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Decolonising the language of citizenship

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates how language becomes a contested site for decolonising the study of citizenship. In particular, I look at the linguistic conditions where the English language is used as a means of writing about citizenship and ask: how do we, as authors, decolonise scholarship if the very means to do so requires the language of the colonisers to begin with? Drawing on writers including Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, Rey Chow, Jacques Derrida, and Gloria Anzaldúa, this article problematises ‘colonial’ expectations embedded in the practice of writing, such as an expectation to write like a native speaker, and to produce a coherent understanding of the text. I argue that these writers’ approaches to language show various ways in which writing becomes integral to de/coloniality. Building on their works, I further suggest different tactics of writing we can adopt to decolonise citizenship studies. They include: using minoritised languages for writing; provincialising English-speaking scholarship; developing a writing style unique to the author; and disappropriating the text.

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Decoloniality; English; linguistic imperialism; minority language; misinterpretation

In preparation of the 25th special anniversary issue for the journal, Engin Isin and Leah Bassel posed a series of questions, one of which was about citizenship and coloniality: ‘Has the study of citizenship moved beyond its Eurocentric, if not Anglo-American, origins toward decolonial or postcolonial interpretations?’ As the Rhodes Must Fall movement exemplifies, this question aptly reflects the contemporary political climate to open a debate about colonial legacy in relation to citizenship. Bringing the perspective of language into the debate, this article examines various ways in which language becomes a site for decolonising the study of citizenship. I will argue that despite the integral role writing plays in de/coloniality, citizenship studies have so far paid less attention to language as a means of writing about citizenship. To be clear, scholarship has been collecting different stories of citizenship beyond the familiar geographical areas of the West. But what are the linguistic conditions that enable such stories to be shared in English, a language rooted in the Western colonial legacy? How do we, as writers, ‘globalise citizenship studies’ (Isin and Nyers 2014) if the very means to do so requires the languages of the colonisers to begin with? I will draw on writers such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, Rey Chow, Jacques Derrida, and Gloria Anzaldúa, to explore how writing can be used as a way to decolonise citizenship studies.

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Citizenship as social struggles

There are different ways to discuss the link between decoloniality and citizenship, one of which is in relation to political subjectivity.¹ In the introduction to the Citizenship Studies journal's special issue titled *Citizenship after orientalism: An unfinished project*, Isin (2012) argues that decolonising citizenship requires a different theorisation of citizenship from its conventional understanding, where citizenship is exclusively tied to membership of a nation. Based on the nation-citizenship-state model, citizenship is assumed to originate in the West. This makes any citizenship projects in the East and South 'imperfect in its development and always catching up with the original' (Isin and Nyers 2014, 7). Isin (2012, 567) argues that looking at citizenship as a 'European invention' itself mirrors the 'orientalist assumption' where nationality is believed to be the absolute timeless basis which guarantees a person's right-bearing subject status in a polity. Instead, 'the anticolonial struggles and the project of reimagining citizenship (as political subjectivity)' point to the need to develop a different approach to citizenship, that is, citizenship understood as struggles of 'the right to *claim* rights' (Isin and Nyers 2014, 8. Original emphasis). Citizenship is enacted when people act and constitute themselves as 'subjects of politics' (Isin and Nyers 2014, 1), and thus claimants of their entitlement to rights. Therefore, together with Nyers, Isin argues that citizenship is central to 'understanding how people become claimants and thereby constitute themselves as political beings in relation to the polities to which they belong' (Isin and Nyers 2014, 4). This approach to citizenship:

not only challenges contemporary forms of neo-orientalism, but also the historical hubris that comes with the assumption that certain key political concepts – namely citizenship – are only conceivable in terms of their Western origins. (Isin and Nyers 2014, 8)

There is a body of research that incorporates the perspective of language into the analysis of citizenship as social struggles (e.g. Puumala and Shindo 2021). Among these studies, some specifically look at the citizenship language link in the context of coloniality. This line of work demonstrates that not only is language constitutive of citizenship struggles over who is entitled to belong to a polity and in what way, but also that these struggles are shaped by colonial legacies. For example, Anne-Marie Fortier examines coloniality in relation to the English language requirement for immigrants in today's Britain. Fortier's work shows that the British colonial legacies of linguistic imperialism generate 'new hierarchies of language' (Fortier 2018, 1256) that put the coloniser's language, English, as the 'standard' and 'international' language over minoritised groups' languages and 'other Englishes' (Hitchcock 2001) used within the British Empire and Commonwealth. According to Fortier, the linguistic hierarchy is embedded into the public discourse and government policy of monolingual Britain, where the ability to speak English is increasingly used as an indication of social cohesion and a sign of commonality. Reminiscent of the colonial practice where the teaching of English was integral to colonial governance, minority languages are demonised in both the public and private spheres. Using languages other than English, or non-native variants of Englishes, is regarded as a sign of failed integration in contemporary Britain. Importantly, Fortier argues that immigrants themselves internalise the hierarchies of language: 'authentic'

English is associated with an image of a good and successful immigrant. The ‘disdain for multilingualism’ (Fortier 2018, 1256) is registered in immigrants’ yearning for ‘proper’ English, through which they develop their sense of belonging to Britain.

Furthermore, as Alina Sajed’s work (Sajed 2010) shows, the linguistic hierarchy discussed by Fortier is saturated with the ‘gender, class, and socio-political location of the postcolonial subject’ (Sajed 2010, 368). Compared to Fortier, Sajed’s interest is less on restrictive citizenship regimes per se than it is on the limits of ‘celebrations of post-colonial hybridity’ (Sajed 2010, 364). Sajed looks at Algerian migrants’ relations to the French language to demonstrate that language controls ‘the access to French culture, ideas and claims to citizenship’ (Sajed 2010, 376). Sajed argues that postcolonial hybridity is intertwined with people’s racial, gender, and class positions. These positionalities work alongside the binary positionalities generated from colonial hierarchies such as coloniser/colonised and colonial/postcolonial. Algerian migrants’ relationship with French and their affective distance to the former metropole project this ‘multiplicity of positionings’ (Sajed 2010, 366). In other words, the experiences of citizenship are unequal: Algerian migrants are divided in terms of their ‘asymmetrical claims to French citizenship’ (Sajed 2010, 375). While some proudly claim their belonging to France, others continue to feel alienated from the society. Some are categorised, or enact themselves, as ‘immigrants’ and ‘*immigré(e)*’, while others as ‘cosmopolitans’ and ‘*exilé(e)*’ (Sajed 2010, 376).

While the research discussed above highlights the linguistic difference between the coloniser and the colonised, others look at language without drawing such differences. For example, Aoileann Ní Mhurchú (2022) focuses on ‘ordinary language’ to explore the role of language in citizenship struggles that challenge existing categories, including coloniser/colonised and migrant/citizen. By looking at ‘ordinary language’, her work investigates ‘struggles in language *across* a variety of registers and ways of speaking [. . .]’ (Ní Mhurchú 2022, 12. Original emphasis) beyond the categories of the standardised Western language and non-standardised non-Western language. Ní Mhurchú argues that the perspective of ordinary language allows us to explore how a political subject emerges not through the oppression of or resistance to, but in co-creation of the West and modernity (Ní Mhurchú 2022, 23). Ní Mhurchú’s work draws on the example of *verlan* used by working class migrant heritage communities in France such as North African and African Arab communities. These communities use *verlan* as a form of word play to modify the normalised French words and phrases through the mixture of other languages spoken in their communities (Ní Mhurchú 2022, 7–9). She argues that *verlan* not only challenges the concept of normalised ways of speaking French but also becomes a tool for these communities to construct the ‘French’ language on their own terms. In this way, migrant heritage communities use *verlan* to re-define what a ‘French community’ means to them, and claim their legitimate belonging to France.

Language as a means of writing about citizenship

Although language has been discussed as an object of studying citizenship, it has so far received little attention as a means of writing about citizenship. As I have shown in the previous section, language becomes a contested site of social struggles where the ‘past’ experiences of colonialism shape contemporary experiences of migration and mobility. This means that researchers are also implicated in de/coloniality in the form of writing.

Following Isin and Nyers, I consider: '[A]s authors, we do not see ourselves independent from these [social] struggles . . . As citizenship studies scholars we position our investigations of citizenship in ways that are attuned to, and part of, these struggles' (Isin and Nyers 2014, 8). How we use language for writing determines the way we become 'attuned to, and part of' citizenship struggles.

To explore the connection between language and writing, Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's approach to language offers a helpful point of departure. In *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngũgĩ reflects on his own relations to languages: he speaks Gikuyu (Gĩkũyũ) as his 'mother tongue' (Wa Thiong'o 1986, 27) and English as an imposed language of the British Empire. Ngũgĩ laments that, in Kenya, English is exclusively identified as the 'language of conceptualisation, of thinking, of formal education, of mental development' (Wa Thiong'o 1986, 28), whereas African languages only function as 'the language of daily interaction in the home and in the community' (Wa Thiong'o 1986, 28) and are thus rendered irrelevant culturally and politically. What ensues is the lack of 'people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environments, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves' (Wa Thiong'o 1986, 3). Therefore, for Ngũgĩ, selecting Gikuyu language for his writing is a political statement to reclaim the silenced voice of the colonised. He considers that writing in a native tongue of the colonised is 'part and parcel of the anti-imperialist struggles of Kenyan and African peoples' (Wa Thiong'o 1986, 28). By producing his works in Gikuyu, he aims to regain the cultural and political relevance of Gikuyu and enact Gikuyu speakers as political subjects in postcolonial Kenya.

Ngũgĩ's relations to language suggest that writing is not simply a means of communication but a mechanism through which a particular understanding of the world is shared through the author's choice of language. As Rey Chow argues, human language, and its function to name things around us, works as a bonding device to develop a common understanding of the world:

By naming things, [...] we are in effect mimicking them – that is, becoming likethem. To name (the other), to become like (the other), to form social relations(with the other): this is how we derive knowledge of the world. (Chow 2014, 3)

The author's choice of language provides a basis for creating a community of 'we' where concepts and experiences are shared among us. For example, Ngũgĩ finds it imperative to use Gikuyu for 'creating a literature' (Wa Thiong'o 1986, 29). Doing so, he argues, would set in motion the making of a community of Gikuyu speakers that 'opens the languages for philosophy, science, technology, and all other areas of human creative endeavors' (Wa Thiong'o 1986, 29).

To put it differently, language is not just an inclusionary device to enact a community of 'we', but also an exclusionary one. Language functions as a gatekeeper that decides who can participate in conversations taking place in 'our' community through the medium of 'our' language. In this regard, writing about citizenship in English unavoidably creates a linguistic condition where a particular approach to citizenship is being introduced and discussed. Because of language barriers, materials written in other languages can be easily ignored, and the voice of non-English-speaking researchers muted. The global ubiquity of the English language further discourages researchers from writing in languages other than English. Since English continues to serve as a global lingua franca, writing in English

promises a wider readership, more publication outlets, and a (supposedly) bigger social ‘impact’. In contrast to English, which enjoys the status of a global language, other languages are given minority status. This leaves limited space for materials produced in minoritised languages to be included in English-speaking scholarship.

The exclusionary aspect of the English language does not necessarily point to the need to replace it with minoritised languages. For example, Ngūgĩ argues that the purpose of using subaltern languages is not to discard English entirely but to create a more egalitarian world through linguistic diversity. He acknowledges the usefulness of English as ‘the language of the world’ (Wa Thiong’o 1993, 40), provided that there are ‘independence, equality, democracy, and peace among nations’ (Wa Thiong’o 1993, 40). To deny the usefulness of English can also lead to the re-colonisation of the postcolonial subject. For some indigenous communities and people of colour who are raised in English-speaking countries, English could be the only means for writing.² These communities may have no choice but to use English because they receive no, or limited, education in their ancestors’ languages.

Ngūgĩ’s approach to language is highly instructive for citizenship studies scholars in two ways. Firstly, it suggests the importance of writing about migration and citizenship in minoritised languages. Using minoritised languages for writing itself can contribute to the increasing number of non-English writings. This countervails the globalising practice of writing in English (and other dominant languages of the West) that normalises, and thus depoliticises, linguistic imperialism for the sake of practicality and inevitability. Secondly, Ngūgĩ’s politics of writing compels us to critically reflect on the reason why we select English for writing. Considering that the English language is part of the structure that sustains the colonial hierarchies, we are confronted with the question of how we might use English creatively to decolonise citizenship. One way to do so could be, to paraphrase Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000), to provincialise English-speaking scholarship on citizenship. By locating this scholarship in a specific historical and socio-political context, we not only develop a dialogue with citizenship studies conducted in different languages, but also start thinking about how to translate discussions held in different languages in such a way that the colonial relation of power is addressed.

Writing like a native speaker?

Unlike Ngūgĩ who sees the need to use his ‘mother tongue’, Derrida instead immerses himself in the world of French. Being an Algerian with French citizenship, Derrida’s relationship with French mirrors the colonial tie between France and Algeria. Derrida calls French as ‘the only language I speak’ (Derrida 1998, 5), and as such, French is not a foreign language – he learned French as his ‘mother’ tongue under colonial rule. At the same time, he also regards French ‘not mine’ (Derrida 1998, 5) because it is the language imposed by the coloniser. Importantly, Derrida confesses that he aspires to become ‘more French’ (Derrida 1998, 49) and command ‘more purely French’ than was demanded by the purity of purists’ (Derrida 1998, 49). He hopes that ‘no publication permit[s] my “French Algerian” to appear’ (Derrida 1998, 45–46) because he cannot ‘bear or admire anything other than pure French’ (Derrida 1998, 46). What underlines Derrida’s insistence on ‘anything other than pure French’ (Derrida 1998, 46) is his understanding of language: for Derrida, language ‘invokes the unknown, multiple possibilities of future’

(Shindo 2019, 439). Whatever language one speaks, language always escapes from the speaker. It cannot be possessed by anyone, be that the coloniser or the colonised, or the citizen or the foreigner (Derrida 1998, 23). Instead of trying to possess language, Derrida releases the ownership of language. He lets language ‘summon[s] the heterological opening that permits it to speak of something else and to address itself to the other’ (Derrida 1998, 69). Although the process of invocation is beyond the speaker’s reach, the speaker is always subjected to the heterological opening of language. In this respect, language is ‘always part of us and in each one of us’ (Shindo 2019, 439). Derrida put it as follows: ‘I confess, I always surrender myself to language’ (Derrida 1998, 47).

There are two important implications of Derrida’s approach to language for decoloniality. Firstly, his claim that language cannot be possessed invites us to rethink the idea of native speakers. Since no one possesses language, there is no authority over the ‘correct’ way of commanding a language. As Chow points out, the development of a global lingua franca, such as English and French, reveals the artificiality of the linguistic privilege bestowed upon the colonisers. To command these languages is not a skill naturally given to a select group of people, but a learned skill which anyone can acquire. Speaking the dominant languages of the West as a native tongue is accidental since so many people have learned to speak them. For example, the spread of English renders a native tongue ‘simply one variant in an infinite series, in which there can be any degree and any number of fits or misfits between the speaker and the prosthesis’ (Chow 2014, 41–42). If there is no authentic and correct way of speaking a language, one way of decolonising the language of citizenship is to develop one’s own unique way of speaking about citizenship in the form of writing. For some writers, this uniqueness may be manifested as their obsession with the purity of language, as in the case of Derrida and the French language. For others, it may be shown in their refusal to accept a native variant and eagerness to acquire a different variant, a way of writing that comes with sound and rhythm different from the native ones.

The latter approach can be found in Chinua Achebe’s work. Achebe argues that using English in his writings is an anti-colonial practice because it shows the arbitrary relationship he has with English: born in Nigeria ruled by the British, he was given ‘no other choice’ than English as his language (Achebe 1994, 434). Precisely because of this colonial history, Achebe argues, writing in English is a deliberate choice for him to communicate his authentic voice. Importantly, however, Achebe clarifies that writing in English does not mean that he intends to use English like a native speaker. He acknowledges that ‘The English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience’, but his English has to be ‘a *new* English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but *altered* to suit its new African surroundings’ (Achebe 1994, 434, emphasis added). Hence, he responds to the question, ‘Can [the African] ever learn to use [English] like a native speaker?’, with a resounding, ‘I hope not’, as the answer (Achebe 1994, 433).

Gloria Anzaldúa’s work written in the Chicano language powerfully illustrates how writing could be done if the author uses what Achebe calls ‘a new English’. The Chicano language is used by Chicanas who live across the border of the US and Mexico, and whose ancestors include Spanish conquistadors, Native Americans, and *mestizo*, a mixture of the two. Their cross-border experience is reflected in the Chicano language: it mixes several languages, including English, Spanish, Chicano Spanish, Tex-Mex, and the North Mexican Spanish dialect. Sometimes ‘in the same sentence or in the same word’ (Anzaldúa 2012, 78),

Chicanas switch from one language to another, depending on whom they talk to and in what context. In other words, ‘there is no one Chicano language just as there is no one Chicano experience’ (Anzaldúa 2012, 80–81). Not having a clearly definable linguistic status, the Chicana language is viewed as an improper and uncivilised language compared to English and Spanish. Anzaldúa points out that Chicanas construct their own perception of themselves based on the image of inferiority attached to the language:

[...] because we [Chicanas] internalize how our language has been used against us by the dominant culture, we use our language differences against each other. To be close to another Chicana is like looking into the mirror. We are afraid of what we’ll see there. *Pena*. Shame. Low estimation of self. (Anzaldúa 2012, 80)

Anzaldúa’s observation about the Chicano language echoes what Ngũgĩ and Achebe see in the relationship between English and African languages. For Anzaldúa, linguistic identity is a ‘twin skin’ of ethnic identity: ‘Unless I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself’ (Anzaldúa 2012, 81). To reclaim the rightful presence of Chicanas, Anzaldúa demands that the Chicano language be treated as a legitimate and authentic language, just as other dominant standardised languages such as English and Spanish. Only then, she argues, ‘I will no longer be made to feel ashamed of existing. I will have my voice: Indian, Spanish, white. [...] I will overcome the tradition of silence’ (Anzaldúa 2012, 81).

Anzaldúa’s writing style reflects her approach to language. In her book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Anzaldúa freely uses several languages alongside English. Although the book is primarily written in English, non-English languages appear throughout the text as a word, a phrase, or a sentence. These languages are used either on their own or together with English, which blurs the linguistic boundary of where one language ends and another begins. Anzaldúa provides no translation of these non-English languages, which further obfuscates the separation of languages. In this way, she uses writing as a means to make both her language and her existence legitimate: she uses the Chicano way of speaking to challenge the ‘tradition of silence’ imposed on Chicanas. Anzaldúa’s writing style gives us a clue as to how authors can be part of the decolonising process in developing their own way of writing while still using English.

To be sure, to decolonise citizenship studies by using ‘a new English’ (Achebe 1994, 434) is not a straightforward task. Writing ‘pure’ English, as Derrida aspired to do with French, might give researchers more visibility and privilege than writing with a non-native variant of English. For example, some publication outlets, such as academic journals, expect authors to write like a native speaker. In order for the author’s paper to be accepted for publication by an English-speaking journal, she needs to convince peer reviewers and journal editors who, consciously or subconsciously, judge the quality of her work partially based on her command in English. Although monographs could be one outlet that gives an author more freedom to use non-standardised Englishes, they are not entirely free from the expectation of using English ‘properly’ because the expectation of pure English is still embedded in various stages of publication, including reviewing, editing, and proofreading. In this respect, teaching could be the most productive site of problematising the way of writing like a native speaker. For example, essay writing can be used as a way of introducing students to the link between decoloniality and writing. Regardless of the assignment topic, writing offers a valuable experience for students to reflect on their own relationship with the English language and

develop their own writing style. To dedicate at least one lecture to, or to develop a course on, language and citizenship can also animate much-needed discussions around writing about migration and citizenship in English and its implications for decoloniality.

Disappropriating practice of language

Secondly, if language is subjected to invocation, as Derrida argues, there needs to be a radical rethinking of what ‘understanding’ means in writing. Since multiple possibilities lie within language, the author has no guarantee that her writing communicates her thoughts accurately. This lack of guarantee challenges the expectation of understanding embedded in the form of writing. The author’s intention inscribed in the text is merely an invitation, an opening, for others to be part of. The author is unable to appropriate, and thus colonise, her voice through writing. Instead the author’s work floats on its own, constantly inviting others to reappropriate her voice, forever dwelling in the encounter of different voices. In this process, the line that demarcates the author and the reader becomes blurred and the ownership of ‘my’ voice unclear. Writing becomes a site of decoloniality where the author’s work is subjected to the co-meaning-making in relation to the other, and what she means is constantly disappropriated. The meaning-making through writing is not the author’s prerogative but a co-making practice emerging in the encounter between the self and the other. Through the exposure to the other and disappearance of the self, the author’s voice slips away. Instead misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and mistranslation lie at the heart of the practice of writing (see also Shindo 2019). We are forced to reconcile the loss of our voice in others, while rethinking how we use language in our daily context, without colonising the voice, without creating one authorial voice over the text.

The disappropriating practice of language has conflicting possibilities for decolonising citizenship studies. In some cases, it can have a counter effect on decoloniality because the refusal to appropriate the voice may end up suppressing the voice of the silenced. As Ngũgĩ’s relations to language show, the domination of English has destroyed not just the Kenyan people’s pride in their language per se but their ‘belief . . . in their capacities and ultimately in themselves’ (Wa Thiong’o 1986, 3). Therefore, for Ngũgĩ, speaking in his native tongue is vital to regain the ownership of his voice. In other words, there is a danger that letting others own the author’s voice is ultimately taking the voice away from her. By releasing the ownership of her voice, the author is ultimately subjected to others who take over her voice. This vexing aspect of the disappropriation strategy can be observed in the controversy over critical race theory.³ Critical race theory is a body of literature used by researchers, activists, and educators to bring the voice of racialised groups into the study of and teaching on racism. At the same time, conservative activists have taken over the meaning of critical race theory, deliberately or otherwise, to claim that it introduces divisive concepts such as the oppressed and the oppressor, to students and society at large.⁴ By disappropriating what critical race theory originally refers to, these activists have successfully mobilised lawmakers to ban the teaching of the subject in some educational institutions in the United States.

In other cases, the practice of disappropriating the author’s voice offers a powerful entry into the decolonising process because it disrupts the hierarchical relationship between the author and the reader. Since there is no authorial voice that colonises the author’s work, the text can generate a creative space of

misinterpretation that unsettles the existing power structure. For example, the UK's first all-Black and all-female Shakespeare theatre company, the Mawa Theatre Company, presents William Shakespeare's works from Black community perspectives. The company uses all Black and female actors to perform Shakespeare's plays to address 'how Black and Black Mixed Race Women are represented in classical text' and produce 'content that focuses on themes within his works that correlate with the Black community'.⁵ Shakespeare's plays offer a perfect platform to gain visibility and audibility for the Black community because his works are strongly associated with Britishness.⁶ The Mawa Theatre Company creates a play where Black female actors take up the roles that are traditionally performed by white male actors, which debunks 'the idea of white ownership over Britishness and over British art'.⁷ By 'reclaiming what Shakespeare could be',⁸ the all-Black and female theatre company powerfully presents their vision of what contemporary Britain should be. The participants of this theatre group deliberately misinterpret Shakespeare's original text in a way that upends the racial and gender bias embedded in the reading of Shakespeare and confronts the society that normalises such reading. In this case, misinterpretation is not a troublesome feature of writing (and reading), but a productive site of decoloniality. Misinterpretation of the author's work brings people together and provides a basis of solidarity for collectively asserting the marginalised voices.

Conclusion

In this article, I have suggested four different ways in which language opens a space for decoloniality in the form of writing: using minoritised languages for writing; provincialising citizenship discussions carried out in English; developing one's unique way of 'speaking' about citizenship in writing; and using misinterpretation as a tactic to disappropriate the text. Decolonising the language of citizenship is not limited to these, however. Regardless of the research topic, we are always confronted by the question of how we use language in our daily context of writing, reading, speaking, listening, and forming relations with others through language. As such, language signals the infinite possibilities of decoloniality. They are everywhere around us, and always within us.

Notes

1. For other ways to discuss decoloniality and citizenship, see, for example: Charles Lee's chapter, 'Decolonizing global citizenship', in Isin and Nyers (2014).
2. I owe this insight to Charles Lee.
3. I thank Charles Lee for suggesting this example.
4. 'Bans on Critical Race Theory Threat Free Speech, Advocacy Group Says', *New York Times*, 8 November 2021. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/arts/critical-race-theory-bans.html> (Accessed 8 April 2022).
5. <https://www.mawatheatrecompany.com/about> (Accessed 8 April 2022).
6. Danielle Kassaraté, the executive director of Mawa Theatre Company, available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/entertainment-arts-58285815> (Accessed 8 April 2022).

7. Gabrielle Brooks, the creative director of Mawa Theatre Company, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2021/jun/10/uks-first-all-black-all-female-shakespeare-company-aim-to-shine-new-light-on-bard> (Accessed 8 April 2022).
8. Danielle Kassaraté, the executive director of Mawa Theatre Company, available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/entertainment-arts-58285815> (Accessed 8 April 2022).

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