



## Creative Intervention

### We Say – A Poem

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This poem is inspired by, and dedicated to, all the radical academics I know who still drink Starbucks. It's also dedicated to myself because I know, not so deep down, that I continue to choose my own daily capitalist grind and the fleeting illusion of comfort over more radical acts of decolonization and global solidarity (although, to be clear, I do not drink Starbucks).

You say *decolonization is not a metaphor*,  
but the words come out as a whisper,

blocked by the arches in your window,  
and the grounds between your teeth.

You say social media's *too much*,  
we're not meant to consume a genocide,

but the death hides behind your screen,  
whether you witness it or not.

We say Palestine should be free,  
but our syllabi say nothing,  
our praxis is failing,  
our activism's mythology.

Because you *say* this,  
and I say *that*,  
but we won't give up a thing.

If decolonization is not a metaphor,  
then why do we make metaphors out of bodies,  
turn nightmares into dreams,  
let "conflict" slide across your tongue,  
and punctate silence with defeat?

We say from the river to the sea,  
but have no idea what that means.

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## **Reflection**

If *decolonization is not a metaphor*, then *poetry is not a luxury*. In my practice, I turn to poetry when I feel more than I think; when I want more than I critique. Poetry is theory without punctuation. It's hope without capitulation. It's rage without code switching. It's remorse without shame. When I write papers, I stew. I map. I obsess. I agonize. I revise and submit. Revise and submit. Revise and submit. When I write poetry, it's because my soul is itching to say something that my mind wants to read. It's where our spiritual wounds bleed and we come face to face with the psychic pain of the Anthropocene. The existential grief of colonialism and genocide and racism and constant death are easily contorted in academic writing. But in poetry, it's grief that does the contorting. In poetry, I feel more than I think. I want more than I critique.

## **Recommended Readings**

- Garba, T., & Sorentino, S. M. (2020). Slavery is a metaphor: A critical commentary on Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's "decolonization is not a metaphor." *Antipode*, 52(3), 764-782.
- Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Crossing Press.
- Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1), 1-40.