The aim of the work is to better understand the systems that oppress us, challenge structures of power and to rehearse solutions for change and resistance. Like Permaculture, the origins of Theatre of the Oppressed have largely been attributed to a *white* middle class male (Boal) when the methods were developed collaboratively with many Black and Indigenous comrades and participants, without whom the methods would never have been set down. Furthermore, like Permaculture, many of the training courses offered are prohibitively expensive.<sup>1</sup>

Our appreciation of the immense potential of both fields, their similarities in their concerns, ethics, principles and techniques as well as our shared critique towards how they often circulated, led us to experiment with bringing these two forms of engagement together, to complement and critique each other. The fact that Theatre of the Oppressed arose from land reform struggles and as a response to fascism and colonialism opened a pathway to combine its theories and practices with those of Permaculture. Our practice is an attempt both to struggle against climate injustice and also to root that struggle in a critique of environmental racism, extractive capitalism and the histories and presents of the colonial plantation system.<sup>2</sup> In this we follow, are inspired by, are in kinship with and support many other active groups and contexts who work towards these aims. We are just two of many people doing this kind of work. (Also see the resources section at the end.)

<sup>1</sup> If you are interested in training in Theatre of the Oppressed, through a Black feminist approach, we recommend working with Bárbara Santos at Kuringa, Berlin. See: <https://kuringa.de/de/kuringa/> last accessed 31.10.2024.

<sup>2</sup> For some of the writing that informs our workshop see Bhattacharya (2018), Casid (2005), Ferdinand (2021), McKittrick (2011), Liboiron (2021), Wynter (1971), Yusoff (2018).

## Concepts, wants, methods

Conceptually, we wanted to consider a question posed by feminist scholar Françoise Vergès:

'What methodology is needed to write a history of the environment that includes slavery, colonialism, imperialism and racial capitalism, from the standpoint of those who were made into "cheap" objects of commerce, their bodies as objects renewable through wars, capture, and enslavement, fabricated as disposable people, whose lives do not matter?' (2017: 73)

Following this query for methodology and combining and critiquing Permaculture and Theatre of the Oppressed, we wanted to:

- Put climate injustice, environmental racism, the effects of racial and extractive capitalism and settler colonialism - their violence towards human bodies, soil, resources, land and communities - at the foreground of our performative workshop practice, to make it the very focus of our methodology rather than assuming this would be naturally 'covered' by the Permaculture ethics.
- Address the implications of how tool kits for design practices such as Permaculture are themselves perpetuating a logic of extractivism - understood in this context as extraction of knowledge from agricultural practices that existed as a conceptual base, also for social and political organising patterns, long before the term Permaculture existed.

- Consider how our practice can stand in active solidarity with the urgent work done by Indigenous communities, such as women farmers in Latin America, who are right now cultivating seeds that are adaptable to the climate chaos they did not create and who continue to be criminalized for their seed activism, opposing seed regulations that privilege the commercialisation of seeds through global companies such as Monsanto and Bayer.

- Ensure that the knowledge we gain and share in our workshops is always in service of anti-racist struggle. For Nicole and other white practitioners and participants to explore how to become, as Noel Igantiev and John Garvey propose, traitors to whiteness (1996) to break down the patterns of *white* supremacy we observe.<sup>3</sup>

- Work towards different forms of outcomes and encompass different forms of articulation. This includes developing accessible and transferable workshop concepts that can be adapted by others, expanding design methods for gardens in both urban and rural areas for those with little or no access to land, collective reading sessions and the creation of new artistic work, for example in writing a play (Mojisola's play *Family Tree*, 2023)

<sup>3</sup> We see this connected to Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's work on breakdown, e.g.: 'Future Ecologies: Compounds, Breakdown, Reparation', Podcast with Maria Puig de la Bellacasa and Dimitris Papadopoulos, HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin, Germany, April 21, 2021.

*Family Tree* (Adebayo, 2023), the play, originally produced by Actors Touring Company (UK), was informed by learning from the Agri/cultural Practices workshop process. *Family Tree* explores extraction from Black women's bodies through the true story of Henrietta Lacks and her immortal cells. Addressing the extraction of cells, of labour and knowledge, the play culminates in the burial of *white* supremacy and the deification of Henrietta Lacks, with music and dancing and fire and feasting! The audience are offered a bowl of Ital stew, a traditional Rastafarian vegan recipe from Jamaica, drawn from Black and Indigenous knowledge about companion planting, nutrition and nourishment.

#### Furthermore, we wanted:

- A method and practice aiming at repairing past injustices whilst not forgetting their continued afterlives. Rather than perceiving of our practices as taking a solutionary approach (as which Permaculture is often termed) we follow Christina Sharpe by acknowledging our practices as located 'in the wake' of 'the still unfolding aftermath' of slavery and plantation culture that makes anti-black racism the normative ground on which Black people stand and we reflect on the implications of this for land based work. (Sharpe, 2016: 1-22).

- A method and practice that could share 'risking the passion for the land' in the words of Édouard Glissant (1997: 151). Thus, we stress the importance Permaculture gives to feeding the soil for earthly survival, while relating to soil as a historical site and matter through which diverse human bodies have been racialised, traumatised and violated by way of forced labour on plantations, provision grounds and creole gardens.

- Methods and practices of cultivation, that would not reproduce the logic of the plantation cultures but instead undermine the very system of settler colonialism, expanding on possibilities of design and agri/cultural practices as fugitive, migratory practices.

- Methods and practices that would acknowledge and actively address the specific structural elements and experiences of environmental injustice engendered through discriminations based on caste, class, colourism, gender, sexuality, religion and other forms that might often be neglected.

- A performative method that would include diverse embodied and artistic approaches for greater accessibility.

Moreover, we wanted to develop workshops free of charge for Black people, Indigenous people and People of Colour and to include a smaller number of *white* participants who are actively committed to anti-racism and who take part on a donation basis.

## Who is this guidebook for?

We have outlined some of the things that we wanted as we set out to develop the Agri/cultural Practices for Climate Justice Workshops. If you share some of these wants and you are Black, Indigenous, a Person of Colour, or a *white* facilitator or educator actively challenging racism in your work and personal life, if you are interested in delving into some of the questions and concepts outlined in this introduction and you are seeking practical creative methods to address racism and climate injustice through the arts - then this guidebook is for you!

**If you are *white*** and you have not addressed issues arising from *whiteness* in your professional and personal life, you are welcome to read this guide, however, we recommend that you increase your knowledge, insight, empathy and skills in these areas first and do some self-reflective and politically engaged work, before applying this workshop methodology. There are many books, resources, courses and organisations out there to support you and it is not the aim of this guide to point you in all those directions. However, you could begin by working through *Exit Racism* (Olette, 2017) and *White Supremacy and Me* (Saad, 2020).

You might be a theatre or arts facilitator, teacher and/or have experience with Permaculture, Agroecology, farming or gardening as you begin this process. **You do not have to be an expert**, indeed, we resist the idea of the individual, colonial, patriarchal, hierarchal, top-down model of learning and teaching. There are books on Permaculture, Agroecology, theatre for social change and workshop facilitation which could be very useful to support you if some of this is new for you (see Adebayo, Martin and Mehta 2011, Boal 1992, Kupperts 2007, Preston 2016, Morrow 2006 and 2014, Penniman 2018).<sup>4</sup> This guidebook does not provide an introductory course in Agroecology or Permaculture itself and it will not teach you in detail, how to facilitate a theatre workshop. This book mainly functions as a space to share our emerging methodology and is intended to be supplemented by other resources (see **References, further reading, resources** at the end of the book).

<sup>4</sup> Organisations which offer different levels of training in Permaculture are: Permakultur Akademie Germany, Permaculture Association UK, 12 Principles Permaculture Design, and many more internationally.

We realise that if you have not run many workshops or taught before, the idea of doing so might feel intimidating. We encourage you to go for it anyway! Mojisola had little experience of Permaculture when starting these experimental workshops with Nicole and similarly Nicole had many years teaching experience but had not facilitated theatre workshops before. When Mojisola started running theatre workshops she used to do it by holding Boal's *Games for Actor's and Non-Actors* (1992) in one hand and reading the instructions aloud to participants in her living room. Let's demystify the idea of who can facilitate. Do some background reading, participate in workshops and courses where you can and most of all, work with at least one other person. **We recommend doing this work in collaboration with others** so that you can share knowledge and experience between you.

Agri/cultural Practices was and is very much a collaboration between Nicole and Mojisola, led by curiosity and openness to trying something new. We also reached out to people whom we knew and respected and asked them to work with us to develop this practice. In the same way, we encourage you to reach out to culturally diverse facilitators, with different skills, experiences, identities and backgrounds, so that you can support each other's practice and so that participants can be better supported by you. See Part Five for information about the guest facilitators and contributors who worked with us during this process.

It could be useful to have people in your team who are experienced at dealing with emotional issues and conflicts, as the work can bring up big feelings and group work is always a challenge. We also recommend that you have a supervision process to support you.

### **How to use this workshop guide:**

#### **It's an experiment**

The Agri/cultural Practices for Climate Justice workshops began very much as an experiment and they are still in a developmental phase. We had overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants about our methodology, so we feel confident to share our experimental processes with you. In each Part of the book, we share our workshop plans in ways that are hopefully clear enough for you to take and use in your own work. However, treat the work as experimental, try the sessions and exercises, adapt them to suit the needs of your group, play with the methodology and do feel free to let us know how it goes! We are consciously de-systematizing fields of knowledge that have been systematised, we question practices without having new answers, we keep reflecting on what we do and do not see this as a closed process and at the same time we hope that we can add something to the many valuable practices out there.

#### **Where and when**

You can apply the methodology outside or inside or with a combination of both, though working on a site that you would like to develop into a green or cultivated space, would be ideal. We have worked in urban and rural gardens, community arts centres and in university classrooms. The sessions we describe in this book took place over three residential weekend workshops, from Thursday late afternoon until Sunday late afternoon, over three seasons: Autumn (October), Spring (April) and early Summer (June), making use of a spacious and adaptable seminar room, the surrounding garden and countryside, in a village in Brandenburg, outside Berlin, which felt safe for Black people and People of Colour. We arranged transportation from the train stations. We would have liked to transport people directly from Berlin and we would recommend looking into transportation if you are working rurally, to avoid encounters with white-supremacists on the train. Sadly, we had one such experience with racists and this is of course, to be avoided. We were able to use the workshops to address this aspect of environmental racism.

We found working in different seasons to be beneficial for the work, specifically in relation to observation exercises, practical work in the garden and preparing for actual design work. Being residential meant we could work deeply and into the evenings and the rural location enabled us to work on the land. However, we appreciate that your context could be completely different. Whatever constellation and context you are working in, you can take our sessions, apply and adapt them in your own ways.

#### **Timing**

Most sessions that we share in this guidebook are 90 minutes in duration (the first welcome session is longer), so this is the minimum time you will need per session. We indicate approximate time lengths for each game or exercise but this will depend on the size of your group. Of course, you do not need to do all the sessions that we share here, however, you will need to do at least three to four 90 minute sessions (plus breaks) to establish a group and start to address the topics. The more time the better of course. Apply what is useful and possible for your work. We appreciate that your workshops may take place in a different time frame than weekends, you might be just working for an intense day, over weekly sessions or an intensive week - that is all fine. We have also run one day workshops, two-day workshops and two evening workshops, using the same methodology. Whatever your time frame, we recommend that you work sequentially. Do not skip the preparatory stages - start with Part One. See our example workshop schedules in the appendices at the end of this book, to give you a sense of how we fit all the sessions together. You are of course, welcome to mix and combine our methods with your own. Be aware that many exercises, particularly those where people offer personal sharings, are deliberately

short, so as to keep personal sharings boundaried. Many exercises are also quick, so that people do not intellectualise too much but think, in action, with their bodies, thereby unlocking their creative expression and avoiding the internal censor and critic.

However, embodied playful sessions are often planned next to more discussion focused sessions, group work or individual reflective sessions, where more time can be given for verbal exchange, to think through issues and questions that arise and to process in other ways. We found that the combination of different kinds of engagement works very well; the diversity of forms of collaborative learning is deliberately utilised.<sup>5</sup>

In the following we add markers on the side to indicate whether sessions are **theatre based**, **discursive**, **applied** and/or **gardening**, while the mode of engagement can change within one session.

### The group

We worked with a group of around 18 adults for the residential workshops and this felt like the optimal group size for our work. However, the exercises and sessions we describe in this guidebook can be used with a minimum of five people and a maximum of 30. Our group was culturally and linguistically diverse with different needs and we found that the exercises could be adapted and played with to be accessible for all. Participants came with a variety of backgrounds with regards to environmental justice work as well as body work and other creative practices. There were no specific requirements other than a commitment to the work and its ethos over the duration of the three workshops. In the case of applicants who are *white*, we wanted to know if they are actively engaged in a process of critical *whiteness*.

However, we sent a short questionnaire to all applicants to understand why they wanted to do the workshop, which also helped us to better understand the group before we started. Do adapt and adjust the exercises to suit your own participants.

### The chapters

In **Part One**, we offer our session plans with descriptions of exercises alongside our detailed notes, which aim to prepare the ground for deeper group work. We also share exercises and tasks that might recur such as check ins, solo observations, Each One Teach One sessions and sequences of practical exercises for welcoming a group that you might come back to time and again, if you are working with a group more than once. You can keep coming back to Part One to get ideas for beginnings, as you are planning your own workshops.

In **Part Two**, we move on to sharing how we introduce the idea of learning about Agroecology and Permaculture through embodied games and exercises from Theatre of the Oppressed, as well as developing the concept of environmental racism and racist environmentalism together with the group. We also offer the session plans we used to get participants engaged in critical reading and reflective creative practices such as writing, drawing, sketching, mapping, photography or movement work. In Part Two we share how we introduce the idea of analysing a site and beginning a process of Permaculture informed design. We also offer a short section with suggestions of ways to deal with conflict in a group and ways to think of the cycle of a group's work together.

**Part Three** should only be used as a follow on from Part Two, as these sessions build on the ones before. In Part Three, the sessions go deeper into anti-colonial thinking through expressive and embodied practice, exploring power relations in relation to design and crucially, unlearning colonial practices such as zoning and mapping.

In **Part Four**, we share our ways of using Image Theatre and Forum Theatre (two sets of techniques from Theatre of the Oppressed) to challenge environmental racism and racist environmentalism and group tasks for designing spaces for climate justice by applying our learning

<sup>5</sup> Following an invitation we facilitated a two-day workshop in Thrissur (Kerala, India) in the context of a theatre school festival. Participants joined from many different linguistic contexts and we developed questions together, shared experiences and worked on solutions through Forum Theatre scenes, achieving deep engagements with climate injustice, without sharing one spoken language.

from Part Three. We also share ideas for expanding the Permaculture ethics, principles and design objectives. In Part Four, we also suggest ways in which participants might share their group work, ways of closing and brief notes on evaluation.

In [Part Five](#), we draw your attention to the importance of guest facilitators and other companions and provide information about their expertise. We suggest films that are suitable for optional evening events. We conclude the book with some questions and considerations that could be useful if you work with the presented methodology in the future. At the end of the book, you will find suggestions for further reading and resources.

What is crucial is that **the people are more important than the workshop plan**. The method lives with and from the participating people. Listen to participants, observe them and adapt the work with them to suit their access and other needs. This means you might put in more breaks, exercises might be done more quietly or slowly than we describe here, exercises might be done sitting down, exercises might be audio-described for people who are visually impaired, trigger warnings might be incorporated, sign-language might be integrated, children might be included – there are a multitude of ways of adapting the work to suit the people. Be prepared to be flexible and open to change. In whichever ways you use this resource, we hope it is enjoyable and enriching for you, your collaborators and participants in the fight against racism through artistic expression towards climate justice for us all! Good luck and let us know how it goes!

# PART ONE: PREPARING THE GROUND - INTRODUCTORY AND RECURRING SESSIONS

In this Chapter, we share what we ask participants to bring with them or do in advance of the workshop, how we set-up the working space, our session plans for welcoming a group (and welcoming them back), recurring exercises and tasks that we come back to again and again and how we prepare the ground and lay the foundations for deeper work in Part Two.



## WELCOME

### Before the workshop

Participants are asked to bring the following items with them:

- An object or seeds of significance to place on the alter (alternative altar)
- Books or other materials for resource sharing
- Clothes, footwear and gloves for all weathers and for work on the ground
- A notebook and pen / note taking device
- Suntan lotion and natural insect repellent if we are working in Summer
- A water bottle and snacks (we usually make sure nourishing culturally diverse food and drinks are provided by the host)

We give **preparatory readings and tasks**. These are not absolutely necessary and can be adjusted according to the group.

### Examples are:

**Walking and writing exercise** where we are sharing Carole Wright's text 'Walking whilst being Blak outside' (2020) as a prompt. We ask participants to read the text and invite them to walk / move in their own neighbourhood and respond through reflective, experimental, poetic writing or any form of note taking that suits them.

**Observation and site analysis exercise** where we ask participants to choose a site/space that they go to every day, or a site that they can have an effect on, even if this effect might seem small. This place could be their windowsill, their balcony, their garden, a patch on the side of the road that they pass often, or an allotment. Alternatively, they can choose a space further away but that they would like to spend more time in in the future, or it might be an imagined space. We encourage participants to give this observation exercise a slice of time each day, even if in passing and ask them to make notes, in writing, drawing, sketching, mapping, through photographs or in your mind, that they can share during the first evening of the workshop. (See also our adapted instructions for site analysis and observation tasks below.)

### Setting up the space

We generally use any clear, open, bright, uncluttered, adaptable and accessible space, inside or outside, with an even surface, free of carpet or obstructions on the ground. There is a circle of moveable seats / spaces. As facilitators, we face the entrance so that we can welcome any late comers. The codes for work are written up on a board or hung up on paper or a cloth. There is also a chalkboard or whiteboard available. There is a table covered with a cloth and materials (see list below) as well as relevant books for all to share.

There is another table area, also covered with a special cloth which is used as the alter (alternative altar) onto which participants can place objects, books and seeds of significance, or things that are sacred to them in relation to our topic, that they have been invited to bring with them. The alter is an important part of acknowledging and creating space for the individual spiritual, cultural and political backgrounds of the participants, in relation to climate justice work. The facilitator's objects are also on the alter, which for us includes a candle, a wooden carving with a candle in memory of enslaved peoples, the First Principles of Environmental Justice and a Black Lives Matter solidarity statement by the Black Permaculture Network.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the Black Permaculture Network see: [www.pandorathomas.com/black-permaculture-network](http://www.pandorathomas.com/black-permaculture-network), last accessed 31.10.2024. Also see: Leah Penniman, 2018. *Farming While Black: Soul Fire Farm's Practical Guide to Liberation on the Land* (White River Junction, VT und London: Chelsea Green Publishing). Leah Penniman 2023. *Black Earth Wisdom. Soulful Conversations with Black Environmentalists*. New York: Harper Collins.



There is welcoming music playing as people enter the space that reflects the cultural background of some of the participants and facilitators. Be mindful that the lyrics are non-violent and not offensive or use instrumental music. If possible, there is a facility to use projection or a laptop. Participants leave their coats, bags and phones etc. away from the circle. Where possible, there are separate spaces to take time-out, to talk 1-2-1, to rest, eat and for children to play with a carer.

## Check list of workshop materials

This is a list of materials that we use for various different sessions in this guidebook. You might not need all of these things, depending on which sessions you facilitate.

- ☐ These notes!
- ☐ Principles informed by Permaculture, written on cards
- ☐ Codes for working together on big paper or cloth, or reusable cards on paper
- ☐ White board marker pens and/or chalk
- ☐ Tables and cloths for materials and for an alter
- ☐ Drinking water and snacks
- ☐ A musical instrument for calling people's attention
- ☐ Soft ball
- ☐ Recycled plastic bottle
- ☐ Big paper
- ☐ Writing pens and paper
- ☐ Post-it notes in different colours
- ☐ Books, including Leah Penniman's *Farming While Black* (2018), Rosemary Morrow's *Earth User Guide to Permaculture* (2006) and Mojisola Adebayo, John Martin and Manisha Mehta's *The Theatre for Development Handbook* (2011). (See References, further reading, resources at the end of this book for more).
- ☐ Laptop with music, speaker and charger
- ☐ Projector connector and links all set up for viewings
- ☐ Ball of string
- ☐ Schedule print outs
- ☐ Principles of Environmental Justice and Black Lives Matter statement printed for alter
- ☐ Readings / quotations / writing prompts printed out
- ☐ adapted site analysis prompts and Starhawk's *Nine Ways of Observing*
- ☐ Creative writing examples from the facilitators including *Family Tree* by Mojisola Adebayo (2023)
- ☐ Toys and drawing materials for any children
- ☐ Objects to enable people to concentrate e.g. stress balls, colouring pads and pens
- ☐ A small empty suitcase
- ☐ A sweeping broom
- ☐ Seven chairs which look the same and a table (desk or dining kind of table)
- ☐ A Peters Projection map
- ☐ White chalk, tape or a rope to make a line on the ground
- ☐ Suntan lotion
- ☐ Natural insect repellent

This list is not exhaustive. Add or take away things according to your needs.

After leaving time for arrivals and informal welcome with music playing, we turn the music off, signalling the start of the workshop. Here is a workshop plan below. Key words are highlighted in bold for ease of reading whilst facilitating.

- **Welcome!**
- **Language check** - who needs translation? Negotiate how translation works with the group. What is important is that people feel free to speak in the language that is best for them, as far as possible.
- Brief welcome to **the space** and any practical things we need to know, from **the venue host**.
- **Ball of string exercise** (around 1 minute per person)<sup>7</sup>: Share your **name** and **pronoun**, how you prefer to be addressed; something or someone you love and **where you are coming from** (not necessarily the geographic location), whilst holding the ball of string. For instance: 'My name is Mojisola, you can call me "Moj", I love the sea and I come from theatre for social change'); then raise your hand to receive the **string** when you hear something that **connects to you**. Keep hold of the string throughout the exercise.
- **Observe** the interconnected pattern made by the string crossing different points in the circle. Briefly **reflect** on how this connects with the work we are doing this weekend (Agroecology/Permaculture, anti-racism, theatre – systems thinking, acknowledging the multiple relations through which we are connected, while acknowledging our different positionalities, creating designs to build on mutually beneficial relations).
- **Overall aims** of the workshop:
  - To provide a critical introduction to Agroecology and sustainable design ethics and principles, partly referred to as Permaculture (permanent culture/agriculture), through games and exercises from theatre for social change and techniques such as Theatre of the Oppressed.
  - To foreground anti-racism, climate justice, decolonization, work against power structures and to start from acknowledging the link between colonialism and environmental crises – including the appropriation of Indigenous and Black knowledges of farming practices and relations to land and species, in order to work towards challenging environmental racism, racist environmentalism and green colonialism.
  - To share creative writing and give space for new artistic expression in response to text-based prompts relevant to climate justice.
  - To all share knowledge and experiences.
  - To develop ideas for conscious designs for the space we are in.
- **Read and contextualise Amitav Ghosh's quote, from *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016)**  
 We found this quote inspiring and thought it could be useful to share:  
 'For let us make no mistake: the climate crisis is also a crisis of culture, and thus of the imagination' (2016: 9).  
 One aim in this workshop is to apply our imaginations to the question of climate justice, through mind and body. Ghosh argues that European Modernity's distancing of ourselves from nature as observable in the development of modern novel writing, where nature becomes a backdrop, controlled and managed by human species, obstructs those who are seemingly not affected yet **to be able to imagine the climate crises**. To counter the climate crises also **entails creating narratives that enable imagining ourselves being part of "nature" (again)**.
- **Our aim now**: is to introduce the workshop, talk through the schedule, respond to questions and requests. Before we go further, it might be useful to have a brief insight into two terms we have used and who we, the facilitators, are.

<sup>7</sup> All timings are approximate and vary according to a group's needs.

- We give a brief introduction to **Permaculture** and **Theatre of the Oppressed practices and why we are critiquing and combining the two** (see Introduction).
- **Positionality - how we as facilitators relate differently to soil and 'being in nature'.** Share your own positionality. Here are ours:

**Mojisola:** I am a Black Londoner. I grew up with very little access to gardens, farms, nature etc. My relationship to soil, as a Black person, has been very ambivalent. Soil for me was dirty, something associated with slave labour, something to keep a distance from. Travelling into the English countryside was always a place where I would be confronted with racism and made to feel like a stranger - and so I felt estranged. I associated Permaculture with middle-class whiteness. I trained with Augusto Boal and spent many years working in Theatre of the Oppressed in locations and situations of conflict and crisis, including work with Cardboard Citizens homeless people's theatre, Clean Break and Pan Arts in London, England; VIDYA slum dweller's theatre company in Ahmedabad, India and Ashtar Theatre in the Occupied Palestinian Territories / Palestine. I have found Theatre of the Oppressed to be the most life changing political theatre tool kit I have ever worked with and I am enormously grateful to my teacher, Boal. However, I also struggle with the fact that Theatre of the Oppressed, like Permaculture, arises from interactions with and contributions from Black, Indigenous and working-class people that have been codified and commodified by privileged white men. So, bringing Permaculture and Theatre of the Oppressed together was not a romantic match. We were both as interested in their problems and questions as the ways in which they could complement each other.

**Nicole:** I grew up as a *white* person in a rural area in Germany, with the privilege of a baseline relation to land and soil fostered through positive experiences. I spent a lot of time playing carefree in the forest with my grandmother, picked flowers and herbs and learned seasonal changes and how to grow and use local vegetables from her. Aside from the sexual comments of a misogynist neighbour, I always felt safest in nature. Now I live with the legacy of mass graves in Germany's colonies and in Germany itself and perceive the German countryside as a very troubled site, also through accumulating experiences of witnessing racism. My privilege as a *white* European academic has allowed me to spend research time in occupied Kashmir where I engaged with highly contested and violated grounds and soil in a territory that holds the highest ratio of military in relation to land size and population. In 2014 I did a Permaculture Design certificate in Spain which inspired me and raised many questions. I further attended two Permaculture teacher trainings, including one in Srinagar (Kashmir) with Rosemary Morrow, organised by Green Kashmir. My work as a Visual Cultures scholar led me to explore Soil as Archive and think with artistic practices that engage with what anti-colonial agri/cultural practices can or might be.

- Go through **schedule** and breaks, including explaining solo observations (see below), optional evening sessions including film screenings etc. and chores (important for residential workshops).
- **The plan is not the people.** It is just a map, not the destination. What we have suggested for this workshop can change according to our needs and we will talk more about how we are going to work, after a breather.
- **Questions, queries, requests?**

### 10 minute breather

During this and all breaks, facilitators check in with each other and adjust the plan as necessary. This practice also reflects a core agroecology / Permaculture principle, to **creatively use and**

**respond to change.** Furthermore, we leave space for participant feedback along the way, which speaks to the Permaculture principle: **apply self-regulation and accept feedback**, thus applying Permaculture principles to our facilitation practice.

## ESTABLISHING A PRINCIPLED SPACE

1 hour

discursive

• **Codes of practice:** we are going to share how we create a principled space through some codes or wants - rather than 'rules'. We reference the *Building the Anti-Racist Classroom Workshop Guide* (2021):

Q: What is the difference between a safe space and principled space?

A: For us, this distinction emerged from conversations with artist and activist Hana-lei Ramos who has problematised the notion of safe space. Whilst the safe space is invoked at almost every event discussing the experiences of marginalised people, it is impossible to know how the discussions will unfold. Therefore, through instilling a safe space, one must acknowledge that it is not possible to guarantee complete safety. Instead, Ramos suggests that principled spaces are better suited to create the environments we wish to develop, we can commit to adhering to a set of principles that guide and shape the space and increase the possibility of safety for all involved.' (BARC 2021, p.5) <sup>8</sup>

Here are some of our codes, drawn from Theatre of the Oppressed, Permaculture and other training we have had. The codes are constantly evolving and are not exhaustive:

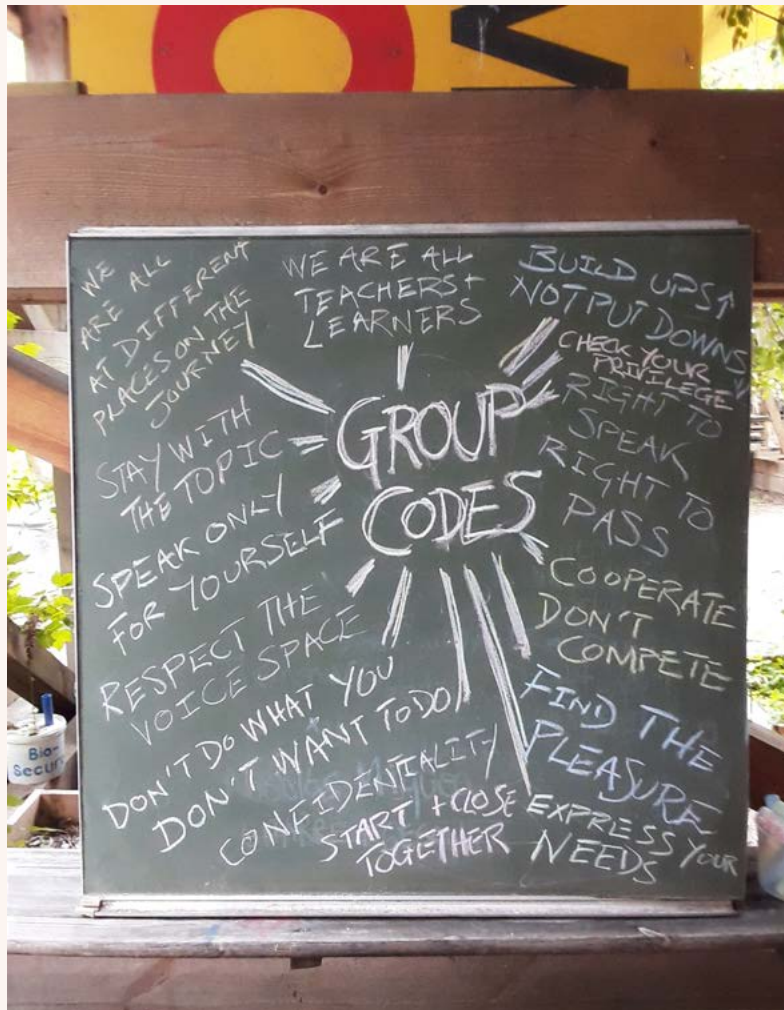
- Don't do anything you don't want to do – physically, emotionally, etc.
- Don't stop anyone else doing what they want to do (in the context of the work)
- Say if there is something you need or something people need to know
- Confidentiality - keep personal sharings in the group and in the space (no social media sharing)
- Only share personal information that you've shared with someone before
- We are all at different places on the journey
- We are all teachers and learners
- Use build ups not put downs
- Calling in, not calling out (invite people into dialogue about a problem don't publicly shame them)<sup>9</sup>
- You have the right to speak and the right to pass
- Stay with the topic
- Speak only for yourself
- Respect the voice space – make sure everyone has equal time to speak
- Use respectful language
- Check (notice and address) your privilege
- Cooperate don't compete
- No violence
- Find the pleasure
- We hold the grief
- All open questions are welcome - there are no 'wrong' open questions (why, what, how, when, where questions...)
- Keep phones asleep unless an urgent reason
- Start and close together
- Work in the spirit of *ubuntu* - the African philosophy which broadly means, I am who I am, because you are who you are. I am me through you and you are you through me. Working in *ubuntu* means having empathy, compassion, understanding, respect etc.

<sup>8</sup> BARC = Building the anti-racist classroom, Workshop Guide. Building the anti-racist classroom, 2021, Creative Commons. See [barcworkshop.org/workshop-guide/](http://barcworkshop.org/workshop-guide/) (last accessed 14.10.24).

<sup>9</sup> See Penniman (2018) on Soul Fire Farm's guideline on 'Calling in', p. 309ff.

- **Reflection on codes** – what do these codes mean to you, what do you connect with, is there anything that we want to resist or change? Reach consensus and acceptance of the codes.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See also the 13 Principles of the Black Lives Matter movement: [blacklivesmatterschool.com/13-guiding-principles.html](https://blacklivesmatterschool.com/13-guiding-principles.html), last accessed 14.010.2024.



- **Needs:** emphasise and continually repeat the importance of expressing and listening out for needs and corresponding feelings in this work. This is informed by Non-Violent Communication and is also essential in Theatre of the Oppressed and in the Permaculture ethic of caring for each other. Task: in pairs, take a minute each to share one thing you need to get the most out of the workshop, then share with the wider group. If there is something we need to know, you can also share with us privately, meet your own needs too and support each other.
- **Read** part of the **First Principles of Environmental Justice** and/ or **Black Permaculture Network Black Lives Matter solidarity statement**. We place these statements on the alter and explain what and where the alter is. We either encourage participants to bring books, seeds or special objects to place on the alter in the next session or we close the session with the participants placing items on the alter, briefly sharing the significance of what they brought with them.
- **Closing ritual: 1-2-3 clap!** We each count in sync together in one of the languages of the group and then all clap at the same time to mark that we have closed the first session together. This is a ritual we use again and again.

We now briefly indicate some of the exercises and tasks (including solo observations, check-ins and re-caps, physical and vocal warm-ups as well as eating together and chores), that recur throughout our workshops, from the preparatory stage through to the more advanced stages (described in Parts Two to Five).

## SOLO OBSERVATIONS

(30 minutes)

To 'Observe and interact' is often referred to as Permaculture's 1st principle with an emphasis on long term and continuous observation of patterns and details while acknowledging ourselves as 'in nature and transformed by it'<sup>11</sup>. Careful and repeated observation (with all senses) is fundamental if we want to work with and respond to nature. Observing social and political patterns is crucial for understanding systems of oppression. And observation is crucial for theatre and art making. We therefore encourage participants to either arrive early at the site (or to wake up early when we do residential workshops). Preferably we assign two or three slots during the day (after breakfast, after lunch, before dinner), solely dedicated to observation. Participants are asked to develop their own individual 30 minute solo observation routine, i.e. finding a specific spot on the site, to sit, stand, lie down, observing with all senses and using a preferred mode to take notes (e.g. writing, drawing, recording, photographing). Solo observations might lead to creative writing / drawing / dancing / music making / other forms of expression but they don't have to. Solo observations are a meditative practice, a time to sit and breathe and sense away from other people. We have found that having a structured time to take a break from other people is particularly useful on a residential weekend. Participants are encouraged to practise their observations at different times of the day and with workshops during different seasons, this helps to attune to daily and seasonal changes. We talk participants through this when we go through the schedule in our welcome session (see example schedule in the appendices). We give different prompts for different solo observation slots, taking inspiration from Starhawks' *Nine Ways of Observing*, and whose instructions we share with the group.<sup>12</sup> We choose modes of observation that are related to themes we will touch upon during the following sessions.

<sup>11</sup> Holmgren (2017), p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> See: [spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices/view/27968/nine-ways-of-observing](https://spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices/view/27968/nine-ways-of-observing) last accessed 14/10/2024.



## EXAMPLES OF SOLO OBSERVATION PROMPTS

- Find your observation spot or a place on the site that you can visit repeatedly. **Observe this site and its immediate surroundings with all senses.** Initially just observe, later you might start **taking notes** on your preferred mode or experimenting with different modes (e.g. writing, drawing, recording, photography).

Following Starhawks' *Nine Ways of Observing*:

- Ask yourself, "**I wonder ...**" questions. There is no need for answers, just see how many questions you can generate. "I wonder why lichen is growing on that side of the tree, only?"
- **Observing Energy.** Ask yourself, "How is energy coming into this system? How is it being exchanged?" There are many different sorts of energy you might observe: sunlight, heat, energy generated by motion of air or water, food, even psychic energy (but take time to focus on the physical before you jump to the psychic.) Also, you might try sketching your spot, or a plant in it, purely as a pattern of light and shadow. Don't worry about producing a 'good' drawing; just let it become a meditation on how light energy is intercepted by form.
- **Observing Flow.** Observe flows of all kinds. How does water move through this system? How do wind and airflow affect the area? What intercepts the flows? What marks do they leave from their passage? What is the source of these flows? How is that source replenished?
- **Observing from Stillness.** Just sit still in your spot for at least fifteen minutes – longer is better. Notice what you can see, and how that changes over time.
- **Observing Edges.** Where does one system meet another in your spot? Edges – places where forest meets meadow, or ocean meets shore – are often the most diverse and fertile parts of an ecosystem. Is that true here? How does the edge differ from the centre?
- **Observe Limits.** What limits growth here in your spot? Shade? Lack of water? Soil fertility? Other factors? How do these limiting factors make themselves evident? What is succeeding in spite of these factors? What seems held back? How have the plants and animals adapted to these limitations? What characteristics do the successful adapters have in common?
- **Observing Past and Future.** What can you observe in this spot that can tell you about its past history, and how it might have changed over time? What can you observe that tells you something about the future of this place?"

One additional observation exercise is inspired by the Zapatistas' approach to find new ways of doing things rather than following existing maps, and rehearsing this practice literally is:

- **Caminando Preguntamos / As we walk, we ask**

Take a walk, asking questions and listening. This observation is best done in pairs and with more time and can be combined with a break and slightly longer walk outside the workshop premises. It also supports participants getting to know each other.

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. [schoolsforchiapas.org](http://schoolsforchiapas.org), last accessed 14.10.2024.

## CHECK-INS AND RE-CAPS

We have found it important to regularly check-in with participants at the start of a session to see how the group is feeling and what their collective and individual needs are, in order to be responsive to change. The check-ins are sometimes themed to correspond to the work we will be doing and sometimes they relate to the solo observation prompts. The check-ins are often creatively embodied preparing the body for different kinds of expression, thus applying the Permaculture Principle of one element having many functions. We start each day with a check-in which might last 10-15 minutes (30 seconds to 1 minute per participant) but these can also be done at the beginning of a session. When need arises we give this more time.<sup>14</sup> Here are examples of check-in exercises you can use. We have found it equally important to re-cap what we have done in a session with a quick check-in at the end or the following morning.

<sup>14</sup> Sandra Passaro introduced the Café plenum in one afternoon during one workshop, as a slot dedicated to checking in how the workshop is going and whether adaptations are necessary.

- **Weather check-in (30 seconds per person)** - express how you are feeling today in terms of weather, connecting your body to the weather outside, e.g. "I am feeling cloudy but I know that the sun will come out soon", or "It's raining and I am breathing a sigh of relief". Then place yourself in the space according to your weather. The group hereby creates a spatial weather map and notices where and how everyone is at this moment. The exercise allows us to work through metaphor, maybe creating emotional distance which might feel safer for some participants. It also raises awareness towards geographical and situational differences in associations connected to weather.<sup>15</sup>
- **Soil check-in** - how is your soil today? For example, "I am feeling heavy and muddy", "I am feeling soft and sandy", "I am feeling full of life and movement". Show how your soil / feels in a movement and sound. Again, different associations can be reflected upon and a task can be to leave out value judgements.
- **Energy check-in** - how is your energy today? Show your energy in a movement and sound.
- **Movement / stretch** - show how you are feeling in a movement or a stretch, the group copies the movement.
- Regularly ask the group: are there **requests, questions or needs?**

<sup>15</sup> Thank you to Stella Barnes for this exercise which we expanded.

## EACH ONE TEACH ONE SESSIONS

As you will see from our workshop schedules (see appendices), we try to incorporate participant-led Each One Teach One sessions into our planning. We explain the idea like this:

Each One Teach One (EOTO), is an African-American proverb and principle of Black diasporic knowledge. (We will expand the Permaculture principles during this workshop and maybe the particular spirit and the source of EOTO could be one of these principles!). EOTO is a principle of community-centred collective knowledge exchange, away from the top-down, banking idea of education, as Paolo Freire called it (Freire, 1968), embracing the idea that everyone is an expert in their own lives (Boal, 1978). We also include the statement 'we are all learners and teachers' in our codes of practice but EOTO sessions give dedicated time to collective knowledge exchange. In this EOTO session we will **plan what we will each teach or share** during this workshop.

### Setting up EOTO

- **Offers call and response song** (10 mins) What would you like to offer or teach the group / project / space? Make an offer through a vocal / melodic rhythm e.g. "I can teach meditation", the group responds in rhythm "you can teach meditation", the facilitator says in rhythm, "can anybody help with that?" The next person makes an offer and so on until everyone has shared.



- Arrange participants into groups of 2 or 3 according to who has similar offers. Participants **discuss how to support each other** in making it happen. They make a quick plan (10 mins).

Or:

- Participants each take two post-it notes of two different colours. They **write down one thing to offer others and one thing they want to gain** during the workshop. Facilitators sort through the offers and wants and support the participants in organising themselves into pairs and groups to make offers. (10 mins).

Participant offers are then incorporated into the schedule of work. Examples of EOTO offers have been storytelling, leading movement warm-ups, cooking, somatic methods to reduce acute stress, methods to check your privilege etc..

## COOKING, EATING AND CHORES

Whether you are running a residential workshop, a day or over a series of evenings, cooking and or eating together can be incorporated into your planning. Climate justice is directly related to food and power. Permaculture includes the design work towards growing food, even if small scale, and rural and urban foraging practices can critically reflect on access to food, so this does not need to be seen as something separate from your work but fully integrated.<sup>16</sup> Food is cultural and personal and offering soul food i.e. food that speaks to the cultural heritage of diasporic peoples, can also be very enriching and nourishing for more than just the belly. Preparing and sharing culturally specific food together can lead to conversations over meal times that can bring up memories and exchanges about home, migration, belonging, loss and travel which can all be part of a collective learning, healing and imaginative experience for a group. (See A Food Journey in Part Five, facilitated by Mama D. Ujuaje, which highlights the relationship between food, colonialism and enslavement). Mealtimes are also important rest periods as well as times to process and take time out, which is also vital for people who experience fatigue. Make sure you leave enough time for breaks and negotiate this with your groups. Lastly, distributing tasks so that everyone helps with preparation, cleaning and other chores is also useful for group bonding and avoids this kind of labour becoming gendered or racialized.

<sup>16</sup> See Zeren Oruc's workshop series Harvesting resilience, as part of Listening to the Land, at Oyouun, Berlin (September 2023) [oyoun.de/en/unsere-arbeit/listening-to-the-land/](https://oyoun.de/en/unsere-arbeit/listening-to-the-land/) last accessed 31.10.2024.

## PRACTICAL GARDENING SESSIONS

Working together physically and with and on the land, where possible, offers important learning moments, strengthens the collective process of the group and is always a welcome activity. Practical sessions are also excellent EOTO moments, as participants can share their experiences while working and each participant can choose how they want to get involved. We have been able to include making hot composts, preparing vegetable beds, feeding the soil and young plants and planting herbs. We have also added separate practical weekends for planting or feeding young trees and shrubs. Our practical sessions have mainly been supervised by Asmelash Dagne with the support of the gardener on the site.

We also start the practical sessions on the land with a check-in and a short physical warm up, to prepare people's backs. We have introduced call and response songs alongside the practical work and participants have offered their own songs and stories.

## CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating together is an important aspect of every workshop and every group activity, during the work and, if possible, at the end, to honour the participation, the time, the diverse forms of work, joy and grief of each individual. For weekend workshops, Saturday evening can be used for celebrations that the participants can organise according to their wishes, for example, dance, music, storytelling around the fire, sauna sessions, etc..

## WELCOME BACK EXERCISES

theatre based

As our workshops took place over three weekends, there was a need to welcome the group back, each time we met. This might be different for your group. However, here are three exercises that you can use at the beginning of any session.

- **Name game. Round 1** (around 30 seconds per person): **cross the space / pass the suitcase** - be in a circle, one at a time take the small suitcase on wheels, go towards someone and say their name and give them the suitcase. Continue until everybody's name has been said. **Round 2** (maximum 1 minute per person): **Exercise - how did you arrive?** - Then, one at a time, take the suitcase again, move to somewhere in the room to signify where you came from to arrive at the workshop. Use a gesture with the suitcase and one sentence to show how you have arrived here, perhaps what you overcame to get here, how the journey has affected you... Collectively reflect on the resonances of a suitcase (e.g. migration, borders, joy, exile etc.). This exercise was especially important to use as Black and Indigenous people and People of Colour who might be bringing difficult experiences with them from the journey out of the city or the country they live in. **Round 3** (maximum 1 minute per person): **Exercise - what are you bringing?** Symbolically take two things out of the suitcase that you are bringing here, let this be **1 thing you want to give** and **anything else you are bringing** that is useful for us to know - e.g. knowledge you want to share, a wish, an offer, a concern etc. This sequence can also be done without a physical suitcase.

- **Greetings exercise.** All at the same time, everyone gently crosses the space and greets someone, remaining in physical contact with them (e.g. a handshake, fist bump, elbow to elbow - whatever people feel comfortable with) whilst sharing three things: 1) sharing your name, 2) a desire that you have for the workshop 3) anything you need to enable you to participate in the workshop. We all do this quickly but we do not break the physical contact with the person we are greeting until we have both connected with one other person. No one should have a moment in the exercise where they are not connected to someone (1 minute x the number of people in your group). Facilitators join in the exercise so we hear all of the needs and desires. Take down quick notes of anything very significant, after the exercise. Check, are there **any other needs and desires** that people want to share that they didn't say in the greetings exercise? You can also come to us 1-2-1.

- **Name game. Round 1** (30 seconds per person): **with a broom - cross the space, say your name, sweep away** the dust you don't need from **the past** (both real dust and symbolic - share what this is if you want to), **make a pathway** to another person and **say their name** e.g. "my name is Mojisola, I am sweeping away the racial stress of the job I have just left and I am handing the broom to Nicole". "My name is Nicole and I am sweeping away the tension that came from anticipating witnessing racism on the train journey here." This continues until everyone who wants to has done the exercise. **Round 2: how did you arrive? - take the broom and show us how you arrived** (physically, emotionally). **Round 3:** use the broom in any way you like (it is not a broom anymore) to **demonstrate one action** that you would like to take in this

workshop or as a result of this workshop e.g. My broom becomes a tree I would like to plant in memory of my ancestor who survived enslavement.”

**Reflection:** Here we have been applying Permaculture principles of renewing and re-using objects and using one thing for multiple functions. In theatre, we can do the same.

As facilitators we take down quick notes in a break so we can incorporate what we learn from the group as they arrive, into further planning.

# PART TWO:

## COLLECTING AND SOWING SEEDS - BASIS SESSIONS

It is important that the areas addressed in Part One above are covered before the work we now go on to describe. In Part Two, we share our session plans which use simple introductory games and exercises drawn from Theatre of the Oppressed and other theatre for social change techniques to initiate an embodied sense of the overall ethos and approach entailed in Permaculture and agroecological principles and techniques. Our aim is to then build on these, both in terms of actual landscape design and working on strategies towards climate justice, seeking to integrate both.

**Please note:** we do not aim to strictly and exhaustively follow the Permaculture principles and techniques as they have been written down by others and we adapt Theatre of the Oppressed games and exercises as well.

As you will see from our example schedules in the appendices, we were taken on a Food Journey by Mama D. Ujuaje in our first weekend workshop and we also had several contributions from Asmelash Dagne on Permaculture during the series of workshops described here and in Part Three. See more on Asmelash and Mama D. in Part Five.

## INTRODUCING AGROECOLOGY / PERMACULTURE ETHICS AND PRINCIPLES THROUGH GAMES AND EXERCISES FROM THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

(1,5 hours)

theatre based

Quick check in (5 mins)

Warm up (approx 25 mins)

**Please note:** the workshop is **multisensory** and uses our bodies and **touch** – please let us know at any point if there is something you cannot or do not want to do. We aim at an **inclusive accessible** group experience where everyone can participate in everything, so **we can always adjust any exercise**. You can also take a break at any point if you need to.

• **Space orientation exercise.** As quickly as possible, go and touch or point to e.g. 3 different leaves, 5 wooden things, 4 edges, 3 metal things, 3 plastic things, 2 different smells, 2 edible things, 2 soft things, 2 hard things, something you could hurt yourself on and if you see something unsafe, make it safe. We connect this exercise to the primary principle of **observing and interacting**. The idea that observation takes up approx. **80%** of Permaculture practice and interaction just **20%**, is stressed. Observation and interaction exist in a continuous cycle so as to co-create spaces and practices with the conditions already there, rather than ignoring or overriding what exists. Observation respects all seasons, times of day, weather, the patterns and relations and potential of a site; we observe with all the senses that we have, we observe material and immaterial aspects, what plants and animals are already present, what is tangible, under the surface, remembered in the body, the soil, the trees. Multi-sensory observation is crucial to identifying problems and challenges. This is the same in Theatre of the Oppressed. The exercise is also about ensuring the space is physically safe to work in.

• **Name, action, description rhythm game.** In a circle, one by one, share your name plus a word beginning with the same letter or sound of your name that describes something about you, plus an action that reflects that word e.g. “narrative Nicole” (Nicole puts a hand behind a listening ear), “Dodge Moj” (Mojisola ducks and swerves). The group repeats the name, action and description, twice.<sup>17</sup> When everyone has shared, we observe, remember and imitate each person’s name, action and description, in a group rhythm.

We connect this to the principle of imitation. In Permaculture we seek to **imitate patterns in ecospheres**, e.g. the forest for designing forest gardens and we design spaces from **patterns to details**.

<sup>17</sup> Jenny Sealey of Graeae theatre company has developed this exercise to incorporate sign language and audio description. Graeae has excellent resources for making theatre work accessible. See [graeae.org/accessibility/](https://graeae.org/accessibility/) last accessed 31/10/2024.

## Theatre games and Permaculture principles example sequence

(approx. one hour)

We go on to use more games and exercises to get us playful, collaborative, expressive and imaginative and to connect to and explore a Permaculture ethic, principle or technique. The table below shows different exercises and how we share a practical example of how the Permaculture principle can be applied. We also ask participants to think of examples and share them, in this way, practical exercises become sparks for collective thinking. This sequence is done deliberately fast. By focusing on a quick group task we become less self-conscious about being expressive with our bodies. Learning Permaculture principles in an embodied way demystifies the concept of design as well as any feeling that acting or art is only for professionals. This way of learning is combined with having Permaculture principles always visible in the workspace for participants to access, repeating principles in a song, sharing further examples and design projects to discuss how principles have been used (in our case examples were shared by Asmelash Dagne in a separate session). The physicality however becomes a crucial part of working with the principles and together.

PRINCIPLE/ETHIC	EXAMPLE	GAME	Mins
<b>Catch and store energy</b>	Clay walls, sun traps, water bucket in shower, organic matter as mulch	<b>Ball name game</b> dynamically pass the soft ball across the circle whilst saying the person's name, keeping eye contact. Then try it moving in the space, keeping energy stored inside the body.	<b>7</b>
<b>Ethic of people care, integration not segregation</b> i.e. no monocultures, <b>mutually beneficial relations, relative location</b>	Indigenous method of growing the <b>3 sisters</b> (corn growing in the centre, pumpkin spreads out on the ground around corn, beans climb up around the corn stem ...)	<b>Stuck-in-the-mud</b> children's game, one chases, anyone they tag becomes stuck with arms and legs apart, others free them by going under, over or around them demonstrating different movements of support	<b>5</b>
		<b>Reflection time</b>	<b>3</b>
		<b>Groups and shapes -</b> 10 second group tasks! Get into...	<b>30</b>
Integration not segregation, Ethic of <b>care for the earth by treading lightly</b> through low footprint, <b>create resilient systems</b> through relations	No tilting agriculture, companion planting for resilience etc.	Groups of the same shoe size – 10 seconds to place minimum number of feet on the ground while finding stability. Observe each other's group shapes.	
<b>Integrate</b> rather than segregate, <b>design vertically and horizontally, everything gardens</b>	Observing and replicating the 7, or more, different levels of the forest for the design of food forests, integrating multiple levels, using walls for growing, growing mushrooms under benches	Groups of 3 – in 10 seconds, make a shape with 3 different levels, incorporating objects or aspects of the space. NB: embrace physical differences, even if you use 1 finger, everyone has a role. Observe other groups.	
<b>Use edges and value the marginal</b> , consciously design edges, <b>use and value diversity</b>	Integrate ponds in garden design, design small resilient plots, no monoculture and big fields, use spiral gardening and wild hedges to increase diversity and productivity	Groups of 4 or 5 – in 10 seconds, make a shape with as many edges as possible, using your whole body if possible and anything in the space. Observe other groups.	

<b>Produce no waste</b> , the forest produces no waste, <b>value renewable resources</b>	Chickens, using wood on the site for raised beds, mulching with organic waste, compost toilets	Groups of different neighbourhoods – 20 seconds to do as much as you can do with a plastic bottle but it’s not a bottle! Show all the things you can do.	<b>30</b>
<b>Work with nature</b> not against it, design across and with seasons	Design food forests for staggered harvesting, maximise resilience	Groups of people born in the same season – 10 seconds to create it with sounds, moves etc.	
Stacking functions, one element can have multiple functions and one function is supported by many elements, for resilience, for autonomy not selfsufficiency	Roof gardens, guiding grey water through house and garden for multiple use and cleaning the water.	Groups of 3 – count the roles you have in life.	
<b>Obtain a yield</b> , acknowledge multiple understandings of yield, for all species	No monoculture, no-ornamental plants, perennial over annual plants, seed saving, bee friendly plants	Groups of 2 – 30 secs to obtain a tiny yield.	
<b>Slow and small solutions, apply self-regulation and accept feedback</b>	Moving one stone can change a lot, make small change to affect rain-water flow	Groups with the same fingerprint :) - see something that needs to change, move it as slowly as possible and reflect on its possible effect.	<b>15</b>
<b>Reflection time</b>			

Closing Ritual: 1-2-3 Clap!









### Reflection note on theatre games:

Some participants might not feel comfortable, not be able to or simply don't want to verbally express experiences of discrimination and oppression and draw attention to aspects that have not been considered by the group. Theatre games, such as the above and those presented below, can be a form of expression where experience and knowledge can be expressed otherwise, without words and explanation needing to be attached and without experiences being personalised. What is unspoken but still actively present in the room can be very powerful. At the same time it can be important to split a group for a particular task if Black, Indigenous and People of Colour do not feel comfortable in a mixed group. This might be especially important during a short workshop where there is not enough time for the group to develop a strong enough principled space. On the importance of creating caucus spaces also see Penniman (2018, p. 278).

- **Set up lunchtime solo sitting observation** (5 mins): choose from available options, e.g. observing from stillness.

Closing Ritual: 1-2-3clap!

## WORKING TOGETHER AND RESOLVING CONFLICTS

(1-1,5 hours)

Check-in (5 mins)

discursive

theatre based

- **Aims of this session** (5 mins): Many projects and justice movements break down because of conflicts within groups, so it is important to address it. Drama is conflict so it is also useful for us to learn about it and preferably, keep it on the stage and not in our group work. This session is meant to be a sharing of tools to deal with conflict and if you also have tools we would love to learn about them too. Below are some tools to start us off. We have included this session in workshops longer than one weekend.

- Reflection on the **principled space codes**. (5 mins) Remind the group that our **codes for a principled space** help to avoid conflict e.g. checking / noticing your own privilege, only speaking for yourself, respecting the voice space and making sure everyone is listened to, listening for and expressing needs and feelings, using build ups not put downs, calling people into a conversation and not shaming them by calling them out, working in the spirit of *ubuntu* etc.
- **Sharing on *The Life of Groups*** theory by Bruce Tuckman (5 mins), which states that groups go through phases of forming, norming, storming and performing<sup>20</sup> – connect this theory to theatre processes and seasons.
- The purpose of sharing this is to take the fear and anxiety from when storming happens
- We focus on the journey from storming to performing and how we might also be able to avoid storming
- **Invite reflection** from participants on experiences when working in groups – talk in small groups and share (5 mins)

<sup>20</sup> See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s\\_stages\\_of\\_group\\_development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s_stages_of_group_development), last accessed 14/10/2024.

Here are some **techniques** to avoid and resolve conflict:

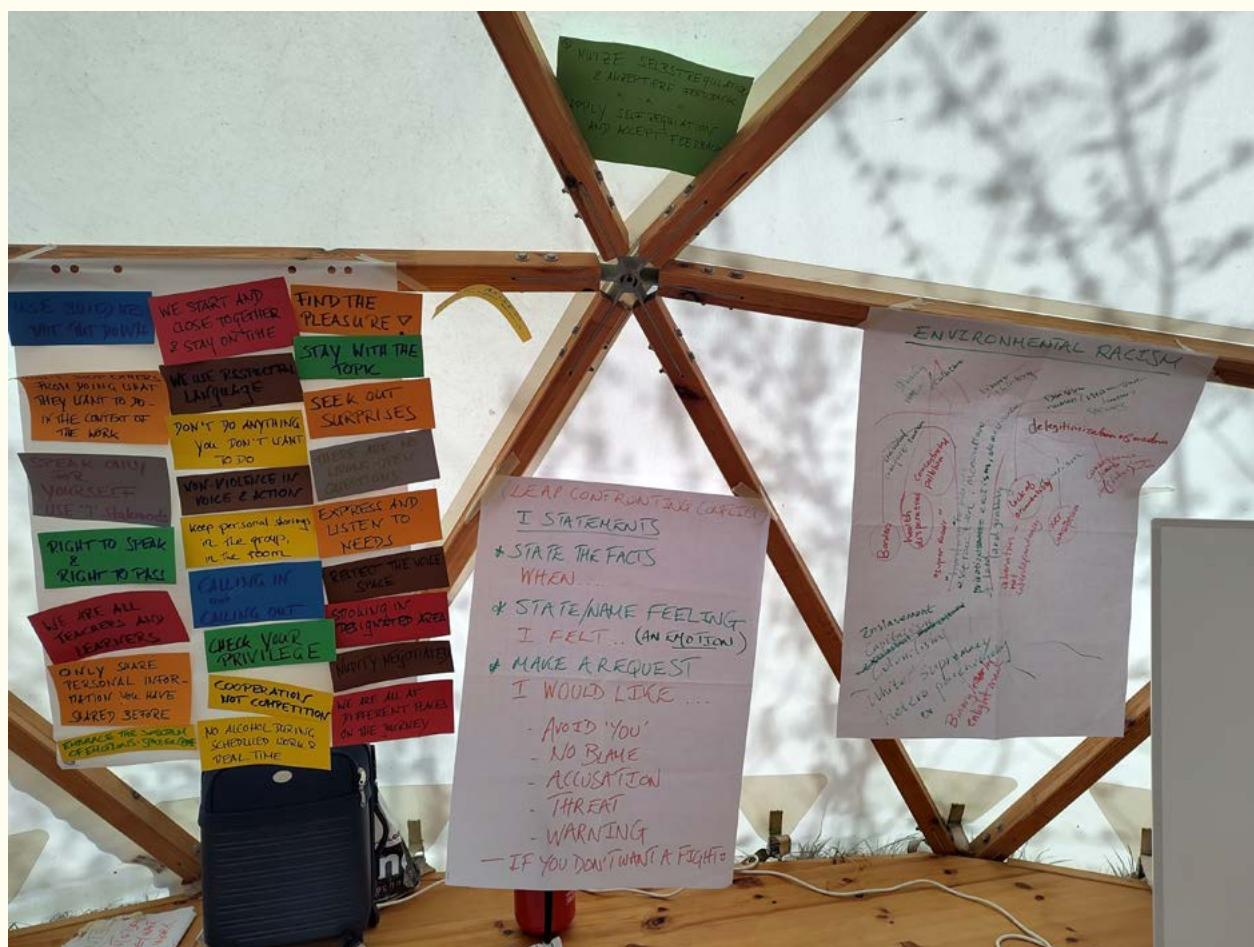
- **Perspectives improvisation** (10-15 mins). Here is a silly warm-up exercise to get us attuned to thinking about other perspectives. Keep this light-hearted. We sit in a circle. A volunteer (ideally a co-facilitator) sits in the middle of the circle. Participants are invited to describe the person in the middle, only from their own perspective, improvising, like this: "Nicole has one arm, half a foot and only one eye". Someone else interjects, for example: "no, Nicole has two eyes and two feet but no back" etc. We continue like this in a playful and deliberately absurd way. The facilitator can deliberately improvise an argument e.g. "you're talking nonsense, Nicole definitely has a back!" We then stop the descriptions and change places. We facilitate a discussion on accepting that we have different perspectives, trying to move and see things from another perspective and avoiding conflict through this.
- **Statements**<sup>21</sup> (20-35 mins). We share this technique which can be applied to resolving a conflict. 1) Invite the person you are in conflict with to talk, agree a private place and a time that is good for both of you. 2) Sit down (discussions are less likely to build to a fight if you are seated). 3) Simply and clearly state the facts. Try to avoid the word 'you' (people tend to get on the defensive when this word is spoken in such a situation). Do not elaborate on the facts, keep it as short and simple as possible. Do not blame or shame the other person. Use I statements e.g. "when I heard the word 'stupid' in relation to me this morning". 4) State your feeling / emotion e.g. sadness, anger, fear. Use a statement beginning with I e.g. "I felt sad". Be aware of what an emotion is and try not to mix your feeling with a word that indicates blame e.g. humiliated, offended. 5) Make a simple request, not a threat. Use an I statement e.g. "I would like to not be called stupid". When setting up the exercise, acknowledge that it is not easy to practise this, but applying the technique can have a more positive outcome and can avert conflict. Give an example of how not to do this exercise, based on the example above. A approaches B standing up, unannounced in a public space and says "hey you called me stupid yesterday morning when I had just woken up, right there in front of someone I don't even know and you made me feel totally shit about myself, if you do that again there's going to be trouble". This example might lead to an interesting dramatic scene (and it is useful in theatre making to learn what leads to drama) but it will not help to avert or solve conflict. Keep the drama on the stage. Ask the group to role-play an anonymous situation, applying the I Statements technique in pairs and reflect on how it was.
- **EOTO on conflict resolution from participants** (10-25 mins). In small groups, discuss what we are going to do if a conflict comes up amongst us and write up our ideas

<sup>21</sup> The I Statements exercise is in Macbeth and Fine (1995). See LEAP Confronting Conflict, who specialise in creative approaches to conflict resolution: <https://leapconfrontingconflict.org.uk/>, last accessed 31.10.2024.

#### **Here are some ideas that came up from our last group:**

- See conflict as an opportunity for change
- Address conflict early
- Ask, how important is the issue to you out of 10? Assess how important the issue is to you. Consider and adjust your response accordingly
- Remember, we exist beyond the conflict
- Acknowledge what has been said (repeat what you listened to)
- Apply active listening
- Be curious about the other person's perspective and feelings
- Saying the word "but" sparks conflict
- Shift energy - take a pause

Tiredness affects empathy and can affect conflict so let's **take a break!**



## CRITICAL READING AND CREATIVE PRACTICE SESSION

(1,5 hours)

Check-in (5 mins)

Needs, requests, questions (5 mins)

- Aim of this session:** During each part of the workshop series we want to share some of the background readings as well as art practices that have informed our thinking. We want to acknowledge the resources that have inspired us, we want to experiment with ways of sharing different kinds of writing, in ways that are accessible and we want to make space for many different modes of articulation and expression. We are not able to give adequate time to go into detail about each resource but we want to think and work with them as prompts. However, if there is interest in the group, we can go back to prompts and elaborate on them. Individual participants who are already familiar with a resource can also share what they know. For now we will merely read the prompts together, take a moment to reflect on each of them and choose one prompt. Everyone then takes time to respond to a prompt in whichever way they want to - through creative writing, or speaking into your phone, sketching, drawing, body movements etc. You might choose a practice you are familiar with and you might choose something new. We will invite you to share what you did, if you want to. However, this can also be a private exercise.

discursive



## Introduce text and artistic practice prompts (20 minutes)

**Note:** Below are some examples we have shared in the past, these can of course be changed, according to the facilitators and the participants. Choose your own and work with texts and other inspirational sources that you know sufficiently well, so that you can facilitate a conversation if questions arise. This task can also be taken for a walk outside the site and can inspire individual creative practice during other times of the workshop.

### Prompts connected to our underlying approach

We refer back to **Françoise Vergès**, a French political scientist, historian, long term anti-colonial feminist activist, public educator as well as an independent curator and film producer, who was born in the island of La Réunion and grew up in Algeria.

‘What methodology is needed to write a history of the environment that includes slavery, colonialism, imperialism and racial capitalism, from the standpoint of those who were made into “cheap” objects of commerce, their bodies as objects renewable through wars, capture, and enslavement, fabricated as disposable people, whose lives do not matter’. (Vergès, 2017:73)

In many exercises during the workshop we encourage you to try out new things, play with other ways of doing things, stretching if slightly what you are habituated to doing, by exploring e.g. your voice, your movements, your responses in role play. Underlying this is the thought that the normativity many of us inhabit, even though in different ways, is steeped in imperial structures and learned behaviours and that change requires us to undo these in many different ways and through different practices. For this session we also take inspiration from **Saidiya Hartman**, an American scholar of slavery and its legacies and a writer who has introduced the concept of critical fabulation when addressing the writing of Black Life and resistances to violent subjugations. She stresses the importance of ‘writing against an episteme’, ‘an episteme of imperialism and colonialism and the slave trade and so called enlightenment philosophy and theory’. She argues for writing stories as a compensation, writing counter-histories not from other facts but from a complete redress of how history has been written. (See: Hartman, 2008: 3f)

### Writing and art practice prompts (examples):

- Connect back to the text by **Carole Wright**: *Walking whilst being Black outside* (2020)

- **Dionne Brand**: *In another place not here* (1996)

Dionne Brand’s novel speaks to the complex texture of relations to land and soil and space making that we want to address and foreground during this workshop throughout. Brand does this through the content of her storytelling and in how she moves between different tones and rhythms in her writing.

*In another place not here* is the love story of two black women, meeting on the island of Trinidad, coming from very different family grounds. It is a queer love story and, we suggest, a story of relations to land, to soil and grounds, being anything but simple and relations to land, to soil and grounds also shaping relations between people.

It is a story of Elizete whose family history is shaped by slavery and who is still in an abusive work relationship as a sugarcane cutter. And Verlia, a metropolitan Marxist, who had left the island to find the Black Power Movement in Toronto and then returned to Trinidad to work the fields for the revolutionary process.

The prompt we found evocative for our context is:

'Tell me what matter was the ground there, where you from, tell me, tell me what your mother's face look like, tell me what colour was the stones, but tell me what colour was the ground. And your hand, did you ever want to plunge it in the stones there, did you ever want to battle slate, for it to fall all over your face and your hand beat them into dust. You did see yourself coming out of a woman crushing stones. I want to go against the ground, grind it in my teeth, but most I want to plunge my hands in stone. Too simple.' (Brand, 1997: 76)

- **Édouard Glissant:** *Poetics of Relation*, (fr. 1990/en. 1997)

Édouard Glissant was a French writer, poet, philosopher, and literary critic from Martinique. We found the two chosen quotations from his book *Poetics of Relation* resonating with our approach to think with the legacy of slavery and plantation culture as well as the knowledge and deep connection to land of those that have been enslaved and of whom labour has been extracted through plantation work, and their descendants.

'Passion for the land where one lives is a start, an action we must constantly risk.' (Glissant, 1997: 151)

'Those who have endured the land's constraint, who are perhaps mistrustful of it, who have perhaps attempted to escape it to forget their slavery, have also begun to foster these new connections with it, in which the sacred intolerance of the root, with its sectarian exclusiveness, has no longer any share.' (Glissant, 1997:147)

- **Laura Aguilar's** self portraits *Grounded* (2006-2007), digital photography<sup>22</sup>

Laura Aguilar was a Mexican-American photographer who captured the largely invisible identities of large bodied, queer, working-class, brown people, often in the form of self-portraits. Her series *Grounded* places her body within First Nation landscapes and she hereby addresses the intersectionality of queer ecologies.

<sup>22</sup> See [lauraaguilarphotography.com/works/grounded](http://lauraaguilarphotography.com/works/grounded), last accessed 31.10.2024.



Grounded #11 (2006), *I identify as a boulder*

'When the "sub-human, in-human, non-human" queer actively connects with the other-than-human, what might that connection spawn?'<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> "Image and quotation from: Mel Y Chen and Dana Luciano (eds.), 'Introduction: Has the queer even been human?', in: *Queer Inhumanisms*, A journal of lesbian and gay studies, volume 21, number 2-3, June 2015. p. 186.

- **Follow up and clarification questions** without aiming to fully contextualise and analyse each quotation (see aims above).
- **Choose a prompt and write, draw, record or make a response** (30-40 mins). Choose a spot for your practice, inside or outside, sitting or walking or a combination of both. Take this time for yourself.
- **Sharing within the group** from those who want to (30 mins).

## INTRODUCING AND PRACTICING SITE ANALYSIS

(1.5 hours)

Check-in (5 mins)

Needs, requests, questions (5 mins)

discursive

applied

**Aims today** (5 mins): From solo observation tasks and practising site analysis on your own close to where you live and before coming to the workshop, we want to now explore the workshop site. We use Permaculture and agroecological methods and expand these and we acknowledge that thorough site analysis would need much more time. We invite you to think of site analysis in the most expansive way possible and to explore how we can shift perspectives and take other perspectives into account. How can we observe from a less anthropocentric perspective?

Each small group makes their own **map of the site** and shares their map with the other groups. (45 mins for individual and group work, 30 mins for sharing.)

**Note:** Site analysis was also introduced by Asmelash Dagne walking the site with participants, sharing his own observations of the site. Asmelash also worked with specific instructions and tables to be filled in that supported participants to explore the site moving through different steps, gradually expanding the observation space.

## Site analysis

Referring to the prompts below, walk the site and take notes. Walk the site alone first and then come together in small groups to make notes. You might also want to start sketching the site. We are creating an inventory of the site.

### Prompts:

- Regular site observation includes observing the sectors such as: sun – light – shade – wind – temperature – rain and the daily and seasonal variations of these.
- What is fixed and what is movable on the site?
- What grows?
- What is the ground?
- What foods and nourishments can you identify?
- What animals and other living species can you observe?
- What buildings and structures are already there?
- Which other materials are on site?
- Where are the edges and what kind of edges are there (walls, fences, wild edges, water, barriers of different kinds ...)?
- What sources of power and available resources are available (sun, wind, water and other resources)?
- What would you identify as limiting and supporting factors and why?
- What are the land contours?
- Can you identify different soil qualities and what is growing in different places?
- What feelings and affect can you sense? What areas of the site evoke different affects (peace, discomfort, connection ...)?
- What can you smell, hear, taste, touch?
- What histories of the site can you access?
- To which communities is the site connected to, or not?
- Who are the neighbours (these can be different kinds of species)?
- What are access points and blocks?
- What relations between diverse species can you observe?
- Can you observe any patterns? This might need you knowing that space, its relations and networks, for some time.
- How does walking, moving in and/or observing the site resonate with aspects of climate (in)justice that you are concerned with?
- What might be the wants and needs of different species on the site?
- What other site analysis prompts might you want to bring to this observation exercise?



As you will see from the example schedule in the appendices, our workshops offer dedicated 90 minute sessions which provide an introduction to Permaculture, including the practice of zones and zoning as part of Permaculture design. Our guest tutor, Asmelash Dagne (more on Asmelash in Part Five) covers this in detail and through examples in different geographical areas and climates, often examples he designed and implemented, thus being able to provide plenty of visuals, and first hand knowledge and description of processes. As discussed in the Introduction, the remit of this guidebook is not to provide an Introduction to Permaculture, however, here is a brief insight into what is covered in the sessions, before delving deeper into challenging colonial notions of design and group design work for climate justice in Parts Three and Four.

Participants are introduced to the underlying ethics of Permaculture design as well as the specific elements and processes of Permaculture Design as “the conscious design and maintenance of productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability and resilience of natural ecosystems” (Dagne, presentation notes). Included are possible objectives of a Permaculture designer and questions that might arise during design processes as well as a repetition of Permaculture principles with examples of how these can be practically applied in design work, according to the context the design is created for (e.g. how to create systems where one element has many functions or/and where one function is supported by many elements to ensure resilience). Basic design processes are introduced as well as **sector and zone analysis** including how Permaculture design works through **zoning a site according to work and energy flow** and the needs of diverse species living on a site, following principles such as **working from pattern to detail** and stressing the **productivity of edges**. For much more detail see Permaculture teaching references such as Holmgren (2017, p. 143-165), Morrow (2006, pp. 101-175).

For us it has been fruitful to ask participants to explore design work on the site of the workshop, even with little time for long term observation and limited knowledge of the site. Designs can concentrate on one aspect or experiment with dream projects exploring what a site could become.

# PART THREE:

## CULTIVATING CHANGE - DEVELOPMENTAL SESSIONS

Now that we have introduced the idea of Permaculture and Agroecology through theatre, we have had an introduction to design and we have started to explore environmental racism, we move on to a series of sessions going deeper into looking at power relations, specifically in relation to design. We explore Indigenous examples of Agroecology that pre-existed before Permaculture was ever written down and are still in use today. We reflect on what unlearning colonial thinking and practice in relation to maps and zones could look like, so that when we come to make designs for the spaces we are working in, we do not repeat colonial patterns. The topics covered in Parts One and Two need to happen before delving into this Chapter. Similarly, the group will need to develop their theatre skills before trying the exercises in this Chapter.

We also had contributions from Asmelash Dagne and Sandra Passaro on Permaculture during the series of workshops described in this Part

## Introduction

Check-in (5 mins)

Pairs - share one learning from the previous session or day (5 mins)

Requests, questions or needs ... (5 mins)

- **Aims of this session:** This will be a **practical session** with Theatre of the Oppressed games and exercises, **exploring power** and **applying this to** thinking about **design**. This workshop and some of the exercises we are doing later aim to **lay the foundation for creating a longer piece of Forum Theatre** to make and perform for each other in the next workshop.

- First of all, let's have a quick warm-up, one by one, each physically and vocally showing what you discovered on your solo observation.

- **1-2-3 warm-up exercise** (15mins)

With things you heard and saw or something you wondered on your solo observation. Participants stand opposite each other in pairs, with neutral bodies. They count to three, one person after another e.g. A says "one", B says "two" A says "three" B says "one" A says "two" B says "three" and so on. They continue until they have built up a rhythm. Then participants replace the number one with a rhythmical movement and sound, for example, embodying / vocalising something they observed during their solo observation. This movement and sound will always represent the number one. But keep two and three the same and repeat the cycle. Then replace two with a different movement and sound. Then replace three with a different movement and sound. Now you have a movement and sound sequence without words.

Reflection: **1-2-3 highlights the importance of seeing what you look at, listening to what you hear** in Theatre of the Oppressed work and Permaculture. Careful observation is crucial in design and in observing power relations. The exercise also reminds us of the principle of observing and imitating patterns in nature and working from pattern (the big picture) to detail. It is also a physical design exercise - choreography is design!

- **Columbian Hypnosis** (the exercise was created in Columbia)<sup>24</sup> (15 mins) is a movement exercise to explore power relations. Facilitators demonstrate first. Participants are in pairs. A places their hand about one hand's distance away from B's face. The bottom of A's hand is in line with B's chin. Wherever A moves their hand, B will follow with their body. Begin slowly but build up to more and more playful and expressive movement. Swap over, explore and reflect on what we observed and noticed.

- **Complete the image** (15 mins). This is an image making exercise where we start to build stage pictures and explore power dynamics. Facilitators demonstrate first. Participants are in pairs. They greet each other (e.g. a handshake) and make a still picture. A remains still but B steps away from the image and observes the picture A is in, three dimensionally, from all angles. B then goes back in and completes the image, making a new still image with their body, taking a new position, in relation to A. A remains the same. Then A steps out of the picture. B remains still. A observes the picture B is making and then goes back in, making a new still image with their body, taking a new position, in relation to A. The cycle continues many times. Participants are asked to connect with and integrate their surroundings e.g. the

<sup>24</sup> There are many variations and extensions to Colombian Hypnosis and Complete the Image. See Boal (1992) and Adebayo, Martin and Mehta (2011).

ground, bushes, trees, into the images. Each new picture is a new story, a new power dynamic, a new relation. Reflect and discuss. What dynamics and relations did we discover? What stories, characters, situations, words and feelings came to mind? How does all this relate to thinking about design? Some of what comes up here could sew the seeds for creating Forum Theatre scenes later.

- **A new version of the Game of Power** (30 mins)<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> The Game of Power was developed by Augusto Boal (1992) and this is an extension of it.

**Round 1:** one by one, we are going to arrange seven chairs and a table, in any way we like, making one chair more powerful than any other. This is partly an exercise about staging. In order to make scenes that explore oppression we need to be able to recognise and represent power relations on stage. We are also applying this exercise to enable us to recognise and reflect on colonial design and hierarchical power structures, so that we do not replicate them in our designs. One at a time, participants quickly arrange the chairs and table. In each picture, we say which we think is the most powerful chair and why. What kind of power relation do we see reflected in each picture?



**Round 2:** After everyone who wants to has arranged the chairs and table, MA makes a picture, with six chairs facing the table, with one chair behind it (reminiscent of a traditional European classroom setting). Now we add a person to the picture. One participant places their body in the most powerful position in the picture, without moving any chairs or the table. The rest of the group say what they see, what kind of power is represented. Then the game begins! Another person puts themselves in a more powerful position than the person already in the picture. The rest of the group say what kind of power is represented and they decide which one is more powerful. The more powerful picture / person remains. Then another person comes and the cycle continues. If one person appears more powerful, in the view of the group, they remain. In this way, we collect visual pictures of power, we understand how power relations work, we gather different ideas of what we mean by power. Only when we understand power can we understand oppression - the abuse of power. Forum Theatre (Part Four) is where we use theatre to challenge oppression, so this exercise is an important building block towards that stage.

**Round 3:** After exploring different power relations, participants are invited to make shapes, using the table and chairs in any way that they like, which they perceive as anti-colonial and non-hierarchical. The exercise is particularly resonant when the objects are placed in relation to an outside space, a garden or field with trees e.g.. We reflect together on what we discover about unlearning colonial design in *natureculture*<sup>26</sup>. We think of *natureculture*, of trees, rivers, birds, stones, branches lying around, not as a backdrop to the theatre exercise but as integral to it. This might also impact how we view tables and chairs, not only as objects to be moved around by humans but as different living materialities with histories that can again be connected to environmental injustice and materialities that have their own relations to the environments we work in.

<sup>26</sup> Conversations on how we speak about nature are an intrinsic part of the workshop as it critiques the separations colonialism has engendered. We do not assume that participants join the workshop with a particular knowledge background and try to develop a shared vocabulary through the process. *Natureculture* can be one way to refer to the intertwinement of nature and culture, stressing the close entanglement of all human species. 'Most of us is outside us' refers to the inseparability of humans from all elements and species and we are grateful to Mama D. Ujuaje for always reminding us of this.

Closing ritual: 1-2-3 clap!

## 'UNLEARNING WITH COMPANIONS IN HISTORY'

(1,5 hours)

discursive

**Note:** In this section we reference Ariella Aïsha Azoulay's comprehensive work in *Potential Histories. Unlearning Imperialism* (London, New York: Verso Books, 2019). Azoulay's work connects with the artistic, institutional, archival work we are also engaged in outside of these workshops and we are here reflecting on how her propositions translate into the context of environmental justice. For other facilitators references and quotations can be exchanged with other approaches to *unlearning imperialism*.

### Introduction

Check-in (5 mins)

Any reflection on previous session/s (5 mins)

Requests, questions or needs? (5 mins)

#### • Aims of this session (15mins)

We have continuously stressed the need to acknowledge Indigenous agri/cultural practices as sources from which knowledge is extracted and written into approaches such as Permaculture. We want to explore this further and ask, what does it mean for us, within this group, to foreground Indigenous agroecological practices in a non-tokenistic way? How do we avoid appropriating, again? How do we not just nod towards where practices come from and then move on within and through our usual structures and habits, focusing on our needs. How can we acknowledge how habitual imperial practices are also present in how we work in and as a group, our group?

We were inspired by the scale of Ariella Aïsha Azoulay's work, we saw connections to the endeavour of this workshop series and we want to experiment with bringing

aspects of it into our work. To unlearn imperialism, Azoulay argues, asks of us to go back to 1492 and to unlearn what originated then.

We read together brief excerpts and discuss possible resonances, acknowledging that we cannot do justice to the full scale of Azoulay's work:

- 'Unlearning the **differential** principle is **to connect** what imperialism fundamentally separates, **to bridge the normalised split** between 'others' dispossessed by imperialism.' (p. 11)
- Unlearning what Azoulay calls **Worldcarelessness**, as " ... active carelessness for the world is a constitutive element of imperial citizenship. (p. 20)
- "Unlearning becomes a process of disengaging from the unquestioning use of political concepts." (p. 11)
- 'Unlearning is essential in order to emphasize the degree of **our implication in institutionalized imperial violence** through different facets of 'good' liberal citizenship (...).' (p. 11)
- 'Unlearning is a commitment to think against and prior to imperialism without forgetting, even for a moment, to what extent imperialism conditions us and invites us to act as its agents.' (p. 20)
- For us this might mean: Can we practice being attuned to our own ways of being implicated in imperialism and how the tools we use are implicated in imperialist tools? This is what we suggest to rehearse in relation to the practice of design. Without assuming we have an answer but going into an explorative self-reflexive process.

We also found resonant that Azoulay states:

- '**Nothing is a discovery**, everything has been noticed already by someone before – we are not inventing resistance, resistance has been present since 1492'. Azoulay argues against the sense of newness of research as 'we cannot invent the anti-imperial, it's always been there.' (p.16)
- This leads to an understanding that unlearning means not engaging with those relegated to 'the past' as 'primary sources' but rather as '**potential companions**'. (p. 16)
- This leads to ' ... insisting that finding precedents (...) for resistance to racial and colonial crimes is not the novel work of academic discovery.' (p. 17)
- Azoulay reminds us that we need to and can keep alive the *potential to reverse history* (p. 43ff)

This scaling up of how we engage with histories, returning to 1492, links back to the relationship between food, enslavement and plantation colonialism, which we explored with Mama D. Ujuaje (see Part Five) and the overall content and premise of this workshop series. Returning to 1492, connects to the felt need to go back to colonialism and the plantation and what colonial plantation culture and enslavement sought to destroy and what this means for agri/cultural, environmental justice work.

### Proposal:

With these propositions in mind we propose to gather the knowledge that we have as a group of Indigenous agricultural/ agroecological practices, of relations to land and all species that have or might have preceded colonial relations, on which permaculture and other agroecological practices are based.

Maybe if we notice, if we are attuned to their details as well as their patterns and their social and



political implications, as well as their current struggles, i.e. if we embed the practices in their wider context of resistance, we can work towards unlearning?

- **Exercise to share and mind-map examples of Indigenous practices and/as resistance to colonial design:** Take out the Peter's projection world map and gather around it, spin the bottle / pencil, when it points to a place in the world, anyone can share any example you have of Indigenous / pre-colonial agroecological design or practices of resistance to colonial design. (40 mins)

**Note:** This exercise can also contain a conversation about terminology, including the term Indigenous. For a discussion on terms see e.g. *Funambulist*, No 50, November - December 2023, "Redefining Our Terms". See chapter 18: 'Indigenous, A conversation between Leanne Betasamosake Simpson and Sabrien Amrov', pp. 18-27. Sabrien Amrov', S. 18-27.)

### Here are a few possible examples as inspiration for a possible mind-map:

The examples that we brought in as facilitators and that were shared by participants are only sketched out briefly here. This session can be more or less guided by facilitators and be another opportunity to foreground the knowledge of the group. It can also spark a research process beyond this session. Small groups can be created to engage more deeply with specific examples, acknowledging that each of us is at a different stage of a longer journey. Connecting what had been divided, learning to unlearn, is not an easy and quick task and we remain aware of appropriations.

- **Zapatista movement/ Zapatismo:** Ancestral practices are included in developing current organisational models while Zapatismo is not understood as a recipe but as a bridge to a world where many worlds fit. Organisational models are e.g. based on **Caracoles**, the spiral snail or couch shell which becomes the name of Zapatista centres where administrative localities are based, referencing the slowness of snails. Linked to this is the **politicising of memory, learning intergenerationally**, working with a lexicon of old words reused and new words to be invented, **inverting the pyramid structure, remaining in the non-knowing and listening practice**. See also the practice of **preguntamos caminando** / walking we ask and the **Zapatista Seed Pedagogics** (via Enrique Dussel).
- **Grupo Semillas (Colombia):** The group's Circular Gardens design and their Three Sisters companion planting/Milpa is closely interconnected with their Espiral de Vida (Spiral of Life). Political principles arise from a home garden circular economy.<sup>27</sup>
- **Adivasi communities in the Nilgiris** (mountain range in Southern India): 25 different Adivasi groups lived in an area the size of Chicago, each community practising different forms of sustainable living, adapted to the very diverse habitats and vegetation types of the **Nilgiri biosphere**, which means adapted to the unique **Shola-grassland mosaic**, with every shola, i.e. every confined forest area, being unique and composed of some 300 species of flowering plants that create unique communities. The border niche of the Shola and the grassland functioned as unique and stable ecosystems. Colonial deforestation, forest and tea plantations as well as introducing agriculture destroyed unique grassland and its diverse communities.<sup>28</sup>
- Collect examples of Maroon, Quilombo and Creole gardens.
- Collect foraging practices.
- Engage with forest cosmologies in the Amazon and Chaco Forest areas.
- Social practices connected to Ensete, False Banana, Ethiopian Banana: Stable and highly nutritious food in Ethiopia, particularly grown in the Ethiopian highlands and prepared e.g. as bread that can be stored for up to one year, linked to local system of food preparation, storing and sharing to overcome periods of drought. (Asmelash Dagene)

<sup>27</sup> Marwa Arsianos, 2020, 'The Regime's of Fig Tree, in: Rights of Future Generations. Conditions, Adria Lahoud (ed), Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag GmbH. p. 78-82. Marwa Arsianos organised a workshop with women representatives of Grupo Semillas, Desarrollo Económico y Social de Los Mexicanos Indígenas and the Pihao indigenous community in Tolima, during the Sharjah Architecture Triennial. Nicole was invited to this workshop where the importance of the women's seed saving work as well as the violence they have to confront was central.

<sup>28</sup> See Bosco, 2023.



- Mojo Plantation (Coorg, South India): Panchagavya liquid manure, made from cow dung, cow urine, ghee, curd and milk, customised with ripe fruits, coconut water, jaggery.<sup>29</sup>
- Yam Minisetts technique in Nigeria (Mama D. Ujuaje)

<sup>29</sup> See Goel and Goel, 2015, p. 49.

There are many more examples, this list is only a miniscule starting point

By sharing examples, detailed descriptions of planting, growing, harvesting, food preparation practices, as well as their political contexts, social relations and connotations attached, we gather vocabularies, affects and patterns that might arise. What stands out for us? How can we start a journey to become companions of these practices in a deeper sense? What might we need to unlearn? From sharing and reflecting through words we move to a more embodied reflection.

- **A Metabolism** of movement and sound (10 mins). Collating and embodying some of what we have learnt from our mind map. See Part Two for a reminder of the Metabolism exercise.

References for this might be the work of Octavia Butler and the kinds of bodies she imagines fit for survival. We were also inspired by a writing prompt that was shared with Nicole by Avery F. Gordon, referencing and reflecting on Herbert Marcuse's *An Essay on Liberation* (1969). Avery F. Gordon writes and cites Marcuse:<sup>30</sup>

'... This struggle must recognize, Marcuse continues, that if capitalism has created a second nature that ties many of us libidinally and aggressively to the commodity form, then a different kind of second (or maybe third) nature is required to counter the "counter revolution anchored in the instinctual structure." This new "nature" would produce a desire for revolution, without which, Marcuse says, we will "fall apart."

<sup>30</sup> Thank you to Avery F. Gordon who shared, generously and with deep insight, individual writing prompts with all participants of the Visual Cultures PhD writing workshop. (Goldsmiths, University of London, June 2023.)

When, Marcuse writes, **we are no longer capable** of 'adapting to the competitive performances required for well-being under domination, no longer capable of tolerating the brutality and ugliness of the established way of life,' then rebellion has taken root and **we have begun to grow those sensory organs for the alternative required to change ourselves and our way of existence.** What kind of radical biology are these completely unnatural organs for the alternative? What do organs for the alternative look like, feel like, smell like? Are they enclosed in bodies or.....? The writing exercise is to play with this image/idea of **organs for the alternative.**' (Avery F. Gordon, 2023, unpublished)

Closing ritual: 1-2-3 clap!

## UNLEARNING COLONIAL MAPS, ZONES AND ZONING

(1,5-2 hours)

theatre based

discursive

Check-in (5 mins)

Requests, questions, needs? (5 mins)

Pairs - share one thing that stayed with you from the previous session (5 mins)

- **Stay in that pair**, you are going to sculpt anything that came up from your **solo observation** (15 mins).<sup>31</sup> We will learn the Theatre of the Oppressed technique of sculpting images which we can use in developing Forum Theatre as well. Facilitators demonstrate the technique first. A takes B and uses their body, as if it were clay, making a shape that expresses anything that came up from their solo observation. As this exercise involves touch, participants should remember to say if there is anything they want or do not want and to stop at any time. Of course, we will not touch the pelvic or chest area or the face. We can also use mirroring, where A makes a shape and B reflects it - this is particularly useful when we want to use the face to express something.

<sup>31</sup> See Image Theatre techniques in Boal (1978 and 1992).

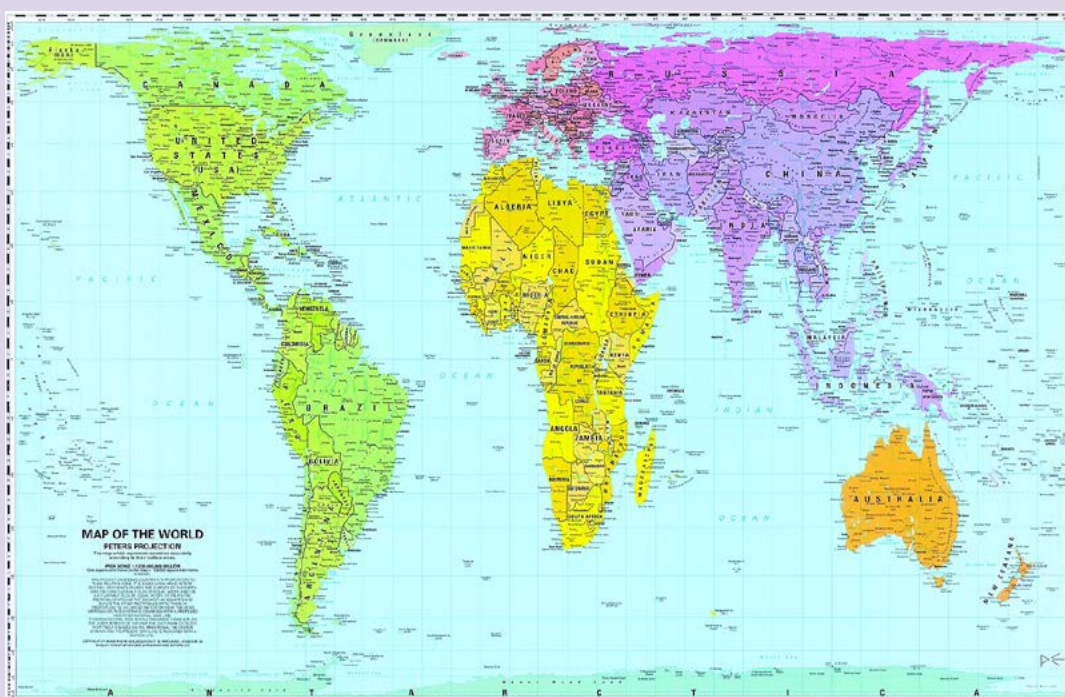
- **Aims today** (2 mins). Zones and zoning is important for Permaculture design as we have learned. Following our approach of seeking to unlearn imperial structures and terms, we want to consider the colonial legacies of zones and zoning so that we do not repeat the power structures that might be inherent in terminologies and habituated ways of working with them.

- **Framing quote by Christina Sharpe** (3 mins)

'The ongoing state-sanctioned legal and extralegal murders of Black people are normative and, for this so-called democracy, necessary; **it is the ground we walk on**. And that it is the ground lays out that, and perhaps how, we might begin to live in relation to this requirement for our death. What kinds of possibilities for rupture might open up? **What happens if we proceed as if we know this, antiblackness, to be the ground on which we stand, the ground from which we attempt to speak**, for instance, an "I" or a "we" who know, an "I" or a "we" who care?'" (Sharpe, 2016: 7)<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Sharpe, Christina, 2017. *In the Wake. On Blackness and Being*. Durham: Duke University Press.

- **Mapping** (5 mins): Look together at the Peters Projection Map. What do you see? What do you notice? Observe colonial zones / zoning.



- **Compare** the Peters Projection map **to the Native Land map** (5 mins).  
See <https://native-land.ca/> What is different?



Amitav Ghosh (2021) on the history of the colonization of North America and **terra-forming**:

'To remake immense stretches of terrain to suit the lifestyles of another continent inevitably entailed the undermining and elimination of the ways of life of those who had inhabited those lands for many thousands of years. The project of terraforming was therefore fundamentally conflictual; it was in itself a mode of warfare, of a distinctive kind.' (Ghosh 2021, p. 55)

- See also the example mentioned above from the **Nilgiri ecosphere** in Southern India and the **impact of British colonialism since 1799**. Europeans came for trophy hunting of wild animals and elephants for ivory and animals used to assist deforestation. The British settled onto the grasslands with temperate climate, using labourers from the plains and manipulating local communities off their land. They introduced crops and English vegetables while other forms of subsistence were made illegal and wood taxed. Forestry and plantations were set up. Grasslands were considered wastelands and unproductive, similar to how Ghosh describes this for settler colonialism in Northern America, which ignores the uniqueness and productivity of the Shola-grassland mosaic, with its rich diversity and resilient networks. Planting exotic trees and tea plantations displaced the Shola-grasslands mosaic, leading to hydrological disruption. (Bosco, 2023: 70ff)

- We also engaged with the zoning of **Palestine** and its violent effects and discussed implications of historical developments being documented through different maps.

- **Share further examples of land use through settlements and colonial appropriations and divisions that you know of, brainstorm and write down effects.** This can be done in small groups with notes being shared after or by keeping the conversation within the full group. With examples gathered by the group, we reflect on how it might feel to go from one zone to another?

We also explore our exchange otherwise in the following exercise:

- **Crossing the line improvisation exercise** (15 mins). The facilitator makes a straight line on the ground, dividing the space in two parts, using chalk, tape or a rope. Round 1 - let's notice our feelings when looking at the line on the ground. Then, one by one, each participant walks up to and crosses the line. No one should prepare what they do as they cross the line, they just let whatever happens to their

body, happen, expressing whatever they like as they cross the line, all they know is that when they cross the line, something is different in the new space that they cross into. For example, I might cross the line and suddenly I feel extremely hot and I show this in action, or I cross the line and I start laughing, I cross the line and I start walking through mud etc. There is no right and wrong, whatever happens, happens. The facilitator goes first to take the pressure off the participants. Keep it playful. The simple crossing of a line can be surprisingly intense, which tells us something. Everyone watches each person crossing the line. Reflect afterwards on how it felt. Round 2 - now we improvise, playing with resisting, overcoming, disrupting and changing the line. Each person can try their own strategy. We collect ideas of resisting lines, fences, borders and connect this to our reflections on zones and colonial maps.



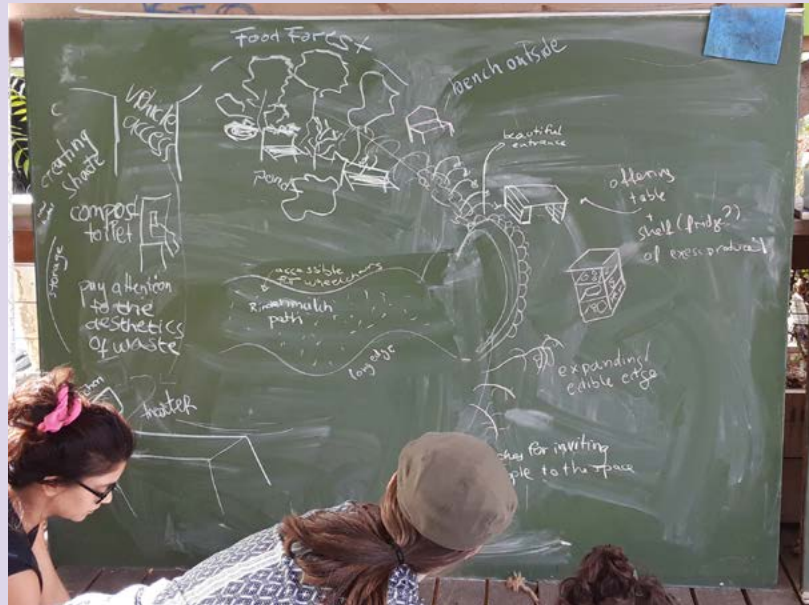
- If we have time, we use the **sculpting technique** (15 mins). Using both bodies and objects we collectively **sculpt / design a scene of anti-colonial space and spacing** (as opposed to zones and zoning), connecting back to the session on Indigenous practices before.

Closing ritual: 1-2-3 clap!



**In our first workshop at Prinzessinnen Garten in Berlin,** the walking the line exercise informed a design for making edible edges so people could eat their way into the garden and so it would feel more accessible and less exclusive, applying and adapting the principle referring to the productivity of edges. The exercise also informed conversations about how different participants perceived the entrance to the garden as accessible and welcoming or not. Growing food (berries, fruits, vine leaves) that were recognisable to different communities was important and for some ornamental plants and an open gate without materials obstructing the path were equally crucial.

See chapter 4 on Design projects for another example.



**We share inspirational projects such as: The Solitary gardens - "Can you imagine a landscape without prisons"**

'The Solitary Gardens, turns solitary confinement cells into garden beds that are the same size and blue-print as the cell Herman Wallace, and so many others spend decades in. The contents (plants, flowers and herbs) of the prison-cell-turned-garden-bed are designed by prisoners serving their sentences in isolation through proxies on the outside. Central to this project is a call to end the inhumane conditions of solitary confinement, simultaneously inspiring compassion necessary to dismantle systems of punishment and control.' See <https://solitarygardens.org/about>

The project resists the separation and lines drawn between public spaces and the prison cells closed off and out of sight by bringing the imagination of those in solitary confinement into the view of public parks and gardens.



<https://solitarygardens.org/visible-records>

# PART FOUR:

## HARVESTING PROPOSITIONS - ADVANCED SESSIONS

The sessions outlined in this Chapter aim to bring all of our learning and unlearning together. It is therefore important that you work through the previous parts before moving on to this one. This is the part where we work in groups to make and perform theatre scenes which directly address environmental racism / racist environmentalism, we collectively think about expanding the principles of agroecology and Permaculture on which design work is based, finally, participants create and share designs to implement on the land or site of the workshops or sites accessible to them, before closing and evaluating the workshop process.

As there were several months between the sessions described in Part Three and the work we describe below, we found it useful to do a 1.5 hour session to recap and recollect learnings from previous sessions, before moving forward. We did this through a creative session, where we revised different games we had played, re-sculpted images that we had made and laid out our notes on big paper along with some of the materials and objects we had used in previous sessions. Hereby we created an installation and archive like a journey that could be laid out in our working space. It might be useful for you to do the same, depending on the time frame of your workshops and the needs of your group. Literally walking through the journey of a workshop can be a powerful reminder of the process a group has gone through and also works as a summary exercise to conclude a workshop.<sup>33</sup>



<sup>33</sup> Thank you to Alfred Decker for introducing us to this practice.

We also had contributions from Sandra Passaro on Permaculture design during the series of workshops described here. See more on Sandra's work in Part Five.

## EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM THROUGH IMAGE THEATRE (1,5 hours.)

theatre based

### Check-in (5 mins)

- **Aim of this session** (5 mins): informed by all we have done, we are going to explore the theme of environmental racism and climate justice in an embodied way as a group, by making a group image. This is a way of having an active discussion through the creation and analysis of physical images, inspired by the idea that a picture paints a thousand words.<sup>34</sup> This task will enable us to build towards short Forum Theatre scenes, where the purpose is to explore a specific issue, take action, propose and discuss solutions.

<sup>34</sup> For more on the origins of Image Theatre, see Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1978). Please note that Image Theatre work can be audio-described for blind and visually impaired participants and facilitators.



- **Sculpt a group image of environmental racism** (in Europe) (35 mins). One at a time, participants use other participants and any objects they need to sculpt an image of what environmental racism in Europe is to them. The aim of the exercise is to deepen our shared understanding of the issue and build towards a consensus image. The next person can adjust the image, add to it, take away from it or make a completely new image. We keep making group images until we have one we can agree broadly articulates our shared understanding of the subject. The facilitator then claps their hands slowly. On each clap, participants in the image make a move towards the opposite of environmental racism - climate justice. We observe the different stages needed to make change.
- **Discuss** (15 mins). *What did we see?* Make a list of issues / problems to explore in creating Forum Theatre scenes
- **Introduction to Forum Theatre:** Forum theatre is a kind of practical debating tool, a game, where the audience understands and finds solutions to problems and oppressions through interactive theatre. A play is presented to an audience where there is a central character, a protagonist, who wants something, but they are oppressed by others. Power is used to stop them doing what they want to do or be or to make them do or be something that they do not want. There is a conflict between the protagonist's desires and those of the oppressors (people / institutions) and the situation ends in a crisis for the central character. The problem presented is something that other people in the audience identify with. The aim of the game is to find different ways of challenging and overcoming the oppression, for the central character. A scene (or play) is presented to the audience by a facilitator. The audience sees it once. They have some discussion about what they see. The facilitator warms the audience up, preparing them to make interventions and change what they have just watched so that there is a different outcome for the protagonist. The scene (or play) is performed a second time around but this time, anyone in the audience can stop the action, replace the central character and try to find solutions and alternatives. Many interventions are welcomed. The facilitator hosts a discussion where the audience identifies what was different about each intervention. Possibilities for change and knowledge are exchanged. (15 mins)

**Please note:** if you have never seen Forum Theatre before, do read up about it more before you facilitate a session, see how it works live or watch examples online. See Boal (1992) and / or Adebayo, Martin and Mehta (2011).

- **Get into groups** and start to **discuss ideas for a story / scenario** which will become a short Forum Theatre scene (15 mins). The scene can be based on personal experiences or it can be fictionalised or a mixture of both. The scene has a central character, a protagonist who is being oppressed by environmental racism / racist environmentalism. The scene builds towards a conflict and then a crisis, which does not end well for the protagonist (as the aim of Forum is to come up with alternatives and solutions for the protagonist).

Closing ritual: 1-2-3 clap!

(1,5 to 2 hours)

**A note on time:** Forum Theatre can be rehearsed in a community or by professional actors, like any theatre, over weeks or months. This is a short session to begin this practice. Ideally, one would take longer than 1.5 - 2 hours. However, even in a short time and within the context of a wider workshop like this, issues can be explored and debated and possibilities for challenging environmental racism / racist environmentalism can be shared.

## Introduction

Check-in (2 mins)

Pairs - share one thing that stayed with you from the last session (3 mins)

Requests, questions, needs? (5 mins)

- **Aims of this session:** Make, present and intervene on Forum Theatre scenes that address environmental racism.
- **Physical / vocal warm up into character improvisation** (10-15 mins minimum). Participants isolate and rotate different joints and limbs e.g. head, shoulders, elbows, wrists, torso, pelvis, knees, ankles and feet. Explore how walking around and leading with one of these parts of the body can give a different sense of character. Let the characters created by the participants meet and greet each other, see what kind of voice comes out of this body shape, play, improvise short interactions. Warm up the voice through yawning, shaking the body, humming and singing. Isolate different vocal resonators e.g. the top of the head, the nose, the throat and chest. Notice how emphasising different resonators e.g. speaking with a very nasal voice gives you a different feeling of a character. Find a body shape that comes from this sound. Walk in the space and meet and greet each other as different characters.

There are so many warm ups you can do to explore character and start to improvise. This is just an idea to get you going. What is important to remember is that Forum Theatre is based on improvisation, therefore, participants need to prepare to use their bodies and voices in different ways to explore characters and different possible actions, reactions and interactions. Moreover, warming up different body parts and vocal resonators demonstrates that we have a myriad of different possibilities, we are not stuck in one way of being, life is an improvisation and the more we learn to improvise and break habituated ways of being, the more we can find solutions to problems and share ideas for breaking oppressive situations.

It can also be useful to play a game or re-cap previous theatre exercises. One of our favourite games is **Irish Duels** (Irish as it was created in Ireland).

- **Irish Duels** (Boal, 1992) (5-10 mins). In pairs, players face each other, each with one hand behind their back and one finger up. A wants to touch B's hand (behind their back), B wants to touch A's hand, A does not want B to touch their hand, B does not want A to touch their hand. The pair try as many playful ways of touching the hand as possible in a 'duel'. Swap pairs. Do the same with wanting / not wanting to touch knees with both hands. Swap pairs. Do the same, using your feet and wanting / not wanting feet to touch the other person's feet. Be gentle in the game - do not hurt each other! Like this game, Forum Theatre is a dynamic, passionate clash of wants.

**Columbian Hypnosis** and or **Complete the Image** or **Image of the Word** are also good exercises to do as a warm up for Forum Theatre and they can be repeated here (see Parts Two and Three).

- **Get into groups, re-cap on the Forum Theatre story / scenario** created in the Exploring Environmental Racism through Image theatre session above (5-10 mins). Facilitators listen to the ideas before devising begins. Decide who is playing which role. It is important that if the story is based on one person's experience of oppression, they should not play the role that they played in real life. It is important that participants have some emotional distance. Furthermore, if you have lived the experience once you do not have to live it again! It is much more fun to play a different role and it can be more fruitful to perhaps play the person who oppressed you. This can also be helpful in seeing a situation from a different perspective
- **Make images, improvise, devise and rehearse short Forum Theatre scenes** (20-25 mins). Each group creates a still picture of the beginning of the scene / scenario - this is usually where we can identify who the central character and what they want is and we can sometimes also see the first signs of who and what is oppressing them. Using the skills we have developed before in Image of the Word, the facilitator instructs the groups to bring their beginning image alive, in stages, through breath, then breath and movement, then breath and movement and sound and then finally fully improvising the beginning part of the scene / scenario. Do the same with the middle of the scene / scenario - this is usually where the conflict takes place and we can see the protagonist being oppressed but struggling for what they want. Then do the same with the end - this is usually where the crisis for the protagonist is clear. After this sequence of work, each group will have the beginning, middle and end, in very rough form. The facilitator can give feedback on the scenes, making sure the story is clear, the characters are clear, the protagonist and their wants are clear and that the oppression is identifiable. Each group briefly rehearses their scenes.
- **Present scenes and forum** (40-50 mins. - more time for this session is optimal). Choose a scene (or more if time) which resonates strongly for the group that they want to forum. The scene is presented, interventions are welcomed and the facilitator hosts a discussion, focussed on what was different about each intervention and what might we learn about challenging environmental racism / racist environmentalism.

**Forum Theatre example:** Even though we had a short amount of time, our groups came up with powerful scenarios in the workshops, partly based on real life experiences, where we found ways of challenging racism in environmental contexts, practicing solidarity and rehearsing for change. One example was a scene where a PoC character was given an allotment in an allotment area dominated by white German people. The character wanted to work on the allotment and was happy doing so but the neighbours started to complain about their music, the kinds of things they were growing and how the garden looked in discriminatory ways. The allotment neighbours had also collected signatures to the effect of ending the character's allotment contract. Participants intervened in the scene, demonstrating different ways of challenging the neighbours including sharing legal information on rights and procedures. Moreover, the Black and PoC participants were emboldened by the sharing, it was fun and empowering and the white participants practiced being active allies or as Ignatiev and Garvey (1996) put it, traitors to whiteness.

Closing ritual: 1-2-3 clap!

(45 mins to 1 hour)

Let's go back to where we started: ethics and principles. Considering the Forum Theatre session and all we have developed so far, what ethics and design principles do we need to inform anti-racist decolonial permaculture / agroecological action? What additional design objectives do we want to consider for anti-colonial design practice?

**Introduction** (ca. 15 Min.)

- **Remind the group of Permaculture Ethics:** What might we want to add? What should be part of the basic ethics?
- **Remind the group of Permaculture Design Principles:** What might we want to change or add? What terminology might we want to change?
- **The Permaculture Design Objectives often include:**
  - To achieve good or surplus yields
  - To develop a sustainable system
  - To avoid wastage of elements within the system
  - To develop a system that meets its own requirements
  - To develop a system that reduces work
  - To increase diversity which enables system stability
  - What might we want to add to these design objectives as we are doing our designs? What might we want to change?

Here are some **possible questions for expanding the Permaculture ethics and principles and design objectives:**

- How do we actively acknowledge and support the context and lineages of many of the principles?
- How to address and work with the different relations to land and soil and agriculture that we come with?
- How to address intersectionality in and through agroecology principles and practices?
- How to counter processes of colonial mapping by de-zoning and laying out, and hereby connect again what has been separated?
- How to be in joy and pain at the same time?
- How to not forget, be in the wake, while creating abundance, while creating other forms of being together?
- How to not be or remain in a reactive mode?
- What body relation to the soil, to species and to our environments, of which we are already part of (much of us is outside us), do we want? How do we decolonize our relationship to soil?

We might not find answers to everything above but the questions are what is important.

**Task:** (30 - 45 mins)

Work in groups to come up with ideas. Share ideas in a plenary. Write up new principles and design objectives and apply these to the designs we will go on to work on in groups.

## Participant's ideas for expanding the Permaculture ethics, principles and design objectives

These are drawn from Black and Indigenous movements:

- 'The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house' (Audre Lorde)
- 'If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.' (Lilla Watson)
- 'Nothing about us without us'
- 'Each one teach one', see Part One for more context
- 'Ubuntu'.
- See the Principles of Environmental Justice, 1991 (appendix)

Ideas, thoughts, suggestions from participants:

- Re-phrase the Permaculture principles of 'integration not segregation' as it has colonial connotations.
- Cut the principles of 'valuing services' and 'obtain a yield' as they have neo-liberal capitalist connotations.
- How can we 'obtain a yield' on stolen land?
- The group also questioned what is considered waste.
- What does it mean to care for the earth and care for the people? Who's earth? Which people? What are the implications if we consider living 'being in the wake' of slavery and plantation culture and living with many different kinds of power structures and hierarchies (Caste, class, gender, sexuality ...)
- Can we cultivate gratitude? Not just designing for the land but thankfulness to the land.
- Can the principles be more poetic, spiritual and include ritual?
- All the participants found it problematic that the discourse of Permaculture does not talk enough about where this knowledge comes from. One consequence of this might be that each Permaculture and Agroecology project needs to be involved in reparation work.
- participants questioned the dependence on classifications and quantifications that tie Permaculture to colonial European modernity and understanding of science and often discounts science based in Indigenous knowledge as just stories and myth telling.

## DESIGNING FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

(minimum 1 session of 1,5 to 2 hours)

applied

Once the group have considered and expanded the ethics and principles which inform design, they work in small groups to come up with a design for the site we are working on and or other sites (e.g. a balcony at home, the street where I live, a farm, a community garden, a fantasy place). Depending on the overall time frame, this task can be more or less elaborate, concentrate on smaller or larger areas or can also focus on one specific aspect.

### The design task:

For this purpose and for this context we want to demystify the idea of the designer. All of us are designers in our daily lives, we design our kitchen shelves so that we can reach spices and pots easily e.g., using the means we have available we are creating a mini-design. At this stage we do not focus on what can immediately be implemented at a site but **we stress the design as a form of rehearsal for change, similar to the Forum Theatre work**. At the same time, if a smaller aspect of a larger design can be extracted and planned to be implemented in the time available, we try to include practical sessions so participants can realise their own designs. We however always consider the principle of Slow and Small Solutions.

### Prompt for design task:

If you were able to make changes at the site we have been working on, what would it need to create an ideal space? Keeping in mind and actively working with Permaculture and agroecology ethics and principles as well as our reflections, critique and expansion of those, integrating learnings from our theatre work, finding processes and solutions together in your small group, applying our codes of practice in your small working group, considering all species who live and work on the site and those who might visit in the future. Revisit your notes from solo observations, notes and maps from site analysis and creating inventories of the site. Be as speculative as you can be, don't start by limiting your imagination, while being serious about ethical concerns. Make it fun and playful while considering possible obstacles and limitations. You may present your design as a map, an installation, a scene, a song, a performance, a game.

## SHARING OF GROUP DESIGN WORK

(1–1,5 hours)

applied

Each group sharing their designs is an important part of the workshop and should not be left out. Each group will learn from others. Celebrations are an essential part of the work. Designs can be donated to the owners of the site or kept by the group, as desired. Some participants might also opt for making designs for spaces they have easy access to. Each group receives questions and feedback from the rest of the group and the facilitators and they are invited to reflect on their own process. What did you enjoy most? What did you find difficult? What would you have done differently looking back now?

As mentioned above, if small aspects of the design proposal can be implemented during the workshop, this can be integrated in the presentation format.

### Examples and offerings of group designs and ideas

We found that questions of access of different kinds are recurring queries and concerns. Related desires for accessible spaces have been linked to the need for orientation in new spaces, gardens or seminar sites. Imagining welcoming gardens can be connected with scent and colour and recognising herbs and plants that reference different cultural heritages. The harvest to be obtained is thus more broadly defined, also including the necessity for social spaces and entrances that welcome newcomers. Questions asked are: What does it need to feel welcome in a wider context that can be very hostile? What is the role of design and space making here?

- One group planted an ancestral herb spiral with herbs connected to diverse cultural heritages used in cooking, which resonated with the feeling of home and familiarity. As the water was poured onto the soil participants were reminded of the practice of pouring libation in memory of ancestors. The group work responded to the need that Black and Indigenous people and People of Colour need to feel welcome in the space, especially given the political climate that many experience as a hostile environment in rural Germany.



- In response to the 'walking the line' exercise (Part Three), the principle of fertile edges, expanding design objectives to include spirituality, a group wanted to make the entrance to a site more welcoming for people to step into and create a portal from one space to another. At the same time the group recognized how important it is to have a safe and anonymous looking space in Brandenburg where Black people, LGBTIQ+ people and People of Colour are not stared at, away from the threat of the far right. After observing the entrance gate, participants noticed the circles in the wood, made by the pattern of branches growing. These circles reminded us of multiple patterns in nature. The group made holes where the circles were and decorated the circles on the inside of the gate, making them look like eyes, thereby affirming that this is a space where it is OK to be seen, where participants are not looked at but see each other, and reminding us of the spiritual concept of the all seeing eye. The group invited all participants to cross the gateway in whichever way they wanted, creating a polyphonous ritual, followed by all participants drawing many kinds of eyes onto the inside of the fence.



- Another group focused on a variety of possibilities for harvesting water on the site, integrating many available structures and buildings, contours of the land as well as trees that are already organising the space, while responding to and working with the sandy soil and lack of rain water that they found on the site. Diverse temporalities had to be considered here. How could structures and materials available be used effectively? How can the principle of small and slow solutions be applied and solutions be developed through observing and interacting with all species on site? Available corrugated sheets along the fence, painted different colours, brought together water harvesting techniques and the desire for a more colourful space.



As you will have noticed, we often close sessions with '1-2-3 clap!' (unless we are just having a short break). With longer workshops, one might want to integrate more of a closing ritual. Here are three ideas for closing:

**Make a group image or moving metabolism of climate justice** - this can leave the group with a positive and uplifting image or energy to take home with them. See Part Two for reminders on how to set up images and metabolisms.

**Free the birds** - each participant has an imaginary bird in their hands. They let it flutter between their palms. They are invited to imagine what they want to release into the world from what they have learnt during the workshop. Going together outside, the facilitator signals when we simultaneously release the birds into the sky, 1, 2, 3 - free the birds!

**Orchestra** - each participant shares a word, phrase or sound that expresses their feeling following the workshop. The facilitator or a participant conducts each word or sound, using repetition, to improvise a closing song or rap. Alternatively, if we want to focus on future action, each participant says in rhythm or through singing, one commitment, one thing they are going to do after the workshop has ended, to make a difference. The facilitator or a participant conducts everybody's phrase into a song or rap.

## EVALUATION

(30–40 mins)

We tend to do a lot of check-ins and adjustments as we go along. We like to build evaluation in, in this way, throughout our work. Therefore, our evaluation processes at the end are quite simple. We offer an online digital pad after every workshop for feedback. Also, at the end of each workshop, we invite participants to sit together without facilitators present, to collect group feedback on what worked well, what could have been different / what could have been improved and any questions or suggestions for the future. This can be done as a group or each participant individually or both. We offer paper in different colours (each colour for a different category of feedback) on which participants write their feedback before putting it into an envelope.

We have found feedback very helpful and continue to include feedback into our work.

# **PART FIVE:**

## **ADDITIONAL SESSIONS, TALKS, PLAY READING AND FILM SCREENINGS BY SPECIAL GUEST FACILITATORS AND ARTISTS**

It was very important in our workshops to have input and additional sessions from guest facilitators and artists. Contributions from guest facilitators and artists can be negotiated according to your own needs and requires careful planning. Conversations regarding shared values and approaches to power critical questions need to be part of the planning process and the positionality of facilitators needs to be considered. Below is some information on each of the contributors we worked with, with links to their work.

**Asmelash Dagne** was born and raised in Ethiopia. His qualifications include: Diploma of Integrated Natural Science (Hawassa college of Education/Ethiopia), Bachelor of Natural Science (Arba Minch University/Ethiopia), Permaculture Design Diploma (At permaculture institute of Britain/England) and Master of Science in Environmental Resources Management at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus – Senftenberg/Germany with a focus on utilizing renewable energy technology to ensure sustainable access to clean water, energy and food in most vulnerable areas of countries in the Global South.

"I started my career in 2008 as an integrated natural science teacher and "Permaculture" practitioner. In the years to come, I have received eight regional and national prizes for remarkable achievements in creating a model education and innovation center for sustainable integrated natural resource management in Ethiopia. 2014-2016: I worked as a "Permaculture" trainer and consultant for SMART-Ethiopia (Sustainable Management of Alternative and Renewable Technologies). I trained over 2000 farmers, students, teachers, and agriculture extension workers in collaboration with various stakeholders (CISS – Ethiopia, LVIA – international, Slow Food International, and others). 2017 – 2018: I worked as assistant general manager at SMART – Ethiopia to install and manage seven solar water pumps to ensure sustainable access to water, energy, and food. I trained farmers and extension workers on integrated resource management. Since 2019 I have been involved in planning and designing a multi years project on Agroforestry for sustainable development of human and nature in rural Ethiopia as external consultant, environmental consultant and trainer @ [EcoPhi Renewables Engineering GabH](https://bestecodesign.wordpress.com/). See: <https://bestecodesign.wordpress.com/>)

Asmelash was part of an early consultation session when we conceived of the workshop model and has been integral to our work. Asmelash led several sessions (online and in person) during various Agri/cultural Practices for Climate Justice workshops, including introducing participants to Permaculture theory and practices with examples from his own work, many of them placed in Ethiopia. Asmelash also facilitated practical sessions on the land such as composting, soil analysis, preparing vegetable beds and planning an edible edge.

### **A FOOD JOURNEY WITH MAMA D. UJUAJE**

**Mama D. Ujuaje** 'Of the African diaspora routed through the Caribbean, Mama D Ujuaje is a creative, a community researcher and learning facilitator. Trained in Agriculture and Horticulture with experience living and working with communities urban, forest, savannah and degraded across East and West Africa and the Caribbean. She has developed a variety of interactive learning experiences and explorations around the constitution and wielding of power at different social scales and geographies. She explores and examines the constructs of modernity/coloniality which disrupt and divert attention from somatic and social healing, repair and revitalisation. Her deep care and consistent attention is recognised as a critical mechanism through which working and living relationships have been successfully negotiated at different levels of organisation: of both human and plant lives.

She is a Community Researcher and Facilitator whose background is in Nourishment praxis and embodied and art-based advocacy towards Socially Transformative Justice. She currently curates, within Community Centred Knowledge, Learning Journeys, exploring the interfaces of community, legacies of colonialism and the modernity which is constituted by it and systems of justice via art, culture and other than human 'lenses'. She uses embodied, multi-sensory and action research methods to interrogate the interfaces of both community and academic institutional knowledge assemblage and flow. She is interested in how humans navigate justice issues over time and space and how all beings manage personal and social trauma within bodies located across the ecologies and territories of the Anthropocene. Mindful and sensitive to the value

of cultural, social and ethical archetypes through which human sense-making is articulated, she encourages a range of creative authenticities to connect, co-inform and strengthen participatory and engaged learning and praxis. Mama D has been invited to a variety of spaces to share innovative, decolonial art based learning practice and to work alongside others to co-produce community centred: learning. She is a plant whisperer traversing old and new worlds of the pluriverse'. See: <https://communitycentredknowledge.org/>)

Mama D. led the participants on one version of The Food Journey, an immersive all day multi-sensory cooking and culinary storytelling performance / workshop tracing the roots and routes of food and spices in relation to and through the violence and exploitation of enslavement, colonisation, plantation agriculture and global capitalism. Mama D. made contributions as a participant as well as a facilitator during weekend workshops and online sessions and brought a wealth of knowledge, sensitivity and urgency towards disentangling ourselves from habituated ways of being that often distances us from everything and everyone around, besides and within us.

## PERMACULTURE DESIGN PRACTICE WITH SANDRA PASSARO

**Sandra Verena Passaro** is a lecturer, curator, qualified designer for applied permaculture and founder of Hungry Cities, Hyper Culture and Co-Creator of the Norient digital space. She conducts transdisciplinary research at the interface of culture, society, education, nutrition and the environment. For over ten years she has been designing, advising and supporting community-building processes in independent international networks, as well as environmental and cultural projects commissioned by the federal, state and city governments. She helped launch the agroforestry campaign and co-designed the development of the Friedrichshain/Kreuzberg environmental education center. She also heads the regional base year east of the Permaculture Academy in Germany, an educational center for sustainable development (ESD) recognized by the UNESCO Commission and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Her concern is to design inclusive virtual or physical spaces in which dialogues and transdisciplinary work between people of diverse cultural backgrounds are made possible. Through the creation of transnational projects as a cultural curator and permaculture designer, she actively implements anti-racist, and decolonising approaches since 2014.

„Social systems work like ecosystems.“ For Sandra Passaro, culture and nature are closely intertwined. Their transdisciplinary approach to systemic environmental design and the promotion of „more than sustainable“, yet regenerative development (on a social and natural level) is based on ecosystem criteria and thus the principles of diversity, cooperation, networking and self-organization. Topics such as food safety and nutrition are her passion. She feels that natural food preparation is our cultural heritage and should be preserved. The key for her is “food literacy”, which is why she is currently researching conceptual systems, such as the productive ecosystem “forest garden” and “syntropic agroforestry”, as well as “regenerative landscapes” and “water management”.

See also [hungry-cities.net](http://hungry-cities.net), [hyper-culture.net](http://hyper-culture.net), [norient.com](http://norient.com))

Sandra Passaro led sessions on Permaculture design and through her wealth of experience in design and teaching she supported the group design work that led to the final presentations.

## FILM SCREENINGS

We often screen films during the workshop or during optional evening sessions. The films we select address both the early emergence of intersectional environmental movements from the Global South as well as the impact that past and present settler colonialism and militarisation has on access to land, to growing, to water, to agricultural practices, to food and foraging. Below are just a few film examples that we find inspiring and connected to our approach; this list can easily be extended.

**Sudesha** (India, 1983, 30 mins) by the Yugantar Film Collective. 'A portrait of Sudesha Devi, a woman who is a village activist in the Chipko forest conservation movement in the foothills of the Himalayas. Here people's livelihoods depend on the forest which is threatened to be destroyed by powerful timber traders. While men work away from home and alcoholism is a problem, women carry out most of the labour. They also became active agents of the Chipko movement. Sudesha navigates family life, the strenuous terrain of the mountains and living her life through protest which also brought her to prison. While scenes of protests have been re-enacted for this film as well and political meetings are followed, the film carries a calmness when attending to the women's daily routines and complexities of securing livelihood in the Himalayas; complexities that link the film to past and current eco-feminist concerns. Yugantar's fourth and last film returned to working with a political movement. While women were not official leaders of the Chipko movement, its protests were largely sustained by women and women were affected the most by the issues raised within this early ecological movement. While working with movement leaders at the time, the collective's focus stayed with women participants, this time with one main protagonist Sudesha. In hindsight members of the collective question how women and in particular working class women have been driving forces in movement politics while not being supported to become leaders. Sudesha was part of the film series "As women see it. How do women see their lives and their future?" A film project with seven documentary films from India, Senegal, Peru, Nicaragua, Egypt, Italy and Germany. Production Faust Film GmbH, Munich. 1981-1983. As the only Yugantar film produced outside India, Sudesha travelled internationally as part of the *As women see it* film series and won awards'. See: [yugantar.film/Films/sudesha/](http://yugantar.film/Films/sudesha/))

**Foragers** (Palestine, 2022, 64 mins) by Jumana Manna. 'Foragers depicts the dramas around the practice of foraging for wild edible plants in Palestine/Israel with wry humor and a meditative pace. Shot in the Golan Heights, the Galilee and Jerusalem, it employs fiction, documentary and archival footage to portray the impact of Israeli nature protection laws on these customs. The restrictions prohibit the collection of the artichoke-like 'akkoub and za'atar (thyme), and have resulted in fines and trials for hundreds caught collecting these native plants. For Palestinians, these laws constitute an ecological veil for legislation that further alienates them from their land while Israeli state representatives insist on their scientific expertise and duty to protect. Following the plants from the wild to the kitchen, from the chases between the foragers and the nature patrol, to courtroom defences, Foragers captures the joy and knowledge embodied in these traditions alongside their resilience to the prohibitive law. By reframing the terms and constraints of preservation, the film raises questions around the politics of extinction, namely who determines what is made extinct and what gets to live on. See: [www.jumanamanna.com/Foragers](http://www.jumanamanna.com/Foragers)

**Chão/Landless** (Brazil, 2019, 110 mins) by Camila Freitas. 'Over a period of four years, Camila Freitas documented the lives of a group of landless workers in the Brazilian state of Goiás. Since 2015, the workers have occupied a portion of a factory site and demanded land reform. Chão provides insights into the group's everyday routine, which is divided up between tilling the land, political activism and talk of what a better future might look like. The film thus delves into the microstructures of local political action while also demonstrating just how dependent the Landless Workers Movement is on Brazilian politics, global capital and the agricultural industry. Occupying a space between frank realism and potent atmospherics that draw their power from poetic

digressions, such as deliberately exaggerated moments on the soundtrack, impressionistic close-ups and cinematographic micro-narrations, *Chão* documents life in the resistance, where hope can sometimes seem like the only thing capable of countering the realities of the world. It was only recently that Jair Bolsonaro, the new president of Brazil, added the landless to the list of enemies of the nation and called on landowners to take up arms to defend their property.' See: [berlinale.de/en/2019/programme/201917902.html](http://berlinale.de/en/2019/programme/201917902.html)

**Xaraasi Xanne - Crossing Voices** (France, Germany, Mali, 2022, 123 mins) by Bouba Touré and Raphaël Grisey. In the mid 1970s, a group of activists from the western African diaspora, hailing from agricultural backgrounds and living in Paris in workers' residences, decide to turn their backs on factory work in order to train with French farmers in the Champagne region. Their objective is to create an agricultural cooperative in a country in the Sahel region of western Africa. In December 1976 the group founds the agricultural cooperative Somankidi Coura, in the Kayes region of Mali, a country of massive emigration. Concurrently the director Sidney Sokona makes a film on the subject, *Safrana ou le droit à la parole* (1978). In this work of fiction, the photographer Bouba Touré plays the role of himself. Later he will become a film projectionist and his political activism will also lead him to produce a significant number of photographs and videos which bear witness to his life as an immigrant and to the conflicts he has traversed and accompanied. Thirty years after Sokhona, Raphaël Grisey begins a new cinematic collaboration with Touré, as a gesture of transmission of an archive and a history at risk of disappearing. From this collaboration will emerge the video *Cooperative* (2008, Raphaël Grisey) and Bouba Touré's short film *Bouba Touré, 58 rue Trousseau, 75011, Paris, France*, in which the filmmaker transforms his apartment into a living archive. The film "Xaraasi Xanne - Crossing Voices" follows the artistic and militant trajectory of Bouba Touré and attempts to assemble pieces of the history of the Cooperative in order to speak of its present and to imagine a future that would be supported by generative African ecological practices, unshackled from the heavy weight of colonial history and entanglements. See: [raphaelgrisey.net/works/xaraasi-xanne-crossing-voices-in-production/](http://raphaelgrisey.net/works/xaraasi-xanne-crossing-voices-in-production/)

We also found it useful to watch examples of community theatre projects at the intersection of climate justice including the Kawounda Women's Collective in Kenya and PETA in the Philippines, documented *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, a book and video by Eugene Van Erven (2000).

## ONLINE TALKS

We offered online talks between the workshop weekends, to keep the learning, dialogues and connection with the group flowing and to include further voices, contexts and approaches.

**Green Kashmir:** Amber Badyari and Shah Badyari founded Green Kashmir and have developed their Permaculture practice and teaching in the context of Kashmir and the UK, including a trauma sensitive approach. During our meeting Amber and Shah shared aspects of their work, challenges and possibilities to work with Permaculture in Kashmir as well as how this connects to local agricultural and social practices. They also shared their work introducing permaculture to agricultural universities as well as environmental district managers as well as to local community groups addressing PTSD. See: [www.greenkashmir.org/](http://www.greenkashmir.org/)

**Sakiya** (Ramallah, Palestine) is a progressive academy for experimental knowledge production and sharing, grafting local agrarian traditions of self-sufficiency with contemporary art and ecological practices. This circular system of knowledge production and sharing integrates agriculture within the framework of an interdisciplinary residency program, where cultural actors, such as farmers and crafts/small industry initiatives, assume a prominent role alongside visiting and local artists and scholars. Sakiya's core programs engage food production, exhibitions, symposia, publications, and education/training workshops, exploring the intersections between art, science,

and agriculture in a sustainable and replicable model. Sahar Qawasmi, cofounder of Sakiya with Nida Sinnokrot shared the concept and projects that sit at the intersection of art, agriculture and science. See their website for more: [sakiya.org/](https://sakiya.org/)

## **FAMILY TREE PLAY READING BY MOJISOLA ADEBAYO**

Mojisola also read from her published play, *Family Tree* (Adebayo, 2023), during one of our evening sessions. The play, originally produced by Actors Touring Company (UK), was informed by learning on the Agri/cultural Practices workshop process. *Family Tree* explores extraction from Black women's bodies through the true story of Henrietta Lacks and her immortal cells. Addressing the extraction of cells, labour and knowledge, the play culminates in the burial of white supremacy and the deification of Henrietta Lacks, with music and dancing and fire and feasting! The audience are offered a bowl of Ital stew, a traditional Rastafarian vegan recipe from Jamaica, drawn from Black and Indigenous knowledge about companion planting, nutrition and nourishment.

We hope you enjoy the virtual stew that this guidebook offers and we invite you to get cooking!

## **CONCLUDING QUESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS**

We hope that the methodology we have shared in this book will be useful to you in developing your own anti-racist practices for climate justice. Agri/cultural Practices is in development and we continue to reflect on the experiment so far. There are many questions we are considering in relation to our own work, that you might want to also consider in your own work.

We are wondering whether...

- white participants could do some guided work together on critical whiteness, before working with a mixed Black and PoC group.
- we could sometimes have workshops where Black and PoC participants and facilitators work together and focus on issues that concern us, without white participants and facilitators taking up too much space and or have separate breakout spaces to discuss issues as they arise.
- the work could speak more directly to questions of queerness at the intersection of race, as this is often implicit rather than explicit in the work. It is interesting to note that almost all participants (as well as Nicole and Mojisola) identify as women, non-binary and or queer.
- the work could address different forms of discrimination based on caste, class, religion, gender and sexuality more to attend to a wider range of contexts and experiences.
- the social model of disability<sup>35</sup> could inform Agri/cultural Practices much more.
- we could make the work even more accessible for people with impairments, people who are neuro-divergent, people with chronic fatigue and with different sensorial needs.
- it could be useful to have a therapist on site during the project, to support people when powerful feelings come up.
- it could be beneficial to have a project supervisor to support facilitators, especially around the emotional labour of the project.
- we could offer transport from cities (e.g. Berlin to Brandenburg), to avoid people experiencing or having anxiety about white supremacist incidents on the train.
- the expanded Permaculture principles could be fed back to Permaculturalists to think about, without the work and experience of BIPoC participants being extracted again.

<sup>35</sup> See: [disabilityrightsuk.org/social-model-disability-language](https://disabilityrightsuk.org/social-model-disability-language) last accessed 15/10/2024



- it could be beneficial to have more time for groups who do not always feel safe in rural areas in Germany, to have more time to rest and enjoy nature.

The workshop model is connecting various different fields of content and practice, seeks to introduce them with integrity, give critical reflection time and be playful and enjoyable and give time for active group work in the form of theatre scenes and Permaculture designs. This is a lot to fit in and timing needs to be thought through carefully, according to facilitators and participants needs and possibilities. Having more time for participants to bring in their own backgrounds, skills and interests is always a plus. Having different workshops split over time has the advantage of being in a place during different seasons while having e.g. one dedicated week can achieve a certain concentration. While planning we also considered who can afford to take time off work, for how long and when?

## Coda

The Agri/cultural Practices for Climate Justice workshops reconnect with the roots of Theatre of the Oppressed in the struggle for land rights in Brazil in the 1960s, making explicit (the often problematically implicit) anti-racist and decolonial origins. We play games on grounds in outside spaces, but in this work, the land itself, the soil and the species all around and underneath us, are not a backdrop. They are not objects or props, but participants in and through the work. The histories and legacies of the soil are ever present. Theatre, the art of human relations in time and space, cannot therefore, be separated from ecology. Nor should Permaculture be isolated from its Black and Indigenous roots. If it does not engage with environmental racism it risks reinforcing racist environmentalism and avoiding the causes of the climate crisis. We therefore place the interconnected climate crisis and struggle against coloniality centre stage and use that stage and workshop space to collectively imagine possibilities for environmental justice. We hope that some of the theatrical, critical and other artistic methods we have shared and pointed towards here can support the urgent process of radically redesigning relationality and rehearsing for change, encompassing all aspects of our environments, from nourishment to toxicity, sparked by resistant questions and based on an ethic of equality.

# **BIBLIOGRAPHY, FURTHER READING, RESOURCES**

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## RESOURCES

### (short selection of training centres and organisations)

12 Principles Permaculture Design, see:

<https://12pdesign.net/>

The Blue Mountain Permaculture Institute, see:

<https://www.bluemountainspermacultureinstitute.com.au/>

Climate Justice Berlin Kollektive (ehemals Black Earth Kollektiv):

@ClimateJusticeBerlinKollektiv

Common Ecologies, see:

<https://commonecologies.net/>

Graeae /with excellent resources for making theatre work accessible for people with disabilities).

See: <https://graeae.org/accessibility/>

Hungry Cities:

<https://www.hungry-cities.net/>

Kuringa, Space for Theatre of the Oppressed, see:

<https://kuringa.de/>

La via Campesina, global network and regional groups:

<https://viacampesina.org/en/>

LEAP Confronting Conflict specialise in creative approaches to conflict resolution:

<https://leapconfrontingconflict.org.uk/>

Information on Mama D. Ujuaje and The Food Journey:

<https://communitycentredknowledge.org/>

Permakultur Institut e.V und Permakultur Akademie, Germany:

<https://www.permakultur.de/home>

Permaculture Association, UK, also offers online courses:

<https://www.permaculture.org.uk/>

Soul Fire Farm, US:

<https://www.soulfirefarm.org/>

## EXAMPLE WORKSHOP SCHEDULES

Time	Thursday, 26.10.2023	Friday, 27.10.2023	Saturday, 28.10.2023	Sunday, 29.10.2023
8 - 9 am	Travel and arrival day	BREAKFAST + CHORES	BREAKFAST + CHORES	BREAKFAST + CHORES
9 - 9.30 am		Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe with all senses + take notes	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe with all senses + take notes	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe + take notes
9.30 - 11 am		Introduction to Ethics and Principles of Permaculture (PC) through Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) through games and exercises (M+N)	Creative writing + art practices inspired by texts (N) + introduction to a Food Journey with special guest facilitator: Mama D Ujuaje	Individual or group walking site analysis of the land with prompts, sharing findings + creative writing prompt (N)
11 - 11.30 am		TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK
11.30 - 1 pm		Climate (in)justice - developing a shared vocabulary through discussion exercises + Image Theatre (N+M)	A Food Journey with Mama D...	Practical work with the soil: warm up then mulching with call and response songs and chants! (N+M)
1 - 2.30 pm		CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations
2.30 - 4 pm		How do we want to work together? Group dynamics, conflict + resolution, knowledge exchange + intro to Forum Theatre (M+N)	A Food Journey with Mama D...	Expanding / altering the PC ? Agroecology principles, plans for online sessions, April + June 2024, closing thoughts + actions (N+M)
4 - 4.30 pm		TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - CLOSING
4.30 - 6 pm	Welcome, introductions, aims, needs, principled space, schedule, chores, plans (M+N)	PC Ethics and Principles through case studies (Asmelash online)	Reflections on A Food Journey with Mama D.	Optional time for those who can stay longer to help clear up
6 - 8 pm	DINNER - REST BREAK 7-8pm Thursday	DINNER - REST BREAK	DINNER - REST BREAK	
8 - 9 pm	Each One Teach One - set up the 'alter'	Optional: film screening of <i>Foragers</i> by Jumana Manna	Participant led celebrations! Dancing, music, rituals, fire, sauna, offers...	



Time	Thursday, 4.4.2024	Friday, 5.4.2024	Saturday, 6.4.2024	Sunday, 7.4.2024
8 - 9 am	Travel and arrival day	BREAKFAST + CHORES	BREAKFAST + CHORES	BREAKFAST + CHORES
9 - 9.30 am	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe with all senses + take notes	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe with all senses + take notes	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe with all senses + take notes	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe + take notes
9.30 - 11 am	Games + exercises from Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) exploring power relations towards anti-colonial design (M+N)	Creative writing + art practices inspired by reading short critical texts in relation to our focus on anti-colonial design (N)	Group design work in response to task (A, M + N in support)	
11 - 11.30 am	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK
11.30 - 1 pm	'Unlearning with companions in history' (Azoulay): sharing + mind-mapping examples of indigenous practices of resistance to colonial design (N+M)	Unlearning histories of colonial zones and zoning through Image Theatre, map observation, exercises + examples, zones in PC (M+N)	Practical work with the soil: warm up, preparing beds, tending trees, planting, with call and response songs, chants, poetry (A, N+M)	
1 - 2.30 pm	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations
2.30 - 4 pm	Introduction to Permaculture (PC) / Agroecology design (with Asmelash in person)	Preparation for PC / Agroecology design work including a walk + talk (A)	Sharing group designs, plans for online sessions, closing thoughts + actions (N+M)	
4 - 4.30 pm	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - CLOSING
4.30 - 6 pm	Welcome, check-in, aims, focus: design, codes, needs, schedule, chores, requests, offers, alter, solo observation(M+N)	Introduction to Permaculture / Agroecology design continued (AD)	Preparation for PC / Agroecology design work continued (A)	Optional time for those who can stay longer to help clear up
6 - 8 pm	DINNER - REST BREAK 7-8pm Thursday	DINNER - REST BREAK	DINNER - REST BREAK	
8-9 pm	Each One Teach One -sharing from pre-task	Optional film screening of Chão (on the Brazilian landless workers movement)	Participant led celebrations! Dancing, music, rituals, fire, sauna, offers...	

Time	Thursday, 20.6.2024	Friday, 21.6.2024	Saturday, 22.6.2024	Sunday, 23.6.2024
8 - 9 am	Travel and arrival day	BREAKFAST + CHORES	BREAKFAST + CHORES	BREAKFAST + CHORES
9 - 9.30 am		Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe with all senses + "I wonder ..."	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe + Observe energies	Solo observations - sit (or walk) alone, observe + observe patterns
9.30 - 11 am		Daily check in + warm up followed by... Workshop with Mojisola and Nicole.  Re-collecting through sculpting images	Daily check-in + warm up into... Workshop with Mojisola and Nicole.  Forum Theatre	Daily check-in + warm up then... Concluding design and practical group work
11 - 11.30 am		TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK
11.30 - 1 pm		Workshop with Mojisola and Nicole.  Image theatre towards Forum Theatre on environmental racism/ justice	Workshop with Mojisola and Nicole.  Forum Theatre into expanding agroecology principles and design objectives	Presenting and sharing designs and walk-through group actions
1 - 2.30 pm		CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations	CHORES - LUNCH - REST BREAK + solo observations
2.30 - 4 pm		Workshop with Sandra.  5 Elements Exploring abiotic factors	Workshop with Sandra.  10 Patterns Natural Patterns as Design Method	Closing together: evaluations, sharings, future commitments
4 - 4.30 pm		TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - REST BREAK	TEA - COFFEE - CLOSING
4.30 - 6 pm (Thursday) 4.30-6.30pm)	Welcome, check-in, aims, codes, wants, schedule, chores, your contribution to the alter.	Workshop with Sandra.  3 Cycles In dialogue with a tree	Workshop with Sandra.  Designing Complex Systems w/ Ecosystem Criteria	Optional time for those who can stay longer to help clear up - thank you! :)
6 - 8 pm	DINNER - REST BREAK 7-8pm Thursday	DINNER - REST BREAK	DINNER - REST BREAK Help clear + prepare for evening	
8 - 9 pm	Each one teach one Organizing offers	Optional evening: Design workshop or practice, sharing of short films and theatre	Optional evening sharing, sauna, solstice party + other offers!	NB: schedule subject to change according to needs + desires.

## FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (1991)

WE, *THE PEOPLE OF COLOR*, gathered together at this multinational People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to ensure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our peoples, do affirm and adopt these Principles of Environmental Justice:

- 1** *Environmental Justice* affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.
- 2** *Environmental Justice* demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.
- 3** *Environmental Justice* mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.
- 4** *Environmental Justice* calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.
- 5** *Environmental Justice* affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.
- 6** *Environmental Justice* demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.
- 7** *Environmental Justice* demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.
- 8** *Environmental Justice* affirms the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. It also affirms the right of those who work at home to be free from environmental hazards.
- 9** *Environmental Justice* protects the right of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.
- 10** *Environmental Justice* considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration On Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.
- 11** *Environmental Justice* must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants affirming sovereignty and self-determination.
- 12** *Environmental Justice* affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and provided fair access for all to the full range of resources.

**13** *Environmental Justice* calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.

**14** *Environmental Justice* opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations.

**15** *Environmental Justice* opposes military occupation, repression and exploitation of lands, peoples and cultures, and other life forms.

**16** *Environmental Justice* calls for the education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.

**17** *Environmental Justice* requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to ensure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.

*Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held on October 24-27, 1991, in Washington DC, drafted and adopted these 17 principles of Environmental Justice. Since then, the Principles have served as a defining document for the growing grassroots movement for environmental justice.*

## **THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH LETTER, 2019**

*This letter was collaboratively written with dozens of aligned groups. As the weeks of action called by Extinction Rebellion were coming to an end, our groups came together to reflect on the narrative, strategies, tactics and demands of a reinvigorated climate movement in the UK. In this letter we articulate a foundational set of principles and demands that are rooted in justice and which we feel are crucial for the whole movement to consider as we continue constructing a response to the 'climate emergency'. May 2019*

### ***Dear Extinction Rebellion,***

The emergence of a mass movement like Extinction Rebellion (XR) is an encouraging sign that we have reached a moment of opportunity in which there is both a collective consciousness of the immense danger ahead of us and a collective will to fight it. A critical mass agrees with the open letter launching XR when it states "If we continue on our current path, the future for our species is bleak."

At the same time, in order to construct a different future, or even to imagine it, we have to understand what this "path" is, and how we arrived at the world as we know it now. "The Truth" of the ecological crisis is that we did not get here by a sequence of small missteps, but were thrust here by powerful forces that drove the distribution of resources of the entire planet and the structure of our societies. The economic structures that dominate us were brought about by colonial projects whose sole purpose is the pursuit of domination and profit. For centuries, racism, sexism and classism have been necessary for this system to be upheld, and have shaped the conditions we find ourselves in.

Another truth is that for many, the bleakness is not something of "the future". For those of us who are indigenous, working class, black, brown, queer, trans or disabled, the experience of structural violence became part of our birthright. Greta Thunberg calls world leaders to act by reminding them that "Our house is on fire". For many of us, the house has been on fire for a long time: whenever the tide of ecological violence rises, our communities, especially in the Global South are always first hit. We are the first to face poor air quality, hunger, public health crises, drought, floods and displacement.

XR says that "The science is clear: It is understood we are facing an unprecedented global emer-

gency. We are in a life or death situation of our own making. We must act now.” You may not realize that when you focus on the science you often look past the fire and us – you look past our histories of struggle, dignity, victory and resilience. And you look past the vast intergenerational knowledge of unity with nature that our peoples have. Indigenous communities remind us that we are not separate from nature, and that protecting the environment is also protecting ourselves. In order to survive, communities in the Global South continue to lead the visioning and building of new worlds free of the violence of capitalism. We must both centre those experiences and recognise those knowledges here.

Our communities have been on fire for a long time and these flames are fanned by our exclusion and silencing. Without incorporating our experiences, any response to this disaster will fail to change the complex ways in which social, economic and political systems shape our lives – offering some an easy pass in life and making others pay the cost. In order to envision a future in which we will all be liberated from the root causes of the climate crisis – capitalism, extractivism, racism, sexism, classism, ableism and other systems of oppression – the climate movement must reflect the complex realities of everyone’s lives in their narrative.

And this complexity needs to be reflected in the strategies too. Many of us live with the risk of arrest and criminalization. We have to carefully weigh the costs that can be inflicted on us and our communities by a state that is driven to target those who are racialised ahead of those who are white. The strategy of XR, with the primary tactic of being arrested, is a valid one – but it needs to be underlined by an ongoing analysis of privilege as well as the reality of police and state violence. XR participants should be able to use their privilege to risk arrest, whilst at the same time highlighting the racialised nature of policing. Though some of this analysis has started to happen, until it becomes central to XR’s organising it is not sufficient. To address climate change and its roots in inequity and domination, a diversity and plurality of tactics and communities will be needed to co-create the transformative change necessary.

We commend the energy and enthusiasm XR has brought to the environmental movement, and it brings us hope to see so many people willing to take action. But as we have outlined here, we feel there are key aspects of their approach that need to evolve. This letter calls on XR to do more in the spirit of their principles which say they “are working to build a movement that is participatory, decentralised, and inclusive”. We know that XR has already organised various listening exercises, and acknowledged some of the shortcomings in their approach, so we trust XR and its members will welcome our contribution.

As XR draws this period of actions to a close, we hope our letter presents some useful reflections for what can come next. The list of demands that we present below are not meant to be exhaustive, but to offer a starting point that supports the conversations that are urgently needed. Wretched of the Earth, together with many other groups, hold the following demands as crucial for a climate justice rebellion:

- Implement a transition, with justice at its core, to reduce UK carbon emissions to zero by 2030 as part of its fair share to keep warming below 1.5°C; this includes halting all fracking projects, free transport solutions and decent housing, regulating and democratising corporations, and restoring ecosystems.
- Pass a Global Green New Deal to ensure finance and technology for the Global South through international cooperation. Climate justice must include reparations and redistribution; a greener economy in Britain will achieve very little if the government continues to hinder vulnerable countries from doing the same through crippling debt, unfair trade deals, and the export of its own deathly extractive industries. This Green New Deal would also include an end to the arms trade. Wars have been created to serve the interests of corporations – the largest arms deals have delivered oil; whilst the world’s largest militaries are the biggest users of petrol.
- Hold transnational corporations accountable by creating a system that regulates them and stops them from practicing global destruction. This would include getting rid of many existing trade and investment agreements that enshrine the will of these transnational corporations.
- Take the planet off the stock market by restructuring the financial sector to make it transparent, democratised, and sustainable while discentivising investment in extractive industries and subsidising renewable energy programmes, ecological justice and regeneration programmes.

- End the hostile environment of walls and fences, detention centers and prisons that are used against racialised, migrant, and refugee communities. Instead, the UK should acknowledge it's historic and current responsibilities for driving the displacement of peoples and communities and honour its obligation to them.
- Guarantee flourishing communities both in the global north and the global south in which everyone has the right to free education, an adequate income whether in or out of work, universal healthcare including support for mental wellbeing, affordable transportation, affordable healthy food, dignified employment and housing, meaningful political participation, a transformative justice system, gender and sexuality freedoms, and, for disabled and older people, to live independently in the community.

The fight for climate justice is the fight of our lives, and we need to do it right. We share this reflection from a place of love and solidarity, by groups and networks working with frontline communities, united in the spirit of building a climate justice movement that does not make the poorest in the rich countries pay the price for tackling the climate crisis, and refuses to sacrifice the people of the global South to protect the citizens of the global North. It is crucial that we remain accountable to our communities, and all those who don't have access to the centres of power. Without this accountability, the call for climate justice is empty.

### The Wretched of the Earth

Argentina Solidarity Campaign  
 Black Lives Matter UK  
 BP or not BP  
 Bolivian Platform on Climate Change  
 Bristol Rising Tide  
 Campaign Against the Arms Trade CAAT  
 Coal Action Network  
 Concrete Action  
 Decolonising Environmentalism  
 Decolonising our minds  
 Disabled People Against the Cuts  
 Earth in Brackets  
 Edge Fund  
 End Deportations  
 GAIA - Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives  
 Global Forest Coalition  
 Green Anticapitalist Front  
 Gentle Radical  
 Grow Heathrow/transition Heathrow  
 Hambach Forest occupation  
 Healing Justice London  
 Labour Against Racism and Fascism  
 Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants  
 London campaign against police and state violence  
 London Mexico Solidarity  
 London Feminist Antifa  
 London Latinxs  
 Marikana Solidarity Campaign  
 Mental Health Resistance Network  
 Mexico Solidarity Campaign  
 Migrants Connections festival  
 Migrants Rights Network  
 Movimiento Jaguar Despierto  
 Ni Una Menos UK



Ota Benga Alliance for Peace  
Our Future Now  
People's Climate Network  
Peoples' Advocacy Foundation for Justice and  
Race on the Agenda (ROTA)  
Redress, South Africa  
Reclaim the Power  
Science for the People  
Platform  
The Democracy Centre  
The Leap  
Third World Network  
Tripod: Training for Creative Social Action  
War on Want

**SOLIDARITY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT**  
**by Black Permaculture Network and Earth Activist Training (2020)**

We, the members of the undersigned permaculture groups and organizations, wish to publicly state our support for the BlackLivesMatter movement and the ongoing fight to end all police violence against communities of color. Permaculture is a system of regenerative ecological design rooted in indigenous knowledge and wisdom. Its three core ethics, care for the earth, care for the people, care for the future lead us to call for accountability for police who currently target, harass and murder people in communities of color, and especially the black community, with impunity. We cannot care for the people unless we assure justice for all people and assert the value of every person's life.

Permaculture also teaches us to look at patterns, and we see a recurring pattern of devaluing and dehumanizing people of color that extends back through the centuries, including the histories of enslavement, the genocide of indigenous peoples, segregation, exploitation and much more. We cannot build a vibrant future unless we acknowledge this painful past and recognize that its legacy continues today.

We see this current system is designed to benefit certain people at the expense of others and is part of the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few. Out of this comes an opportunity to redesign a truly restorative way of dealing with injustice, conflicts, competing needs, and past wounds,

At this time of grave environmental crisis, we recognize that the divisive impact of all forms of discrimination and prejudice hamper every effort to shift the path of our society off of the road to ruin and onto the path of regeneration. Our economic, political and social systems can only find ecological balance when they are founded upon justice. One of the core permaculture principles is that diversity creates resilience. We are committed to envision, design and create a world in which we affirm and celebrate human diversity, where we can learn from one another's perspectives and support one another's struggles. We are proud to lend our support to all those who work to make that vision real.

*Pandora Thomas, Black Permaculture Network*  
*Starhawk, Earth Activist Training*

## AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHIES

### Mojisola Adebayo

Mojisola is an award-winning Black-British (Yoruba/Danish) lesbian playwright, performer, producer, facilitator and Professor at Queen Mary, University of London. Mojisola holds a BA in Drama and Theatre Arts, an MA in Physical Theatre, a PhD in Black queer theatre (University of London). Mojisola trained extensively with Augusto Boal and is a specialist in Theatre of the Oppressed, working particularly in locations of conflict and crisis. Mojisola has worked in theatre, radio and television over the past 30 years across four continents, performing in over 50 productions, writing, devising and directing over 30 plays, from Antarctica to Zimbabwe. Their own plays are concerned with racism, climate change, slavery, occupation, homophobia, Islamophobia, gender-based violence and the Black Lives Matter movement. Publications include several of her plays in Mojisola Adebayo: *Plays One and Plays Two* (Oberon Books), *Family Tree* (Bloomsbury Methuen), *48 Minutes for Palestine* (Bloomsbury Methuen), *The Theatre for Development Handbook* (Pan, co-written with John Martin and Manisha Mehta), *Wind / Rush Generation(s)* (in National Theatre Connections 2020, Methuen) and *Black British Queer Plays and Practitioners* (Methuen, co-edited with Lynette Goddard. For more see [www.mojisolaadebayo.co.uk](http://www.mojisolaadebayo.co.uk)

### Nicole Wolf

Nicole (she/her) is a *white* queer researcher, writer, pedagogue and curator, living in Berlin. She was a Senior Lecturer in Visual Cultures (Goldsmiths, University of London) for 20 years. Much of her research and thinking has been inspired and informed by artistic and activist practices in South Asia, in particular intersectional feminist work in India and work that engages with military occupied Kashmir. Cinema's role in processes of decolonisation has been in the foreground of her research, teaching and curatorial work. Nicole trained in Permaculture in 2014 (Ecodharma, Spain), followed by two Permaculture teacher trainings, including one with Rosemary Morrow in Srinagar, organised by Green Kashmir. Since then she has been passionate about connecting her research interests in critical ecologies, anti-colonial environmentalisms, agroecology and creative practice, exploring agri/culture as resistance practice and Soil as Archive. As part of 'Living Archive – Archive Work as a Contemporary Artistic Practice' and 'Archive ausser sich' (both projects by Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art, Berlin) Nicole led the restoration of Yugantar's film works, India's first feminist film collective, through her research and writing, accessible @yugantar.film. Nicole developed "Soil – City- Solidarity" (with Alfred Decker), an interdisciplinary urban permaculture design course, complemented by the symposium "'Tell me what matter was the ground' – Repair beyond redemption". Selected academic publications can be found here: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/visual-cultures/n-wolf/>

Mojisola Adebayo and Nicole Wolf, Berlin, October 2024

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