

Decolonising International Justice

Unravelling What Decolonising Means
for the International Justice Major
at Leiden University College



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Report of the Leiden University College Decolonising International Justice Research Clinic

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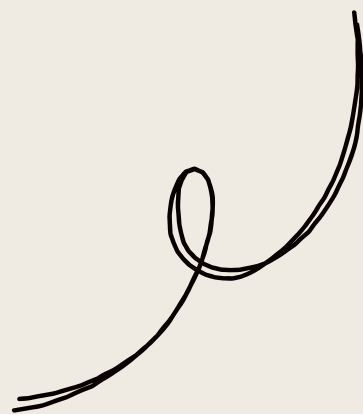
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Introduction

Around the world, there is a growing movement to decolonise the curriculum, with both students and educators seeking to disrupt existing epistemic hierarchies within higher education. This report, developed by students and staff within the International Justice (IJ) major at Leiden University College (LUC), aims to enhance student and staff understanding of what decolonising means in general and what decolonising means for LUC's IJ major in particular. While the report is primarily targeted towards our local context at LUC, we hope it will also be of wider interest to communities and institutions beyond this setting. The report is based on interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders within LUC, as well as a literature review of materials that reflect upon decolonising the curriculum both within and beyond areas of study connected to the IJ major.

The report is divided into **five parts**:

- **Part 1 (Introduction)** begins by critically reflecting on our decision to write this report, before elaborating the contexts of the report, the meaning of decolonising within LUC's IJ major, our methodology, and challenges and limitations encountered during our research.
- **Part 2 (Community Insights and Dialogues)** presents some of the insights and takeaways from our conversations with both students and staff concerning what is and should be happening in terms of decolonising the curriculum at LUC.
- **Part 3 (What Decolonising Means for the IJ Major: Ideas and Practices)** sets out a range of ideas and practices that help surface what decolonising means for the IJ major, based on conversations with staff and students, as well as a literature review of materials related to decolonising the curriculum.
- **Part 4 (Conclusion: Sustaining the Conversation)** concludes with some ideas for continuing the conversation beyond our research clinic.
- **Part 5 (Further Resources, Bibliography and Reading List)** sets out a range of additional resources for anyone interested in learning more about decolonising the curriculum, as well as a reading list which can be used as a basis for creating a reading group on decolonising the curriculum in fields related to international law and justice.

At the outset, we would like to express our thanks to the students at LUC who attended our focus group sessions, as well as the professors at LUC, Leiden Law School, and the Van Vollenhoven Institute who participated in our interviews. We would also like to thank those who provided feedback on earlier drafts of this report, in particular Mohsen al Attar, Matthew Canfield, Densua Mumford, Ingrid Samset, and Sahib Singh.

Our decision to write this report is based on our modest hope that the experiences we highlight and the literatures we engage with may provide one entry point for *students* to critically reflect on class materials and concepts, for *educators* on their content and modes of pedagogy, and for *institutions* on how to better encourage and create environments conducive to decolonising the curriculum. Importantly, our aim is not to provide a definitive guide to decolonising the curriculum – something which we do not believe is possible – but rather a starting point for those who wish to inspire change in their teaching and learning.

Thinking Reflexively About This Report

At the outset, we feel it is important to express that we continue to have reservations about our decision to write and publish a report of this nature.

• DECOLONISATION AS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT VS. DISRUPTION

In her recent book, *Decolonisation and Legal Knowledge: Reflections on Power and Possibility*, Folúkẹ Adébí sí explains that ‘a critical adoption of decolonisation should be done for the purpose of the world it may produce, and not just for a department to identify itself as “decolonised”’. Adébí sí emphasises that there is an important difference between “decolonisation” (within and outside of academia) that merely *acknowledges* the colonial nature of a discipline and decolonisation that seeks to *disrupt* and *dismantle* the colonial nature of the world’ (Adébí sí, 2023: 21-22).

We believe that our efforts in writing this report and offering reflections on the practices of higher education can only begin to hope to engage with the former notion of decolonisation, with the latter existing primarily outside of academia. We agree with Adébí sí that ‘units and degrees cannot really be “decolonised” when they are subordinated to institutions, professional standards, nation states, and global orders that rely on colonial logics and praxis’ (Adébí sí, 2023: 21-22). At the same time, we believe that this should not lead to paralysis, but to an honest acknowledgement of the need to work within and against the limits of what is achievable within a neoliberal higher education institution, whilst simultaneously striving to contribute to the reimagination and creation of new worlds beyond them.

• NO DEFINITIVE BLUEPRINT FOR DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

We are also concerned that in producing a report of this nature, we may give the misleading impression that there is a definitive blueprint for decolonising the curriculum. In this regard, returning to the work of Adébí sí, we wish to emphasise that ‘decolonisation is not a tick-box exercise that requires academics to complete a set of predetermined tasks’ (Adébí sí, 2023: 167-168). Rather, decolonisation is ‘a specific anti-colonial political project of justice... instituted by colonised peoples, including, peoples in what is designated the Global South, racialised peoples, and indigenous peoples’ (Adébí sí, 2023: 158).

Rather than aiming to offer some kind of blueprint for decolonising the curriculum, therefore, our hope is that this report is able to offer some reflections on ‘what the political project of decolonisation means for our curricula... and related activity’ at LUC and to surface some ideas for both students and educators to consider when considering what actions to take in this regard (Adébí sí, 2023: 158 and 168).

• SITUATEDNESS AND INCOMPLETENESS OF KNOWLEDGE

We also wish to emphasise that knowledges are always situated and inevitably incomplete (Grosfoguel, 2007: 213). As such, we have sought to reflect on how the information we have gathered through our research, and the insights we have produced as a result, are situated in time and space, as well as identify some of the limitations that may have impacted our work during this process. As our reflexivity is also inevitably constrained, we encourage readers to critically reflect on the information, emotions, and other elements involved in developing this report.

Ultimately, we believe that engaging with the process of decolonising the curriculum means reflecting on its limitations to the best of our abilities, whilst also leaving it open to questioning and critique. By reaffirming the situatedness of knowledge, and continuously reflecting on our positionalities during our work and the risk of appropriating the voices of those who (at least in certain respects) may be positioned in more peripheral positions within existing societal hierarchies, we hope to offer reflections on the process of decolonising the curriculum in a meaningful and humble manner.

We would also like to emphasise that our reflections on the position of our endeavours within the university, as well as decolonising work more broadly, were aided by conversations with our interviewees. It is thanks to our peers that we have gained insights on the situatedness of our knowledge, as well as the difficulties and challenges of decolonising the curriculum.

• CREATIVITY AND DISCOMFORT

In one of our interviews with a professor from the IJ major, we were told: 'Oftentimes we hear decolonising and think of it as very critical, but I think of it as very creative' (Interview 2). Through the work of our clinic, we hope to inspire the same mindset when it comes to reflecting on decolonising within the IJ major - approaching the topic with a sense of *openness and creativity*, whilst also acknowledging and embracing the inevitable *discomfort and challenges* that can arise from the process.

Decolonising the curriculum is both an individual and collective effort, which needs to be pursued at all levels of LUC, both within and beyond the IJ major. It is also an ongoing process that cannot simply be checked off or accomplished in one report, but through this report, we hope to modestly contribute to this effort within the IJ major at LUC.

"a critical adoption of decolonisation should be done for the purpose of the world it may produce, and not just for a department to identify itself as 'decolonised'"

FOLÚKÉ ADÉBÍŚÍ (2023): 21-22

Contexts

This report was written as part of the *Decolonising international Justice* research clinic, comprised of two assistant professors and four students within the IJ major at LUC. The work of our research clinic may be situated in a number of overlapping contexts.

DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM MOVEMENT

The work of our research clinic is situated within the wider decolonising movement in higher education. Rooted in a longer trajectory of decolonising logics and practices (Moosavi, 2020: 334-341; Adébísi, 2023: 48), calls to decolonise the university gained particular attention following the Rhodes Must Fall campaign in 2015. Initiated by students at the University of Cape Town who were protesting a statue of 19th century imperialist and white supremacist Cecil John Rhodes on campus, the campaign sparked the emergence of a broader movement that generated important questions across universities around the world regarding how institutions of higher education maintain colonial legacies (Bhambra et al., 2018: 1).

THE NETHERLANDS

The clinic took place in the Netherlands, a State with a long and violent colonial history, which continues to have ongoing repercussions to this day.

In her 2016 book, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*, Gloria Wekker explores a number of paradoxes of Dutch culture, including the 'stark juxtaposition between the Dutch imperial presence in the world, since the sixteenth century, and its almost total absence in the Dutch educational curriculum, in self-image and self-representations such as monuments, literature, and debates about Dutch identity' (Wekker, 2016: 13). Only recently has some change in consciousness of the Dutch imperial past come about, with notable work on Dutch mass violence in Indonesia in particular, as well as apologies by Dutch government officials for Dutch atrocities in Indonesia, as well as the suffering caused by Dutch involvement with slavery.

Nonetheless, Dutch awareness and reflection on colonialism still only scrapes the surface, with mass violence in Indonesia for decades being labelled as mere 'excesses', and engagement with the past in Surinam, the Antilles or Aruba often treated as 'histories "elsewhere", instead of forming part of a common historical narratives' (Castellanos-Jankiewicz and Hommes, 2022). Moreover, the apologies offered by Dutch government officials have been critiqued variously as belated, ill-timed, issued without sufficient input from affected communities, and inadequate – with calls remaining for more concrete actions, including reparations and reforms, led by and for affected communities (Ostiana, 2023; Teffera, 2022).

THE HAGUE

Within the Netherlands, the clinic took place in The Hague, a city that presents itself as 'the City of Peace and Justice' and proclaims itself to be 'known worldwide for its role as a figurehead of international law, policymaking, and efforts for global peace', while being home to some 200 international organisations, including the International Court of Justice, Europol, and the International Criminal Court (The Hague International Centre, 2023).

Yet, similar to the Dutch State as a whole, this self-image has tended to crowd-out recognition or concern for The Hague's colonial history, with decisions made in the city having significant consequences for colonised communities including 'oppression of the indigenous population, disenfranchisement, violence, slavery and the suppression of any form of resistance' (Haas Historisch Museum, 2023). In November 2022, Jan van Zanen, the Mayor of The Hague, apologised for 'the way our predecessors have supported and benefitted from the system of colonialism and slavery' (NL Times, 2022).

LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

Within The Hague, the clinic took place at Leiden University, a higher education institution that has only recently begun to provide more room for critically examining its relationship to slavery and colonialism.

In 2022, the *Mapping Slavery* project placed markers at locations around the Leiden connected to its slavery past, including the houses of plantation owners and museums filled with colonial objects. At a panel to launch the initiative at Leiden University, panellists discussed how the university helped Leiden become a knowledge production centre, with overseas colonial administrators often studying law at the institution (Leiden University, 2022a)

In his inaugural lecture in 2022, Gert Oostindie, Emeritus Professor Colonial and Postcolonial History at the Institute for History at Leiden University, called on the university community 'to hold a mirror to ourselves and, where necessary and possible, also take concrete steps' to address the university's relationship with slavery and colonialism. Notably, Oostindie observed how 'never before had an inaugural lecture been devoted to Dutch colonialism, to Dutch responsibility, to its perpetrators', despite Leiden University playing a significant role in preserving the Dutch East Indies (Leiden University, 2022b).

LEIDEN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Within Leiden University, the clinic took place at LUC. LUC offers an interdisciplinary liberal arts and sciences programme with a focus on four global challenges: Peace and Justice, Sustainability, Prosperity, and Diversity. The Liberal Arts and Sciences programme offered at LUC involves an educational programme that encourages students 'to think along with and move between disciplines', with LUC's additional focus on Global Citizenship aiming to link 'the global challenges with local realities, grounding you with an ethical outlook, an understanding and appreciation of your place in the world, and what you can contribute to it' (Leiden University, 2023a). The LUC community consists of 600 students, with approximately 45 different nationalities represented (Leiden University, 2023b).

In light of significant concerns raised within the student community in 2019 about institutional racism, including pedagogical practices, as well as inadequate institutional support and trust concerning issues of race and racism, staff and students have been engaging in ongoing conversation and action to address questions related to decolonising the curriculum. In this regard, our work may be situated within wider decolonisation efforts at LUC, comprised of initiatives taken and driven by academic staff and students to decolonise the curriculum, including a Decolonisation Working Group and affiliated research clinics. The goals of these efforts can be summarised as follows:

- to study the various definitions of decolonisation in the context of higher education, and in the process of knowledge production more generally;
- to reflect on decolonisation practices inside and outside of LUC, potentially identifying decolonising approaches that may be useful to explore further; and
- to share insights with LUC staff and students to foster critical self-reflection on our own practices as a community.

"There was, until the last decade of the twentieth century, a stark juxtaposition between the Dutch imperial presence in the world, since the sixteenth century, and its almost total absence in the Dutch educational curriculum"

GLORIA WEKKER (2016): 13

LUC'S INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MAJOR

As one of six majors that students can choose, the International Justice major focuses not only on international law, but also 'national and regional legal orders as well as relevant transnational and local norms and actors'. The major seeks to analyse 'how norms, laws and institutions operate in practice through comparative and interdisciplinary approaches that combine legal research with socio-legal and other approaches from the social sciences' (International Justice Major, 2023). The major has three tracks - International Law, Human Rights and Society, and Statehood and Integration - taught by LUC staff alongside affiliate professors primarily from Leiden Law School and the Van Vollenhoven Institute. The major also has two co-convened tracks, a Gender Studies track co-convened with the Culture, History, Society major, as well as an additional track co-convened with the Governance, Economic and Development major.

The IJ major presents itself as offering an exploration of 'challenges to justice and the rule of law in a globalising and pluralistic society' (International Justice Major, 2023). When reflecting on decolonising the curriculum, this self-presentation is important particularly when it is recalled that 'the rule of law' was developed and relied upon to justify Dutch colonisation in the East Indies, including through the writings of Hugo Grotius, a member of the political elite within the Dutch Republic and legal adviser to the United East Indian Company (de Vries and Spijkerboer, 2021: 294).

Importantly, the violence of the rule of law is not a relic of the past - for many individuals and communities (international) law remains bound up with legitimating various forms of violence to this day. The District Court of The Hague's recent legitimisation of racialised immigration controls conducted by law enforcement authorities in the Netherlands offers one example (Salomon, 2022).

With this in mind, we agree with Adébisi's observation that without acknowledging the truth of these experiences of unfairness, inequality, and violence, 'the knowledge we transmit about the world proceeds from within the limited and selective perspective of a discipline implicated in producing unequal social realities' (Adébisi, 2023: 10).

Defining Decolonising within LUC's IJ Major

Recent years have witnessed a surge of activity centred on decolonising curricula around the world. According to Adébísi, the recent proliferation of decolonising movements must be situated in 'the long history of anticolonial intellectual production and praxis that has often happened in the Global South, or has been done by indigenous populations, or marginalised populations in the Global North', including 'independence movements, anti-slavery struggles, uprisings against enslavement, anti-apartheid global movements, and Pan-African organising' (Adébísi, 2023: 49).

In reflecting on the meaning of 'decolonising the curriculum', therefore, our starting point is to **avoid characterising 'decolonisation' as a recent discovery by the westernised university**. Rather, as Adébísi explains, contemporary action in higher education to decolonise curricula owes its present appearance to a history of decolonisation, understood in broad terms as 'an immediate and continuing political and active anticolonial response seeking to dismantle ongoing colonialism' (Adébísi, 2023: 49).

Importantly, **theorisations of decolonisation are not uniform**, but encompass 'a collection of anticolonial strategies and trajectories whose boundaries are delineated, not only by the manifestations of the specific colonial manifestation contested, but also the structural and epistemic tools contextually available' (Adébísi, 2023: 34). It is not possible to review all the varied theorisations of decolonisation in this report (on which, see generally, Adébísi, 2023: Chapter 1). Rather, our aim here is more modestly to identify some guiding principles that can be relied upon as entry points for developing and sustaining conversation and action on decolonising the curriculum within LUC's International Justice major.

With this in mind, this section begins by navigating some of the literature that has reflected on the meaning of decolonising the curriculum in general, before turning to explore how conversation and action on decolonising the curriculum might be developed and sustained within LUC's IJ major in particular.

"Everyone in the world is affected by colonization; it is structural, it is institutional, it is systemic and it is affective; [...] its logic is deeply ingrained in our daily lives"

SYLVIA TAMALE (2020): 245

• DEFINING DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

The rise in prominence of '**decolonising**' as a pedagogical framework has been accompanied by significant contestation over what it means to 'decolonise the curriculum'. For the purposes of this report, we understand 'decolonising' as a way of thinking about the world that takes undoing the legacies of colonialism, empire and racism as its central object of study, and which seeks to offer alternative ways of thinking about the world together with alternative forms of praxis (Bhambra et al., 2018: 2; Moosavi, 2020: 332).

The focus of decolonising is on understanding and seeking to disrupt **coloniality**, namely long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, which persist in the aftermath of the end of formal colonial administrations (Quijano, 2007: 168-170; Maldonado-Torres, 2007: 243). As Grosfoguel explains, the significance of coloniality resides in its capacity to help us 'understand the continuity of colonial forms of domination after the end of colonial administrations, produced by colonial cultures and structures' (Grosfoguel, 2007: 219).

To recognise coloniality, therefore, is to acknowledge that '*everyone* in the world is affected by colonization; it is structural, it is institutional, it is systemic and it is affective; [...] its logic is deeply ingrained in our daily lives' (Tamale, 2020: 245). As such, it is suggested that 'the first target in the process of decoloniality must be our mentalities and consciousness' (Tamale, 2020: 245). In other words, there is a need for serious reflection on how coloniality encompasses what Quijano refers to as 'a colonization of the imagination' (Quijano, 2007: 169).

Such reflection requires, as a first step, understanding how colonial structures of thought were internalized in the first place. In her book, *Decolonization and Afro-Feminism*, Sylvia Tamale identifies 'four different but interlinked processes through which the imperial project achieved its goal of colonizing the mind' - processes that may be understood to collectively contribute towards **internalising colonialism** (Tamale, 2020: 246).

For Tamale, the challenge of decoloniality is 'the conscious resistance to [these] internalized colonial structures of thought' (Tamale, 2020: 244). Its purpose, in the university setting at least, is 'to aid both educators and learners "lift the veil" to uncover colonial legacies, sexism and heterosexism, to analyze colonial histories and values in search of ethics that reject domination and exploitation, and to articulate critiques of colonial ontologies (i.e. the nature of reality/"truth") and epistemologies (i.e. how we know this "truth")' (Tamale, 2020: 244-245).

Processes of Internalising Colonialism

THROUGH 'OTHERING'

First, the need of colonizers to enact difference and justify power inequalities against those they were colonizing generated a process of 'othering', in which 'the imperial definition of 'self' [became] dependent upon its "other"' (Tamale, 2020: 246). The social category of 'race', for example, was a 'key element of the social classification of colonized and colonizers' (Quijano, 2007: 171). As Robert Knox observes, 'Populations which were labelled as "Black" (or other racial identities) did not initially identify as such - indeed they had many other identities through which to organise their existence. It was only when juxtaposed to whiteness that black people "became" Black' (Knox, 2023: 55-56).

THROUGH INVISIBILISATION

Second, colonialism involves a process of invisibilisation, through which 'non-Western forms of knowledge construction and their ways of being' were rendered invisible, with 'Indigenous realities (ontologies) and ways of knowing (epistemologies)... often ignored and/or marginalized' (Tamale, 2020: 247=248). In this way, the colonial project has been characterised as one of 'epistemic violence', entailing 'the use of knowledge to subjugate racialised/indigenous/colonised and otherwise othered populations, with the assistance of law's alliance with coercive power' (Adébisí, 2023: 161).

THROUGH BINARISATION AND UNIVSERALISATION

Third, imperialism also constructs human relations through 'rigid binary frames - Black/White, female/male, feminine/masculine, straight/gay, able-bodied/disabled, rich/poor, beautiful/ugly, etc', thereby erasing 'the infinite shades of grey that nuance our lives' (Tamale, 2020: 249). These binary distinctions, Tamale emphasises, 'are strategically constructed and universalised to serve colonial vested interests', with 'the constructed "essence" of norms... then used as a basis to police and punish those who deviate from the constructed norms' (Tamale, 2020: 250). The logic of binary thinking also feeds into the process of othering by locking us into 'a system of structural inequality whereby we view the "us" in opposition to "some other"... based on the belief that "the other" lacks some desirable characteristic that the "us" has' (Tamale, 2020: 250). According to Tamale, therefore, 'Either/or understandings must be replaced with both/and logics' to reflect the reality that 'the identifies that make us who we are intersect not additively but multiplicatively' (Tamale, 2020: 249-250).

THROUGH AUTHORITATIVE KNOWLEDGES

Colonialism also establishes certain types of knowledge as objective, neutral and universal as a means of rationalising privilege and justifying hierarchies and forms of exclusion. As Tamale explains, 'Certain knowledges were permitted to evolve as "science" while other Indigenous knowledges were simply labelled as lore, superstition and quaint fancies' (Tamale, 2020: 250).

Returning to the example of 'race', it was earlier noted how it was only through a process of 'othering' that racial classifications were constructed; it was only when Black people were juxtaposed to whiteness that they 'became' Black. Yet, as Knox emphasises, 'it was not simply through juxtaposition that race came into being... Black people became such so they could be inserted into a hierarchy' (Knox, 2023: 57). In other words, race was socially constructed not only to assert difference but also 'to rationalize privilege and to stigmatize, to justify prejudices and exclusion' (Tamale 2020: 250). It was in this way that practices of capitalist expansion and colonial extraction emerged as processes of 'racialisation'.

Reflecting on these different layers of internalising colonialism, the decolonising the curriculum movement may be understood to be animated by a concern for undermining the **epistemic violence** produced by ontologies and ways of knowing that purport to be wide-ranging and claim universal validity, but which neglect the diverse ways of knowing identifiable across the world (al Attar and Abdelkarim, 2021). Put differently, a core aim of decolonising the curriculum is **epistemic diversity**, understood as a struggle to enhance our ways of teaching and learning by recognising the incompleteness of all ways of knowing and engaging with the plurality of finite knowledges across the world (Icaza and Vázquez, 2018: 122).

In the struggle for epistemic diversity, de Sousa Santos refers to the importance of developing a '**sociology of absences**', which recognises that 'whatever does not exist in our society is often actively produced as non-existent' and allows us 'to expand the relevant experiences of the world' (de Sousa Santos, 2016: 21). To this end, de Sousa Santos encourages an '**ecology of knowledges**', understood as 'the need to bring together different kinds of knowledges' based on an awareness that 'all knowledges are incomplete' and a recognition of the 'infinite plurality of finite ways of knowing human experience in the world' (de Sousa Santos, 2016: 22-23).

"At its core, the [decolonising the curriculum] movement is motivated by the concept of epistemic violence. Much of the colonial project involved superimposing a European knowledge system over all others, devastating local cultures and denigrating local ways of knowing"

MOHSEN AL ATTAR AND SHAIMAA ABDELKARIM (2021)

Mbembe similarly suggests that the decolonising process aims to transform the university into a '**pluriversity**', understood as 'a process of knowledge production that is open to epistemic diversity' and which 'does not necessarily abandon the notion of universal knowledge for humanity, but which embraces it via a horizontal strategy of openness to dialogue among different epistemic traditions' (Mbembe, 2016: 36-37).

In response to the structural silencing of certain voices and the prioritisation of others, Adébisí suggests that 'we need to step away from extractivism in our use of "knowledge production"', a term which often 'mirrors colonial logics of discovery of things that are not actually missing', and move towards '**knowledge cultivation**', a term which conveys 'visions of collaborative growth, grounding, care, and creativity' as well as 'relationality' (Adébisí, 2023: 161 and 164).

Reflecting on universities as 'sites where intellectual and transformative work can intersect', Gopal suggests conceptualising an '**anticolonial university**' that 'pushe[s] towards the horizon of decolonisation rather than a "decolonised" one'. In this context, anticolonialism may be understood as 'the practice of thought and action towards the goals of decolonisation', with the prefix 'anti' invoking 'a critical and radical spirit of enquiry and action rather than a singular state to be feasibly arrived at within the modest - and inevitably compromised - parameters of the university'. In this vein, anticolonialism 'harnesses oppositional and interrogative energies, not only enabling contestations and challenges but also the imagining and elaboration of alternatives that are not "returns" to prior states' (Gopal, 2021: 889).

In line with this orientation, Gopal suggests that an anti-colonial university 'commits to recognising the centrality of European colonialism in shaping the globe as we experience it today; to assessing its consequences for communities and cultures; to interrogating and dismantling harmful mythologies and falsehoods on which the colonial project relied as well as those that underpin its afterlife today; and to repairing the great gaps in our knowledge and understanding that have emerged consequently' (Gopal, 2021: 889).

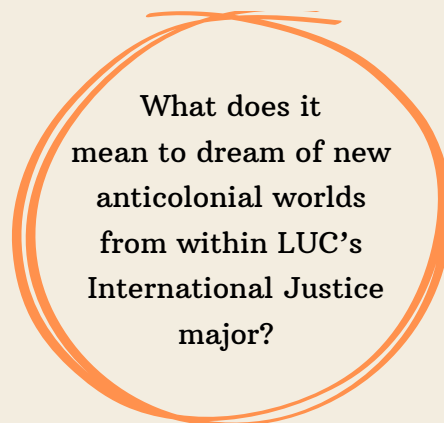
In practice, this means critically reflecting not only on **what** is included and excluded from the curriculum, but also on **how** content is being taught, as well as **practices beyond the classroom** in the form of research, institutional policies, and community work (Kishimoto, 2018: 540).

Importantly, decolonising the curriculum is '**a continuous, open-ended process**', which means 'starting somewhere, even if tentative, and continuously adapting the knowledges we teach and learn' and nurturing 'an ongoing community conversation, not a predetermined result' (LUC Decolonising the Teaching and Learning of International Relations Research Clinic, 2021: 6).

• DREAMING OF NEW ANTICOLONIAL WORLDS FROM WITHIN LUC'S INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MAJOR

In her recent book, *Decolonisation and Legal Knowledge: Reflections on Power and Possibility*, Folúkẹ Adébí sí suggests that rather than offering an invitation to decolonise the law school curriculum, a preferred pathway is to pose a different question: 'What does it mean to dream of new anticolonial worlds from within the law school?'. In considering decolonisation within higher education, Adébí sí suggests that 'we should not ask, "how can I decolonise the curriculum that I teach" or "how can I decolonise my research?" or "how do we decolonise the law school?", but "if I was designing, today, a law school for the future world we need, what would it look like?"' (Adébí sí, 2023: 158).

Taking inspiration from this framing, as well as Gopal's conceptualisation of an anticolonial university, we believe that the process of decolonising the curriculum within LUC's IJ major can be framed around the question:



To help nurture and sustain conversation and action in response to this question, we take inspiration from the work of Sylvia Tamale, who articulates 'at least **five layers or sub-systems of colonization** that need to be peeled away' to contribute to this process (Tamale, 2020: 236). Whilst acknowledging the particularities of the context that forms the focus of Tamale's work, we believe the five layers may also offer one pathway for dreaming of new anticolonial worlds from within LUC's IJ major. On the next page, we set out the layers, together with an illustrative list of questions to accompany them.

Importantly, these layers and the illustrative questions that accompany them are not elaborated as end-points through which 'decolonised curricula' can be achieved within LUC's IJ major. Rather, they are meant as entry points to enable conversation and action amongst students and educators over possible pathways for dreaming of new anticolonial worlds from within LUC's IJ major.

In terms of our clinic, we devoted most of our time towards exploring and reflecting upon the curricular content and pedagogical approaches layers – consequently, these also form the focus of this report. While our discussions inevitably also touched on issues related to the other layers – and we offer a few brief remarks related to those layers towards the end of this report – in general we left those areas as focal points for future discussion, whether in future research clinics or other spaces within LUC.

Dreaming of New Anti-Colonial Worlds from within LUC's International Justice Major: Five Layers

INSTITUTIONAL ETHOS

Does the **character** and **culture** of LUC perpetuate coloniality or does it deliberately invalidate it?

Does it give space and pre-eminence to **colonial legacies**, or does it invalidate **Indigenous and alternative worldviews**?

CURRICULAR CONTENT

Do curricula strive to discuss and bring together different kinds of knowledge from **different epistemic traditions**?

Do curricula situate texts and other materials in their political, economic, social, and historical **context**?

Do curricula deconstruct the use of **language** and **voice** within texts and other materials?

Do curricula critically reflect on their **silences** and **absences**, as well as the **power dynamics** that have led to marginalisation of particular perspectives and traditions?

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

Do classrooms engage with questions of **positionality** and **reflexivity** with respect to LUC, educators, students, authors, and the texts and materials under discussion?

Do classrooms enable **dialogical and collaborative learning environments** and create space for engaging with **emotions**?

Do classrooms harness different pedagogical **frames** (e.g., anti-racist, decolonial, queer)?

Is collaboration nurtured with **communities beyond the classroom**, including those with a particular interest in decolonisation?

RESEARCH POLITICS

Does the research conducted at LUC perpetuate **colonial concepts, biases, imaginaries, and blind spots** or does it engage with **methodologies and lenses** (e.g., intersectional lenses) that strive to understand and question **systems of domination and coloniality**?

INCLUSIVENESS OF DIVERSITIES

Does LUC have plans to incorporate **historically disadvantaged and alienated groups** such as women, people of colour, LGBTQIA+ people, people living in poverty, at all levels (administration, students, educators)?

• DRIVERS FOR DECOLONISING WITHIN LUC'S IJ MAJOR

Sustaining an ongoing process of thinking through what decolonising means for the IJ major within LUC is both important and necessary.

The process is ***aligned with the overarching aim of the IJ major***, which is to explore challenges to justice and the rule of law in a globalising and pluralistic society. As noted earlier in this report, to study the rule of law requires unveiling its ties to coloniality and its role in the production of inequalities, violence, and destruction. Moreover, many of the challenges confronted in the IJ major cannot be adequately addressed by monocultural approaches to knowledge that neglect or marginalise the plurality of ways of knowing that exist across the world.

The process is also important ***to ensure that the major is representative, accessible, and inclusive***. As Kimunguyi explains, 'A colonial curriculum is characterised by its unrepresentative, inaccessible, and privileged nature. Unrepresentative, because it selectively constructs teachings which exclude certain, oftentimes, crucial narratives. Inaccessible, because it consequently prevents many of its recipients from identifying with the narratives construed, whilst appealing to a historically favoured demographic. Privileged, because it ensures the continued participation, comfort and flourishing of this select group of people, in both an academic and a wider societal context' (Keele University, 2021: 9-10).

In this regard, it is notable that recent decades have witnessed a significant growth of scholarship in the field of international law that seeks to confront international law's hierarchies and biases, whether by unsettling international law's claim to universality, unearthing the role of colonialism in shaping international law's architecture, exposing the Eurocentric legacies in international law's operation which persist to the present day, or questioning international law's progressive credentials. (Burgis-Kasthala and Schwöbel-Patel, 2022: 2) As Jones and O'Donoghue emphasise, 'sustained historical investigation has left it unarguable that international law is intimately connected to the process of colonialism and imperialism. If our students do not understand this, they do not understand international law' (Jones and O'Donoghue, 2022: 93).

Finally, although our focus groups revealed a degree of dissensus within the IJ student body concerning their expectations pertaining to decolonising the curriculum, it is clear that ***several students who participate on the IJ major have a legitimate expectation that they will be exposed to different perspectives from across the world***. To teach from a Eurocentric perspective, one which excludes or marginalises a wider range of ways of knowing, undermines these expectations. When our clinic began, one of our initial observations was the seeming lack of attention paid to the decolonising movement within the IJ major. However, after research and interviews with both students and staff, we began to recognize how this silence was in part a result of a lack of knowledge on how to approach these topics, and not always necessarily due to a lack of interest. While our report cannot address this challenge comprehensively, we hope it will provide a modest contribution within the IJ major in this direction.

Methodology

This report is based on work conducted by academic staff and students within the research clinic during the course of one semester in the 2021-2022 academic year. The clinic was structured into two parts.

• READING GROUP

The first half of the clinic was organised as a ***reading group focused on understanding what decolonising higher education means, the theories behind it, and its application in practice***. The aim was to build a strong foundation and understanding of the debates centred on decolonising the curriculum in general and decolonising international justice in particular. Each week, the group was invited to read and reflect on readings related to decolonising the curriculum, theoretical perspectives (including decolonial theory, Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL), critical race theory (CRT), and other critical perspectives related to pedagogy), and case studies which applied particular theoretical perspectives to the field of international justice (with a focus on international legal pedagogy).

An updated version of the reading list we relied upon for this purpose can be found at the end of this report.

• INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

The second half of the clinic was devoted to ***conducting interviews and focus groups with different stakeholders at LUC***, encompassing IJ faculty and affiliate professors that teach IJ courses, IJ students, professors who had previously led research clinics related to decolonising the curriculum at LUC, and students who had been involved in those research clinics.

In broad terms, the interviews and focus groups sought to surface insights concerning existing perspectives on decolonising the curriculum within higher education and existing decolonising practices, experiences, and initiatives taking place at LUC both within and beyond the IJ major.

Challenges and Limitations

During our research clinic, we encountered a number of challenges and limitations to our work. In this section, we offer some reflections on these hurdles and how we addressed them during our work.

• PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS

First, the research process was confronted by **practical limitations**, both in terms of the clinic's limited **size** (comprised of four students and two assistant professors) and **duration** (running for one semester). Naturally, these constraints limited the breadth of literature examined and the scope of interviews that were able to be conducted.

Min Tan notes that the **emotional labour** of decolonising work is both 'unavoidable' and 'required', but also that 'the cost of that labour is often untold' (Min Tan, 2021). Within the research clinic, our labour was rendered partially visible, and partially invisible, by the university. Although LUC granted students the privilege to gain credits for their participation on the research clinic, the official credit ultimately proved to be disproportionate to the actual time and labour required. In this way, the university effectively rendered invisible the true extent of the academic and emotional labour invested by students in this project. That said, visibility arose from the conversations which the research initiated, as well as the opportunities it created for the IJ major and for other members of the community to reflect and collaborate on decolonising work. Ultimately, these conversations brought to light the motivation, wisdom, creativity, and knowledge of those engaged in both decolonising work and 'emancipatory ways of teaching' within the university.

'Emancipatory ways of teaching' are ways of teaching embedded in critical scholarship that aim to expose and break free from structures of unfairness, oppression and inequity in pedagogical content and practice. A good example of such an approach at LUC is Dr. Ann Wilson's *College Project* course, in which students first collectively reflect on a diversity of perspectives within scholarship about the university before pursuing group research projects aimed at addressing a specific issue within the LUC community. The term 'emancipatory ways of teaching' was referred to in one of our interviews with faculty at LUC.

"Decolonisation is, above all, a difficult process and no academic engagement with it should be soothing or, worse, imagine itself adequately reparative... [D]ecolonisation cannot take place just in the classroom, and... a singular focus on 'decolonising the mind' runs the risk of standing in for decolonisation itself"

• RISK OF TOKENISTIC DECOLONISATION

Second, our research clinic was also confronted by the challenge of **guarding against tokenistic decolonisation**, understood as merely gesturing towards epistemic hierarchies and biases in a symbolic manner without going far enough to disrupt those structures (Moosavi, 2020: 348). Such tokenistic decolonisation can take various forms, including ‘a minimalist approach which superficially uses the language of intellectual decolonisation or mentions Southern scholars, scholarship or ideas only in passing’ or in the final class of a course (Moosavi, 2020: 348). This observation connects to the related concern that work related to decolonising the curriculum may be co-opted by universities, which become alive to ‘the marketability and profitability of decolonisation and go on to commodify it in the interests of capitalising on a timid version of it’ (Moosavi, 2020: 349).

In light of this challenge, we acknowledge and emphasise that we do not claim to be comprehensively engaging in decolonising work merely by producing a report, or by attempting to improve teaching and pedagogy within our academic institution. Efforts to decolonise the curriculum are only part of decolonisation as a process aiming to dismantle the oppressive structures of coloniality at the very foundation of societies across the world.

Changing pedagogical approaches to expand beyond Eurocentric ways of knowing, whilst important, must not detract attention from material transformation, reparation and restitution (Tuck and Yang, 2012: 19 and 21; al Attar and Abdelkarim, 2021: 15-16). Gopal, for example, emphasises that decolonisation ‘is, above all, a difficult process and no academic engagement with it should be soothing or, worse, imagine itself adequately reparative’, adding that ‘decolonisation cannot take place just in the classroom, and [...] a singular focus on “decolonising the mind” runs the risk of standing in for decolonisation itself’ (Gopal, 2021: 884).

• IMPOSSIBILITY OF DISRUPTIVE DECOLONISATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Finally, we are also cognisant that decolonisation that seeks to disrupt and dismantle colonial legacies is likely to be **impossible** within higher education, particularly given coloniality’s deep entrenchment within universities and the neoliberalisation of academia (Moosavi, 2020: 342; Adébisí, 2023: 21-22). Bearing this challenge in mind, in this report we seek to put forward avenues for change whilst remaining aware that they are unlikely to result in any larger restructuring of our educational institution in and of themselves. Ultimately, we agree with Ramos and Roberts who suggest that although ‘the classroom cannot do everything, [...] this does not mean it cannot do anything’ and it remains possible to contribute ‘to educating students to know otherwise and to inspire students to go out and create change within the world(s) in their reach’ (Ramos and Roberts, 2021: 41).

Community Insights and Dialogues

During our interviews and focus groups with staff and students at LUC, we identified a range of insights and ideas related to decolonising the curriculum that warrant further reflection amongst the IJ major community.

Student Focus Groups

During our focus groups, we found that students who may be interested in decolonising the curriculum are not always aware of the initiatives being taken by other students and staff, nor where to start engaging with these topics. At the same time, initiatives aimed at raising **awareness** on campus are having a hard time figuring out the best way to generate interest and attendance at events

We also observed disparate **interest** concerning the process of decolonising the curriculum from within the IJ major. This may be rooted in some students prioritising engagement with doctrinal law, rather than critical perspectives, due to a perception that the former is more important than latter for professional advancement within the field of international law. It may also be rooted in inconsistencies in the extent to which different faculty members engage with decolonising practices in their teaching.

In terms of engagement with decolonising the IJ major, students revealed a mixed reception towards **open-ended final essays and projects** as an avenue for engaging with decolonial and other critical perspectives, particularly where professors had provided inadequate grounding in such perspectives during the course.

At the same time, there was support for reconceiving **course evaluations** to include more specific questions on expectations and desires of the students regarding the pedagogical approach of the teacher, content diversity, and engagement with the topic on a personal (and not only academic) level. This could be expanded beyond the IJ major as a means for students to voice opinions on which pedagogical approaches and practices would help them learn and engage with the materials that teachers discuss. It could also help teachers better reflect on the materials they rely upon from a different perspective. IJ students have highlighted their teachers' general openness to suggestions and questions around these topics, while expressing a wish for systematising such lines of communication.



Faculty Interviews

During our interviews with both LUC and affiliate staff, concerns were expressed about insufficient **institutional support** for taking on and incorporating decolonising perspectives and practices into their teaching. Examples include the teaching certification courses not addressing decolonisation, restrictions in making changes to their syllabi, a lack of administrative time and compensation for both staff and students undertaking decolonising work within the university, and more general time and resource constraints resulting from the burden of other duties and responsibilities.

Some staff expressed that alongside the institutional difficulties of finding the time to prioritise decolonising work, it can sometimes be **difficult to figure out where to begin**. This includes broader topics of addressing what decolonising means, but also more course-specific questions concerning how decolonising practices can fit into their curricula.

Nurturing a Sustainable Conversation

Our interviews and focus groups also revealed a degree of variation concerning **what decolonising the curriculum means**, including narrow conceptions that appeared to equate decolonising practices with diversifying course content to the neglect of other layers for decolonising the curriculum such as pedagogical approaches. Similarly, concerns raised within student focus groups that placed particular emphasis on a lack of diversity in choice of texts and case studies seemed to neglect the distinction between demographic and epistemic diversity and the importance of decolonising content by grappling with the power relations that underpin existing epistemic hierarchies.

Ultimately, our research clinic has identified a lack of consistent and productive **communication** between staff, students, and the institution concerning the process of decolonising the curriculum. The frustrations and concerns from faculty and students alike are neither heard nor effectively communicated to each other, which can lead to different expectations and reactions. For example, in interviews, some staff expressed that they feel as though students do not fully understand the conditions that they work under and expect unrealistic changes, while some students expressed that the main reason why they feel discouraged from engaging with decolonising the curriculum is because of staff reactions and attitudes. Students in focus groups cited examples such as situations where decolonisation is discussed as an ad hoc topic in the last course session making it seem irrelevant and disconnected with the rest of the course, or where the burden of bringing decolonising perspectives to class seemed to rest with students from minority backgrounds. We believe that it would be beneficial to create spaces for these conversations to take place in a constructive and unintrusive manner to ensure that efforts and concerns from all actors are voiced, acknowledged, and engaged with.

What Decolonising Means for the IJ Major: Ideas and Practices

Based on our conversations with different communities at LUC, we acknowledge that everyone is at different stages of understanding what decolonising means for their ongoing work and projects. Based on a literature review of materials related to decolonising the curriculum in general and decolonising international justice in particular, we have identified a range of ideas and practices that we hope will provide one entry point for conversation and action on what decolonising means for LUC's International Justice major.

Drawing on the layers identified earlier in the report, we have divided these ideas and practices into three categories:

- ***Pedagogical approaches***, encompassing methods used for teaching and assessment;
- ***Curricular content***, encompassing the substance and structure of courses; and
- ***Practices beyond the classroom***, encompassing some initial reflections on additional layers of decolonising the curriculum such as inclusiveness of diversities.

To the extent possible, we have tried to incorporate examples and case studies relevant to the IJ major to illustrate how the ideas identified can be put into practice. Commonly encountered issues or pitfalls are also addressed, alongside suggestions on how to overcome them. Importantly, the ideas and practices advanced here are modestly intended to provide inspiration and guidance, and should by no means be taken as a standard or definitive list of 'best practices' that must be implemented.



Pedagogical Approaches

Pedagogical approaches encompass **how curricula are taught** in the classroom, including teaching methodologies, the classroom environment, and assessments and feedback. In order to begin to reflect on pedagogical approaches within the IJ major, this section elaborates ideas for engaging with practices of positionality, reflexivity, dialogical teaching, as well as different pedagogical frames and registers that may be relied upon in the classroom.

(a) Positionality and Reflexivity

Engaging with positionality and processes of reflexivity can be beneficial for all classrooms, and for students and teachers alike when conducting their teaching, learning, and research.

Positionality encompasses a diversity of practices that seek to position knowledge production within the classroom, and surface how a person's background, beliefs and values may affect their way of seeing the world (Icaza ad Vazquez (2018): 119).

- Positionality practices include **positioning the authors, texts, and ways of thinking** discussed in the classroom, including revealing 'the axes of differentiation along race, class and gender have been essential for establishing the canon, and concurrently, how the canon has been essential to reproduce these axes of discrimination' (Icaza ad Vazquez (2018): 119).
- Positionality practices also include **positioning the knowledge and experiences of the teacher and students**. Acknowledging one's positionality is important for understanding how someone's background, beliefs, and values may influence their understanding of a particular issue. Equally, positionality statements help others understand how and why someone might see something in a particular way. Reflecting on how to rely upon anti-racist pedagogical approaches, Kishimoto emphasises that 'in anti-racist teaching, regardless of course content, students are encouraged to make connections to, and see themselves as part of, the topics being discussed' (Kishimoto, 2018: 546). For Burgis-Kasthala and Schwobel-Patel, this also entails that 'as teachers we are willing to acknowledge our own limited knowledge and perspectives as well as our interest in learning from our students' (Burgis-Kasthala and Schwobel-Patel, 2022: 20).

Reflexivity encompasses a diversity of practices that seek to enable self-understanding and self-critique of one's biases (Emtseva, 2022: 765). Distinct from being reflective, reflexivity involves examining one's beliefs, assumptions, understandings, practices, and judgments, and how these may impact our teaching, learning and research. Reflexivity is also important for understanding how one's positionality may affect our beliefs, perspectives, and practices. Examining the distinction between reflexivity and positionality, one study explains that '[i]f positionality refers to what we know and believe then reflexivity is about what we do with this knowledge' (Hammond and Wellington, 2014).

Importantly, **positionality and reflexivity are ongoing processes**, which can help surface how coloniality shapes research and learning environments. Nevertheless, positionality and reflexivity practices must be exercised with care, lest they lead to hasty assumptions about individuals and communities. This could arise, for example, where a teacher assumes that a student from a certain background (for example, growing up in a particular country or region) is more knowledgeable on a particular issue. This is problematic, since although having personal lived experience of an issue generally provides perspective, it does not necessarily translate into extensive knowledge or interest. Moreover, even if one were to have extensive knowledge about an issue based on lived experience with respect to a particular topic, they might not feel comfortable expressing themselves on that issue, precisely because of the personal dimension it bears on them.

Drawing on existing scholarship, we have identified **a range of ideas for engaging with positionality and reflexivity in the classroom.**

'WONDER AS PEDAGOGY'

In their paper, *Wonder as Feminist Pedagogy: Disrupting Feminist Complicity with Coloniality*, Fabiane Ramos and Laura Roberts discuss how they employ 'wonder' in their pedagogies to challenge the epistemic violence of colonial logics within the university and mainstream feminism (Ramos and Roberts, 2021: 29).

The authors conceptualise 'wonder' in terms of 'instigating passion for learning that disrupts taken-for-granted truisms and knowing as possession (of the 'known') in favour of knowledge as a relationship that is multiple, dynamic and never complete' (Ramos and Roberts, 2021: 36). Such an approach encompasses putting differently situated voices into conversation with one another and nurturing a sense amongst the class of being in relation to texts rather than learning about them.

Importantly, several dimensions of pursuing wonder in the classroom involve creating a space in the classroom that is conducive to practices of positionality and reflexivity (Ramos and Roberts, 2021: 39-40):

- First, by **implementing an ethos of wonder at the outset of the course**, with an emphasis on 'kindness, respect, responsibility, trust and openness', and a clear message that 'students are respected and honoured regardless of where they are at and whatever their world views might be', that 'everyone in the classroom shares the responsibility to nurture this ethos that we propose', and that both teachers and students are being asked 'to take risks and be vulnerable' through this process.

'WONDER AS PEDAGOGY' (CONTINUED)

- Second, by **planning questions** to include in discussions that inspire students to reflect on 'their places in the world, their privileges and complicities with systems of power, the ways in which they have been trained to know, and about taken-for-granted stereotypes (gender, race, otherness, culture, etc.)'. Such questions are 'always framed in connection to the topics/thinkers with whom we are engaging to start fostering ways to 'read' literature/experiences/realities that are relational'.
- Third, by inviting students to write **weekly journal entries**, in which they can 'reflect on what we did in class, their learning, the text we are reading and how they are in relation to all of this'. These entries not only help deepen student self-reflexivity, but also enable teachers to better tailor their guidance for each student. In the LUC context, journal entries could follow a broad prompt instead of needing to answer a specific question, allowing students to truly reflect on readings and class discussions without being confined to answering a question. Journal entries could also constitute part of the participation grade, allowing more introverted students a chance to show that they are engaging with the class.

CRITICAL HISTORIES OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

In their paper, *History and Self-Reflection in the Teaching of International Law*, Henry Jones and Aoife O'Donoghue observe, 'If students are demanding an education that is responsive to questions raised by the society they live in, **the discipline's history** is essential to challenge their preconceptions and enables them to better understand the role of international law in the world' (Jones and O'Donoghue, 2022: 86). Engaging with histories of international law that centre coloniality would also 'put a student on alert in reading articles which ignore that context' (Jones and O'Donoghue, 2022: 84).

By way of example, Jones and O'Donoghue suggest **disrupting the focus on the Peace of Westphalia as 'the ever-present origin story' of public international law** by instead narrating a story of a single state (e.g., Ethiopia), focusing on a movement (e.g., anti-slavery), selecting a word (e.g., civilisation), or identifying an event (e.g., the Bandung Conference), as alternative starting points for historical discussion. Critically engaging with histories of international law can empower students to see how particular concepts were constructed and contested over time and problematize 'claims of universality, of knowledge, and of core and periphery' (Jones and O'Donoghue, 2022: 97 and 99-100)

CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES OF PLACE AND LOCATION

In his chapter, *Teaching International Law: Both Everywhere and Somewhere*, Juan Amaya-Castro discusses **international law's 'emplacement paradox'**, which refers to international law's authority being based on both its need for generality and detachment as part of its aspiration to be 'the law of everywhere', as well as its need for locality as part of its aspiration to be enacted in particular contexts (Amaya-Castro, 2017: 523).

When international law is discussed at university, the classroom becomes a site where this emplacement paradox is enacted – where international law is 'invoked in its everywhere-ness and simultaneously charged with somewhere-ness' (Amaya-Castro, 2017: 534). It is in the **choice of specific examples** to enhance student understanding where it becomes clear that emplacement is 'never neutral, but rather drenched in the mix of perspectives, ideologies, and investments of the people doing the emplacing'. Emplacement also reveals itself during class discussions 'as professors attempt to make sense of **students' investments** in particular positions by understanding how they are 'coming at it', and from which specific perspectives' (Amaya-Castro, 2017: 530-531).

Building on these reflections, one way for teachers to discuss colonial power dynamics within the field of international justice is to **engage with critical pedagogies of place and location**. For example, in her article, *Colonialism, Context and Critical Thinking: First Steps Towards Decolonizing the Dutch Legal Curriculum*, Alison Fischer suggests that teachers can draw on a wealth of case studies drawn from research concerning Dutch colonial history to teach Third World Approaches to International (TWAIL) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) methodologies to their students, whilst discussing a variety of legal issues related to colonialism, race, and law (Fischer, 2022: 19).

At LUC, **a critical exploration of the adequacy of international law to address colonial wrongs through reparations claims**, for example, could engage with the Dutch history of compensating White slave owners for each individual freed from slavery, whilst neglecting to compensate the formerly enslaved – not only to reveal the injustice of this arrangement but also to examine the role of race in this context. As Fischer explains, 'In this case, the whiteness of the former enslavers was a prerequisite to compensation for "lost property". The formerly enslaved did not have this prerequisite and were denied property rights in both their own bodies and their labour' (Fischer, 2022: 22).

INTERSECTIONALITY AND MULTIDIMENSIONALITY

Additional lenses through which to engage with positionality and reflexivity in the classroom are intersectionality and multidimensionality.

Intersectionality may be understood as an analytic lens that 'seeks to capture both the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more forms of discrimination or systems of subordination', in particular by addressing 'the manner in which racism, patriarchy, economic disadvantages and other discriminatory systems contribute to create layers of inequality' and 'burdens that flow along these intersecting axes contributing actively to create a dynamic of disempowerment' (UN Division for the Advancement of Women, 2000).

In the field of international law, an intersectional lens might be relied upon to explore how the initial wave of feminist international law scholarship neglected to engage with imperialism, with the consequence of tending to universalize the experiences of white women in the Global North at the expense of the experiences of women in the Global South (Gathii, 2021: 1630-1631).

Multidimensionality may be understood as an analytic lens that seeks to more effectively capture 'the inherent complexity and irreversibly multi-layered nature of everyone's identities and of oppression' (Hutchinson, 1997: 641, cited in Gathii, 2021: 1632), in particular by explicitly exploring 'mutually reinforcing structures of oppression and subordination' (Gathii, 2021: 1635).

In the field of international law, a multidimensional lens might be relied upon to explore how TWAIL scholarship has tended to underplay the subordination of indigenous peoples. James Gathii, for example, points to the work of Amar Bhatia concerning the 'absence of indigenous peoples in TWAIL's retelling of international legal history', which 'embraces a solidarity of decolonised African and Asian states that subsumes within it indigenous peoples and their legal traditions and practices' (Gathii, 2021: 1636). Ultimately, 'by examining the multidimensional nature of colonial subordination to include indigenous peoples, Amar Bhatia offers a corrective to decolonising movements and their attendant scholarship that, in his view, embraced assimilationist goals inconsistent with the interest of indigenous peoples and thereby erased their distinctive experiences as well as their activism' (Gathii, 2021: 1636).

(b) Dialogical Education Within and Beyond the Classroom

Accompanying practices of positionality and reflexivity, there is also much to be gained from adopting a dialogical approach to teaching, a notion that has roots in the work of Paulo Freire. In his seminal book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire was critical of the 'banking concept of education', in which education 'becomes an act of depositing, in which students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor' (Freire, 1970: 72). Against this perspective, Freire proposed '**dialogical education**', in which 'the program content is neither a gift nor an imposition – bits of information to be deposited in the students – but rather the organized, systemized, and developed "re-presentation" to individuals of the things about which they want to know more' (Freire, 1970: 93).

Importantly, dialogical education extends beyond classroom boundaries. Icaza and Vazquez, for example, refer to the notion of '**transitionality**' to speak of 'the importance of enabling the students to address the question of the meaning of the knowledge they are learning' by placing emphasis on 'enabling students to bridge the epistemic border between the classroom and society, the classroom and the Earth' and ensuring that the classroom 'never loses sight of how knowledge addressed and reproduced impacts the social and/or the Earth' (Icaza and Vazquez, 2018: 120).

The notion of dialogical education is often misunderstood as requiring teachers to relinquish their authority to become non-directive facilitators as a means of democratising power in the classroom. Yet, as Donaldo Macedo explains, 'dialogue as a process of learning and knowing must always involve a political project with the objective of dismantling oppressive structures and mechanisms prevalent both in education and society' (Freire and Macedo, 1995: 380). The challenge for teachers, therefore, is to try to **decentre authority** in the classroom as a means of sharing power and enabling learning as a mutual process between faculty and students **without ignoring or relinquishing responsibility** for the authority and power that teachers continue to exercise (Kishimoto, 2018: 548).

Drawing on existing scholarship, we have identified **a range of ideas for dialogical education both within and beyond the classroom.**

BRAVE SPACES

In one of our interviews, a professor explained how the introduction of decolonial perspectives in the classroom appeared to make some students clam up and worry about saying the wrong thing. The professor elaborated that the reaction of the class made it seem as if the topic were controversial (Interview 6). What seems apparent from this example is that engaging with decolonial and other critical perspectives that potentially disrupt student assumptions or challenge their beliefs may make some of the class feel **vulnerable** and **uncomfortable**.

Reflecting on feelings of discomfort, Amia Srinivasan suggests distinguishing between 'calls for safety that issue from a justified grievance at inequality – the disproportionate susceptibility of the relatively powerless to violence, mental degradation, silencing, economic precarity, illness and death – and those calls for safety that reflect a fundamental denial of what it means to be living, vulnerable creatures'. Where safety is unequally distributed within the classroom across social divisions, teachers should be alive to the fact that 'free inquiry requires not just the absence of interference into speech, but the provision of the preconditions that allow everyone to speak, and be listened to' and that 'getting some students to exercise their right to speak requires that some students be asked to quieten down'. At the same time, classrooms cannot, and should not, be made totally safe – students may feel discomfort because of the vulnerability certain discussions generate, but that vulnerability allows for growth. While the classroom can be 'a liberating, thrilling experience', students can also be asked 'to confront a text, an idea, a possibility that brings one's whole life up short'. As Srinivasan emphasises, 'These moments can feel existentially threatening but they are – like the right to speak and be listened to in turn – a precondition of the project, and promise, of the classroom' (Srinivasan, 2021).

To make classrooms more conducive to difficult discussions, one option is to shift away from the language of 'safe spaces' towards '**brave spaces**', emphasising 'the need for courage rather than the illusion of safety' (Arao and Clemens, 2013: 141). Creating 'brave space' usually begins by inviting the class to reflect on why they think the term is being relied upon instead of 'safe space', thereby involving their critical lenses at the outset and creating room for participants to develop their own meaning of brave space. The process of actualizing brave space typically continues with collectively developing and agreeing to a set of basic principles to guide classroom discussions.

Importantly, Arao and Clemens emphasise that teachers should strive for '**protracted dialogue**' in defining brave space and the principles, so as to guard against establishing principles that may contribute to 'the conflation of safety and comfort and restrict participant engagement and learning' (Arao and Clemens, 2013: 141). As part of this process, teachers can discuss vulnerability and discomfort in the classroom with respect to themselves and the students. Being clear with students that a degree of vulnerability is an inevitable part of the learning process may itself enable more open discussions.

CO-CREATING COURSES WITH STUDENTS

One way of sharing power with students is to engage students in the creation of courses. Sophie Rigney, for example, suggests involving students in 'creating the seminar list, the reading list, the sets of reflections for class, and the assessment tasks, so that they co-create the curriculum', a process that aligns with the value of creating a classroom 'where the teacher is not assumed to be a special holder of knowledge' (Rigney, 2020: 514).

Such initiatives have been adopted in other institutions. Adelle Blackett, for example, has discussed how students seeking to engage with themes of critical race theory made use of the 'student-initiated seminar' at the Faculty of Law at McGill University, for which she acted as 'sponsor' by providing guidance as needed (Blackett, 2017: 1262). The initiative involved the students themselves taking 'a leadership role in preparing materials, and coordinating the teaching of the course' which focused on themes of critical race theory. While supportive of the initiative, Blackett notes that the initiative 'risked a neoliberal turn' and that it is important to guard against the development of 'a troubled asymmetry in the distribution of invariably limited institutional resources' whereby 'critical new courses on "identity" could be taught by students themselves, unlike most established, mainstream courses' (Blackett, 2017: 1263).

To guard against this risk at LUC, one possibility that professors could explore would be to **utilise research clinics**, for which students receive credit for their participation, as spaces to co-create new courses on themes related to decolonising international justice that would ultimately form part of the established curriculum.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND ACTIVISM

Expanding the learning space, Folúkẹ Adébí sí suggests one avenue for dialogical education is to enable students 'to humbly engage with community activism... especially in spaces where marginalised populations are the majority' (Adébí sí, 2023: 170). This might involve inviting universities 'to rethink their place and role in the communities and spaces in which they exist and work', for example through collaborations with 'law offices which specialise in areas of interest to decolonisation', as well as field trips for 'documentary/film reviews, museum visits, engaging in charity work, attending courtrooms, and so on' (Adébí sí, 2023: 171). Such collaborations may offer students some **possibilities to connect to efforts taking place beyond the classroom aimed at disrupting and dismantling coloniality around the world.**

DIALOGICAL ASSESSMENTS

An additional space for engaging dialogically with students is assessments. In the field of IJ, a number of scholars have offered ideas for dialogical assessments:

- **Dialogical Book Reviews**, in which students are asked to review a book and are then invited to present their review to and interact with the author in 'author-meets-reader sessions', which can be made open to the wider faculty and community to attend (Blackett, 2017: 1265).
- **A Wikipedia Project**, in which students are asked to edit a Wikipedia page on excluded or under-researched topics or people, putting to use decolonial and other critical theories and texts discussed during the course. The aim is for students 'to gain a deeper understanding of the politics of knowledge production in terms of normalised inclusions and exclusions' through 'an activity of community building' (Ramos and Roberts, 2021: 40).
- **Recent News Reviews**, in which students are asked to interpret recent news events from different perspectives of international law. Mark Massoud, for example, invites students to imagine they are an intern at an intergovernmental organisation such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and tasked with drafting a memorandum on a question of international law. As Massoud explains, students must not only consider the organisation's goals, but also 'explain to their bosses what realist responses might look like, what formalist perspectives might encourage, and what TWAIL or feminist approaches might want UNDP to consider or reconsider' (Massoud, 2021: 5).

"We must distinguish between those pedagogical practices that secure students' access to the classroom on equal terms, and those practices that answer to an unanswerable demand for total psychological safety."

AMIA SRINIVASAN (2021)

(c) Pedagogical Frames and Registers

In his paper, *Must International Legal Pedagogy Remain Eurocentric?*, Mohsen al Attar argues that 'publicists who yearn for the profound metamorphosis of international law must teach the discipline in revolutionary ways' (al Attar, 2021a: 178). To this end, it is important to critically consider different pedagogical frames and registers that may be relied upon and engaged with in the classroom. A range of scholars have offered reflections on this theme.

PEDAGOGICAL FRAMES

In his paper, *Must International Legal Pedagogy Remain Eurocentric*, Mohsen al Attar invites teachers of international law to critically reflect on three pedagogical approaches that may be relied upon in the classroom:

- **A Critical Frame**, which approaches international law from a traditional doctrinal perspective so that students learn how to navigate the vocabulary of international law whilst scattering TWAIL and other critical perspectives across the syllabus to nurture awareness of international law's limits and partialities. According to al Attar, the risk of this approach is that it 'does little to allay the epistemic violence of Eurocentric international law' and 'might even stifle movement towards radical action' by legitimizing the status quo and disrupting 'neither international law nor student thinking about international law' (al Attar, 2021a: 194-195).
- **The "Others" of International Law Frame**, which involves renouncing the singularity of European epistemology in the articulation of international law by navigating, for example, African, Asian, Islamic, and Indigenous approaches to international law. According to al Attar, a challenge for this approach is that specialist courses sometimes receive a lukewarm reception from students, while 'if we sustain the conventional arrangement of the course but fertilize it with lectures on a blend of traditions, we risk confusing students' (al Attar, 2021a: 200).
- **An Anti-Racist Frame**, which centres how race remains 'a marker and method of differentiation, operating both intentionally and intuitively' within international law and in this way confronts 'both the pathology of whiteness [...] in the regime's authorship and the advantage white peoples derive from its sustained operation' (al Attar, 2021a: 202-204).

RADICAL COUNTERFACTUALS

In his chapter, *Subverting Eurocentric Epistemology: The Value of Nonsense When Designing Counterfactuals*, Mohsen al Attar suggests that beyond relying on **counter-narratives** as a means of exposing legacies of colonialism within international law, teachers could rely on 'radical counterfactuals' as a means 'to upend Eurocentric epistemology and knowledge, to imagine existence beyond the ideas that sustain the status quo' (al Attar, 2021b: 146 and 161).

Radical counterfactuals are those which 'subvert reality, context, and sense to underscore that what we regard as real, contextual, and sensible are all contingent and, to those who suffer the predations and perversions of these categories, they are also nonsensical'. Examples include 'a democratic Security Council, an IMF whose president is selected by African states, the constitutionalisation of participatory economics, [and] a global moratorium on intellectual property rights'. By deploying radical counterfactuals, it may be possible 'to plot **pathways towards alternative models of international legal relations** that do not seek to legitimise the segmentation of humanity into First World agents and Third World subjects' (al Attar, 2021b: 160-161).

STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

In his paper, *The Teaching of (Another) international law: Critical Realism and the Question of Agency*, Luis Eslava discusses the school of thought known as '**critical realism**', which involves 'attending closely to the deep and widespread connection between structure and agency, and to its impact on everyday arrangements of power' in an effort to 'increase students' ability to challenge unequal global patterns of distribution and accumulation, and think about how such patterns affect them and are, indeed, reproduced by them' (Eslava, 2020: 381). At the core of this approach is a call for teachers 'to enable a learning environment in which students' agentic possibilities are strengthened *in awareness of* - instead of *despite* - those structures that are already shaping their lives' (Eslava, 2020: 369).

To illustrate how this approach can be deployed in the teaching of international law, Eslava discusses how his *International Human Rights Law* syllabus 'emphasises the way in which the global architecture of human rights has come to constitute, especially over the last three decades, particular subjects in the world - for example, the citizen, the woman, the worker, the refugee or the poor - who enjoy certain specific rights and not others'. Eslava explains how 'engaging the "canon" of international human rights law through this idea of subject formation has made it more attractive to my students, not because it reaffirms the usual liberatory aura of this area of law, but because it gives them a way to engage with it as a sphere of contingent practices that we should worry about, and transform if needed, in order to produce those types of change that we desire'. Eslava concludes that the lesson his students tend to draw from his classes 'is not to run away from a field so deeply imbricated in global structures of power, but that we must engage more closely "with and against" international law's frames, and its long doing and undoing of us' (Eslava, 2020: 383-384).

THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

In their paper, *Between Resistance and Reform: TWAIL and the Universality of International Law*, Luis Eslava and Sundhya Pahuja put forward an approach that seeks to surface the everyday life of international law as 'a specific kind of **material practice**' by examining practices that occur, not only through 'typical international legal places' such as courts, but also 'the many other practices and objects that are reflexively unrelated to the international, but which may be understood hermeneutically as expressions, embodiments and enactments of international law' such as biometric scanners used at borders to control migration, water-meters for the functioning and measurement of development projects, and mobile phone technologies deployed for the integration of small farmers into the global trading system (Eslava and Pahuja, 2011: 109 and 127-128).

As Eslava and Pahuja explain, adopting this frame offers an avenue 'to start locating the international in those places that usually escape our attention and yet regulate our lives, especially the lives of the billions who are subject to developmental interventions'. Moreover, charting the international as it unfolds in people's everyday lives can provide students with '**a map to resist, revolt and strategise against the effects of the regulatory proliferation of international law**', for example through 'the work of profanation and the re-embedding of international legal concepts, sites, artefacts and forms of life in alternative economies' (Eslava and Pahuja, 2011: 129).

In a similar vein, James Gathii suggests that 'instead of focusing only on the formal sources of our discipline, such as treaties, custom, judicial opinions, and state practice, [...] also focus[ing] on **ordinary people** and **social movements** not only in resisting rules made from above, but in forging new ones that reflect their concerns' (Gathii, 2020: 185).

"Instead of focusing only on the formal sources of our discipline, such as treaties, custom, judicial opinions, and state practice, we can also focus on ordinary people and social movements not only in resisting rules made from above, but in forging new ones that reflect their concerns."

JAMES GATHII (2020): 185

RE-IMAGINING MOOT COURTS

In her chapter, *Mooting: Advocacy, Litigation, Strategy*, Christine Schwöbel-Patel discusses possibilities for **disrupting common mooted exercises**.

Moot courts are an engaging teaching method, which enable students to develop and enhance skills that are likely to be useful in their future careers. Researching legislation, crafting convincing arguments, being able to deliver oral presentations proficiently, as well as defending one's position firmly, are all important qualities which students can practice through mooted exercises.

Nevertheless, moot courts as traditionally conceived also serve 'a structuring function in the reproduction of privilege'. Participants are encouraged to argue their position from a positivist perspective based on legal rules and discouraged from critiquing the unfairness or inequalities which such rules and systems may serve to condone. Not only does this reinforce the 'myth of the neutrality of the law', it also overshadows 'rich traditions of critiquing inequalities hidden through law's supposed neutrality' (Schwöbel-Patel, 2021: 12).

A re-imagining of the moot court might take inspiration from the idea of '**the trial of rupture**'. A trial of rupture moot 'considers ways in which legal tools can be used to highlight structural inequalities' and 'seeks to unmask the assumption of the separation of the political and the legal for the purposes of anti-imperialism' (Schwöbel-Patel, 2021: 16-17). Students are initially invited 'to reflect on those power structures that commonly remain hidden in mooted competitions' and 'to express the exclusionary aspects of a trial [...] [which] might involve reflections on the typical judge, on the type of language that is used in the courtroom, or the legal principles invoked'. Students are also invited 'to rotate in their roles of judges, prosecutors, defendants, and defence lawyers' (Burgis-Kasthala & Schwöbel-Patel, 2021: 20).

Such an approach challenges both the assumed neutrality of law and decorum that are present during mooted. Furthermore, rather than focusing solely on Western forms of litigation, diversifying mooted exercises might involve students enacting cases from judiciary systems embedded in different cultural and political contexts, thereby also learning about a wider variety of forms of litigation and dispute resolution.

ENGAGING WITH EMOTIONS

In her chapter, *Reflections on Teaching “Emotion Bites”*, Rebecca Sutton explains that when teachers fail to engage with emotions, they do not make the classroom an emotions free space, but rather ‘serve to obscure the important work that emotions are doing – in the law, in legal reasoning and in the student experience’ (Sutton, 2022).

Engaging with emotions in the classroom might involve reflecting on **teachers’ and students’ emotional investments in particular subject areas**. In the field of human rights, for example, Zembylas suggests that decolonising pedagogy ‘needs to recognise that global discourses of human rights formulate pedagogies of emotion in society and in schools, exerting a powerful impact on the affective struggle for empowerment and resistance’. As such, educators ‘need to be critically aware of the emotional consequences when they categorise individuals into ‘oppressors’ and ‘oppressed’ [...] [and] to understand how learners’ emotional attachments are strongly entangled with traumatic historical circumstances of human rights violations and material conditions’ (Zembylas, 2017: 496).

Engaging with emotional knowledge could also involve reflecting on **how international law is perceived and experienced**. James Gathii, for example, discusses recent work by Kamari Maxime Clarke concerning proposals by the Pan-African Lawyers Association (PALU) to expand the criminal jurisdiction of a future African Court of Justice and Human Rights (Gathii, 2020: 176). In the work, Clarke explores logics beyond doctrinal concerns with the rules of international law to reveal how justice is experienced affectively in light of ‘deep-seated histories of injustice, such as the absence of international institutional intervention into colonialism and apartheid, and the inequalities in the way in which international criminal justice is administered today’ (Gathii, 2020: 177). Engaging with these affective realms in the classroom could provide an important basis for discussing and reflecting on the complex historical legacies and destructive consequences of international law.

Curricular Content

Curricular content encompasses **what is taught in the classroom**. As Adébísi explains, a curriculum is ‘a selection of knowledge that is both contested and constructed’, which also ‘describes, underwrites, and reproduces relations of intersubjectivity, and epistemic power, as well as possibilities opened and foreclosed’ (Adébísi, 2023: 168). In designing curricula, teachers make choices, determining which elements (including theories, concepts, frames, voices, and ideas) to include and exclude, as well as which to prioritise and marginalise.

In order to begin to critically examine curricular content within the IJ major, this section elaborates a range of ideas for reflecting on choice of texts and other materials, choice of case studies, contextualising doctrine, including different languages, engaging with theories, absences and silences, student and guest collaborations, disenchantment and reconstruction, nurturing dialogues between texts and legal systems, and confronting the challenge of constraints.

CHOICE OF TEXTS AND OTHER MATERIALS

Within the IJ major, educators will be familiar with **an established canon**, understood as the shared texts, case studies, theories, voices, experiences, and perspectives that are often assumed and expected to be engaged with within particular subject areas. At its most basic, decolonising the curriculum involves **diversifying the texts and materials** relied upon in the classroom, including in terms of race, class, and gender, to include marginalised communities and subaltern perspectives. Diversification is important for several reasons, such as enabling different perspectives to enter into conversation with one another, as well as providing inspiration for students whose voices tend to be underrepresented or absent in academia (al Attar and Abdelkarim, 2021: 10-11).

Importantly, as Achille Mbembe emphasises, diversifying the curriculum is about **‘expanding the archive, not excising it’**, a process involving ‘reading the different archives of the world critically, each with and against the others’ (Mbembe, 2022: 130). From this perspective, diversifying the curriculum is ‘not about closing the door to European or other traditions’, but rather ‘about defining clearly what the centre is’ (Mbembe, 2016: 35). Or as Priyamvada Gopal puts it, ‘This would mean [...] not repudiating all ideas marked as “European” or even “Enlightenment” but treating them as “texts that need a new deciphering within a much wider context than has hitherto been given them”’ (Gopal, 2021: 892).

CHOICE OF TEXTS AND OTHER MATERIALS (CONTINUED)

Diversification of texts and other materials should be accompanied by *an approach that grapples with ‘the power structures that have created hierarchies of knowledge and looks to dismantle these’* (Keele University, 2021: 22). As Mohsen al Attar and Shaimaa Abdelkarim explain, ‘a curriculum is not a reading list but an epistemological gateway into a discipline’ in which educators ‘identify the concepts we favour and situate them in relation to others, assigning materials that verify our position’ (al Attar and Abdelkarim, 2021: 11). Applying this insight to the legal field, al Attar and Abdelkarim observe that ‘to think of law is also to think about human experience and the texts we select convey an interpretation of that experience and the underlying epistemology’ (al Attar and Abdelkarim, 2021: 14). In this vein, diversifying reading lists must move beyond demographic diversity towards an approach that strives to critically engage with different ways of knowing – in other words, towards *epistemic diversity* (Icaza and Vazquez, 2018: 122).

Of particular importance for educators reflecting on the epistemic diversity of their curricula, Grosfoguel draws a distinction between *‘epistemic location’* and *‘social location’*. As Grosfoguel explains, ‘The fact that one is socially located in the oppressed side of power relations, does not automatically mean that [they are] epistemically thinking from a subaltern epistemic location... Subaltern epistemic perspectives are knowledge coming from below that produces a critical perspective of hegemonic knowledge in the power relations involved’ (Grosfoguel, 2007: 213). In this vein, educators should guard against what Moosavi refers to as *‘nativist decolonisation’*, which involves ‘glorifying Southern scholarship or scholars just because they are from the Global South’. As Moosavi explains, diversifying texts and materials ‘is not achieved by merely introducing people or ideas from the Global South [...] but rather it is about disruption of the colonial past and the assumptions that it has generated to arrive at something that is prepared to rupture the colonial legacy in drastic ways’ (Moosavi, 2020: 347).

When reflecting on the choice of materials, educators might consider:

- reviewing *a broader range of texts and source materials*, including journals based in the Global South that may surface different debates or perspectives;
- reflecting on *how knowledge in a particular subject could be used to further/maintain or disrupt/dismantle relations of coloniality*;
- consulting *colleagues in related disciplines* specialised in particular research areas;
- reviewing *texts about pedagogy* that raise questions concerning diversity, coloniality and critical thinking;
- diversifying *the types of source material* relied upon in the curriculum by including podcasts, music, art, and literature, for example.

(Keele University, 2021: 20; Decolonising SOAS Working Group, 2018: 10)

CHOICE OF TEXTS AND OTHER MATERIALS (CONTINUED)

By way of example, reflecting on how to centre Pan-African ideas as part of decolonising the teaching of international law in Africa, Babatunde Fagbayibo draws on the work of James Gathii to highlight two epistemic approaches that could help 'shape the reconsideration of the existent Eurocentric logic that dominates the reaching of public international law in Africa' (Fagbayibo, 2019: 175): 'contributionist' and 'critical traditionalist'.

- **Contributionist scholarship** aims to demonstrate how scholars from non-Western geographical contexts have contributed to the development of international law – for example, Taslim Olawale Elias' work surfacing 'the extent to which pre-colonial Africa made immense contributions to the development of international law' and in the process providing 'a pluricivilisational conception of international law by establishing the specific contributions of African actors to matters of diplomacy, trade, and peace' (Fagbayibo, 2019: 175). Importantly, as Ntina Tzouvala explains, while surfacing the contributions of non-Western communities to the field of international law is 'undeniably a much-needed task', in engaging with this scholarship it is important to critically reflect how 'an approach that questions Eurocentrism exclusively by showing that non-Westerners also became competent users of the language of international law ends up implying that the language itself is truly universal, even if it originated in Europe' (Tzouvala, 2021: 418).
- **Critical traditionalist scholarship**, by contrast, focuses on 'exposing the complicity of international law in devising principles and systems that facilitated the complete subjugation of Africans', as well as advocating 'a fundamental reform of the international system so that it genuinely reflects the cause and aspirations of the developing world' – for example, Umozurike's work surfacing the role performed by concepts such as *terra nullius* in denying the international personality of African peoples (Fagbayibo, 2019: 177-178). Returning to Tzouvala, this strand of scholarship is distinguished by its aim 'to show that some of the disciplines' core concepts and arguments not only incorporate Western ideas about the world but also support the material interests of imperialist centers, even if the composition of the profession has diversified' (Tzouvala, 2021: 418).

CHOICE OF CASE STUDIES

Very much related to the choice of texts and other materials is determining whether case studies included within existing curricula are **reflective of the varied experiences that communities across the world encounter concerning particular themes and subject areas** (Keele University, 2021: 9).

James Gathii, for example, recommends challenging '**the limited geography of places and ideas**' that dominate the field of international law, noting how international law textbooks 'are more likely to be filled with cases and examples from the international law produced in places like Geneva, New York, and Washington, D.C.' (Gathii, 2020: 166) Gathii urges international lawyers to critically reflect on how international scholarship and practice 'privileges certain locations while excluding and rendering other locations and international legal activities invisible' (Gathii, 2020: 166).

For example, Gathii notes that inadequate attention is devoted to the international law produced in places like Arusha, Tanzania – home to the East African Court of Justice and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as the East African Law Society and the Pan-African Lawyers Union (Gathii, 2020: 166-167). Importantly, in engaging with these institutions, international lawyers should guard against the tendency to depict African institutions in reductive terms 'as an example of "what not to do"' or as 'passive junior imitators of their Western counterparts', at the expense of their role as active and innovative actors in the development of international law (Gathii, 2020: 169-170). Examples include the redeployment of the East African Court of Justice from its initial design as a trade court to become one of human rights, as well as pioneering environmental cases that have been brought before Africa's international courts (Gathii, 2020: 171-176).

CONTEXTUALISING DOCTRINE

A further suggestion is to critically reflect on **how doctrine can be taught in its political, social, economic, and cultural context**, including engagement with the history of particular concepts and thematic areas.

Michelle Burgis-Kasthala and Christine Schwöbel-Patel, for instance, provide the example of contextualising the right to self-determination and statehood by engaging with the concept's historical transformation from a principle to a right in the twentieth century and critically reflecting on how this transformation significantly narrowed the concept and 'emptied [it] of its radical potential', for example with respect to struggles for Indigenous sovereignty. Such contextualisation could be enhanced 'by highlighting subaltern perspectives, such as those of American and Australian Indigenous peoples, before those of the dominant Western view' (Burgis-Kasthala and Schwöbel-Patel, 2022: 17-18).

LANGUAGE

According to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, language has 'a dual character', being both 'a means of communication' and 'a carrier of culture'. In its latter form, language is '**the collective memory-bank of a people's experience in history**', such that 'the choice of language and the use to which language is put are central to a people's definition of itself in relation to its natural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire universe' (wa Thiong'o, 1985: 109-110 and 116-117). In the field of international law, there is an emerging strand of scholarship critically reflecting on the relationship between language and international law. Gabriel Lentner, for example, suggests that 'the dominance of the English language in the expert discourse in international law means that priority is given to certain narratives (e.g. the canon of Western philosophy) and epistemologies... over others (e.g., the canon of South Asian philosophy)' (Lentner, 2019: 52).

In this vein, one suggestion for educators is to strive to **incorporate materials from a variety of languages in their curricula**. LUC's *Decolonising the Teaching and Learning of International Relations* research clinic, for example, suggests that educators could include non-English sources as recommended readings, as one of several options within the required readings from which students could choose from, or by inviting students to identify texts in their own preferred language for assignments such as presentations and essays (LUC Decolonising the Teaching and Learning of International Relations Research Clinic, 2021: 14).

ENGAGING WITH THEORIES

An additional suggestion is to critically reflect on how to engage with different theoretical perspectives, such as TWAIL, critical race theory, decolonial theory, and queer theory, within particular courses. How best to incorporate theories is likely to vary depending on the course and preferences of the instructor so it is important to reflect on what is likely to work best in different contexts - whether introducing theories **seminar by seminar linked to issues discussed** or via **a class dedicated to theories**. Regardless of the approach, as Rigney explains, 'Spending more time analysing [theoretical] approaches to law which demonstrate law's relationships to race and empire - and having this as a framework - would better provide students with tools to further their decolonial activism' (Rigney, 2020: 513).

ABSENCES AND SILENCES

As discussed earlier in this report, de Sousa Santos emphasises the importance of developing a '**sociology of absences**', which recognises that 'whatever does not exist in our society is often actively produced as non-existent' and allows us 'to expand the relevant experiences of the world' (de Sousa Santos, 2016: 21).

Translating this idea and the related concept of a 'pedagogy of absences' to the international law context, Michelle Burgis-Kasthala and Christine Schwöbel-Patel suggest different ways of considering '**the silences** in a mainstream curriculum and our inability to imagine alternatives'. For example, questions that might be discussed in the classroom include: 'Why is it that the visceral, the physically violent dominate our thinking about crises in international law? Why is it that the rise of international economic law and international investment law is coterminous with the decline of questions about social and economic justice in international law? Can we imagine a post-statist world to address contemporary climate and migration challenges? How might we imagine a curriculum that can speak to the rich and varied experiences of international law as a quotidian practice both in the classroom and beyond?' (Burgis-Kasthala & Schwöbel-Patel, 2022: 21).

STUDENT AND GUEST COLLABORATIONS

Educators could also consider **involving students in the construction of curricula**, whether by consulting them on the types of content they would like addressed and/or carving out spaces to delve into topics and readings identified by students as part of the course structure (Decolonising SOAS Working Group, 2018: 10). LUC's *Decolonising the Teaching and Learning of International Relations* research clinic, for example, suggests that whenever students are invited to review a particular topic for an assignment (such as a group presentation), they could also be asked to identify at least one reading that engages the topic from a different perspective to the readings already identified in the syllabus. The additional reading could then be distributed in advance of the class and form part of the discussion (LUC Decolonising the Teaching and Learning of International Relations Research Clinic, 2021: 20).

Beyond collaborating with students, educators could also **invite guest speakers who speak from and engage with particular epistemologies**. Guests could include people outside of regular academic such as local practitioners and activists involved in decolonising projects on the ground (LUC Decolonising the Teaching and Learning of International Relations Research Clinic, 2021: 13).

DISENCHANTMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION

In their article, *Decolonising the Curriculum in International Law: Entrapments in Praxis and Critical Thought*, Mohsen al Attar and Shaimaa Abdelkarim urge reflection on how even critical international legal scholars 'deploy critique within disciplinary boundaries to re-enchant international law through a critical wariness of its origins and the epistemologies that reproduce Eurocentrism, yet that always ends in its embrace' (al Attar and Abdelkarim, 2021: 16). They suggest opening up space in the teaching of international law for **disenchantment**, understood as 'rejecting the international legal order as a totalising knowledge regime' and 'going beyond international legal relations in alternative praxis and views on an international order' (al Attar and Abdelkarim, 2021: 18 and 20).

In this vein, simply discussing the relationship between colonialism, colonality, and international law, as well as exposing false universals by highlighting the divide between those who benefit and those who suffer from specific legal arrangements, whilst important, is ultimately inadequate (al Attar and Quintero Godínez, 2023). Educators should strive to engage with anti-colonial thinkers whose work is not limited to 'exposing the blind spots or exclusionary character of Western thought', but which also reveals '**positive or reconstructive ambitions**' (Getachew and Mantena, 2021: 379).

Seeking to reimagine the task of decolonising political theory, for example, Getachew and Mantena discuss a range of thinkers who have wrestled with 'the inadequacy and occlusions of the inherited categories of social and political thought' and who 'rightly perceive that their political experiences, struggles, and aspirations are not adequately captured by existing categories', but whose work moves beyond critique 'by taking up the political predicaments of the non-Western world as sites of political theorizing' - whether through a strategy of '**conceptual innovation**', in which 'new concepts are generated out of the specific experiences of postcolonial politics', or through a strategy of '**conceptual reanimation**', in which 'existing concepts are reformulated and retheorized as a result of their circulation and instantiation in postcolonial contexts' (Getachew and Mantena, 2021: 372 and 380).

NURTURING DIALOGUES BETWEEN TEXTS & LEGAL SYSTEMS

Beyond content, it is also useful to reflect on **the organisation of courses and the structure of individual classes**. In particular, teachers could reflect on **the relative prominence given to critical and underrepresented perspectives** – guarding against such perspectives being merely additive rather than pervasive within a course’s structure.

In this regard, teachers might consider different ways of **nurturing dialogue between different epistemic approaches within their curricula**. This might involve teaching through the juxtaposition of materials written from different theoretical perspectives, for example by inviting students to read doctrinal and critical perspectives on a particular thematic area, or putting different critical perspectives into conversation (for example, critical race theory and TWAIL).

Additionally, it might involve **nurturing a dialogue between different legal systems**. Sophie Rigney, for example, explains how law school ‘can be a powerful site for bringing different legal systems into relation’, offering ‘a meeting place for different “meanings” – two (or more) legal systems and their attendant ways of knowing and doing law – and can be a place where they are brought into a relationship’. By way of example, Rigney discusses the importance of acknowledging Indigenous law as law, both to avoid perpetuating the violence that accompanies the denial of this position, as well as to begin a conversation between multiple legal jurisdictions. As Rigney explains, ‘Rather than seeing “law” as universal, we must see the law that we are trained in as just one mode of law, which can exist in conversation or meeting with other laws’ (Rigney, 2020: 507-508).

Developing this reflection with respect to the field of international law, Rigney emphasises the importance of acknowledging ‘Indigenous international law’, understood as ‘the sets of laws that Indigenous communities create and practice, to mediate their relationships to other communities (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and political structures (like states and international organisations)’ (Rigney, 2021: 126). Recognising Indigenous international law is important for nurturing dialogue with other forms of international law, particularly those which have tended to deny its existence such as ‘European international law’. As Rigney explains, ‘there is a need for different international legal systems to develop ways to better “hear” each other, and take seriously the practice, political agenda, and epistemological and ontological basis of these systems of law’ (Rigney, 2021: 153).

CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGE OF CONSTRAINTS

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that there typically exist a range of constraints confronting educators, whether in the form of *neoliberal institutional commitments* or the *limited time available within courses* to engage with both doctrinal and critical perspectives in ways that are meaningful. The concern may arise, therefore, that decolonising the curriculum could result either in an unworkably expansive syllabus striving to be comprehensive or an unconvincingly compressed syllabus providing only a reductive introductory window into different concepts and ideas.

Yet, by *creatively reflecting on different approaches towards structuring the curriculum*, this need not be the case. Responding to the concern of time constraints, Burgis-Khastala and Schwöbel-Patel suggest by way of example that 'one can open with discussions of a judgment of the World Court one week, [...] and then, in the following week open with say, a feminist rewritten judgment' or 'open a discussion about sovereignty with a reference to Indigenous sovereignty and then contrast this with Westphalian concepts of sovereignty'. As the authors conclude, 'Setting priorities for discussion is a requirement for any syllabus, whether colonised ("traditional") or decolonial' (Burgis-Khastala and Schwöbel-Patel, 2022: 21-22).

"One reason I became interested in these questions [about decolonizing the curriculum] came from a certain sense of silences in our program with regard to these global challenges, and questions of what do we mean by the global, the world, and whose voices count in that conception. The main silence I felt marking our program was positionality. Are we hiding the positions from which we are speaking? Presenting ourselves as neutral conveyors and objective? Even though it comes across as a noble idea to address global challenges, it's more of a question of who do we see ourselves as being when we do that. Where does the knowledge we have, convey, and acquire as students and teachers come from, and what would that knowledge equip graduates with when they go beyond the college into their careers?"

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR

Practices Beyond the Classroom

As noted earlier in this report, there are at least five layers that require attention as part of sustaining conversation and action towards dreaming of new anticolonial worlds from within LUC's IJ major. Beyond pedagogical approaches and curricular content, a number of layers pertain to practices beyond the classroom, such as institutional ethos, inclusiveness of diversities, and research politics.

The risk of focusing narrowly on classroom practices is that transforming the curriculum may crowd-out the need for transformations in domains beyond the classroom setting. To this end, it is important to **build a movement**, encompassing students, academic staff, non-academic staff, and wider community members, which seeks to nurture decolonising values across LUC as an institution and a community.

While a comprehensive reflection on wider transformations is beyond the scope of this report, we highlight two categories of practices beyond the classroom that should form part of the conversation on decolonising the curriculum at LUC.

(a) *Diversifying Student and Staff Representation*

While it is important to remember that demographic diversity does not equate to a decolonising approach, attempts by the institution to hire and accept a **more diverse student body and staff** remain an integral part of decolonising the university. This requires critical reflection to understand the underlying reasons behind underrepresentation in the staff and student body, as well as barriers in terms of the classroom, academic policies, and institutional structures that may negatively affect diversity (Kishimoto, 2018: 550).

(b) *Institutional Support*

Ensuring a diverse faculty and student body is important, not only for nurturing epistemic diversity, but also for providing representation, understanding, and support for the LUC community. In order to better support work related to decolonising themes at LUC, including the often-invisible labour of both faculty and students to challenge existing epistemic hierarchies, the university should consider **allocating funds for projects established by students and/or faculty members** – whether related to research, pedagogical practices, and/or mental and emotional support (Min Tan, 2021).

Conclusion: Sustaining the Conversation

Decolonising is a continuous process of change and reflection, meant to disrupt existing hierarchies of knowledge and systems rooted in coloniality. It is not a temporary project, nor can it necessarily provide direct and uncontested results. In writing this report, our clinic has sought to provide one entry point to help nurture future initiatives within the IJ major at LUC related to decolonising. In our conclusion, we share three additional reflections on how to sustain the conversation.

- **Organise regular community events on the meaning of decolonising for the IJ major**, including **at least one annual event** amongst faculty and students to discuss themes related to the process. The event could take many different forms, including the involvement of guest speakers and/or faculty and student discussions. Ensuring clear and regular communication amongst faculty, students and other members of the LUC community about the process of decolonising is important - whether for providing space to continue to reflect on how to disrupt and dismantle coloniality within the university and society, creating opportunities for promoting existing projects and future collaborations between faculty and students, or providing mutual support for the heavy emotional and intellectual labour of decolonising work.
- **Harness research clinics as a space for collaboratively working on projects within the IJ major related to decolonising**, for example using clinics to create **reading groups** devoted to decolonising pedagogies in the field of international justice or to collaborate with students to co-create **new courses** focused on topics related to coloniality.
- **Incorporate decolonising perspectives in first-year IJ-themed courses**, such as the *Global Challenges: Peace and Justice* course and the 100-level IJ major courses - ensuring that students are introduced to key theories, concepts and debates from the outset of their time in the LUC community. Familiarising students with decolonising perspectives from an early stage in their time at LUC would help transform these perspectives and the concepts they rely upon into an integral part of discourse within the LUC community. Students would also be afforded more time to reflect upon and raise questions about these perspectives during their time at LUC. Systematically addressing coloniality within knowledge and knowledge production can help normalise the acknowledgment of coloniality and its pervasiveness in contemporary society, as well as sharpen students' critical capacities.

We would like to conclude by thanking all of those who have been involved in decolonising initiatives both within and beyond LUC, and wish to recognise their often invisible labour as the foundation for our work within our clinic. We seek to honour their labour by sharing the ideas, reflections, and suggestions which they have inspired in us, to advance acknowledgement of coloniality within the world, as well as our institution and community.

Further Resources

Below is a non-exhaustive list of further resources for anyone interested in learning more about decolonising the curriculum in general and decolonising international justice in particular.

(a) Mailing Lists and Networks

- The Decolonial Critique Network ([here](#))
- Decolonising Collective Leiden ([here](#))

(b) Guides

- Decolonising SOAS Working Group, *Decolonising SOAS Learning and Teaching Toolkit for Programme and Module Convenors* (May 2018) ([here](#))
- Keele University, *Decolonising the Curriculum: Staff Guide* (2021) ([here](#))
- Jivray, S., *Towards Anti-Racist Legal Pedagogy: A Resource* (SLS Assoc. 2020) ([here](#))

(c) Podcasts and Online Lecture Series

- Ghent University, *Decolonizing The University* Podcast ([here](#))
- Utrecht University, *Unsettling Knowledge* Podcast ([here](#))
- University of Westminster, *Pedagogies for Social Justice* Podcast ([here](#))
- University of Edinburgh, *Decolonising the Curriculum - Sharing Ideas: The Podcast Series* ([here](#))
- UCL, *Decolonizing Law* Lecture Series ([here](#))
- NCRM, *Decolonial Research Methods* Webinar Series ([here](#))
- TU Delft, *Decolonising Knowledge* Lecture Series ([here](#))
- AfronomicsLaw YouTube Channel ([here](#))
- Amsterdam University, *Decolonising Europe* Lecture Series ([here](#))
- Fresh Squeezed - *The Opinio Juris* Podcast ([here](#))

(d) Blog Sites

- African Skies ([here](#))
- AfronomicsLaw ([here](#))
- Critical Legal Thinking ([here](#))
- International Law & The Global South ([here](#))
- TWAILR ([here](#))
- Warwick *Slippery Fish Book Group* ([here](#))
- Times Higher Education, *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion* ([here](#))
- Times Higher Education, *Decolonising the Curriculum* ([here](#))

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Reading List



In this final section, we provide an updated version of the reading list which we relied upon for the first part of our clinic. Our hope is that the reading list may prove useful for anyone seeking to learn more about decolonising the curriculum in general and decolonising international justice in particular. The reading list is designed in the form of an 8-week reading group, which meets once per week for two hours. Each session encompasses approximately 100-120 pages of reading but is easily adaptable to suit the needs of different contexts and participants, and can also be supplemented with a wider variety of materials, such as music, art, and literature, as well as field trips and guest speaker sessions.

It is important to emphasise that the list is far from exhaustive. It is structured according to three categories of materials:

- materials that explore ***decolonising the curriculum in general***;
- materials that introduce ***theoretical perspectives related to coloniality and decolonisation***;
- materials focused on ***decolonising international legal pedagogy***.

For more general resources on teaching in the field of international justice, we recommend the *Oxford Bibliography on Teaching International Law* compiled by Christine Schwöbel-Patel ([here](#)), as well as the British Institute of International and Comparative Law's (BIICL) *Teaching International Law Webinar Series* convened by Barrie Sander and Jean-Pierre Gauci ([here](#)).



Session 1

A. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: THEORIES OF DECOLONISATION

1. Adébisí, F, 'Theories of Decolonisation; or, to Break All the Tables and Create the World Necessary for Us All to Survive', in Adébisí, F, *Decolonisation and Legal Knowledge: Reflections on Power and Possibility* (Bristol University Press 2023), Chapter 1 [[27 pages](#)]

B. DECOLONISING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: APPROACHES AND TACTICS

2. Al Attar, M, 'Must International Legal Pedagogy Remain Eurocentric?' (2021) 21 *Asian Journal of International Law* 176 [[30 pages](#)]
3. Burgis-Kasthala, M and Schwobel-Patel, C, 'Against Coloniality in the International Law Curriculum: Examining Decoloniality' (2022) *The Law Teacher* 485 [[22 pages](#)]

Session 2

A. DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM: DIVERSITY OR DECOLONISATION?

1. Mbembe, A, 'Thoughts on The Planetary: An Interview with Achille Mbembe', Barnard-Naude, J (ed), *Decolonising the Neoliberal University: Law, Psychoanalysis and the Politics of Student Protest* (Routledge 2021) 122 [[14 pages](#)]
2. Min Tan, J, 'The Many Layers of Invisible Labour Decolonising the Academy' *TWAILR: Reflections* (12 March 2021) [[7 pages](#)]
3. Van Goozen, S, 'What I would like is for people to come at the world with lots of different ways of seeing things"; Dr Liam Kofi Bright on the philosophical canon' *Justice Everywhere* (4 October 2021) [[5 pages](#)]
4. Icaza, R, and Vazquez, R, 'Diversity or Decolonization? Researching Diversity at the University of Amsterdam', in Bhabra, G, Nisancioglu, K, and Gebrial, D (eds), *Decolonizing the University* (Pluto Press 2018) 108 [[15 pages](#)]

B. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: DECOLONISING POLITICAL THEORY AND EPISTEMIC RENEWAL

5. Fanon, F, *The Wretched of the Earth* (transl R. Philcox. Grove Press 1963), Chapter 1 [[61 pages](#)]
6. Getachew, A and Mantena, K, 'Anticolonialism and Decolonization of Political Theory' (2021) 4 *Critical Times* 359 [[22 pages](#)]
7. al Attar, M and Quintero Godínez, R, 'TWAIL Pedagogy: Un-Learning Colonial Ways of Teaching International Law' *Opinio Juris* (23 March 2023) [[3 pages](#)]

or

al Attar, M, 'Of Anti-Colonialism and International Legal Pedagogy: Can we Visualise a Post-Westphalian World?' *Opinio Juris* (22 February 2023) [[6 pages](#)]

Session 3

A. DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM: THE DECOLONIAL BANDWAGON

1. Moosavi, L, 'The Decolonial Bandwagon and the Dangers of Intellectual Decolonisation' (2020) *International Review of Sociology* 332 [[19 pages](#)]
2. Podcast: 'Decolonising Higher Education Roundtable Discussion' (2020) (here) [[first 15 minutes is Moosavi, but feel free to listen beyond](#)]

B. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: DECOLONIALITY AND EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE SOUTH

3. Quijano, A, 'Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality' (2007) *Cultural Studies* 168 [[10 pages](#)]
4. Mignolo, WD, 'Coloniality Is Far From Over, and So Must Be Decoloniality' (2017) 43 *Afterall* 38 [[7 pages](#)]
5. Grosfoguel, R, 'The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political-Economy Paradigms' 21 *Cultural Studies* (2007) 211 [[11 pages](#)]
6. De Sousa Santos, B, 'Epistemologies of the South and the Future' (2016) *From the European South* 17 [[11 pages](#)]

C. DECOLONISING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: PEDAGOGIES OF PLACE

7. Amaya-Castro, JM, 'Teaching International Law: Both Everywhere and Somewhere' in Sainz-Borgo, JC, et al (eds), *Liber Amicorum: In Honour of a Modern Renaissance Man, His Excellency Gudmundur Eirksson* (Universal Law Publishing 2017) 521 [[16 pages](#)]
8. Anghie, A, 'Critical Thinking and Teaching as Common Sense - Random Reflections' *Opinio Juris* (31 August 2020) [[5 pages](#)]

or

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Emtseva, J, 'Practising Reflexivity in International Law: Running a Never Ending Race to Catch Up with the Western International Lawyers' *MPIL Research Paper Series No. 2021-11* (2021) [[11 pages](#)] and Viswanath, R, and Rao, T, 'Reflections on Spatiality in International Law' *International Law & The Global South* (6 October 2022) [[2 pages](#)]

9. Fagbayibo, B, 'Some Thoughts on Centring Pan-African Epistemic in the Teaching of Public International Law in African Universities' (2019) 21 *ICLR* 179 [[20 pages](#)]

or

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Session 4

A. DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM: AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Tamale, S, 'Rethinking the African Academy', in Tamale, S, *Decolonization and Afro-Feminism* (2020 Daraja Press) 235 [[48 pages](#)]

or

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B. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: DIALOGICAL TEACHING

2. Freire, P and Macedo, D, 'A Dialogue: Culture, Language, and Race' (1995) 65 *Harvard Educational Review* 377 [[25 pages](#)]
3. hooks, b, 'Engaged Pedagogy', in hooks, b, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (Routledge, 1994) 13 [[9 pages](#)]
4. Srinivasan, A, 'The Politics of Safety' *The Financial Times* (13 August 2021) [[5 pages](#)]

C. DECOLONISING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: CRITICAL APPROACHES TO TEACHING (INTERNATIONAL) LAW

5. Eslava, L, 'The Teaching of (Another) International Law: Critical Realism and the Question of Agency and Structure' (2020) 54 *The Law Teacher* 368 [[15 pages](#)]
6. Jones and A. O'Donoghue, 'History and Self-Reflection in the Teaching of International Law' (2022) 10 *London Review of International Law* 71 [[33 pages](#)]

or

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or

Schwöbel, CEJ, "'I'd like to learn what hegemony means": Teaching International Law from a Critical Angle' (2013) *Law and Method* [[16 pages](#)]

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7. Schwöbel, C, 'Mooting: Advocacy, Litigation, Strategy' in I, Rua Wall, et al., (eds) *The Critical Legal Pocketbook* (Counterpress, 2021) 11 [[6 pages](#)] **and** Schwöbel-Patel, C, and Werner, W, 'A Brechtian Way of Mooting' *EJIL:Talk!* (2022) [[2 pages](#)]

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Shrivastava, A, and Lakra, R, 'Critical Reflections On Jessup 2022: The Unsettled Promise of Decolonisation' (2022) *TWAILR: Reflections* 48/2022 [[8 pages](#)]

Session 5

A. DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM: ANTI-COLONIALISM & DISENCHANTMENT

1. Gopal, P, 'On Decolonisation and the University' (2021) 35 *Textual Practice* 873 [[24 pages](#)]
2. al Attar, M, and Abdelkarim, S, 'Decolonising the Curriculum in International Law: Entrapments in Praxis and Critical Thought' (2021) *Law and Critique* [[20 pages](#)]

B. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: LANGUAGE & DECOLONISING THE MIND

3. Podcast, *Decolonising the Mind*, 'Never Write in the Language of the Colonizer' (2021) (interview with Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o here)
4. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 'The Language of African Literature' (1985) 150 *NLR* 109 [[14 pages](#)]

C. DECOLONISING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: COMPARATIVISM & DIVERISTY

5. Roberts, A, *Is International Law International?* (OUP 2017), Chapter 1 [[17 pages](#)]
6. d'Aspremont, J, 'Comparativism and Colonizing Thinking in International Law' (2019) *The Canadian Yearbook of International Law* 89 [[22 pages](#)]

or

Santos de Carvalho, J, and Uriburu, J, 'Problematizing Diversity: The Change That International Lawyers (Do Not) Want for International Courts' (2022) 10 *London Review of International Law* 391 [[35 pages](#)]

or

Meguro, M, 'Appraisal of Diversity in International Law: Self-Serving Biases and Interdisciplinarity' (2021) *Amsterdam Law School Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2021-18* [[17 pages](#)]

7. Lentner, G.M., 'Law, Language, and Power - English and the Production of Ignorance in International Law' (2019) 8 *International Journal of Language & Law* 50 [[12 pages](#)]

or

Amann, O, 'Language Bias in International Legal Scholarship: Symptoms, Explanations, Implications and Remedies' (2022) 33 *European Journal of International Law* 821 [[30 pages](#)]

8. Gurmendi, A, and Miranda da Cruz, PB, 'Writing in International Law and Cultural Barriers: Parts I and II' *Opinio Juris* (August 2020) [[4 pages](#)]
9. Weiler, J, 'Cancelling Carl Schmitt?' *EJIL:Talk!* (13 August 2021) [[2 pages](#)] **and** Van Ho, T, 'Cancelling Schmitt' (2021) 32 *European Journal of International Law* 730 [[2 pages](#)]
10. Browse post in the following symposia hosted by *Opinio Juris*::

- Kourtis, DA, and Carpenter, C, 'The Visible C of the Invisible College: Classism and the International Legal Profession - Symposium Introduction' *Opinio Juris* (19 Dec. 2022)
- Al Attar, M. 'Symposium on Systemic Racism and Sexism in Legal Academia: The Promise of Victory' *Opinio Juris* (16 May 2022)

Session 6

A. DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM: *FEMINIST PEDAGOGY*

1. Ramos, F, and Roberts, L, 'Wonder as Feminist Pedagogy: Disrupting Feminist Complicity with Coloniality' (2021) 128 *Feminist Review* 28 [[13 pages](#)]

B. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: *COLONIALITY, SEX, GENDER, & SEXUALITY*

2. Lugones, M, 'Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System' (2008) *Hypatia* 186 [[20 pages](#)]
3. Tamale, S, 'Challenging the Coloniality of Sex, Gender and Sexuality', in Tamale, S, *Decolonization and Afro-Feminism* (2020 Daraja Press) 92 [[40 pages](#)]

C. DECOLONISING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: *DECOLONISING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION & INDIGENISING THE LEGAL ACADEMY*

4. Rigney, S, 'Creating the law school as a meeting place for epistemologies: decolonising the teaching of jurisprudence and human rights' (2020) 54 *The Law Teacher* 503 [[14 pages](#)]

or

Zembylas, M, 'Re-Contextualising Human Rights Education: Some Decolonial Strategies and Pedagogical/Curricular Possibilities' (2017) *Pedagogy, Culture & Society* [[11 pages](#)]

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5. Sutton, R, 'Reflections on Teaching "Emotion Bites" in an LLM Course on Human Rights and Conflict Resolution' SSRN (2022) [[11 pages](#)]

6. Chartrand, L, 'Indigenizing the Legal Academy from a Decolonizing Perspective' (2015) *Ottawa Faculty of Law Working Paper No. 2015-22* [[22 pages](#)]

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Xavier, S, 'Learning from Below: Theorising Global Governance Through Ethnographies and Critical Reflections from the Global South' (2016) 33 *Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice* 229 [[25 pages](#)]

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Session 7

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1. Adébisi, F, 'Decolonising the Law School: Presences, Absences, Silences... and Hope' (2020) 54 *The Law Teacher* 471 [4 pages]
2. Select **at least one** from:
A paper from, 'Special Issue: Decolonising the Law School' (2020) 54 *The Law Teacher* 471
or
Jivraj, S, 'Decolonizing the Academy - Between a Rock and a Hard Place' (2020) 22 *interventions* 552 [18 pages]
or
A chapter from, Adébisi, F, *Decolonisation and Legal Knowledge: Reflections on Power and Possibility* (Bristol University Press 2023)

B. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: POSTCOLONIAL AND DECOLONIAL DIALOGUES

3. Bhabra, GK, 'Postcolonial and Decolonial Dialogues' (2014) 17 *Postcolonial Studies* 115 [5 pages]
4. Spivak, GC, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in Nelson, C, and Grossberg, L (eds), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (University of Illinois Press 1988) 271 [39 pages]

C. DECOLONISING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: *THIRD WORLD APPROACHES TO INTERNATIONAL LAW (TWAIL)*

5. Eslava, L, 'TWAIL Coordinates' *Critical Legal Thinking* (2 April 2019) [8 pages]
6. Eslava, L, and Pahuja, S, 'Between Resistance and Reform: TWAIL and the Universality of International Law' (2011) 3 *Trade, Law and Development* 103 [26 pages]
or
Gathii, JT, 'Twenty-Second Annual Grotius Lecture: The Promise of International Law: A Third World View (including a TWAIL Bibliography 1996-2019 as an Appendix)' (2020) *ASIL Proceedings* 165 [22 pages]
7. Video: Eslava, L, 'The Everyday Life of International Law' (18 March 2016) (here)
8. Al Attar, M, 'Subverting Eurocentric Epistemology: The Value of Nonsense When Designing Counterfactuals', in Heller, K, and Venzke, I (eds), *Contingency in International Law: On the Possibility of Different Legal Histories* (OUP 2021) 145 [16 pages]
9. Massoud, M, 'Teaching Three Canons of International Law' (2021) *TWAILR: Reflections* 28/2021 [6 pages]
10. Sen, R, 'The Emotional Labour of Teaching - A Feminist Critique of Teaching Critical International Law' *Opinio Juris* (3 September 2020) [4 pages]

Session 8

A. DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM: ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGY

1. Kishimoto, K, 'Anti-Racist Pedagogy: From Faculty's Self-Reflection to Organising Within and Beyond the Classroom' (2018) 21 *Race Ethnicity and Education* 540 [[12 pages](#)]
2. Blackett, A, 'Follow the Drinking Gourd: Our Road to Teaching Critical Race Theory and Slavery and the Law, Contemplatively, at McGill' (2017) 62 *McGill Law Journal* 1251 [[27 pages](#)]

B. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: INTERSECTIONALITY & OCCUPIED SPACES

3. Bejarano, CA, 'Law at the Intersection: Feminist Legal Theory, Critical Race Theory', in Wall, I et al (eds), *The Critical Legal Handbook* (Counterpress, 2021) 151 [[8 pages](#)]
4. Ahmed, S, 'Occupied', in Ahmed, S, *Complaint!* (Duke University Press, 2021) 137 [[39 pages](#)]

C. DECOLONISING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: RACE & INTERNATIONAL LAW

5. Gathii, JT, 'Writing Race and Identity in a Global Context: What CRT and TWAIL Can Learn From Each Other' (2020) 67 *UCLA Law Review* 1610 [[40 pages](#)]

or

Achiume, ET, and Carbado, DW, 'Critical Race Theory Meets Third World Approaches to International Law' (2021) 67 *UCLA Law Review* 1462 [[40 pages](#)]

6. Al Attar, M, 'Subverting Racism in/through International Law Scholarship' *Opinio Juris* (3 March 2021) [[5 pages](#)]
 7. Sirleaf, M, 'Do You Have To Say That You Are Black?' (2022) *TWAILR: Reflections* 43/2022 [[5 pages](#)]
 8. Wilde, R, 'Hamster in a Wheel: International Law, Crisis, Exceptionalism, Whataboutery, Speaking Truth to Power, and Sociopathic, Racist Gaslighting' *Opinio Juris* (17 March 2022) [[6 pages](#)] and Labuda, P, 'On Eastern Europe, 'Whataboutism' and 'West(s)plaining': Some Thoughts on International Lawyers' Responses to Ukraine' *EJIL:Talk!* (12 April 2022) [[6 pages](#)]
 9. Anonymous Blackademic, 'Black in the Ivory: Reflections of Early Career "Blackacademics" in International Law' *Afronomics* (28 April 2022) [[3 pages](#)]
 10. Knox, R, 'Subject Positions' *TWAILR: Reflections* 39/2021 (2021) [[10 pages](#)]
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- Knox, R., 'International Law, Race, and Capitalism: A Marxist Perspective' (2023) 117 *AJIL Unbound* 55 [[5 pages](#)]
11. Video: Robert Knox, 'Race and International Law' (here) ([approx. 80 mins](#))

