



Decolonial Activist Program: connecting theory to action for movement building

Introduction: The Decolonial activist Program is designed for individuals who want to contribute to the decolonial movement and seek a deeper understanding of the roots of colonialism, its ongoing impact on society, and the critical need for reparations. Whether you're new to this subject or already actively involved within a specific community or social movement, this program offers you the opportunity to strengthen your insights, develop skills as a movement builder and connect with like minded people who want to join the movement for justice and reparations. This training is a unique opportunity to explore decolonization and reparations in depth and to empower yourself to play an active role in shaping a more just future.

What is the Decolonial Activist Program

The Decolonial Activist Program is part of an educational initiative centered around the [Pan-Decolonial Reparations Manifesto](#), which emerged from Aralez's annual decolonial reparations conference in April 2024. This manifesto articulates reparatory demands directed towards Dutch institutions and state actors in relation to the global South and former and present-day colonies.

The Decolonial Activist Program consists of 5 bi-weekly sessions that offer deeper insights into the history and present-day manifestations of colonialism, as well as concrete strategies and tools to actively contribute to change. Each session blends theoretical knowledge with practical strategies. We offer participatory gatherings that combine lectures, interactive exercises, group discussions and individual reflections.

Additionally, after each session, participants will receive a learning question to reflect on at home, allowing us to learn not only from the sessions but also from each other's experiences and insights. We encourage participants to commit to the full program, enabling us to delve deeper and build a stronger collective movement.



Practical information

What is the content of the Decolonial Activist Program about?

The five sessions cover the following themes:

1. Understanding Colonialism through Decolonial Theory and History
2. From Colonialism to Neo-Colonialism: Liberation Movements from the Global South
3. Unpacking Holistic Reparations and Their Application to Our Social Movements
4. Strategies for Change: How Can We Influence Our Social Movements?
5. From Theory to Action: Tools for Organizing, What Can We Do?

Dates of the sessions:

- Session 1: May 3rd, 2026 from 13:00-17.00
- Session 2: May 17th, 2026 from 13:00-17.00
- Session 3: May 31st, 2026 from 13:00-17.00
- Session 4: June 14th, 2026 from 13:00-17.00
- Session 5: June 28th, 2026 from 13:00-17.00

Practical information:

*The sessions are bi-weekly and include a total of 5 sessions, we expect participants to be able to join the whole series when signing up and take place in Amsterdam

*Each session will be 4 hours in total, as well as some 2-3 hours preparation

*Participation costs 50 to 100 euro in total depending on what you can miss, for people participating through an organizational fund the cost is 250 to 500 euro. In case you are not able to pay, you are free to mail us for a free spot.

*We have a broad definition of activism, anyone is welcome in what effer shape or form they contribute to social justice.

*feel free to share the syllabus in your networks for setting up reading-groups, in case you do feel free to let participants donate a contribution to NL67 TRIO 0320036073 t.n.v. Stichting Aralez

How can I Sign up? sign up can be done through this [form, link](#)



What are the sessions about?

N1: Understanding Colonialism through Decolonial Theory and History

During the first session we will provide a basic understanding and overview of Decolonial Theory and delve into the history of how racial capitalism developed. We will elaborate on some of the important historic events and it's present day legacies such as the Indigenous Holocaust, Chattel slavery, contract labour and colonisation through 'civilising' missions, as well as the resistance against these colonial crimes. We will also look at pre-colonial societies and how they were affected by colonialism.

N2: From Colonialism to Neo-Colonialism: Liberation Movements from the Global South

During this session you will learn how movements in the global south fought for their liberation during the decolonization period after world war II, and as a response, how western governments tried to maintain their colonial influence through military interventions, sanctions, economic imperialism and debt traps from the IMF and World bank. This session will give you a better understanding how neo-colonialism works and the role socialism and communism have played in shaping anti-colonial movements for self-determination.

N3: Unpacking Holistic Reparations and Their Application to Our Social Movements

This session will focus on the concept of Holistic Reparations, how can we conceptualise reparations as tool to restore the right to full self-determination in all of its material, ecological, cultural and social dimensions?

During this session we will also delve into the difference between the difference between 'development aid' and reparations and provide concrete examples of reparations in practise next to theoretical background and some of the developments in International law.

N4: Strategies for Change: How Can We Influence Our Social Movements?

This session explores different approaches to influencing social movements, focusing on the debate between reform versus revolution – working within systems for change or dismantling them entirely. We'll also examine the distinction between Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) and decolonization, how they are distinct frameworks in theory and practice, but also how they can complement each other in fostering transformative justice.

Additionally, we'll explore various forms of resistance, from armed struggle and public debate to art, education, and joy, as tools to mobilize and inspire change.

N5: From Theory to Action: Tools for Organizing, What Can We Do?

In this final session, we focus on the practical aspects of community organizing, exploring how movements can transition from opposition to becoming established forces of change. We'll also address the challenges and opportunities of working with diverse communities, examining strategies to foster unity while embracing differences to build strong, inclusive movements.



Who are the trainers?

Chris de Ploeg



Chris Kaspar de Ploeg Bedoyan is a grassroots organizer, speaker and investigative journalist. He wrote the book Ukraine in the Crossfire and is currently writing a book on colonialism & World War II. He is also co-founder and core organizer at Aralez, a grassroots organization for decolonization, and at Arts of Resistance, a coalition bridging social movements and the arts. Chris writes, speaks and organizes on various social justice topics, including (neo-)colonialism, climate justice, racism and capitalism. You can find his work on his website: www.chrisdeploeg.com.

Pravini Baboeram



Pravini Baboeram is an artist, community organizer, and creative producer. She is co-founder of the production house 7th Gen Creatives, specifically focused on created art in service of social struggle. She was the driving force behind Tetary Must Rise, a crowdfunding campaign to replace the statue of colonizer Barnet Lyon with that of Hindustani resistance fighter Janey Tetary in Suriname. She is also the initiator of Indian History Month through Sarnámihuis, which celebrates the historical contributions of people from the Indian diaspora. Pravini also wrote, produced, and directed the music documentary "The Uprising," a film about the anti-racism and decolonial movement in Europe.

Max de Ploeg:



Max Arto de Ploeg Bedoyan is a community builder, grassroots organizer, guest lecturer and public speaker. He focuses on social justice, reparations and decolonization in the broadest sense of the word. Based on the theme of Climate Justice, he was the project leader "Indigenous Liberation" in collaboration with Indigenous diaspora and solidarity organizations as well as coordinator and co-founder of the "Justice for Palestine" series at Pakhuis de Zwijger. Lastly, he is a co-founder of Aralez, a pan-decolonial network and organization in Amsterdam and project leader of the Week Against Racism and Together against racism coalition.



Sources & take Home exercise for Session N1

N1: Understanding Colonialism through Decolonial Theory and History

During the first session we will provide a basic understanding and overview of Decolonial Theory, next to this we will delve into the history of how racial capitalism developed. This first session will do this by elaborating on some of the important historic events and it's present day legacies such as; the arrival of columbus that commenced the Indigenous Holocaust, Chattel slavery, the colonization processes and destruction of Identity through 'civilising' missions, contract labour systems as well as the resistance against these systems of oppression, whilst remembering pre-colonial identities beyond colonialism. Finally, we will reflect on the colonial way slavery was abolished.

Take home question:

What are relevant historic events for your community or sector? How does colonialism and it's history manifest in the present?

Reading & watching materials in preparation:

Watching:

> The Uprising, pravini baboeram documentary
[link](#)

Reading:

>Why Decoloniality in the 21st Century?
Sabelo Ndlovu, [link](#)
>Make Decolonization about Decolonization again, [link](#)

Additional learning sources

Below some optional resources and materials in the forms of books, documentaries, interviews and lectures that can help you on your way.

Interviews & lectures:

Check out the Decolonial Learning Sessions of Aralez: [link](#)

- > What is decolonisation in the 21st century | Decolonial Learning Session #21, [link](#)
- >Keti Koti Lezing Haitiaanse revolutie Karwan Fatah-Black, [link](#)

Documentary/video:

- > Racism A history , the BBC, [link](#)

Book tips:

- > Open Veins of Latin America by Eduardo Galeano
- > In het Spoor van Fanon, Koen Bogaerts
- >The Dutch Atlantic, Kwame Nimako & Glenn Willemse
- >How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, Walter Rodney
- >Silvia Federici, Caliban and the Witch
- >Genocide op Banda: de genocide van Jan Pieterscoen Coen van Marjolein van Pagee
- > A People's History of Modern Europe, William A Pelz
- > Frantz Fanon, Wretched of the Earth.
- > De grote Koloniale Oorlog, Chris de Ploeg,
- >Decolonizing The Mind A Guide to Decolonial Theory and Practice, Sandew Hira



Sources & take Home exercise for Session N2

From Colonialism to Neo-Colonialism: Liberation Movements from the Global South

During this session you will learn how movements in the global south fought for their liberation during the decolonization period after world war II, and as a response, how western governments tried to maintain their colonial influence through military interventions, sanctions, economic imperialism and debt traps from the IMF and World bank. This session will give you a better understanding how neo-colonialism works and the role socialism and communism have played in shaping anti-colonial movements for self-determination.

Take home question:

How does neo-colonialism show up in your community, field or sector? What kind of movements do you know that address this?

Reading & watching materials in preparation:

Reading these sources will help you prepare for our session,

> Alarmism About China Distracts from Ongoing Western Imperialism, [link](#).

Documentaries/podcasts:

> The Empire Files: The U.S. School That Trains Dictators & Death Squads [link](#)

> *Crisis In The Congo: Uncovering The Truth* [link](#)

> How the North Plunders the South w/ Jason Hickel, [link](#).

> Red Star Over the Third World w/ Vijay Prashad, [link](#).

Additional learning sources

Below some optional resources and materials in the forms of books, documentaries, interviews and lectures that can help you on your way.

Documentaries:

> John Pilger documentaries: "war by other means" and "The war on Democracy" [link](#)

Short videos:

> Global Wealth Inequality - What you never knew you never knew [link](#)

Reading materials:

> "The birth of a corporate colonial player", S. Welvaart & M. van den Berge. [Link](#)

> Nkrumah 1965, "Neo-Colonialism, the Last Stage of imperialism", [link](#).

> Ha-Joon Chang (2003) Kicking Away the Ladder: The "Real" History of Free Trade, [link](#)

> Hyper-Imperialism: A Dangerous Decadent New Stage, [link](#).

> The New Denial of Imperialism on the Left, [link](#).

> Beyond Eurocentrism, [link](#).

> Dawn: Marxism and National Liberation, [link](#).

Books:

> Vijay Prashad - Washington Bullets

> Vincent Bevins - The Jakarta Method

> Jason Hickel - The Divide

> Naomi Klein - the Shock Doctrine

> Jason Smith - Imperialism in the 21st century

> William Blum - Killing Hope.



Sources & take Home exercise for Session N3

Unpacking Holistic Reparations and Their Application to Our Social Movements

This session will focus on the concept of Holistic Reparations, how can we conceptualise reparations as tool to restore the right to full self-determination in all of its material, ecological, cultural and social relations dimensions? During this session we also delve into the difference between diversity/ inclusion and emancipation politics in contrast to liberation and decolonization politics as well as the difference between 'development aid' and reparations. This session will provide concrete examples of reparations next to theoretical background.

Take home question:

How would reparations look like, what measures would you think are necessary for your community, sector or field you work in?

Reading & watching materials in preparation:

Reading these sources will help you prepare for our session.

> Reparations manifesto Aralez, [link](#)

> Prof Chinweizu, "Reparations and A New Global Order: A comparative Overview" [link](#)

> Decolonial Learning Session: Pan-African perspective on Reparations by Esther Stanford-Xosei, [link](#)

Additional learning sources

Below some optional resources and materials in the forms of books, documentaries, interviews and lectures that can help you on your way.

Video:

- > Decolonial Learning Session: Pan-African perspective on Reparations by Esther Stanford-Xosei, [link](#)
- > Nederland en Indonesië: recht op herstel, [link](#)
- > Presentation Decolonial Manifesto, [link](#)
- > recordings of Aralez panels & conferences on reparations or neo-colonialism [link](#)

Readings:

- > Wittmann, N. (2016) "Reparations — Legally Justified and Sine qua non for Global Justice, Peace and Security" [link](#)
- > Prof Chinweizu, "Reparations and A New Global Order: A comparative Overview" [link](#)
- > Dr. Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (2011) "Colonial Dynamics of Genocide Imperialism, Identity and Mass Violence" [link](#)
- > Maeve McKeown (2015) "Reparations for Caribbean Slavery: Combining Forward-looking and Backward-looking Responsibilities" [link](#)
- > The Case for Reparations, Ta-Nehisi Coates, [link](#)
- > Capitalism, Global Poverty, and the Case for Democratic Socialism, [link](#).
- > The Actuality of Red Africa, [link](#).

Books:

- > Slavery Reparations Time Is Now: Exposing Lies, Claiming Justice for Global Survival - An International Legal Assessment by Norra Wittman



Sources & take Home exercise for Session N4

N4: Strategies for Change: How Can We Influence Our Social Movements?

In this session we'll explore different approaches to influencing social movements, focusing on the debate between reform versus revolution – working within systems for change or dismantling them entirely and what this means in terms of strategy. We'll also examine the distinction between Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) and decolonization, how they are distinct frameworks in theory and practice, but also how they can complement each other in fostering transformative justice. Additionally, we'll explore various forms of resistance, from armed struggle and public debate to art, education, and joy, as tools to mobilize and inspire change.

Take home question:

What form of resistance resonates most with you and what form of resistance do you feel uncomfortable with?

Reading & watching materials in preparation:

Watch/listen:

- > Knock down the house, [watch here](#)
- > Israel-Hamas War: Piers Morgan vs Bassem Youssef On Palestine's Treatment, [watch here](#)
- > If we burn with Vincent Bevins, [listen here](#).

Read:

- >> AOC's DNC Speech Was a Betrayal of the Gaza Movement, [read here](#).
- > Decolonizing education, a view from Palestine: an interview with Munir Fasheh, [read here](#)
- > Climate Leninism and Revolutionary Transition, [read here](#).

Additional learning sources

Below some resources and materials in the forms of books, documentaries, interviews and lectures that can help you on your way.

Listen

- > How to think about rest as a form of resistance, [listen here](#)
- > "We've Hit a Tipping Point" – Riz Ahmed on Protest, Joy, and the Power of Story, [listen here](#)

Watch

- > Resistance Art: Reclaiming Our Story, Building New Futures, [watch here](#)
- > Heated Debate: Should We Hand Back The Crown Jewels?, [watch here](#)

Read

- > Palestinians have a legal right to armed struggle, [read here](#)
- > Black Joy: Resistance, Resilience and Reclamation, [read here](#)
- > Imperialist Propaganda and the Ideology of the Western Left Intelligentsia, [read here](#).
- > How AOC Went From Influencer to Influenced, [read here](#).

Books:

- > Hegemony How-To: A Roadmap for Radicals, Jonathan Smucker
- > How to Blow Up a Pipeline Book by Andreas Malm
- > Emergent Strategy, Adrienne Maree Brown
- > If we Burn - Vincent Bevins



Sources & take Home exercise for Session N5

N5:From Theory to Action: Tools for Organizing, What Can We Do?

In this final session, we focus on the practical aspects of community organizing, exploring how movements can transition from opposition to becoming established forces of change. What are challenges we need to be mindful of and how can we ensure sustainable movements that stay true to the values and principles of the movement while getting a seat at the table of the establishment. We'll also address the challenges and opportunities of working with diverse communities, examining strategies to foster unity while embracing differences to build strong, inclusive movements.

Take home question:

What are you fight against, but more importantly, what are you fighting for?

Reading & watching materials in preparation:

Watch:

> Omroep Zwart: Donkerwit is alle kleuren (Dark white is all colours) , [watch here](#)

Read:

> 7 Principles of Zapatismo to Consider in Community Building, [read here](#)
> Notes on strategy, [read here](#)

Additional learning sources

Below some resources and materials in the forms of books, documentaries, interviews and lectures that can help you on your way.

Listen

> Plantation Politics and Campus Rebellions, [listen here](#)
> Palestine and the BDS Movement, [listen here](#)

Watch

> The Secret History of How Cuba Helped End Apartheid in South Africa, [watch here](#)
> Decolonizing Europe: how to engage with decolonization in European civil society? [watch here](#)

Read

> Globalize the Intifada Zine, [read here](#)
> The Brown in Black Power: Militant South Asian Organizing in Post-War Britain, [read here](#)
> Tariq Ali: The Dilemmas of Lenin: Terrorism, War, Empire, Love, Revolution
> 'No democratisation without decolonisation' A testimony from the student movement in Amsterdam [read here](#)
> Programmamaker als bondgenoot van de草root, [link](#)
> Diversity is a white word, [link](#)

Toolkit:

> Actie-toolkit van Kick out Zwarte Piet, [link](#)