

Working with words

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"We take it upon ourselves to find words even when our words are fatigued, repeated, exhausted and overused. We refuse to state that we are 'so tired' but instead find words every day. This is our task. We are workers with words. Many of our words amplify the cries of wailing mothers and fathers, screaming children, and horrified witnesses".
Khawla Badwan and Alison Phipps, "Keep telling of Gaza", *Sidhe Press*, 2024

Working with words, these days, feels extremely hopeless and helpless; is this really the best we can do, in the face of intolerable levels of violence and injustice? We take inspiration from Gazan poet Refaat Alareer who stated that, as a professor, he had little at his disposal but a marker to throw at violent attackers, but that if need be, throw this marker he would. So these are the puny words, and the puny work, that we are able to put forward in these times of unbearable crisis on so many fronts.

The theme of this issue, the struggles for territory and their relation to justice, feels apt. It may help us to think about the ways in which portions of space become imbued with meanings and values beyond their material role as places we inhabit, and how "territories" become both places of struggle, and places to struggle for. Claiming space, as a way to address spatial injustice, occurs in many shapes and forms, as illustrated by the articles in this issue. That not every claim to territory is a pursuit of justice is also a take-away from this collection of pieces, and an interview in the Public Space section also documents the fact that some injustices do not necessarily result in collective mobilisations. Other Public Space interviews remind us of the need for greater epistemic justice in the ways we allow the exiled to speak up and produce their own representations.

Many needed decolonisations are on our mind as we keep preaching spatial justice, and keep hoping for International Courts to enforce justice.