

Decolonial Subversions

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A Manifesto for Decolonial Subversions

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Abstract

While decolonisation has in recent years become increasingly popular in everyday and academic discourses, it has thus far failed to deliver the radical ruptures and revolutionary transformations of the world-order envisioned by anticolonial practitioners and intellectuals. In great part, this is because exploitative politico-economic relations reminiscent of imperialism are upheld under the guise of globalisation, free-market and development. This Decolonial Manifesto is a call for action to dismantle current power structures and bring about fairer and decentred processes of producing, legitimising and distributing knowledge over and above challenging western hegemony in general. While a series of pragmatic points of action (including rotational editorship, open access publishing, multilingual written, audio and visual contributions among others) aim directly at overcoming the deep-rooted issues pervading academic publishing, these are to be collocated within larger narratives challenging race- and class-informed marginalisations, capitalist and neoliberal market-structures, unethical patriarchal setups, ableist discourses and the relentless destruction of planet Earth. Such a project is necessarily open-ended, collaborative and disruptive, and promises subversive and enriching spaces for change.

Keywords: decolonisation, publishing, knowledge production, regimes of truth, subversion

¹ The idea of writing this Manifesto at first came to me while discussing with Romina Istratii, co-founder of *Decolonial Subversions*, a series of processes and principles around which we envisioned our platform. While I set out to write the Manifesto as a constitutional document for *Decolonial Subversions* in general, it increasingly came to reflect my personal take on decolonisation, and thus appears as a separate contribution to the platform. Those principles that instead both, Romina and I hold to be fundamental for our project appear in in the [Basic Manifesto](#).

Decolonisation has over recent years become increasingly popular in both, academic discourses and everyday parlance. While decolonisation's widening scope is unconditionally welcome, it is often the very amplification of its reach that gives the semblance of a world that is increasingly decolonial, thus frequently exonerating academics, activists and lay people from persistently and scrupulously verifying that the structural and systemic changes essential for decolonisation are implemented. From a more attentive outlook, in fact it appears that 'decolonial' is often used as a mere cosmetic (certainly fashionable) label that eludes radical rethinking and profound restructuring.

Decolonial Subversions springs from the dissatisfaction with the increasingly aesthetic form that decolonisation has recently taken, and the lack of commitment toward a re-envisioned world-order. Our aim is to question the deep-rooted and persevering hegemony enjoyed by the Global North,² and to promote its dismantling in favour of a more just world where geopolitical, epistemic and ontological setups are informed by equitable networks and philosophies—as opposed to the currently prevailing unidirectional centre-periphery relations invariably forged at the expense of the Global South.

Partially, the missed accomplishment of a far-reaching decolonial project can be attributed to the fact that it is an endeavour still largely directed and governed by interested actors representing a western-centric outlook. Accordingly, decolonisation has been framed as an organic development that progresses from Empire to Nation States, necessarily accompanied by the spread of Enlightenment values such as self-determination, autonomy and freedom.³ The radical ruptures and revolutionary transformations of the world-order envisioned by anticolonial intellectuals, politicians and activists from erstwhile colonies are thus obscured, while exploitative politico-economic relations reminiscent of imperialist configurations persevere disguised under discourses of globalisation, free-market and development.⁴

With *Decolonial Subversions* we not only want to provide a platform for the dissemination of decolonial *content*; importantly, we envision its *modus operandi* to be radically and subversively decolonial too. It is especially the second aim of our endeavour that has been circumvented within and outside academia, mostly by conferring decolonisation the role of a powerful façade wanting of implementation. It is significant that this paradox, whereby decolonisation is vigorously advocated while institutions remain

² Currently various expressions are used to refer to the divide and hierarchisations that have arisen between different sociocultural, economic and geopolitical areas in view of colonisation. Some of these are: west and non-west, centre and margin, Anglophone, Euroamerican, Eurocentrism, Orient, Global South and Global North. None of these reflect internal complexities and dynamics of marginalisation, risking to further unwarranted generalisations. However, in lack of a better terminology and aware of the their limitations, I resort to several of these terms, appealing to the readers' common sense that, among other things, they exceed geographical connotations and obscure inner marginalisations. See below for further reflections.

³ See A. Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2019.

⁴ See for example G. Prakash, "Who's Afraid of Postcoloniality?", in *Social Text*, Nr. 49 (1996) pp. 187-203.

firmly embedded in structures reaffirming exploitative power-relations⁵—not very differently from how freedom, self-determination and equality were pursued by colonial regimes while they subjugated colonies—remains till date largely unchallenged. An honest and coherent pursuit of decolonisation needs to address and solve this underlying paradox with all its consequences.

Chiefly aware that a truly decolonial endeavour entails predictable challenges and unforeseen courses, *Decolonial Subversions* fully embraces and commits to these. Among the difficulties we foresee figure the disadvantages deriving from not complying with current systems of knowledge-legitimation, which invariably persevere stale models of western knowledge-production. For example, in insisting that contributors in their works resort to thinkers and references from the Global South no less than the Global North, we break away from the cycle of self-perpetuating western epistemic dominance. This, however, comes at the cost of being—at least initially—precluded from becoming an indexed journal, a status accessible only to publications whose articles present bibliographies referencing articles published in already-indexed journals. The currently dominant system obviously results in a self-affirming process of knowledge-production where what is (not) to be considered legitimate knowledge is established at the outset.⁶ It is equally evident that such a system discourages especially young researchers and scholars from the Global South and beyond—often harbingers of innovative and radical thinking—from diverging from the highly restrictive and codified modes of making knowledge embraced by a large section of western academia. In light of these crucial limitations, we are firmly convinced that the drastic choice not to comply with common standards of scholarly knowledge-production is absolutely necessary (despite entailing definite obstacles) in order to create a vibrant network where decolonial knowledge can be pursued and disseminated as more than a mere façade. We are immensely grateful to the profound ethical commitment demonstrated by our contributors, partners, readers, listeners and viewers, thus helping in shaping a truly decolonial platform, which we are certain is thoroughly rewarding in the short run, and hope will assist in furthering ever-more impactful conversations on decolonisation in the long run.

Decolonial Subversions fully commits to the decentralisation of knowledge and to being a platform shaped by hitherto un(der)represented voices and by worldviews and modes of being that do not conform to mainstream, hegemonic paradigms. While all contributions undergo a rigorous and sophisticated review-process attesting their integrity and meaningfulness, we expressly refrain from directing or prescribing the orientations and

⁵ This becomes evident for example when looking at the fees that overseas students are charged for studying in the UK, when many state-of-the-art English universities and other institutions are built on revenues from erstwhile colonies (f. ex. S. Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India*, Hurst & Co., London 2017). Similarly, the avoidance of publishing Open Access and the prohibitive costs of conventional publications—incidentally often revolving around non-western protagonists—largely limit readerships to the Global North, foreclosing a genuine and informed dialogue with, and feedback from, a majority of scholars, researchers, activists and knowledge-producers from the Global South.

⁶ Metrics that we propose instead highlight the geographical and linguistic outreach of readers and contributors, and the multilateral engagement between Global South and North.

formats decolonisation and conversations thereupon may take.⁷ This is also encouraged through a novel way of conceiving the review process and an innovative rotational managerial process that foresees the periodic delegation of editorial and reviewing tasks to qualified collaborators located across the Global South.

In challenging and revising mainstream paradigms of knowledge-making, *Decolonial Subversions* addresses fundamental questions such as: What is considered legitimate knowledge, who can express it, and which are its underlying regimes of truth? Who defines these criteria of legitimacy, and in whose interests have they been normalised and universalised?

Listed below are guidelines and annotations we deem crucial for the implementation of an earnest decolonial knowledge production, dissemination and appreciation. While these emerge from our situated understandings of, and aspirations for, a sustainable decolonial world-order, we hope that the scope of this radical and innovative manifesto exceeds *Decolonial Subversions* and inspires like-minded people to replicate and disseminate its core principles in a concerted effort to make the world a place where voices expressing all kinds of worldviews and modes of being can be equally heard and engaged with.

It should be noted that this is a work in progress, forever open-ended, tirelessly forging space for voices yet to be heard and truth-domains yet to be legitimised. We do not know what directions this project will take, which disruptions it will provoke, nor what repercussions it will have. We know, however, that change, and its inherent uncertainties, are impending and eagerly embark on this journey of *Decolonial Subversions*.

Our vision

- Decolonisation needs to be **structural** and **systemic**.
- This requires, on the side of established actors, the courage to **relinquish control** and embrace the unknown and uncertain routes decolonisation may take.
- This requires, on the side of established actors, to actively create **welcoming spaces** to be occupied by un(der)represented, oppressed or marginalised actors.
- This requires, on the side of established actors, to **profoundly listen to and engage with** these new voices and the worldviews and metaphysics they advocate and live by. In doing so, listeners ought to refrain from reducing these voices or translating them into familiar paradigms, and are required to appreciate them in their own right.
- Without the pretence to govern or predetermine the directions and formats decolonisation may take, in our vision the harbingers of marginalised worldviews and modes of being are committed to **reciprocal understanding** and respectful coexistence.

⁷ As founding editors we nevertheless maintain the right to withhold or withdraw contributions that we deem inappropriate for the larger aim of decolonisation. Hate speech or fundamentalist views for example will not be tolerated. Having said this, the content published on this platform expresses the contributors' opinions and not necessarily that of the editors.

- Without underestimating the significance of material violence, and acknowledging its necessity in some cases,⁸ we encourage and expect hitherto unheard protagonists to commit to a **sustainable and enriching coexistence** with erstwhile oppressors: to return the atrocities received would not result in decolonisation, but in the preservation and promotion of oppressive colonial structures, the only difference being that the oppressors-oppressed and centre-periphery dynamics are reversed.
- This does not translate into a call for passive appeasement nor exclude the need of reparations, quotas and the **active promotion of marginalised groups** in all fields.
- We ask marginalised voices to **take charge** of the envisioned changes and **direct the course and implementation of decolonisation** as they deem most appropriate in view of their aspirations, understandings of wellbeing, peaceful coexistence, dialogue and engagement.
- The **undoing of the current oppressive status quo** can be conceived in a number of ways. Among these figure (a) the outright, potentially violent, overthrowing and displacement of those misusing positions of power,⁹ and (b) subtle subversions deploying mimicry and leveraging on ambivalence to gradually modify grammars of speech.¹⁰ While the former risks to result in reversed, yet equally harmful centre-periphery relations, the latter is likely to exhaust itself in superficial alterations of centre-periphery relations or in the slow amalgamation of the peripheries in an ever-expanding, unifying centre, rather than promoting far-reaching structural adjustments that account for the uniqueness of the various agents.
- In our vision, a **sustainable decolonised world-order** is of a third kind: one where, instead of a reversal of centre-periphery relations or of an all-encompassing amalgamating centre, a multitude of interconnected units coexist, functioning at the same time as centres to themselves and peripheries to other centres. In this vision, power is diffused and boundaries between these centres may be porous, permitting **non-hierarchical exchanges** in multiple directions, as *pares inter pares*.¹¹
- Such a decolonial model is inherently incompatible with current **neoliberal capitalist relations** that build on **exploitative links** between erstwhile colonies and empires. During the Industrial Revolution colonies were looted of their primary goods, which, after being processed in European factories, were sold for profit in the west as well as in the colonies. This unprecedentedly increased the capital of industrialised nations and further consolidated their hegemony. More recently, with the capitalist narrative assuming a global scale and the accumulation of economic wealth being depicted as the outcome of a meritocratic system rewarding personal endeavours, financial profit

⁸ This stance surfaces time and again in Fanon's work. See for example F. Fanon "Concerning Violence", in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin Books, London 2001 [1961] pp. 27-84.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Such soft strategies of subversion are closer to Bhabha's position. See for example H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, New York 1994.

¹¹ This idea may best be captured by a mandalic structure (see S. Tambiah "The Galactic Polity in Southeast Asia", in *HAU The Journal of Ethnographic Theory* Nr. 3, Vol. 3 (2013) pp. 503-534) or a rhizome (see G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 1987).

has been made to appear as delinked from the historical abuses of power underpinning it. Hence, colonial relations persist undisturbed through the globalisation of markets, while capitalism (and its latest expression neoliberalism) remains largely unacknowledged as primary factor in persevering neo-colonial exploitations. Financial monopolies and the concentration of profitable know-how deepen the politico-economic hierarchical setup between centre and peripheries. Moreover, fierce competition for the maximisation of production and the conquest of markets leads to the reification and universalisation of a linear time- and growth-scale that is in great part alien to peoples with cosmologies and metaphysics different from a western worldview entrenched in Enlightenment values.

- In a similar vein, in view of the **imminent environmental collapse** the world at large is facing, it is unacceptable that a global narrative of environmental awareness and carbon footprint reduction is built exclusively or primarily on western categorisations of 'environment', 'nature', 'sustainability', 'humans' and other 'animals', and conceptualisations about how their respective relationships should look like. These current mainstream understandings are not exhaustive and uncomfortably one-sided. We sustain that the formulation of environmental preservation and recovery needs to not only incorporate **indigenous conceptions of humans, animals, nature, sustainability and environment** (categories that are contextual and amenable to porosity and fluidity)¹² but has to build on the holistic approaches to human-animal-environment coexistence and cooperation espoused by indigenous peoples and peoples from the Global South. The deadly exploitation of Earth is a product of the boundless will to conquest, accumulation and growth pursued by western peoples in the aftermath of the industrial revolution and in the name of capitalism. It is crucial that peoples who have not defined their relationship to the environment as one of endless extraction and exploitation—but rather established relationships of mutual nurturing and caring—inform and guide the path to the ecosystem's survival.
- Just as a neoliberal capitalist world-order thrives on the commodification of the environment in order to recklessly exploit its resources, so it demands **commodified and programmable bodies** in order to maximise their labour potential. Female bodies, in view of their menstrual cycle and their capacity to give birth, are less amenable than male bodies to comply to neoliberal expectations, and as such are devalued and oftentimes portrayed as defect; male bodies, instead, are elevated to bodies par excellence. In such a scenario, **menstruation and childbirth are at best reduced to biological functions and at worst become defects to be medically treated**—rather than physiological, spiritual and cultural phenomena to engage with holistically. While the link with colonialism is not as explicit as in other domains, and the position of women across the globe is subjected to a number of oppressive strategies that vary according to context, it is paramount to view gender also within

¹² Descola has shown how in different cultural contexts there are different boundaries between nature and culture. See P. Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*, University of Chicago Press, London 2013. See also Ingold's work: T. Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*, Routledge, New York 2000.

the larger framework of the competitive and hierarchical dynamics set out by capitalist-imperialist worldviews. Importantly, since western women enjoy a heightened attention in view of the Global North's hegemony, similarly to how male bodies are deemed bodies par excellence western women are portrayed as women par excellence. It follows that women from the Global North are at the centre of discourses on oppression as well as emancipation, obscuring the cultural embeddedness of women across the world and the specificity of their statuses, issues and resources.

- Just as female bodies, **differently-abled bodies** are also excluded from the upper ranks of modes of capitalist production and, as such, devalued and marginalised. Both, **physically and mentally differently-abled people** do not conform to the standards prescribed by western capitalism, a system that ultimately foresees male, abled, western bodies (or honorary versions thereof) as ultimate ideal bodies.
- There is an **intimate nexus between colonialism/imperialism, predatory capitalism, indiscriminate exploitation of the environment, racism, sexism and ableism**. All six build on notions of competition, control and superiority (be it with regards to other populations, market contestants, the environment, or non-dominant bodies) and their implementations mutually sustain and reinforce each other. As such, we believe that decolonisation can never be isolated from a critical re-evaluation of the capitalist economy, a fierce curbing of the current environmental destruction, and an acknowledgment of local notions of culture, gender, fertility, mental and physical ability and productivity.
- In light of the important challenges to thus-far firmly grounded and universalised concepts (such as nation state, individual, race, gender, nature, culture, self-determination, progress, etc.) that decolonisation necessarily calls for, it is important to be vigilant about the **intellectual vacuum** that such deconstructive efforts can bring about. While it is desirable to analyse the genealogy of such notions and question their validity—especially when applied outside the context in which they were first formulated—there also needs to be a cautious awareness of the directions in which emerging narratives move. There is in fact an important, yet often very fine line between decolonial quests and the rise of new authoritarian voices and regimes of truth, as recent history has repeatedly shown. We understand such postcolonial, authoritarian, often fundamentalist structures of power to be no less culpable of protracting injustices similar to those furthered by colonial regimes, by deploying analogous values of superiority, control and competition at the expense of (old and new) marginalised and oppressed groups—despite at times doing so by appropriating decolonial narratives. It is the **responsibility of decolonial thinkers** to engage also with the potential distortions to which decolonialism can be subjected. These are essential and **urgent conversations**—too often avoided as they raise uncomfortable questions—which we hope will vigorously take shape on this platform.
- Throughout this Manifesto we have resorted to overarching and often uncomfortably broad terms, most notably **Global South, Global North, west(ern), centre and periphery**. We are aware that these concepts are **fluid and contextual** and that their

generalised deployment may be misleading, or at least obfuscating subtle power-relations at work on smaller scales. To indiscriminately talk about a Global North or the west, and contrast these against a Global South or the non-west portrays homogeneous conglomerates of power, which hide the profound imbalances that instead animate these regions. Within the Eurocentric bloc, for example, exist discrepancies at times no less profound than those between the so-called Global South and Global North. Similarly, it would be inaccurate to conceive of the Global South as an evenly disadvantaged and oppressed area: exploitations akin to those implemented by colonial regimes abound also there, creating discriminating hierarchies no less significant than those between the so-called west and non-west. We acknowledge that the symbolic landscape of Global South and Global North, centre and peripheries, west and non-west (a term that barely eludes the problems associated with its predecessor: the Orient) is a product of the **reification of an assumed universal (geographic and symbolic) centrality of Europe** and its presumed superiority and progress. To resort to these terminologies, contextual in nature yet harbingers of mistaken claims of universality, is problematic. For lack of better terms, we fall back on them. The very fact that academic and non-academic discourses cannot formulate more accurate definitions is a significant point of reflection.

Our project

- *Decolonial Subversions* is a platform for the formulation, exchange, evaluation, implementation and spreading of decolonial activity. Accordingly, our webpage is conceived as a dynamic combination of interaction and content. The portion dedicated to interaction is predominantly a space with information about the decolonially active members of this project, starting from the editors, to the editorial and advisory boards, contributors, reviewers, translators, partners and more. As this network grows, we envision also the possibility of visitors to comment and converse on decolonial matters in a **subversive forum**. The portion dedicated to content is divided into **Visual Decolonial Subversions, Acoustic Decolonial Subversions and Written Decolonial Subversions**. With this structure, where visuals and audios are given as much importance as texts, we wish to move away from the idea, deeply rooted in western academia, that knowledge comes first and foremost in the form of text. Incidentally, audio and visual formats also allow a multitude of people who have not necessarily been exposed to, or trained in, predominantly text-based knowledge-production, to share their stories and knowledges in ways that are close to their modes of expression, and forego the loss of accuracy and sophistication that inevitably come in such cases with the relinquishing of audio and visual elements.
- Just as different types of knowledge are best expressed through different formats (written, audio, visual), so **texts come in different styles**. While generally academic knowledge is associated with a specific—linear—style and requires authors to present their arguments in the order ‘introduction’, ‘body’ (‘data’ and ‘analysis’) and ‘conclusion’, we invite contributors to remain **loyal to the modes of building arguments and analyses** that are expressive of their own cultural domains. Since

knowledges are embedded in different cultural contexts, their expressions occur in a variety of styles, of which linearity is but one. When reducing arguments, stemming from non-Anglophone contexts, to linearity (as a way of conforming to mainstream standards of knowledge), analytical processes are not only subjected to artificial constraints, but often also undergo crucial loss of meaning.

- Similarly as with the loss of accuracy—and, oftentimes, meaning—that generally occurs when converting knowledge into different formats and styles, the translation into English of texts originally formulated in other languages may not **do justice to the authors' intentions**. Moreover, when authors, whose first language is not English, are forced to write in English in order to reach a wider audience, they are subjected to **linguistic and epistemic violence** since certain concepts and processes of thinking do not translate into Anglophone cultures and vice versa. Neither can the various components of different languages be correlated to one another through clear-cut, bidirectional links, nor can concepts be necessarily isolated from their socio-linguistic and metaphysical contexts. For this reason, we welcome authors to submit their manuscripts in their mother tongues. Each text will be **published in its original language**, as well as in an English version. This way, we minimise the linguistic and epistemic violence that is otherwise perpetrated on non-Anglophone authors, and we maintain the text's original sophistication, while at the same—through the text's translation—permitting its outreach to English-speaking readers.
- It is evident that translation is a complex endeavour that requires a person's profound familiarity not only with the languages in question, but also with their cultural and metaphysical contexts. As such, we regard **translation as a crucial, creative endeavour** that needs to be acknowledged accordingly. Whenever authors are not themselves deeply acquainted or comfortable with English, we collaborate with skilled translators and duly recognise them not only for their mastery over different languages, but also for their creative act of bridging cultural territories.
- In publishing contributions in languages other than English, along with their English version, we want to confront those readers, who often take for granted that English is the lingua franca of knowledge, with the **experience of being exposed to texts at times incomprehensible to them**. This is an attempt to curb the epistemic dislocation that non-Anglophone speakers are often subjected to when engaging with a primarily English-oriented knowledge-system.
- We particularly insist that contributors resort to thinkers from the Global South no less than from the Global North and to female authors no less male authors in their references and **bibliographies**. This is pivotal to **overcoming the protraction of western males' hegemony** in what is considered legitimate knowledge—something that occurs either by repeatedly referencing their material, or by the various degrees to which non-western and non-male authors take on the guise of honorific white men.
- Also in our **review-process** we ensure that knowledge is not exclusively filtered through thinkers from the Global North: each submission will be rigorously reviewed by at least one expert on the topic from the Global South.

- *Decolonial Subversions* offers both, blind and open peer-review. In a **double peer-review process** each contribution is carefully reviewed by two highly specialised reviewers and reworked accordingly by the author. In case the two reviewers disagree on the quality of any given contribution, a third reviewer from the same field will be engaged in the review process.
- While standard scholarly review-processes are anonymous, we acknowledge that at times the protection of anonymity can lead to **unwarranted aggressiveness or usurpation of power**. Moreover, it is known that in highly specific areas of knowledge the omission of the authors' credentials does not guarantee their anonymity. In order to avert such hypocrisies, we allow our contributors to **choose between anonymous and non-anonymous review**. Where the contributors are known, also the reviewers are expected to be disclosed. Conversely, we offer reviewers the option to provide overt reviews, in which case they will be matched with authors of similar inclinations.
- *Decolonial Subversions* commits to publishing **Open Access**, whereby all content is freely accessible to readers, viewers and listeners everywhere. Too frequently in fact publications can be accessed only via expensive subscriptions or pay-walls, which create a large imbalance once again between the Global North and the Global South. It is particularly disturbing when knowledge that builds on collaborations with people from the Global South (be it as informants, interviewees, assistants or through archival access) is thus made inaccessible to the very protagonists of such studies. Not only is knowledge-consumption this way limited to a readership that is financially advantaged or connected with specific universities but, importantly, healthy dialogues with, and potential rebukes by, the protagonists of such works are foreclosed.
- Despite the innovations *Decolonial Subversions* proposes, it is yet unknown whether academic and mainstream knowledge productions can be modified to the extent required by thoroughly decolonial moral standards. We do not insist nor expect that **academic and western popular knowledge, so profoundly entrenched with, and profiting from, oppressive knowledge-hierarchies**, survives a decolonial ethic, and are open to the possible consequences of such radical revisions.
- A revolutionary step toward implementing a decolonial modus operandi in the process of knowledge-production is *Decolonial Subversions'* **rotational editorship**. We envision a regular delegation of all editorial processes (conceiving the call for contributions, selecting reviewers and translators, managing the review and translation process) to partners located in the Global South. In doing so, we hope to give decolonial knowledge-production a radically new meaning.
- We collaborate with a number of partners, and ensure we **primarily engage with professionals from the Global South**. So far, our design, photography and web-development teams are located in India, whereas our language partners are primarily based in Africa.
- As leitmotif of our design we have chosen **handloom fabric**, due to its anticolonial significance. As is well known, colonial invaders made substantial parts of their fortunes by looting colonies such as India of their cotton and then imported finished

goods at prohibitive prices. Conversely, anticolonial protests were often organised around handloom production and weavers: Mahatma Gandhi's influential *khadi* movement for example boycotted foreign cloth and promoted the hand-spinning of natural fibre cloth as a means for rural sustenance. While during colonial times **protests around handloom** were an integral part of the movement against the invaders, today weavers are often uniting against the exploitative relations into which they are forced by ruthless capitalism. Of various types of handloom fabrics, *ikat* is one technique that can be found across the Global South and even in the west. As such, ***ikat* handloom has not only an anticolonial and anti-capitalist significance, but also runs throughout the Global South** with its unique, creative regional variations.

Due to the nature of this text as a manifesto, here we have exposed our vision and modus operandi through concise and poignant blurbs at the expense of more detailed elaborations. The themes and arguments touched upon will however emerge in a number of contributions on this platform, where they will be addressed with the required depth and sophistication.