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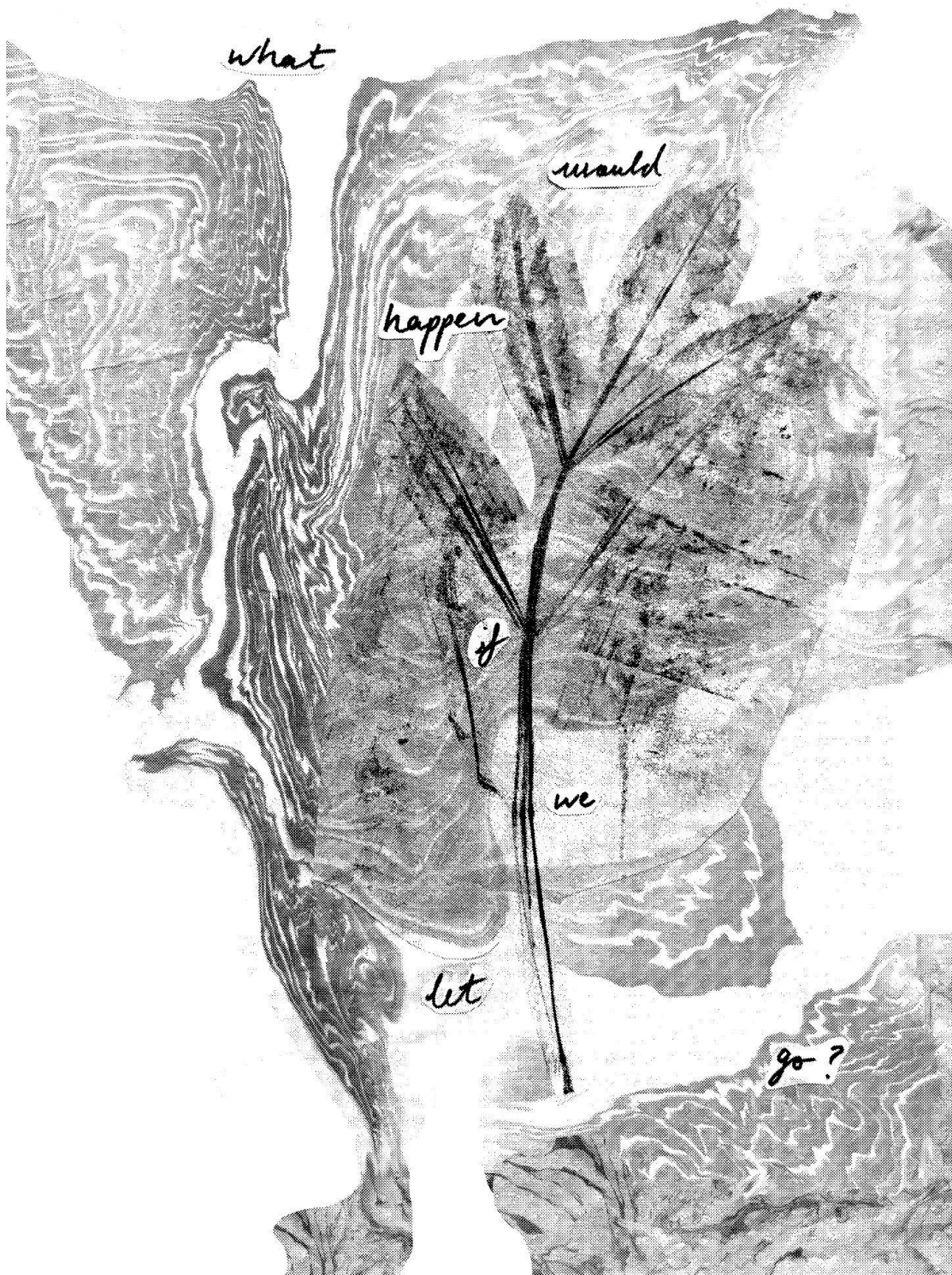
happen

if

we

let

go?



Who we are

We are two people who wanted to create a manifesto setting out our political thoughts in this moment. We have been having discussions for a long time around our desires to reject respectability, counter cloying and dominant liberal asian imaginaries, and the images that we personally draw on in pushing the bounds of our work as we attempt to do our part towards collective liberation.

We are you. We have worked with local communities, in nonprofits, and the arts as volunteers, freelancers, employees. Like you, we care deeply for the people around us and we work in similar jobs and conditions as you – and we reject the neoliberal project in all these spaces. We speak from the belly of the beast as we gnaw our way through. We invite you to find your teeth and use them well.



o cops !!

Why yellow peril

The term 'yellow peril' emerged in the late 19th century in the context of – and as a response to – Asian labour migration to white settler colonies (including the US), where the ruling classes weaponised cheap racialised labour to entrench colonial logics and further their exploitative interests.

At the same time, imperialist European countries had colonial interests in Asia which had been and were being thwarted, the Boxer Rebellion being one example. In 1895, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany famously used "The Yellow Peril" as the title of an image showing the countries of Europe as Christian warrior-goddesses ready to defend against the looming threat from the east. In the same year, France, Germany and Russia had tried to make Japan surrender its Chinese colonies to them after the First Sino-Japanese war. Ten years later, Japan's defeat of Russia amplified this threat - who was to say that these eastern countries wouldn't try and do the same and colonise Europe in return? They were clearly capable of defeating western nations.

Yellow peril conveniently functioned to justify the global racial-capitalist logics of colonialism and European hegemony that birthed it, building on fears that can be traced back to Genghis Khan's invasions as well as European race science taxonomies developed in the 18th century.

For us, the term yellow peril is useful as a racialised political category that is born out of – and acknowledges – the material histories, relationships and consequences of global imperialism. These include colonial underdevelopment and extraction from land and people, capture and migration, movement of resources and entanglements of labour.

When we name and use yellow peril, we are speaking against liberals and their projects of innocence, assimilation and reform. We want to highlight and refuse the deliberately vague and hollow language they hide behind: progress, diversity, inclusion, representation.

Recently, we have seen people use yellow peril as a general term for anti-ESEA racism and sinophobia, shoring up demands for the state to 'take [their] issues seriously' and criminalise individual bigots. We say that this is superficial, poorly-informed, and disingenuous. ESEA liberals use this established historical term to appear serious in their politics and lend weight to their demands, while running what is essentially a PR campaign.

Structural meaning and context are removed from a phrase that originated specifically in European and North American imperialism, diluting it into something pale and vacuous. This emptying of language also reflects their praxis as investment in cooperation with entities that drain and suppress disruption.

Rather than build solidarity with those bearing the brunt of state violence, liberals continually signal and angle their allegiance towards the non-profit industrial complex, state bodies, academia, media, and the system of racial capitalism itself.

Our interest is in paths of thinking that lead to revolutionary action to dismantle the state, as it tries to disappear our comrades here and all across the world. We share our examination of these topics in the hopes that we can clarify what we are working against, and that you might also use this practically in your own abolitionist work.



Liberasian hate

It's 2024 and we haven't stopped Asian hate. What now?

We're not dismissing personal experiences of violence. We are questioning the *social response* to this violence, namely reframing certain types of racist attack specifically as "hate crimes." Certain ESEA groups have sold community care back to us, naturalising how policing is embedded in social care through reporting / safeguarding processes, promises of greater funding, and administrative support. An example of this is the "hate crime" consortium that manages On Your Side, a third-party reporting centre. As with any TPRC, this "non-police" service actually facilitates contact between police and communities. It constantly requires feeding with more criminogenic reports and data and copagandists—sorry, "community champions", to improve its reach and quality.

Police have more power, funding, and tools of war than ever. They continue to terrorise the population, from migrants to those made poorest amongst us to protestors. This hate crime hotline is compatible with these policing practises by building profiles of "perpetrators" and diverting attention away from state violence.

Post-2020 ESEA advocacy groups insist Asians are not the virus. We say these groups, who routinely collude with the government to inflate policing and extinguish revolutionary

thought in return for state funding, jobs, and clout, are the real parasites latching onto us. These ESEA groups want to assimilate into the neoliberal order through a mythology of quantitative data, representation, and rule of law. They think the only thing wrong with the world is a lack of inclusivity. They are so good, hardworking, respectable, success-minded, surely they deserve a seat at the table?

They aren't Yellow Peril or – heaven forbid – Red communists! In fact, due to the need to maintain innocence, there is no colour to their politics at all (moving up through the ranks of the Labour party notwithstanding).

We say there is a need to oppose this Asian liberalism because it is counterinsurgent. It is high time to understand we want different worlds. Allowing these liberal groups and discourses to go unchallenged means their movement swells like a great boil. Now, we do not mean that we ought to “have dialogue” with liberals for “peace”: that is their word. As Kwame Ture said, “‘liberation’ is ours.” It is urgent to offer a better set of ideas to support diaspora as a force for internationalism, with abolition as its core framework.

The cause of Palestine has cuffed the ear of this complicit colonial world so thoroughly, yet some people still cling to the notion that the colony and the metropole, these interdependent prison structures, will save the innocent among us – Palestinian, Black, Asian – alike. “Innocence” is a colonial tool, a fake and temporary whiteness. To free ourselves we refuse any reaching for it: in this moment we may as well be yellow.

If whiteness fears us as yellow, let us be yellow.

Yellow peril as framework

We propose yellow(ness) as a politically rooted alternative to liberal identity terms. We don't care about politeness or sounding palatable to those in power, or descriptors that can be used in policy reports to get more funding for working with cops.

We also want to make clear that this is a term we offer for the purposes of advancing solidarity, and expressing and directing our rage as well as our actions. It is not a term we use to describe shared experiences of oppression, or even experiences of being targeted for state violence and proximity to death.

Within this political grouping, it is our responsibility to recognise, understand and act on our specific structural relationships to power based on class, likelihood of criminalisation, citizenship, skin colour, gender, etc.

WE ARE YELLOW because
we are abundant weeds,
lion's teeth, sharp and bitter.

WE ARE YELLOW because
we are sick of you
non-threatening Asian liberals.

WE ARE YELLOW because
we don't want to go to
Parliament, party at
Buckingham Palace, or get
Investing in Ethnicity Awards.



What we want

We want a world free from all forms of (racial) capitalism, colonialism, imperialism, and dispossession.

We believe in the importance of dreaming, action, and care-taking as collective practises. Creating a future for us all requires us to reject individualism.

We refuse to accept or normalise the violent structures of police, prisons, borders and immigration enforcement, as well as any complexes that use similar logics of death, disappearance, and abuse.

As (East and Southeast) Asians writing from the heart of empire, we acknowledge our entanglement in the imperialist violence occurring on many lands across the world, as well as the violence of anti-Blackness and islamophobia that is deeply entrenched in and shapes where we live.



We learn from those who have come before us in this work, those who have been embodying and living it for generations, and those who struggle alongside us. We honour the lead of Black, Indigenous, and Global South organisers with respect to their liberation fights, their relationships to land, and their demands for freedom.

We refuse the simplification of anti-imperialist struggles - we wish to see freedom from empires for all peoples from Haiti to Palestine, Sudan to Artsakh, Congo to Kashmir, Dzungarstan-Altishahr to Turtle Island and West Papua. We wish to see material reparations and the return of land for those violently abducted and displaced from their homelands whether through trans-atlantic chattel slavery, or land invasion and colonisation by imperial nation states.



Does we really mean...

When we call to destroy state structures and power, to end imperialism and capitalism, to abolish prisons, police, settler colonial states, borders—

We mean that we are committed to the deep and extensive work needed to break down these violent entities. We don't want to glamourise, but instead to affirm that our liberation being tied together is soil-bound, embodied, steady and collaborative.

We mean that we each hold a strand of this collective fabric-making, and we are committed to handling these threads of action with intention and care, knowing each is inseparable from the next.

We mean that our goal is to be active participants and co-conspirators in the crumbling of empires, capitalism, and their tools. We will use our teeth, hands, bones, to keep tearing at the machines of their engorged, death-making bodies.

biting the hand that feeds

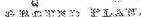


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WHAT LIES BEYOND THE STATE

PERFORMANCE

OF SAFETY?



CLAUDIA JONES

LESBIANS & GAYS
SUPPORT THE MINERS

RED CANARY SONG

WALTER RODNEY

CRADLE COMMUNITY

PRISONER SUPPORT
NETWORKS

JACKIE WANG

TAMARA NOPPER

AUDRE LORDE

BLACK RADICAL
TRADITION

DAVID WOJNAROWICZ

ACT UP

OLIVE MORRIS

SAMIDOUN

LEAH LAKSHMI
PIEPZNA-SAMARASINHA

INDIGENOUS THOUGHT
& PRACTICE

JOY JAMES

SINS INVALID

A-SIVANANDAN

GHASSAN KANAFANI

AIMÉ CÉSAIRE

FRANTZ FANON

ABOLITION

EDWARD SAID

SYLVIA WYNTER

MENTAL PATIENTS UNION

SAIDIYA HARTMAN

LESBIANS & GAYS
SUPPORT MIGRANTS

CLR JAMES

LISA LOWE

STUART HALL

GARGI BHATTACHARYYA

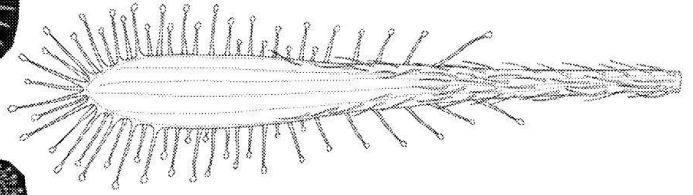
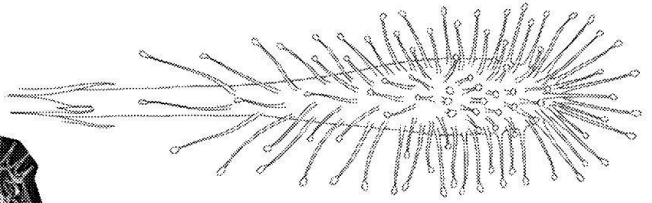
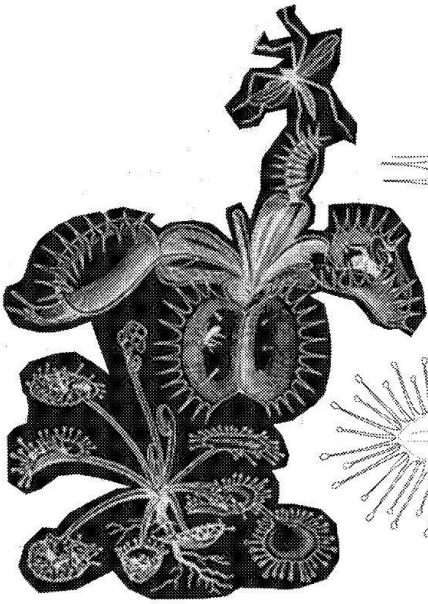
SEX WORKER ADVOCACY
AND RESISTANCE
MOVEMENT (SWARM)

HARSHA WALIA

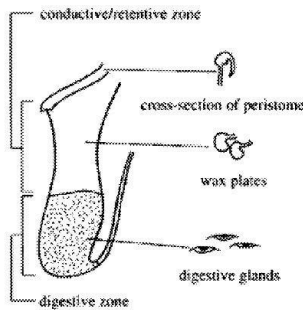
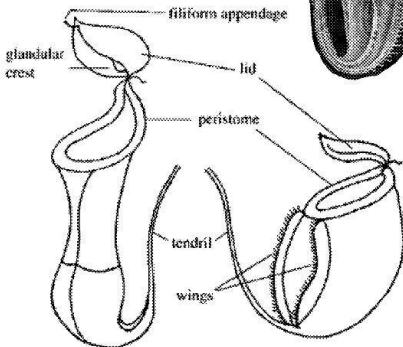
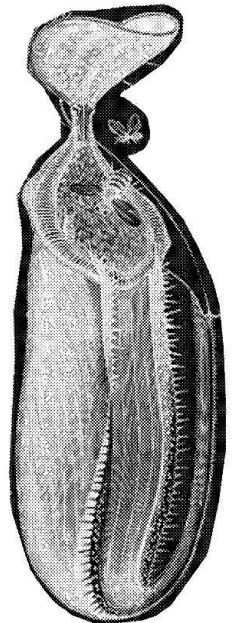
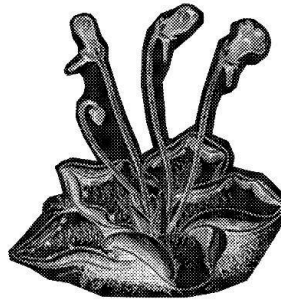
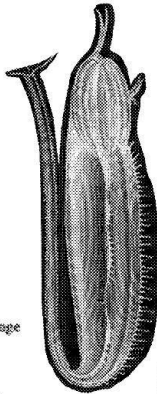
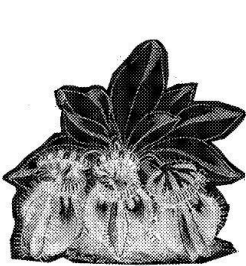
DYLAN RODRIGUEZ

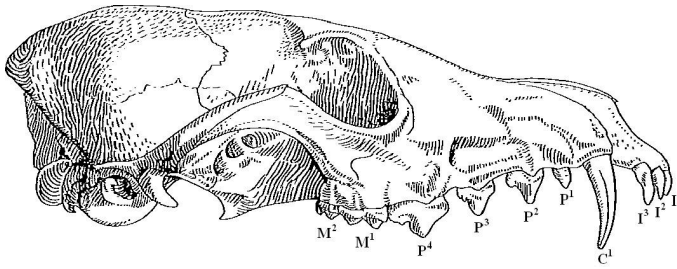
NAOMI MURAKAWA

An incomplete network of those who have
nourished and helped shape our thinking



eat the hand that starves

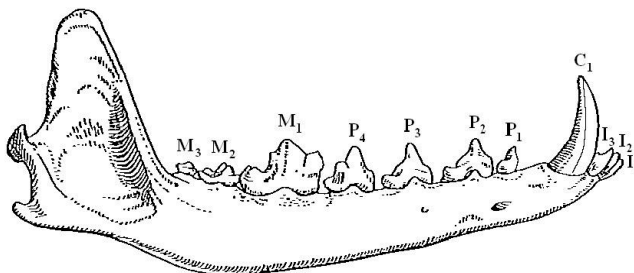




We are more interested in being threats than blending into a smooth, flat surface of visibility and legibility. We would rather be incomprehensible.

If we imagine world-making and disrupting with comrades as a material creative practise, we want to be embroidered and patched onto that quilt, rugged and bumpy like scar tissue on the skin of spaces that seek to annihilate us. We want to be the seams that run under the surface, rooting and propagating and supporting.

Let our scattered roots become strong, breaking open the bones of empire to strip out what is useful, building ourselves into a great mass tangling through walls and borders, over rivers and seas. Our appetite is for internationalism. We do not hunger for the tomb and a plate of crumbs that you call the nation state: we want the whole world free!





WE ARE YELLOW because we are acid and bile in the throat
of the nation state.

WE ARE YELLOW because we can be alien threats moving
in the in-between spaces, loosening the bricks of empire's
prisons.

WE ARE YELLOW because we want more than to be
puppets in a security theatre.



Skin A Rat - SASAMI
Concerning Peace - Special Interest
Slide Tackle - Japanese Breakfast
DEVIANCY - Backwash, Surgery Head
Define and Conquer - Screaming Toenail

Fever - Yaeji

Dentata - Big Momma

STFU! - Rina Sawayama

Abomination - Shamir

Drunk Walk Home - Mitski

Teeth Agape - Tanya Tagag

Michin - Yaeji, Enayet

Biting Down - Lorde

Nasty - Tinashe

(2-Inch) Grave - We Don't Ride Llamas
Surveillance Is Like Centipede's Feet - Backpack
Resolution/Revolution - The Linda Lindas
Loud Bark - Mannequin Pussy
Homogenized Milk - Special Interest

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About the authors

Kirstin Wu is part of anti-state community organising in London, and the abolitionist collective Remember & Resist. They are a student of time, plants, and other strangenesses.

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