

RADICAL TEACHER

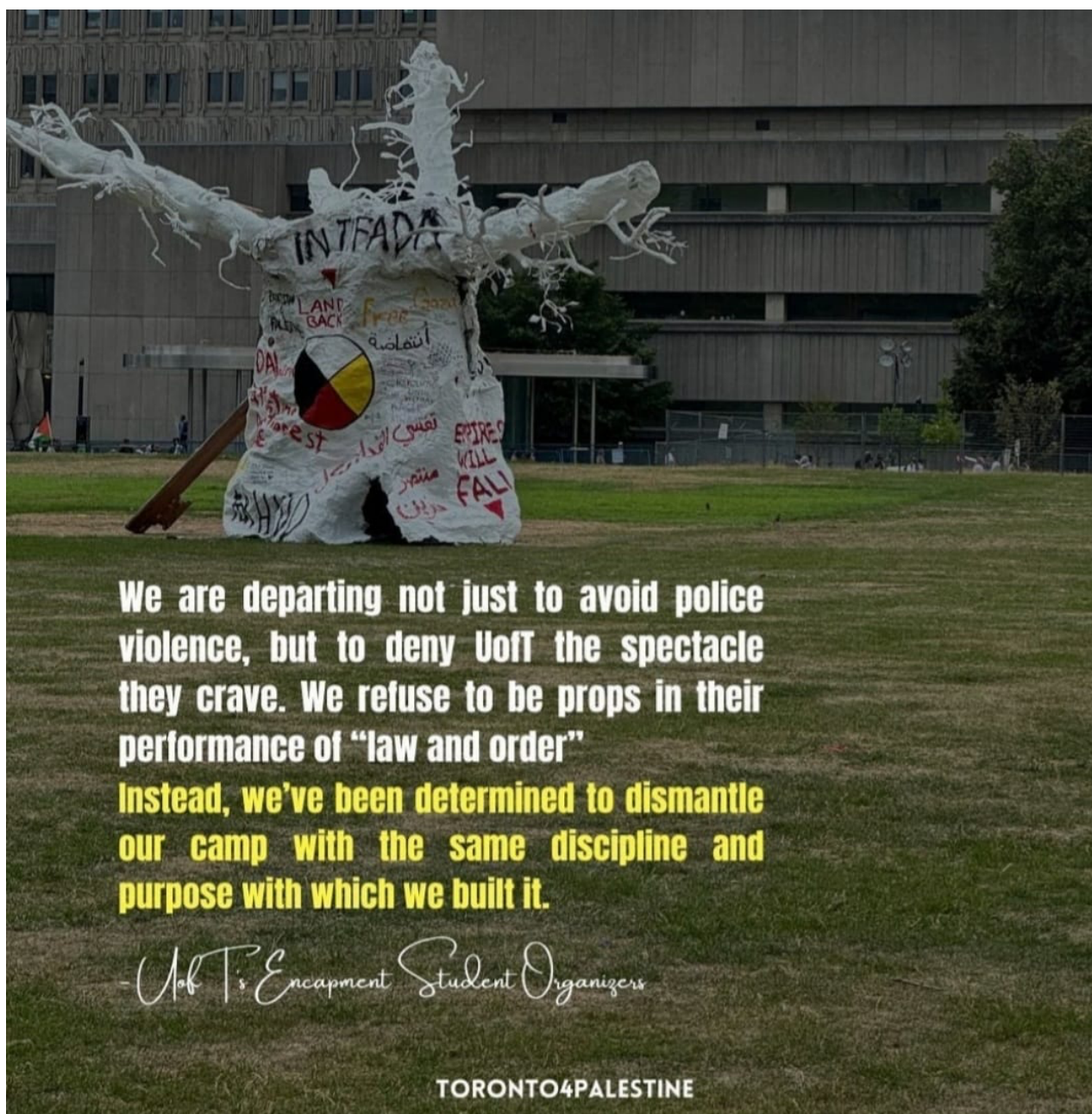
A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

From the Land to the Seeds: Pedagogies of Liberation

by Clelia O. Rodríguez



OLIVE TREE AT UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO. PHOTO BY MARIANA MEDELLÍN CANALES



*"It is not revolutions and upheavals
That clear the road to new and better days,
But revelations, lavishness and torments
Of someone's soul, inspired and ablaze."*

- Boris Pasternak

Photo taken of the **Olive Tree**, a communal DNA congregation of Hope, an artistic installation branching across oceans and territories sketched by artist Mariana Medellín. After 60+ days of endless *innersectional*¹, not inter, pursuits transcribed into intergenerational action-oriented presence by humans from across the globe chanting unapologetically FREE PALESTINE organized and led by @occupyuft, a judge ruled that the land will continue to be incarcerated under the legal discourse of "private property." On July 9th, 2024, the judge determined that although protestors were boxed in as "well-meaning, group individuals," the University of Toronto (UofT) had the right to use brutality if the ruling was disobeyed. We are seeds and our dreams are flowing along the buried creek that runs underneath this settler colonialist educational that makes false claims on commitments to Truth and Reconciliation. One day, I know it, another apology will be issued... may pity be with you and the 7 next generations that will inherit your crimes – silence included.

Vow to Seeds

- I mother you beyond genealogies -
- like when Cacao embraces the sound of Fire -
- like when obsidian tingles the divine bell of Dignity -
- like the unwavering arms of a child screaming: "YUMMA" -
- like the knowing that Death knows no caste -
- like knowing that Caste knows Death -
- like the crystalized saliva of a brown Auntie's tongue screaming: "IT ENDS WITH ME" -
- like boarding the Orient Express train with sharpened cinnamon sticks -

Free Pakistan! Free Bangladesh! Free Nepal! Free Sri Lanka! Free the Maldives! Free Bhutan!

- I mother you with the roots aligned in my uterus wall -
- like when Cintli's gentleness rushes to communal kitchens -
- like when the inception of Hope touches patience to whisper: "share watermelon" -
- like the corridors of tents reciting to the heavens with bread and oil -
- like the questioning of all things partitioned by writing -
- like knowing the possibilities of learning to show up with Respect -
- like how Fire is Home -
- like what happens when we contemplate a tear's sanctuary carved in an Elder's face -
- what would it take to listen politically? -

LAND BACK means LAND BACK is LAND BACK means LAND BACK!

- I mother you furiously in love with love -
- cutting, chopping, slicing, peeling, pouring, boiling, broiling, steaming, roasting -
- imagining beyond censor-ship because my waters drown the navels of hate -
- unveiling the way of the corn as it paths outwards: STOP MAKING EXCUSES FOR VIOLENCE -
- all violence -
- reproducing plastic-made criticisms -
- like the fake grass leaving First Nation children without water -
- like I don't know, maybe-just-maybe protesting on stolen land begs for questions -
- "where are we?"

STOP MAKING EXCUSES FOR MALE VIOLENCE

- I mother you preceding public speeches condemned with salt -
- like when a voice echoes the torrential sounds of Xibalba: "Drop the MIC! -
- like when the grace of Elders preaches spiraling Truth: "Respect the Fire!"
- like when your jewel is to remember to remember -
- like it's not about the unsustainable in-and-out cloud seeding of modern solidarities -
- like it's not a catwalk of check-marks treating Fire as a vaping session -
- seeding sovereignty to transcend digitalized modalities of organizing: can you imagine it? -
- rituals, ceremonies, rituals, ceremonies -
- did I miss the teachings of Grandmother Moon? -

Feel-Think to become the be in BE-ing.

- I mother you with offerings -
- an anatomy of forever grieving-breathing-EXISTING -
- fertile hands to bless the healing rituals happening in 7-grain salads -
- fertile historical hands constantly in spiral movements -
- fertile multivocalities dancing to awaken you from patriarchal domination -
- fertile grounds sustained on known codes of wisdom printed in the pupils of my eyes -
- fertile trans-trans-trans-trans-trans-trans-trans-NESS -

- fertile continuum cross-pollinating lessons witnessed by memories of the Land -
- fertile abundant waist-to-waist walks towards the water -

Josephine Mandamin. Water is life. Is listening. Is sense. Is sound. Is memory.

- I mother you from abolitionist cribs -
- where rice and beans are spiced up with oxygenated articulations to demand DIGNITY -
 - where ethics are inner-laced to presence and not representations -
 - where water is protected and not left at the mercy of plastic bottles -
- where the everyday, everyhour, everyminute, everysecond is liberated -
 - where podiums and gowns are a distant nightmare -
- where the cloning of jokers' asses lives in the perpetuity of anonymity -
 - where voices are the conduits to orgasm Humanity -
 - where the livestreaming is that of the rivers to the sea -

A Freed Palestine Means Liberated Dreams

- I mother you when wings birth the impetuous energy to restore ENERGY -
 - when the Eagle streams its fury against Criminals Against Humanity -
- when the Condor soars with intuition connecting to the Palestinian sunbird -
 - when their tweets infiltrate the noise of pollution to trumpet creation -
- when the Seven Truths chirp above Fire, above Water, above Elders, above Matriarchs -
- when the layering of sacred geometry is transformed in chitters: DIVEST to detach -
- when wings flap back to ask: "When are you going to start disclosing your chains?"
 - when In-Flights to the heart traces the resting places of dying claws -
 - when the Feather is RESPECT -

Dancing cranes made up of Returned Black Divine spiritual ⇄ ⇄ ⇄ ⇄ ⇄ ⇄

Notes

1. This is not just my own emphasis. This is my own pedagogical ancestral alignment to ways of teaching-learning beyond likes – “likes” often attached to destruction of one’s soul in exchange for plastic curriculums where students are presumed criminals even before they meet instructors all under the plagiarism section. It is the case that professionals in universities who have plagiarized their way through by using the same tactics as the colonizers they criticize in their publications. INNERsectionality as it is shared in abundance in this text is meant to be deeply analyzed. If you are going to be “borrowing” the word/metaphor, acknowledge the Ancestors that are staring directly to you – the ones standing behind and besides me. This is the last ancestral warning you get through my writing.

2. The Urgency of Political Imagination in the Pursuit of Higher Consciousness

At the encampment a Free Palestine was imagined, dreamt, manifested, invoked and honored in the four directions. The political imagination that emerges when extraordinary pain meets action. Students, or co-learners as I prefer to say, greeted life in hope-affirming bonds encircling questions generating more questions; we loosened up hierarchal ties that cause us to drag along internalized racism, classism, homophobia, islamophobia, sexism; we connected to those who see, hear, feel, taste, and smell our Humanity when they acknowledge themselves.

To prioritize imagination in a world made up of critical perspectives written, analyzed, gathered, deconstructed, presented, archived, anchored, and co-opted by the same old, same old discussants of “knowledge” is a rare condiment that reveals a sensorial spectrum of future possibilities in the pursuit of becoming higher conscious Beings. We are ahead of our times. That much was self-evident. Imagination is/was a key to learning the ways of slow knowing that moves/d the righteous chants echoing the voices of siblings across the world weeping as bearers of destructions of seeds. It requires a serious shutting the fuck up.

Political imagination was a conduit that led to the creation of a reading circle, The Watermelon Library. This activated place adorned by the presence of lettered and documented knowledge on crimes against humanity, land, seeds, bodies of water, air, spirit, and all spiritual Beings ventured towards the challenging task of staring back at our own’s cruelty. The People’s Circle, a name that resembles the idea of a homogenous entity, was a gathering of endless circles of knowledges spiraling in a path that still seeks to break away from all forms of oppression. Like this. Like this now in forever. What fed the urgency to find each other in Palestine is a collective experience of erasure, eradication, and all forms of elimination of knowledge. The encampment was not an exceptional place of liberation because we are all sacred seeds. It was a hub of electrifying energy where the sun’s presence magnified light and darkness.

Sacred Tlel

No one is above the land. NO ONE IS ABOVE THE LAND. There was a sacred Fire present at the People’s Circle for Palestine at UofT. The magnetic strength of perpetual burning ceremony, protected, maintained, and cared for First Nations Matriarchs and fire-keepers, appeared on a place that for thousands of years, as it appears on the UofT website, “it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit.” UofT expresses gratitude “to have the opportunity to work on this land.” The Sacred Fire was disrespected from day one and that is a burning lesson for fragile entities that walk by the mercy of strings drowning in gasoline – the infamous gaslighting world. Liberals & Co.: Faculty, administrators, staff. All well read/published/informed on anti-indigeneity, women’s rights, rush-rush Global South feminism, abolitionist theories, and its parental distant Marxist former grandfathers. All well read/published/informed on how censorship and punishment work, Fanon/Foucault/King/Lorde/Simpson decolonizing styles. All affiliates of institutions mocking the Land with linguistic theatrics contaminating ears with the excess of notorious white and patriarchal guilt.

I say this: Disrespect to the Fires beyond your reduced scopes of Indigeneity to only Turtle Island is Anti-Everything falling within a spectrum of violence. Fire is life, is creativity, is home, is the vivid undercurrent of a river as a path to the weeping of mothers.

The Fire that accompanied us at the encampment taught me that no matter how hard humans try to package gasoline as sustainable, I know that it will be short-lived. This is not new knowledge. The Moon is a witness. The University of Toronto, an institution that claims to be committed to Reparation and its journey to do that failed to do that harming, contaminating and hurting the land and seeds. Violence was brought in to the encampment, in marches, in meetings, in Telegram chats, in Departmental meetings, in the court rooms – Free Palestine? Not so fast.

References

- A Tribe Called Beauty. “Inspirational Indigenous Women: Josephine Mandamin.” May 8, 2019. Web. <https://atribecalledbeauty.wordpress.com/2019/05/08/inspirational-indigenous-women-josephine-mandamin/>
- Buchanan, Emma. “The university’s response has been pathetic”: Scenes from the pro-Palestine encampment at U of T.” *Toronto Life*. May 13, 2024. Web. <https://torontolife.com/city/university-of-toronto-encampment-israel-palestine-divestment/>

Clelia O. Rodriguez is a global scholar, speaker, author, mom and auntie born and raised in the ancestral lands of the Lenka Peoples, currently teaching in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). She is Founder and Academic Lead, SEEDS for Change; Gender Advisor, Global Affairs Canada; and the author of Who Are You Without Colonialism?: Pedagogies of Liberation (2023), co-edited with Josephine Gabi; Decolonizing Academia: Poverty, Oppression and Pain (2018); and Maternizando la Matriz. (2024).



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



This journal is published by [Pitt Open Library Publishing](https://pittopenlibrarypublishing.com/).