



CURRICULUM STUDIES WORLDWIDE

Curriculum Challenges and Opportunities in a Changing World

Transnational Perspectives in
Curriculum Inquiry

Edited by

Bill Green · Philip Roberts · Marie Brennan



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Curriculum Studies Worldwide

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Transnational Perspectives in Curriculum Inquiry

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Transnational Curriculum Inquiry in a Changing World

Bill Green, Marie Brennan, and Philip Roberts

INTRODUCTION

What role does curriculum scholarship have to play in the strange and difficult times we find ourselves in? This book provides one response to that question. Bringing together contributions from across the world, it lays out a state of the art, and also an agenda for the future, with regard to what we describe here, explicitly, as transnational curriculum

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inquiry. At the same time, it is important that this be seen as a thoroughly situated articulation, epistemologically and spatially, as embodying a view from somewhere. The book follows the 6th World Curriculum Conference, held in Australia in late 2018, as the latest in a series of triennial conferences under the auspices of the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS), dating back to 2000. From the outset, IAACS's project has been to 'internationalise' the field, particularly from the perspective of its origins in the American scene—something itself complicated by what might be described as the 'Empire' speaking back, with curriculum scholars elsewhere in the world increasingly re-articulating their own distinctive and sometimes dissenting versions and visions of curriculum inquiry. That project has been an important and generative one, opening up the field and offering new understanding and imperatives, as well as challenges and opportunities, for curriculum scholarship worldwide, albeit that it still remains shaped and enabled nationally, at least historically.

This Introduction is written within the 'lock-down' time of COVID-19, an unprecedented global pandemic which has already changed the world, irrevocably. In some ways, the pandemic is a particularly stark manifestation of globalisation, and perhaps a defining condition for education in the age of late modernity and late capitalism, realised in new regimes of testing and accountability, in 'traveling' policy formations, in new 'edu-scapes' and supra-national reform imperatives, in increasingly global-academic mobility. Each of us has been in some manifestation of 'lockdown' and 'social isolation' in recent months, like our contributors, our colleagues, with most of us engaged in writing curriculum inquiry, in one form or another, or otherwise 'doing' curriculum. The opportunity arises therefore, and the challenge, to consider what it is to be engaged in *curriculum* praxis and scholarship, in work that is imagined and realised under the sign of 'curriculum' at this time—to ask, again, what *is* curriculum? What is curriculum inquiry? What *constitutes* curriculum inquiry? What *counts as* curriculum inquiry? What makes it curriculum? Undoubtedly the curriculum field is a broad church, and as others have noted, there is little to be gained in setting too strict a limitation on what it refers to and contains. But there is real value, looking forward, in asking such questions, if only to promote a heightened reflexivity in our conduct and our sense of ourselves as a scholarly community—a 'discipline'.

Here in Australia, for instance, a striking feature of this most recent period (April–June, 2020) has been formal government emphasis on keeping children and young people out of and away from schools. This has not meant closing schools, however, and the concomitant turn to various forms of home-schooling, distance education and online learning, as a means of providing for some measure of continuity in ‘normal’ curriculum and schooling, has meant new challenges for parents and for teachers. Little articulated, as yet, is that all this provides an excellent opportunity to rethink normative or institutionalised understandings of curriculum and schooling in their normal, ‘grammatical’ form—including the very coupling of curriculum and schooling. What does ‘curriculum’ do *for* and *to* teaching and learning? What do sequence, continuity and development mean in this regard? What ‘boundaries’ and ‘thresholds’ pertain to knowledges as they move from one context to another? Etc. These and other questions are directly pertinent to the distinctive professional and intellectual expertise of the curriculum specialist, or the curriculum scholar. And yet in Australia there is little recognition, as yet, of the challenge *and* the opportunity presented here for curriculum inquiry as a field of expertise and specialist knowledge. All the more reason, then, to encourage greater self-awareness on the part of curriculum scholars, not only in Australia but elsewhere as well, because it is more than likely that similar or related things are happening across the world, as Business as Usual is interrupted and perhaps even disrupted. Clearly, there are increasing debates, worldwide, about the purposes of education institutions, and of education itself as an institution. Concurrently, global protests around the Black Lives Matter crisis perhaps indicate that we may be entering a new phase of decoloniality in settler states such as the USA and Australia. All such shifts raise potential and probing questions for curriculum work and curriculum inquiry in universities and schools.

All this is why, in such a changing and tumultuous context, this book seeks to provide a range of accounts of contemporary curriculum thinking and activity, as a demonstration of the informed, critical curriculum mindset, at a momentous time in global history. In what follows, we shall firstly outline the conference occasioning this book—bearing in mind that while it is not a ‘conference proceedings’, it continues conversations from that event. An exploration of some of the major issues emerging from these conversations, as well as from other recent developments and debates in the field at large, is then presented. Finally, we provide an

overview of the book itself, across the various chapters, indicating some of the thematic links between them, and reviewing the project of the book as a whole.

THE MELBOURNE CONFERENCE—CONTINUING THE IAACS PROJECT

The 6th World Curriculum Studies Conference (December 2018) was co-hosted by the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) and the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA), working together with IAACS. This was the first time that the event had been held in Australia, following previous IAACS conferences in Baton Rouge (2000), Shanghai (2003), Tampere (2006), Cape Town (2009), Rio Di Janeiro (2012) and Ottawa (2015). The Conference's formal title was 'Transnational Curriculum Inquiry: Challenges and Opportunities in a Changing World'—as it turns out, a felicitous framing for the event as it played out.

Three Keynotes and three Featured panels, as well as symposia and individual paper-presentations, were distributed over three days. The Keynotes were presented by Julie McLeod¹ (Australia), Zongyi Deng (Singapore)² and Crain Soudien (South Africa), as scholars of international standing, and these presentations were very enthusiastically received, with each speaker presenting from their own work in explicit dialogue with the designated theme of that particular day. An innovation at the conference was the Featured Panels, held over the three days, with invited panellists for each day drawn from a range of countries, including New Zealand, Australia, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Chile, Norway and the USA. The themes of the Panels were as follows:

- 'National Curriculum: International Perspectives'
- 'Teachers' Work/Lives and Curriculum Making'
- 'Indigenous & Decolonising Challenges in/to Curriculum Theory'

¹ See McLeod (2019), for an account drawing on similar material to Julie's Keynote.

² He has since moved to University College London in the UK. It was important in the conference planning, however, that at least one of the Keynotes was from the Asian region.

It was conceived from the outset that the conference overall would be structured in accordance with these topics, as *meta-themes*, under the umbrella of its focus on transnational curriculum inquiry in a changing world. This was not seen as a free-for-all—we wanted to take this thematic structure seriously, and we did³; and so too did those who presented at the conference. The conference was conceived as not only an opportunity to showcase curriculum scholarship but also specifically *as* curriculum scholarship—in particular, extending lines of inquiry initiated two decades previously.

Major traces of the Panels remain in the concept and organisation of this book. They clearly raised a number of important and even crucial issues in and for the field more generally.⁴ Particularly significant in this regard, we believe, was the Panel on ‘Indigenous and decolonising challenges in/to curriculum theory’, which we saw as potentially very generative and especially appropriate for a conference of this kind held in Australia, where the state of Aboriginal education is surely a scandal, and an indictment of the nation as a whole. This is notwithstanding the point that other countries have histories just as troubled and as disturbing, regarding their indigenous people. This is truly a worldwide phenomenon, and a major curriculum challenge in and of itself. We were very keen therefore to highlight this issue at the conference and, more importantly, the perspectives and standpoints associated with it.

While this was the first time that this triennial conference had been located in Australia (or the ‘Antipodes’), it was the third time that it was held in the southern hemisphere.⁵ This seems to us significant, in terms of what it means for recent interest in notions such as ‘southern theory’ and the ‘Global South’. Practically, holding this international conference in Australia immediately raised issues of distance and travel, which clearly have an effect on participation, and hence on registration, and the financial and organisational struggles that bedevilled the conference from the outset—something perhaps worth re-considering in the future.

³‘We’, that is, the conference organising committee.

⁴Note that the ‘national curriculum’ Panel was followed up by a symposium published in the journal *Curriculum Perspectives* (Vol. 29. No. 1, 2019), comprising short papers on national curriculum developments and debates in England and Wales, Brazil, Norway, and Australia.

⁵The others being Cape Town (South Africa) in 2009 and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 2012.

A final point: the conference itself was well attended, in the end, and by all reports a successful academic-intellectual event. There were 242 registrations from all over the world, with 149 paper-presentations and 15 symposia (within which, a further 52 individual presentations⁶). Participants came from 32 countries, including Australia, with not surprisingly the largest representation, followed by China. There was a significant contribution from South-East Asia, and also from South America, while attendance was relatively small from Europe, Africa, and fewer from North America than usual. Yet this was a truly multi-national conference, and an important moment in the transnational curriculum field. The scholarship on display was wide-ranging and illuminating, and often inspirational, from the Keynotes through the Panels to the symposia and the papers. This is clearly evident in the conference as text, in both its commodified and lived forms, although of course the latter lives on now simply as memory. That was a key reason, in fact, for why we were keen to follow up the event with a material record⁷ of some kind, a marker, something manifested here in this book.

While the Melbourne conference was its originating forum, the book is not simply a ‘conference proceedings’. Rather, it comprises invited contributions from conference participants, based on both their abstracts and their presentations. Those who responded to these invitations then worked on writing their chapters, in accordance with the terms of reference of our book proposal. With the book understood in its own right, we were concerned that it be as inclusive and as representative as possible, hence a genuine exercise in transnational curriculum inquiry, as a contribution to the curriculum studies field.

TRANSNATIONAL CURRICULUM INQUIRY?

What is it to seek to understanding curriculum transnationally? This has been a central organising question for the IAACS project from the outset,

⁶Many of these were either already published (e.g. Loh et al., 2018) or in press, as special issues and the like (e.g. ‘Curriculum Making as Social Practice: Complex Webs of Enactment’, *The Curriculum Journal*, Vol. 29, No. 2).

⁷While there have been several formal book-length publications associated with this conference series (e.g. Ropo & Autio, 2009; Truett, 2003), overall this aspect doesn’t seem to have been much considered, or seen as worthwhile and even strategic. That seems a great pity, and perhaps a missed opportunity—hence our own concern to follow up the Melbourne conference with this book.

and more particularly for Bill Pinar’s curriculum research program over recent decades. That program has undoubtedly been a productive and important one, and directly formative for IAACS. This is not to say that they are identical—it is crucial, in fact that critical distinctions are made in this regard, not the least because of the need to insist on the specificity of the Association and the integrity of scholarship. Pinar’s work here traces back at least to the first half of the 1990s and the monumental volume *Understanding Curriculum* (Pinar et al., 1995), which contains a chapter entitled ‘Understanding Curriculum as International Text’. The notion of ‘curriculum-as-international-text’ has become an important reference-point for much subsequent work—including that of IAACS and especially its conference series. This focus has been described recently in terms of ‘internationalism’ as a “third paradigm (2000–present)” in US curriculum studies, following on from “curriculum development (1918–1975)” as the first phase “and then reconceptualist curriculum (1976–2000)” (Jupp, 2017, p. 22). It should be noted that the reference here is to curriculum studies in the USA, as a nationally distinctive field (see also Pinar, 2013). We need to differentiate between the view of curriculum studies historically identified or associated with North America and the view from elsewhere, variously conceived—a shift in perspective, and perhaps the emergence of a programmatic *multiperspectivism* in curriculum inquiry, and a concern with not just ‘positionality’ but ‘situatedness’ as well (Reynolds, 2017, p. 1). *Where in the world is one speaking from?*—with all of these (‘where’, ‘the world’, ‘speaking from’, ‘who’) to be thematized. As is becoming increasingly recognised, it is important to distinguish between a more or less hegemonic (North) American ‘voice’ and the voices of others, from elsewhere. It matters greatly that curriculum is produced in multiple places and spaces.

Hence it is useful to consider how internationalism is understood, and its relations with terms and concepts such as globalisation, cosmopolitanism and transnationality itself. A distinction has been made, strategically and operationally, between ‘internationalisation’ and ‘globalisation’, on the grounds that the latter seems to be associated with a tendency towards homogenisation and standardisation, whereas the former preserves and indeed affirms differences and particularities. Hence, from the outset the emphasis has been, for IAACS, on “support[ing] a worldwide—but not uniform—field of curriculum studies” (Gough, 2004, p. 7). This has meant insisting, in practice, on the continuing relevance of the nation. Pinar (2010, p. 2) argues “the primacy of the

nation in curriculum reform”, proposing that “[p]rerequisite to understanding curriculum internationally is ... the primacy of the particular case” (p. 14)—in this instance, the nation. Hence: “Internationalization denotes the possibility of nationally distinctive fields in complicated conversation with each other” (Pinar, 2010, p. 3). The Australian curriculum scholar Noel Gough provides a particularly illuminating perspective on this matter. As he writes:

Curriculum studies is itself a form of contemporary cultural production through which the transnational imaginary of globalization may be expressed and negotiated, although it is more common for curriculum scholars to speak of the ‘internationalization’ of the field. (Gough, 2000, p. 88)

Elsewhere, he makes the point that “those of us who have been explicitly engaged in projects of internationalizing curriculum inquiry have addressed questions of how local knowledge traditions in curriculum inquiry can be performed together in a variety of ways” (Gough, 2014, p. 93).

Within such a perspective, the question must be asked: What about the nation? Does the nation still matter? Do questions of nationhood, nationality and even nationalism continue to be worth asking in contemporary (transnational) curriculum inquiry? As scholars such as Pinar (2010) and Reid (2000) indicate, historically and traditionally curriculum work has been conducted within the purview of the nation. This remains even now the case, as evidenced by the recent volume on the Australian Curriculum (Reid & Price, 2018) and a special issue of *The Curriculum Journal* on developing a new curriculum for Wales (Vol, 31, No. 2, 2020), under the heading ‘Educating the Nation’. Given Pinar’s (2010, p. 2) assertion of “the primacy of the nation in curriculum reform”, his focus has been on ‘internationalization’ rather than ‘globalization’:

Not only does internationalization point to the national context in which global politics is enacted but, for my purposes, the term underlies the promise of the next stage... in curriculum studies. *Internationalization denotes the possibility of nationally distinctive fields in complicated conversation with each other.* (Pinar, 2010, pp. 2–3—his emphasis)

As he writes: “Understanding the national distinctiveness of curriculum studies enables us to underscore how national history and culture influence our own research” (p. 14). It is worth noting here that mass-popular schooling, as a modernist-imperial project, was introduced into colonies and former colonies, often as part of ‘civilising the natives’. So curriculum, even if not an official ‘national curriculum’, has been inevitably tied to the self-reflexive development of citizens (‘in the national interest’, so to speak). Similarly, universities in many countries, including across China, India, the continents of Africa, Australia and South America, grew largely along European post-Humboldtian lines which emphasised national cultures alongside the science subjects. Indeed, universities became symbols of ‘modernity’ and means of entry into nation status in many instances. Their curriculum, too, took on elements of the scientific ‘world view’, which flowered along with developing country-specific cultural practices—poetry traditions and political induction in China, for example.

Indeed, if we accept that curriculum is one central mechanism whereby we tell ourselves who we are, then “[t]elling ourselves who we are involves many facets of identity, but the one that has been most clearly associated with the institution of curriculum is the question of what nation we belong to and what it means to belong to that nation” (Reid, 2000, p. 114). Moreover: “[n]ational curriculums”—by which is meant, here, simply those formal curricula arising in different countries—“are cultural artifacts, in the same way that national songs, stories, and festivals are cultural artifacts”, and “[e]ven if they use the same basic materials, what results from those materials has unique meaning for individual nations” (Reid, 2000, p. 114). That view might be countered by observing that we live now in a global era, and that nations are no longer as seemingly monumental as once they were. Nonetheless, as Pinar and various others argue, nations still matter in and for curriculum inquiry. They continue to provide a bedrock for much of what is recognisable as curriculum and schooling, as situated selections from national culture. ‘National curriculum’ thus constructs the nation as much as being shaped by earlier forms of nation. Simultaneously, ‘national curriculum’, whether official policy or not, now enrolls countries in new forms of globalism, through uses of ‘big data’. Supra-national testing regimes establish the ‘global’ as a ‘space’ of comparison of nations, in a hierarchical stratification of performances of student ‘achievement’, tied to economic performance.

Speaking from somewhere continues to matter, and this includes nations, among other ‘places’⁸, within a complex, dynamic, global field of flows and spaces, ‘scapes’ (Appadurai, 2010). Yet speaking from somewhere implies not only, or simply, a geographic notion of place. Curriculum development for both schools and universities has long been associated with dominant forms of nationalism and national identity formation. While curriculum contestation in many sites has raised questions of which knowledges and whose knowledge is included, these remain problematic. The early 1970s debates in the edited collection *Knowledge and Control* (Young, 1971) highlighted this for England and France, through the sociology of knowledge via the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Basil Bernstein. More recent contestation includes the ‘decolonise the curriculum!’ protests in South African universities from around 2015. The locus of enunciation has shifted.

In particular, it becomes increasingly generative to take account of what, appropriating Gramsci, might be called the ‘Southern Question’—the notion of the Global South, as a new and perhaps necessary consideration in and for transnational curriculum inquiry. This is crucial to questions of power, positionality and situatedness, as well as ‘enunciation’ (Macedo, 2011). There are two aspects of this. One is to acknowledge a longstanding historical view of the world in terms of a dominant North and a subaltern South, based in politico-ethical considerations of modernity and colonialism. Connell (2007) has provided a provocative and somewhat controversial argument in this regard, organised around the motif of ‘southern theory’. This is appropriately referenced here, as an avowedly Australian perspective on knowledge and social theory. “[S]ocial thought happens in particular places” (Connell, 2007, p. ix): it is produced somewhere, and it is directed and oriented somewhere—often somewhere else. Connell’s Australian location remains significant, even if the audience is potentially a worldwide one, especially if that location is understood biographically and historically—as it was for Connell (e.g. p. 203), and it is for us, as curriculum scholars. Curriculum inquiry happens in particular places, too. Of course, writing from the Antipodes, as we do, does not definitively shape and inform our account, or give it any particular epistemological warrant. What it does do is indicate

⁸Both those subordinate to the nation (e.g. states, provinces, etc.) and those superordinate to it (e.g. region).

where we are speaking from, i.e. the periphery of the curriculum field, worldwide.

This is partly why the issue of the ‘South’ is relevant here.⁹ We understand the project of transnational curriculum inquiry as an attempt to re-balance the scene, to allow for and indeed to actively promote voices and perspectives from elsewhere, as a matter of principle. It is important, nonetheless, not to misrecognise the ‘South’ as a literal geo-political reference. Rather, it is a metaphor. Hence: “... ‘the South’ and ‘the Antipodes’ are more of a state-of-mind or condition, rather than a place” (Stewart et al., 2017, p. 62). As de Sousa Santos (2018, p. 1) points out, with particular relevance to curriculum:

It is an epistemological nongeographical South, composed of many epistemological souths having in common the fact that they are all knowledges born in struggles against capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. They are produced wherever such struggles occur, in both the geographical North and the geographical South.

That is, recognising the ‘South’ is a political statement. In this regard, de Sousa Santos (2014, 2018) has pointed to the ways in which knowledges other than the Euro-centric have been excluded and refused: what he terms the construction of an “abyssal line”, dividing the world. On one side is ‘reality’ and the existence or invisibility of anything beyond the ‘abyss’. As this plays out in curriculum terms, knowledges from the colonised cannot be recognised, or seen, let alone included. Hence, de Sousa Santos develops the term ‘epistemicide’, marking the violence of that exclusion, which he sees as built into the institutions of the colonies and of new nations—including their schools and universities. In Australia, the deplorable treatment of indigenous peoples, killing off hundreds of languages and rich cultural knowledges, is still very much an open issue, a ‘wound’ (Grant, 2016). Australia’s more recent geo-economic relations with Asia adds to the sharp irony, historically, of its White Australia Policy, so long a centrepiece of its national identity. de Sousa Santos’ (2014, 2018) concern for the recovery of and reconstructions of “epistemologies of the South” thus become a means of, and opportunity for,

⁹Notwithstanding criticisms such as that of Papastergiadis (2017), who has argued that “[t]he emancipatory ideas that were embedded in the idea of the South have faded” (p. 85).

curriculum renewal for schools and universities, and for communities, more broadly. In discussing the necessary moves towards cognitive justice through educational institutions, De Sousa Santos points to new ecologies of knowledges—not to gain new generalisations or universalisations but rather, to engage in pluriversities, erasing the abyssal line in the process of engagement across knowledges (de Sousa Santos, 2018). There is, of course, much more involved in curriculum renewal along such lines, as Paraskeva (2016) intimates.

A further aspect of the ‘Southern’ question is pertinent here is the issue of language, or more particularly, of ‘English’ as the means by which transnational curriculum inquiry has largely (hegemonically?) been conducted to date. What problems emerge when this is problematised?—when what is sometimes called ‘anglification’ is reckoned into account, in considering matters of globalisation and internationalisation? Paraskeva (2016, p. 209) is sharply emphatic in this regard, referring to “... the linguistic imperialism framed by the English language and culture as an aspect of [curriculum] genocide”. As Jupp (2017, p. 7) writes: “Through to the present, efforts to internationalize curriculum studies have generally advanced the coloniality of knowledge through using ‘international’ English as lingua franca”. He further notes: “This use of English emphasizes the assumption that curriculum studies’ internationalization represents an expansion of the US-centered and Anglophone field’s third paradigm” (p. 7). Here he points to the more constrained understanding of ‘internationalisation’ as part of the ‘advancement’ of American curriculum studies, which has been already alluded to. This has been a marked feature of the IAACS program as well, with the conferences all conducted in and through English as the primary means of communication and exchange, although this certainly doesn’t mean that other languages haven’t also been in play. The same must be said of books such as this one, published in English as it is, even though it features scholars writing from South America and elsewhere, for whom English is not their first language (L1), or indeed their preferred language.

What is important here, however, is the question not so much of the language of transnational curriculum inquiry but of opening it up to other epistemologies, ontologies and cosmologies, and other forms of knowledge and ways of knowing. This might be described, following Derrida, as a necessary supplement. It is not about displacing Western knowledges (and even English-language scholarship, contemporary or classical), rather of building new relationships across diverse knowledges. How this might

be done is, of course, another matter altogether. Jupp (2017, p. 13) calls for "... a South-led transnational curriculum studies South-North global dialogue that emphasizes Southern voices, epistemologies, and readings of the Global North from the periphery". This might be best conceived as a crucial initial phase, with hopefully a recalibrated discourse to subsequently emerge, as a re-energised feature of the curriculum field, worldwide.

So how best to understand what we have named here transnational curriculum inquiry? Calling for a new emphasis on notions of mutuality, negotiation and cosmopolitanism, Jupp (2017, p. 9) refers to "the emergent transnational curriculum studies field". For us, however, 'transnational curriculum inquiry' has greater resonance and value, certainly for our purpose here, in introducing and framing this book. This is partly because it was introduced early on by our fellow Australian, Noel Gough, as the Foundation Editor of IAACS's journal *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry*. As he wrote in his inaugural Editorial, regarding "the *idea* of transnational curriculum inquiry", this is about more than just producing yet another journal or generating more publications: "it is also a site for research and for producing intercultural understanding and actively valuing cultural diversity" (Gough, 2004, p. 7). This creates new opportunities "for reconceptualising curriculum work that can be generated by considering how we should respond to, and progressively consolidate, the formation of new publics – democratic, multicultural, and transnational citizenries" (p. 4). Furthermore, it involves "reconceptualising curriculum inquiry as a postcolonialist project" (p. 7). We endorse that understanding. While this book is by no means wholly to be read along such lines, overall, it is certainly intended as a gesture in that direction, and as such, a call for further work along such lines. How it is to be understood, and realised, remains a project still to be fully and properly articulated.

THE BOOK, THE READER AND A FINAL NOTE

The book that you are reading comprises nineteen chapters¹⁰ by authors from around the world, and more specifically from Aotearoa New Zealand, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, England, Hong

¹⁰Plus an Afterword, by Julie McLeod, commenting on the volume as a whole.

Kong, Luxembourg, Singapore, South Africa and the USA. We have organised it in accordance with the thematic structure of the original Conference—‘Decolonising the Curriculum’, ‘Knowledge Questions and Curriculum Dilemmas’, ‘History, Nation, Curriculum’ and ‘Curriculum Challenges for the Future’. Our intended reader is the curriculum scholar, whether established or emerging, although we hope that others in the field will also find the book of interest and value, even utility. We are confident that all of the contributors, as writers and scholars, will concur with our view that scholarship matters, and perhaps especially so at a time when visions of teaching as pragmatic-intellectual work are being actively suppressed, and schooling is becoming more and more regulated and constrained. In what follows, we provide a brief overview of the volume as a whole, and of the chapters it contains and frames.

‘Decolonising the Curriculum’ (Sect. 1) opens the volume, foregrounding a key theme for transnational curriculum inquiry—perhaps especially important at this time where there is widespread outrage seen in worldwide affirmations that ‘Black Lives Matter’. This emphasis was also a key focus for the Melbourne conference, where a Featured Panel addressed the topic of ‘Indigenous & Decolonising Challenges in/to Curriculum’. As various commentators have noted, Australia—starting as a British penal colony and federating as a settler society in 1901—was always a profoundly ‘white’ nation-state, with the notorious White Australia Policy at its heart. Yet there was, and always will be, a long-standing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence and, as the Uluru Statement from the Heart makes clear, this country was never *Terra Nullius*, and sovereignty over the land was never relinquished (<https://ulurustatement.org/>). The Australian challenge remains: the decolonisation of curriculum and schooling. These chapters engage this challenge—not only in Australia but elsewhere as well, speaking from the local circumstances of South Africa, Chile, Aotearoa New Zealand and China, together with Australia. Chapters in other sections—Corbett, Green and Roberts, for example—also take up the challenges of decoloniality (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018), as is incumbent on most of the world.

Theoretically and empirically robust, the Section starts with Crain Soudien’s “Development, Decolonisation and the Curriculum: New Directions for New Times” (Chapter 2). Drawn from his provocative and historically situated keynote, his chapter here presents insights from four

positions on decoloniality taken in South Africa, involving ‘Transformation’ by ‘Detachment’, ‘Inclusion’, ‘Enlargement’ and ‘Critical Appropriation’, respectively. Locating these within global debates, he concludes that intellectual and emotional engagement with this in curriculum terms involves teaching “wider and deeper ways of knowing, but also ... teach[ing] with compassion and care”. Georgina Tuari Stewart, a Panel-list at the Melbourne conference, offers the image of ‘Smoke and Mirrors’ in her chapter exploring curriculum policy of inclusion of Māori knowledge in Aotearoa New Zealand curriculum (Chapter 3). Along with later chapters, Stewart uses a critical engagement with Michael Young’s work to unpack the insubstantial, even deceptive explanations underpinning the policy, and its confusions in and for practice. Chilean scholar Daniel Johnson-Mardones in his chapter entitled ‘The Mestizo Latinoamericano as Modernity’s Dialectical Image: Critical Perspectives on the Internationalization Project in Curriculum Inquiry’ (Chapter 4) takes up a key South American contribution to decoloniality debates in which coloniality is constitutive of modernity. He proposes intercultural dialogue as a contribution to the internationalisation debates in curriculum studies, a dialogue moving beyond Euro-centric modernity/coloniality by starting from the ‘mestizo latinoamericano’. Kevin Lowe and Nikki Moodie—two Australian Aboriginal Panellists at the Melbourne conference—join here with Sara Weuffen to analyse the official Australian Curriculum and its ‘mirage’ of Indigenous content (Chapter 5). They trace the shift from education for self-determination, equity and anti-racism towards concerns with Indigenous underachievement and ‘self-esteem’, seeing this as a form of assimilation and incorporation into settler society. A policy of ‘reconciliation’ between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people sidelines Indigenous control of knowledge for and about Indigenous people and absolves settlers from responsibility to decolonise. Weili Zhao offers transnational curriculum studies “a de-colonial language gesture” in her chapter from Hong Kong (Chapter 6). Drawing on Huebner and Heidegger, Zhao reintroduces the recuperation of language as a decolonial tool, as a means to avoid “curriculum epistemicide” (Paraskeva 2016). Pointing to the loss of alternative cognitive, cultural and ontological frames, represented in the loss of language, she discusses problems with Chinese adoption of the globally circulating term ‘competencies’. The term’s ‘translation’ adopts Western ‘Tylerian’ framing of curriculum, evacuating Chinese historical terms and knowledge traditions.

In Sect. 2 ('Knowledge Questions and Curriculum Dilemmas'), what has been described as the 'knowledge question' is confirmed as a resonant topic in recent curriculum-theoretical debates. Initially linked to the work of Michael Young and others, it has been both generative and controversial, putting knowledge back on the agenda at a time when, as some argue, attention to knowledge as such risked being backgrounded or eclipsed. Yet the curriculum question *par excellence* has long been that originally ascribed to Herbert Spencer—'What knowledge is of most worth?' New issues of disciplinarity have arisen in recent times, along with attention to 'practical', 'tacit', 'body', 'interim', 'personal' and other forms of knowledge—including, crucially and increasingly, the issue of indigenous knowledges. Initially oriented to and even dominated by Western, modernist, metrocentric orientations and value, this debate has more recently opened up to 'other' perspectives, from China and from Asia more generally, as well as revisiting Classical understandings, and those linked to other non-Western epistemologies, ontologies and even cosmologies. All this returns politics and ethics to the picture, and highlights issues of power and desire, and of the non-neutrality of curriculum—but also of the need for educators themselves to be knowledgeable, as agents and designers, and as curriculum makers. Knowledge questions generate and provoke curriculum dilemmas, and curriculum dilemmas of various kinds more often than not can be tracked back to challenging issues of knowledge and 'knowledge-ability'.

This section includes five chapters, headed by Zongyi Deng's account of knowledge and 'content' in recent debates and his overview of three different but potentially complementary perspectives on curriculum and schooling (Chapter 7). Crucially he introduces a Chinese 'wisdom' tradition into the debate—thereby nicely complementing Zhao's account in the previous section. Philip Roberts' chapter focuses on the relationship between the types of knowledge in the curriculum based on metropole disciplines and rural knowledges (Chapter 8), raising questions about the relationship between the 'metropole' and the 'hinterland' as sites and sources of knowledge-making. What teachers and educators more generally do with the knowledge they are assigned to teach is addressed next, in Yew Leong Wong's account of curriculum making and curriculum design (Chapter 9), working with what is called 'the methodology of design' and adopting a classically modernist stance in doing so. There is a connection here with a later chapter on curriculum design which seeks to unsettle such a perspective (Chapter 18). Teaching is again the

focus of Silvia Morelli's chapter (Chapter 10), written from Argentina, drawing on classical neo-European notions of *bildung* and *didaktik* to offer what she calls a distinctive 'language' for talking and thinking about curriculum, and about teaching, in the changing context of what she presents as an emerging postmodernity. The section concludes with an important move by Lew Zipin and Marie Brennan (Chapter 11) beyond the knowledge question per se, as currently formulated, to engage issues of ethics, richly articulated with notions of power and social justice. What is striking here (indeed, across the book as a whole) is the manner in which different chapters work off each other, implicitly *and* explicitly, pointing in this case to ongoing challenges of curriculum and knowledge, and ranging from considerations of curriculum making at different levels to the curriculum-in-use.

Regarding Sect. 3 ('History, Nation, Curriculum'), a feature of the Melbourne conference was its deliberate foregrounding of the historical imagination in curriculum inquiry. This was seen as particularly important in the Australian context, as originally an outpost of empire and later a settler nation-continent in its own right, endeavouring to better understand its distinctive location in the world and concomitant challenges of identity and history, dispossession and reparation. Hence a number of presentations at the conference addressed the History curriculum (and not only by Australians, it must be said), although that aspect is not represented here. Curriculum history as a distinctive genre of curriculum inquiry in its own right didn't figure as much as we had anticipated, although there were various manifestations of the historical emphasis in Reconceptualist work, particularly regarding autobiography and (to some extent) psychoanalysis. The emphasis on *nation*—the national provenance of curriculum work and inquiry—was certainly much in evidence, not only in presentations on the still relatively recent 'local' Australian Curriculum, but also with reference to curriculum and schooling in other countries. Hence the thesis that curriculum activity more generally remains more or less nation-centric was sustained, overall.

This section opens with Bill Green's account of curriculum history as a distinctive form of scholarship, with regard to both traditional history of education and curriculum inquiry (Chapter 12). Green draws on poststructuralist theory and philosophy, and notions of discourse and materiality, to outline what might be involved in researching so-called progressive education in Australia—clearly a transnational phenomenon. Following on from this account are chapters from Brazil, Canada and

Luxembourg. Rita de Cássia Prazeres Frangella (Chapter 13) looks at literacy policy in recent Brazilian curriculum developments, and the relationship between curriculum and literacy from a policy perspective. This chapter complements accounts presented elsewhere, on curriculum debates in Brazil (Chapter 17) and more generally in Chile and Argentina (Chapters 4 and 10). Michael Corbett (Chapter 14) seeks to rethink notions of ‘place’ in recent curriculum inquiry, drawing on his own work in rural education and educational sociology, introducing a scalar view of situatedness, and drawing on recent social and cultural theory by Bhabha, Haraway and Latour. His is arguably a distinctively Canadian perspective, however, not simply because he references the Canadian communication scholar Harold Innes but also, and more importantly, because his account emerges from due consideration of landscape and territory, indigeneity and dispossession, identity and history, in the course of which he puts forward Latour’s evocative notion of the ‘terrestrial’. The section concludes with Sabrina Sattler’s historical exploration of curriculum development in Luxembourg (Chapter 15), indicating how that country’s striking trilingualism plays out in ongoing struggles over identity and diversity. It is therefore a good example of the way in which nation, language and education come together in transnational curriculum inquiry, complicating the ‘one nation/one language’ ideology that still characterises much public and professional debate.

Section 4 (‘Curriculum Challenges for the Future’) concludes the volume with four chapters, each addressed to particular issues which we see as presenting important challenges for the field. The first (Chapter 16), by American scholar Patrick Roberts, seeks to expand the way in which ‘internationalisation’ has been considered to date, perhaps more particularly in the Anglo-American scene. He proposes shifting from ‘complicated conversation’ as an organising metaphor to something more appropriate and generative, and to this end he puts forward intriguing notions of ‘distal confabulation’ and ‘transnational literacy’, aligning more with work associated with the Global South—that is, thinking South. There are links to be made back to Johnson-Mardones’s account (Chapter 4), which similarly seeks to unsettle current notions of ‘internationalisation’. This is followed by a chapter by Veronica Borges and Alice Casimiro Lopes on teacher education and curriculum policy/politics in Brazil (Chapter 17). What is interesting here is the explicit and focused use of the philosophical work of Derrida and Laclau—a theoretical orientation to be observed of South American curriculum inquiry

more generally (e.g. Macedo, 2011). Hence reading this chapter back to others written from South America, by Frangella (Brazil) and also albeit differently Morelli (Argentina), as well as Johnson-Mardones (Chile), provides insight into a different form of curriculum thought than is common elsewhere, in Australia and New Zealand, for example, or in the UK. Somewhat differently again, Lucinda McKnight's reconceptualist engagement with curriculum design (Chapter 18) is informed by feminism and posthumanism, as well as drawing widely on curriculum theory. Writing from Australia, she challenges the rationalism evident in current-traditional work in curriculum design, seeing it as both modernist and masculinist. Signalling thus a shift in terms of curriculum form as well as, and as much as, curriculum content, she includes a section presented provocatively in poetic mode, thereby pointing to the value of art-based work as an alternative form of expression in curriculum inquiry. Finally, John Morgan (Chapter 19) foregrounds the challenges associated with climate change and the Anthropocene in arguing that the school curriculum as currently constituted, and conventionally understood, is locked into a 'carbon-based' mindset that is now proving to be profoundly limited and limiting. He offers a radically 'post-industrial' perspective on curriculum and knowledge from Aoteroa New Zealand, suggesting that school subjects themselves need to be reconfigured so as to better represent the new lifeworld emerging in the twenty-first century. With links to be made back to Corbett's account (Chapter 14) of ecological damage and new imaginings of place, a crucial issue is thereby put on the agenda of transnational curriculum inquiry—the urgency of global environmental crisis and change, and a concomitant call for action. Perhaps it goes without saying that we see all these various challenges as opportunities too.

A final note, then. We offer this book to you, our reader(s), in the hope that you will find in it not only an invitation to, and a rich resource for, understanding curriculum, worldwide, but also—and very importantly—a provocation to curriculum praxis. We see the various challenges offered across this book as welcome opportunities for learning, for changing ourselves *and* the circumstances we find ourselves in, together, in the only world we have available to us.

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PART I

Decolonising the Curriculum



CHAPTER 2

Development, Decolonisation and the Curriculum: New Directions for New Times?

Crain Soudien

INTRODUCTION

While decolonisation is not a new idea, recent events around the world have significantly raised its prominence in discussions about what we teach and how we teach in the contemporary university. These events—most notably the #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) and #FeesMustFall student protests in South Africa, which erupted for three years between 2015 and 2017, and the Black Lives Matter protests in the United States which sprang up after the brutal killing of black men in the United States—brought, not for the first time, of course, the intellectual legitimacy of the university sharply into focus. Animating the protests, especially in the South African context, were distinctly local social realities, such as the costs of higher education. Underpinning them, however, and so making

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the uprising significant much more widely, was a problematisation of the university's 'colonial' character and particularly its deployment behind the epistemological and ontological project of global whiteness. The students challenged the university's relevance for themselves as black people and for the project of social development. They questioned its ability to name and confront inequality and social exclusion. It had failed them and required radical transformation.

One of the #RMF's most strident demands was that their university, the University of Cape Town, should "[i]mplement a curriculum which critically centres Africa and the subaltern ... through addressing not only content but languages and methodologies of education and learning" (RhodesMust Fall, 2015, p. 6). Over a period of almost two years, marked by the occupations of university buildings, the cessation of teaching and learning on several campuses and physical confrontations with the police, the South African students brought the higher education system to a stand-still. Nothing less than its decolonisation, they said, would satisfy them. Significantly, two years later, in the closing years of the second decade of the twenty-first century, they were, for the most part, back in their classrooms. The campuses were relatively calm. Nobody, however, was under any illusion that the issues had gone away. The colonial genie had been released from the bottle. How to engage it was the question confronting many scholars, analysts, administrators and policy-makers, and also members of the broad public. Emerging from it, and still in progression, was a feverish debate about the place, role and potential of the South African university in the first instance and of the larger idea of the 'the university'.

The purpose of this chapter is to work critically with this South African decolonial moment in higher education. It asks what insights the South African iteration of this discussion bring to the questions raised by the decolonial critique and how this discussion is of relevance for debates about curriculum transformation. How do the issues raised in this particular development in South Africa bear on discussions about curricula that are concerned with and about exclusion, dignity, recognition, justice and, critically, empowerment? Four key positions are identified in the South African discussion, namely *Transformation by Detachment*, *Transformation by Inclusion*, *Transformation by Enlargement* and *Transformation by Critical Appropriation*. What these positions illuminate and occlude for the South African situation, in the first instance, and the wider global

context in which we find ourselves, in the second, is important to make sense of.

In exploring these positions, it is important to acknowledge their embeddedness in and alignment with the decolonial movement's basic propositions as they relate to the politics of knowledge, namely,

- A rejection of the hubris of modernity, essentially that it provides for the world its defining logic for development. Central to this logic are notions of the nation-state, the incontrovertibility of capitalism, the precedence of western science over all other forms of knowledge and the priority of individualistic understandings of self over alternative—collective and communal—pathways towards and expressions of subjectivisation and subjecthood.
- Resistance against the premise of the inevitability of modernity—that the logics of development, as a result of this inevitability, tends towards the self-correction of global systems of governance, economic management and cultural practice to the homeostasis inherent in modernism (see Richards, 2011, p. 3).
- Awareness of how the African university has been used for the imperial project of global dominance. It began, as Mahmood Mamdani (2019, p. 17) observed, "... as a colonial project—a top-down modernist project whose ambition was the conquest of society".
- That racialisation sits at the core of the project of modernity with whiteness as the ontological benchmark for defining the human subject.

In terms of a wider politics of knowledge, while there might exist a relatively strong consensus around these propositions in progressive circles, decoloniality/decolonialism/decolonisation is viewed with suspicion in mainstream academia. While this approach enjoys some visibility in philosophical and particularly sociology of knowledge circles, it sits on the margins of the social sciences and humanities. It has not received the affirmation enjoyed by other critical theories of power, such as post-structuralism or feminism. This marginality is regrettable. It is regrettable because we have, in the discussion that decoloniality provokes, a powerful re-articulation and elaboration of, for instance, feminism's *cri de coeur* of the entanglement of the personal and the political. While we need to be attentive to the distinct positions and accents that we are hearing in the

decolonisation debate, it is the critical deconstruction of the modernist project as it takes us to the brink—the brink of a world that, on multiple fronts, will not be able to sustain itself—that demands our attention.¹

The positions examined here, as will be seen, are based on and reflect varying degrees of awareness of and sensitivity of these assumptions and the politics of knowledge against which they work. They see themselves as explicit interventions in this politics and the social and cultural praxes that emanate from these assumptions. Critically, what gives them their distinctiveness is their explanation of themselves within the project of modernity and their relationship to it.

Important also for the argument developed in this chapter is having a sense of the place of South Africa for the global discussion. There are, obviously, particularly South African dynamics in the positions one sees here. I argue, however, that the politics and sociology of South Africa encompass and provide for us, in ways in which only a handful of other countries in the world might provide, the possibility, indeed viability, of developing alternative ontological and epistemological imaginaries out of, away from and distinct from those offered to us by dominance. In relation to this dominance, I suggest that there are in the South African discussion important possibilities for engaging with the complexity of modernity.

DECOLONISATION AND DECOLONIALITY

Who then are these Southern Decolonialists, as we might call them? They are a mixture of scholars, activists and commentators who are strongly aware of the current conversation on decolonisation in both North and Latin America. Where the accent in the Latin American version of decolonisation is not unmindful of the ontological—the questions of being—it is pre-eminent amongst the Southern Decolonialists. They have almost as a point of departure Boaventura de Sousa Santos' (2007) description of dominant knowledge as “abyssal”, as dividing the world into ‘humans’ and ‘sub-humans’.

What the *Southern Decolonialists* agree about, as the brief summary of the basic propositions off which they operate suggests, is important to

¹Emphasising the gravity of the moment, Yuval Noah Harari (2018, p. 5) says that the world is in a “state of shock”: “In 1938 humans were offered three global stories to choose from, in 1968 just two, in 1998 a single story seemed to prevail; in 2018 we are down to zero”.

recapitulate. Their agreement pivots on an analysis of what is wrong in the world—that the advent of colonialism, the particular stage reached by globalisation in the nineteenth century, brought to the world a totalising logocentrism. A logocentric view, the Oxford Concise Dictionary tells us, consists of “the words and language (that are used) as a fundamental expression of an external reality” (Soanes & Stevenson, 2008, p. 828). The logocentrism of the European Enlightenment gave the world its template for thinking about what it meant to be human. Rosi Braidotti’s (2013, p. 13) book, *The Posthuman*, explicitly articulates how this template functions:

At the start of it all there is He: the classical ideal of ‘Man’, formulated first by Protagoras as the ‘measure of all things’, later renewed in the Italian Renaissance as a universal model and represented in Leonardo da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man. An ideal of bodily perfection which, in keeping with the classical dictum *mens sano in corpore sano*, doubles up as a set of mental, discursive and spiritual values.... This model sets standards not only for individuals, but also for their cultures.

In agreement, the Southern Decolonialists:

- Reject the marginalisation of the African voice
- Reject the positioning of Africa as a “place to learn about and not from” (Hendricks & Leibowitz, 2016) and
- Reject the objectification of Africa as a site for Western scrutiny (Garuba, 2015 and see also Kamanzi, 2016).

They stand for, together, the urgency of “recogni[sing] and according value to the [knowledge of the] previously disadvantaged ...” (Garuba, 2015, para 19). Describing the agreement, Essop (2016, para 17), explains that “[d]ecolonisation is first and foremost about inclusion, recognition and affirmation” (Essop, 2016, para 5).

How inclusion, recognition and affirmation work does not enjoy the same agreement. There is disagreement about who should be included and affirmed in the decolonial community. How the idea of being human should be engaged, as a consequence, has become contentious. This contention essentially produces two distinct approaches. The first is based

on a particular interpretation of black consciousness.² It is referred to here as *New Black Consciousness*. In this approach, a single strand, described here as *Transformation by Detachment*, has come to predominate. The second approach, formed around both older and newer intellectual provocations on the African continent and in Europe, is an African humanist one and is most clearly articulated by scholars such as Prah (2017) and Mbembe (c.2016). In it are three positions: *Transformation by Inclusion*, *Transformation by Enlargement* and *Transformation by Critical Appropriation*. Important and very visible scholars such as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) fall between these two positions. He is drawn on frequently by activists in the first approach and is, himself, critical of elements of the work of people in the second, but agrees on key issues with the second group.

TRANSFORMATION BY DETACHMENT

The first approach, and that of Education by Detachment in particular, is, in some ways, the most visible in the South African setting in the current period. It found strong expression in recent higher education protests and in particular the #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) and #FeesMustFall (#FMF) campaigns. This approach is influenced by decoloniality scholars such as Ramon Grosfuegel (2011) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013).

The position that had developed during these protests—capturing the detachment view of the world—was that all the major institutions of colonialism, the schools and the universities in the main, were irredeemably tainted by their histories. What is required, goes the activist sentiment of this group, is a complete break from them. This position is related to but is not the same as Samir Amin’s ‘delinking’ argument.

Demonstrating this rupture view, and in the process explicitly taking position in relation to liberalism, the #RMF stated that “[o]ur freedom cannot be given to us. We must take it. Going forward, we will no longer compromise. Management is our enemy” (#RMF, 2015, p. 12). Their central purpose, they argue, is the disruption of all forms of *normal* engagement with the structures and the agents of normativity. Leigh-Ann

²These positions echo the tensions evident in the larger discussion taking place between and amongst scholars laying claim to post-structuralism, post-colonialism, decolonisation and decoloniality.

Naidoo (2016, para 8), an important spokesperson, explained their task as follows:

The first task in this hallucination has been to kill the fallacies of the present: to disavow, no to annihilate, the fantasy of the rainbow, the non-racial, even of liberation. The second task is to arrest the present. To stop it. To not allow it to continue to get away with itself for one more single moment. And when the status quo of the present is *shut down* the third task – and these have been the moments of greatest genius in student movement – is to open the door into another time. It is difficult to work on the future while the present continues apace. There has to be a measure of shut down in whatever form, for the future to be called.

Shut down is bringing to an end the transmission routes of dominance, and its production of *certainty* and *self-doubt*. Certainty is the emblematic characteristic of whiteness. Doubt—its very opposite—is that which belongs to blackness. Certainty is the capacity that individuals and groups come to own and display of never feeling any sense of anxiety about the symbolic and demonstrative appurtenances of their civilizational location, their ‘looks’, their aesthetic repertoires and their place in the cosmos. To them, ordained, falls the civilizational duty and obligation of leading the planet. Self-doubt is the very opposite of this. It is to always exist in a state of limbo, to never feel in control of oneself, to proceed through life in a state of neurotic self-denigration, to always, in the finish, feel inferior, ugly, ashamed and unwanted. This is captured by Biko (2004, p. 30):

One should not waste time here dealing with manifestations of material want of the black people. A vast literature has been written on this problem. Possibly a little should be said about spiritual poverty. What makes the black man fail to tick? Is he convinced of his own accord of his inabilities? Does he lack in his genetic make-up that rare quality that makes a man willing to die for the realisation of his aspirations? Or is he simply a defeated person?...

The existential angst in this position is important to work with. It brings to the discussion of inequality an important psychological perspective. Two issues are crucial in this psychological moment. The first is the issue which Education by Detachment explicitly brings to the discussion—that of *black pain*. Black pain is presented here as the civilizational product of racism.

TRANSFORMATION BY INCLUSION

The scholars in this second group of intellectuals historically have been at the forefront of the thinking about decolonisation. Amongst them are the leading philosophers on the African continent, Achille Mbembe and Kwesi Prah. They are fiercely critical of colonialism. Mbembe says, for example, "... [decolonisation] is the taking back of our humanity.... They are struggles to repossess, to take back, if necessary by force, that which is ours unconditionally and, as such, belongs to us" (Mbembe, c.2016, p. 12).

Mbembe's critique of colonialism is based on a distinct reading of the power of coloniality. In this dissection it is his explanation of the Anthropocene—the time we are in, now—which is crucial. The moment of the Anthropocene is a moment, he explains, marked by colonial knowledge systems and particularly colonial theories of origins structured around etymologies, frameworks and classifications which produce, in the first place, in the tradition of Linnaeus, global taxonomies—systems of classification of organisms—of life and, building on this, in the logic of Darwin and his ideas about 'survival', theories of the 'natural' precedence of some life forms over others.

The critical and distinguishing move which the Inclusionists make is to develop an analysis of inequality which goes beyond racial inequality. In this, towards the project of building a just world, the Inclusionists are, and remain anxious about the re-inscription of the most powerful aspect of modernity's knowledge frameworks, particularly their classificatory order of ideas of race and tribe. Prah (2017, p. 1), for example, argued against the racial ways in which the idea of Africa had been taken up: "the Africanization or localization (as it is sometimes called) of positions which were previously held by colonial personnel does not in itself necessarily translate as outstanding progress. It must be remembered that Africanization wherever it has been pursued on this continent is a policy which mainly affects the fortunes of the elite".

In this, in contrast to the Detachment position, Inclusionists like Mbembe make clear that they are not against European knowledge: "it is singularly complex. It contains within itself the resources of its own refutation... [it] can allow us to see ourselves clearly, always in relationship to ourselves and to other selves in the universe, non-humans included" (Mbembe, c.2016, p. 23). This decolonial position, as a

consequence, projected the idea of inclusion, of recognition and affirmation, beyond modernity's binary distinction between and hierarchalisation of life into humans and non-humans: Being in the world, explained Mbembe, involved the recognition and affirmation of deep democracy. The category of human was no longer sovereign. Humans shared the world with other forms of being:

Our world is populated by a variety of nonhuman actors. To reopen the future of our planet to all who inhabit it, we will have to learn how to share it again among the humans, but also between the humans and the non-humans. (Mbembe, c. 2016, p. 24 and pp. 26–27)

EDUCATION BY ENLARGEMENT

An important contribution to the decolonisation discussion has been provided by the Ugandan/South African scholar Catherine Odora-Hoppers and the Centre for Development Education which she established at the University of South Africa. The contribution made by Odora Hoppers (SARCHI Chair, 2009b and see also Odora-Hoppers and Richards 2013; SARCHI Chair, 2009a) precedes the 2015 student revolt. She critically, however, comes to emphasise the issue of the marginalisation of indigenous knowledges and the importance of integrating displaced knowledges into the repertoire of knowledge traditions that are available in the world. Her approach to decolonisation is in alignment and agreement with the larger decolonial critique:

The Western package ... is inadequate to the task of bringing up children who have other frames of reference. The system as we have it is too limited for the drama that confronts a growing African child ... No one has complete answers.... [The problem with Eurocentric knowledge was that] it bites a little piece of what is possible; it spits out and ignores the rest. (SARCHI Chair, c.2009b: n.p. numbers)

Odora-Hoppers' analysis pivots on the hubris of Western ways of knowing—the conceit that it constitutes the answer to the world's problems. It is this assessment that leads her 'No one has complete answers' response to the methodological position of *enlargement*, as distinct from detachment:

It's about how your one-tenth of the solution can link with that one-tenth and that two-fifths and so on, (about how quantum physics can be integrated with the knowledge of) ... the rural child, barefoot and in tattered clothes who has a botanical garden coming right to her doorstep. She is naturally evolving inside a system that is integrated with nature, with a grounding in plant, weather and soil systems. Western science needs to build on the knowledge the African child already has by linking up with the child's lived world. (SARCHI Chair, c.2009b: n.p.)

The methodology for this is radical transdisciplinarity. Radical transdisciplinarity includes the full range of critical thought available to human beings. What colonial knowledge forms did, she argued, like Mbembe, were to “dig [them]sel[ves] into silo[s]... [and so] ... los[t] the capability to converse with other [forms of knowledge]” (ibid).

And so, she argued, what was now needed, was not so much to rewrite the Western script but to ‘enlarge’ it so that Africa too has a voice. The result is that new theoretical and conceptual advances are introduced which, in turn, help to provide more nuanced conceptions and interpretations of hitherto poorly understood dimensions of livelihood in the African context. These include expanding the understanding of innovation from only scientific laboratories and the related economic parameters, to notions such as ‘social innovations’, ‘cultural capital’, ‘innovative practices in relation to livelihoods’, ‘innovations from below’, the ‘social good’ and the ‘commons’. It calls for revolutions not only in technology, but also in the way we think about issues. It furthermore enables the introduction of dynamic conceptual reversals that give dignity to rural people.

EDUCATION BY CRITICAL APPROPRIATION

Less visible in the decolonial discourse but significant all the same is the work of the scholar Premesh Lalu (2019) of the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) at the University of the Western Cape.

The central plank in Lalu's (2019, p. 39) argument is that the modern university is “marred by a seemingly intractable epistemic impasse”. This impasse, he argues, has led to its objectification as a sign of imperial ethnography. To undo this ethnographic grip in which it finds itself, liberals have appealed to the university's distinguishing mark for itself—the mark of ‘reasoning’. Lalu's argument is that ‘reason’ in the modern

university has been encoded in the idea of race, or through its proxies such as culture. Critiquing the use to which reasoning is used in the modern university through the invocation of scholars of the body and its politics, such as Foucault (1969), he argues that:

... what Foucault obscures in the rendering of the problem of neo-liberalism is that history, in so far as it is understood as a project that rhymed with historiography and that promised to free the subject from the inevitable cataclysm that waited it, *worked to further block desire by leaving race to be dealt with by the agency of reason – if you like by university discourse. Not only was this a refusal to think about history in South Africa as ultimately a battle about historiography, but also a refusal to analyse the return of the repressed in the historical account of the becoming post-apartheid of South Africa.*

At the core of the questioning, and this is the major contribution of the CHR, is what Lalu describes as the racial remainder. ‘Race’ remains the medium through which power is analysed and so is reaffirmed, even as dominance seeks to disavow its own power.

Lalu’s approach bears directly on the decolonial discussion—its danger of recuperating the terms of imperialism’s social—and the suggestion that there are other vantage points, other than imperialism’s category of ‘race’ from which to think about what it means to be human. The challenge it produces, he suggests, is, in particular, the space and place of the post-apartheid. At issue are the constitutive and founding exclusions of universal categories: “... while one can acknowledge, without seeking revenge, what one owes to Europe, one can at the same time also investigate the histories that provided the grounds on which European thought was situated and translated in our pasts”. The contribution of the CHR is to do precisely this, but also more. It is to explore the possibility of explanations that are yet to come. These are beyond ‘race’. They pivot on making the university in the South a site for “inquiring ... what we should be desiring and whether it is possible to find an alignment between what we desire and what we should desire. Stated differently, can the South offer a new perspective on the relation of responsibility to freedom?” (Lalu, 2019, p. 46). Critical here is what he is referring to in his understanding of desire. Desire here, as the animating impulse of the university, is to know. When knowing is encoded in ‘race’ or racial knowing, the university is trapped in the coils of dominance. The southern university,

Lalu argues, has to break this impasse. To be attended to, therefore, is not simply the issues of access, but the modes of reasoning typified by the modern university.

CONCLUSION

The contribution of these Southern Decolonialists is consistent, in important respects, with what colleagues elsewhere in the world are saying. It introduces, however, important new insights into the discussion. What are these?

The Detachment Decolonialists' most important contribution is their focus on racism as a distinguishing signifier of imperial power. We have in this contribution a profound existential indictment of the zeitgeist of modernity—its infiltration into and permeation of the period of the last century and a half with ontologies of racial conceit and racial subjection. The privilege of entitlement, recognition and affordance to the pain of othering, marginalisation and systematic denial (Soudien, 2017). To the many other characterisations which we might make of the current era—individualism, narcissism, excess consumerism and self-servingness—this particular group of Southern Decolonialists also brings in the condition of existential woundedness. The woundedness is embodied—broken black bodies. The scale of the civilisational challenge, the Detachment scholars charge, is evident in the almost wilful blindness of those who claim that their education enables them to see. In response, the Detachment scholars provide the anguished prolegomenon to the world: “Black man, you are on your own”, and with this the enraged battle-cry “that we shall burn the whole thing to the ground and start all over again. We are better off with nothing”.

The African Humanists in some ways are alert to this apocalyptic view, and offer their response. The strength of their view is on the deconstruction and analysis of the problems of the times. The problem for them is modernity's logocentrism—‘race’—and the way in which it has come to be normatively constituted in the everyday. Central to this normative constitutiveness is its framing of what it means to be human and the imposition of the ideal around the figure of white male, able-bodiedness—Braidotti's ‘vitruvian male’—projected in the current period in middle-classed exemplary masculinity. At the core of this logocentrism is, in the first instance, racial classification, and in the second, patriarchy. African Humanism's theoretical innovation is its demythologising of the

priority of the human and an invitation to think of knowledge differently—less human-centred, and certainly in much broader epistemological scopes. This suggests not simply the need for transdisciplinarity but also the necessity of thinking beyond the boundaries of what are thought of as ‘western’, ‘southern’ and however else the boundaries of knowledge are circumscribed and policed.

Implicit in these emphases, the first on racism and the second on ‘race’, are important indications of the differences amongst the Southern Decolonialists. The criticism the African Humanists make of the Detachment position is that, in working with the problem of racism, the Detachment view fetishizes the black body—“a re-racialisation has occurred”, argues Jeff Rudin (2017), and as agreed to by Prah (2017) and Mbembe (2016, 2017). Their concern is that the Detachment view, in its rejection of whiteness, ends up in an essentialist caricaturing of the idea of ‘race’—essentialised white depravity and essentialised black virtue.

The Detachment view of the African Humanists, however, is also important to note. They accuse the Humanists, and particularly Mbembe, of depoliticising the crisis of racism. This depoliticisation, Detachment critics argue, takes place through Mbembe’s theoretical focus on the problems of the planet, through his shifting of the gaze away from the plight of black people. They describe his approach as a liberal ecological one.³ This criticism is interesting. It is in one sense problematic but in another, not. It is problematic in so far as it loses the opportunity of locating racism against black people in a larger systemic analysis of the problems of ‘empire’. That ‘empire’ is a powerful force behind several challenges the world is experiencing is important in terms of understanding how multiple challenges that are being experienced are related to one another.

It is also insightful, however. While Mbembe (c.2016, p. 23) helpfully explains that the challenge that arises is that of developing a perspective “which can allow us to see ourselves clearly, always in relationship to ourselves and to other selves in the universe, non-humans included”, he insufficiently engages with the emotional weight of racism. He places all his hope for engaging empire, it can be suggested, in the power of reasoning. It is his clear-eyed analysis, his conceptual unmasking of coloniality, that will move the world to a better position. Needed in that

³This position was articulated at a lecture I gave on decolonialism at the University of Pretoria in May 2017.

clarity, it can be argued, reformulating Lalu's focus on 'race', is a specific acknowledgement of the pain experienced as a result of racism.

How this discussion may advance, I suggest, is through an attempt to understand pain intellectually and emotionally, in education terms and in the politics of education.

The African Humanists help us to locate and explain this pain intellectually. It provides the frameworks through which one can place racism and its abjection of the black body in its wider ecology. The Detachment scholars help us to understand it emotionally. Bringing together the two views of Detachment and African Humanism makes possible a way of talking into the past and into the future.

It is out of this coming-together that suggestions for a new enlarged curricular agenda present themselves. Such an agenda, it seems, would benefit from working with the general features of power and its articulations in modern forms of knowledge. It would need to be able to historicise the ways in which dominant forms of knowledge have come into being and arrived at their logocentric presumptions and, critically, to not simply acknowledge those logocentricisms, but to deal with their effects. This, the African Humanists' approach, helps us to deal with the issue in informative ways. Learn, they tell us, in wide and deep ways. Learn, as Ballim (2018, p. 140) says, through "expos[ing] [ourselves] to as many ways of knowing as possible".

As they are projected by the African Humanists, these ways of knowing are, however, understood largely as mental attributes, as modes of reasoning. The moment calls for more. Our ways of knowing must include also the affective, the emotional. This, as the Detachment scholars are showing us, is the largely unspoken urgency of the moment. How does one speak in a classroom to the rage that accompanies and gives expression to the pain? Many children, whatever one might think of their emotional states of mind, bring into the learning experience complex fragilities.

It is here that we have access and recourse to, of course, the long experiences of counsellors working with trauma in all of its variety. The trauma of death, loss, injury, etc., is familiar to educators. But it is not built into our pedagogical and curricular repertoires. Our work on inclusion, the developments we have made in multicultural education, are helpful. But even they now have to be elaborated to engage directly with the lived pain which issues out of the structures of our everyday experiences. We need to teach wider and deeper ways of knowing, but we also need to

teach with compassion and care. A way forward, it is suggested here, is in engaging in explicitly deliberative ways with the positions offered by these Southern Decolonialists.

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Smoke and Mirrors: Indigenous Knowledge in the School Curriculum

Georgina Tuari Stewart

INTRODUCTION: RESEARCHING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

This chapter explores the policy and practice of including Māori knowledge in the school curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand. Such a question is complex and context-dependent, so the details differ in each setting, though similar patterns are seen in other countries, especially Australia, Canada and the United States (collectively known as the CANZUS countries—see Bell, 2014). Similar patterns are also found in sectors beyond schooling, particularly tertiary education. This topic is important for curriculum theorists in Aotearoa New Zealand, where education policy is increasingly moving in this direction, in attempts to overcome inequity for Māori and Pacific students in compulsory schooling. Conveniently for the neoliberal state, the policy of including Māori knowledge in the curriculum helps transfer responsibility for Māori student outcomes to

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individual teachers and schools, by attributing Māori success to culturally responsive pedagogy (as set out in policy—see Ministry of Education, 2011). Under the influence of multiple policy levers that sometimes work against each other, the ideas of ‘Māori knowledge in the curriculum’ and ‘culturally responsive pedagogy for Māori students’ have tended to merge, adding to the evident confusion. Teachers are being placed under enormous pressure as a result of policies based on these ill-defined ideas. This chapter critiques Michael Young’s (2013) curriculum theory from a Māori-centric perspective, and uses it to unpack the thinking behind these policies, and show how they can easily go wrong. Added motivation to critique Young’s ideas from a Māori perspective comes from their adoption by some academics in Aotearoa New Zealand, most notably by Elizabeth Rata (2012), in her debatable campaign against Māori education.

The phrase ‘smoke and mirrors’ comes from the days of phantasmagoria and refers to an illusion for conjuring up apparitions, but today it is a metaphor for deceptive or insubstantial explanations. This image fits the seductive but slippery notion of including indigenous knowledge in the school curriculum, especially in teaching science. Yet this is an increasingly popular approach in Aotearoa New Zealand, as a way to fulfil expectations on schools and teachers to demonstrate culturally responsive pedagogy. Other theoretical apparitions emerge below, such as the ‘crisis’ in curriculum theory conjured up by Michael Young (2013), whose article is the focus of the next section. There are, however, additional reasons why ‘smoke’ and ‘mirrors’ are fitting title images for this chapter.

In Aotearoa New Zealand for over 30 years, since the mid-1980s inception of neoliberal influences, bicultural education policy has been used as a ‘smokescreen’ to distract attention away from wealth inequalities, and make individual schools and teachers responsible for Māori student outcomes (Lourie, 2016). The New Zealand Treasury (1987) reasoned that Māori student underachievement was caused by their lack of cultural self-esteem, due to several generations of Māori having been forcibly assimilated to the dominant settler culture, with schools playing an important role in the process. This ‘lack of self-esteem’ explanation conveniently overlooks ethnic wealth inequity, with Māori families concentrated in the lowest bands of the socioeconomic scales. Educational success has reliably been shown to be directly proportional to family income, so the statistical relative poverty of the Māori population

is effectively guaranteed to produce inequitable school outcomes. Bicultural education policy has therefore been useful to the state as part of a ‘politics of distraction’:

It continues to be the case that 30 years of bicultural education policy has not yet solved the persistent problem of the educational underachievement of Māori students in the compulsory school sector (Lourie, 2016, p. 643).

The attempt to include Māori knowledge in the school curriculum is like a mirror, in the sense that it tells the mainstream more about itself than about it does about Māori. This is the key point about interculturalism: whether bi- or multi-culturalism, it breaks the shackles of monoculturalism and allows us to ‘see’ our own culture, which monoculturalism renders invisible (Stewart, 2018b). The next section ties my work into the current field of curriculum theory, as represented by Young (2013). I present a critique of Young’s article from my own perspective on curriculum theory, based on over two decades of teaching and research on the science curriculum for Māori-medium schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (Stewart, 2010a).

‘WORKING THE RUINS’ OF CURRICULUM THEORY: RESPONDING TO MICHAEL YOUNG (YOUNG 2013)

The scholarship of Michael F. D. Young is foundational in curriculum theory and educational sociology, beginning with his seminal work *Knowledge and Control* (M. Young, 1971) and continuing in recent articles such as Young (2013), which recommends a knowledge-based approach to ‘overcome the crisis’ in curriculum theory. Young’s (2013) article is an interesting example of contemporary curriculum scholarship against which to clarify my own position as an indigenous Māori curriculum theorist, revisiting his arguments and noting our points of agreement and divergence. Young is an authoritative commentator on curriculum theory, and his reasoning is based in a comprehensive grasp of the field, from his lifetime of work within it. On certain points I agree with the substance of what he says, but not the slant that he gives it. I agree with most of his main conclusions, but not with all his reasons for reaching those conclusions, as the following discussion highlights.

Young (2013) starts with an overview of curriculum theory, as he understands it—its origins, models, and current status. He argues that today, curriculum theorists have neglected their key task concerning access

to knowledge through the school curriculum, a neglect he terms a “crisis” (p. 103). Young traces how the field of curriculum theory has shifted over time, from the original era of the “technicist model” of curriculum, with its “rigidities and aridities” (p. 104) associated with “Bobbitt, Tyler and Taba” (p. 104), towards “ideology critique” (p. 105), associated with the work of Michael Apple, William Pinar, and others. Their critique “made explicit the way that *curricula are not given but always embody prevailing power relations*” (p. 104, emphasis added), which Young describes as a focus on “knowledge of the powerful” (p. 104). Young’s concern is that, in that shift, curriculum theory has tended to lose sight of “its primary object—*what is taught and learned in school*” (p. 105, original emphasis). As he writes:

A focus on ‘knowledge of the powerful’, despite its strengths, almost inevitably shifts the analysis from what goes on in schools to the distribution of power in the wider society and offers little either to teachers or to political movements seeking a more equitable approach to the curriculum. It made the assumption that the existing curriculum, based on ‘knowledge of the powerful’ could be replaced as a result of political changes—without providing any indication as to what such a new curriculum might be like. As politicians have found, in contexts not limited to education, on the few occasions in history when the Left have gained power, without such alternatives, they are reduced to some variant of the old models that they had previously opposed. (Young, 2013, pp. 104–105)

Young’s first sentence, above, offers sound but unoriginal critique of the critical curriculum tradition. A weakness of any critical theory is its tendency to point out what is wrong without offering workable alternatives (Young, 1989). His second point is sledgehammer-like, since there is a diverse range of thinking within the traditions of critical curriculum studies, but in some cases (including in Māori science curriculum) the idea that key curriculum knowledge can be replaced at will has certainly been proposed, and this idea needs to be unpacked and challenged. Young’s third sentence is one of several points in the article where he points the finger at ‘the Left’ but, ignoring that, the point about being ‘reduced to some variant of the old models’ certainly chimes true with my experience and observations of the field of critical curriculum research and scholarship.

One basic problem with Young’s summary of curriculum studies is that a technicist model cannot, on principle, be replaced by one based

on ideology-critique, because they are of different logical orders. It follows that we have never transcended the original era of technicist models of curriculum, based on modernist theories of knowledge: an argument articulated by Robert Young in his valuable book on critical theory of education (Young, 1989); and one that also explains why Science curriculum is so resistant to reform (Blades, 1997). Michael Young is of course correct to point to problems relating to knowledge in the curriculum, but his ‘solution’ of what he calls “powerful knowledge” is illusory. His ideas about “powerful knowledge” are far less contentious than he seems to believe. Has any curriculum studies scholar ever advocated denying a child access to key knowledge such as literacy and numeracy through schooling? Young’s simplistic depictions of both “knowledge of the powerful” and “powerful knowledge” generate a reified binary (Gasché, 2007), which is inevitably an unsound basis for discussing the question of knowledge in the curriculum.

The above reasoning shows why it is unfair of Young to accuse curriculum theorists of neglecting their duties, because he is presenting a philosophical conundrum as if it were a clear-cut choice, or a matter of moral fibre on the part of the scholars concerned. This confusion seems to explain why Young blames ‘the Left’ for the curriculum debates: it is the only rationale left open, without seriously accounting for the effects of the seismic shifts in philosophy that have taken place in the last fifty years. These philosophical shifts have had ripple effects throughout the entire academy, including Education and its sub-disciplines, and in particular curriculum theory, given that the school curriculum is an inheritor of the Enlightenment ‘knower’ in relation to knowledge. Young’s notions of “powerful knowledge” and “knowledge of the powerful” are inadequate representations of the real-world contexts of school curriculum, in all its remarkable complexity, so it follows that his ensuing points built on this binary are also skewed.

Nor do I consider it adequate for Young to argue that politics has displaced theory of knowledge in the evolution he outlines from technicist models of curriculum to ideology-critique. This is because his argument overlooks the fact that everything in education is ‘always already’ political, given his first principle of curriculum theory, highlighted above (“curricula are not given but always embody prevailing power relations” [p. 104]). Young is correct, in that epistemology, or theory of knowledge, became much more complicated after WWII, in a gradual, cumulative

process that has involved a loss of confidence in the modernist and Eurocentric traditions, especially in knowledge-based contexts such as school curriculum (Williams, 2001). This lack of confidence is manifested in what Young describes as “a fear of knowledge” (p. 107), commonly encountered in contemporary schools, and an example ‘manifesto’ written by a school to declare its intent to teach knowledge, appended to Young (2013). It is certainly sad to see schools come to this; to feel the need to write such a document. Young is surely correct to say that “curriculum theory needs a theory of knowledge” (p. 107)—otherwise, how could it be curriculum theory? My point is that Young need not blame ‘the Left’ for the curriculum debates, but rather must take heed of the downstream effects of the knowledge debates within disciplinary philosophy—how changes in epistemology have changed the entire academy AND the world at large, including politics and schools, and how those knowledge debates have ended up destabilising, but not replacing, traditional models of curriculum theory.

Young’s reasoning actually demonstrates my main point: we have NOT transcended technicist models of curriculum, as he shows when he points out how his opponents invariably settle for “some variant of the old models”. This acknowledgement that the school curriculum has not changed in essential outline, despite years of work in critical curriculum traditions, underlines the fact that the concept of curriculum is, itself, an outcome of the technicist way of thinking about knowledge, and gives the lie to the idea that changing the knowledge taught in the curriculum can overcome social injustice. As Young succinctly remarks, “no curriculum can, on its own, reduce educational inequalities” (p. 114). This is a point that I pick up again below.

Young outlines two consequences of what he styles as curriculum theory’s “loss of object”: First, that it has opened the field up to:

a whole range of writers in philosophy, literature and cultural studies who raise serious questions about culture and identity in modern society but have little specific to say about the school curriculum. The second consequence is that governments and curriculum designers—at least in the United Kingdom, pay less and less attention to curriculum theorists as specialists in the curriculum field. (Young, 2013, p. 105)

Here I share the frustration that Young seems to express in the first sentence, though deflecting his complaint about recent diverse curriculum

scholars, recognising that I am probably among those to whom Young refers. The curriculum research literature is replete to overflowing with theoretical excursions about what must change in what is taught in schools, but not nearly enough research is available that demonstrates examples of successful curriculum reform. Yet great expectations are placed on schools to achieve social change (see the following section, below). It is also easy to agree with Young's second consequence, since educational research seems invariably at risk of disconnection from national curriculum policy processes. Nevertheless, Young's 'crisis' is more like an apparition, conjured up seemingly in order to act as rationale for advocating his "knowledge-based approach to the curriculum" (pp. 109–111), which seems to be a case of 'back to the future', based as it is on the standard principles of curriculum theory.

In this article (as elsewhere), Young recants his own radical past, explicitly referring to having "spent too much time on the political question" (p. 107). He takes a defeatist position, advocating the traditional curriculum despite acknowledging its problems. "At least a knowledge-based curriculum will highlight and not mask the inequalities in our society as so called pre-vocational programmes invariably do" (Young, 2013, p. 115). This conclusion is ethically unsound, since it seems willing to sacrifice even more students to educational failure on the altar of curriculum purity. This statement also contradicts Young's professed social justice motivation in this article concerning the entitlement of all school students to access "powerful knowledge". Students who do not succeed at school do *not* access the "powerful knowledge" to which they are entitled, but instead learn powerful lessons about being failures. In a rather shocking admission, Young acknowledges this mass failure as "the inescapable practical dilemma of mass secondary education, at least in western capitalist societies" (p. 112), but this not only destroys his ethical position, it also reduces his entire argument to clarification of how he is using the phrase "epistemic access".

In his last section titled "Political objections", Young again names "the Left" and adds "the poststructuralists" as among those who oppose curriculum proposals based on disciplinary knowledge. This is because, Young asserts, they accept

by implication, the relativist argument that there is no such thing as 'powerful knowledge' that is represented by subjects which should therefore be the entitlement of all pupils to have access to. They assume that 'access

to subject knowledge' can be discarded as a priority for perhaps a third of each cohort by the age of 14 or 16 on the grounds that those pupils are not interested or find it too difficult or that it puts impossible demands on teachers. (p. 114)

This passage underlines the philosophical weakness of Young's argument. In the first sentence he invokes the familiar binary of universalism and relativism, much discussed in science education and other curriculum contexts (Siegel, 2001, 2002). In the second sentence, he presents a typical extreme version of the relativist position, while capturing the anxiety of classroom teachers made responsible for overcoming intransigent inequities created by macro-level socioeconomic processes (Thrupp, 2008). Contemporary curriculum theory is especially complex and vulnerable to such confusion, given the unresolved nature of the knowledge debate, which emerges in different domains with varying specific emphases. For some reason, many pro-universalism scholars such as Young almost always misrepresent their opponents' positions, as if they have either not read or not understood their work. This weakness is also demonstrated by Elizabeth Rata in relation to her critiques of Māori education (see Stewart & Devine, 2019). In reality, relativism is far more nuanced than Young admits, and ranges from weak to strong (Herrnstein Smith, 2005). Relativism objects to and seeks to ameliorate the imperialist consequences of universalism, since commitment to universalism ultimately denies the right to cultural difference, such as expressed in Māori identity politics (Walker, 2016). Unchecked, universalism readily slips towards cultural assimilation, which acts as cover for a form of political and philosophical supremacy. To address these imperialist weaknesses is not at all to discard the entire edifice of scientific and academic knowledge, nor to say that it can be replaced by other knowledge (such as Māori knowledge—depending on what we mean by this). Young seems to forget that a weak version of relativism is required in order to identify as Māori. His universalist arguments lead to cultural assimilation, which a Māori person experiences as annihilation of one's symbolic self. For this reason, critical Māori curriculum theorists—including me—sit to the relativist side of Young on the universalism-to-relativism theoretical continuum.

It is poignant to critique this article by an elder scholar who blames 'the Left' for curriculum debates, thereby revealing the influence of politics on his own thinking, while scolding curriculum scholars, in general,

for allowing politics to have too much influence in their field. The question of knowledge in the school curriculum is one of the most reflexive of all debates, and notwithstanding disagreements, it is vital to recognise the value of Young's work, thus evoking the post-structuralist metaphor of "working the ruins", used above in the section title (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). While I believe Young is basically correct to advocate for a curriculum based on disciplinary knowledge, I think he presents his argument back to front, because a curriculum not based on disciplinary knowledge is arguably not a 'curriculum' at all. To criticise the school curriculum because it sorts pupils according to their success at learning misses the point—this is what schools and curricula are designed to do. A more critical concept that sees 'curriculum' as the product of an underlying technocratic way of thinking about knowledge logically entails that 'curriculum knowledge' means the important knowledges required to function in society and achieve personal potential. The keys to this knowledge are often referred to as 'literacy and numeracy'—which I take to mean critical competence in reading and writing a range of textual and numerical information.

It makes sense to focus on Young's three gems of curriculum wisdom, which, taken together, provide a useful basis for discussing Māori knowledge in the curriculum in the next section. Young's three principles are:

- curricula are not given but always embody prevailing power relations
- curriculum theory needs a theory of knowledge
- no curriculum can, on its own, reduce educational inequalities (from Young, 2013).

MĀORI KNOWLEDGE IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Young's first principle encapsulates the essence of critical curriculum theory. Curricula are not 'given'—they are not natural or universal phenomena. Māori curriculum theory is a type of critical curriculum theory, and this principle applies to Māori education as much as any other type of education. Curricula always embody prevailing power relations, which means the ubiquitous influence of politics in education. This principle makes great sense, but only within the context of contemporary Western education: it would have little meaning, for example, within

a pre-European Māori community. Taken seriously, therefore, this principle challenges the conceptual coherence of the notion of a ‘Māori curriculum’—showing it to be a conundrum: an idea with contradictory aspects.

In terms of Young’s second principle, what theory of knowledge underpins the approach of including Māori knowledge in the curriculum? ‘Māori knowledge’ is a form of ‘indigenous knowledge’ from Aotearoa. Both terms are ‘umbrella’ terms, in the sense that they group together a range of disparate forms of culture: ‘indigenous knowledge’ is generic, but ‘Māori knowledge’ though relatively restricted in scope, also depends on the post-colonial ethnic category of ‘Māori’, which was invented in Aotearoa in about 1850, in response to the influx of British colonisers (Walker, 1989). Pre-European Māori identities (and therefore knowledges) depend on tribal kin groupings, and all things Māori have been under pressure from colonising forces for around 200 years. So the first difficult task is to define Māori knowledge, but the two above factors—its ‘umbrella’ (i.e. non-standard) nature, combined with 200-odd years of subjugation—mitigate against being able to do so satisfactorily in cultural terms OR to an acceptably ‘standardised’ degree, as required (for instance) for a national curriculum. Classroom teachers are expected to make learning objectives explicit for each lesson. What would explicit learning objectives look like for Māori knowledge, and how would teachers assess work based on Māori knowledge? These ‘thought experiments’ help to clarify the practical problems involved.

Māori knowledge is so different from standard curriculum knowledge that thinking of a curriculum based on Māori knowledge seems almost to betray its indigenous essence. What is possible or practical differs according to curriculum subject area, yet all subjects are treated as if they are the same. The problems of incompatibility are most severe in subject Science, given its emphasis on naturalistic ‘facts’ and its basis in the scientific paradigm, but other subjects face similar problems. This is why the Māori-medium curricula have ended up being largely translations of the English-medium curricula (Stewart, 2012). This paragraph speaks back to Young’s (2013) dismissive assertion that critics of standard curricula seek wholesale replacement of knowledge content. From a Māori perspective, it would be more accurate to say that critics of standard curricula seek for them to be modified, not replaced.

If (and it is a big ‘if’) we can agree on what Māori knowledge is and provide access to it, the next question is whether and how it can be

included in the school curriculum: what would this mean in practice? Simply adding items of Māori knowledge into a teaching programme is problematic—liable to distort the Māori knowledge, perhaps by definition invoking caricatures or cartoon versions by cutting indigenous knowledge away from its original cultural contexts and webs of meaning with corresponding fields of practice. Notwithstanding the severe practical difficulties, I argue that the idea of replacing Western knowledge in the Science curriculum with Māori knowledge is impossible on principle, an apparition produced by foggy thinking, and any attempt to, for example, teach rongoā (traditional plant medicines) instead of basic chemistry, will fail (Stewart, 2010b). On this matter I agree with Young’s main point that school curriculum necessarily must be based on disciplinary knowledge, since any alternative, despite its attractions, is as insubstantial as the rainbow.

What is considered ‘Māori knowledge’ varies widely, but could include any combination of the following list of knowledge types:

- Māori language
- Māori values
- Māori facts
- Māori metaphors
- Māori narratives
- Māori perspectives

Clearly some items on this list can conceivably be included in classroom curricula in different ways. The extent to which each item could be included varies according to school type, subject, and class level. For example, Māori metaphors and narratives (which carry Māori values) can be used as examples in otherwise ‘standard’ curricula, as they are in programmes of literacy and subject English. Māori perspectives (which carry all things Māori) can be used in managing the learning environment, and as examples or sources of critical views in English, art, social studies, etc. Māori language can and should be part of every classroom as a national official language (Stewart, 2014). In some schools, te reo Māori is a medium of instruction, in some it is studied as a distinct subject, and in some schools it is a community language, occurring as part of normal classroom discourse. Understanding the meaning of ‘Māori facts’ is more difficult: it may be taken as part-and-parcel of the other items in the list,

or it may be taken to mean the same as ‘facts’. In short, including ‘Māori’ content is both a political and an educational intervention, and even very small modifications in classroom curriculum can make a significant difference for Māori students. Judicious inclusion of Māori knowledge in the classroom curriculum is an enrichment exercise: a matter of ‘both-and’, not ‘either-or’.

Young’s third principle is that no curriculum can overcome educational inequalities, which is a key insight, but one he uses to justify abandoning altogether the attempt to design curricula that ameliorate traditional inequities in school outcomes. This seems like another example of black-and-white thinking. The wisdom of this principle is that we cannot expect too much of curriculum, but since, as Young argues at the start of his article, curriculum questions must be re-thought anew by each generation (and in each social context), it follows that some possible curricula must lead to better outcomes than others. This process of re-thinking is surely core business for curriculum theorists.

The current policy of including Māori knowledge in the school curriculum is a good test-case for this principle. The well-documented history of Māori education makes sense of the current trend towards a policy to legally enforce the inclusion of Māori knowledge in the school curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand (Penetito, 2010). A national identity built on a primary bilateral relationship between Māori and Pākehā Treaty partners and a longstanding reputation for “the best race relations in the world” (Human Rights Commission, 2017) are part of the landscape in which biculturalism has flourished in education and the arts, in a safer and more liberal social context than almost any other. The strength of the state school system, combined with the recognition of the key role that schools had played in earlier generations to endanger te reo Māori, are among the factors in why Māori education is almost an obsession in Aotearoa New Zealand, and also a local sub-field of scholarship, albeit one defined by deficit (Ewing & Shallcrass, 1970). While most Māori academics know that almost all Māori families share a history of being unfairly evicted or cheated of their traditional economic land bases, the national myths of egalitarianism and the ‘level playing field’ of state schools serve to lull Pākehā into a sense of secure superiority, based on social amnesia (Novitz & Willmott, 1989). According to this ‘common sense’ in New Zealand, Māori were ‘lucky’ to be colonised and should be ‘grateful’ to Pākehā (The Spinoff, 2018).

Māori advice to the state school system has always been about the need to better understand their Māori students, but given this strong national amnesia about the history of oppression of Māori, the message is interpreted as meaning that ALL schools must teach Māori language and culture. The growth of a small but successful Māori language school sector in the last 30-odd years, ironically alongside the trajectory of economist and neoliberal influence in education (Stewart, 2018c), has triggered a positivist policy reaction, which is understandable but nevertheless depressing in its illogic. This policy seems to suggest that since Māori-medium schools teach much more Māori language and culture than ‘mainstream’ state schools, it follows that teaching more Māori language and culture in English-medium schools will improve the outcomes of their Māori students. I recently witnessed Ministry of Education policy staff summarising discussions about the potential of biculturalism in education by writing “the whole of te ao Māori [the Māori world] must be included in schools”—a well-meaning phrase that nevertheless sent shivers down my spine, given its shadow image of symbolic annihilation. The success of the Māori language schools derives from the fact that Māori people run the school and Māori families are involved in their children’s education (Tākao, Grennell, McKegg, & Wehipeihana, 2010). The Māori schools are Māori-centred in a way that English-medium schools simply are not: many Māori parents stay away from their children’s schools because of their bad memories from their own school days.

The confusion over knowledge that Young argues has created a curriculum “crisis” is certainly evident in this debate. There is a fine line but huge difference between ‘replacing’ curriculum knowledge with Māori knowledge, and ‘enriching’ curriculum with Māori knowledge. The ideologies taught as national history in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand must be addressed (Stewart, 2018a). Moreover, bicultural education policies cannot, on their own, do much if anything at a statistical level to reduce Māori inequity. Such policies may help open the door to learning for Māori students, but cannot replace the role of literacy and numeracy in ensuring an individual student’s success in life. Māori-medium schools are keenly aware of the importance of literacy and numeracy, and aim for bi-literacy or mastery in both languages.

CONCLUSION

To include Māori knowledge in the school curriculum fits under the umbrella of ‘good teaching practice’—but perhaps not if enforced by legislation, since being ‘forced’ to teach anything seems at odds with the ideals of classroom ‘best practice’. Some claims about adding Māori knowledge to the school curriculum are unrealistic about what such initiatives could possibly achieve in terms of Māori equity, and these claims are sometimes based on the false idea that all knowledge is equal. The debates about knowledge in the school curriculum are complex, but Young’s three principles work together with Kaupapa Māori research principles to guide a nuanced yet optimistic approach to unpacking this complex curriculum issue. Māori knowledge has endless potential to support and enrich traditional curriculum frameworks.

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The *Mestizo Latinoamericano* as Modernity's Dialectical Image: Critical Perspectives on the Internationalization Project in Curriculum Studies

Daniel F. Johnson-Mardones

INTRODUCTION

From a worldwide perspective, modernity's dialectical image is the *mestizo Latinoamericano*—a hybrid being born out of the conquest of America. As such, the *mestizo Latinoamericano* becomes the gravitational centre of a force-field of a primal phenomenon constituting what we call modernity, or better modernity/coloniality: the invasion of a continent located between Asia and Europe. The *mestizo latinoamericano* is the primal image of the primal history of modernity. This chapter addresses the possibility of building a worldwide educational interdisciplinary field of curriculum inquiry based on intercultural dialogue, beyond the limits of

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Eurocentric modernity and its educational deployment. It aims first to critique modernity-as-educational-project, drawing on the *mestizo latinoamericano* as its dialectical image; and second, to connect this critique to the larger project of the decolonization of academic educational fields, bringing the Latin American thinking of liberation into the conversation on the internationalization of Curriculum Studies. The figure of *mestizo latinoamericano* helps the field of Curriculum Studies to become historical from a planetary horizon.

THE CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY AND THE *MESTIZO LATINOAMERICANO*

According to Walter Benjamin, history breaks down into images: images that allow us to delve into the meaning of modernity. It is those “figures of thought” or “dialectical images” which are the analytical objects in which the spirit of an epoch can be grasped. A dialectical image makes visible a primal phenomenon in history. Such intuition opens the space to bring reflection to a non-Eurocentric perspective, and look at the previous centuries that built that high capitalism or *mature* modernity (Dussel, 2011, 1995), which Benjamin’s dialectical images portray (Benjamin, 2008, 1999, 1969). In that movement we found a dialectical image, *the mestizo latinoamericano*. This image becomes an object of analysis “uniquely capable of producing kinds of meaning that are otherwise inaccessible or unrepresentable” (Jennings & Doherty, in Benjamin, 2008, p. 169). Therefore, it helps to resituate and to problematize modernity as modernity/coloniality in the construction of a world-system (Mignolo, 2011; Quijano, 2008; Wallenstein, 2004).

The *mestizo latinoamericano* is a dual being; a body in which coexists in a syncretic way the *European* conqueror, on one hand, and on the other, the conquered *Indian*, the colonizer and the colonized, the enslaver and the enslaved, the oppressor and the oppressed. The *mestizo* carries in his body the trauma of conquest and slavery. The two historical processes are at the base of modernity as a worldwide phenomenon. The two first “holocausts” that modern Europe is responsible for. As Dussel has suggested, the *mestizo latinoamericano* is the only race as old as modernity. The conquest of America was not just a politico-military-economic undertaking but also a process of erotic domination. Through that process, a hybrid being was brought into life. I argue that the *mestizo latinoamericano* is the “true” dialectical image of modernity. *América*,

according to Anibal Quijano (2008, p. 533), was constituted “as the first space/time of a new model of power of global vocation” that connected the idea of race and colonialism. As we see, the critique of modernity is the critique of colonialism.

In *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (1987), Habermas situates the beginning of modernity in the eighteenth century, with Hegel’s theorization of that phenomenon. Therefore, Habermas ignores the historical processes underlying the articulation of that discourse, overlooking the role of factors external to Europe in the formation of the European consciousness. Habermas’ Eurocentric perspective disregards the comparative advantage that the invasion of America gave to Europe, making possible its development. This advantage allowed Europe to become the centre of a global system that reaches maturity at the end of the eighteenth century. Unlike Habermas, the Latin American philosopher Enrique Dussel has pointed out that the philosophical formulation of modernity begun by Descartes’ *cogito ergo sum* had its practical antecedent in the Spanish Empire’s *conquiro ergo sum*. Therefore, it was the *I conquer* of the European invasion of America that is at the base of the (similarly European) *I think*.

While the process of domination of the *conquistador* over the *indio*, as well as the political process of European domination over the *indio* and the slave remain significant, pedagogical domination begins with the indoctrination that follows the conquest. As we also see, modernity is a pedagogical project, whose deployment over *Latinoamérica* differs grandly from the educational ideal formulated around the idea of enlightenment. Rather, the educational formulation of modernity and its institutionalization in the so-called modern educational system is also informed by the historical dynamics underlying the constitution of Europe as a centre of the world-system. This *pedagógica* is part of this modern ontology since the European father constitutes his mestizo son or daughter into a depository of his will to power. The pedagogy of modernity is a pedagogy of domination, which continues and reproduces both political-military and erotic domination.

Serving as a radical critique of modernity as an educational project, the *pedagógica Latinoamericana*, therefore, begins by focusing on the educational process that followed on from the military and erotic domination that was the conquest. Consequentially, the *mestizo* is also its dialectical image, and as such it can help us to unfold its problematic. Since the mestizos are neither Spanish nor Indians, they “live in their own flesh the

contradictory tension of modernity as both emancipation and sacrificial myth” (Dussel, 1995, p. 125). The *mestizo* born from the erotic domination of her Indian mother becomes also the object of the pedagogical domination by his European father. The father is the male conqueror, ergo the *mestizo* oppressor, which unfolds into the dominating educator. Dussel (1980) quotes Las Casas affirming that “commonly, wars do not let live other than youngsters and women” (p. 18). The latter will become the raped mothers of the *mestizo* race—a child that is the beginning of a new pedagogical style, Dussel concludes. The *mestizo* is the child of the *pedagógica Latinoamericana*, and as such, it speaks about the orphanhood of modern schooling’s child.

The orphan *per excellentia* of this *pedagógics* of domination, Dussel continues, is not just any child but mainly the child from the periphery; it is a colonial and neocolonial orphan. That is to say, the *mestizo latinoamericano* is a rude barbarian in need of being educated, as the gift of civilization. The *latinoamericano* child is not confirmed as *mestizo* but negated in its distinctiveness in having to negate his Indian mother. To Dussel, this expresses in the need, posed by the pedagogy of domination, to negate the popular culture in favour of the *higher* culture of the empire or the nation-state. The reenactments of the Empire’s civilizing project by the new republics during the centuries that followed the *independencia Latinoamericana* (i.e. Latin American independence) have also failed to affirm the *mestizos*’ double origin, leaving out, unacknowledged, their *Indio* and *Negro* heritages.

The *pedagógica Latinoamericana* continues its intellectual work as a criticism of the ontology of modernity, which has the father, the imperial state and the preceptor as the main subjects of its pedagogy. The father-state-teacher is in fact the reenactment of the *cogito ergo sum*, deployed as well as announced first by the *conquero ergo sum*; and then becoming *doceo ergo sum*. This modern pedagogy was born out of the praxis of domination constitutive of the European subject, having its first performance in the conquest and colonization of what we now call *América*. Against this pedagogy, coming out of the primal phenomenon of modernity, the *pedagógica Latinoamericana* focused in the face-to-face of intergenerational relationships. The child is not an orphan but the parents’ child whose place in a first proximity are able to establish a dialogical relation. Thus, pedagogical face-to-face has the particularity of being a

passage between erotics and politics (Dussel, 1980). The *pedagógica Latinoamericana* understands education as a liminal space acknowledging and honoring the other exteriority.

The child born in a family (home) is educated (school) in order to form part of a political community (country); the child born in a culture is expected to found a home. That is why pedagogical discourse is always twofold, and the planes continually become blurred, the quotidian and the social. This matter has been more or less well stated in what is called the “second Oedipus complex”. The young man in his adolescence again situates himself in an oedipal conflict, but now in a socio-psychoanalytical context. The drive towards the mother is at the same time towards the ancestral, the popular culture; the interposition of the father is likewise that of society or the state. His “ego ideal” (father-state) is in crisis. The young man cannot identify with a decadent *imago patris*; the oedipal conflict persists, and its revelation is youthful rebellion as a symptom of sexual and political repression.

The *pedagógica Latinoamericana* occupies itself with the intergenerational transmission of accumulated culture through pedagogical systems. “The educational system and the mass media are today the two most important systems in the formation of the average person”. These systems are usually “patriarchal, where the male dominates the female, and the couple dominates the child. This pedagogical system is not only erotically uxoricidal but also pedagogically filicidal” (Dussel, 1985, p. 22). According to Dussel, the worldwide events of 1968 are a generational rejection of the filicide, having sadly developed a new filicide in the process. He elaborates,

That rebellion of the child against the gerontocracies (elders) and the bureaucracies – not only of the neocolonial bourgeoisie but also against the opulence society, the destruction society, and consumption societies of multinational corporations – produces a new filicide, a tragic moment of the *pedagógica Latinoamericana*. (Dussel, 1980, p. 23)

That is for the Latin American philosopher the meaning of 1968, namely the Tlatelolco massacre—the assassination of students participating in a protest in Mexico City, at Tlatelolco Square. The event appears strongly when Mexican curriculum scholars tell the story of the arrival of the field of curriculum studies into México (de Alba, 2011; Díaz-Barriga & García-Garduño, 2014). At some level, the negation of the child’s exteriority

is expressed in the negation of his/her material life. It is beyond the system where the erotic-political-pedagogical exteriority is to be found and continue to live. The child is the exteriority of the *erotics* (her-his parents), “it is the other from whom one always has to learn how to listen in silence to the new revelation that is brought to past history as tradition” (Dussel, 1985, p. 24). Moreover, since the pedagogical space is a passage between the erotic and the political, the child is also a political pedagogical exteriority. “The child, the new one, is not an orphan”, as modernity pretends, but “the offspring of its parents and of a people” (Dussel, 1980, p. 24). Otherwise, what follows is a filicide, meaning the cultural death of the child. The denial of the child’s exteriority by the pedagogical system is very commonly done in the name of their freedom and wellbeing, and by the deployment of the best pedagogical methods at hand. The *pedagógica Latinoamericana* reads against the grain the canonical texts of modern pedagogy, such as Rousseau’s *Emile*, the paradigmatic child of modern education whose orphanhood needs to be retained as much as possible. Dussel writes

The preceptor (the father or the state) obliges the pupil to be or to behave like an orphan (without mother and hence without popular culture) and to be obedient in everything, as Rousseau explains in *Emile*. Claiming that nature expresses itself in reality, the repressing preceptor obliges Emile to follow a fixed curriculum tenaciously in order to merit his title of petit bourgeois, with even a European tour (the delight of the bourgeoisie of the time) and with a perfectly docile wife, a repressed housewife. (Dussel, 1980, p. 25)

The school as pedagogical-political institution, alongside with the other pedagogical systems, shapes as well as imprisons the child. Unlike this pedagogy, the *pedagógica Latinoamericana* aims at the child’s liberation. It is, thus, metaphysical since it goes beyond the world as given, allowing the son and the daughter to be as Other. In Dussel’s words, to allow the son to be, so that Oedipus grows as another, as the anti-Oedipus, is to respect him in his [and her] exteriority. This enables a praxis of pedagogical liberation, an education as a practice of freedom (Freire, 1968), which is also erotic as well as political. The *Malinche’s* children (Dussel, 1985, 1980; Paz, 1961) as an *Otro* must be an anti-Emile, that is, not let alone before its preceptor and having to accept what is given, but situating itself in the continuity-discontinuity of a tradition.

THE CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY/COLONIALITY
AND DECOLONIZATION OF ACADEMIC
FIELDS: CURRICULUM STUDIES
AS AN INTERNATIONALIZATION CONVERSATION

Working through the past is where the path of reconstruction gets started (Salazar Bondy, 1968; Zea, 1970, 1968, 1947). That was the path that the *pedagógica latinoamericana*, as part of the Latin American thinking of liberation, followed just at the time when the field of curriculum was imported/exported to *Latinoamérica* as a new technological language to name education, back in the 1960s and 1970s. I use the expression “Latin American thinker of liberation” to refer to the intellectual work of a generation whose main concern was to think Latin American from its specificity. This was the project that now is known as the “decolonizing turn” (Castro-Gomez & Grosfoguel, 2007; Dussel, 2011, 2013; Mignolo, 2011), “a new epistemological “location” for our themes” (Dussel, 2011, p. 188). Liberation was the concept used by these Latin American intellectuals to (re)think several disciplines through Latin American lenses back in the 1960s and 1970s. Fals Borda wrote his *Liberation Sociology* (1968) in Colombia, Gustavo Gutierrez published his *Theology of Liberation* (1970) in Peru, and Enrique Dussel wrote his *Philosophy of Liberation* (1975) already in exile in Mexico. Paulo Freire wrote also within this tradition, stating in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) that “the central problem is this: How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation?” (p. 48). This becoming-historical (Pinar, 2011) was central to the radical critique of modernity (Freire, 1970; Illich, 1971) that took place in *Latinoamérica* at that time (Johnson-Mardones, 2017, 2018). In that endeavor, as Dussel (1976, p. 16) wrote, “[w]e must re-define and re-conceptualize” our Eurocentric academic field. This Latin American talking-back to instrumental education, mainly as represented in Curriculum Studies in what we call now the Tyler rationale, is enabled by an anti-pedagogy of the pedagogy of domination, one that recognizes the child’s exteriority. In other words, to study a tradition is to reinvent it. While the project of domination, born within the modernity-as-educational-project, annihilates what is otherness, what is not the same—namely the new generation, the oppressed populations, the peripheral cultures—the project of liberation formulates its pedagogy

by emphasizing the Other's exteriority: the student, the oppressed and the peripheral. Therefore,

The ethos of pedagogical liberation demands that the teacher know how to listen with respect in silence to youth, to the people. Only the genuine teacher who has become a patient and enthusiastic disciple can attain to an adequate discernment of the reality in which a people find itself. Pupils, the young, and the people admire teachers who, in their lifestyle, in their living together with them, in their humility and service, dedicate a critical awareness to affirming the values inherent in the young and in the people. Such teachers manifest a collaboration that unifies, mobilizes, organizes, and creates. (Dussel, 1980, p. 25)

That is the affirmative moment of the *pedagógica Latinoamericana*. There is not a magisterial ego before which an orphaned entity must passively wait to be taught, but a fountain-like exteriority of what is not yet. To this tradition, the educational face-to-face is crucially played in bipolarity of the word-ear, which is to say interpellation-listening, in Levinasian terms. Then, the welcoming what is not-me becomes service to the other as *Otro*. The disciple is new history. The liberating-liberated father-teacher-state listens to this new history that reveals the child's exteriority and allows the child to be, not from the paternal-maternal project, which is also educational and political, but from the filial project. This metaphysical project is revealed before the silent attentive mother-teacher-state. The *pedagógica Latinoamericana* is a pedagogy of listening.

The *pedagógica Latinoamericana* is pedagogy of listening, Freire's pedagogy. To the *pedagógica Latinoamericana*, the *Otro* is worthy of being listened to. To this pedagogy of listening, the son and the daughter are also fully human and able to communicate. As *Otro*, the disciple is exterior to the adult totality and then the possibility of renewal of life. He is the not yet of his progenitor. Her mere presence speaks of future. Dussel (1980, p. 150) writes, "The pedagogical face-to-face, then, is respect for the *Otro*, [...] the sacred before no love is sufficient, no hope excessive, and no faith adequate". Therefore, the disciple is no longer an orphan in need of paternal authority, remaining silent before his or her father-teacher-government. On the contrary, he or she is to be listened to. "It is necessary to shut up before what cannot be talked: the revelation of the *Otro* as other, as a mystery, as distinct. "His/her" revelation is "inexpressible" (*Unaussprechliches*) from "my" [our] world" (Dussel,

1980, p. 92). It requires silence, enabling dialogue, the opposite of the monocultural monologue that mark the global deployment of modern schooling since its very beginning, and once again reenacted today, as a global curriculum informed by standardizing testing.

In silence one awaits for the revelation of the *Otro*. In pedagogical dialogue, “the silent one is the inappropriate source of meaning” (Benjamin, 2004, p. 6). Freire understands very well the need for silence in order to educate for liberation; a silence so different from the culture of silence that he criticizes. His pedagogy is a pedagogy of listening; a listening-waiting for the voice of the *Otro* upon whom speaking has been denied. Freire’s conversational writing is evocative of the oral tradition as a “contemplative encounter with the other that reconstructs subjectivity and society” (Pinar, 2012, p. 191). I believe that this concern must be located at the centre of schooling as a modern educational “dispositive”. Schooling itself, as well as education more generally, is a system of social standardization. This standardization is not unrelated to the process of homogenization begun by Europe at the outset of modernity and whose first subjects were the peoples of America who had been negated. The indigenous people of *Latinoamérica* were the *Otro* “whose voices were silenced by Europe’s praxis of domination” (Johnson-Mardones, 2018 (p. 32). From this beginning, *Latinoamérica* was excluded from the conversation of humankind. On this point, Dussel (1995) explains:

The inescapable difficulties of such mutual conversation were not even in place, as occurred among the Eurocentric conquistadores, conversation become impossible, as did any argumentation in a real communication community ... from the moment of Europe’s discovery of America, the Europeans disgracefully covered all this over. Under the mantle of forgetfulness and barbaric modernization, Europeans have continued realizing that mythic 1492 through the continent. (p. 87)

To move beyond this original denial of the other is to the *mestizo Latinoamericano* a task of historical reconstruction, a reconstruction that begins with the reciprocal respect of a dialogical encounter, both in human education and in the fields studying it, such as curriculum studies. This reciprocal respect enables the beginning of the pedagogy of domination, discovering, unlike the Europeans who have arrived since 1492, a pedagogy of liberation going beyond the world that is being given to

him and her. This is the affirmative moment of the *pedagógica Latinoamericana*, which not only negates the pedagogy of domination of every present but also creates a future. To the *pedagógica Latinoamericana*, the *mestizo latinoamericano* must affirm his and her dual character, beginning with his and her rejected mother's heritage but acknowledging also that of his father. It is in the *Latinoamérica* as exteriority of modernity, and the rejected within that dual entity, where lies the way out of this history of domination.

This is the path that Curriculum Studies seems to have taken through internationalization (Pinar, 2014, 2008; Trueit, 2003), becoming an "international" conversation but also a "complicated" conversation (Pinar, 2011; 2014). Such a hopeful project, the building of a truly international non-uniform (Miller, 2009) field of curriculum studies, leads to reconsidering internationalization as not just a moment in the historical development of the United States curriculum field, but also a dimension of the field itself. In fact, when addressed from the global south (de Sousa Santos, 2014), internationalization has been part of the field from the moment when curriculum studies went global, about six decades ago. This is the first wave of internationalization (Johnson-Mardones, 2017, 2018), a neocolonial one, marked by the global exportation of curriculum development and educational planning. This is consistent with curriculum as a phenomenon, since curriculum was born as a centralizing apparatus of schooling (Hamilton, 2009), itself a system of cultural standardization characteristic of modernity. Not unexpectedly, the radical critique of schooling came out of the underside of modernity, precisely in the time when curriculum was brought to the region as a new way to name education. That process has been conceptualized by some Latin American curriculum scholars as a form of "acculturation" (García-Garduño, 2010), an act of "cultural imperialism" (Díaz-Barriga & García-Garduño, 2014, p. 11), the introduction of the "U.S. industrial pedagogy" (Díaz-Barriga, 1984), the beginning of the influence of the "educational technology" (Magendzo, Abraham, & Lavín, 2014, p. 176), and the arrival of technical curriculum (Montoya-Vargas, 2014).

The common understanding of these authors seems to be that "the traits of a view of education based on efficiency and productivity were absent" (Díaz-Barriga & García-Garduño, 2014, p. 11) in *Latinoamérica* before the 1960s. The critique to that process was performed with the language of pedagogy in Latin America and with the call for the reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies in the context of origin of that

field. Those two processes were not unrelated, foreseeing the project of curriculum as an international conversation. In fact, Freire's concepts

... such as *conscientização*, humanizing education, liberating education are important concepts in which these scholars elaborate to talk back to the mainstream of the field conceived exclusively as curriculum development. Freire's work was also a ta[l]king back to that rationale that had arrived in Latin America in the 1960s as a new educational technology. Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* appeared strongly influencing the US reconceptualization of the field in the 1970s. The reconceptualized field of curriculum was also international from the very first moment. (Johnson-Mardones, 2015, p. 3)

To focused on the *mestizo latinoamericano* as modernity's dialectical image, a syncretic being born in the underside of modernity as a consequence of its traumatic foundational phenomena, helps us to reconsider the hybridity of each tradition, each culture, every academic field. The *mestizo latinoamericano's* existential hybrid resonates with Curriculum Studies' own hybrid character. This resonance may certainly help in re-thinking the project of Curriculum Studies as an international but non-uniform field, an already-begun, ongoing, and unfinished international conversation informed by dialogical encounters.

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Refusing Reconciliation in Indigenous Curriculum

Kevin Lowe, Nikki Moodie, and Sara Weuffen

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we critically examine calls to increase Indigenous content in the Australian Curriculum,¹ to explore how the idea of greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and knowledges became entwined with the discourse of reconciliation. The

¹In 2011, the federal government introduced a national Australian Curriculum, recognising that states and territories retain control of education systems within their jurisdiction. As a result, states and territories have variously taken up, changed and implemented elements of the Australian Curriculum, under the oversight of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority (ACARA). Nonetheless, the national Australian Curriculum retains a position as the pre-eminent and authorising policy for curriculum across Australia.

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first National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (NATSIEP) established a rights-based approach to Indigenous schooling and recognised that non-Indigenous education systems and procedures “have not adequately recognised and accommodated the particular needs and circumstances of Aboriginal people” (Department of Employment, Education and Training [DEET], 1989, p. 5). This policy focused on the role of education in enabling Indigenous peoples to more effectively exercise their rights and participate more fully in broader Australian society. To the extent that the 1989 NATSIEP discussed curriculum, this too was described in terms of relevance to and appropriateness for Indigenous learners. The 21 Goals of the NATSIEP were oriented towards equity, and elementally focused on anti-racism, strengthening cultural identity, and the exercise of self-determination at all levels of the education system. These principles were so clearly grounded in a rights-based approach to Indigenous wellbeing that the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991) explicitly recommended the extension of the NATSIEP to pre-school (Recommendation 289), prisoners (Recommendation 185), and Aboriginal community-controlled adult education institutions (Recommendation 298 and 323).

Recently, Patrick and Moodie (2016), and Maxwell, Lowe and Salter (2018) note that federal control of Indigenous Australian policy and national education standardisation shifted the discursive purpose of schooling for Indigenous children and young people from self-determination, anti-racism, and equity towards the ‘problem’ of underachievement. Central to this shift was the recognition that Indigenous achievement was linked to culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy (Parkinson & Jones, 2018). Within the settler-colonial schooling context, however, the specificity of Indigenous claims became assimilated within broader inclusion, multiculturalism, and empowerment discourses (Parkinson & Jones, 2018). In line with the second pillar of the NATSIEP, the inclusion of atomised Indigenous content was considered sufficient to engage Indigenous learners while having the added benefit of securing their families’ grateful support in the assimilatory practices of schooling (Kowal, 2008) and also serving the needs of settler students.

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As suggested by Hughes (2020, p. 1), the educational future of Indigenous students—indeed, all students—was exquisitely tied to the mirage of Indigenous content. A generation later, Indigenous content in the Australian Curriculum is represented as a “self-esteem” building strategy to enhance participation by Indigenous students, or as a vehicle to teach “all students” to respect, recognise, and reconcile with the “world’s oldest continuous living cultures” (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, n.d.).

In line with the reversal of the Commonwealth policy of self-determination and increasingly neoliberal subsumption of Indigenous autonomy, the promise of curriculum generally to recast the relationship between schools and Indigenous learners and their communities was broken to serve individualised narratives of participation and attainment (Patrick & Moodie, 2016). As individual Indigenous learners (or their families) became represented as solely responsible for their own successes and failures, the systemic barriers to equitable outcomes and Indigenous aspirations—such as racism, monolingual instruction, standardised testing, school disengagement with families—were emphasised or removed from policy documents altogether through the early part of the twenty-first century and replaced with discourses of reconciliation. The idea of *reconciliation* in Australia is perhaps best understood as a political consolation prize, following the federal government’s 1991 policy reversal on national treaty and land rights legislation (Clark, de Costa, & Maddison, 2016). As reconciliation came to replace substantive recognition of Indigenous-specific rights in regard to education, the purposes to which ‘Indigenous curriculum’ could be oriented would serve less the idea of Indigenous community control of Indigenous education and rather more the eliminatory desire of incorporation.

In considering the issue of ‘representation’ we suggest that the justification of Indigenous content in curriculum under a social justice rationale is part of the settler-colonial strategy of excluding Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being from the schooling system. Idealistically, the primary purpose of Indigenous content (ACARA, n.d.) is to build a greater level of awareness among the broader Australian population by suggesting that a greater common good can be achieved if more Australians possess a deeper knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. This aim however was only ever a minor goal of the NATSIEP, which more substantively considered ‘representation’ as an onto-epistemic right to control curriculum content, pedagogic

strategies, and policy direction within Indigenous-controlled educational systems.

SETTLER COLONIALISM AND RECONCILIATION IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Here we propose that the theory of settler colonialism (Calderon, 2014; Moodie & Patrick, 2017; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wolfe, 2006) can be extended in the Australian context to offer a deeper explanation of the policy inadequacies of recognition in the curriculum. This work proceeds from the position that settler colonialism describes a specific social formation, historically and currently, whereby the invasion of Indigenous societies is understood not as a past moment of conquest, but as an ongoing, structural desire for the elimination of the Native (Wolfe, 2006). While settler colonialism is often genocidal, the eliminatory desire of the settler does not always manifest as a genocidal act; genocide exists outside settler-colonial formations, and settler colonialism itself is “not invariably genocidal” (Wolfe, 2006, p. 387). Instead, settler colonialism’s “specific, irreducible element” (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388) is access to territory and ownership of land. As Australian nationalism gradually separated from the British Empire through the twentieth century, the overtly genocidal intent of the state (manifest as frontier warfare, massacres and systematic child removal—see Tatz, 2001), the initial period of state-sanctioned violence required for the settler society to establish itself on Indigenous land, transitioned to a symbolic recuperation of indigeneity in order to assert its own difference (Wolfe, 2006, p. 389). No less eliminatory, in order for the settler state to make sense of its own past in the context of a self-proclaimed liberal democratic tradition, some form of state-sanctioned indigeneity—repressed, appropriated, and disarticulated from Indigenous collectivities—functions to allow the settler to justify their ongoing occupation through the illusion of recognition. In effect, this “move to innocence” allows the settler to imagine an untroubled future, one in which settler-native conflict has been resolved (Tuck & Yang, 2012), by virtue of settlers’ connection with and knowledge of the “refractory imprint” of indigeneity (Wolfe, 2006, p. 389).

The settler desire for elimination is always structured by its encounter with the Native. As a result of the ongoing encounter, the settler-colonial state can rarely or wholly entirely replace Indigenous society, but it does develop a set of strategies that serve to always rescue settler futurity. Tuck

and Yang (2012) describe “settler adoption fantasies” (p. 14) as a process that alleviates the anxiety of historical wrongdoing and the problem of un-belonging by allowing the settler to develop an “indigenized consciousness” (p. 17). They say:

These fantasies can mean the adoption of Indigenous practices and knowledge, but more, refer to those narratives in the settler colonial imagination in which the Native (understanding that he is becoming extinct) hands over his land, his claim to the land, his very Indian-ness to the settler for safe-keeping. This is a fantasy that is invested in a settler futurity and dependent on the foreclosure of an Indigenous futurity. (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 14)

With Calderon (2014), we suggest that the inclusion of Indigenous content in the Australian Curriculum is a *palimpsest*, if we consider curriculum as text, where “previous writings are erased and written over, yet old [settler] knowledge bleeds through” (p. 315). In the earliest Indigenous education policy documents (DEET, 1989), the purpose of curriculum for Indigenous learners was to strengthen their cultural identities, ensure relevant content, and increase the quantity of self-determination that Indigenous people exercised over educational processes. As successive policies, declarations, national curricula, and teacher accreditation standards gradually included greater recognition of Indigenous issues, this incorporation weakened the decolonial intent of the NATSIEP (Tuck & Yang, 2012) through two movements.

First, the individualization of student achievement supported the adoption of White performance benchmarks, against which Indigenous students are to be measured and always found lacking. Indigenous capability—for success, self-determination, autonomy or civic participation—is rendered absent by a technicist assessment of performance on standardised tests. What bleeds through is the impossibility of Indigenous sophistication and thus the inevitability of settler possession. Henry Lewis Morgan and the “ladder of civilization”, and specifically Indigenous peoples’ position at the bottom of that ladder (Morgan, 1977/1964), is never far away from settler-colonial justifications for the governance of Indigenous knowledges, lives, and lands.

Second, the functional atomization of Indigenous content in learning areas across the Australian Curriculum is united by the discourse of reconciliation, where “all students” are encouraged to respect and recognise

“the world’s oldest continuous living cultures” (ACARA, n.d.). In practice, this has led to the proliferation of curriculum resources as teachers, with barely more knowledge of Indigenous issues than their students, struggle to construct coherent, ‘reconciliatory’ narratives that make sense of Native pasts, presents, and futures in settler-colonial schooling contexts. Here the idea of ‘reconciliation’ does heavy lifting, recognising and ameliorating settler teachers’ anxieties about historical violence and offering a narrative of peaceful resolution. As Nakata (1997) describes, within such educational regimes, Torres Strait Islanders—indeed perhaps all Indigenous peoples—are not viewed as themselves, but are understood only in relation to what is known by settlers about them, occupying a devalued, misunderstood and Othered position to that of the settler subject (Nakata, 1997, p. 24). Reconciliation becomes a powerful and endlessly flexible settler ‘innocenting’:

While the importance of reconciliation for Indigenous peoples (as a historically disenfranchised minority who continue to suffer from racism) is clear, what animates the drive towards reconciliation for settler-invaders (native or migrant) in a national context where there is no ‘widespread threat of violence’ from Indigenous peoples it is not immediately self-evident. Although settler-invaders gain much from constituting the ‘mainstream majority’ of the Australian nation, they can also experience anguish over colonialism which can lead to assertions of colonial beneficence, a desire to assimilate indigenes into ‘settleness’ and/or a yearning for their own ‘happy hybrid’ autochthony. (Paradies, 2016, p. 106)

Maddison and Stastny (2016) consider school-based and wider community educational practices, including media, with regard to knowledge-building of post-invasion history, and reconciliation in Australia. Their qualitative research shows that, despite increasing awareness of frontier violence, injustice and racism, participants maintained consistently stereotypical views about Indigenous deviance or “special treatment” (Maddison & Stastny, 2016, p. 240). Reconciliation was often viewed as a “clean slate”, sometimes involving the possibility for socio-economic equity, but also sometimes as Eurocentric or as a political strategy to avoid the substantive reparation required for healing (Maddison & Stastny, 2016, pp. 241–242). Hence, the assumption that a coherent understanding of ‘reconciliation’ is widely held by settler Australians is troubled, despite the powerful narrative of a reconciled settler future that influences how non-Indigenous peoples engage with its complexities.

The fundamental issues of Indigenous rights and the pursuit of equity involve a reconfiguration of power relations which the language of reconciliation makes impotent. Greater knowledge of Indigenous histories and cultures, and an appreciation of the idea of reconciliation (howsoever conceived), does not change the basic social formation of settler colonialism. Reconciliation, we argue, is the settler attempt to write and rewrite the eliminatory desire to incorporate Native difference as long as it doesn't survive in a form sufficiently powerful to assert control over land. It is to this task that teachers have been marshalled to perpetuate a 'whitewashed' version of history, so that every child across the mandated years of schooling is given little opportunity to question the erasure of Indigenous sovereignty (Weuffen, 2018). 'Reconciliation' becomes the primary outcome of curriculum inclusion, obfuscating Indigenous rights and aspirations (Short, 2008, p.135).

THE COHERENCE OF INDIGENOUS ONTO-EPISTEMOLOGIES IN CURRICULUM

While the project of Indigenous-focused curriculum has been ostensibly constructed in service of reconciliation and improving Indigenous learner outcomes, neither aim has been achieved (Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet, 2020). Most Australians are biased against Indigenous people (Shirodkar, 2019), and the Aboriginal Voices project—which reviewed more than 13,000 publications in the field of Indigenous education—demonstrates that there is no evidence of sustained improvement in Indigenous student outcomes (Guenther, Harrison, & Burgess, 2019). The pursuit of Indigenous rights and equity in outcomes is simply not the core justifying principle of settler-colonial engagement with Indigenous schooling. The process by which the Australian Curriculum has been created, defined, and enacted iteratively positions the settler order as superior. Increasingly, the act of curriculum-making has become the instrument through which government intervention for reconciliation may be addressed on a national scale without disrupting settler futurity or innocence. Presented as a document for scoping and sequencing learning, in reality, how Indigenous content has been referenced and included in the curriculum is a demonstration of the fundamental organisational power of settler knowledge.

Successive governments use the formal curriculum as a tool to assert what should be visible (settler supremacy) and why (to produce the next

generation of settler citizens). Through the avenue of public education, the three R's (reading, writing, and arithmetic) have been constructed as the undisputed educational underpinnings for success by all F-12 students. This conceptualisation of learning is naturalised by an epistemic structure that constrains knowledge to a disciplinary hierarchy, which does not and cannot reflect Indigenous structures of knowledge. Within the settler-colonial structure of schooling, ACARA presents Indigenous content as a subsidiary priority, where its inclusion occurs selectively, and where its overriding function is to augment disciplinary learning. In almost every case, Indigenous knowledge is juxtaposed as a contextual element within the disciplines, with its legitimacy as knowledge dependent on its ability to support 'higher-order' academic knowledge reproduction (Hughes, 2020). Having been subserviently positioned as supporting content, through the act of daily pedagogy, the incrementally colonising Western knowledge and experiences are reinscribed so that the interests of Indigenous peoples cannot be served, and where reconciliation as envisaged by Indigenous people cannot be achieved, with self-determination remaining a mere dream.

Within contemporary western mass education, the key enterprise of curriculum is to structure knowledge according to disciplinary academic power. Conditions around the selection, "normalisation, hierarchicalisation, and centralisation, organise the field to define what is knowledge, eradicating false or non-knowledge" (Foucault, 2003, p. 181). The disqualification of knowledge deemed naive and hierarchically inferior not only validates one form of knowledge over another, but also constructs the very processes of knowledge-making and the pedagogies used to support its transmission. The focus on difference authorises contemporary whitewashed ideologies of inferiority to perpetuate notions of marginalisation and "reify old relations that condition future possibilities" (Nakata, 1997, p. 310). The reach of such disciplinary power is a circular process visible throughout all levels of education; from early childhood, through the primary and secondary years, to university undergraduate education, and completing the cycle with initial teacher education programmes at the tertiary level, thus inscribing the next generation of learners and teachers. The secret power of disciplinary knowledge is as a massive knowledge reproduction machine, of which curricula is an output. The *inclusion* of Indigenous content into the established curricula then is a subtle but pervasive component of the settler project of elimination which, in turn, legitimises the dominant disciplinary structures.

Indigenous perspectives have been included in the Australian Curriculum through the ‘cross-curriculum priority’ mechanism and the increased frequency of specifically referenced content descriptions (ACARA, n.d.), of which much has already been written (Lowe & Galstaun, 2020; Salter & Maxwell, 2016). A brief review of the F-12 curriculum shows that *Indigenous* is mentioned $n = 103$ times and centred in language studies ($n = 85$), with *Aboriginal* mentioned $n = 691$ times and emphasised in language studies ($n = 241$), Humanities and Social Science ($n = 157$), and Science ($n = 104$). While the concentration of Indigenous content in the Language and Social Sciences has long been of concern (Lowe & Yunkaporta, 2013), the recent inclusion of elaborations for Indigenous perspectives in the Science domain may offer a welcome expansion of content into a wider variety of discipline areas. However, as Nakata (1997, p. 8) argues, things are not “just white or black, and things cannot be fixed by simply adding in Indigenous components to the mix”. Moreover, as McKinley and Stewart (2012) argue, the inclusion of Indigenous culture into science curriculum can tend towards caricature in the distortions required to fit Indigenous knowledges into settler schooling practices. The issue of simply including *something Indigenous* and increasing the number of times that ‘Indigenous issues’ are mentioned in the Australian Curriculum comes to replace the principle of equity of outcomes for Indigenous students. As McKinley and Stewart (2012, p. 545) suggest, drawing on Edward Said, the issue of sign and symbol—of representation and discourse—offers no substantively different ground from which to tackle the fundamental right that non-Western people have to contribute to and benefit from all discipline areas.

It is well-established that Indigenous knowledges are a complex accumulation of Country-bound² and intersectional “knowledge that embraces the essence of ancestral knowing” (Akena, 2012, p. 601). Yet, the formal school curriculum has never been defined or enacted for the benefit of Indigenous students. The eliminatory impulse of settler colonialism to avoid Indigenous resistance, survival or futurity is a purposeful disconnection of the relationally connected core of Indigeneity. Over the

²Indigenous people’s ecological and territorial connections are sometimes represented as ‘land-based’ or ‘place-based’. ‘Country’, rather, denotes a specific ontological relationship in the Australian context which describes spatio-temporal relationships between landscapes and other entities, including humans (see Moodie, 2019, pp. 740–741).

years, Indigenous content has been inserted with increased frequency into the Australian Curriculum, on the assumption that more visibility equals more reconciliation and therefore greater student outcomes. Yet, without interrogating how Indigenous knowledge is included into the established settler-colonial narrative permeating the Curriculum, students become programmed into:

... the system and conventions of representation, the codes of their language and culture, which equip them with cultural 'know-how' enabling them to function as culturally competent subjects ... They unconsciously internalise the codes which allow them to express certain concepts and ideas through their systems of representation – writing, speech, gesture, visualisation and so on – and to interpret ideas which are communicated to them using the same system. (Hall, 1997, p. 22)

When we go searching for evidence of any link between increased frequency of Indigenous content, student learning outcomes and retention, or even a more reconciled nation, there is no tool to measure this aside from individual conversations. Therefore, when positive student outcomes are not observed, or racism continues to permeate Australian culture, individual teachers become the points of blame with systemic barriers to participation overlooked. This promotes the conditions under which a pervasive and self-fulfilling cycle of colonisation occurs whereby poor teaching of Indigenous knowledges leads to calls for more content to be included in the curriculum. Yet, absent largely from these discourses is a critical analysis of how curriculum operates, who it serves, and what its primary purpose is. The absence of such critical engagement creates space for the inclusion of vague statements about Aboriginal students being able to see themselves within the Curriculum in order to participate and build self-esteem. This insinuates that without more content, Indigenous students will be disinclined to participate in Australian education, continue to view themselves negatively and remain ill-informed about their cultures.

However, the question needs to be raised about whether an increased visibility of Indigenous knowledges segmented according to structured disciplines of settler colonialism serves a reconciliatory device or continues the structural processes for eliminating Indigenous sovereignty. We argue that while the project of including Indigenous perspectives into the

settler-colonial curriculum is intended to increase the visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, it neglects the way that Indigenous knowledges have been de-legitimated as coherent systems of thought and practice (Smith, 2012). As Nakata (2004, p. 7) discusses:

Western education demands an ongoing denial or exclusion of our own knowledges, epistemologies, and traditions, and a further co-option into a system:

- that is quite different from our own;
- that is deeply implicated in our historical treatment and continuing position;
- that can never fully understand or give representation to our own histories, knowledges, experience and expression of our reality; and which,
- through its discursive complexities, always circumscribes our own representations and understandings in its re-presentations.

While calls for increased content seem to stem from successive student cohorts' perceptions and desires to address the inherent failure of settler-colonial schooling system to discuss, address, or even include, Indigenous content, the question about whether the existing structure allows for any fidelity to Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies remains. The relegation of Indigenous knowledges to a cross-curriculum priority area, for example, legitimises competency-focused teaching as a pseudo-reconciliatory tool that functions to reinforce settler supremacy. The foundational weakness, lack of depth, incomplete narratives, segmentation, and infantilization of Indigenous knowledges is the smoke-and-mirrors of reconciliation, where settlers attempt to innocent themselves of responsibility for the ongoing violation of Indigenous rights.

As we have established, settler-colonial curriculum is not a benign tool. It collects, organises, and separates Indigenous knowledges to support the construction of an 'innocent' settler future. Even though there have been substantial attempts to indigenize curriculum through localising and contextualising Indigenous knowledge from within communities in which the schooling takes place (Harrison & Skrebneva, 2020; Harrison et al., 2019), and whether or not the inclusion of such content equals self-determination remains unclear. Acknowledging the different socio-political climate of Aotearoa New Zealand, lessons about a more nuanced decolonisation of Indigenous curriculum and the cultural politics of

reconciliation can be drawn from the National Curriculum there, which is composed of both *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (Ministry of Education, 2017). The latter applies to Māori-medium schools and the cultural specificities of wellbeing and success for Māori students. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to explore the intricacies of these approaches, we raise it here to highlight the lack of ontological depth and embeddedness of Indigenous knowledges in Australia's current national curriculum. Settler structural and cognitive agendas continue to position Indigenous as *Other* in a seemingly unavoidable dichotomy. In lieu of a coherent and singular Indigenous curriculum within Australia, perhaps there is little scope for the consideration of Indigenous studies as its own key learning or discipline area, as the NATSIEP envisioned, or the development of a two-way or bilingual education system that is oriented to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights, wellbeing or success, let alone rights to self-determination in education or otherwise (United Nations, 2007).

CONCLUSION

This chapter explores how the discourse of reconciliation functions to separate Indigenous knowledge from Indigenous learners and pedagogies in policy, curriculum, and professional standards. Since the first national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy was released in 1989, the positioning of Indigenous content in the school curriculum has shifted away from an initial focus on relevance to Indigenous learners and engagement with families, towards two primary goals: perpetuating the impossibility of Indigenous sovereignty and rescuing non-Indigenous futures through reconciliation. The idea of Indigenous success has been separated from the pursuit of a social justice and rights-based agenda to, instead, being linked to individual achievement, attendance, and participation metrics. This discursive turn serves the settler fantasy of an easy path to a reconciled future and functionally absolves contemporary complicity in Indigenous elimination (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 4). We suggest there is an urgent need to critically interrogate the assumption that the inclusion of Indigenous content into the Australian Curriculum alone addresses the purpose of building an informed and reconciled polity in this nation or meets the rights and aspirations of Indigenous peoples.

The prospect of reconciliation offers the settler a resolved future, free from the both the trauma of a violent colonial past and the incommensurability of Indigenous rights and knowledges. The first National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy did indeed recognise the need to extend the level of knowledge that the broader Australian polity holds about Indigenous issues. But as successive governments have reversed the small gains in Indigenous rights achieved in the second half of the twentieth century, reconciliation has come to replace the foundational concerns of Indigenous educators and communities about the place of Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being in schooling for Indigenous students. Instead, it is an insufficient degree of reconciliation and Indigenous families' own alleged shortcomings, that are purported to explain Indigenous underachievement. Indigenous success must be on Indigenous terms, not those of the settler-colonial state, and it is to this task that the future work of curriculum must be oriented.

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Towards a De-Colonial Language Gesture in Transnational Curriculum Studies

Weili Zhao

HUEBNER'S CURRICULUM LANGUAGE-VALUE THEORIZATION & LANGUAGE-EPISTEME RUPTURE

Dwayne Huebner, a philosopher of education and curriculum theorist, has proposed many cutting-edge ideas of curriculum theory and educational thought spanning the second half of the twentieth century. To his student William Pinar (1999, p. xxiv), Huebner “may well be judged as *the* most important” scholar in the field of curriculum studies, whose intellectual thinking has largely initiated, shaped, and integrated many current studies on the political, the phenomenological, the aesthetic, as well as the theological dimensions of education. To Huebner, curriculum scholars are often overly dependent on scientific thought patterns, which unfortunately blind them to many other significant and important intellectual, say, religious and spiritual, traditions of both East and the West, all potentially applicable to the theory and practice of education.

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For example, since the 1950s, the instrumental-managerial Tyler Rationale has become the predominant epistemic rule, (dis)ordering educational activities into a four-element enclosure of goals, learning experience selection, learning experience organization, and evaluation. To Huebner, this Rationale is a tyrannical, demonic, and apparently magical force which, with its two myths of learning and purpose, prevents the possible formation of other forms of curricular thought. Huebner (1966/1999, p. 104) comments, “by framing curricular tasks in this [Tylerian] language, the curriculum worker is immediately locked in a language system which determines his questions as well as his answers”. This dominant curriculum language, mostly derived from social science and psychology, ludicrously reduces “the complexity and mystery of a fellow human being” (p. 102) to a technical term of the “learner”, and reduces “mysteries to problems, doubts to error, and unknowables to yet-to-be-discoverables” (p. 104). They fail to attend to the temporal, dynamic, and impromptu on-goings of educational activities in and outside of classrooms.

To break out of this Tylerian trap, Huebner draws upon Heidegger’s language thinking to envision five sets of languages and value systems, *technical, political, scientific, esthetic, and ethical*, that comes with a rich, wholistic, and meaningful curriculum. The *technical* value system seeks to maximize change in students through an economic means-ends rationality, with ends or objectives carefully and accurately specified in behaviour terms and activities designed to fulfil the ends. The ends, decided according to the learner’s position in the social order, are translated into psychological terms like “concepts, skills, attitudes” (p. 106). *Political* valuing, which often exists in curricular thought covertly rather than overtly, helps curricular workers to maximize their power in a way to accomplish their work as effectively as possible. *Scientific* valuing seeks to maximize attainment of information or knowledge for the teacher or educator and exists when scientific activity produces new knowledge. *Esthetic* valuing, which Huebner observes is often completely ignored in the curriculum praxis of the day, gives educational activity some symbolic or esthetic meanings, sometimes also symbolic of the meanings of the educator. *Ethical* value, often ignored too, views educational activity per se primarily as an encounter between man [*sic*] and man in its encountering and is often described in metaphysical-religious language.

Huebner’s curriculum language-value theorization taken along with a Heideggerian language perspective is intriguing to me in that it

rightly pinpoints a possible language-episteme rupture, often neglected, in curriculum studies. It is not that curriculum scholars don't examine the use of language terms or discourses in curriculum knowledge (re)production. Rather, language terms or discourses are mostly taken as rhetorical expressions, rather than epistemic styles/traces of reasoning in a Heideggerian sense. For example, scholars often treat OECD's "core competency" as a rhetorical expression for signifying certain skills-knowledge-literacies, failing to ask what styles of reasoning and epistemic form of knowledge-value conditions such definition. To Heidegger (1978, p. 217), language is "the House of being", to the extent that language speaks thought ontologically and human people dwell in its epistemic speaking. Put differently, language corresponds authentically to its originary epistemic saying, and different languages, like Chinese and English, speak differently onto-epistemologically (see Zhao, 2019a, 2019b). Michel Foucault (1973) understands "episteme" as some historical "epistemological unconsciousness" that grounds and configures knowledge formation and its discourses within an historical era. Simply put, what language terms we choose to use and how we use them are closely entwined with our epistemic, conscious or unconscious, styles of reasoning. In this light, Huebner advises us to examine how people talk about or describe educational activities, to pay attention to the language they use, and to explicate the values or epistemic styles of reasoning intended through the used language. Only after such scrutiny can we produce a systemic rationality to maximize each of the five languages-values towards developing a wholistic curriculum and more meaningful educational activities.

In this light, Huebner vociferates, curriculum research is in search of a new language, i.e. a new epistemic style of reasoning (my paraphrase). For example, Huebner (1985/1999) himself draws upon religious and spiritual wisdom and languages like "spirit", "spiritual", and "transcendental" to encompass the riches of education beyond the parameters of the Tyler Rationale. To him, "various modes of knowing are suffused with the spiritual" (p. 348) and "education is only possible because the human being is a being that can transcend itself" (p. 345). "Spirit" here "refers to that which gives vitality" (p. 343), henceforth, "talk of the 'spirit' and the 'spiritual' in education need not be God talk", but can be "about lived reality, about experience and the possibility of experiencing" (p. 344). Furthermore, he (1966/1999) artfully rephrases the word "responsibility" into "response-ability" as a sought-after educational agenda. Namely,

education is to cultivate students' "response-in-the-world" (p. 112), a responsive sensitivity as well as sensibility with which students are awakened to, and become responsive to, the unveiling of the unconditioned, the new, and the unique in the real world.

Placed in the field of transnational curriculum knowledge (re)production, Huebner's assertion that curriculum research is in search of a new language and curriculum language-value theorization gains new significance and implications. That is, the language-episteme rupture alerts us to the issue of epistemic colonialism that has been constitutive of the modernization process of non-Western nation states and of modernity as coloniality. Specifically, the globalization of the Tyler Rationale language and other Eurocentric discourses does not merely reduce curriculum and educational thinking into an instrumental and managerial enclosure. More importantly, it marginalizes and overwrites other cultural forms of knowledge or epistemes, both within and outside of the West, which Paraskeva (2016) calls "curriculum epistemicide".

GLOBALIZING DISCOURSES-EPISTEMES AS CURRICULUM EPISTEMICIDE

"Epistemicide" refers to the colonization of one knowledge form by another. Paraskeva (2016) proffers the term "curriculum epistemicide" to represent a form of Western epistemic imperialism, which he argues has reached a "quasi-irretrievable point" (p. 3) and continues to intersect with the daily praxis of schools in and beyond the West. As a form of colonialism, epistemicide "is constitutive of, rather than derivative from, modernity" (Andreotti, 2011, p. 383), and "coloniality", as the memory or legacy of colonialism, defines culture, labour, intersubjective relation, and knowledge production well beyond the limits of colonialism and long after the end of a colonial administration (Maldonado-Torres, 2007).

Paraskeva argues that the happening of epistemicide is not only an effect of Western power hegemony, but also anchored in a fabricated eugenic claim that Western epistemological perspective is "unique and the only cognitive possible" (p. 3). As an effect, an epistemological disordering that treats the West as being superior to the non-West becomes a naturalized truth of coloniality. One expression is the popularization of Eurocentric discourses, say, core competencies, skills, and literacies, in non-Western countries, reproducing the hegemonic Western forms of

knowledge in the latter. It is to be noted here that linguistic epistemicide doesn't merely mean a replacement of discourses per se. Rather, it is a killing of a mode of reasoning and a form of knowledge-making that come with different cultural discourse and language. In alignment with wa Thiong's (1986) claims that language is the most important vehicle in subjugating the spiritual mindset of the colonized, Paraskeva foregrounds "linguistic genocide" as the "very core of the colonial and the neocolonial project" (p. 202). That is, "the production and reproduction of hegemonic forms of knowledge are precisely the institutionalizations of a linguistic or cultural epistemicide" (p. 241).

Over the past 10 years, and with a Heideggerian-Foucauldian language-discourse perspective, I have been problematizing both the modernization of the Chinese language and the popularization of West-centric discourses in China as an imprint of modernity-coloniality (see, Zhao, 2019a, 2019b, 2020, in press). The modernization of the Chinese language started in the early twentieth century when western terms and concepts were introduced into China. Accordingly, many traditional Chinese terms are re-appropriated or neologisms (compounds) of monographical characters are coined as the semantic glosses of the western concepts. Either way, the mode of translation transfigures or overwrites the original cultural-historical senses nurtured within each Chinese character (*hanzi*). For example, the modern Chinese term *wenbua*, as a gloss of 'culture', is re-invoked from the Yijing statement *yiwenuatiansxia*, literally saying, "transforming (the world below the sky) with letters/literacy (not weapons)". However, as a semantic gloss of 'culture', *wenbua* becomes a conceptual signifier of 'language' and 'customs', eclipsing its original historical-cultural-epistemic sensibilities. In this sense, the translingual ordering of *wenbua* = culture bespeaks a language-episteme rupture as mentioned above. Namely, while they are semantically equal(ized), they speak distinct cultural epistemes and the modern use of *wenbua* as a concept eclipses the epistemes of the ancient Chinese term *wenbua*.

The Westernization-modernization of the Chinese language happens along with, or is constitutive of, the Western hegemonic power expansion and a concomitant eugenic Western superiority vs. Chinese inferiority disordering. Imprisoned, most Chinese academics and policy makers since the twentieth century have welcomed, rather than resisted, the Western modernity-coloniality episteme (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). For example, the Western critique that the Chinese language was illogical and vague

was corroborated by many radical Chinese scholars in the 1920s New Cultural Movement. Collectively aligning themselves to Western science, technology, and language as a eugenic norm, they called to eradicate the ‘backward’ Chinese Confucian tradition and to Romanize the Chinese language (see Zhao, 2019b). Put differently, the Chinese intellectuals and institutions have subscribed to the murder of their own cognitive matrix (Paraskeva, 2018). This embrace of the Western modernity-coloniality episteme has indeed produced an academic aphasia in post twentieth-century China, suppressing and overwriting China’s traditional culture. The fact that Chinese policy makers and academics are still feverishly borrowing Western curriculum policies and practices re-affirms the long-time effect of modernity-coloniality on the colonized (Maldonado-Torres, 2007).

While claiming that modernity-coloniality is essentially a form of linguistic-epistemic genocide, Paraskeva also turns language around as the very de-colonial tool. Specifically, Paraskeva questions the linguistic imperialism portrayed by English and other Western imperial languages in internationalizing curriculum studies. For example, most counter-dominant Western epistemological views neglected other linguistic forms and other forms of knowledge, citing only and/or mostly English-speaking scholars and English literatures. The overwhelming majority does not know or does not value the scientific knowledge produced in other ‘inferior’ languages than English. Paraskeva proffers a de-colonial curriculum theory to advocate a pluri-versal, not uni-versal, cartography wherein each knot can work as a point to re-introduce languages, memories, economies, social organizations, and subjectivities, de-constructing Western culture and knowledge as the centre of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge and the source of civilized or official knowledge. In exposing and suspending the ‘darker side’ of the Western modernity-coloniality of knowledge, power, and being towards global “cognitive justice”, a de-colonial curriculum theory hopes to bring to the foreground “a silenced and different genealogy of thought” (p. 80).

Paraskeva’s de-colonial language gesture echoes my earlier research on China’s curriculum and educational language and discourses at the intersection of East and West, and tradition and modernity. I concur that language can indeed become a decolonial tool, but I would add, only if we go beyond the traditional treatment of language as merely a linguistic system/tool and further put linguistic practices in a cross-cultural meaning-making paradigm. In the next section,

using China's on-going *suyang* curriculum reform as a case study, I integrate Huebner's curriculum language-value theorization with my Heideggerian-Foucauldian language perspective to showcase the double roles of language in problematizing transnational curriculum knowledge (re)production. Specifically, while curriculum epistemicide happens through the very site of translingual practices between the English and Chinese languages, we can also turn around the very language-episteme rupture in translation to counter 'English' hegemonic colonialism towards new 'Chinese' forms of knowledge and being.

UNPACKING CHINA'S SUYANG CURRICULUM: A COLONIAL/DE-COLONIAL LANGUAGE PERSPECTIVE

In 2016, China released its *Core Suyang Definitions for Chinese Student Development* (encompassing 3 domains, 6 core categories, and 18 key definitions) as a three-year state-commissioned research output. While modelling itself upon the OECD's core competency definitions and the USA's conceptual map of twenty-first-century skills, China's *Suyang Definitions* claims to be more than a Western replica, also leveraging upon the Confucian *learning, body-cultivation [xiushen], and governing* tradition (Ministry of Education, 2016; Lin, 2016). Simply put, as I have unpacked elsewhere (see, Zhao, 2020, in press), *suyang* curriculum claims to have two Chinese characteristics. First, the historical-cultural notion, *suyang*, is re-invoked to name China's competency-based curriculum as both a gloss and counter-gloss of the English terms "competencies-skills-literacies". As a gloss, *suyang* curriculum indicates China's globalization of its curriculum reform, keeping itself abreast of the advanced West. Second, as a counter-gloss, the semantic repertoire of *suyang* is expanded to encompass "desirable character-traits [*pinge*]" and "emotions-attitudes-values" on top of the "key competencies-skills-literacies" which OECD/USA endorses primarily in their frameworks.

The fact that *suyang* is both a gloss and a counter-gloss of the English *competencies-skills-literacies* provides an opportune entry point to scrutinize the double roles, namely colonial and de-colonial, that language could play in problematizing transnational curriculum knowledge (re)production. While I have unpacked these issues separately in my previous research (see, Zhao, 2019a, 2019b, 2020, in press), this chapter integrates and rephrases my former arguments in a more coherent way, foregrounding a de-colonial language gesture in curriculum studies.

My reiteration of China's *suyang* curriculum reform below unfolds in two parts. First, drawing upon Huebner's language-value theorization, I show how Chinese policy makers' and academia's efforts in re-calibrating the *suyang* curriculum as more than a Western replica are thwarted by their own unconscious subjugation to modernity-coloniality as a form of epistemicide. Two expressions of modernity-coloniality are discussed: the psychologization of *suyang* as a concept, and the modern conceptual mode of signification that underpins the *suyang* = competency disordering. Second, drawing upon Heidegger-Foucault's language-discourse perspective, I show how I have unpacked *suyang* as a form of *su* + *yang*, explicating a holistic Chinese body-thinking episteme that is not reducible to the modernized Western conceptual mode of thinking. That is, the language of *su* + *yang* itself can work as a point of de-linking and opening that de-constructs Western culture and knowledge as the centre of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge, and the source of civilized or official knowledge.

PSYCHOLOGIZATION OF SUYANG AS AN EXPRESSION OF MODERNITY-COLONIALITY

As mentioned above, Huebner maintains that a rich, wholistic, and meaningful curriculum would nurture five sets of languages and values, i.e. *technical, political, scientific, esthetic, and ethical*. The contemporary Chinese *suyang* text undoubtedly bespeaks a predominant technical value-episteme, entailing "a means-ends rationality that approaches an economic model" (Huebner, 1966/1999, p. 106) that seeks to maximize change in students' knowledge-skills-ability-behaviour repertoire. The text is replete with Western-introduced modern psychological language terms and concepts, easily translatable to "skills, knowledge, attitudes, learning habits, process, self-discipline, progress, outcome, problem-solving skills, self-regulated learning, life-long learner, critical thinking, innovation, creativity, and sustainable development". Moreover, these terms are grammatically epistemologically used as "object/objective" that a presumed subject of "learner" is supposed to acquire after learning varied subjects in order to position himself/herself successfully along a social order. To borrow Huebner's words, this technical language and episteme locks both teaching and learning into an enclosure-oriented towards nothing but these anticipated learning outcomes, allowing for no mysteries, doubts, error, unknowables, or failures.

The text also speaks to the esthetic-ethical language and valuing (see Table 6.1—NB: the left is the Chinese excerpt and the right is my literal translation) because the semantic repertoire of *su yang* also embraces Confucian “desirable character-traits [*pingge*]” and “emotions-attitudes-values”, hoping to develop students’ “aesthetic taste” and personal traits on how to “be with others and the natural environment ethically” (Ministry of Education, 2016). However, this (Confucian) esthetic and ethical language and valuing are overwritten by the predominant technical episteme, causing a language-episteme rupture.

To Huebner, the esthetic-ethical valuing is best expressed in metaphysical-religious language which suspends the transparent psychological concepts of knowledge and skills towards opening to uncertainty, vagueness, and transcendence. However, “aesthetic appreciation” in the Chinese text is clearly defined along a subject-object ordering and by psychological terms of “knowledge, skills, method, consciousness, discover, sense, appreciate, and evaluate”. The lofty-sounding concepts of “human-based conscience, respect-protect human rights and values, care about human existence, development, and well-being” also frames the complex curricular tasks of humanistic care into a question-answer discoverable. The mysteries, doubts, uncertainties, struggles, or failures within the very daily life experiences of doing humanistic education are

Table 6.1 Esthetic-Ethical Excerpts of the *Su yang* Text

人文情怀: 具有以人為本的意識, 尊重、維護人的尊嚴和價值, 能關切人的生存、發展和幸福等。

审美情趣: 具有藝術知識、技能與方法的積累, 能理解和尊重文化藝術的多樣性, 具有發現、感知、欣賞、評價美的意識和基本能力; 具有健康的審美價值取向; 具有藝術表達和創意表現的興趣和意識, 能在生活中拓展和昇華美等。

社會責任: 自尊自

律, 文明禮貌, 誠信友善, 寬和待人, 孝親敬長, 有感恩之心 ... 熱愛並尊重自然, 具有綠色生活方式和可持續發展理念及行動等。

Humanistic regard: have a human-based conscience, respect-protect human rights and values, care about human existence, development and well-being

Aesthetic affect-taste: accumulate artistic knowledge-skills-methods; understand/respect diverse culture-arts; have a basic sense or skill in discovering-sensing-appreciating-evaluating beauty; show an interest-consciousness to express arts and demonstrate creativity

Social responsibility: self-respect and self-discipline, be civilized and polite, trust-worthy and friendly to others, familial respect to relatives and seniors, be grateful ... love and protect nature, green lifestyle and sustainable development idea and action

simply glossed over as if non-existent. In other words, the fact that these esthetic values are described in psychological concepts shows a language-value-episteme rupture that has not so far been recognized by the Chinese academia in developing its *suyang* curriculum.

Furthermore, the definition of “social responsibility” entails some familiar-sounding Confucian ethical values like “be civilized and polite, trust-worthy and friendly to others, familial respect to relatives and seniors”—also called socialist core values—that help students in being with themselves, others, and the natural environment. However, these language terms tend to be read as modern(ist) concepts, representing some moral codes or principles that students as individual, autonomous, and rational ‘learners’ are expected to develop and abide by. Such a psychologization of *suyang* reveals that psychology (behavioural psychology, cognitive psychology, and now learning sciences) has largely replaced philosophy as the grounding discipline of education since the twentieth century, and instrumentality, managerialism, measurability, and evidence have become the dominant epistemes underpinning the Tyler Rationale as an expression of modernity-coloniality.

“SUYANG = COMPETENCY” AS COLONIALITY OF MODERN SIGNIFICATION AND REPRESENTATION

Treating the esthetic-ethical valuing of *suyang* as psychological concepts alerts us to a modern episteme of signification and representation that Foucault (1973) argues has become a planetary episteme and from which we are yet to emerge. To Foucault, this episteme features a conceptual signifier-signified style of reasoning and a trap of philology. By the ‘trap of philology’, Foucault means we often assume the a priori existence of grammatical arrangements in a language for what can be expressed in it. As an expression, Chinese scholars and policy makers commonly treat *suyang* as a semantic gloss of the English terms of competencies-skills-literacies, namely *suyang* = competency. The Chinese cultural term *suyang* is a compound of two monographs, *su* and *yang*, respectively nurturing two epistemic senses of *pure unpolished* and *nurturing/bringing up*, which the English gloss *competency* fails to nourish. In other words, *suyang* and *competency* are epistemically distinct from each other, and a *suyang* = competency ordering along a modern conceptual signification belies a language-episteme rupture. However, failing to recognize the epistemic differences between these two

language terms, Chinese academia relentlessly interpret *suyang* as a gloss of “competencies-skills-literacies”, referencing OECD-USA’s and other international curriculum texts (see, e.g. Cui, 2016; Zhang, 2016; Zhong, 2016). Defining *suyang* through *competence* prevents Chinese academia from reading *suyang* as a form of su + yang, let alone explore the latter’s historical-cultural saying. As a result, incessant discussions are going on about *suyang*, but not about the originary saying/being of *suyang* itself in Chinese academia.

As I have argued elsewhere (see, Zhao, 2020), such a semantic (dis)ordering not only entails a language-episteme rupture. It also exposes Chinese people’s unconscious subjugation to the planetary modern-Western mode of signification and representation, as an imprint of modernity-coloniality. To borrow Paraskeva’s (2018) words, Chinese intellectuals and institutions have subscribed to the ‘murder’ of their own cognitive matrix. Consequently, Chinese scholars’ efforts of cultivating a Chinese characteristic competency-based curriculum are nothing but a linguistic trap and trope. Re-invoking a cultural-historical, or a *new*, language term *suyang* does not necessarily guarantee an epistemic consciousness revival. Then how can we explicate the cultural epistemic saying of *suyang*, irreducible to the modern trap of signification and representation? Next I shall revisit my earlier unpacking with a Heideggerian-Foucauldian language perspective, arguing that language can indeed become a very de-colonial tool against its colonial power.

“SU + YANG” AS CHINESE BODY-THINKING EPISTEME: A DE-COLONIAL GESTURE

Heidegger (1977) observes, “language first gives to every purposeful deliberation its ways and underways. Without language, there would be lacking to every doing every dimension in which it could bestir itself and be effective” (p. 40). Foucault (1973) claims that critics of modernity need to “work [their] way back from opinions, philosophies, and perhaps even from sciences, to the words that made them possible, and, beyond that, to a thought whose essential life has not yet been caught in the network of grammar” (p. 298). One strategy Foucault describes is “to disturb the words we speak, denounce the grammatical habits of our thinking, and dissipate the myths that animate our words, to render once more noisy and audible the element of silence that all discourse carries with it as it is spoken” (ibid.).

Inspired, I have elsewhere bracketed *suyang* as a modern concept and rewritten it into a grammatical form of “su + yang” (see, Zhao, 2020). Digging into the etymological sayings of *su* and *yang*, I have explicated a Chinese (w)holistic body-thinking (Wu, 1997) episteme that could be nurtured within the cultural notion of *suyang*. This (w)holistic body-thinking is not “bodily thinking” or “thinking has a bodily dimension”, but rather the “body enacts thinking ontologically” such that the “body is thinking and thinking embodies itself in bodily engagements” (Zhang, 2010). It is to be noted, though, the Chinese “body” registers not the physical or biological body of the modernity episteme but a “psychosomatic self” (Ames, 1993, p. 165), a (w)holistic mind-body-heart ensemble. This (w)holistic body-thinking epistemically responds to the Confucian “body-cultivation” (*xiushen*) in that it is by playing/living varied contextualized roles that a Confucian person learns to make his/her personhood in relation to others, not as a foundational and autonomous individual like “the learner” (Ames, 2011). This (w)holistic body-thinking episteme opportunely re-treats the Confucian virtues or character traits such as “human compassion, righteousness, ritual propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness” no longer as being reducible to a modern conceptualization of ideas. Cultivating such virtues becomes a mode of being to be lived and and practised, say, through parents’ bringing up the children and children’ repaying their parents by showing filial piety and reverence when their parents get old (Zhang, 2015).

This brief revisit of my earlier unpacking of *suyang* as *su + yang* provides a good example on how the translingual practice of translation can become the very site of epistemicide and how language can be re-appropriated as a de-colonial tool. Here the language-episteme rupture that comes with the *suyang = competency* disordering foregrounds a unique understanding of translation between different language systems. Namely, translation is not to produce “equivalents that successfully mediate between (cross-cultural) differences, but precisely the partly opaque relationship we call ‘difference’” (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 17). While producing the semantic equalization between different cultural language terms may indeed endorse the colonial function of language, explicating the otherwise mediated difference, I argue, turns around language as a de-colonial gesture and works as a first step in de-colonial transnational curriculum studies.

TOWARDS A DE-COLONIAL LANGUAGE GESTURE IN TRANSNATIONAL CURRICULUM STUDIES

Intersecting Huebner's curriculum language-value theorization, Paraskeva's invocation of curriculum epistemicide, and Heidegger-Foucault's language-episteme thinking, this chapter foregrounds the double roles that language can play in problematizing transnational curriculum knowledge (re)production. Huebner's (1966/1999) vociferation in the 1960s, namely that curriculum research is in search of a new language, still reverberates today when neoliberal competency-based curriculum reform has become a hegemonic episteme global-wise and in a different manner. While Huebner's language-value theory provides a paradigm for us to re-invigorate the complexity and dynamics of education from the instrumental and managerial constraint, Paraskeva's curriculum epistemicide thinking levels up Huebner's curriculum languages in relation to the issue of colonialism in international curriculum knowledge (re)production.

While this chapter fully upholds Paraskeva's (2016) argument that "language does play a key role in the decolonial turn" (p. 237), I would add that it does so especially when we take language as not merely a representational system with modern grammar but an ontological being of epistemes. Only with the latter can we suspend the grip of the planetary signifier-signified conceptual mode of reasoning and attend to the language-episteme rupture inherent in translanguaging practices. This is especially so when we scrutinize the linguist and cultural translation between the two different language-episteme systems of English and Chinese. Seen this way, even though modern Chinese language terms are largely Westernized, Chinese language is still *one forgotten, muted yet living* expression of cultural wisdom, and problematizing Chinese language indeed becomes a de-colonial "first and fundamental step" (Hayhoe, 2014, p. 315) in critiquing modern China's knowledge production in general.

Paraskeva (2016) argues that a de-colonial curriculum theorization is to expose and suspend the "darker side" of the Western modernity-coloniality of knowledge, power, and being towards global "cognitive justice". It is "sentient of the wor(1)ds behind and beyond the Western epistemological platform, wor(1)ds that are non-monolithic" (p. 86). My unpacking of *suyang* is not only an "alternative thinking of curriculum" but also an "alternative thinking of alternatives" (see, Santos 2007). That

is, body-thinking is an alternative thinking to mind-thinking in the epistemological and ideological terrain. As a form of decolonial thinking, it doesn't begin anew in the old West-Eurocentric cartography of knowledge but finds an entirely new ecological beginning in the distinct Chinese space of knowledge. It delinks itself from the yoke, the spell, or the rhetoric of modernity, democracy, post-modernity, or post-colonialism, all grounded in the Occident, hoping to bring to the foreground "a silenced and different genealogy of thought" (Paraskeva, 2016, p. 80) by critiquing the validity of knowledge itself.

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PART II

Knowledge Questions and Curriculum
Dilemmas



Bringing Content Back in: Perspectives from German *Didaktik*, American Curriculum Theory and Chinese Education

Zongyi Deng

No curriculum questions are more fundamental than knowledge questions such as ‘what knowledge is of most worth?’ and ‘how is knowledge selected and organized into the curriculum?’. However, knowledge questions as such have all but disappeared in current global trends in curriculum policy and practice. There has been a shift in curriculum policy from a concern with knowledge to a preoccupation with competences and academic outcomes. Accompanying this shift is a move to bypass formalized curriculum planning—centring on knowledge selection and organization for teaching and learning in school—in favour of developing academic standards and competency frameworks (Karseth & Sivesind, 2010; Young, 2009a). Behind these developments is the pervasive rhetoric of the knowledge society that eschews knowledge in favour

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of generic competences needed for the twenty-first century. The development also has to do with what Biesta (2010) calls ‘learnification’ of educational discourse—the global shift towards talking about learning, rather than education—in which knowledge is something constructed by the student, with no educational value in itself.

Knowledge questions have also disappeared from the field of contemporary curriculum theory and discourse, which has been fundamentally shaped by neo-Marxist and postmodern paradigms (see Deng, 2018b). For neo-Marxist curriculum theorists, the fundamental curriculum question is not ‘what knowledge is of most worth?’ but ‘whose knowledge is of most worth?’—a socio-political question that needs to be addressed in terms of interest, ideology, politics and power relation (Apple, 1990, 2004). They devote their energy to curriculum critique geared to exposing or unravelling the interest, ideology and agenda of those in power, and unmasking the political mechanism through which dominant groups exercise power and control over weaker groups. For postmodern and post-structural curriculum theorists, knowledge—in particular school knowledge—is reducible to no more than the stand-points and perspectives of dominant groups (cf. Moore, 2009). Accordingly, they reject traditional subject-based curriculum and champion a multicultural curriculum that affirms and validates “every voice in the school community” (Slattery, 1995). As a result, there is a loss of what Michael Young calls the “primary object” of curriculum theory—the knowledge taught and learnt in school (Young, 2013). Contemporary curriculum theorists have been increasingly marginalized by policy makers and curriculum developers; they are left on the sidelines of any serious contemporary debate about what knowledge should be taught in school (Deng, 2015a; Young, 2013).

‘BRINGING KNOWLEDGE BACK IN’: THE SOCIAL REALIST SCHOOL

It is in this context that Michael Young and his colleagues’ project to ‘bring knowledge back in’ becomes particularly pertinent and significant (e.g., Young, 2008, 2013; Young & Muller, 2015; Young et al., 2014). Over the last two decades, they have endeavoured to reintroduce knowledge into the recent global discourse on curriculum policy and practice and into the field of curriculum theory. Associated with the project is the *social-realist* school—a coalition of scholars in the UK, South Africa,

Australia and some European countries, with seminal writers such as Michael Young, Johan Muller and the late Rob Moore.

Using realism and the sociological works of Durkheim and Bernstein as theoretical underpinnings, Young and his colleagues establish a social-realist theory of knowledge that serves to bring centre-stage disciplinary knowledge in curriculum discourse. In that theory, they distinguish between specialized, disciplinary knowledge and everyday knowledge, on the one hand, and between different types of disciplinary knowledge, on the other. While reflecting human interests and standpoints, disciplinary knowledge has its own properties, trustfulness and explanatory power that can transcend the personal interests and standpoints of producers (see Young, 2008). Created by specialist communities of scholars, this knowledge is *powerful knowledge* because it provides the best understanding of the natural and social worlds. The acquisition of this knowledge facilitates the imagining of alternatives and enables people to move beyond their particular experience (Young & Muller, 2013). As such, disciplinary knowledge is worthy of being taught in its own right and to its own end.

With this theory of knowledge as the essential starting-point, they develop a knowledge-led curriculum theory which purports to inform curriculum planning and pedagogical practice. The central purpose of schooling is to help students gain access to disciplinary knowledge that they cannot acquire at home (Young, 2009b). Moreover, access to this knowledge is an entitlement of *all* students—and (thus) a social justice issue. Curriculum planning is essentially a process recontextualizing an academic discipline into a school subject—which entails selecting, sequencing and pacing academic knowledge in view of the coherence of the discipline and the constraints created by the developmental stages of students (Young, 2013). Classroom teaching is a process of passing on a body of disciplinary knowledge to students (Young, 2009b, 2013). Furthermore, to overcome the ‘crisis’ in contemporary curriculum theory, Young argues, curriculum scholars must employ as the essential point of departure “what do students have an entitlement to learn” for constructing curriculum principles that “maximize the chances that all pupils will have...access to the best knowledge” (Young, 2013, p. 115).

Social realism has been effective in bringing knowledge back into the current global discourse on curriculum policy and practice and has provided a meaningful perspective for tackling the crisis in curriculum theory (see Deng, 2015a). However, there are several issues that require attention. A theory of knowledge—rather than a vision or teleology of

education—is taken as the essential point of departure for developing curriculum theory. This theory of knowledge is in essence epistemological and sociological rather than *educational* and *curricular*. As a result, it disposes Young and his colleagues to see knowledge as an end in itself rather than as a means to some bigger purposes—e.g. citizenship and civic education, individual intellectual and moral development, self-actualisation and human flourishing. They are concerned primarily with the question of “what should they [students] know?” rather than the question of “what should they [students] become?” (Hamilton, 1999, p. 136). In this regard, the social-realist school has been disconnected with long traditions of educational thinking across the world such as German *Didaktik*, American curriculum theory and Chinese education, among others—traditions that are centrally concerned with the latter question. In these traditions, it is content or subject matter—a special kind of knowledge selected into the curriculum—that gives meaning and significance to teaching and learning in classroom. In other words, content or subject matter is inherently a *curriculum* concept (see Deng & Luke, 2008). Yet the term ‘content’ or ‘subject matter’ is often conflated with or replaced by ‘knowledge’ in the discourse of social realists.

BEYOND THE SOCIAL REALIST SCHOOL

Informed by, but going beyond, the project of Young and his colleagues, in this chapter I reintroduce knowledge into the conversation from the perspectives of German *Didaktik*, American curriculum theory and Chinese education. Among many schools or traditions of German *Didaktik* (e.g. *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik*, Berliner *Didaktik*, psychological *Didaktik*, experimental *Didaktik*), I select *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* for discussion because it is the main school or tradition and provides an elaborate, theoretical account of content in relation to education and the curriculum. Among many schools of American curriculum theory, I chose Schwab’s curriculum thinking because Schwab is one of the very few US theorists who has provided a sophisticated, elaborate account of the role of knowledge and content in relation to education and curriculum. His thinking is rooted in and developed out of the rich tradition of curriculum and educational thinking—represented by Dewey, McKeon, Schwab and Tyler, among others—within the University of Chicago, arguably the birthplace of American curriculum studies.

As will be seen, the examination of *Bildung*-centred Didaktik and Schwab's curriculum thinking brings forth three propositions concerning (1) the role of knowledge in education, (2) a theory of content that serves to inform curriculum practice and (3) an image of teaching as a student-content encounter. I will show in the final section how these propositions find resonance in the Confucian tradition of educational thinking, and in the 'New Basic Education' reform in China.

BILDUNG-CENTRED DIDAKTIK

Bildung-centred Didaktik provides a theory of teaching and learning that pertains to implementing the state curriculum in classrooms. Such a theory consists of three essential components: (1) a concept of *Bildung*, (2) a theory of content that serves to inform curriculum planning and classroom teaching and (3) an image of classroom teaching as a meaningful encounter between the learner and content.

Standing for the German ideal of (liberal) education, *Bildung* refers to the formation of the full individual, the cultivation of human powers, sensibility, self-awareness, liberty and freedom, responsibility and dignity (von Humboldt, 2000; see also Hopmann, 2007). The concept is later extended to include the development of self-determination (autonomy), co-determination (participation), and solidarity (Klafki, 1998). *Bildung* is achieved through linking the self to the world (social and natural) in "the most general, most animated and most unrestrained interplay" (von Humboldt, 2000, p. 58). The world, independent from us, is processed by human thought represented by academic disciplines (Lüth, 2000).

With this concept of *Bildung* as a point of departure, German *Didaktik* scholars conceive of the role of disciplinary knowledge in relation to education and curriculum. Knowledge is to be "used in the service of intellectual and moral *Bildung*" (Lüth, 2000, p. 77), rather than something that is to be gained for its own sake. Academic disciplines are an indispensable resource or vehicle for *Bildung* (Klafki, 2000). There are several forms of disciplinary knowledge—historical, social, linguistic, geographic, physical, chemical and biological—each of which gives us access to a particular aspect of reality and each of which has potential to cultivate a particular type of human power and disposition. Furthermore, German *Didaktik* scholars establish a theory of educational content (*Theorie der Bildungsinhalte*) that serves to inform curriculum planning and classroom teaching for *Bildung*. It consists

of four related concepts: *contents of education* (*Bildungsinhalt*), *educational substance* (*Bildungsgehalt*), *the elemental* (*das Elementare*) and *the fundamental* (*das Fundamentale*). Curriculum designers characteristically call the contents embodied in the state curriculum the ‘contents of education’, which result from a deliberative process of selection and organization of the wealth of the academic knowledge, experience and wisdom for *Bildung*:

Curriculum designers assume that these contents, once the children or adolescents have internalized and thus acquired them, will enable the young people to ‘produce a certain order’ (Litt) in themselves and at the same time in their relation to the world, to ‘assume responsibility’ (Weniger), and to cope with the requirements of life. The contents of teaching and learning will represent such order, or possibilities for such order, such responsibilities, inevitable requirements and opportunities.... (Klafki, 2000, p. 150)

In other words, once content is selected into the state curriculum framework or syllabus, it has been ‘curricularized’, so to speak (Doyle, 2011). As such, content is imbued with educational meaning or potential for *Bildung*,

The three other concepts serve to theorize the educational potential of content. The educational potential of content consists in the educational substance of content which is, in turn, comprised by the *elemental*—concentrated, *reduced* content, in the form of penetrating cases, concepts, principles, methods and so on. The *fundamental* refers to the ‘primordial’ experience that the elemental can bring out or the potential impact it can have on the perspectives, modes of thinking, dispositions and ways of being-in-the-world of individuals (Krüger, 2008). Informed by this theory of educational content, the state curriculum framework only lays out school subjects and their contents to be covered in schools, but it does not specify the educational substance, meaning and significance of content—these are to be identified and interpreted by a teacher, in a specific classroom situation (Hopmann, 2007). Teachers are entrusted with a high level of professional autonomy to interpret the state curriculum framework. They are viewed as curriculum makers “working within, but not directed by” the state curriculum framework, informed by the idea of *Bildung* and the *Didaktik* way of thinking (Westbury, 2000, p. 26).

With reference to the above notion of *Bildung* and the theory of educational content, German *Didaktik* scholars articulate what teaching is and what responsibility a teacher needs to have. Classroom teaching is seen as a “fruitful encounter” between content and the learner for *Bildung* (Klafki, 2000), rather than as the mere transmission of academic content. Such an encounter leads to a deeper understanding of the world, modifications in perspectives and the cultivation of human capacities or powers. Students are seen as unique individuals, with their own experiences, motivations and interests. Therefore, in instructional planning, the teacher must identify the elemental aspects of content (penetrating cases, basic ideas, concepts and methods) and ascertain the value and significance of content with reference to individual students “with a particular human context in mind, with its attendant past and its anticipated future” (Klafki, 2000, p. 148). Furthermore, he or she is to transform content into forms that are perceived as meaningful by students themselves. In other words, the teacher unlocks the educational potential of content by reducing content to ‘powerful’ elemental categories (cases, concepts, methods) and unpacking the educational meaning and significance.

SCHWAB’S CURRICULUM THINKING

Like *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik*, Schwab’s curriculum thinking can also be seen as consisting of three essential components: (1) a vision of a liberal education, (2) a theory of content that seeks to inform curriculum planning and pedagogical practice and (3) a notion of teaching as an encounter between students and content.

For Schwab, the central purpose of a liberal education, which is akin to *Bildung*, is the development of an empowered, autonomous and active individual. Such an individual possesses an understanding of culture and the world, and a set of powers and dispositions that allows him or her to face the challenges and problems in the society of the times. The powers and dispositions of an educated person, further articulated by Schwab, include a “capacity for ‘syntactical communication’”, a disposition to “quest, beyond mere survival, for a state called ‘happiness’”, an ability to “deliberate wisely about technologies based on science” and “to choose thoughtfully among several technological methods” (Levine, 2006, p. 119). The powers also include “abilities and insights to face the new problems of our times and to use the new instrumentalities with

wisdom and freedom” (McKeon, 1953, p. 113) and “critical and organising power and deliberative command over choice and action” (Schwab, 1978, p. 125), among others. The cultivation of such intellectual, social and civic powers and dispositions is achieved through the interaction of individual students with various forms of knowledge embodied in contemporary academic disciplines.

The primary concern of Schwab, like that of the German *Didaktik* scholars, is with the contribution of academic disciplines to human formation and the cultivation of human powers and dispositions, rather than the epistemological properties, structures, and explanatory powers of disciplinary knowledge per se (see Fenstermacher, 1980). Accordingly, Schwab articulates a theory of knowledge that conceives of the essence of academic disciplines in ways that are productive in cultivating those human powers and dispositions. Following McKeon, he identifies three types of academic disciplines—natural sciences, social sciences and humanities—each of which has the potential to develop a particular type of human power and disposition. The significance of each discipline is determined by a distinct set of *arts* or *methods of inquiry* instead of content or subject matter. As Levine (2006, p. 99) explains,

the place of the natural sciences in general education was determined by the arts required to analyse problems, validate knowledge, and communicate statements about natures and things. The place of social sciences in general education was determined by the arts required to deal with problems concerning associations set up by humans to achieve common values. The place of the humanities in general education was determined by the arts required to analyse the great achievements and products of human creativity when considered with respect to their formal structure.

Building on McKeon, Schwab argues that the contribution of an academic discipline to the cultivation of human powers lies in the methods or arts of inquiry embedded within the discipline. An academic discipline consists not only of statements and conclusions, but also “arts” or “methods” employed in disciplinary inquiry, an understanding of which enables the development of liberating human powers that are applicable in wide ranging situations and practices:

The ‘intellectual’ arts and skills with which the liberal education curriculum is concerned are not then intellectual as to subject matter, and thus exclusive of other subject matters, but intellectual as to quality. They are the arts

and skills which confer cogency upon situations and actions whether these be scientific, social, or humanistic, general and abstract or particular and concrete. The liberal arts, however formulated, are to be understood as the best statement of our present knowledge of the human make, of various means – some special in their application to specific subject matters, some general – by which the understanding frees us from submission to impressions, beliefs, and impulses, to give us critical and organizing power and deliberative command over choice and action. A liberal curriculum is one concerned that its students develop such powers. (Schwab, 1978, p. 125)

Consistent with this theory of knowledge, Schwab formulated a theory of content that serves to inform curriculum planning and classroom teaching. This theory consists of a particular notion of content and a set of categories that could serve to reveal the educational potential of content for the cultivation of human powers. Identified from the fund of academic knowledge, it takes the form of scholarly materials (histories, scientific reports, literary works and so on) that reflect the revisionary character of knowledge (concerning how knowledge was developed), rather than just the “rhetoric of conclusion” (knowledge as a final product) (Schwab, 1962). The set of categories, called three faces, is explained as follows:

- The first face is the *purport* [educational meaning and significance] conveyed by the material, referring to, for instance, an account of a political event by a historical segment [an extract from a historical source], a way of classifying physical phenomena by a scientific report, a moral dilemma or an image of a person by a literary work. Having students encounter the purport as such can open up opportunities for widening their horizons, transforming their perspectives, and cultivating their moral sensitivity.
- The second face is the *originating discipline* from which scholarly material derives, referring to a coherent way of inquiry – a problem identified, an investigation executed, the data or argument sought and a conclusion reached. Having students understand and experience the problem, method, principle and conclusion of a disciplinary inquiry can give rise to the development of independent critical thinking, an ability to judge the validity and reliability of knowledge claims, and an understanding of the merits and limitations of a particular mode of inquiry.

- The third face refers to *access disciplines* that can be brought to bear on scholarly material to disclose its full complication and sophistication. When a piece of material is scrutinised by asking different types of questions, using different perspectives and different methods of inquiry, it can render diverse opportunities for cultivating critical thinking, freedom of thought, self-understanding and prudent thought and action. (Deng, 2018a, pp. 342–3; also see Schwab, 1973)

Informed by this theory of content, curriculum planning entails a deliberative and interpretive process of selecting the content from academic disciplines with a view to their educational potential, within a particular instructional context and with a particular group of learners in mind. The process entails identifying the educational potential of the scholarly material under consideration, by means of the three faces—purport, originating discipline and access disciplines. The final decision to include a particular piece of scholarly content in the curriculum is made with reference to both its educational potential and the four curriculum commonplaces: subject matter, milieu, learner and teacher (Schwab, 1973).

What teaching is, and what responsibility teachers need to have, take on a special meaning in regard to the vision of a liberal education, the theory of knowledge and the theory of content. As with *Didaktik*, classroom teaching is seen as an encounter between students and content to achieve the kind of education envisioned. A student is seen as a unique individual, with *eros* (“the energy of wanting”), and as an instrument that the teacher needs to make use of (Schwab, 1978). In instructional planning, the teacher is to recover the significance in scholarly material through “arts of recovery”—in terms of the meaning conveyed (the purport), the particular way of inquiry involved (the originating discipline) and multiple ways of inquiry brought forth (access disciplines) which could be brought to bear on the material (Schwab, 1969). By means of these three categories, scholarly material or a curriculum text is made to open up manifold opportunities for challenging the understanding of students and cultivating their intellectual and moral powers and dispositions.

CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

Despite being developed in different social, historical and cultural milieus, *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* and Schwabian curriculum thinking have significant similarities with respect to theorizing teaching and teachers. Both employ, as a point of departure, a vision of education—centred on the cultivation of human powers and dispositions—for thinking about the role of knowledge in education and curriculum. Both treat disciplinary knowledge, not in and of itself, but as a resource or vehicle for that cultivation. Both view content—that which results from the deliberate selection of academic knowledge—as embodying educational potential. Both see classroom teaching as an educational encounter or meeting between students and content, and stress the necessity of unlocking the educational potential of content for cultivating human powers and dispositions.

There are, of course, differences between *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* and Schwab's curriculum thinking. The former views the cultivation of human powers and dispositions as resulting from interactions not only with academic knowledge but also with society and culture, whereas the latter conceives of it as resulting primarily from interactions with disciplinary knowledge. The former views academic disciplines as established bodies of knowledge, whereas the latter sees them in terms of achievements as well as, more importantly, arts or methods of inquiry.

Differences aside, both *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* and Schwab's curriculum thinking are markedly different from that of Young and his colleagues. The latter employs a sociological theory of knowledge—rather than a vision of education—as their point of departure for thinking about the purpose of education, curriculum planning and classroom teaching. Disciplinary knowledge is viewed as having its own powers, worthy of being taught for its own sake or to its own end. Classroom teaching is seen as a process of transmitting disciplinary knowledge to students.

Behind these similarities and differences are two rather different types of educational theorizing that are associated, in turn, with two distinctive traditions of educational thinking. Both *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* and Schwab's curriculum thinking exemplify a way of theorizing in the European *Pädagogik* tradition which is distinctively *educational*, *normative* and *hermeneutic*. (For an explanation on the convergence in educational theorizing between Schwab and *Didaktikers*, see Künzli, 2013; Reid, 1980.) This way of theorizing is educational because it

is centrally concerned with questions pertaining to human formation and development. It is normative because the theorizing is informed by a conception of what education ought to be. Furthermore, both *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* and Schwab's curriculum thinking have a strong hermeneutic and interpretive inclination, a proclivity towards interpreting and unpacking the meaning and significance of content by means of a set of categories. After all, the European tradition seeks to establish *Pädagogik* as a distinctive human science, with "its own terminology, its own points of departure, its own methods of investigation and verification" (Krüger, 2008, p. 216).

By contrast, the way of theorizing used by Young and his colleagues reflects the Anglophone *disciplines of education* tradition in which the perspectives or theories that are used to think about education are derived or developed from theories of foundational disciplines (psychology, sociology, philosophy and history) (Furlong & Whitty, 2017). Such perspectives or theories are then used to establish theoretical principles concerning curriculum planning and classroom teaching. The tradition has a strong dependency on foundational disciplines for its language, theoretical perspectives and methods.

RESONANCE WITH CHINESE EDUCATIONAL THINKING

The examination of *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* and Schwab's curriculum thinking brings forth three propositions:

1. If education is centrally concerned with the cultivation of intellectual, moral, social and civic powers, then knowledge needs to be seen as an important resource for that cultivation, rather than as something taught for its own end. Furthermore, knowledge needs to be reconceived in ways that are productive for this cultivation.
2. A theory of content is needed that addresses how knowledge is selected and organized into curriculum content and how content can be analyzed and unpacked for educational potential.
3. Teaching needs to be seen as an encounter of students with the essence of content that gives rise to opportunities for self-formation and the cultivation of human powers.

Now I show that these three propositions, in varying ways, finds resonance in the Confucian tradition of educational thinking and in the ‘New Basic Education’ reform.

The first proposition is resonant with the Neo-Confucian notion of self-cultivation—the development of self-worth, self-respect, self-understanding and individual powers in relation to fulfilling one’s social responsibilities and functions. As de Bary (1996, p. 33) observed,

The Four Books with Zhu Xi’s commentary gave the individual a sense of self-worth and self-respect not to be sacrificed for any short-term utilitarian purpose; a sense of place in the world not to be surrendered to any state or party; a sense of how one could cultivate one’s individual powers to meet the social responsibilities that the enjoyment of learning always brought with it—powers and responsibilities not to be defaulted on.

Self-cultivation is achieved through the interactions with the physical and cultural world, entailing the investigation of natural and social phenomena and the advancement of knowledge (Bai, 2013; de Bary, 1996).

The idea of teaching conveyed in the third proposition bears resemblance to what Confucius believed about the essence of teaching. As instantiated in *The Analects*, teaching in essence is a ‘heart-to-heart’ dialogue between the teacher and his disciples, necessitated by an in-depth engagement with the meaning of a classic text (Wu, 2011).

New Basic Education reform (2001–) is directed towards transforming elementary and secondary schools in Shanghai in the midst of the profound social, economic and educational transition underway in China at the turn of the twenty-first century. Rooted in the Confucian tradition of educational thinking and informed by European theories of pedagogics, the reform provides instantiations of the above three propositions. The central purpose of education, according to Ye Lan (the key architect of the reform), involves the development of students’ abilities to self-regulate, judge and think reflectively, their self-confidence, and their courage to face challenges (Ye, 2009a, 2009b). It entails the cultivation of individuals with “self-consciousness of life”, the “inner power” for realizing the value of life (Ye, 2009a). Individuals are to “own their consciousness and have the ability to lead their own destinies” (Ye, 2009b, p. 562).

Content is held as an important ‘resource’ and ‘means’ for cultivating individual learners rather than a body of knowledge and skills for

mere transmission or mastery (Ye, 2009a). A distinction is made between *explicit content* and *implicit content*. The former is embodied in instructional frameworks, syllabi and textbooks, consisting of the outcomes of human experience and practice selected and organized for the purposes of providing students with opportunities to understand and interact with the real world, developing their intellectual and moral abilities and cultivating their self-consciousness of life. The latter is further differentiated between *implicit 'process' content*—pertaining to the process and practice through which knowledge was developed and formulated by human beings—and *implicit 'relational' content*—concerning knowledge relationships in and across school subjects. These three notions are essential for recognizing and appreciating the educational values and significance inherent in content—in terms of developing students' self-understanding, intellectual capacities, and social responsibilities (Ye, 2009a). They can be seen as constituting *a theory of educational content* in life-practice pedagogics.

Ye Lan (2009a) construes classroom teaching as a “dynamic” and “generative” process organized around content and directed towards cultivating the life-consciousness, intellectual and moral potential of the active individual. The act of teaching is seen as involving an active “interplay” between learners and content which could bring about a profound impact on learners. To facilitate such an interplay, classroom teachers necessarily analyze and explore the educational value and significance inherent in content in terms of explicit content, implicit ‘process’ and ‘relational’ contents, with attention to who students are, their interests, knowledge backgrounds and experiences. Teachers are to reorganize, frame and transform content in a way that allows the educational value and significance to be realized in classrooms (Ye, 2002, 2009a).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I have sought to (re)introduce knowledge into the conversation on curriculum policy and practice from the perspectives of American curriculum theory and German *Didaktik*, and Chinese education, respectively. The three key propositions which are at the heart of *Bildung*-centred *Didaktik* and Schwab's curriculum thinking find resonance in the Neo-Confucian tradition of educational thinking. As such, they can be seen as representing cross-cultural, transnational wisdoms, and together call for a way of thinking about the purpose of schooling, knowledge and

content, and classroom teaching which is markedly different from that of Young and his colleagues. As Deng (2015b) observes,

If we take such arguments seriously, then the essential point of departure for curriculum research and theorising should not be the knowledge that ‘all students are entitled to have access to’ (Young, 2013, p. 107) but the intellectual and moral powers or capacities all students need to develop through an encounter with content. In this regards, to bring knowledge back in calls for a new theory of knowledge, and in particular, a new theory of content that support and facilitate such an encounter within the current context of a knowledge economy and globalization. The development of such theories requires curriculum theorists to have a well-informed understanding of the expectations and demands placed on the current generation of students in terms of understanding, capacities and dispositions of mind, and to take up the challenge of curriculum making in terms of selecting, organizing and transforming knowledge into curriculum content in a way that allows content to open up manifold opportunities for the cultivation of intellectual and moral powers deemed desirable in the twenty-first century. (p. 783)

To bring forth the three propositions, then, is to invite curriculum and educational scholars to participate in the search for new ways of thinking about knowledge and content in relation to curriculum planning and classroom teaching for the twenty-first century. This can be accomplished through reformulating or restating these three cross-cultural wisdoms in the light of expectations and challenges posed by the new century. The New Basic Education reform provides an instantiation of how such a task is carried out in China.

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Knowledge Beyond the Metropole: Curriculum, Rurality and the Global South

Philip Roberts

‘What’s this got to do with me’ is possibly the most common question asked by students of their teachers. It was certainly asked of me many times when I was a teacher in remote areas of New South Wales, Australia, and I still hear it asked nowadays when I visit rural schools in my research work. The more I reflect on these conversations the more unsettled I increasingly become; throughout these conversations, there is an implicit questioning of the relevance and utility of the knowledges taught in these schools and the imagined lives of students and communities (Roberts, 2018a). In this chapter I outline the theoretical threads I have been pulling together in order to make sense of these conversations. This helps me to address a key curriculum issue: what counts as rural knowledge/s and how they might be engaged in education to make the curriculum more meaningful, and just, for rural students. In advancing my argument, I use the theoretical perspective of the South in relation to both

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the rural and the global metropole, in order to open alternative avenues for considering the implications for curriculum inquiry. I intentionally do not work to resolve the underlying questions, and instead propose this as a beginning-point in exploring implications for spatial–epistemic justice for rural spaces.

In earlier work (Roberts, 2018a; 2014a; Downes & Roberts, 2015) I have investigated the lack of recognition of the rural in contemporary Australian education: curriculum documents and curriculum reforms pay little-to-no attention to students beyond the city or a small range of identified equity groups needing specific attention. Students and communities in rural areas are, instead, regarded as not needing such attention. Rather, they are perpetually positioned as disadvantaged, due to on average lower levels of achievement in the official curriculum. This official curriculum, and its elaborations, also fail to mention rural communities in the official story of the nation or to provide links to examples related to a rural student’s lifeworld (Roberts, 2018a). Such absences reflect the policy and scholarly focus on the quality of the teacher rather than the nature and appropriateness of the knowledge that teaching relates to.

The absences of these knowledges in official Australian curriculum are fundamentally issues of spatial and epistemic justice (Roberts & Green, 2013; Roberts, 2018a). At their centre is the question of the very nature of knowledge that is valued in modernity. Ultimately, what ruralknowledges *are* is a work in progress. The aim here is to outline some of the influences shaping the concept, and some theoretical tools I find useful in beginning to elaborate it. For now, I am suggesting ‘rural knowledges’ as a form of knowledge “grounded in an understanding of rural life worlds as opposed to meanings rooted in a more metropolitan-cosmopolitan worldview” (Downes & Roberts, 2015, p. 81). This is akin to that described by Corbett (2010) in his discussion of the knowledges of Atlantic fishing communities that enabled them to maintain a viable industry for generations, and that sustained the culture the industry sustained. It is not as simple as using examples from students’ lived experiences to explain concepts, as this still privileges the original concept. It includes but goes beyond ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll et al., 1992) to be more about developing and reforming knowledge from a rural standpoint (Roberts, 2014b).

THE METROPOLE

The concept of the global metropole as the centre of knowledge production (Connell, 2007; Collyer, 2014; Collyer et al., 2019) has first to be problematised. Classically the metropole is the European centre of knowledge and society which has come to dominate the globe through the process of European colonisation, and more recently globalisation. While not a single locale, the metropole evokes the idea of, as leading classical examples, Paris, London, New York and Los Angeles, etc., as centres of global power. This power is based on economic dominance and knowledge production. Through using the concept of the metropole, I want to explicitly evoke, in this example, Paris, London, New York and Los Angeles, as *ideas* and not as physical temporal locations (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 1996). The strategic shift I propose, however, is to focus upon the reality, oddly overlooked in much scholarship, that while each of these exemplar cities may be sites of great wealth and power, they are also sites of extremes of poverty, social dislocation and violence. Furthermore, Paris, London, New York or Los Angeles, etc., are not France, the United Kingdom or the USA, each with extremes of diversity of economic and social capitals across their national geographies. If the metropole is itself just a concept-metaphor, then it can be recast in our thinking. The rural, the ‘hinterland’, is often positioned outside the imagined cities of the metropole—literally and metaphorically—and often refers to spaces of increasing economic uncertainty and social dislocation (Shucksmith & Brown, 2019). There exist simultaneously an advantaged city and its less advantaged rural surrounds, as the rural is corollary to the city; with both implicitly entwined as concepts, but also practically given the need of cities for resources to sustain themselves.

At this point, it might be useful to evoke the image of a babushka doll, the classic toy where one doll sits within the other in a collection of decreasing size. In the outer layer exists the notion of the metropole in its Eurocentric modernist form; within the next layer exists the rural in these contexts. Complicating the notion of the metropole, colonial cities such as Sydney, Vancouver and Cape Town, for example, need to be included as another layer. Each is surrounded by another layer of a rural space, with a distinct history and settlement pattern when compared to the European rural. Furthermore, emergent global cities such as Shanghai may well lay claim to inclusion in yet another layer, and therefore so do their relational rural spaces. Some readers may be wondering about the inclusion of the

USA in the initial framing of the Metropole. While the inclusion of the USA may be ambiguous, given the European tradition that the concept references, the USA's inclusion as part of the global cosmopolitan world is based on the origins of its settlement, with that settlement pre-dating its independence, its population, settlement patterns and subsequent global power (Connell, 2007) associated with uneven development.

Within this orientation/critique, there is an entanglement of south-and-metropole. I find using the image of the metropole allows me to maintain a focus upon the city-rural distinction I am particularly concerned with, as part of the bigger issues of the South. The 'south' is, in itself, a complex concept. It is at once a geographic space, located in the southern hemisphere, an economic and political space, beyond the centres of global power, and a cultural space removed from the culture of global economic power. The south has also been historically beyond the centres of knowledge production (Collyer et al., 2019) and related forms of power. Many of the locales cited above are themselves in the geographic south, Sydney and Cape Town, for instance, while Shanghai is often included in the cultural and economic south. Each however, just like Paris or New York, has its own rural, and this rural other, I suggest, is analogous to the Global South.

To reframe the city-rural issue as a knowledge question, I propose drawing on the insights of leading southern theorists, primarily Santos (2014) and Paraskeva (2016). South and Central America have not yet entered into the discussion because it has been framed in terms of the metropole. This illustrates the inequities produced through the metropole. To highlight the relevance to curriculum and the rural, I further address the work of Connell (2007) and Collyer et al. (2019) on the structures of knowledge production.

MODERNITY AND RURALITY

I begin by considering sociology as a discipline since my reading of curriculum inquiry comes through sociology, and it is the account of the development of the academy, and the disciplines that form the foundation of school subjects in the curriculum, that inform my thinking here. Connell's 'Southern Theory' (2007) is a theoretical starting point, outlining how sociology is a discipline of, and for, the north—or, as she suggests, the metropole.

Arguably the concept of the ‘rural’ only comes into existence thanks to the development of sociology as a discipline. One of the earliest positioning of the rural as a distinct category in sociology is Töennies’ seminal work, and its distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*—forms of social relations emergent as populations shift to emerging cities. In Töennies’ construction, *Gemeinschaft* is often rendered as either community or communal society, and *Gesellschaft* rendered as society or associational community. The semantic nuance in this work positioned *Gesellschaft* as modern society, organised and regulated on contractual terms, and *Gemeinschaft* as a traditional social order, emphasising established ways focussed upon kinship and proximity. Implicit here is a loss of trust in others as people move to the developing cities and social connection becomes diminished. For my purposes here, Woods (2011) notes that *Gesellschaft* has become associated with the urban and *Gemeinschaft* with the rural, although such categorical distinctions were not the intent of Töennies’ work, which was more focussed upon the implications of emerging settlement patterns in the rapid urban development of nineteenth-century Europe.

Continuing this distinction, Corbett (2014) argues that rural places are portrayed as the bastion of *Gemeinschaft* in contemporary societies. While this is inherently a metropole conception, it certainly holds true in Australian popular culture, and in much of the literature on the value of rural places. Indeed, the rural is often romantically portrayed as the bastion of value of the nation in much popular culture in the western cultural tradition, while increasingly, and contradictorily, being also a fearful place for those from the city who are not familiar with it. Here we juxtapose a mythology of the values of honesty, integrity, trust and handwork in founding the nation, particularly in settler nations like Australia, Canada and the USA, with the challenges of its inherent hardness, distance and unfamiliarity that make it unattractive to many. Complicating the notion of the metropole, I suggest that it even holds true in the positioning of rural China in the context of its rapid urbanisation. In the Chinese context, for instance, the founder of Chinese sociology, Fei Xiaoting (1992, translated, original 1947), who himself studied in Europe, suggests that traditional Chinese society, and the values that make it distinct, come “from the soil”. How modernity interacts with this notion, and its implication for the distinct Chinese cultural values, is a work in progress in Chinese sociology.

Within the *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* distinction is an inherent epistemological dimension that can be traced through Töennies' influence upon Durkheim and his 'mechanical' and 'organic' solidarities thesis, and the change in social relations described by Marx (Thomas et al., 2011). Indeed, in Töennies, social interaction is based upon either natural will (*Gesellschaft*) or rational will (*Gemeinschaft*) (Thomas et al., 2011), with the distinction between these being primarily the application of rationality in decision-making. While referring to social organisation they lay the basis for epistemology, with rationality inherent in privileging efficiency and the economic in the new societies being formed in urban spaces by independent social actors motivated by self-interest. Alternatively, actions based upon relationships and proximity motivated by community outcomes represented a society that was being left behind. Knowledge was, in the new society, something that existed separate from the communal and needed to be validated independently, whereas in the communal society knowledge was situated and existed in relation to people and places and shared through knowledge exchange in action. Consequently, what counts as knowledge is reflected in constructions of the rural today.

Defining the rural is a deceptively difficult undertaking, and has been one of the preoccupations of the field of rural studies, itself constituting rural sociology and rural geography. An interesting reflection here is why a distinct field of study, rural sociology, emerged from its parent field of sociology. Shucksmith and Brown (2019) suggest that the rural is often studied as part of urbanisation, indeed as the outcome of urbanisation—thus reinforcing the relationship between the rural and the city, even at this base level of academic study, with rural studies conceivably a project of maintaining the rural. Shucksmith and Brown (2019) go on to characterise trends in defining the rural as a distinction between a *social constructivist* and a more *structural/demographic* approach. The social constructivist approach, more commonly associated with European rural studies, understands the rural as a social and cultural phenomenon that is produced, and distinct in and of itself. Alternatively, the structural/demographic approach, more commonly associated with North American rural studies, understands the rural as constituted of measurable characteristics that can be compared to other places. Bollman and Reimer (2020) characterise this as a distinction between theory and operational variables. All told, definitions tend to coalesce around some combination of social/cultural dimensions of self-identity,

economic dimensions often linked to production or industry, and locational dimensions, including geography, population density and distance from somewhere else. These are then expressed in qualitative terms of experience and value or measured and represented quantitatively through statistics.

TOWARDS A RURAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Durkheim's *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* distinction can be seen at work in the elements of defining the rural. On the *Gesellschaft* side of the ledger, we can observe the elements of identity, belonging and culture that is understood in relation to a sense of rural place and identity. It is also often from here that theories of rurality arise, aiming to understand its distinctive characteristics. *Gemeinschaft* is more associated with the measurable elements such as geography, location, economic outputs, population density and educational outcomes. The reality is, of course, not as simple as the binary implied here, and indeed taxonomies of the rural work to integrate both elements (Bollman & Reimer, 2020; Shucksmith & Brown, 2019), as each can be represented to some extent both qualitatively and quantitatively. Though, each is often positioned in relation to an imagined elsewhere (Roberts & Green, 2013), which is often not acknowledged. Consequently, the rural still only exists in relation to its metropole Other.

It is, however, the epistemological issues in defining, and accounting for, the rural that I am preoccupied with here. Using the shift initiated by Töennies, then coming through from Durkheim, it seems self-evident that the more qualitative approaches tend towards relational and situated subjectivities that value rural places in and of themselves; whereas the more quantitative aspects tend towards a rationalist and detached framework for explaining phenomena that are separated from particular places. Each draws upon a different nature of knowledge of, and for, the rural. The former is situated in the experience of the rural, whereas the latter is about describing the rural, while both tend towards an implicit metropole norm (Roberts & Green, 2013).

Overall, there is limited work on what may be described as an epistemology of the rural. My aim up to this point has been to lay some foundations for thinking about knowledge and the rural in new ways. I have been suggesting that the rural is defined by the academic field that constructs it as other, and that this process of production is entwined

with the knowledge production valued in the metropole. Now, I extend the account (i.e. Tönnies through Durkheim [and Marx] progression) to include Bernstein and his concept of vertical and horizontal discourse.

KNOWLEDGE AND THE RURAL

Bernstein's vertical and horizontal discourses are the third component of the theoretical tools I am proposing that we use to think differently about ruralknowledges in the curriculum (Bernstein, 2000). In this construction, horizontal discourses are situated and associated with everyday life, whereas vertical discourses are removed from contexts and experiences—we might consider social or cultural studies, applied Mathematics and applied English with the former, and Physics, Mathematics and classical Literature with the latter. Again, a *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* distinction appear self-evident here. Young (2007), in his appropriation of the vertical and horizontal knowledge metaphor, explicitly reflects these notions, drawing upon Durkheim, to reprise the idea of 'sacred' and 'profane' social locations of knowledge—the former having an immediacy and practicality, and the latter being considered and removed from the everyday.

Staying with Young (2007), and his work with Muller (Young & Muller, 2016), the distinction between 'knowledge of the powerful' and 'powerful knowledge', related to vertical and horizontal discourse, provides a bridge for us to return this discussion to a consideration of curriculum and the rural. In this construction, knowledge of the powerful, or high-status knowledge, refers to who gets to define what counts as knowledge. Powerful knowledge, on the other hand, relates to knowledge that all citizens should have an entitlement to and thus is a requirement of equality (Young & Muller, 2016).

For the rural, this is a classic thought-trap, a false dichotomy. As we have seen, if knowledge is produced in the global metropole, both the south and—our focus here—the rural, are positioned outside its production (Collyer et al., 2019). The work of Young and Muller (2016) assumes a universality of the global metropole (Roberts, 2018a) that erases areas outside of it, including rural areas of the metropole and the Global South. This false dichotomy of 'powerful knowledge' and 'knowledge of the powerful', in Young's (2007) original construction at least, only holds in a knowledge system built upon knowledges of the metropole. Furthermore, powerful knowledge becomes the pursuit

of knowledge of that metropole in order to gain advantage in the global knowledge system it perpetuates; whereas, knowledge of the powerful can be seen as an ingenious ruse: by noting that there are inequities to focus on, it ignores the ones we come to internalise. Powerful knowledge essentially facilitates rural mobility; knowledge of the powerful is knowledge of the metropole, as is powerful knowledge. It is, to borrow a phrase from Santos (2014), an epistemicide of rural knowledges, that recasts the classic ‘what/whose knowledge is of most worth?’ question in a new light (Apple, 2004; Pinar, 2012).

A GENERALISABLE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CASE

To reinforce this point, I use two Australian researchers, Teese (2013) and Bleazby (2015), to discuss ‘curriculum hierarchy’. Teese (2013) argues that knowledge, as represented in the curriculum in Australia at least, is stratified into high-status and low-status knowledge. Higher status subjects are characterised by a long history, greater literacy demands, abstract ideas, rich theoretical content, relationships, patterns and logic, and a focus on personal distinction. The more abstract, theoretical, cognitive, objective, universal and certain a subject’s content appears, the higher is its status—for instance, Mathematics, Physics, Economics or Classical Literature. In contrast/contradistinction, lower status subjects have a more recent history, lesser literacy demands, applied ideas, less theoretical ideas, fewer relationships, patterns and logic, and focus on relevance—Applied Mathematics, Environmental Science, Business Studies or Media Studies. Bleazby (2015), taking a more philosophical perspective while referencing the Australian Curriculum and more specifically the English (UK) Curriculum, arrives at similar conclusion: The more abstract, theoretical, cognitive, objective, universal and certain a subject’s content appears, the higher is its status; whereas subjects associated with concreteness, practicality, corporeality and subjectiveness are regarded as lower status.

This notion of higher–lower status knowledge then translates in practice into what Teese (2013, p. 229) has referred to as a ‘curriculum hierarchy’. An analysis of the social characteristics of students, and schools, in the Australian State of Victoria (Teese 2013; Teese, Lamb, & Helme, 2009) reveals that students from more advantaged backgrounds, and schools serving more advantaged communities, overwhelmingly study

higher-status subjects in the later years of secondary school. Furthermore, these students and their schools achieve higher average grades and an overwhelming majority of matriculation places in university. Indeed, entry to university is predicated upon achievement in the senior secondary curriculum, with the system aligned to this curriculum function down through the preceding years of schooling.

In a recent extension of Teese's work, and focussing on Australia's most populous state of New South Wales (Roberts et al., 2019), I have shown that this hierarchical structure is enduring and exists in another Australian jurisdiction. Furthermore, I also showed that students outside the metropolitan areas of the State are accessing high-status subjects at a significantly lower rate than metropolitan students, even when controlled for student social background. This latter finding appears to be a function of the limited school-subject breadth possible in the small schools that dominate rural areas, and rural students' perception of the lack of relevance of these subjects. In a related study with rural students around Australia and their aspirations to study high-status subjects (Roberts, 2018b) I found that students who wanted to remain in rural places rather than move to the city did not see the relevance of these subjects to rural industries. This is significant, given the strong focus on reforming the curriculum to better meet the needs of work (as Yates [2011] points out)—although that is a view of curriculum as primarily serving the economy I do not generally support. The lack of connection to rural industries and students' lifeworlds (Roberts, 2018a) reinforces a lack of understanding of work and related knowledges in rural spaces, by curriculum designers and teachers—both of whom, I suggest, are enculturated with the values of knowledge from the metropole.

Reprising the sociological account that developed above (Töennies, through Durkheim and Bernstein, and the *Gesellschaft/ Gemeinschaft*, vertical/horizontal construction of knowledge), I argue that a distinct lineage that marginalises knowledges of, and from, the rural can be observed. Indeed, the very nature of defining the rural reinforces this proposition, with its distinction, itself rooted in Töennies, between knowledges situated in contexts and relationships or removed from them. On this distinction, the field of rural studies has a distinct area of research in relation to knowledge exchange, aimed at bridging the vernacular expertise of the rural workforce and the expertise of professionals in a two-way exchange (Lowe et al., 2019). This would appear

to be a concession by rural studies itself that it is formed and validated in one frame of knowledge, as distinct from the object of its study. In the education sphere, and directly related to curriculum, well-developed areas of research such as rural literacies (Donehower, Hogg, & Schell, 2007; Green & Corbett, 2013), spatial reasoning in mathematics (Lowrie & Jorgensen, 2018) and ethnomathematics (D'Ambrosio, 1987) have illustrated that there exist distinct knowledges in and of rural places. These however have had limited utility in official curriculum documents (Roberts, 2014a), thereby reinforcing the metro-centric bias of curriculum development.

Many readers will, I hope, see parallels in the arguments here to knowledges of the south, described by Connell (2007) as often related to land, place and relationships, and Indigenous knowledges. Indigenous knowledges, also discussed by Connell (2007), bring further diversities of ontology and epistemology, that have been displaced through colonialism and globalisation in favour of knowledge produced in the metropole. Related to this, Santos (2014) separates metropolitan societies from colonial societies, again referencing forms of knowledge of, and from, relationships to land and community. Here I should note that knowledge born of solidarity and struggle against the metropole is also implicated. These parallels, and their distinct meanings in national contexts—such as Aboriginal knowledges in Australia—are intentionally flagged, as further examples of the struggles for knowledge beyond the metropole against what Santos terms ‘epistemicide’. While they are inexorably part of this present argument, it is not my position to represent Indigenous positions on this, but instead to support their expressions and arguments. This is even though, as I have suggested, the rural has characteristics analogous to Indigenous struggles. As these arguments gain traction, there is a risk that such knowledges are ‘permitted’ to exist, but in a manner akin to horizontal knowledges, something which I hope I have illustrated to be a false dichotomy, itself privileging the metropole.

HISTORY OF DISCIPLINES

Of significance here is the history of the disciplines themselves as metropole constructions. The disciplines provide the architecture through which curriculum frameworks are subsequently developed, with school subjects then further representing the disciplines (Green, 2010). Adding to the earlier argument of curriculum hierarchy in the Australian context,

Teese (2013) has outlined the history of various school subjects in order to highlight that the high-status subjects are aligned to university-based disciplines. These universities were themselves established on the model of the European university and based upon metropole knowledge organised in disciplines. With the advent of mass schooling, the only curriculum model that existed was organised around university entry for the social élites. Almost by default, this model then became the basic organising principle for school curriculum in Australia. It is important to note here that mass schooling itself only came about because of European colonisation and displaced the educational practices and knowledges engaged in by Aboriginal communities for thousands of years. While not necessarily following the particular historical quirks of colonial Australia, international comparisons of curriculum, especially school subjects, reinforce the near uniformity of curriculum based on metropole disciplines, especially within metropole nations, and those aspiring to share its benefits. The organising principles of school curriculum are then inherently organised around knowledge from the metropole, thereby imbued with the contradictions inherent for ruralknowledges as discussed earlier in the chapter.

These metropole disciplines as organising structures for curriculum have a particularly problematic history in the south, and in colonial nations. They provide the intellectual basis for subjugation and dispossession (Paraskeva, 2016; Santos 2014). Given that the field of curriculum studies emerged as a strand of the social sciences, it cannot easily be divorced from the foundations of the social sciences and their relation to empire (Connell, 2007). This positions curriculum, and its study—especially in the south—as complicit in the ongoing marginalisation and domination of the south, Indigenous peoples, and (in my own context) Aboriginal Australians. As Forsyth (2014) has explained, the university project in Australia provided the intellectual basis for the conquest of Aboriginal lands with knowledge of geology, geography, anthropology and (European) agriculture, and then provided the professional classes with the justification, and (im)moral foundation, of metropole values and knowledges to continue. While not seeking to claim a moral equivalency, it has been my aim here to suggest that the rural, in the global metropole and the south, has been overlooked in issues of knowledge domination and marginalisation. Furthermore, I have been suggesting that the theoretical tools of the south are helpful in illustrating the process of marginalising rural knowledges in the curriculum.

CURRICULUM AND RURAL SCHOOLS

As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, Australian curriculum reforms have been characterised by the absence of debates on knowledge (Yates & Collins, 2010), suggesting that questions of knowledge have been considered as already resolved. I also suggested that this is manifestly untrue when knowledge is considered from the perspective of rural communities and their students (Roberts, 2014a). Instead, we observe the notion of *Gemeinschaft* perpetuated in education, where the main difference with rural schools is often assumed to be a connection with nature, either as a connection to land in learning outside or land-based industries (Halsey, 2018; Theobald, 1992). Notably, however, the focus for rural schooling tends to focus almost exclusively on the process of learning and achievement, and not the nature of the curriculum, and knowledge, that organises that learning (Roberts, 2018a).

In the thought-lines I have set up here, the rural is part of the epistemological south as proposed by Santos (2014) and Paraskeva (2016). This epistemological south refers to peoples and cultures that have been marginalised through imperialism and the global knowledge system that legitimated it. The resultant knowledge system has all but eliminated other forms of knowledge, especially those technically and culturally intrinsic to peoples of the Global South, and set up a system where the rules of what is allowed to count as knowledge have been imposed from the metropole. Entwined in modernity, this ongoing imperialism sets up the system of knowing that is the foundation of global capitalism, and epistemology itself. Countering these epistemologies of the south refers to the identification and validation of knowledges that have been deemed marginal by the rules of ‘western’ ‘scientific’ knowledge as a form of ongoing imperialism. The critiques of, and from, the south however largely remain silent on the rural. It has been my intention to link these ideas to thinking about rural knowledges, and then to the curriculum, as one vehicle through which the rural is produced as peripheral. Countering the (to borrow a phrase) epistemicide of rural knowledge is to me a fundamental issue of epistemic justice (Anderson, 2012), as a constituent part of spatial justice (Roberts & Green, 2013; Soja, 2010).

The aim here has been to propose new avenues for considering curriculum for rural schooling, and knowledge as it relates to, and from, rural places more generally. To follow this line of thinking, however, leaves some fundamental questions of what to do as unanswered—indeed, to

answer the questions implied is the ongoing work I invite you to join me in, and propose as an avenue of curriculum inquiry focussed on rural knowledges. I will pre-empt one issue, though, and say that this is not to propose a relativism of knowledge. As Moore (2013) suggests, some knowledge might offer better explanations than others. However, it may well be that knowledge produced outside the global metropole has better explanatory value: it is just that they just have not been allowed to be seen. What is clear is that while our curriculum and knowledge system is siloed in the knowledge production structure of the metropole (Collyer et al., 2019), there is no route for new ideas to follow of their own volition. Instead, to use an Australian colloquialism, we'll be like a brush turkey scratching the soil. Occasionally our understanding of the world is upended—for instance, the idea of a black swan was fanciful in European understandings, where all swans are white. However, with the arrival of European colonisers in Australia they soon discovered that here, in the south, swans are indeed black, and with that, assumptions changed, along with the textbook. Ultimately modernity and education are predicated on progress. That progress is shaped by the move to the city—the global metropole—and there exists no notion of progress beyond this. In the interests of epistemic-spatial justice, however, we need to rethink the nature of curriculum from the perspective of the rural, and the global south more generally.

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Curriculum Making as Design Activity

Yew Leong Wong

Curriculum making is challenging work. Many interrelated issues must be taken into consideration (Schwab, 1973; Tyler, 1949; Walker, 2003). Furthermore, the complexity of the curriculum means that, firstly, no part of the curriculum can be adequately addressed in isolation from its other parts (Banathy, 1991; Goodlad, 1975; Hoban, 2002; Sarason, 1971), and secondly, curriculum making is an ongoing process that is never truly finished (Mason, 2008; Morrison, 2006, 2008). How, then, can educators develop and implement an effective curriculum?

This chapter suggests that educators may find the methodology of design useful for curriculum making. After all, most design problems are, like curriculum issues, complex social system problems.¹ I begin with a

¹Horst Rittel was probably the first design theorist to make this observation about design problems (Buchanan, 1992). The complexity of curriculum issues and their socio-political character are highlighted in the works of Ralph Tyler, Joseph Schwab, John Goodlad, Henry Giroux, Michael Apple, and many other curriculum theorists.

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brief description of design and design problems; the key ideas from this account are then applied to curriculum making.

DESIGN

The common view among designers and design theorists is that design has no specialised subject matter: the problems that designers address may concern any domain of human experience.² What binds these problems together is the question that is at the heart of each of them: can things be better than they currently are (Simon, 1969)? Designers create possibilities for how things could be and then select what they think is the best among them for implementation.

The creations of designers can, and often do, affect people's lives in significant ways: materially, experientially, and ethically (Forty, 1986; Grudin, 2010; Helfand, 2016). Many designers therefore deem it their responsibility to ensure that their creations are not only efficient and effective in performing a practical function, but also human-centred and meaningful (Brown, 2009; Hara, 2011; Helfand, 2016).³ Here, designers derive their authority from their recognised experience and practical wisdom in dealing with similar problems in the past, rather than some expert knowledge they may have about specific subjects. This opens design artefacts to public scrutiny and debate (Buchanan, 1995).

Design can therefore be said to play two roles in human affairs. First, in the practicalities of our daily existence, it is the deliberate creation of concepts or plans for artefacts that are intended to perform specific practical functions better than currently available solutions (Parsons, 2016). Second, and at the same time, it is a creative expression of competing ideas about how we should live (Borgmann, 2006; Buchanan, 1995).

DESIGN PROBLEMS

Probably the most widely accepted account of design problems is Horst Rittel's characterisation of them as 'wicked problems' (Rittel, 1972; Rittel

²For example, see Brown (2009), Buchanan (1989, 1992), Heskett (2005), Martin (2007), and Papanek (1984).

³Many design theorists have expressed a similar view, e.g. see Borgmann (1984, 1995, 2006), Grudin (2010), Krippendorff (2006), Norman (1988), and Papanek (1984).

& Webber, 1973). The main idea of this view is that design problems are indeterminate, i.e., they cannot be definitively articulated.

To see why design problems are indeterminate, we must first grasp the relationship between problem-*finding* and problem-*solving* in design. According to Rittel and Webber (1973), when tackling a design problem, the information that one needs to define the problem depends on one's ideas for solving it. But these ideas are themselves ways of understanding the problem, because how one specifies a design problem *is* a specification of the direction in which a solution is to be sought. In other words, one's understanding of a design problem co-evolves with one's ideas for solving it. This is very different from how problems are handled in elementary mathematics (e.g., solving an equation) or classical science (e.g., analysing the structure of an unknown compound). In these disciplines, problems can be exhaustively studied and fully articulated separately from the problem-solving process, and it is clear what exactly is required to solve them.

Consider, for example, a project to design disposable diapers for adults. What is the problem here? Is it the technical issue for making baby diapers work in adult sizes? Partly, perhaps. Information about variations in body shape and size among adults, the ability of different types of materials to contain the quantities of urine and faeces that an adult can produce at any one time, and so on, must therefore be embedded in the definition of the problem and considered in the creation of its solution. Who will be using the diapers? Can those who need to wear diapers put them on or change by themselves, or will they need assistance? How must the form of the diaper be modified so that one can easily help an adult put it on or change? How do those who need to wear diapers feel about having to wear diapers? As soon as one regards these and other questions about the experience of using adult diapers to be among the issues that the solution should address, they immediately figure in one's understanding of the problem.

Clearly, problem-finding and problem-solving in design are one and the same process. Hence, to definitively articulate a design problem, one must first build an inventory of all conceivable ways of solving the problem. But this is impossible to accomplish ahead of time, because it would mean already having a definitive understanding of, and hence a complete solution to, the problem right from the start. Design problems simply cannot be addressed through a linear, sequential, and purely rational approach that demands a complete, definitive statement of the

problem as a pre-requisite for commencing the process of creating its solution (Cross, 2011; Dorst, 2011; Schön, 1983).

But definitive formulations of design problems are impossible in any case. The complex, open-ended nature of design problems means that, firstly, there are many stakeholders with different, potentially conflicting, needs, goals, and values involved in any design problem; secondly, there is no end to a design problem's causal connections to its external environment; and thirdly, the various elements of a design problem and the different components of its external environment are so intricately interconnected that any movement anywhere in the system would cause confounding waves of ramifications throughout the system (Brown, 2009; Rittel & Webber, 1973). Therefore, there can be no unique, complete, and objectively correct way of articulating and solving any design problem, and there is always a chance of discovering, even after the completion of a project, a hitherto unconsidered perspective of the problem. All formulations of a design problem are thus only partial understandings of the problem (Cross, 2011; Dorst, 2011; Schön, 1983). How a design problem is ultimately understood and solved depend on the designer's experience, practical wisdom, worldview, and ability and willingness to engage stakeholders in open and sincere conversations about their circumstances (Brown, 2009; Buchanan, 1992, 1995; Grudin, 2010; Helfand, 2016; Mitcham, 1995; Rittel, 1972; Rittel & Webber, 1973). It follows from this that solutions in design can never be true or false, only better or worse (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

Two further consequences follow from the indeterminacy of design problems. First, there is no rule internal to the logic of the problem that will signal the completion of a design project (Rittel & Webber, 1973). Since there is always a chance of finding a new perspective of the problem, it always makes sense for the designer to try to find a better way of defining and solving the problem. What ends a design project in practice are considerations that are external to the problem, such as time constraints, resource limitations, a loss of patience, and so on. Second, no test can conclusively determine whether the definition or solution of a design problem is good or bad, because any implemented solution would produce waves of ramifications over a lengthy, virtually unbounded, duration, and there is no way of knowing for sure, immediately or ultimately, when or whether all ramifications have exhausted themselves (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

In recent years, a lot of attention has been given to the experiential, semantic, and ethical dimensions of design problems. A design problem is essentially a situation in which the needs of a group of people are unmet, inadequately addressed, or served in a way that inconveniences or harms them or others. Such a situation often provokes strong emotions in the stakeholders (Helfand, 2016; Norman, 1988), causing them to attach negative meanings to the things they associate with it (Helfand, 2016; Krippendorff, 2006; Turkle, 1995, 2005), and significantly influencing their ethical beliefs and actions (Borgmann, 1984, 1995; Kroes & Verbeek, 2014; Turkle, 2011; Weinberg, 1966; Winner, 1980).

Consider wheelchairs. A wheelchair that is too difficult for users to operate by themselves is of no use to those who are unable to walk, unless they are accompanied by someone who is able and willing to push them about. Furthermore, for wheelchair users who live in an area where the design of the built environment has paid little or no mind to their special mobility needs, the meaning they associate with their wheelchair may gradually shift from ‘a tool to help me get about’ to ‘a constant unhappy reminder of my disability and loss of independence’. In the end, to avoid the frustration and sense of futility that they inevitably feel whenever they venture into public spaces, these wheelchair users may choose to confine themselves to their own homes, inadvertently severing themselves from public society (Disabled People’s Association, 2015; Fam, 2016; Goh, 2013; Goy, 2016).

A solution that is efficient and effective in performing a practical function, but fails to address, or addresses only inadequately, the problem’s experiential and semantic dimensions, or brings about negative ethical consequences, is a bad solution. That designers should do their best to avoid creating such solutions is a sentiment that is easy to agree with in principle, but difficult to live up to in practice. As Rittel and Webber (1973) noted, every attempted solution to a design problem, even a small trial, is implemented in the real-world and will therefore have real and irreversible effects on people, and these effects have long half-lives. However, the indeterminacy of design problems entails that designers must experiment, and hence make many errors, before finally getting it right (Brown, 2009; Cross, 2011; Schön, 1983). In addition, designers rarely design for just one person. Typically, they create solutions that will be used by many different people across many different types of situations. Often, these situations also involve non-users whose experiences are affected by the use of the solutions. The sheer diversity of possible

contexts in which a design artefact may be used and the intricate interconnections among the different concerns and values that constitute each of these contexts make it especially challenging to attain the goal of creating a solution that is good for all stakeholders—functionally, experientially, semantically, and ethically. Yet, designers have enjoyed much success at solving such knotty problems. Would it be useful for educators to treat curriculum making as a design activity and apply some of the designer’s methods in this task?

THE ‘WICKED’ CURRICULUM

Seeing curriculum making as a design activity calls attention to the fact that a curriculum has four interrelated dimensions: functional, experiential, semantic, and ethical. Developing a good curriculum requires the curriculum maker to address all four dimensions adequately.

Consider the introduction of Project Work into the Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (GCE ‘A’ Level) curriculum in 2000. The subject’s design is grounded in the principles of project-based learning.⁴ It aims to develop students’ skills in collaboration, communication, independent learning, and synthesising and using knowledge from different areas of learning to understand and solve real-world problems; it requires students to work in teams of four or five persons over a period of about eight months on a project concerning a real-world issue of their own choosing; and it formally assesses students’ communication skills and ability to critically and creatively use knowledge from different areas to address real-world problems by examining their project reports, project presentations, and self-reflection essays (Ministry of Education & University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 2017). The subject’s original assessment design also required students to demonstrate their collaboration skills through their visible behaviours during discussions and a detailed documentation of their processes (Bryer, 2006).

Project Work was a ground-breaking subject in the history of Singapore education when it was first implemented. At the time, although project-based coursework has already been a feature of a few subjects

⁴For an introduction to problem-based learning, see Blumenfeld et al. (1991), Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2006), and Thomas (2000).

for several years,⁵ Project Work was the first subject to teach and assess students entirely through an extended group project; it was also the first such subject that all GCE 'A' Level students must take. Until that moment, learning in Singapore schools offering the GCE 'A' Level curriculum was largely facilitated through traditional teacher-centred approaches. To prepare schools and teachers for the implementation of Project Work, the education ministry organised numerous professional development courses in project-based learning for teachers. The subject was also trialled in schools for two years before it finally went live in 2002. Even then, it was not until 2003, after schools and teachers had experienced a full year of its implementation and identified areas in their processes where further adjustments were necessary, that students were officially assessed in the subject. To this extent, those who created Project Work were aware that the successful development and implementation of a curriculum requires attention to be paid to several of its aspects simultaneously.

However, the curriculum developers behind Project Work had focused almost exclusively on the functional aspects of the curriculum (e.g., teacher learning, operational processes, and teaching resources). Although they had ensured that adequate resources and structures were in place for the implementation of the subject, they did not consider (or if they did, not sufficiently) the experiential, semantic, and ethical dimensions of the subject's design and implementation, i.e. how the subject would be experienced by teachers and students, what it would mean to them, and how it would influence their behaviours.

For example, in the early years of the subject's implementation, teachers' uncertainty about how best to facilitate project-based learning and students' anxiety about their academic performances in a culture that places an almost excessive emphasis on examination results led to an inordinate reliance on templates to guide students through their projects; in the extreme cases, the teachers, not the students, were the ones driving the projects. This inadvertently diverted the subject from its intended objectives of cultivating independent learning and knowledge application skills in students. Within the context of a highly competitive educational environment, the subject's original assessment design also

⁵For example, Theatre Studies and Drama in the Singapore-Cambridge GCE 'A' Level curriculum.

nudged students towards staging inauthentic performances of collaborative behaviours whenever their teacher was observing their discussions and producing needlessly detailed documentation of their processes, thereby increasing the workload of both teachers and students beyond what they could manage. Further, the single-minded focus of both teachers and students to get the job done caused many students to have little idea what it was that they were supposed to have learned, even by the end of the course; consequently, many students felt that the subject was tedious, unpleasant, and ultimately meaningless (Bryer, 2006). To the credit of the education ministry, many of these problems were addressed through two subsequent cycles of review and redesign (in 2004 and 2017) and several briefings and professional development activities. Nevertheless, as Rittel and Webber (1973) had warned, the effects of the subject's original design on those who had experienced it were irreversible—and these effects had rather long half-lives.⁶

All curricula involve people, and people experience things in ways that are influenced by their personal histories, cultures, psychological states, beliefs, values, aspirations, fears, circumstances, and so on. The specific ways teachers and students experience a curriculum shape the meanings they make of it, which in turn affect their beliefs about and behaviours towards the learning and assessment activities and materials they encounter in the curriculum. To see curriculum making as a design activity is to see it as the curriculum maker's responsibility to address, in a way that pays attention to various contextual conditions, all of the following concerns during the curriculum making process: operational matters, structural considerations, teachers' professional development, students' learning needs, the quality of teachers' and students' experiences, the meanings and beliefs they will form about the curriculum and education, and the behaviours they will come to exhibit as a result of their experiences and meaning-making. But how might curriculum makers accomplish this when, potentially, the curriculum may be experienced by

⁶I teach a class on project-based learning at my university. My students are trainee teachers who have been hired to teach one of the traditional subjects in junior colleges, such as Economics and English Literature. Most of them are likely to also be deployed to teach Project Work at their schools. Some of them are greatly troubled by the prospect of teaching the subject, because they believe it will not benefit their future students. These trainee teachers formed this belief some 5–7 years ago when they themselves were students in Project Work classes.

many people with different, sometimes conflicting, perspectives? In addition, seeing curriculum making as a design activity also means recognising that there is no definitive way of formulating and solving the challenges that one will encounter when trying to address the above concerns. How might the methodology of design help the curriculum maker here?

DESIGNING CURRICULUM

I sketch here three design techniques that curriculum makers would find useful: interpretive framing, designing for deep meaning, and co-designing with users.

Interpretive Framing

The ‘wicked’ nature of design problems makes it necessary for designers to adopt an approach that is interpretive, reflective, responsive, exploratory, and collaborative; the processes of such an approach are non-sequential, iterative, and ongoing (Cross, 2011; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Schön, 1983, 1987). Dorst (2011) describes what such an approach looks like using a cognitive model that is derived from formal logic.⁷

According to Dorst (2011), designing is a kind of value creation. It relies fundamentally on abductive reasoning and can be described as an attempt to complete one of the following equations.

<i>Abduction-1</i>	WHAT (thing) <i>Unknown</i>	+	HOW (working principle) <i>Known</i>	leads to	VALUE (aspired) <i>Known</i>
<i>Abduction-2</i>	WHAT (thing) <i>Unknown</i>	+	HOW (working principle) <i>Unknown</i>	leads to	VALUE (aspired) <i>Known</i>

‘VALUE’ refers to the value that the designer aspires to create. This is typically known at the start of a design project. ‘WHAT’ is the artefact (object, process, system, etc.) that constitutes the solution to the design problem. The artefact works in accordance with some theory, hypothesis,

⁷Dorst credits Roozenburg and Eekels (1995) with the development of this model and traces the origin of its key concepts to Charles Peirce’s account of human reasoning.

or principle about how things operate—the ‘HOW’ in the equations—in a specific context to achieve the aspired value. At the start of a project, the ‘WHAT’ is unknown: it is the solution that the designer will eventually create.

In one type of design problems, ‘Abduction-1’, the working principle in operation (the ‘HOW’) and the contextual conditions of the problem are known and act as constraints or guides in the designer’s creative process. The challenge confronting the designer is to create an artefact (the ‘WHAT’) that will, in accordance with the existing working principle, bring about the aspired value within those contextual conditions. The process is experimental and iterative. The designer generates an idea for a potential solution, inserts it into the equation, and sees how close it comes to bringing about the aspired value under the known working principle and contextual conditions. The result of this experiment helps the designer work out how the idea should be modified or if a different idea is needed.

In another type of design problems, Abduction-2, the working principle is not known at the start of the project. Such problems call for radical innovations that will disrupt how things currently work. The challenge to the designer is to create an artefact-and-working-principle pair that will bring about the aspired value within the contextual conditions of the problem. The designer does this by first generating a list of possible working principles. Each potential working principle combines with the aspired value to form an interpretive frame, i.e. a perspective of the problem. The interpretive frame transforms the Abduction-2 type problem into a pseudo-Abduction-1 type problem, allowing the designer to focus on experimenting with ideas for solutions that fit that interpretive frame. The designer then repeats this process with the other interpretive frames, until a satisfactory or desirable solution is found.

Applied to curriculum making, the curriculum maker may be facing an Abduction-1 or Abduction-2 type problem. Abduction-1 type problems are those ‘closed’ problems that teachers deal with on a daily basis, such as having to quickly modify a lesson plan due to the unexpected breakdown of a piece of equipment, or having to adjust the unit plan because a significant number of students have performed poorly in a recently administered test. With such a problem, the working principle (e.g., the general teaching approach) is known and constrains or guides (though not in a strictly deterministic way) the teacher’s search for a solution that would work within the specific contextual conditions of the problem.

Abduction-2 type curriculum problems are far more complex by comparison. They typically require a radical shift in educational philosophy or teaching or learning approaches. With such problems, there is little clarity as to what the new curriculum design (the ‘WHAT’) should be and how the eventual solution would work (the ‘HOW’). Suppose that a school in an educational system that relies heavily on traditional forms of teaching, learning, and assessment decides to radically reform its curriculum so that learning will become more authentic and meaningful to its students. Does this mean facilitating learning by asking the students to tackle the tasks and problems that adults encounter in their lives, or inviting them to address the issues that matter to them right now? What teaching approaches should the teachers use? Would the students need to acquire new skills before they can benefit from the new curriculum? How should the students be assessed? How would higher educational institutions or employers regard the students’ results in relation to the accomplishments of students from the other schools in the system? Does the school day need to be restructured? It is indeterminate how these and other questions about teaching, learning, and the school’s operations should be answered. The curriculum maker must create both the new curriculum and the conditions needed to support its operation.

Like the designer, the curriculum maker can achieve this by exploring different interpretive frames for understanding the problem at hand. In the above example, the curriculum maker may experiment with an apprenticeship model of learning, a student-directed approach, a co-construction approach, and so on. Each of these possible working principles combines with the aspired value of authentic and meaningful learning to form an interpretive frame. Each interpretive frame is a perspective of the problem. The curriculum maker uses each frame as an inspiration and guide to generate different possible curricula for consideration. The curriculum maker cycles through the stages of interpretive framing, idea-generation, and testing and refining in an iterative, reflective, and responsive manner, until a solution that is desirable to all stakeholders is found (Schön, 1983). As it is with design problems, the curriculum maker’s ideas for the design of the curriculum co-evolves with his or her understanding of the curriculum problem at hand. The use of interpretive frames as a cognitive tool enables the curriculum maker to address complex curriculum problems in a systematic manner.

DESIGNING FOR DEEP MEANING

According to Albert Borgmann (1984, 1995, 2006), the artefacts that we design and use simultaneously disburden and engage us. Disburdenment is the reduction or removal of the human effort needed to accomplish a goal. Design artefacts disburden us by ‘procuring or making available a commodity such as warmth, transportation, or food ... without burdening us in any way, i.e., [by making them] commodiously present, instantaneously, ubiquitously, safely, and easily’ (Borgmann, 1984, p. 77). For example, making a meal from scratch requires planning, going to the market for the ingredients, perhaps discussing with the butcher which cut of meat is best for a particular dish, preparing the ingredients, keeping an eye on the fire, stirring the pot periodically, and so on. The whole process can take up half a day. Heating up a frozen pre-cooked meal instead would reduce all this work to just a quick trip to the supermarket and operating the microwave—all done in half an hour if one lives fifteen minutes from the supermarket. The massive effort needed to make a meal from scratch is now undertaken by the pre-cooked meal and the microwave, efficiently, without mess, and without one having to pay the meal any attention while it is being heated up. One can even perform another task while waiting. It is only when the pre-cooked meal fails to work as promised that one is forced to confront and reflect upon the impact it has had on one’s life.

In Borgmann’s view, there are two kinds of design artefacts: *things* and *devices*. ‘Things’, like manually cooked meals and fire-bearing hearths, demand deep physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional engagement even as they disburden us in some ways. For Borgmann, engagement is the proportionate correspondence between the amount of time and cognitive and emotional resources we are expending, or willing to expend, on a particular task and the significance and profundity of the task. Things promote or support deep engagement with our environments and the people in them, because our interactions with things help to create meaning in our lives. On the other hand, ‘devices’, like pre-cooked meals and central heating units, disburden us without offering us any genuine meaning and hence do not engage us in a deep way.

Borgmann (1995, 2006) observes that the dominant trend in design practice today is to satiate the unrelenting consumerist appetite that characterises contemporary human society with the creation of an ever-growing quantity of devices. Consequently, we are becoming shallower,

lazier, and more impatient, constantly demanding easy and instantaneous gratification in conditions of increasing isolation and alienation.⁸

Applying Borgmann's ideas to curriculum making, the curriculum maker must be urged to create curricula that are personally meaningful, and hence deeply engaging, to students. On one level, this means creating learning experiences that are related to things that matter to students or things that teachers can bring students to care about. On another level, this means creating learning experiences that do not disburden students too much cognitively, i.e., the learning experiences should be suitably challenging to students. This is because tasks that are too easy to complete will quickly become uninteresting and meaningless to those who have been assigned to tackle them. In Borgmann's language, curriculum makers must ensure that the curricula they create are things, not devices.

John Hunter's (2013) World Peace Game curriculum illustrates these ideas perfectly. Structured as a role-playing simulation game that is played over 16–24 hours, the curriculum invites students to collaborate and solve about fifty of the world's most urgent crises, such as climate change, terrorism, and poverty. Hunter provides his students with some basic information about the crises and a basic framework for learning and then largely leaves them to their own devices. The students quickly become engrossed in the intricacies of the problems they encounter; emotional engagement occurs when students find themselves having to negotiate with one another and write letters to the families of soldiers who died in the wars they have started. The game is deeply meaningful to the students, because the problems they encounter in the game are real, cognitively challenging, and emotionally engaging. Making the students' experiences even more meaningful is the fact that the game (or curriculum) gives them a lot of space to explore and construct their own knowledge and provides immediate and clear feedback on how they are progressing. Despite the difficulty of the challenges faced, Hunter's students, some as young as ten-years-old, invariably succeed in solving the crises.

CO-DESIGNING WITH USERS

Different things matter to different people. How can one create a curriculum that is meaningful to different individuals at the same time?

⁸Similar observations have been made by Bernard Stiegler (2015), Sherry Turkle (2011), and George Monbiot (2016).

Ultimately, the different things that different people care about can be sorted into the following categories: home life, work or study life, health concerns, recreation, and relationships. Each of us care about different things in each of these categories; if we care about the same things, we might do so in different ways and to different extents. Nevertheless, we can be brought to empathise with and care about the concerns of others, because we share some of those concerns, and those that we do not share belong in the same categories as our other concerns (Peterson, 2017).

Here is an example. Several years ago, I designed and delivered a nine-hour project-based learning unit for teaching some Primary 4 mathematical concepts: ratio, proportion, and the properties of basic geometric shapes. In the first lesson, I invited the students to redesign my apartment to better meet the needs of my family and instructed the students to present their answers in the form of an appropriately scaled cardboard dollhouse, complete with cardboard furniture, appliances, and so on. I told the students what my wife and I needed in our home and showed them a three-minute video of my then sixteen-month-old daughter waddling about the apartment in her diaper. I was a consultant to the school and a total stranger to the students. There was no reason why they should care about my (or my wife's) home needs, but they were able to empathise with the needs of my daughter, because many of them had younger siblings and the video clearly depicted the many perils my daughter had to deal with daily while living in an apartment that was not child-safe. This was enough to make the task meaningful to all forty-one unique individuals in the classroom. They were fully engaged for the entire duration of the unit. I did not have to explicitly teach any mathematics; all I had to do was to point them to the relevant pages in their textbooks and they learned all the mathematical concepts they needed to build their dollhouses.

In this unit, I provided the basic framework for learning and gave the students space to pursue their own lines of inquiry and construct the knowledge they needed to solve the problem I had set them. The students encountered the targeted mathematical concepts at different times and in different ways during the unit, depending on how they defined the design problem I had given them. It was clear from my in-class observations that the students had sufficiently grasped the targeted concepts, and an independent post-activity test conducted by the school's teachers confirmed this.

The idea here is to create a basic frame for the curriculum, basing it around some broad area of human concern. This frame should provide students with sufficient direction to the knowledge and skills that the curriculum intends to teach, but leaves enough space for students to explore and learn in a way that makes sense to them as individuals. In a sense, teachers and students co-design the curriculum so that everyone experiences the curriculum in a personally meaningful way. In this way, curriculum making is never truly finished, as different teachers and students create different experiences for one another within the same basic frame.

CONCLUSION

Seeing curriculum making as a design activity makes available for the curriculum maker's use some of the methods that designers employ to solve wicked design problems. I have described how three of these methods may be applied in curriculum making. I intend these to be additions to the curriculum maker's toolbox, rather than replacements for any of the tools already in that toolbox. The ideas presented in this chapter were drawn from my personal experiences and reflections in curriculum making, first as a schoolteacher and more recently as an educational researcher and teacher-educator who sometimes supports schools in their curriculum making efforts. Certainly, more rigorous empirical testing of the ideas suggested here is required. Nevertheless, I hope to have provided fellow educators with something that is worthy of their consideration.

Let me end with a cautionary note that is inspired by the works of Tony Fry, Anne-Marie Willis, and Sherry Turkle. According to these scholars, designing is a double movement: as we design and use the solutions we have created, we reshape the world we live in; in turn, our designing, solutions, and the world we have reshaped act back on us and change us in fundamental ways (Fry, 1994, 2003, 2009; Willis, 2006). For example, Turkle (1995, 2005, 2011) found that prolonged use of computing technologies can cause fundamental transformations in the users' conceptions of who and what they are. We must therefore be careful with how the curriculum we are making may shape the beliefs, behaviours, and values of teachers, students, school leaders, parents, and others who are involved.

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Curriculum–*Didaktik* and *Bildung*: A Language for Teaching?

Silvia Morelli

INTRODUCTION

The trilogy of books about ‘Didaktik and/or Curriculum’ (Hopmann & Riquarts, 1995; Gudem & Hopmann, 1998; Westbury, Hopmann, & Riquarts, 2010) marked an important moment in the discourse about *didaktik* and curriculum studies. It was understood as an international dialogue on the subject and gathered together scholars from Continental Europe, Scandinavia and North America. A conference at the University of Oslo in 1990 raised the need to share understandings of curriculum and *didaktik*, justifying commonplaces and analysing what each perspective understands by teaching, content and classroom. The study of these relationships makes a turn into new ways of understanding curriculum and *didaktik* as a single field of study. I consider this moment, which happened thirty years ago, a key event in the discourse looking for meeting points between the *Didaktik* tradition and Curriculum Theory. Since then, a new interaction between *didaktik* and curriculum has been

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taking place, making it possible for these two traditions to live together in order to enhance the understanding of schooling, in which *teaching* is a central issue. In Argentinian academic writing, the didactic tradition is stronger than curriculum theory. Since the 1970s its production is closer to *didaktik* as regards theory and development of teaching, methodological construction and a social perspective on the lesson. However, while the development of *didaktik* is greater than curriculum production, there is in neither any consideration of a *Bildung*-centred *didaktik* or discussion about the *Bildung* concept. In spite of this, I anticipate that international dialogue between curriculum and *didaktik* will improve this debate in Argentina.

In this chapter, I consider necessary a resignification of this discursive encounter, while making a turn into new ways of understanding curriculum and *didaktik* as a single field of study, and introducing theoretical perspectives coming from postmodernism. As products of early modernity, both curriculum and *didaktik* were conceived in accordance with the characteristics of schooling of that time. Today, however, studies on curriculum and *didaktik* should be carried out within a theoretical framework that transcends modernity. Otherwise, modernist theories will resemble ‘a shrunken tight shirt’ when trying to analyse and reflect upon contemporary educational matters.

In taking up the current curriculum–*didaktik* debate, including an analysis of *Bildung* as it takes on a new perspective outside a modernity framework, I want to rethink this relationship and its meanings in the current context, where school and teaching have been changing. As social phenomena, they have left the modern project but cannot yet find another purpose that offers to improve school life. And that emptiness is being filled with universal discourses built on global standardization. The aim here is to analyse teaching content as a core of the curriculum–*didaktik*, in articulation with a rethinking of the *Bildung* concept. I am concerned with how this complex meaning and sense relationship is advanced, and what this field now understands by content, knowledge and schooling, in the face of the distinctive demands of twenty-first-century education.

In a non-binary treatment, special attention is first given to a new concept of *Bildung* as an integrated idea of curriculum–*didaktik*, and then to its relationship with teaching through the understanding of schooling, curriculum policies and autonomy, understanding the latter as a didactical and political category. This analysis is engaged in a hybrid dialogue that will allow us to move forward in what is still an unfinished reflection. This

dialogue is framed in accordance with Lyotard's (1984/1979) notion of the 'postmodern condition'.

TEACHING CONTENT

The international dialogue resulting from the trilogy of books arising after the 1990 conference operates as a metaphor, making visible the discourse markers of a transnational conversation about different meanings of curriculum-*didaktik*, and demonstrating the growth of this field. Considering the complexity of the educational scenario, the perspective of curriculum-*didaktik* benefits both national educational policies and the autonomy with which each school decides its life. In countries like Argentina, which has a federal education policy, autonomy becomes the opportunity to highlight the micro-level as a propitious zone for the implementation of curriculum-*didaktik* where the understanding of schooling and teaching intervenes. Argentinian schools are considered public institutions for compulsory education. They are controlled simultaneously by the provincial education system and by the federal government education policy. But principals are responsible for the development of schooling, which includes, among other things, the implementation of teaching methodologies and material design by teaching staff. Regarding teaching, a canonical problem claims to be recovered: the passage from 'knowledge' to 'content'. By analysing the kind of knowledge and perspectives from which contents are built, it can be seen as a consequence of current local phenomena and social demands.

Furthermore, *Didaktik* is a construction between theory, practice and the art of teaching, in which teachers decide in a particular way about content to be taught to a group of students in certain circumstances. This construction allows teachers to intervene in the dialogue that each student maintains with content. As Hopmann (2007, p. 109) says, "nowadays, this common core of *didaktik* is challenged by changing conditions of schooling, which leads to the question, whether it should be replaced by other approaches". He recognizes, further, that knowledge has a different sense in the *Didaktik* Tradition, the Anglo-Saxon Curriculum or French *Transposition Didactique*. But how these meanings can be shared to enrich the field and provide answers to current teaching problems is the main issue. The key is not to foreclose the traditions that each concept entails. It is preferable to grant equivalences between curriculum and

didaktik to create new meanings. In my opinion, teaching content articulates a meeting-point where both perspectives and their traditions and common roots converge. In that sense, curriculum is more than a written state project or a centralized guideline, as the German tradition saw it. Coinciding with Pinar (2011, 2012), curriculum is conceived as a ‘complicated conversation’ between perspectives, texts and discourses about education, teaching and learning. Also, it is a way of ‘being student’ in one’s own self and also in school life, sharing with others, which is closer to Pinar’s concept of *currere*. This broader notion of curriculum becomes the Internationalization of Curriculum Studies, where local curricula are analysed and crossed within the global context. This is the dialogue that epistemologically strengthens curriculum’s relation to *didaktik* and share meanings. Curriculum is about nations, regions and their policies in social context, and highlights the social, cultural and biographical circumstances that make it an educative text. Sharing concerns about school life with *didaktik* is a challenge to rebuild itself as a language for teaching.

What Hopmann (2007, p. 109) calls “restrained teaching” is based on these three important points: *Bildung*; the difference between matter and meaning; and the autonomy of teaching and learning. Using these points, a greater opportunity for curriculum is presented. Reviewing teaching scenarios, I examine what happens in the connections between curriculum and *Bildung*, curriculum and subject matter, and curriculum and the autonomy of teaching. These items of “restrained teaching” are the key for the curriculum–*didaktik* discourse and its nodal points of Teaching Content. Also, I want to consider the three phases presented by Hopmann (2007) about order, sequence and choice, and reinstall new meanings into teaching content. These three are still important to consider for the teaching process and the transformation of knowledge into content. For Hopmann (2007, p. 109), this transformation is different within a didactical approach, compared with the Anglo-Saxon tradition of ‘curriculum and instruction’, and also from the French notion of *transposition didactique*.¹ The transformation of knowledge into content occurs when it involves the recognition of cultural and context differences.

In tandem, content-knowledge has always been identified with disciplines for teaching. I would say that it has been the commonplace *par*

¹This French concept will not be developed here.

excellence. It would have never occurred to anyone to teach any subject without considering the discipline. Hopmann (2007, p. 111) quotes Hugh of Saint Victor, regarding disciplines and teaching. As he discusses in relation to teaching History, in a common root of *didaktik*, there were three ways to understand discipline in the nineteenth century: [a] as an order of knowledge coming from the Scholastic tradition, [b] as an order of teaching, like Comenius's natural sequence of learning from simple to complex, from micro-cosmos to macro-cosmos and [c] as a choice, highlighting teacher knowledge about teaching, and about interpreting state guidelines and translating them into classroom pedagogical action. The consideration of order, sequence and choice has always been present as a core of teaching—even when content is rethought in a framework that includes both curriculum and *didaktik*.

But seen from a postmodern perspective, there is more to examine. For that task, I consider two important issues for teaching as the articulated core of curriculum-*didaktik*. The first is to rethink disciplinary knowledge as a source for content, and to understand that there are different kinds of knowledge for teaching content. The second is to review what is the most worthwhile knowledge with regard to teaching content.

Let us go to the first one. In both Ancient Greece with the Trivium and Quadrivium and the beginning of Natural Sciences in the seventeenth century, disciplines had a decisive place in the determination of what should be taught in school. Although it has always been held that there cannot be content without disciplines, social scenarios created in recent decades subvert this historical idea as it has been consolidated over time. Contents are calling for another organization of knowledge in the school, one not exclusive to the disciplines. However, there are additional considerations regarding scientific knowledge and the narrative knowledge that Lyotard (1984 [1979]) speaks about, in his account of the *postmodern condition*. The opportunity arises to recognize other knowledges, even other disciplines, as sources for content. This is the core of teaching content in contemporary society: to consider the specificity of identities, and the coexistence between modern and postmodern structures and disruptive events. In that sense, Lyotard distinguishes scientific knowledge from narrative knowledge. The first needs to provide proof and be able to refute any opposing or contradictory statements, and is

validated through a single criterion of truth, which does not admit contradictions. It also does not allow more than a single language-game.² This means that there are no ‘games’ between the sender and the addressee to understand discourses, and that each signifier has only one signified. In a pedagogical situation, if the teacher is considered as sender and the student as addressee, the latter does not know what the first one does. Lyotard says however that knowledge cannot be reduced to science. There are other forms of knowledge that refer to narrative, which is quite different to the rationality of material observation. Narrative knowledge is at the same time sociopolitical and epistemological, and, as Lyotard says:

Knowledge, then, is a question of competence that goes beyond the simple determination and application of the criterion of truth, extending to the determination and application of criteria of efficiency (technical qualification), of justice and/or happiness (ethical wisdom), of the beauty of a sound or colour (auditory and visual sensibility), etc. ...

... it makes “good “ performances in relation to a variety of objects of discourse possible: objects to be known, decided on, evaluated, transformed. (Lyotard, 1984, p. 18)

It should also be noted that narrative knowledge does not need to be legitimated through the criterion of truth but, rather, it is social institutions that legitimize it. It also has an impact on time, which allows it to be legitimated by its permanence. In the form of popular stories, culture, biographies or institutions, narrative knowledge allows us to know, decide, value or transform portions of student life. Its narrative format allows multiple language-games, which means that there are many ways to be enunciated. In this form of communication, the speech act requires a speaker (which can be the teacher or students, or others), a listener (represented by students, teacher or others) and the third (which is the one that is referred to).

Putting forward narrative knowledge in this way does not mean that disciplinary knowledge cannot also be part of the teaching content,

²The concept ‘language-game’ (Wittgenstein, 1986 [1953]) is a game analogy to language. Similarities are found in constitutive and strategic rules of language, learning the meaning of words by learning how to use them.

because content considers other kinds of knowledge for its elaboration. Stories of culture, institutions or biographies are closer to students' life-experience, and today it is possible to take them to give greater representation to the ideas or concepts that teachers can teach in each class. Narrative knowledge burdens the content with subjectivity, bringing particularity to groups and subjects. From that point of view, the question of *What knowledge is of most worth?* can never have a universal answer. Narrative knowledge is valued by individual teachers, learners and/or communities. The worth of knowledge is understood from particularity and contributes to solve social problems like exclusion, violence, nutrition, consumption, gender issues, living in democracy, climate change, diversity and so on. Regarding these intellectual stories and present circumstances, Pinar (2017, p. vi) raises three questions that specify the challenge humanity faces in a curriculum based on human life: What are we going to live for (culture)? What are we going to live off (economy)? and What are we going to decide about these challenges (democracy)?

AUTONOMY FOR TEACHING

Giving value to narrative knowledge, curriculum-*didaktik* takes up the tension between the universal and the particular and the global and the local. In my understanding, that is where *didaktik meets curriculum* (Hopmann, 2015) and recognizes autonomy as a didactical and political category for teaching which takes place at school as a social institution. In curriculum-*didaktik*, autonomy is constructed through translations between the levels of curriculum and policy. It is especially at the micro-level where autonomy acquires meaning for schooling (Fig. 10.1).

Let me explain what happens with autonomy and translations in the teaching process. We cannot ignore the relationship between curricular policies and teaching, and how the first can determine what will happen in the classroom. But teaching has a power that goes beyond curricular policies and is built on the autonomy of the educational institution. In it, autonomy will allow teaching content to be closer to narrative knowledge. That is why I want to focus this explanation on the micro-level and nano-level (NL).

Between each level of curricular policies, there are translations that allow nations (macro-level) and states/provinces or municipalities (meso-level) to make interpretations of broader policies (including those of

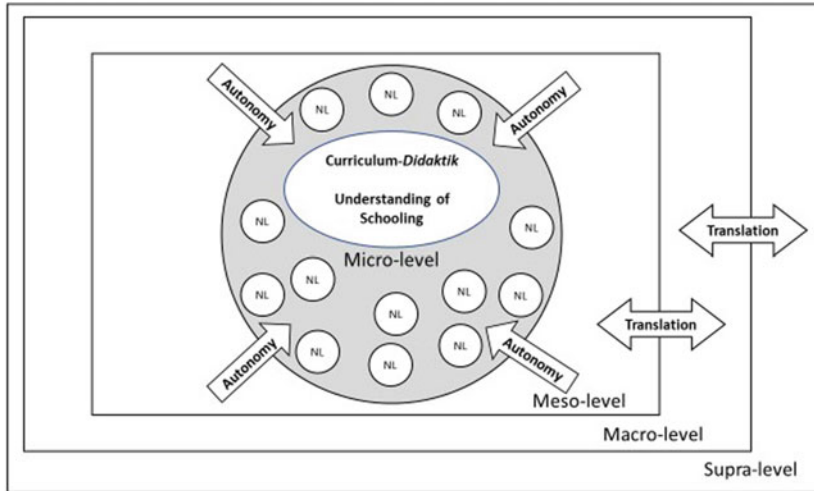


Fig. 10.1 Translation and autonomy for teaching

the supranational) according to their convictions, contexts and possibilities. These translations become policies about teaching and learning. They play a double game. On one hand, they maintain a common educational policy language and, at the same time, they generate their own policies very differently across levels in each country, and about curriculum development. This political difference between each territory gives them particularity and could not be done without considering teacher autonomy as a category of curricular policy.

But I would like to turn to what happens in the micro-level (schools), where autonomy could be noted as part of the school's identity and where teaching content begins to be designed, according to specific groups of teachers and students. In this area, autonomy becomes a political category for didactic work, as well as for each school making its own decisions about order, sequence and choice for teaching content. In that process I would like to rescue the understanding of *schooling as the synthesis that defines the original and particular organization of teaching in each school*. Inside the school, as a micro-level of curricular policies, each classroom (nano-level) will continue to develop teaching autonomously. In this way, order, sequence and choice return to be considered. As Westbury et al.

(2010, p. 17) says, drawing on Wallin (1998), this sense of curriculum-*didaktik* “provides teachers with ways of considering the essential what, how and why questions around their teaching of their students in their classrooms”.

RETHINKING *BILDUNG*

The old concept of *Bildung*, coming from the Enlightenment as both a political and educational project, is nowadays considered an ambiguous concept. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, many authors have been analysing and redefining it. For instance, Biesta (2002a) sees it as a rich and complex concept; Horlacher (2014) characterizes it as fuzzy; and Taylor (2016) describes it as a mobile concept. But despite the conceptual diversity, they agree to address the future of *Bildung*. For the German tradition, *Bildung* means inner cultivation in harmony with the education of the citizen, founded in society, culture, even school. I believe that the educational potential of *Bildung* is undeniable and, increasingly relevant not only for *didaktik* but also for the curriculum. Coming into the postmodern condition, this relationship between *Bildung*-curriculum-*didaktik* begins to be considered beyond German contexts and is settling in the international dialogue. This is why it is such an important intellectual exercise to transfer the concept of *Bildung* to present times.

Considering Lyotard’s perspective of narratives, the first task is to make a turn from *Bildung* as a master narrative, as in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to *Bildung* as a small narrative of the postmodern condition discourse. Following Biesta (2002b), I ask how general can *Bildung* be, and if there is a future for *Bildung* in our times. Coinciding with his questions and identifying modern *Bildung* at the macro-level policy, we should abandon the universality of its notion and begin to understand it through the notion of ‘difference’. In that sense, Biesta (2002a, p. 343) says that a possible future of *Bildung* could be thinking about plurality in term of “difference” and “life with others”. He understands that, in our present world, the general or the universal become a problem (Biesta, 2002b, p. 346). Agreeing with this, I would like to understand *Bildung* according to school life and the different meanings that each education system gives to autonomy for teaching. In the same sense, Taylor (2016, p. 424) argues that postmodernism figures the self

as a multiplicity, produced in and through fragmentation, plural, contingent, located and without fixed points. She attributes three central factors for a postmodern *Bildung* (ibid., p. 425): the first is the plural understanding of the self, recognized into a social practice enmeshed within social context; the second concerns values, rejecting the universality of Western values; and the third addresses how forms of ‘power/knowledge’ produce the educative discourses setting regimes of truth for knowing.

It follows, then, that *Bildung* remains a prominent idea in education, and it still has a great potential to improve schooling. So, in my opinion it is timely to rethink this important concept for the curriculum–*didaktik* debate, focusing it in the particularities of school life and of teaching and learning practice. Rescuing the ideal of *Bildung* brings an opportunity for rethinking the importance of teaching content, thus rewriting new chapters in the curriculum–*didaktik* story. It implies the need to collect debates about *Bildung*-centred *didaktik*, and provides warning of new social configurations, where politics and culture intervene, and giving visibility to the student as social subject, with his/her own particularities of life, identity and difference. Thus Løvlie (2002, p. 467) refers to *the promise of Bildung*, with the expectation that the idea of *Bildung* can contribute to a critical understanding of education in society. This promise lets us analyse the current interplay between the subject and his/her identity with images and Internet. For him, *Bildung* was always related to images such as photography through the visual arts and, more recently, the computer-generated graphic. In my understanding, images coexist with literacy in the definition of a self-formation. The challenge in the current era is to review this coexistence and analyse what place the image gains today, and what it affects in self-formation and life with others. The passage from word to image, the hypertext, the interplay of texts, genres and topics in hybrid expressions, transforms the traditional idea of *Bildung*. But in the present, it takes on the challenge of thinking about the tension between a universal notion of education, as in the modern perspective, and the particularity of the construction made in each school.

From the postmodern condition of Lyotard, it would be interesting to discuss the role that Løvlie (2002) calls *beautiful illusion*, as opposed to the illusion of virtual realities and their impact on the learner. Also, it should help to analyse his *promise of Bildung* and understand the subject’s suspended closure:

On the face of it, postmodern society offers new ways of realising the basic idea in von Humboldt's programme—the idea of individual diversity within global humanity. In today's multicultural society boundaries are broken, hybrid social life forms crop up and new arenas for social expression are provided for. Multicultural encounters produce substantial shifts, greater or smaller, in personal, social and political relations. Interaction on the Internet and the use of mobile phones allows for a free cultural interplay that is both creative and transformative (Løvlie, 2002, p. 469).

Bildung's history goes beyond modernity, and can be reconstructed for the current 'new times' of digital images, screens and selfies. In the current era of broken boundaries, the contingency of the multicultural interplay is necessary for the subject. One idea is central to this reconstruction: *Bildung* is just not a universal concept, and it needs social and cultural revision. Another problem to be solved in *Bildung* is the place of the subject and his/her self-determination. While modernity assumed that the subject had an inner capacity for self-determination, we must revise this, asking how these inner capacities are built today, considering technological influences and life with others (Biesta, 2002a), and the interplay between the particularity and difference of identities. The inner capacity for self-determination is not an action that achieves the subject in solitude and abstraction, but depends on the context that is currently configured in the diversity of social scenarios.

Postmodernism refuses to assume that the subject precedes any discourse. Conversely, Lyotard considers that 'phrases' define the subject. This can assist with rethinking the self-determination needed for *Bildung*: how else can self-determination be thought for a subject?

Then the question about what knowledge has the most worth begins to take on real meaning when presented from the particularities of students and their self-determination through teaching content. This can be seen in Pinar (2011, p. 73), when he understands *Bildung* in the recognition and nonrecognition of *alterity*. It means that self-determination is an encounter with one's own self in difference, particularity and subjectivity—for example, in an encounter between students and particular 'content knowledge' in their own context. That scenario of particularities enables us to ask about new identities, organized around cosmopolitanism, gender, multiculturalism, aesthetics, which in turn, defines new citizenships. Self-determination means also highlighting individual biographies, as Pinar's *carrere* (2011) does, in recognizing

schooling as the space in which subjects interact in curriculum's 'complicated conversation'.

CONCLUSION

In rethinking curriculum–*didaktik* in the twenty-first century, this writing, although always contingent, would not be possible without rescuing curriculum, *didaktik* and *Bildung* as modern concepts. We need to notice the interstices that these leave as empty spaces that will be filled with reflections and contributions of transoceanic dialogues, such as the 'Oslo Conference' and 'the Internationalization of Curriculum Studies'.

Understanding curriculum as a complicated conversation (Pinar, 2011, 2012) opens multiple dialogues: international, epistemological, cultural and political—dialogues for teaching. In them, a postmodern theory of *Bildung* is closer to the international encounter between curriculum and *didaktik*. Furthermore, this idea is close to what I call curriculum–*didaktik*, as a single field of study about new postmodern conditions for both curriculum theory and the *didaktik* tradition. To link curriculum and *Bildung* reinstalls another way of understanding the subject and his/her self-determination through the teaching process.

That means that translations are different languages to interpret particularities and differences that can be found at school. Hence, we must forget knowledge as a universal and consensual ideal, and remember that it does not connect only with disciplines (validated by scientific method). Culture, context, identities: all play their own game in translating knowledge in school for teaching content. Curriculum–*didaktik* and *Bildung* focus on the understanding of schooling and define the micro-level policies for schools, teachers and communities, giving rise to difference and particularity. There, autonomy takes on a new didactic and political sense for teaching. The link between *Bildung* and curriculum–*didaktik* as a language for teaching revives also the question about knowledge and its derivation in order, sequence and choice (Hopmann, 2007). But, as Lyotard shows, the notion of knowledge is not only represented by disciplines: everyday life, social-micro worlds and personal stories are also knowledge as narrative forms.

Leaving modern times, where are we going to travel? Are we content to move into a neoliberal individual and standardized performativity culture, or do we seek a culture of teaching language beyond accountability, standardization and privatization, and one that is centralized in

its own (i.e. students' and teachers') trajectories and an understanding of schooling? Are we moving to an agonistic relationship between *Bildung* and curriculum–*didaktik*? To revive the question about the worth of knowledge and its derivation in order, sequence and choice (Hopmann, 2007), we might consider narrative knowledge and Lyotard's small narratives: to focus on the micro-level as the core of teaching, as a political and didactical act. That is why bringing into the present the understanding of schooling as a micro-level policy could be the place to rewrite curriculum–*didaktik* and *Bildung* in postmodern conditions. Moreover, there is another issue regarding self. It is pertinent to ask how self-determination is constructed, in times of multiple literacies and complicated conversations (Pinar, 2011) conducted in virtual meeting through screens (Løvlie, 2002). What other ways has a subject to find her or himself? Self has new challenges linked with virtual modes, in which the subject multiplies her or himself and relates to others. So, the curriculum–*didaktik* debate has much to contribute if we continue to believe in the educational potential of *Bildung*, but also has the challenge of rethinking teaching content as one of the main tasks of this field, which is now remaking itself in postmodernity.

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Ethical Vexations that Haunt ‘Knowledge Questions’ for Curriculum

Lew Zipin and Marie Brennan

INTRODUCTION: KNOWLEDGE-AND-ETHICS QUESTIONS FOR CURRICULUM

Critical education debates tend to move across the three key domains of philosophical question: i.e. about knowledge (*epistemology*); about being (*ontology*); and about ethics (*axiology*). These ‘ologies’ have a way of chasing each other in and out of focus. A strong trend in current curriculum debates is the call to ‘bring knowledge back in’ (Young 2008a) to central focus. While we agree it is always vital to give robust attention to knowledge questions, we find that the ‘bringing back’ call diminishes *ethics* questions that also are always vital. In this chapter, we argue the importance of framing knowledge choices for curriculum within ethical

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principles for deciding curriculum *purposes*. We identify vexatious ethical tensions across three curriculum knowledge elements: life-based ‘funds of knowledge’; ‘disciplinary’ knowledge; and knowledge invested with selective power as ‘cultural capital’.

To begin, we cite, in agreement, Nancy Fraser’s (2009, pp. 38–39) assertion that *knowledge* and *values* are inseparable:

[T]he circumstances of justice are inherently theory-laden *and value-laden*, which is why they are controversial.... The task of adjudicating rival characterizations... [must therefore] be handled dialogically, in a multifaceted practical discourse that canvasses alternative conceptions, unpacks their underlying assumptions, and weighs their relative merits – all in full awareness of the *internal relations between knowledge and normative reflection*. (our emphases)

That is, no knowledge is simply ‘best for all’, un-vexed by valuations that are partial, not universal. Thus the question of *what* knowledge should be selected for curriculum always should raise further questions of *whose* knowledge, and *how* decided, calling for dialogic response-*ability*, as a crucial capacity of ethical responsibility to hear and care what others value as curriculum *purposes*. Can we do justice in deciding *what* knowledge students and teachers work with, unless attending seriously to questions of *whose* valued knowledge and purposes are included? And since groups affected by curriculum knowledge activity—who therefore deserve inclusion in such decisions—are multiple, with diverse cultural histories, questions of *how* curriculum decisions should be reached across diverse groups loom large.

From these *what*, *who* and *how* questions, Fraser derives three principles for robust social justice—redistribution, recognition and representation—which we translate to curriculum principles:

- **R1:** Egalitarian *redistribution* of resources that support social thriving: Fraser’s ‘*what*’ of justice. As we translate: What knowledge, and why, do learners need and deserve to engage within curriculum activities?
- **R2:** Inclusive *recognition* of meanings and values that matter, culturally-historically, among diverse social groups: Fraser’s ‘*who*’ of justice. We translate: Whose cultural knowledge needs recognition

through inclusion in curriculum activities of diverse learners who inhabit schools?

- **R3:** Participatory-democratic *representation*, including all groups of people subjected to a regime that structures their activity, in processes to determine the framing ‘grammars’ of that regime: Fraser’s ‘*how*’ of justice. We translate: How to decide what/whose needs, values and purposes for knowledge should go into framing school curriculum regimes?

We argue that substantive address to all three Rs requires ethical attention to three curriculum knowledge elements: *disciplinary* knowledge developed in academic fields; *funds* of knowledge emergent in lifeworlds of power-marginalised groups; and—a most vexatious element—power-élite ways of knowing that are invested, as ‘cultural *capital*’, with selective status to judge ‘high’ vs. ‘low’ school achievers. We find that pursuing justice through curricular work with all three elements is not only complex but approaches ‘impossibility’. It is thus tempting to avoid or deny the need to address some of these elements. We next examine an ascendant trend—to fetishise disciplinary knowledge as *the singular* worthy element for curriculum—which we argue is both reductive and reliant on dubious premises.

FETISHISING DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE: NATIONAL CURRICULA AND SOCIAL REALISM

Anointing Discipline-Based Knowledge as ‘Best/Same for All’

Much national curriculum policy hails disciplinary knowledge as ‘best’ for all learners regardless of class, ‘race’, gender and other social structural positions. We note that, in recontextualising disciplinary knowledge into school subjects, national curricula typically reduce cohesive knowledge bodies to scant content fragments. However, to address logics of justification, not policy (mis)translations, we draw on Michael Young as a key academic figure in the Social Realist (SR) movement—influential in South Africa, the UK and spreading—to bring disciplinary knowledge ‘back in’ as ‘best for all’. Young (2014, pp. 63–64) positions himself as an atypical critic of curriculum reforms by the UK Tory government:

Unlike the majority of critics on the Left ... [I take] the view that the problem with government's version ... is not that it endorses a knowledge-led curriculum.... [I]n focussing on 'knowledge' and in re-emphasising the key role of school subjects and their links with university disciplines, the government's reforms open a debate about a curriculum for all that was never previously addressed.

A flaw, says Young (2014, p. 63), is a "version of knowledge ... [too] fixed in history", rather than continually evolving through the labours of disciplinary collectives. What is it about disciplinary collectives, then, that makes the knowledge they generate and evolve necessarily 'best for all'?

Conjuring a 'Sacred' Impartiality of Disciplinary Knowledge Networks

In warranting a disciplinary 'best for all', Young (2008a, pp. 146–147) cites Durkheim's distinction between 'sacred' and 'profane' social locations of knowledge production:

Durkheim... emphasize[d] the "sociality" of knowledge, but ... [also] different types of social organization ... His starting point was a distinction between profane and sacred orders of meaning that he found in every society that he studied. The profane refers to people's response to their everyday world – it is practical, immediate and particular.... [T]he sacred was a collective product of a society, and not related directly to any real world problem... [thus] both social and removed from the everyday world.

That is, disciplinary knowledge evolves within specialist communions that, while social, stand in other-than-worldly ('sacred') remove from worldly ('profane') mixes of sense made in everyday activities. In stressing that Durkheim 'found' this distinction in *all* societies, Young implies a universal human-social tendency towards this sacred-profane social division. SR advocates further hail Durkheim's claim that, across time and space, disciplinary networks progressively purify epistemological partialities that participants embody in given times/spaces. As Durkheim says (quoted in Maton & Moore, 2010, p. 10):

Collective representations are the product of an immense cooperation that extends not only through space but also through time; to make them, a multitude of different minds have associated, intermixed, and combined

their ideas and feelings; long generations have accumulated their experience and knowledge.

Progress towards evermore disciplined and trustworthy mindfulness, says Young (2014, p. 66), is now “largely located in universities” and “global communities of which university researchers are a part”, who, whether “particle physicists ... or social scientists”, “have shared rules ... for testing and questioning the truth of whatever they claim to know in their field”. Thus, says Young (2008a, p. 31):

[T]he objectivity of knowledge is in part located in the social networks, institutions and codes of practice built up by knowledge producers over time. It is these networks of social relations that, in crucial ways, guarantee truth claims, and give the knowledge that has [been] produced its emergent powers.

By “powers”, Young does not mean unjust social structural power of some groups over others, but *empowering* capacities. Hence “[p]owerful knowledge provides more reliable explanations... for engaging in political, moral, and other kinds of debates” (Young, 2008b, p. 14). As *only* disciplinary knowledge bestows such powers, it is the *only* worthy basis for curriculum, argues Young (2008a, p. 89):

Bernstein’s distinction between vertical and horizontal knowledge structures assumes that the codes and practices associated with subjects and disciplines are designed to set the curriculum apart from the everyday knowledge that students bring to school.... [I]t is this separation of the curriculum from everyday life that gives the knowledge acquired through it an explanatory power and capacity for generalization that is not a feature of everyday knowledge tied to practical concerns.... [P]rinciples for guiding curriculum policy necessarily follow ... [C]urriculum cannot be based on everyday practical experience. Such a curriculum would only recycle that experience.

The gist of this argument¹ is that knowledge based on everyday experience is too ‘horizontally’ structured: local, segmented and diverse, not integrating in a ‘vertical’ coherence that, over time and space, sorts out what gets us closer to ‘true’. Thus, if included in curriculum, it

¹We note that some Bernsteinian scholars question whether Young reads him properly.

undermines the generalising and explanatory powers that disciplinary knowledge accumulates via “immense cooperation”. Young thus urges policymakers to reject life-based knowledge as deficits, not assets, for curriculum. Indeed, national curriculum trends share this stress on disciplinary knowledge as the “only/best” curriculum element “for all”.

Epistemic and Ethical Challenges to Discipline-Only Justifications

Young identifies two linked virtues of discipline-*only* curriculum: *objectivity* and *empowerments*. We here address objectivity (extending to empowerments in the next section). While Young does not claim final objectivity, since disciplinary knowledge evolves—and what is ‘true’ may change as nature and society evolve—we question, on a few grounds, the Durkheimian assertion that *disciplinary social networks* build impartialities that ‘guarantee truth claims’:

- *Experientially*: As participants in academic education fields (including curriculum studies) linked to multiple disciplinary domains, we *never* see ‘rules for testing’, ‘codes of practice’, etc., that purify gender, ‘race’, class or other social structural partialities that participants embody. Nor do we see insulation from power-plays of funding and regulating sources that influence research projects and designs.
- *Historically*: There are so many examples of unenlightened turns within scientific networks. For decades, many evolutionary-biological ‘specialists’ offered skull-size ‘evidence’ of superior Caucasian intelligence. Likewise, many psychologists invoked ‘evidence’ that women are ‘by nature’ private and nurturing, thus suited to teach and nurse, while men are public and competitive ‘by nature’, thus fit for political-economic leadership. It does not suffice to say they were ‘temporarily’ mistaken and the ‘long durée’ of ‘immense cooperation’ fixes such errors. Indeed, correctives stem more from anti-racist, feminist and other *political* movements (which include academics) than from ‘sacredly’ cloistered specialists.
- *Conceptually-analytically*: Historians and sociologists of science (e.g. Callon, Lascoumes, & Barthe, 2009; Kuhn 1962) diagnose how sciences neither stand clear of external political-economic shaping, nor—even in ‘hard sciences’ such as physics—achieve ‘vertical’ integrations that settle ‘horizontal’ disputes within disciplinary networks

over concepts, assumptions, methodologies, worthy problematics, etc.

In sum, ‘purification’ of knowledge across disciplinary networks does not hold up to scrutiny. Such an oversweeping, *faith*-based social ontology—trust the objectivity of all ‘specialist’ networks—offers no grounds for what might make some disciplinary processes more trust-worthy than others. We here join feminist standpoint-science arguments (e.g. Harding, 1992) for *power-sensitive research and inclusive dialogue*—across diverse women, people of colour, working/under-class, etc.; and ‘lay’ as well as ‘expert’ voices—that maps and triangulates “*partial* objectivities”, rather than buy into the “God Trick” (Haraway, 1988) of “*universal* objectivity”. (For refutation of SR claims that standpoint theories are ‘relativist’ and so lack any objectivity, see Edwards, 2014; Zipin, Fataar, & Brennan, 2015.)

Finally, we apply Fraser’s 3Rs for robust social justice. In fetishising disciplinary knowledge as ‘*the best for all*’, SR negates: (a) *recognition*, through curricular inclusion, of knowledge that holds use, meaning and value in lives of diverse social groups; and (b) participatory *representation* of those groups in decisions about contents, activities and purposes of curricular work with/on knowledge. As we clarify in the next section, we agree that disciplinary knowledge offers empowerments to learners who, outside of schools, may not have access; hence, SR meets the justice principle for curriculum to *redistribute* cultural resources that enable all, in their diversity, to pursue good lives. A question arises: Might disciplinary knowledge reduce its flaw-potentials, and *gain* stronger epistemic *and ethical* empowerments (rather than lose powers), through curriculum that interacts discipline-based *and* life-based knowledge elements? We argue *yes* in the next section.

BREATHING LIFE BACK IN: A MORE ROBUSTLY ETHICAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Vygotsky’s Two-Way Knowledge Dialectic: Life-Based ↔
Discipline-Based

Ultimately only life educates, and the deeper that life ... burrows into the school, the more dynamic and the more robust will be the educational

process. That the school has been walled in ... from life itself has been its greatest failing. Education is just as meaningless outside the ... [life]world as is a fire without oxygen, or as breathing in a vacuum. The teacher's educational work, therefore, must be inevitably connected with ... social and life work. (Vygotsky, 1997/1926, p. 345)

Welcome back, life! If Young urges that schools look *upward* to universities for 'knowledge-led' curriculum, Vygotsky urges also connecting curriculum *outward* to learners' life-based knowledge. "*Ultimately* only life educates" means that sense-making *emerges*, first of all, in living engagement with natural and social worlds. This includes disciplinary fields, which all arise historically in attentions to phenomena in the thick of life—not at 'sacred' remove—and must stay connected to life matters to keep a robust meaning-making dynamic from dissipating and going astray.

Of course life-based sense-makings also can lose dynamism and go astray. It is in curricular connections of life- and discipline-based knowledge, argues Vygotsky, that they contribute reciprocally strengthened learning *empowerments*. As Moll explains (2014), Vygotsky's concept of "the zone of proximal development ... capture[s] the relationship between what he called 'spontaneous' and 'scientific' concepts" (p. 34). By "spontaneous concepts", Vygotsky means experiential sense that emerges among people in everyday life spaces. Such incipient sense carries vital *powers* of interest, curiosity, question and grasp within and about lifeworlds. However, fruition of such powers requires educational extension beyond lived proximities, through engaging "scientific" concept systems that contribute "the characteristic of systematicity: the way scientific concepts form part of an organised system of knowledge and thus can more easily be reflected upon and deliberately manipulated" (Moll, 2014, p. 35; i.e. Young's "explanatory power and capacity for generalization"). Vygotsky thus argued for curriculum that, through *dialectical interaction*, mutually enhances the powers of both knowledge elements. Says Moll (p. 35):

Everyday concepts provide the "conceptual fabric" for the development of schooled concepts, and ... are also transformed through their connection with the more systematic concepts. Scientific concepts grow into the domain of personal experience, thus acquiring meaning and significance. However, scientific concepts bring conscious awareness and control, which Vygotsky believed to be essential characteristics of schooling.

Conceptual powers thus transact both ways: to *gain* meaning and significance, disciplinary concept systems need lifeworld ‘conceptual fabrics’, into which they in turn weave powers of awareness and control. Indeed, ‘*fabric*’ suggests the *ultimate* life-basis of conceptual development, without which there is nothing of *significance* for disciplinary knowledge to grow into. Contrary to SR, then, curriculum must not rip life-based knowledge away from engagement with disciplinary knowledge.

Community-Based Funds of Knowledge as Rich Curriculum Assets

Vygotsky’s knowledge dialectic underpins the Funds of Knowledge (FK) approach to curriculum, extending from anthropological studies of how poor Mexican-American communities in the U.S. southwest generate and share knowledge to survive and thrive (Velez-Ibáñez, 1988; Velez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992; Wolf, 1966). Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992, p. 133) define FK as “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge” that gain use, meaning and value as “essential for household ... [and community] functioning and well-being”. That is, *FK* emerge and evolve in social networks, accumulating coherence across time and space—as “*developed bodies* of knowledge”—and so are not as “segmentally” limited to locales as SR theory suggests. FK research chronicles bodies of maths knowledge used in building homes, agricultural science knowledge, and much more (Hogg, 2011) that could fairly be called *disciplinary*. Moll et al. (1992) pioneered a methodology in which university teacher-and-academic teams researched for FK in students’ family-community settings, and then, in study groups, reviewed the ethnographic data for rich FK veins around which to build units of curriculum work, dialectically linked to school subject domains.

FK thus offer rich ‘funds’ for curriculum to engage students in work with knowledge familiar to them, while extending their knowledge-abilities (‘powers’). Moreover, like disciplinary bodies, FK bodies evolve, especially among young people whose inherited FK face changing life contexts of their emergent futures (Estabén-Guitart, 2016; Zipin, Brennan, & Sellar, 2020; Zipin, Sellar, Brennan, & Gale, 2015). Contrary to SR’s view of life-based FK as *deficits*—in valorising a disciplinary *same-knowledge-best-for-all*—the FK approach “transform[s] students’ *diversities* into pedagogical *assets*” (Moll & Gonzalez, 1997, p. 89; our emphasis). Marginalised communities are thus recognised “not as places

from which children must be saved ... [but] which, in addition to problems (as in all communities), contain valuable knowledge and experiences that can foster ... educational development” (Moll & Gonzalez, 1997, p. 98).

Indeed, community *problems* are sources of rich funds for curriculum activity. Moll et al. indicate the curricular value of knowledge based on *difficult* life conditions:

Our approach also involves studying how household members use their funds of knowledge in dealing with changing, and often difficult, social and economic circumstances... [and] develop social networks that interconnect them with their social environments... [in] multiple spheres of activity within which the child is enmeshed. (Moll et al., 1992, pp. 133–144)

Zipin (2009) thus argues that the considerable life-based knowledge that marginalised communities accumulate about ‘darker’ problems—effects of racism, poverty, etc.—should not be seen as ‘in addition’ to ‘valuable’ FK, but *as valuable FK*. We suggest that proximate problems reflect wider social structural issues—climate change, racism, chronic un(der)employment and more—of high worth for local–global curricular focus linked to multidisciplinary school subject domains.

So far we have amplified *epistemic* empowerments of a Vygotskyan curriculum dialectic. Yet *ethical* robustness is also implicated, which we now foreground.

Bringing Robust Ethics to the Fore

Regarding Fraser’s R2, the FK approach inclusively *recognises*—in building curriculum units around—FK that diverse marginalised students bring to school. Regarding R3, the approach seeks participatory *representation* of student, family and community actors in generating curriculum. Says Moll (2014, p. 137):

The funds of knowledge approach, then, represents a challenge to the stifling prescriptivism of the status quo, not only in valuing the knowledge of the students most marginalized by the education system but also in assuming that teachers can conceptualize a rigorous curriculum that honours students and families as co-participants in the practice of education.

Moll affirms both *epistemic rigour* in the FK approach, and *ethical robustness* in honouring student, family community and teacher co-participants in deciding the substance *and purposes* of curriculum work. In recent articles (Brennan 2017; Zipin, 2017, 2020; Zipin & Brennan, 2018, 2019), we have imagined further co-participation through curriculum units in which students collaborate with community members, teachers and academics in action-research on ‘problems that matter’ (PTMs) in a school’s locale. This PTM approach not only brings community FK into classroom curricular use, but extends curriculum activity into community spaces, with co-participants sharing diverse knowledge in a mutual learning-and-teaching process that builds collective knowledge-abilities.

Social-educational justice, we argue, requires a robustly participatory-democratic R3 to bring school, university *and community* actors—especially from marginalised communities—into ethically repurposed curriculum decisions and activities. The challenging logistics for doing so are situated, given contingencies of schools and their locales. Participatory inclusion must be created “pragmatically and contextually”, urges Fraser (2003, pp. 46–47), since “everything depends on precisely what currently unrecognized people need in order to be able to participate as peers ... [a]nd there is no reason to assume that all of them need the same thing in every context”.

But we have not yet addressed R1, *redistribution*, which we argue is haunted by highly vexatious dilemmas of whether/how to redistribute something that carries *a power-logic of injustice*: i.e. ‘cultural capital’.

REDISTRIBUTING CAPITAL’S LOGIC: ETHICAL VEXATIONS²

Cultural Capital: A Haunting Absent-Presence in SR and FK Approaches

The French exam was a concentrate of irregularities... You gave an A- in French to a boy who, in France, would not know how to ask the whereabouts of the toilet. He could only have asked for owls, pebbles and fans, either in the singular or the plural... picked carefully for being exceptions, not for being commonly used. (Schoolboys of Barbiana, 1970, p. 15)

²This section reworks thought from Zipin (2015) in relation to this chapter’s discussions.

These Italian peasant schoolboys, writing in the 1950s, highlight a curriculum device that selects for competitive success of the already-privileged: knowledge tested, but not taught, that power-élite families provide to their young but power-marginalised families cannot. Bourdieu (1998, p. 20) thus theorises school operations that select for ‘cultural capital’ (CC):

The educational system... maintains the preexisting order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital. Most precisely, by a series of selection operations, the system separates the holders of inherited cultural capital from those who lack it.

Inheritance occurs primarily in family. Bourdieu (1986) defines three CC modes: *objectified*, *institutionalized* and *embodied*. The first two are tangible (e.g. home library; parents with university degrees). More telling in school selection operations is the embodied mode: subconscious *dispositions* of ‘primary *habitus*’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), tacitly acquired through immersion in practices of early-life habitats. Dispositions of power-élite groups tacitly encode schooling’s ‘message systems’ (Bernstein, 1977) of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Such *implicit* dispositions are hard to redistribute to students who did not embody them before entering schools, requiring careful *explicit* teaching that schools rarely try, instead misrecognising dispositional differences as ‘natural’ rather than cultural. An injustice, says Bourdieu (1977, p. 494), is that:

By doing away with giving explicitly to everyone what it implicitly demands of everyone, the education system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give.

If CC codings pervade school message systems, shouldn’t schools make efforts to reveal and teach them, as a matter of social justice? Social Realists tend to negate this question by denying that curriculum encodes unjustly selective capital. Thus, says Moore (2013, p. 350; original emphasis):

SR is the appropriate framework ... because it secures... strong *justice* claims with strong rather than weak *knowledge* claims. The powerful are so

not because they can arbitrarily impose *their* knowledge/culture as ‘powerful knowledge/culture’, but because they enjoy privileged access to the knowledge/culture that *is* powerful in its own right.

We argue that SR carries *weak* justice in negating ethical principles R2 and R3. Moore indeed indicates how SR ‘justice’ hinges solely on R1: redistribution. Yet this does *not* include redistributing CC: what Young (2008b) calls ‘knowledge of the powerful’, as distinct from ‘powerful (disciplinary) knowledge’ supposedly purified of selective partialities. Moore’s refutation of “*arbitrarily* imposed” CC refers to Bourdieu and Passeron’s (1977) claim that certain attributes become invested with selective “capital” value as “culturally arbitrary” effects of social-positional power (as the Barbiana schoolboys analyse in “owls, pebbles and fans” curriculum).

SR’s better argument might be that, *if* curriculum comprised only ‘the purified best’ disciplinary knowledge, which pedagogy successfully redistributed to all, this would eliminate selective CC in curriculum. We argue, however, that actors in academic knowledge networks *do* embody partialities, which their ‘codes of practice’ do *not* eliminate. Nor does university-based disciplinary knowledge transfer directly into curriculum but is recontextualised within policy fields rife with power-plays of partial interest.

Unlike SR, the FK approach does not negate CC in theory. Yet most FK projects, and literature (an exception is Rios-Aguilar, Kiyama, Gravitt, & Moll, 2011), do not give the CC problem much attention. It might be hoped that, since academics involved in FK projects are strongly social justice-oriented, often from marginalised communities, they can help select FK of sufficiently inclusive richness to attenuate CC’s selective power in school subject knowledge and accentuate its better empowerments. We see two problems here. One is that, unless a school is (rarely) ready and able to put FK’s social-justice logic into full practice, institutional operations of CC selection are hard to evade. Moreover, even if schools can attenuate CC effects within their domains, there are ethical responsibilities to prepare students for CC selection along paths beyond school control that lead to further education and life-chances.

We can understand temptation to negate or side-step difficult challenges of reckoning with CC in-and-beyond schools, instead emphasising *use-values* of knowledge. SR values empowering uses of disciplinary knowledge, albeit fetishised as *the* sole knowledge of curriculum worth. FK values *both* discipline- *and* life-based knowledge for respective and

interactive uses. We share ethical valorisation of empowering uses of knowledge. Yet Bourdieu's Marxian point is that, whatever their uses, certain cultural qualities gain arbitrary curricular foothold due to selective *exchange-value* power—a *capitalising* logic—that co-opts use values.

We return shortly to the tension between 'use' and 'exchange' values. However, this tension is bound up in questions of *whether/how* selective CC can be redistributed through curricular means.

Delpit's Curricular Both/And: Redistributing CC While Honouring Lived Cultures

In a now-classic essay, African-American educator Lisa Delpit (1988) pursues strategies to *both* redistribute power-selective cultural codes to students who do not inherit them in families, *and* honour home-community cultures through meaningful curricular use. Like Bourdieu, Delpit highlights the injustice of selecting for dispositions cultured primarily in power-élite families:

To provide schooling for everyone's children that reflects liberal, middle-class values and aspirations is to ensure ... the culture of power, remains in the hands of those who already have it... [since] some children come to school with more accoutrements of the culture of power already in place—"cultural capital," as some critical theorists refer to it. (p. 285)

So long as selection for CC sustains deeply entrenched footholds within school message systems, argues Delpit, justice requires providing marginalised students with *explicit access* to cultural codes that schools typically leave implicit: "[W]e must take responsibility to *teach*, to provide for students who do not already possess them, the additional codes of power" (p. 293). However, merely explaining the codes is not sufficient pedagogy. Catching dispositional subtleties of CC expression takes culturally authentic practice whereby students access "the codes ... within the context of meaningful communicative endeavors" (p. 296).

Yet such cultural practice of power-codes risks assimilation of students' community cultures. It must then be limited to an *expedient* 'justice' in negotiating *unjust* power, and offset by a more valorised *ethical* justice through which, rather than "passively adopt an alternate code", students are "encouraged to understand the value of the code they already possess" (p. 293). Delpit offers an illustrative case: a primary-years class in which

rural Native-Alaskan children develop literacy in *both* ‘Village English’ *and* ‘Formal English’, comparing-and-contrasting codes and contexts. Crucially, when focusing on Village literacies the teacher accords *ethical pride-of-place*, “savoring the words” and “tell[ing] the students, ‘That’s the way we say things. Doesn’t it feel good? Isn’t it the absolute best way of getting that idea across?’” (p. 293). In contrast, the teacher frames the learning of Formal English as follows:

We listen to the way people talk, not to judge them, but to tell what part of the river they come from. These other people are not like that. They think everybody needs to talk like them ... [and] have a hard time hearing what people say if they don’t.... We have to feel a little sorry for them because they have only one way to talk. We’re going to learn two ways to say things. (p. 293)

This curricular-pedagogic process *both* makes rich use of community cultural *funds*, *and* takes pains to redistribute cultural *capital*, while, in age-appropriate ways, raising critical awareness to the *injustices* that institute some people’s cultures as ‘superior’ against others cast as ‘deficient’. Says Delpit: “[E]ven while students are assisted in learning the culture of power, they must also be helped to learn about the arbitrariness of those codes and about the power relationships they represent” (p. 296). Delpit’s both/and approach thus communicates to students that “their language and cultural style is unique and wonderful but that there is a ... power game that is also being played” (p. 292).

Delpit is not alone in chronicling cases where schools *both* honour home-community cultures *and* redistribute CC. Yet cases are rare and, even when strongly successful (e.g. Meier, 1995), do not lead to system-wide take-up. We argue that the *logic of capital* restricts redistribution of CC within a *zero-sum game* that allows very few upward-mobile ‘winners’.

Grappling with Capital’s Logic: Acute (In)justice Tensions

In justice-oriented discourse, ‘capital’ is a term too-often applied casually to cultural qualities variously valued for *use* (‘use-valued’) among diverse marginalised groups. ‘Capital’ is made interchangeable with community ‘funds’ or ‘wealths’ (Yosso, 2005)—as if not just “unique and wonderful” (Delpit) but “their capital”. This terminological slippage loses Bourdieu’s (and Marx’s) insight into the *selective accumulation logic* of ‘capital’.

Below we outline this logic by which only cultural properties of select groups are—*arbitrarily and unjustly*—invested with *exchange-value* (i.e. *capital-value*) in education ‘markets’.

- *Selective accumulation* means a power-élite few can sustain abundant hold on cultural attributes kept inaccessibly scarce to the power-marginalised many.
- Holding *exchange-value* means the capital-invested cultural attributes are selected as showing ‘high-achiever’ value, relative to others, in competitive school performance.
- What is invested with exchange-value may indeed have *use-value* in the cultures of people who possess it, and may potentially offer uses to others. Indeed, capital-accumulation processes exploit what ‘consumers’ value for use. Yet, regardless of *use-value*, what draws and holds *exchange-value*—cultural *capital*—is the capacity of the cultural ‘commodity’ to select for competitive ‘success’.
- Certain cultural attributes are fetishised in schools as ‘naturally special’ (e.g. ‘Formal English’, in Delpit’s illustration), such that all should accord them ‘most-high’ value, and understand themselves as ‘in deficit’ if ‘lacking’ them. Such *cultural-capital* attributes, misrecognised as ‘natural’, constitute relatively secure repositories for sustaining selective capital among those who already hold it, thus reproducing their powers of social structural position.
- Yet no cultural attribute holds ‘special value’ eternally, since what draws capital investment is, ultimately, arbitrary—as demonstrated if a fetishised attribute gains redistribution beyond the powerful few. In no longer holding rarity, it loses power as capital. In that case, competitively selective value can shift to other arbitrary attributes scarce to non-élite groups.
- This fungibility of capital-(re)investment co-opts efforts to redistribute it. If just a few schools succeed in redistributing, say, Formal English to students who do not inherit it in families, this does not provoke shift in what draws capital investment. However, shift is provoked if many schools succeed; hence the structural injustice of unequal possession of what schools selectively privilege remains.

Social Realist dismissal of CC as a problem for redistributive justice fails to see that the problem is not particular knowledge, but the *selective logic*

by which *capital* invests that knowledge *arbitrarily*. Investment may be in knowledge of meaningful use value, and/or ‘owls, pebbles and fans’ of meaningless use. Yet, so long as *a capitalising logic deeply structures the grammar of school message systems*, *some* cultural properties and codes will hold arbitrarily selective capital investment. We thus must not get so absorbed in a ‘justice’ of redistributing CC that we diminish efforts towards an *ethically richer curriculum justice logic*: to work with knowledge of cultural *use-value* among diverse, and especially marginalised, communities. After all, no knowledge would hold exchange-value in a socially just world that education should work towards. We dare imagine *a use-valuing ethical frame for curriculum* that: (a) puts primacy on *use-valued* knowledge, disciplinary- and life-based (FK), and accords ethical pride-of-place to the latter (Fraser’s R2); and (b) since valued cultural uses are diverse and can clash, robust participatory-democratic processes to negotiate alternative *use-claims* in situated schools and school systems (Fraser’s R3).

Yet, as Jameson (2005, p. 199) remarks: “[I]t is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism” (*or* racism, patriarchy, and other structural inequalities). So long as power-code selections retain stronghold across schooling and other social institutions, we face a vexatious ethical dilemma. *Redistributive* justice calls for effective efforts to teach what school systems accord ‘high worth’, even if, beyond rare instances, the *logic* of selection reinvests and so co-opts such efforts. Yet efforts to redistribute capacity to ‘play the power-game’ cannot succeed widely; and they redistribute not just power-invested codes, but the *selective logic* of that investment, *which predicates structural inequality*, contradicting a robust justice of *recognising* diverse community use values through *representative* processes.

CONCLUSION: SUMMONING STRONG ETHICS TO PURSUE (IM)POSSIBLE JUSTICE

Can curriculum *both* redistribute power-culture’s codes to those who do not inherit them, *and* recognise/represent diverse cultural use values, in ways that resolve their contradiction? We do not see a ‘solvable’ both/and, but rather what Derrida (2001) calls a “transaction between two ... justified imperatives” (p. 54) which are “infinitely contradictory, placing [us] before the aporia of a double injunction” (p. 53). An *aporia*—a contradiction calling for both/and efforts yet not amenable

to dialectical resolution—poses an acute condition of dilemma in which, in efforts for “responsible decision, an abyss remains, and must remain” (p. 54); which “is infinitely distressing”, says Derrida (p. 56), as both are “at once necessary and apparently impossible” (p. 59).

We suggest that educational efforts to redistribute codes of selective exchange-value evoke an *expedient* impulse to negotiate ‘more just possibility’ within operations of power that cannot possibly be just. On the other hand, efforts to recognise/represent people’s diverse cultural use values evoke an *ethical* impulse to challenge unjust but formidable power towards fully substantive justice. If, between these ‘both/and’ justice impulses, an abyss must remain, then there is no rule for responsible decision on how to navigate their tension. Rather, educators need, in our view, to summon two attitudes for persistence within the abyss. One is what Derrida calls a “hyperbolic ethics ... that carries itself beyond laws, norms” (p. 35). The other is what Australian educator Garth Boomer (1999) called a “pragmatic-radical” attitude. We read this tensely hyphenated both/and—being *both* pragmatic *and* radical—not in vulgarised senses of *pragmatic* as ‘being realistic’, and *radical* as ‘on a loony fringe’, but in an “ethical-philosophical sense” of “do[ing] what works to create conditions of possibility to pursue what is worth working towards” (Zipin & Brennan, 2019, p. 56).

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PART III

Nation, History, Curriculum



Curriculum History and Progressive Education in Australia: A Prolegomenon

Bill Green

INTRODUCTION: HISTORY, ‘PROGRESSIVISM’, AND TRANSNATIONAL CURRICULUM INQUIRY

This chapter is focused on curriculum history, as a distinctive (sub)field within curriculum inquiry. I am convinced that historical imagination is a crucial feature of both curriculum scholarship and praxis, although this is not always evident in the work of the field—to say nothing of its various entanglements with policy. Curriculum history needs to be understood, further, within the broader context of transnational curriculum inquiry, and an important aspect of it. This means attending to national culture and schooling, in its geographical and institutional specificity, but with due regard for matters of internationalisation and cosmopolitanism. Phenomena such as ‘neoliberalism’ or ‘progressivism’, along with many other issues of this kind, need to be engaged historically, but also geo-spatially, and comparatively. Nations (still) matter.

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In what follows, I look first at curriculum history, focusing on work from Australia, although also making reference to developments and debates in this regard elsewhere, and worldwide. I then turn to what is variously called ‘progressive education’ or ‘educational progressivism’, or perhaps ‘learner-centred education’—the so-called progressive strand in Australian education and schooling, expressly from a curriculum-historical perspective. Here I want to acknowledge, right at the outset, Julie McLeod’s pioneering efforts and achievements with regard to the history of progressive education, and undoubtedly one of Australia’s leading educational scholars. Indeed much of what I have to say is deeply informed by her now extensive investigations of the ‘progressive’ project in Australian educational history (McLeod, 2015). My aim is to draw out certain aspects of this, relating in part to my own work in English teaching and curriculum history, an area that I see as particularly relevant to understanding progressive education in Australia, but also in the Anglophone world more generally. To what extent it is relevant more widely remains to be seen.

CURRICULUM HISTORY IN AUSTRALIA; OR, THINKING CURRICULUM HISTORICALLY

Curriculum history is a relatively recent phenomenon in Australia.¹ Nonetheless I will sketch here an account of how I see this field today, making specific reference to education and schooling. This involves beginning with due acknowledgement that Australia is a relatively new nation, still, with its establishment reaching back little more than a century, from Federation in 1901. This is despite the fact that it was originally ‘discovered’, colonised, and settled from the late eighteenth century, by the British, and also that it was homeland to Aboriginal peoples and nations for tens of thousands of years prior to that. So let me be very clear: this is very much a *white* curriculum that I am focusing on here, and the educational realisation of a ‘selective tradition’ that is thoroughly and often insistently Anglo-European. At the same time, and in terms of the project of transnational curriculum inquiry, the case I am putting forward about the necessity and value of the historical imagination has a

¹Of course, much the same might be said for many other countries as well.

much broader relevance, geographically and spatially. It affirms the entanglements of nation and empire in curriculum and schooling, worldwide, something likely to be occluded without a rich and ongoing investment in curriculum-historical inquiry, as a distinctive academic-intellectual enterprise. There is much to gain and to learn in thinking historically, as I hope to demonstrate.

There are several points to make, at the outset. The first is that a distinction needs to be made, as I see it, between curriculum history and the history of education, as fields of inquiry. What I am more broadly concerned with here is curriculum inquiry, and I see curriculum history as a subset of that larger field. This is different from seeing it within, and as subsumed by, the history of education. It isn't that these are entirely separate undertakings or perspectives; clearly there are overlaps, and dialogue is to be actively encouraged.² But for the moment I want to insist on the specificity and distinctiveness of curriculum history. This means work that is deliberately and self-consciously *curriculum*-oriented and -informed, and marked by what Whitson (2009, p. 352) has called "a framework of curriculum consciousness". Baker (2013) similarly points to the usefulness of distinguishing between curriculum history and history of education, noting the former's "broader location relative to history of education – that is, beyond social science into the humanities, and attuned to both popular cultural and academic conceptions" (p. 43). She also provides an intriguing, if rather provocative, inventory of some important differences and developments in this regard (Baker, 2013, pp. 31–32). There are rich possibilities, then, in a reconceptualised view of curriculum history, which has various implications for Australian scholarship.

Regarding curriculum history in Australia, it would appear that there is in fact little work available of this kind—and for perhaps quite understandable reasons (Green, 2003/2015). In this regard, educational historian Craig Campbell has made the following observation:

Broad, cohesive, critical historical studies of school curricula from colonial to more modern times barely exist. There are studies for individual school subjects, and curriculum for limited periods of time, but curriculum remains a field barely scratched. It is an important issue for the history of

²See Lindmark (2015) regarding the state of play in Nordic history of education, within which curriculum history as a specific topic is explicitly located, and similarly so.

ideas, the sociology of knowledge and the historical role of curriculum in the educational development of Australia. (Campbell, 2016, p. 7)

Although sympathetic to the cause, it needs to be said that Campbell is nonetheless not working within the disciplinary ambit of curriculum scholarship, which I think limits his sense of the field and its constraints and possibilities. Among other things, such accounts from within the history of Australian education rarely problematise the coupling of curriculum and schooling, or the view of curriculum as more or less exclusively an institutionalised practice.

A further consideration is that Australian work in curriculum history to date has tended to be distributed across subject-areas—for instance, Music, Mathematics, Technical Drawing, Nature, Study, English, etc.—and to some extent, levels of schooling (e.g. reading pedagogy and the primary school). Hence it can be hard to keep track of and to bring together, or to develop this inquiry as an organised resource. Furthermore, while such work might well be working with an explicit, articulated understanding of curriculum (i.e. as concept), this is not at all necessarily the case, which means that curriculum as a term is often being used in a more or less descriptive or commonsense way, without drawing in and building on relevant theory in curriculum history itself—or indeed recognising that something of this kind exists. What constitutes *curriculum* history, of course, or how it is best to be understood, remains awaiting further conceptual work. But there have been some initiatives in this regard, and some promising signs of growing if still rather sporadic scholarly momentum. Writing in 1989, Seddon sought to challenge the prevailing ‘technical’ perspective in existing historical work and instead to develop a ‘social’ view, referencing among other Richard Teese’s remarkable historical-sociological studies of Australian curriculum and schooling, focused on Victoria in the second half of the twentieth century (Teese, 2000, 2014). Work of this kind certainly represents an important strand in curriculum history in Australia.

LOOKING ELSEWHERE

At this point it is helpful to look outside Australia, to other recent accounts of curriculum history. How consistent is the account I am offering here with these? Not all that much, it would appear. Or rather these other accounts seem to be marking out different territory, which

is perhaps understandable since the significance of national culture and context has been acknowledged, notwithstanding the internationalisation project. Linné (2011) for instance argues for the importance of notions of time, narrative and history for curriculum theory, although despite claiming to be “re-thinking curriculum history” she seems to underplay curriculum history as a distinctive form of curriculum inquiry in its own right. For Tröhler (2016a), curriculum history is necessarily to be seen within curriculum studies, which he identifies as “an offshoot of a particular US way of understanding the organization of schooling and instruction” (p. 280). As he writes: “The fact is that curriculum history, together with curriculum studies in general, is in its origin and in a dominant way an *American tradition of research*, a particular result of a particular way of doing research in the field of education” (Tröhler, 2016b, p. 4). It becomes clear, however, that he regards curriculum itself as essentially an Anglo-American phenomenon, whereas “in Europe a more or less continuous research tradition under the catchword ‘curriculum’ has never really existed” (Tröhler, 2016b, p. 9). Others might well want to debate that point. His own sense of the field is worth quoting here at length:

[C]urriculum history ... offers a sophisticated way to do educational research, particularly as it allows the combination of traditionally separated *philosophical history of ideas* (for instance, social justice or political philosophy), *social history* (for instance, with regard to educational opportunities and life chances) and *the history of institutions*, if this integrated view is understood as part of a *cultural history* that asks for particular systems of reasoning and modes of sense-making that emerge and may prevail (or not) in areas and regions, whereby very often the idea of the nation-state has more or less successfully defined where these areas and regions are to be defined geographically. (Tröhler, 2016b, pp. 17–18; my added emphasis)

The reference here to ‘history of ideas’ is particularly significant. Coupled with social and institutional history, such work involves combining intellectual history with the history of ideas, and of systems of reasoning. This is indeed a particular and even partial view of curriculum history, although it needs also to be said that it is consistent with the so-called Popkewitz School, and also broadly speaking with the Reconceptualist tradition in curriculum inquiry (Tröhler, 2016b, p. 283). I am keen not to deny or underplay the insight and value of such work—quite the contrary, as I have certainly learnt much from it. Nonetheless I think it is fair to say

that a greater and more immediate influence in Australia has been the British work of Ivor Goodson (1988, 1994) and others, organised to a large extent around school subjects.³

Goodson's influence in this regard might be traced back to the relative paucity of curriculum inquiry in Australia (Green, 2003/2015), although it also attests to the strong tradition of Australian work in the subject-areas. It is worth noting that Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (1995)'s monumental study of historical and contemporary discourses in curriculum inquiry confirms that "[t]he study of curriculum history ... has emerged in the 1980s as one of the most important sectors of contemporary curriculum scholarship" (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 42), and point to "an emerging "self-consciousness regarding the historicity of curriculum work, theoretical or institutional" (p. 43). With their principal focus being on the United States, they clearly endorse curriculum-historical inquiry, and the centrality of the historical imagination in curriculum inquiry more generally. Coming back to Australia, however, and notwithstanding the undoubted local relevance of this point, two issues mitigate against the development of such work in the Australian context. One is the relative lack of substantial and effectively organised archives, of the kind available in the United States, for instance, or in Europe.⁴ The other is, more recently, the impact of neoliberalism in educational policy and its characteristic refusal of history (Reid, 2019).⁵ Even so, the case for curriculum history remains compelling.

A POST-LINGUISTIC TURN?

It is another strand, however, that I focus on here. This is one interested more in questions of language. Influenced by poststructuralist and especially Foucaultian thinking, this is a particular line of inquiry associated in different ways with what has been called the 'linguistic turn'

³This has been described by Brazilian curriculum scholars (Lopes & Costa, 2019) as the "History of School Subjects" (HSS).

⁴An important initiative in this regard is the resource developed by Lyn Yates and colleagues at the University of Melbourne, which provides a review of curriculum policies in Australia 1975–2005 (<http://web.education.unimelb.edu.au/curriculumpoliciesproject/>). See also Yates, Collins, and O'Connor (2011).

⁵Clearly neoliberalism's influence in education has been evident worldwide. However, how it has played out in Australia has, arguably, its own specificity.

or the ‘textual turn’. I would argue, indeed, that it has had distinctive inflections in the Australian context.⁶ Addressed specifically to developments and debates in curriculum history in Australia and New Zealand, Baker (1996) provided an influential and more theoretically informed account than hitherto the case in such work. As she writes, her concern is “with the nature and structure of discourse available with which to reason, to explore and to describe the curriculum history field” (Baker, 1996, p. 107). This paper can be seen now as an early expression of her later, more mature scholarship based in the USA, which would become much more explicitly informed by Foucault. It is aligned in various ways with work such as that of Popkewitz and others, with Popkewitz (2007, 2011) in particular a highly influential figure in recent decades (González-Delgado & Woyshner, 2017). This is undoubtedly important work, internationally. It has deeply informed our distinctly Australian studies, and I see it moreover as potentially highly generative for our ongoing inquiry.

For the best part of thirty years now, I have been working with colleagues on a research program addressed to thinking historically about English teaching, teacher education, and public schooling in Australia, with particular reference to the first half of the twentieth century.⁷ In the course of this work, following the pathways of our interests and preoccupations has taken us into times both before and after the period between Federation (1901) and World War I. Some investigations have traced back into the early nineteenth century while others are focused on the more recent past, in accordance with the notion of the ‘history of the present’. Overall, this work can be characterised as formed within and framed by a ‘post-theoretical’ perspective, that is, by what has been called ‘*post*’-theory, or the various discourses of poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and ‘postmodernism’, which I now prefer to call simply the Postmodern (Green, 2017). This is captured in the title of a paper first presented in 2000 and eventually published in 2009: ‘curriculum history and the linguistic turn’ (Cormack & Green, 2009). We referenced this ‘turn’

⁶An important precursor here is Musgrave (1988), in which he makes explicit reference to language and textuality—notwithstanding the fact that his own curriculum-historical work, illuminating as it is, clearly cannot be seen within such a ‘post-theoretical’ frame of reference.

⁷Further work associated with this research program has looked at reading pedagogy and literacy debates.

in Derrida, in his (in)famous assertion of “the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of a centre or origin, everything became discourse” (Derrida, 1978, p. 280). But Foucault also provided a crucial resource for our work, and indeed has been a much more influential figure in education studies more generally, perhaps especially in Australia. Along with Derrida and Foucault, we drew on others from somewhat different perspectives such as Bakhtin, in arguing for a new attention to language and textuality, discourse and signification. ‘Discourse’ became a crucial concept to work with, and indeed in many ways an organising principle. “[W]hat are the implications of this turn to discourse for the conduct of curriculum history?” (Cormack, 2005, p. 122), we asked. Not just its ‘conduct’, either, but also its very conceptualisation. In this regard, a line of inquiry had been developing for some time, asking questions about the ‘modernist’ character of curriculum, especially given that schooling was clearly a signature project of modernity. Was it possible to think curriculum *beyond* modernity? *After* modernist schooling? (Because of course curriculum goes on going on...) Or was it the case that it was inescapably caught up in that particular epistemo-historical frame? It was in this context that it became strategic to introduce notions of *post*-curriculum history, not simply as a provocation but also as an experiment, a ‘thought-experiment’.⁸

Taking due account of the ‘linguistic/textual turn’ has been especially productive in re-reading the historical record, as well as attending to archival research. As noted, an important resource has been post-structuralist theory and philosophy, with Foucault an important resource, both for his understandings of discourse, knowledge and power, and for his methodological notions of ‘genealogy’ and ‘archeology’. One way in which this has been realised is a wariness regarding received categories, and an unwillingness more generally to take these for granted, as given. This has meant focusing on the categories themselves, *as* categories and concepts. As Cormack (2005, p. 121) writes: “Concepts such as *knowledge*, the *learner* (or *child* or *adolescent*) the *teacher*, the *school*, from a poststructuralist perspective, are not assumed to have some foundation in the ‘real’, or to be an unchanging ‘background’ to the study of curriculum[,] but to be formed out of the same discourses that shape the curriculum”. This is not just a matter of “examin[ing] the histories

⁸See Lather and Clemens (2010) for a relevant account of ‘post’-theory and the history of education.

of some of the fundamental and often unexamined categories ... implicated in the design and conduct of curriculum”, but also, importantly, problematising “objects and structures such as the school and the classroom”, as well as “organisations such as education departments or the state itself” (Cormack, 2005, p. 122). That is, it is not just ‘concepts’ that are of interest here, but also *practices*, along with artefacts and even architectures—a mixing of materiality and the semiotic. For Cormack, this involves a new understanding and appreciation of the ‘technical’. “The implication for curriculum-historical work”, he writes, “is to understand the humble techniques of curriculum as being as important as the rationalities and ideas that are used to justify them, and not to assume that the former necessarily derive from the latter” (p. 123). Hence, among his writings, for instance, is an account of the ‘slate’: “a key material object in the teaching and learning of literacy in schools for the general population as they became compulsory, secular and free” (Cormack, 2016, p. 95). This concern for the material, and for the mundane practices of curriculum and schooling, is particularly noteworthy, especially given a tendency in some quarters to see discourse-oriented work as merely ‘textualist’.

A key feature of the (post-)linguistic turn has been its assertion of historical ‘data’ as ‘text’, and its insistence on historical inquiry as a form of discourse analysis. This takes two forms. One is more directly linguistic and textual in orientation, and works more empirically with available texts, for instance drawing on the methodological and conceptual resources of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). A key reference here is the work of Fairclough (e.g. Cormack, 2005—see also Cormack & Green, 2009).⁹ Cormack in particular has now done extensive work in this regard, drawing in other figures such as Bakhtin. Approaching conventional historical ‘data’ as text means that it can be interrogated beyond its ‘content’ or its informational value. As such, it is an important complement to traditional work in educational history using quantitative data—census and enrolment figures, for instance. But there is another side to this work, drawing more on the Foucaultian view of *discourse*,

⁹It needs to be said, too, that discourse analysis has been a particularly strong area within Australian educational research (Lee & Poynton, 2010; Luke, 1995, 1997). See the Special Issue on ‘Critical Discourse Analysis’ in the journal *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* (Vol. 18, No. 3, 1997).

that is equally productive. Here, emphasis is placed on a particular understanding of ‘context’ as the conditions of possibility and intelligibility of educational ‘statements’, which comprise actions as well as utterances or articulations. Discourses are to be seen as higher-order manifestations of particular formations-in-flight of knowledge and power, constructing the ‘objects’ of which they speak, and permeating the social field. Hence a distinctive relationship exists between discourse and history, as a complex field of force and signification. One can inquire therefore into the play of discourses at work in any one moment, constructing subjectivities and author(is)ing particular domains of knowledge and conduct. How for instance are children to be known or thought about?—as ‘children’ or ‘pupils’, or ‘delinquents’, or ‘at risk’, etc. When does a ‘child’ transmute into an ‘adolescent’? Where, and how, are the boundaries set in this regard? By whom, or is it by what?

Further, it became clear an explicit engagement with the non-discursive, the material, and relatedly, the heterogeneous—the hybrid, the mixture—was crucial. How is discourse to be understood as *matter* as well as meaning? This has taken the work into the realm of practice theory (Reh, 2014), and also into drawing out the relationship between discourse and practice.¹⁰ How is ‘practice’ itself to be reconceptualised within such a frame? Within a conventional view of discourse as enabling distinctive, preferred ways of thinking, acting, being, etc., the social field is to be understood in terms of the ‘discourses’, ‘programs’, and ‘effects’ that are produced. At any one historical moment, a particular social field is marked by multiple and competing *discourses*, *programs*, and *effects*. In such a formulation, ‘programs’ can be technologies as well as practices, thereby drawing in the non-discursive, or the sociomaterial; while attending to the realm of ‘effects’ acknowledges unpredictability and contingency, the ‘failures’ and the unforeseen. Moreover this is not to be seen hierarchically, rather as a two-way movement, up and down. In a sense it doesn’t matter where one starts, methodologically, since any starting point is immediately, organically connected to the larger material-discursive field, and any point or pathway within it. Presented as “a tri-stratal view of historical practice” (Green, 2005, p. 117), the formulation is accompanied by “a sharp emphasis on ‘(dis)continuity, interruption and uneven development” (p. 118), along with notions

¹⁰Initial engagements with practice theory were in the context of professional education (Green, 2009), including teacher education.

of non-correspondence and heterogeneity. The point is to allow for contingency and the accidental, and to encourage “careful attention to “the local specificity of historical circumstance” (p. 118), the mundane as well as the monumental. In this way, the complexity of history is foregrounded, as a field of possibilities and probabilities, designs and desires.

It should be said that this ‘framework’ is presented as a resource for and a guide to curriculum-historical inquiry, and most definitely not as a template. Nonetheless, it has proved to be useful over several decades now, as a reference-point for researching English curriculum history in Australia (e.g. Green, 2003). But there has been more to this work than simply studying just the English subjects and their various aspects (‘reading’, etc.), as matters of interest and concern in themselves. As Goodson (1992, p. 25) notes, “[s]tudying school subjects ... provides us with a window on the wider educational and political culture of a country”. That this might be particularly the case with English teaching in Australia is still to be appreciated, as with other L1 subjects. This issue can be further illuminated, however, in turning now more directly to the history of progressive education in Australia.

THE ‘PROGRESSIVIST’ PROJECT IN AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION

I now turn to consider thinking historically about so-called progressive education, especially in Australia.¹¹ As noted above, McLeod’s extensive investigations of the ‘progressive’ project in Australian educational history have been especially important here. Crucially she points to “the shadow side” of the various reform initiatives identified with educational progressivism (McLeod, 2015), noting the need to account for things that are excluded or occluded in such programs, for absences, and silences.¹² At

¹¹ Perhaps needless to say, so-called ‘progressive education’ is clearly a transnational phenomenon *par excellence*, manifesting in many different contexts across the world (Brehony, 2002; Howlett, 2013). Historically, it is linked in Europe to what is called ‘*Reformpädagogik*’ (Hopmann, 2007, p. 114).

¹² McLeod is particularly concerned in this regard with the relationship between progressivism and race, which she sees as particularly salient for Australian education history, although by no means exclusively so (McLeod & Paisley, 2016). This particular concern is taken up with specific reference to English curriculum history in Brass and Green (2020).

the same time, she is adamant that the more positive or productive, even utopian aspects of educational progressivism are to be neither denied, overlooked, or underestimated, and this is equally something to bear in mind. So what is progressive education, and how might be engaged as curriculum history?

What is primarily at issue in progressive education is a new (renewed?) emphasis on matters of experience, activity and interest in curriculum and schooling, in the face of their devaluation and even denial in previous or established forms of education. “Progressive education typically denoted an emphasis on child-centred and active learning, immersion in the natural world, growth of the inner life of the child, and a valuing of cooperative relationships among students and between teachers and students” (McLeod, 2019, p. 452). Understanding curriculum as the articulation of knowledge and pedagogy, this applies as much to ‘content’ or subject matter as to teaching and learning, teachers and learners. A different view of the pedagogical relationship is implied here, crucially, a shift away from transmission and recitation to student engagement and active involvement. Knowledge is also differently conceived—although this is always a vexed and difficult question. Milieu changes too, even if only within the space of the classroom, although often there are indeed moves outwards, into the school more generally, including its playgrounds, and even beyond. Different relationships between school and community become at least imaginable, even though sometimes they are still somewhat phantasmatic. Classroom order maps differently onto social order. As Baker (1999, p. 81) describes the US context: “Reforms in the present are considered to be identifiable as progressive if they project a more liberal rather than conservative vision of public schooling and its function”. She continues thus:

Progressive education is currently associated with building a more democratic democracy, with concerns for social justice, with methods based on cooperation and group decision making, with organic and culturally relevant teaching, and with a centering of the child in pedagogical strategies. (Baker, 1999, p. 81)

In Australia, the scholarly consensus is that there are three distinct periods within which ‘progressivism’ seemingly flourished, namely the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, the 1930s, and the 1960s and 1970s—that is, some forty-five years, or almost half the entire twentieth

century. The question arises then, as to whether progressivism might therefore be seen as something ‘abnormal’ erupting onto the scene of Australian education at particular moments and then disappearing, or rather as more prevalent than is often accepted, and hence more or less ‘normal’—just as much part of the grammar of mass-compulsory schooling, as so-called traditional education. This affords a different perspective on how history plays out as continuous, and relatedly, to the problem of *(dis)continuity*. In this case, it becomes important to be attentive to *(dis)continuity* not only across time, but geo-spatially and comparatively across Australia’s multi-scalar educational history and the significance of the state for curriculum and schooling, partly as a consequence of geography. Campbell and Sherington (2006) have suggested that a distinction should be observed in the Australian context between what they call ‘administrative’ and ‘pedagogic’ progressivism. By this, they seek to stress the way in which hierarchy, regulation, and standardisation play out across the country, albeit differently realised in the various States and Territories. As they write: “Progressivism in this phase of Australian secondary reform apparently had little to say on pedagogic matters, though more on issues of curriculum content or ‘syllabuses’” (Campbell & Sherington, 2006, p. 200; see also Campbell, 2013). Attention to discourse here might illuminate ways in which the actual school curriculum, and in particular the school subjects in their emergence and development across primary and secondary schooling, might represent pedagogic initiatives, or to the manner in which the ‘administrative’ and the ‘pedagogic’ come together in particular biographies and career-trajectories.¹³ This is especially clear in the case of subject English, from my point of view at least, but it is evident also in later phases of progressive education in Australia—in particular, the 1970s (McLeod, 2014). The key point remains however that attending to the specificity of how the educational-progressivist project plays out in the Australian context¹⁴ is crucial, as indeed it would be for other national cultures.

¹³I would suggest, further, that this is a good instance of why an informed and theorised sense of curriculum, as concept, is crucial in *curriculum*-historical inquiry.

¹⁴See Kass (2018), for instance, regrading ‘nature study’ in Australia.

A Discourse-Theoretical Perspective

I want to come back now to the implications of turning to discourse, and to discourse theory, for curriculum history. What, in particular, does this mean for thinking historically about educational progressivism in Australia? Brehony (2001) provides an extremely useful account of the educational history of progressivism, in which among other things he discusses the work of the American educational historian Sol Cohen (1999), and, expressly in terms of the ‘linguistic turn’ (p. 424), highlights the importance of language in historical inquiry, thereby seeming to open up possibilities regarding the value of post-theoretical perspectives of the kind I am concerned with here. There are problems in his account, however. As he writes: “Cohen’s view implies that there is nothing outside language, no classrooms, no schools, no pedagogy that can be called progressive or anything else. *There is only the language of progressivism* [...]” (Brehony, 2001, p. 423; my added emphasis). And there’s the rub. Too often the discursive turn is seen simply as attending to language, as ‘textualist’. Progressivism in such a light is simply a matter of language, a way of speaking. There is something in that, of course. Who is it that talks about progressivism? In an earlier documentary history of literacy debates in postwar Australia (Green, Hodgens, & Luke, 1997), we noted how often this was more often than not those who were critical or at least sceptical about educational change and innovation, and also, but to a lesser extent, its proponents.¹⁵ In this sense, then, this is the way that progressivism was ‘spoken’ into existence, often as a less-than-desirable ‘import’ into a nation that saw itself as ‘coming of age’.

But it depends on how discourse itself is understood. In this regard, I want to recall Derrida’s observation, cited earlier, of “the moment when language invaded the universal problematic”—when “everything became discourse”. I read this as pointing to a social-epistemic change when it became no longer possible to work with a sense of realist certainty, a taken-for-granted or assumed foundationalist view of the world, or a single truth. Everything became discourse, or discursive—caught up in complex webs of force and signification. Foucault provides another, complementary perspective. He brings in the non-discursive, the material, the grit and obduracy of the social. Hence it is not enough to focus simply (or simplistically) on language, on what is spoken or written,

¹⁵Subsequently, of course, academic researchers...

on what is recorded, although it is important to do so. It is necessary and indeed crucial to look for ways to take account of bodies and buildings, practices and technologies, personalities and personnel, the minutiae and mundanities of everyday life in classrooms and schools, and other educational(-administrative) sites. Thinking about progressivism as discourse, therefore, means working from the outset with this broader, more comprehensive, heterogeneous view, and bringing together Derrida and Foucault, where and when appropriate. A central issue here is that discourse is *constitutive*: it constructs that which it articulates. What is it, then, that discourse—more specifically, the discourse of progressivism—seeks to construct? McLeod suggests that its object is the ideal child, the ideal learner, although clearly it goes beyond this, to take into account the teacher, the classroom, the school, the community, and the society, among other things, all understood as discursive objects. Ultimately, though, progressivism desires a better world, and undertakes to design it.

Here it becomes useful to think of educational progressivism as a discursive formation—comprising, as outlined earlier, specific *discourses*, distinctive *programs*, and a range of *effects*, or discernible outcomes in the social-educational world. This would enable us to look for relevant *discourses* as realised in texts of various kinds, writings, theories, polemics, etc.¹⁶ It would allow us to discern the *programs* and technologies put in place as a response to such discursive work as policies or practices—ways of getting things done in the educational sphere; and it would alert us finally, to the *effects* generated, or what happened as a result of all this, some of it unforeseen. In this way, something of the sheer complexity of history is exposed, including its unpredictability. This has obvious implications not only for social and educational planning, but also for curriculum research. It is usual now to point to the halcyon period of the 1930s as a highpoint in the history of progressive education in Australia (e.g. Hughes, 2015), but it should also be recalled that the particular reform at issue here actually didn't 'take': it didn't, in itself, effect much of anything, or seemingly so. It was literally a 'mis-take'. This is undoubtedly due partly to the advent of the Second World War, which interrupted everything. It may well be also the case that the discourse subsequently went underground, with "many of the ideas first broached in the 1930s and

¹⁶This would include the school curriculum itself, as both 'text' and 'context'.

1940s only receiv[ing] implementation in the 1950s and 1960s” (Campbell & Sherington, 2006, p. 194). But what does that mean—how did this happen? Something that continues to intrigue, in fact, is the apparent absence of the 1950s¹⁷ from the official history of educational progressivism. Given the three-phase periodization alluded to above, what was happening in the 1950s? If there was indeed an undercurrent of progressivist ideas in this interim period, how was this manifested? That would be a fruitful line of inquiry, it seems to me.

A CONCLUDING NOTE—CURRICULUM HISTORY IN, AND BEYOND, THE NATION

In this relatively brief and even cursory account of curriculum history and progressive education in Australia, I have sought to demonstrate the value of attending to the specificity of educational practice in national cultures and contexts, as well as the importance of transnational curriculum inquiry. Taking a transnational perspective, overall, is both enriched and complemented by local investigations of how curriculum and schooling are realised in particular nation-states, taking due account of matters such as uneven development, coloniality, and the relationship between governmentality and geography. I argue here that Australia has produced distinctive versions of both curriculum history and progressive education, albeit in complicated conversation with other histories, elsewhere. The difference matters. Place matters. Just as these have become guiding principles for curriculum research more generally, so too they are relevant here, and generative in shaping and informing such local-global studies in curriculum-historical inquiry. I would add, in closing: discourse matters too. Hence a locally inflected discourse-theoretical approach to curriculum history, as outlined here, may well be something to think about further, within the larger transnational project of curriculum inquiry.

¹⁷Properly speaking, this is the period from 1945 into and through the 1950s—from the end of the War to the advent of the perhaps mythical 60s. This period is examined to some extent in the documentary history I did with colleagues (Green et al., 1997); although a relatively cursory treatment, much more could be made of it even now.

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Curriculum and Literacy Policies in a Context of Curriculum Centralization: The Case of Brazil

Rita de Cássia Prazeres Frangella

INTRODUCTION

One of the issues we commonly come across is the need for teacher training, not only in initial education but mainly in continuing education, as a requirement for the pursuit of quality in education. In the field of curriculum, this discourse is emphasized in many studies that, in their conclusions, point out as the main proposition the necessary reformulation of teacher training proposals (Lopes & Macedo, 2007). This perspective draws attention to the context of educational reforms, especially the curricular ones, which are present in the contemporary scenario as a *sine qua non* for achieving improvement in the quality of education. Thus, the sense of reform is imbued with changes that they would generate results in line with the improvement objectives outlined in a striking mark of positivity.

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If ‘reform’ is the watchword, another not-so-new watchword associated with it is ‘training’. What I propose with this chapter is to discuss this complex relationship, thinking of teacher training as an instance of curriculum production, and not simply a related issue. I argue that in the pursuit of quality, there are myriad meanings in dispute and a plurality of social demands that articulate around the significant void, in this case quality, as Macedo (2009) and Lopes (2012) also argue.

The proposition of analyzing the production of curricular policies from this perspective is based on a discursive perspective that allows us to infer curricular policies as political-discursive productions. Thus, observing the demands and articulations that produce a given discursive formation—which is not an amorphous set or constituted by juxtaposition, but on the contrary, a complex alignment of tensioned and articulated demands allowing a discourse to be hegemonized—enhances analysis of the articulations that constitute the production of curricular policies.

What I highlight is the observance of the production of curricular policies as a political struggle for meaning, involving different articulated discourses. Among these are the discourses for teacher training that also occur as a production of curricular policies. From dialogue with scholars such as Derrida (2001), Bhabha (2003) and Laclau (2011), I observe the displacement/lapse of signifiers such as formation and curricular policies that are articulated in the production of a pedagogical discourse that, in search of quality, signifies the investment in teacher training as institutes of curriculum policies.

Deepening the observations made in previous research moments and as a development of these reflections, I take as my object of study the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (*Pacto Nacional pela Alfabetização na Idade Certa* [PNAIC], 2012a), a programme instituted by the Brazilian Ministry of Education in partnership with states and municipalities that aims at ensuring that all children are literate by the age of eight and by the end of the third elementary school year. Given its scope and also because it was presented as a strategic action in the context of educational policies for Elementary School, the relevance and importance of taking it for analysis is justified.

The extent, scope and adherence to the Pact are noteworthy: data provided by the Secretariat of Basic Education state that 317 literacy teachers, 15,000 study counselors, 5420 municipalities and 38 public universities in the 26 states of the Federal District are involved (PNAIC, 2012a). Given this, it is necessary to ask: What pact was signed? Thus, the

objective is to discuss which senses of curriculum, training and teaching are instituted in tracking the development of a national public policy and its hegemonization strategies.

Undoubtedly, one of the issues highlighted in discussions about the production of public education intertwines the issue of literacy and the development of reading and writing skills of children, youth and adults. Constantly vaunted by the media, from the undoubtedly expressive results of different internal and external evaluations, we see children who complete the early years being unable to read/write, young people who also do not master such basic knowledge, with flow correction policies, acceleration and other policies being produced from this reality in the Brazilian context.

If the situation is alarming, it calls for fruitful action to be taken so that we can address the problem and look for ways to reverse the scenario, often pointing to two urgent fields of action: *curriculum* and *teacher training*.

With regard specifically to the training of literacy teachers, the theme is reaffirmed as a strategy for the possibility of reversing the problem observed in everyday practice: the reformulation of proposals for teacher training, qualifying the action of the literacy teachers. Thus, investment in the Right Age Literacy Pact, which focuses primarily on continuing education for literacy teachers, occurs concurrently in a context where issues arise in the debate on the definition of a national curriculum, with the approval of the National Common Curricular Base—known in Brazil as *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* (BNCC), reinforcing a centralized curriculum logic. From a discursive and post-structural perspective on curriculum, it is argued that the curriculum discourses produced within this programme occur in a displacement of signifiers such as formation, curriculum, quality, law and knowledge, articulated in the production of a pedagogical discourse which means investment in teacher training as an institute of curricular policies, with the aim being to analyze this relationship.

It can be considered as a triggering landmark, which intensifies the cross-discussions between curriculum and literacy, and the implementation of the nine-year Elementary Education, which was already included

in the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law¹ (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* [LDB] No. 9,394/96) and also as a goal of the National Education Plan (2001–2011). The entry of the six-year-old child into Elementary School, and more recently the institution of compulsory education from the age of four,² exposes the need to reconfigure both Early Childhood and Primary Education not only in the organization and financing of education systems, but also in understanding the objectives, political-pedagogical project, and evaluation of each stage of Basic Education. Faced with so many issues, the fundamental question to be resumed is: Which curriculum?

TEACHER TRAINING AND CURRICULUM: UNDER ERASURE?

When thematizing about teacher training and curriculum policies, I do so in alignment with these central research questions: What kind of demands produce articulations that make meaningful curriculum policies and literacy teachers' training? What senses of curriculum and training do these policies engender? As such, teacher training and curriculum policy are configured in an intricate game of a duplicated condition. Bringing in the idea of the double, I make use of Bhabha (2003) in his analysis of identification and cultural difference in the intersection with the post-structural conceptual, defending a perspective that moves away from an original (in the depth of being) and cumulative relationship, and asserting the mark of differential, strategic and ambivalent relationships.

Bhabha questions the centrality of identity as an image, which would enable a fixation, and argues in favour of a perspective that emerges in discursive space, in the meaning. To this end, he discusses the process of identification as a discursive strategy mobilized by issues such as culture, politics, meaning and desire. Thus, from these tropes, what we encounter in this process is not the sense of depth, an original unity, but a dimension

¹Translator note: The translation used here was the same used in the document *World data on Education, compiled by UNESCO*. Retrieved September 10, 2019 from http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Brazil.pdf.

²With the 1996 LDB, Early Childhood Education becomes part of Basic Education, as a right of the child, a duty of the state, but with optional enrolment. Starting in 2013, children from 4 years of age are required to enrol in Early Childhood Education.

of *duplication* that, to Bhabha (2003, p. 84), is “the articulating principle of discourse itself”.

If the visualized image seeks to objectify, to fix, the duplicity is enacted by ‘and’, which here does not imply a sense of additive, but rather marks the tension, the non-binaryism, since it is, and at the same time is not, marking the place of ambivalence.

It is from this conception that I argue that we can think of the relationship between teacher training and curriculum policies as being *under erasure*. In this condition, there is a loss of the original place and, under erasure, formation and curriculum are duplicated and articulated, which highlights the political game involved in the production of policies, as Mouffe (2003) says in differentiating politics and politicians, and stating that the latter deals with issues involving deliberation in the context of the process of fight/power actions. The politician refers not only to actions of control and determination, which refers to politics.

In relation to the PNAIC, a first question about the policy itself and the design that this research proposes is answered: What is it about? Teacher training policy or curriculum policy? It is not one or the other, but both! The close relationship between such central issues—curriculum and training—has always been clear; what I argue is the understanding of how they produce each other in the midst of a political struggle, in a third space, in an “in-between-place” (Bhabha, 2003, pp. 67–68).

Problematizing from this perspective can enhance an analysis of the political process of this relationship and of political-educational projects clearly linking training proposals as instituting curriculum proposals. It is not a question of knowing which one comes before or after—training or curriculum—but to observe the continuum of two poles and the articulations in this space in-between.

Thus, the continuing education actions of teachers cannot be taken as isolated or as subordinate to a priori curricular policies, but in a relationship that, by denying an anteriority, occurs as an articulation. Thus, what we perceive is a displacement of *training* actions as moments of production of curriculum policies, in an imbrication of meanings, mobilized by a shared lack of quality.

INVESTIGATIVE PATHS

Given the theoretical assumptions that anchor the argument of this chapter, we investigate the articulated meanings that allow the production of curriculum policies. It involves thinking the production of discursive

formations as a movement resulting from articulations, displacements and disputes in the social context.

Oliveira, Oliveira, and Mesquita (2013) suggest that:

the construction of the methodology in the researches referenced in the discourse theory must be made in function of the developed problematization, the possibilities of using different techniques and resources in the methodological design of these researches become – as long as they meet the criteria of theoretical consistency and practical feasibility – quite broad. Consequently, it is possible to identify researches inspired by discourse theory that develop, among others, document analysis, interviews, narratives, images, audiovisual products, ethnographic data, even statistical data and, often, more than one of these combined alternatives. (p. 1335)

Thus, in a qualitative approach and aligned with the scholarly references supporting the argument, this research privileges the analysis of documents related to the interviews and the materials produced from the PNAIC by teachers, supervisors, etc. It also uses network ethnography, as proposed by Ball (2014), since we can observe the production in social networks of strategies for sharing experiences, reports that create other powerful networks of knowledge production. Thus, we assume a broader conception of document (Le Goff, 2013), understanding them beyond official texts, with the institutional signature of the Ministry of Education. We also take materials produced by the partner universities, by the different social actors that constitute the PNAIC—teachers, study supervisors, coordinators—and by those produced in the networks linked to the programme.

In this chapter, as a research cut-off, we focus on the analysis of the different texts produced under the PNAIC, namely: the guiding documents, resolutions and decrees, and also the training books, since they are the main materials produced for teacher training.

The analysis aims to identify and discuss the cores of meaning being constituted: however, it is not a linguistic analysis. We seek to observe clusters and slips that address meanings in order to think about the articulation of some initially selected keywords, such as *curriculum*, *literacy*, *training*, *teaching*, *knowledge*, which end up discursively delineating a meaning for the curriculum policy and training of literacy teachers.

TRAINING TEACHERS, PRODUCING CURRICULUM

The PNAIC was prepared by the Ministry of Education, including States, the Federal District and the Municipal Education Secretariats in a federative pact. The Pact defines the literacy of children up to eight years old at the end of the third year of Elementary School, evaluating the results by specific periodic examination created under the programme. The PNAIC Guidance Document (2012a) introduces it as follows:

By adhering to the Pact, government entities commit themselves to:

- I. Literate all children in Portuguese language and Mathematics.
- II. Conduct annual universal assessments, applied by Inep [National Institute for Educational Studies and Research], with graduating students of the 3rd year of Elementary School.
- III. In the case of states, support municipalities that have adhered to the Pact Actions for their effective implementation (p. 11).

The PNAIC (2012a) actions are defined as:

The Pact Actions are an integrated set of curriculum and pedagogical programs, materials and references that will be provided by the Ministry of Education and which contribute to literacy, having as main axis the continuing education of literacy teachers. These actions are based on four areas of activity: I - Continuing education of literacy teachers (...); II - Didactic and pedagogical materials (...); III - Evaluation (...); IV – Management, social control and mobilization (...). (pp. 11–14)

Despite being presented as a teacher training programme, the articulation of training as an institute of curriculum references is clear.

The main material produced by/for the PNAIC are the training booklets: a set of publications that refer to teacher training. The main material produced by/for the PNAIC are the training booklets: a set of publications that refer to teacher training.³

PNAIC's principle for the training is defended as follows:

The institutional commitment (from the Federal Government and the Education Secretariats) lies mainly in the need to promote spaces, situations and materials appropriate to the moments of work and reflection,

³ See <http://www.pnaic.ufscar.br/posts/view/Entrega-dos-Kits-de-Cadernos-do-MEC>.

understanding that continuing education is not a training in which general techniques to be reproduced are taught. If we think of teachers as inventive and productive subjects, we know that they will not be repeating in their classrooms what has been applied to them during their training in order to guide their new practice. We know that from different training strategies, they will be stimulated to think about new work possibilities that could increase and improve their daily pedagogical practice. (PNAIC, 2012b, p. 27)

In the presentation of the training structure, the organization is such that there is a clear concern with the curricular discussion, in the intention of the elaboration of principles that guide the construction of curricular proposals in the scope of the policy act. This implies questioning the meanings of curriculum, teacher training/action that are unfolded, and how they would allow articulations of meanings for the references to be built:

What does the continuing education of literacy teachers need to ensure? The continuing education of literacy teachers needs to ensure, among other things, tools for planning literacy. Literacy occurs on a daily basis and should be targeted at each student. Therefore, the course focuses on the lesson plans, the didactic sequences and the diagnostic assessment, which maps the skills and competencies of each student, in order to outline strategies that allow the student to learn effectively. (PNAIC, 2012b, pp. 24–25)

The course lasted two years. Each year, the total duration was 120 hours, with face-to-face meetings throughout the year. Courses were offered in different classes: one course for first-year teachers in Elementary School, another for teachers in the second year and one course for teachers in the third year. In addition, there is a specific class for multiservice class teachers. Observing the organization of the training booklets (Table 13.1), the first two units of each year's study focus on curriculum issues and planning.

In this training organization, there is a clear concern with the curricular discussion: the intention to elaborate principles that guide the construction of curricular proposals. It is possible to observe the curriculum as planning, in a more practical sense of guidance on how to teach, with predominance of the discussion on didactic-methodological aspects and the organization of knowledge. Given the emphasis on methodological

Table 13.1 PNAIC's training structure

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Year/class</i>	<i>Booklet title</i>
1 (12 hours)	1	Literacy curriculum: conceptions and principles
	2	Curriculum in the literacy cycle: consolidation and monitoring of the teaching and learning process
	3	Inclusive curriculum: the right to be literated
2 (8 hours)	Rural Education	Curriculum in the literacy cycle: perspectives for rural education
	1	School planning: literacy and Portuguese language teaching
	2	The organization of planning and routine in the literacy cycle in the perspective of literacy
3 (8 hours)	Rural Education	Planning and organization of literacy routine
	1	Teaching planning from a diversity perspective
	2	Learning of the Alphabetic Writing System
4 (12 hours)	2	The appropriation of the Alphabetic Writing System and the consolidation of the literacy process
	3	The last year of the literacy cycle: consolidating knowledge
	Rural Education	Appropriation of the Alphabetic Writing System and the consolidation of the literacy process in rural schools
4 (12 hours)	1	Playfulness in the classroom
	2	Let's play and create our and other stories
	3	Let's play and reinvent stories
	Rural Education	Playing at school: playfulness in rural schools

Source: PNAIC (2012b, pp. 24–25)

and procedural aspects, the question is: How are literacy teachers viewed in this process, as curriculum producers or reproducers?

As Macedo (2012) argues, it is necessary to put teaching under suspicion. This is an important dimension of education, but it is not the only one. Education is a multidimensional process that does not end in learning. Such statement is made in the analysis that crosses such propositions with another axis of PNAIC's organization: evaluation. PNAIC brings with it the creation of the National Literacy Assessment (*Avaliação Nacional da Alfabetização* [ANA]), a universal systemic assessment that aims to assess the level of literacy achieved at the end of the cycle. Investing in training as a way of establishing curriculum implies cross-cutting objectives in PNAIC, which takes place in a context that reinforces

the idea of centralizing curriculum production and a culture of evaluation as an indicator of quality. Thus, it is possible to highlight the transmutation of learning expectations into learning rights, described as objectives.

The indication of learning rights has been a recurring rhetorical strategy in Brazilian curriculum policies. The mobilization around the quality of education has a democratic character when it is presented as the basis for such policies that it is the definition of learning clearly and precisely in response to the right of learning that each and every one has and must be assured. I have argued in my work (Frangella, 2016, 2018, 2019) that there is an articulation between knowledge and right that, having equity as objective, reverses the common in the homogeneous, which unfolds in normativity and standardization of content/procedures/objectives of learning. In this logic, there is the erasure of differences under the argument of equality in learning rights:

The direct association between knowledge and learning reduces the understanding of the right to education, subordinating the formative dimension that affects the agency; in this line, the idea of the right to learning unfolds in the school's duty to teach. Undoubtedly, it is up to the school's teaching activity, but reducing education to the dimension of teaching content undoubtedly implies narrowing the sense of education to that of teaching, which cannot be understood as equivalent. (Frangella, 2016, p. 72)

The alignment between curriculum/knowledge/right/assessment shifts to the idea of defining the knowledge to be taught, understood as rights, the key to the meaning of the curriculum. This can be seen in excerpts of the training booklets, mainly in unit 1 of each year, which summarizes the curriculum:

The definition of learning rights contributes to the discussion about what can be prioritized in teaching planning and what can be assessed, a topic that will be discussed in the next section. Unit 1 year 1, p. 22. (PNAIC, 2012c, p. 22)

Curriculum in the literacy cycle is, therefore, a proposal for the temporal and spatial reorganization of education, which is translated into a new way of conceiving children's learning pathways.

The reason for the extension of the literacy period to three years, without retention, is justified by the possibility of teaching providing the production/appropriation of writing and reading based on the principles of continuity and deepening. In this context, the construction/appropriation of knowledge by students would take place progressively during the period. Such an option, however, does not imply failing to ensure the necessary learning rights each year as set out in the Learning Rights Framework in the Sharing section of this booklet. Unit 1, year 2, p. 8. (PNAIC, 2012d, p. 8)

In the first unit of this course, we will seek, in a shared way, to reflect on some general principles that we consider fundamental in order to guide the teaching work and which are expressed in the teaching of the early years in the daily life of the classroom.

Undoubtedly, in order to plan teaching practice, it is essential that we have a clear notion of what our commitments to students are, what our educational principles are, and the strategies to be used so that, in a manner consistent with these principles, we can ensure the children's learning rights. There is no way to define didactic activities without knowing what we want to teach and what children know about what we intend to teach. Unit 1 year 3, p. 1. (PNAIC, 2012e, p. 1)

The curriculum conception, based on the premises defended by PNAIC, emphasizes a dimension that values the organization and planning of knowledge and teaching, in a naturalization of the very conception of knowledge on which it is based. Thus, in the analyzes undertaken, by problematizing the idea of this centrality, it is argued that there is a risk of polarization that deprives the political task of retrieving other possible meanings for curriculum, defending the need to consider it as a place of cultural enunciation. Such problematization is related to other curricular propositions that are unfolded in this context: the establishment of the National Common Curricular Base in Brazil, sharpening the sense of a common knowledge as unique and its unfolding in a perspective of centralization in curricular production.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study of a national public policy within the scope of PNAIC, focusing not only on teacher training, but also on the constitution of pedagogical work in the literacy cycle, and which is based on significant financial contributions, raises important issues for us to think about broadening the field of public policy studies, in this case curricular policies. It is necessary to discuss which policies produce effects and their impacts, and also interactions with other policies.

By focusing the analysis on PNAIC, I understand it as an institute of curricular policies, in a movement of duplication, marked by 'and'. It is neither one nor the other—that is, curriculum policy or teacher training—but something more, duplicated, as Bhabha (2003) puts it: the duplication of the signifier marks the place of ambivalence, a delayed presence—a presence through absence, ambivalent in the duplicity of the iteration.

In line with the theoretical contributions supporting the study, the production of curriculum policies is understood neither a matter of seeking a meaning in itself—what it *is*—nor as a valuation/hierarchization that points out what meaning it should have. Nor does it imply a binary analysis of either approving/supporting or refuting/denying the programme. If, on the one hand, programmes such as PNAIC recognize the teacher's right to continuing education policies and highlight their importance, on the other hand, the controlling intention seeks to contain the meaning process, regulating the literacy practice. Thus, when discussing what meanings of curriculum, teaching, training, and literacy are hegemonic, I sought to think about the production of discursive formations and how they articulate/demand other social arrangements. There is a yearning for the norm and the illusion of control and, as contingent production, an ambivalence that exists in the power relations making up the curriculum, which preclude norm/control from fully occurring.

In this sense, I align myself with Bhabha when he states that the language of criticism is efficient not for what it can offer as a generalizing total view, but an opening to a space of translation, a hybrid place that compromises a binary logic between knowledge and its objects. As such, it requires negotiation so curriculum emerges in this in-between as a translation act, as a cultural production.

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Relocating Curriculum and Reimagining Place under Settler Capitalism

Michael Corbett

INTRODUCTION

In the late 1990s, I took a course in the politics of curriculum at the University of British Columbia. Early in the course, the instructor relayed what is probably an old curriculum saw. He commented that if we were ever on an airplane sitting next to a dentist who asked the question, ‘What is curriculum anyway?’, there is a very simple answer that you can rattle off which will most likely satisfy the dentist and possibly lead to deeper discussion *if* either or both of you want it. The answer was: ‘What to teach, to whom, and when’. At the time I was beginning to explore the idea of place to better understand my research site in rural eastern Canada. I remember wondering, what about ‘where’? While I suppose, ‘to whom’ can and should involve ‘context’, I’m still wondering.

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In this chapter I want to try to move beyond the critiques of ‘place-less’ curriculum and schooling developed out of the place-based education movement (Gruenewald, 2003a, b; Greenwood & Smith, 2007), taking into consideration critiques of this very movement (Bowers, 2006; Corbett, 2020; Nesor, 2009). At the same time, I wish to address, at least in a partial fashion, the way that place has been situated in the curriculum studies literature in the United States, developing out of the work of Joe Kincheloe and Bill Pinar (1991),¹ and more recently in that of William Reynolds (2017a). I write from a position outside the curriculum field, as a rural education specialist and an educational sociologist. I begin with an analysis of Homi Bhabha’s analysis of culture and/in space, moving on to an analysis of place and curriculum theorizing, concluding with a discussion of select emerging materialist social theory and speculating on its implications for reimagining curriculum theory.

My general argument here is that what Pinar (2009) has called the ‘primacy of the particular’ is important but potentially limited. I draw on cultural and social theory to make the case that culture, place and identity need to be understood more explicitly as material and discursive phenomena. I also argue that curriculum theorizing should engage seriously and creatively in current and emerging exigencies of global geopolitics, radical mobilities and the possibility of decolonial post-capitalist futures, as imagined in contemporary social theory and in fiction alike. I begin with an analysis of Homi Bhabha’s idea that culture is at least partially unhinged from local and national anchors by global colonialism, before moving on to an analysis of the influence of modes of communication in globalized capitalism. I conclude by drawing on Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway’s speculative materialist analysis that reaches towards new spatial stories.

BHABHA AND THE LOCATION OF CULTURE

Bhabha’s principal target is the idea of culture as a unified ‘container’ of identity and subjectivity (Bhabha, 1994). His critique stimulated and

¹I think it is also important to note the way that Kincheloe and Pinar (1991) diverged in their thinking, with the former moving in a more explicitly Marxist direction while the latter forayed into phenomenology. How each maintained (or diverged from) a focus on place and what Pinar calls ‘the particular’ is beyond the scope of this account.

reflected debates concerning the nature of multiculturalism and how this idea has played out in the West, in ‘advanced societies’ which have been shaped by colonialism and the globalization of capitalist accumulation. For Bhabha, the idea that culture is ‘located’ or contained within a particular national geography is complicated by the colonial experience. What this conflation of culture and place fails to understand is how a new *thirdspace* is created in all colonial interchanges. The myths of orientalism (Said, 1979), for instance, are complicated by the way that new hybrid identities are created in the colonial experience, and how dreams of domination, enculturation and assimilation are always troubled and refuted by the complexity of human agency.

The very idea of culture seems in this account to be emergent, hybrid and interstitial, evolving in unpredictable ways that generate cultural forms cut loose from physical geography, from the nation-state, to Bhabha’s analysis of the family micropolitics caught in the historical and spatial web of colonial violence in Toni Morrison’s novel *Beloved*. If more traditional ideas of culture rest on the relations between people and bounded places, Bhabha’s idea of culture seeks to understand the ubiquitous movement of bodies, ideas and things around the globe (Appadurai, 1996; Bauman, 1991). Spatially it is both the space in-between, but also the mobilities, passage routes or ‘stairways’ and ‘bridges’, to use Bhabha’s metaphors, that matter significantly in production and reproduction of culture and identity, but also in the production of knowledge itself. Here epistemological questions emerge from the particularities of cultural knowledge rendered unstable by hybrid intercultural and transcultural forms of knowledge constitution and production.

For Bhabha, there is more than a salubrious transcendence of colonial relations that separate people and places into the customary bins such as tradition and modern, self and other. Rather, what emerges from the colonial encounter is a fractal of improvisations, negotiations, translations, interpretations, all of which generate unpredictable emergent hybrid transformations. The maintenance of established structures of inclusion and exclusion do not disappear, nor do the resistances that dance along as well. Bhabha writes:

Postcoloniality, for its part, is a salutary reminder of the persistent ‘neo-colonial’ relations within the ‘new’ world order and the multinational division of labour. Such a perspective enables the authentication of histories of exploitation and the evolution of strategies of resistance. Beyond

this, however, postcolonial critique bears witness to those countries and communities – in the North and the South, urban and rural – constituted, if I may coin a phrase, ‘otherwise than modernity’. Such cultures of a postcolonial contra-modernity may be contingent to modernity, discontinuous or in contention with it, resistant to its oppressive, assimilationist technologies; but they also deploy the cultural hybridity of their borderline conditions to ‘translate’, and therefore reinscribe, the social imaginary of both metropolis and modernity. (Bhabha, 1994, p. 6)

Bhabha concludes his *Location of Culture* essay speaking to the desire for solidarity and what he calls ‘the join’, which I take to be the possibility of connection, communication and the possibility of something beyond modernity, colonialism, capitalism, and indeed the receding cultures of spacetime past. In the curriculum field, what might this desire signal and what kinds of spatial imaginaries might it work with in order to do so? In terms of curriculum as well, the emergence of cultural hybrids and the mobilities that produce them has also, perhaps ironically, situated culture and identity at the centre of curriculum discussions in North America and beyond. The culturally responsive pedagogy movement has developed out of the work of African-American scholars, whose work interrogates the longstanding marginalization of students of African descent. Drawing on both structural analysis of educational achievement and more poststructural and phenomenological work in critical race theory (Ladson-Billings, 1998) and intersectionality (Hill-Collins & Bilge, 2016), it has become increasingly clear that curriculum theory is compelled to address the persistent educational disadvantage experienced by racialized, Indigenous, second language, queer, disabled and working-class youth. Yet, culture, structural inequality, hybrid knowledges and emergent identities reside in places, and it is in places where curriculum can, and I think should, be located.

LOCATING KNOWLEDGE

Questions arise concerning how curriculum responds, or should respond, to difference in culture, race, ability, gender and social position. One part of this discussion relates to how school knowledge is formulated (Young, 2007) and how curriculum is implemented and indeed, the relationship between these elements. Green (2018) has situated the question of curriculum in the established binary of theory and practice, analyzing

the Anglo-American *Reconceptualist* tradition that has sought to establish curriculum studies as a unique intellectual field in its own right, and the *Deliberationalist* view.

Green points to the modernist roots of the Deliberationalist tradition, in which a pragmatic focus on system dynamics overshadows a critical analysis of the system itself and the social relation which produce and maintain it. In the United States, the pragmatist tradition develops from Dewey, through functionalist scientific management as in the work of Bobbitt and Tyler, and on into the 1960s and 1970s, when the tradition meets the reconceptualization of the field, beginning with Schwab's modernist critique and on into the phenomenological and poststructural critiques of Doll, Greene, Pinar, Aoki and others. In a sense, the Reconceptualists transform the curriculum field from a pragmatist/functionalist field of inquiry to a textual one. It is here that Green suggests that a rapprochement can be achieved by integrating textuality with materiality, which I read as incorporating the exigencies of place and the body, along with their material demands, including, presumably, the persistent demand for relevance in/of the curriculum field.

The colonial experience has structured education and curriculum theorizing—internally in Britain, for instance, in terms of differentiated education for different social classes, sexes and racialized groups, and externally, in the empire and beyond. The same may be said by extension, in former colonies like India, Australia and Canada where questions of culture that preoccupied Bhabha are central to the educational enterprise. Here as well, we can see the persistent importance of place in the curriculum conversation. Schooling and its content have long been understood as key instruments of modernization, cultural hegemony and linguistic domination (Willinsky, 2000); indeed, large parts of the sociology of education and curriculum studies intersect at the very nexus points that colonialism establishes and develops. The work of Cynthia Chambers (1999, 2008) along with other work in the curriculum field that has begun to focus on land and place (Ng-A-Fook & Rottmann, 2012; O'Connor, 2020; Scully, 2020; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013; Wallin & Peden, 2020) has brought the Canadian curriculum field into conversation with questions of colonialism, place and indigeneity, focusing on the intersection of the ordinary skilled practices in communities outside the metropolis, and Indigenous lifeways. In Chambers' work and in that of Indigenous curriculum scholars, the question of curriculum,

culture and place emerge at the centre of educational policy discussions, following the release of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (Canada, 2015).

The abstract, structural or vertical dreams of colonizers and curriculum-makers have always encountered the inevitably recalcitrant, non-standard local place-practices as a problem (Corbett, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2020; Theobald, 1997). Place is a problem that is never solved, for either colonialism or for curriculum and pedagogy. As Bhabha theorizes, and as Elsie Rockwell (2019) demonstrates in her historical research, educational problems associated with modernization and colonialism appear as messy problems of transaction, negotiation, strategy and tactics.

It can be argued, I think, drawing on Green, that the very idea of curriculum operates in a contested space between the particular and the general, employing *vertical* (abstract) and *horizontal* (spatial) discourses (Bernstein, 1999). Vertical discourse represents structural, asynchronous and often placeless ‘powerful’ (Young, 2007) knowledge which maps onto centralized colonial educational projects and imaginaries. Place and culture introduce multiple horizontal tension into systems of education designed in the nineteenth and into the mid-twentieth century for the purposes of colonial social engineering, eugenics, class and gender reproduction, cultural propaganda and population control. Understood this way, the work of the Reconceptualists can be taken as an effort to locate curriculum in social space, and to defuse its structuralist leanings, but also to support various social justice projects.

In a paper entitled ‘The Primacy of the Particular’, William Pinar (2009) has offered a retrospective analysis of his own impact on the field (‘as I tried to imagine a future for the field after Tyler’ [Pinar, 2009, p. 147])—identifying an emphasis on place as a central pillar in his thought. He writes: ‘Theorizing place began as an effort to contextualize the curricular challenges posed by living – as I did for twenty years – in the American South’ (Pinar, 2009, p. 143). This emphasis on place links with Pinar’s autobiographical focus developed out of a preoccupation with the history and culture of the American south in his early work (Kincheloe and Pinar, 1991), moving subsequently to what he calls a ‘reconstruction of place as planetary [that] animates my current effort to reconstruct humanism’ (Pinar, 2009, p. 143).

As Pinar illustrates, the question of curriculum in relation to place and space is not new. Considerable work relating to place and the

American South, especially as this region relates to wider American educational imaginaries, has emerged, following Kincheloe and Pinar's (1991) *Curriculum as Social Psychoanalysis: The Significance of Place*. A good deal of this work has been catalogued by William Reynolds (2017b), and I will not recapitulate it here. What seems worth saying, though, is that much of this work appears—as does the American literature on place-based education—as a series of undertheorized and disconnected area studies focused squarely on the ‘primacy of the particular’. I have also critiqued a recent collection edited by Reynolds (2017a) for its lack of connection to the broader field of rural education and, indeed, of scholarship beyond the United States (Corbett, 2018).²

What this work illustrates, though, is how curriculum theorizing deals in tensions between ‘the particular’, as Pinar puts it, and abstract vertical discourses that attempt to bind socio-educational space to produce common educational experiences and sensibilities (Tomkins, 1986). The technical problems envisaged by Bobbitt and Tyler in their functionalist vision of curriculum situate the field as an instrumental socialization mechanism (machine) whose central purpose is subjectivization and population formation for the modes of production and social relations present in a given (capitalist) time and place. The problem of curriculum in this sense is about the transmission of ‘basic’ functional skills such as literacy and numeracy, which form the basis for the sorting and selection that satisfies the needs of the job market. This curricular vision essentially ignores culture and place, setting it aside, in the way that Bissoondath (2002) describes as a show of food, clothing and nostalgia which reinforces the hegemony of the dominant culture. The chief business of curriculum is the real business of social reproduction, i.e. producing and certifying workers for capital. Knowledge is not powerful for any mysterious reason relating to the nature of the knowledge itself or to the special access to reality this knowledge confers; it is powerful because it allows its holders access to job markets, and it is powerful because it seldom challenges established power. Yet theory matters, and hegemonic knowledge

² Butler and Sinclair (2020) have recently conducted an analysis of the idea of place in educational research. While their approach is quite comprehensive and theoretically rich, drawing on scholarship across a wider range of philosophical, cultural and political literatures, the vast bulk of attention focusses on research and researchers working in the United States.

is always contested and troubled, as Bhabha has argued. In the Canadian context, the long-established French-English *détente*, contemporary immigration and the complex politics that surround it, as well as work emerging from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (2015), have shifted the national cultural conversation to a more complex discussion which has been reflected in curriculum, as provinces work to retool school systems for multilingual students and for curriculum that tells a new story about Indigenous-settler relations.

COMMUNICATION AND/IN SPACE

Relating to the complex challenges for colonial governance and inevitable hybridities explored by Bhabha, Harold Innis (1951) long ago pointed out how fundamental problems relating to the control of space and time are central to understanding how civilizations rise, operate, justify themselves, and ultimately fail or come to be absorbed into other polities. Phenomena of territorialization and deterritorialization are, as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) put it, a relentless flow, principally concerned with contestation and transformation of space through time.³ Innis was concerned with the rise of literacy as a mode of modernist communication and the effect it has in the establishment of power; particularly, how vernacular language and alphabetic symbol systems created the conditions for the rise of the individual, the decline of monarchical and ecclesiastical power, the proliferation of epistemologies, and processes of governance and control that arise with forms of democracy that follow on from classical societies (Burchell, Gordon, & Miller, 1991; Foucault, 2010).

While Innis did not address schooling or curriculum, specifically, his analysis of communicative capacity and mode points to how power takes shape in modernity. The use of the press in the early twentieth century follows on from Innis' detailed analysis of the spread of literacy from papyrus, through parchment, through monasteries to the printing press, whose invention coincides, not by accident, with the Reformation, the emergence of globalization of markets, colonization and industrialization (Braudel, 1992). As the commodity emerges as a mass product for exchange, copied, distributed and traded, so too is knowledge given flight, copied and distributed as well. Indeed, the 'copy' itself, as Benjamin

³Needless perhaps to say that this production and reproduction of space was also the concern of Henri Lefebvre (1992) in his spatial analytics.

(2019) discerned and as Baudrillard (1994) developed, is a centrepiece of modernist ontology.⁴

Innis describes the emergence of modernity and the forms of time and space binding created in industry as well as in institutions of governances such as health and educational bureaucracies. Emergent communication systems particular to modernity, from the printing press, through radio and television, shape the conditions for mass literacy and the related demand for mass schooling in the twentieth century. Not only are vernacular literacies and democratization crucial instruments of power and control, but the capacity to copy becomes central not only to modernity itself but also to the project of mass schooling and the parallel curriculum studies movement which arise through the twentieth century. Innis can already see in the 1950s how radio as a communication system dispenses with power's need for literacy. He uses the examples of Hitler and Franklin Roosevelt as political leaders who were early adopters of audio and moving images to promulgate mass propaganda. In recent years, Donald Trump has, in his idiosyncratic way, managed emerging social media tools, probably in conjunction with other internet applications, as well as the predictive and manipulative potential of big data and manipulative targeted messaging, to surveille, propagandize and achieve political ends (Zuboff, 2019).

Innis' foundational analysis of how the means of communication embodies tools of regulation and the exercise of power and governance across spatial and temporal spans raises questions about contemporary communicative instrumentalities. By the same token, the spatial expansion/compression⁵ represented by contemporary mobilities and the networks that support them (Appadurai, 1996; Castells, 2009; Urry,

⁴The mechanical reproduction of images lifts the image from the context in which it is produced and distributes it across space. This plays a part in massification whose "theoretical representation is found in statistics" (Benjamin, 2019, p. 173). Reproduction of the image is virtually co-terminus with both the development of statistical techniques and the idea of curriculum studies which can be traced to the early twentieth century in the United States in the work of Franklin Bobbitt which situates curriculum itself as a mass public project.

⁵The term 'glocalization' has been long used to describe the simultaneous shrinkage of space in the 'global village' is refracted by increasing focus on culture and identity and where global inequities challenge any notion that history was finished with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union (Fukuyama, 1992), or the global village is what has been called a "flat world" (Friedman, 2005).

2000), along with Bhabha's hybrid thirdspace identity⁶ that has grown out of colonial encounters, further challenge established theoretical understanding, including those relating to curriculum.

While the focus on culture and communication/discourse have framed the central concerns of educational reform in terms of theoretical tools available and relevant to the particular time and places in which the Reconceptualist movement gained traction, new ideas relating to place, culture and curriculum have emerged. The complexity of contemporary geopolitics demands more than the linguistic turn in sociocultural theory was able to offer. Furthermore, key structural theories relating to social class, sex/gender, race/ethnicity, while resilient, have, it seems to me, proved insufficient for grasping the complexity of problems like the rise of populism, nativism, counter-globalization, pandemics and climate change, to name a few current problematics.

CURRICULUM IN TROUBLE: FROM CYBORGS TO COMPOST

In *Staying with the Trouble*, Donna Haraway (2016) has moved on beyond her ground-breaking analyses of situated knowledge (1988) and cyborg theory (1985, 1991). In her early work, Haraway develops a feminist analysis that focusses on the primacy of perspective in a way that is not entirely inconsistent with Pinar's poststructural project. Knowledge is always developed from somewhere, and that somewhere excludes women and their world-views and situations. This analysis developed into feminist standpoint theory, which draws on the foundational work of Marxist feminists (Harding, 2004; Hartsock, 1983; Smith, 1987, 2005), who critiqued both the structuralist bias in Marxist analysis as well as its assumption of an individualized economic rationality which did not take into consideration the social position of women and how the relational foundations and complexity of women's ordinary lives reveal starkly different rationalities and landscapes of choice and opportunity from those imagined by male political economists and sociologists. In addition,

⁶I am increasing convinced that 'identity' in its collectivist, constructivist and essentialist forms (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000) will be consigned to a similar fate as that which befell other similarly problematic concepts in sociology and psychology such as 'role'. Contemporary work in queer geographies, for instance, offers new ways of thinking about identity and the boundaries, restrictions and violence that identities can represent (March, 2020).

Haraway's early situated knowledges work takes up the poststructural invective (c.f. Foucault, 1980) that discursive practices, including those of scientists (see also Latour, 1993; Latour & Woolgar, 1986), generate or create truth, rather than neutrally revealing it.

As a biologist, Haraway has always been concerned, as well, with the way that social theory had tended to follow the Enlightenment separation of the human, the animal and the material to generate the Cartesian or Kantian subject. Haraway's work has explored the complex entanglements of humans and non-human animals (2007) and problems with the radical separation of the human and material worlds, which has created the conditions for a foundational insensitivity to the material earth that has set the planet on a course for ongoing ecological destruction and, ultimately, climactic disaster. In this respect, Haraway's work prefigures a movement in social theory that refuses the linguistic-material separation that has led to an unproductive and potentially disastrous territorial impasse with the natural sciences (Latour, 2013, 2018; Rose, 2013), as well as the decolonial and Indigenous critiques of the implication of Western intellectual traditions in genocide, land theft and the cultivation of divisive and destructive binaries (i.e. civilized/savage; advanced/primitive; premodern/modern, etc.) that operate under the guise of progress (Battiste, 2013; Smith, 1999; Tuck & MacKenzie, 2015; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The figure of the cyborg that she adopts from science fiction in the early 1980s (Haraway, 1985) represents a final break with naturalistic notions embedded in humanism, and particularly what she sees as the oppressive way that common binary categories structure (rather than describe) the world. Additionally, cyborg imagery proposes the integration of the human and the machine, and a deep ontological critique. This has been developed in feminist new materialism (Groz, 1994, 2017), actor network theory (Latour, 2007), agential realism (Barad, 2007), posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013, 2015), and in a widening variety of perspectives challenging the linguistic foundations of early generations of much poststructural thought.⁷

The imagery that emerges in Haraway's cyborg world is also evident in the entangled 'mess' of the contemporary age which has been variously described as the anthropocene, the capitaloscene (Malm, 2016),

⁷Well-known exceptions here are the work of Foucault and particularly that of Deleuze and Guattari, which contained significant materialist and spatial formulation.

and the plantationoscene (Haraway, 2016), among other nomenclature. Haraway's framing of this present epoch rejects anthropocentric implications of common nomenclature by inventing what she calls the Chthulucene. This notion imagines a world in which the human and non-human are intimately interconnected and ideally engaged in an intentionally symbiotic process of world-making made possible by theory that refuses to separate people and things into neat conceptual containers. This work echoes classic science fiction cyborg motifs in the work of Octavia Butler (2000), Phillip K. Dick (1968) and William Gibson (1984/2000), as well as emerging posthumanist themes in contemporary fiction (Powers, 2018; Tokarczuk, 2018) and popularized social-scientific analysis (e.g. Harari, 2016, 2020; Tsing et al., 2017). The performative challenge articulated by Haraway (2016) in *Staying with the Trouble* is for a committed engagement with life, sustainability and survival in a damaged world. Rather than retreating from the enormity of the challenges of global poverty and inequality, ecological degradation, habitat and species destruction, climate change, pandemics, global inequalities and the ravages of colonialism on Indigenous people, it is Haraway's vision that we apply both the tools of scientific realism and those of language, myth and imagination to think through and act intentionally and collectively to create a different world than the ubiquitous TINA imaginaries offered by neoliberalism.

This project focuses on both place and movement, and its 'curriculum' reveals a bold and controversial thought experiment that creates a mythic family (the *Camilles*) who lives through five future generations between an imaginary rural community in Appalachia devastated by mountain-top removal mining, and a location in Mexico. For Haraway, 'staying with the trouble' is represented at a number of levels in the multigenerational Camille story. First of all, the first of five Camille characters is part of a utopian community intentionally developed in a place ravaged by industrialization. Rather than starting fresh, this utopia is not an escape but a deep engagement in a horrifically damaged place. Secondly, the Camilles choose a totem animal and are genetically integrated with these animals, becoming what Haraway calls symbionts. This move obviously extends the cyborg metaphor into the realm of non-human animal species, to generate a new level of connection and entanglement. Thirdly, since the original Camille chose a monarch butterfly as her symbiont, she and her family not only inhabit and work to 'renovate' their industrially ravaged

Appalachian home, they also migrate through the corridor of the monarch's seasonal migration, living part of the year in Mexico. Across five generations, the Camilles and their families work to create 'kin' across space and species. Haraway's chief metaphor in this more-than-human kinship myth is the mundane idea of *compost*, or the twin ideas that all beings and things both 'compose' (create, c.f. Bateson, 2001) and return to earth as humus.

This story projects forward to the year 2425 and it is far from simplistically utopian, containing challenging prospects such as a reduced global population of three billion and ongoing species destruction. Haraway's writing is controversial and disturbing, but she defends the idea of fewer human babies and a greater range of kinship relations with non-human species, using the slogan 'make kin not babies'. Drawing on the work of Canadian Inuit artist Tania Tagaq, Haraway writes:

It matters which concepts conceptualize concepts. Materialist, experimental animism is not a New Age wish nor a neocolonial fantasy, but a powerful proposition for rethinking relationality, perspective process, and reality without the dubious comforts of the oppositional categories of modern/traditional or religious/secular. Human-animal knots do something different in this world. (Haraway, 2016, p. 165)

Haraway's controversial thought experiment at the very least opens up new vistas which suggest new ways of conceptualizing the relationships enmeshed in place, in ways that challenge dominant ways of thinking about the curriculum question with which I opened this chapter. Under the sign of the new materialism, agential realism, flat ontology and actor network theory, this perspective raises new questions about knowledge that matters (what to teach), to an increasingly neoliberalized, identity-focused 'student' (to whom), in the face of both temporal issues relating to development, and others relating to the time we are drawn into together (when) via the productive processes.

LATOUR'S TERRESTRIAL TURN

While Haraway's symbiont thought-experiment plays out against the backdrop of what is euphemistically called climate change, Bruno Latour's (2018) recent imaginative theoretical work develops what seems to me to be a compatible analysis of terrestrial politics. This work extends his early work in actor network theory (2007) and science studies (1986,

1993), through his ‘anthropology of the moderns’ (Latour, 2013) in which he began to focus on the challenges and complications of speaking and translating across world views. This work reiterates his ideas about the way that modernity is a dream that has never arrived and how its key spaces of activity (notably in the science laboratory) are social sites in many ways like any other, which confront knowledge practices and world-views operating on entirely different ontologies, myths and standards of evidence.

In *Down to Earth*, Latour (2018) creates an argument about how the material earth responds forcefully to human activity, exercising agency through climactic, bacteriological and viral activity that cannot be ignored. In his analysis, Latour creates a spatial dynamic that counters the local and the global as complex countervailing forces that play out in multiple different ways. He develops, first of all, additive and subtractive versions of both the global and the local. Additive globalization (or ‘globalization plus’, as he calls it), for instance, is a formulation of the idea that focuses on the way that globalization attends to diversity and complexity made possible by a better-connected world. Globalization ‘minus’, on the other hand, reflects a vision that focuses alternatively on the development of unified world systems, centralization and coordination of control over economic and political processes, and what an older generation of sociologists called world systems or convergence theory. Latour offers the same analysis of localization, which also has additive and subtractive variants.

Importantly, globalization and localization operate as what Latour calls ‘attractors’, that provide alternate world-views that coalesce opinion, policy and social thought more generally. For instance, we can see how both additive and subtractive globalization create resistances in the form of localization as both nation-states (Trumpism, Brexit, right-wing populism in Europe) and individuals seek to escape from the compulsion to globalize. In this sense, the local, or place, is invoked as an alternative to the complexities and challenges of the global but also as a space of retreat, in which life is alleged to be simpler, promising ‘tradition, protection, identity and certainty within national or ethnic borders’ (Latour, 2018, p. 30). Similar forces operate in the other direction as localism is critiqued for xenophobia, and ignorance of how global supply chains operate, and the interdependency of places cannot be wished away.

Out of the tension produced in the interface between the global and local attractors, Latour theorizes the emergence of chronic instability, which in turn generates two responses that become emergent attractors

in their own right. The first he labels ‘out of this world’, and it is represented by Trumpism and the capricious emotionalism and illogic that he and other charismatic leaders represent. Because the local-global interface and the established left-right political categories can not contain or explain the tension, ‘[e]verything has to be mapped out anew’ (Latour, 2018, p. 33). The mapping suggested by the out of this world attractor is a refusal to accept constraints, limits, scientific evidence, and which ‘no longer claims to address geopolitical realities seriously, but purports to put itself outside all worldly constraints, literally offshore, like a tax haven’ (Latour, 2018, p. 36). Climate change denial and capricious speculation that injecting disinfectants into sick people are illustrations.

Through the last half of *Down To Earth*, Latour develops a final attractor which he calls the Terrestrial, which represents a rejection of the three utopias represented by the aforementioned attractors (the global, the local, and the out of this world). Here he argues that the local is the most important of the three attractors because it is the only one connected to material reality, i.e. the land and water. Yet, he argues that neither the shining global of modernity nor the reassuring local any longer exist (Latour, 2018, p. 91). Here his argument converges with that of Bhabha, I think, in the sense that there is no cozy locale to which we can turn for a stable identity. Latour also draws implicitly on Indigenous and decolonial perspectives, speaking to the problematic and difficult defense of/by those who have been expelled from lands (Sassen, 2014). He writes:

The negotiation – the fraternization? – between supporters of the Local and supporters of the Terrestrial has to bear on the importance, the legitimacy, even the necessity of belonging to a land, but – and here lies the whole difficulty – without immediately confusing it with the Local has added to it: ethnic homogeneity, a focus on patrimony, historicism, nostalgia, inauthentic authenticity ... [there is] nothing more innovative, nothing more present, subtle, technical, and artificial (in the positive sense of the word), nothing less rustic and rural, nothing more creative, nothing more contemporary than to negotiate landing on some ground. (Latour, 2018, p. 53)

CONCLUSION: PLACE, COMPOST, EARTH

In my view, Latour’s conception of the ‘terrestrial’ resonates across the work of Haraway and Bhabha. This suggests, I think, what Indigenous

scholars have been promoting for decades: an honest appraisal of how we got to where we are (Truth) and a shared/negotiated path forward that seeks not only to create a more just future (Reconciliation), but also to ‘acquire as much cold-blooded knowledge about the *heated activity of an earth* finally grasped *from close up*’ (Latour, 2018, p. 74—his emphasis). This includes a deep critique of educational traditions and practices which are marinated in what Latour calls the ‘perversity of modernism’, which positions tradition as archaic. This analysis is consistent with the critiques of both Indigenous and rural scholars, such as those influenced by the Wendell Berry/Aldo Leopold communitarian tradition, which focuses on cyclical time, cultural knowledge of place, stewardship and communion with the non-human world.

In relation to place-oriented and rurally-oriented curriculum theorizing, as cited above, a vision of localism as escape from problems of modernity has devolved from American rural philosophers such as Wendell Berry, Kirkpatrick Sale and Aldo Leopold, anarchists such as Murry Bookchin and James Scott, ecological thinkers too numerous to name, and place-based education promoters like David Gruenwald/Greenwood (in his early work⁸), David Sobel, Jack Shelton and Paul Theobald. While I have tremendous sympathy with these positions and some of the ethics and politics they imply, they do not, even in their more sophisticated incarnations, adequately theorize the complexities of a networked and interconnected world. Fostering a deep experiential appreciation for local environments is important, but it is not enough.

The defensive politics represented in the southern US tradition in curriculum theory emanating from Kincheloe and Pinar (1991) to Reynolds (2017) also fail to grapple with the range of relations, unequal exchanges and mobilities that make the contemporary world. My own early work (Corbett, 2001, 2007) could also be subject to the same critique. The central problem is the way that localism, in relation to its global other, is invoked defensively as a protection of lives, identities and traditions, in the face of external threats. While this is important work, it is by now obvious that this approach can feed directly into, and inadvertently buttresses, the emergent politics of resentment that have supported the rise of irrational charismatic political leaders (Cramer, 2016; Hochschild, 2016; Wuthnow, 2018).

⁸I would like to thank David Greenwood (2009) for challenging my own thinking to take on the problem of colonialism in relation to rurality.

I use the language of truth and reconciliation deliberately above, drawing on the work of Canada's TRC, which reported in 2015 (Canada, 2016) following years of testimony from Indigenous Canadians who experienced residential schooling. The report documents Canada's history of colonial education, which was essentially that the instruments of curriculum and pedagogy, designed to marginalize, brutalize and erase a people, to destroy language and cultural knowledge practices, ushered in a Eurocentric capitalist modernity. In other words, it was a brutal project designed to destroy the lived curriculum of a people, the languages, beliefs and skill sets that sustained them by wrenching children from their histories, their families and their places. The general thrust of the TRC is for the Canada's thirteen provincial and territorial school systems to work towards reconciliation by imagining a curriculum focused on truth-telling, justice and the incorporation of what Indigenous Canadians have understood all along—that a damaged earth will ultimately fight back.

To locate curriculum in the realm of the Terrestrial, in the sense that Latour creates, is to attempt to move beyond critiques of place-based education that draw schooling and knowledge itself within the safe, familiar home space of the locale. It is to attend critically to the attractors of localization and globalization to problematise how a re-turn to nostalgic non-relational ontologies and epistemologies cannot help us understand well the curriculum questions: what to teach, to whom and when? It is my sense that curriculum theory must enrich the 'primacy of the particular' with a materialist ecological politics that integrates the human and natural sciences (Rose, 2013).

Contemporary social theory grapples with the complex relations generated under conditions in which all places and people alive today are drawn together in complex webs through which bodies, things (including commodities and pathogens) and ideas move. The challenge for curriculum theory, as I see it, is to develop relational understandings of culture, communication and materiality, and this will not be accomplished in the absence of complex spatial understandings. We need new imaginaries, new stories, to come to grips with the space we are in, and thus, I draw inspiration from Pinar's (2004) more radical and intersubjective formulations of *curreere*, science fiction and the frontiers of social theory, as potential tools to confront both localized Heideggerian phenomenological retreats and the desperate and bizarre 'out-of-this-world' politics that provide a dangerous comfort.

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Reconceptualizing the Multilingual Child: Curriculum Construction in Luxembourg

Sabrina Sattler

If language, or languages, are the bearers of cultural identity,¹ the teaching of language within an educational framework—or, more specifically, the making of the language curriculum—is closely linked to the

¹The present essay distances itself from an essentialist interpretation of the concept of identity and understands identity as a historically varying conceptual ideal that is, among other things, conceived and constructed in terms of policy, and specifically educational policy. Identity thus does not refer to some essential substance but must be understood as a constructed foundation of individual and collective characteristics. At the same time, it is important in this context to emphasise that this interpretation of identity, too, is a construct.

This chapter is drawn from a PhD project underway at the University of Luxembourg. The working title of the dissertation is *Curriculum Development in a multilingual society: The Example of Luxembourg*. The dissertation will be concluded in early 2021.

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question of identity formation. This chapter will investigate the extent to which conceptions of identity are inscribed in the school curriculum, and how this affects the process of its creation. It will do so by taking the linguistic situation in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg as an example, where the construction of identity is closely linked to institutional multilingualism. My brief overview of the linguistic situation in society and school in Luxembourg emphasises the way in which this linguistic identity is changing in the face of an increasing standardisation of educational planning and discusses how this is to be evaluated in terms of cultural history. This will be illustrated with reference to two notable acts of legislation relating to primary schooling in Luxembourg: one was the law of 1912, and the other, almost a hundred years later, the reformed successor law of 2009. It is important here to identify the ideas about a constructed linguistic identity that were dominant before and after the primary education reform of 2009, and to establish what developments have taken place. Of particular value in this context is the notion, first formulated at the beginning of the twentieth century, of a Luxembourg *Mischkultur* (mixed culture: Weber, 1909), and I discuss the extent to which this idea conflicts with contemporary tendencies in educational planning. This will show that Luxembourg is a kind of laboratory because of developing processes of globalisation and migration, and hence this account is relevant to other multilingual contexts in general and to curriculum scholarship in particular.

When looking at the formation of the modern European nation-states during the nineteenth century, the use of a common language became a national-political strategy to bind a nation to a people and, therefore, to practise social cohesion. “The Invention of Monolingualism” (Gramling, 2016) created the linguistic and societal superstructure in most nation-states, with the national language signifying therefore a total cultural entity. This so-called “monolingual paradigm” (Yildiz, 2012) was depicted as a *natural* norm, which is often labelled with the notion of the ‘mother tongue’, thereby hiding examples of actually occurring multilingualism (see *ibid.*, p. 6). In this sense, mass schooling and mass literacy became “the primary means of such a social engineering of monolingual populations” (*ibid.*, p. 3).

One of the exceptions to this construction of the monolingual child or citizen is the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, where the historically developed multilingualism—or rather, bilingualism (and later trilingualism)—was politically maintained. French and German were officially recognised

as national languages in the Constitution of 1848, and implemented in the primary school system in 1843. Today, the existence of three official languages—namely, French, German and Luxembourgish—beside each other and in relation to each other, produces, accordingly, a trilingual situation. The logic of this was that multilingualism then had to be considered as “the pluralization of monolingualisms” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 132). The Luxembourg school system, also institutionalised during the course of the nineteenth century, played a major role in preserving this multilingual ‘habitus’, and, relatedly, in building a trilingual Luxembourg nation (Gardin & Lenz, 2018).

The way in which schooling in Luxembourg deals with heterogeneity and multilingualism must therefore be regarded as a case-study that may be relevant to other multilingual contexts in general, and in particular to curriculum scholarship and educational planning at an international level. This immediately makes clear the relevance of the Grand Duchy to education policy. If one considers, for example, the social composition of Luxembourg, one can already imagine the challenges faced by its educational system: More than half a million² people live in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and the proportion of foreigners is almost 48% (as of 2020, STATEC, 2020a). Of these, the Portuguese, who make up 15.2% of the total population, constitute the largest group of immigrants (ibid.). And then there are more than 200,000 cross-border commuters from Belgium, Germany and France who ply their trade in Luxembourg as a centre of economic activity (as of 2019, STATEC, 2020b). Beside the three officially recognised languages of the Grand Duchy, there are thus other languages that are spoken in Luxembourg on a daily basis. Linguistic competence in the three national languages is, as in other countries, too, to be understood as the essence of cultural integration: one’s identity as a citizen is defined in terms of language.

By comparison with other multilingual countries, as for instance Switzerland, what is specific to Luxembourg is that language usage is less dependent on particular territorial boundaries and is, in terms of language policy, organised on a nationwide basis. This is partly due to the small size of the country, situated in the middle of Europe, and due also to its cultural openness and historical interrelationship with the neighbouring countries, Belgium, Germany and France. Historically, though,

²626.100 (state as of 1st January, 2020, STATEC, 2020a).

there have evolved various “domains of linguistic behaviour” (Berg, 1993, p. 18). This classic domain-specific linguistic usage is however becoming increasingly more complex as a result of the high proportion of migrants and the occupational mobility of cross-border commuters (Gilles, 2009, p. 194ff.). Thus the three national languages are used context-dependently as common languages, as *linguae francae*. Luxembourgish, or *Lëtzebuergesch*, was from a historical point of view perceived up into the twentieth century as a dialect variant of German and not as an autonomous language, and was popularly known as ‘our German’. Since the language legislation of 1984, it has been counted officially as a national language and is used in oral communication, first and foremost by residents who have grown up in Luxembourg. French is above all the language of the law and is used extensively as a common language, especially with cross-border French-speaking commuters from Belgium and France. German, historically speaking, is used mainly in the media and is fundamental in certain occupations.

In addition to this, there are a number of socio-linguistic observations to be made on the use of different languages. Luxembourgish, for example, has emotional weight in terms of the consciousness of national identity. Historically, French was considered a prestige language spoken primarily by educationally privileged strata. French and German dominate in the domain of written language, and so also in schools. Apart from the school context, however, German is a “silent language” (Scheer, 2017, p. 74), since it is rarely spoken on an everyday basis—except with German speakers. All three languages are, however, official languages of the administration and are introduced in succession in Luxembourg’s eight-year primary school system, beginning at the pre-primary level. Pupils come into contact with Luxembourgish and—what is new, in recent years—they also receive a first oral, play-oriented introduction to French during their early childhood education. At the age of six, they are normally taught to read and write in German. In the following school year, French is systematically introduced as a spoken and then written language. In the course of the school system, French gradually becomes a major language of instruction. It goes without saying that a classification of L1, L2 or L3 speaker is hard to define in this multilingual school and societal context. This is also highlighted in the official educational standards for languages, published during the reform movement of 2009 (Kühn, 2008).

WHAT'S IN A 'CURRICULUM'?

The way in which I am invoking the term 'curriculum' reflects the notion of "understanding curriculum" in Pinar et al. (2008) and the notion of curriculum as "complicated conversation" (ibid., p. 848), and refers to the politics of curriculum construction and its associated power relations. However, the practitioner's side of curriculum creation needs to receive attention as well if we are to 'understand' these power relations. In this case, I refer to 'curriculum making'.

With regard to 'curriculum', the term itself is rarely used in the Luxembourg educational discourse. The terminological ambiguity reflects that of the German term *Lehrplan* (lesson plan) versus the Anglo-Saxon *curriculum*, which 'does not merely represent the various societal expectations placed on schools and teaching, but also designates the diverse planning instruments for teaching such as schoolbooks, school organisation, learning goals, and testing tasks' (Horlacher & De Vincenti, 2014, p. 476). Both notions, *Lehrplan* and *curriculum*, derive from different political and cultural conditions, which need to be borne in mind when looking at national curricula. As far as these cultural idiosyncrasies are concerned, it is not the aim of this chapter to elaborate on these different models and their various interpretations, because it is not part of the Luxembourg tradition.³ However, in Luxembourg, the traditional syllabus is commonly known by the French term *programme* and refers to subject-related school programmes.⁴ In this context, it should be noted that these *programmes* include subject- and grade-specific learning and teaching recommendations, as well as a specific competence expectation of the pupil. Curriculum making in Luxembourg however needs to be

³For a detailed overview, see Horlacher & De Vincenti, 2014. See also Horlacher, 2011 for a deeper analysis of the German concept of *Bildung*, which affected the understanding of *Lehrplan* and the overall tasks of school. In Luxembourg there was no comparable debate around the two notions, which is related partly to the late foundation of the university in 2003 and partly to the historical development of the school system. Because of different territorial claims, especially until the middle of the nineteenth century, it was not only the German but also the Dutch and French influences which found their way into the organisation of the Luxembourg school system and language policies. This is therefore not the place to go into a discussion of the two notions, which has no special relevance to the situation in Luxembourg and would go beyond the scope of this account.

⁴At this point, it is worth noting that 'curriculum' and 'programme' are of course quite often used interchangeably.

understood as a ‘multifaceted phenomenon’ (Biesta, 2014, p. 31) and requires a constant dialogue between all educational actors and agencies.

The process of curriculum making in Luxembourg is characterised by a mix of bottom-up and top-down, and cannot be understood as a linear practice. First and foremost, the Ministry of Education sets educational standards on a nationwide basis, which can be, but do not necessarily have to be, part of a supranational educational agenda. The individual *programmes* are drawn up by a committee of teachers, organised on a nationwide basis for each school-subject (or sometimes subject combination) for the different school tracks which exist in Luxembourg. In terms of the regular school system, pupils go on to receive a classical secondary school education (*enseignement secondaire classique*) or a more practical, career-oriented secondary school education (*enseignement secondaire général*) after completing their primary school education (*enseignement fondamental*). Both secondary school types can qualify them for higher education. However, these tracks require different kind of syllabus. The members of the *programme* committees discuss in particular the use of certain text-books, teaching materials and examination regulations. Depending on requirements, working groups, quite often within the *programme* committee, meet according to specific needs—for instance, the definition of competence levels in a specific school-subject. These committees need to be understood as an advisory body to the Ministry of Education, or rather the Secretary for Education. The development of the *programmes* is moreover, especially in recent years, accompanied by the input of ministerial liaison officers. After all, the *programmes* need to be confirmed by national policy makers. However, it is important to stress that educational policy makers in Luxembourg are quite often themselves seconded teachers, which shows a specific power constellation in terms of curriculum making.

With regard to subject-specific syllabi, it is notable that discussions about language skills are quite often on the educational agenda. This is essential due to the fact that German and French are the main languages of instruction for the whole of the school system, i.e. also in non-language-related subjects, and therefore inevitably play a part in the acquisition of indirect competences. As a consequence, “specialist teaching is always also language teaching” (Hu, Hansen-Pauly, Reichert, & Ugen, 2015, p. 63), and teachers must be adequately prepared and must be proficient in all three official languages.

Due to the fact that the idea of curricular scholarship is not really academically consolidated in Luxembourg and, further, that a department of *curriculum studies* does not exist at the country's only university, I here work with a broader concept of curriculum, mostly inspired by an Anglo-American research perspective. Thus it is crucial to "understand" (Pinar et al., 2008) curricular activities in the Grand Duchy, on the basis of which school programmes represent the universal attempt at creating certain kinds of persons⁵ and, in terms of language, specific kinds of speakers. A concept of curriculum is therefore

historically formed within systems of ideas that inscribe styles of reasoning, standards and conceptual distinctions in school practices and its subjects. Further, the systems of reasoning embodied in schooling are the effects of power. That power is in the manner in which the categories and distinctions of curriculum shape and fashion interpretation and action. In this sense, curriculum is a practice of social regulation and the effect of power. (Popkewitz, 1997, p. 131)

Following this idea, the concept of curriculum has to be conceived more broadly than the mere provision of contents that are to be taught and learnt. Bearing this in mind, the following observations are based on an understanding of the curriculum as part of cultural history.

The curriculum is thus not there for its own sake, but is always situated within the interplay of external social and historical processes. Curriculum scholarship therefore constitutes itself in a discursive practice. The curriculum, as a road map for a strategy of national and supranational education policy, and also as a pedagogic reaction to, or intervention in, social and historical change, is thus ascribed a role in constructing identity. Curriculum construction needs therefore to be understood as social practice, "as discourse, as text, and most simply but profoundly, as words and ideas" (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 7), and cannot be restricted merely to instructional support for teaching. The curriculum is therefore by definition a *hidden curriculum* (Giroux & Purpel, 1983; Jackson, 1968; McLaren, 2015), in the sense that specific, beside explicit learning goals, there are also implicit and covert educational goals embedded in the curriculum, which correspond to societal needs as well as an institutional definition of what these needs are and should be. As a consequence,

⁵For details see, for example Popkewitz, 2008; Popkewitz, Diaz, & Kirchgasser, 2017.

the curriculum is promoted as being the hinge linking the organisation of teaching and social processes. Following this idea, the intellectual system behind the curriculum standardises the governing notions of a society. In Luxembourg, this is closely tied to the ideal of trilingualism.

THE IDEA OF A LUXEMBOURG ‘MIXED CULTURE’

Trilingualism is often claimed to be of vital importance for Luxembourg, and thus also for its citizens. This is explained in terms of the country’s geographical location between the large neighbouring communities of German- and French-speakers, and the exchange that takes place between them. Of relevance here from the point of view of cultural history is the concept of a “mixed culture” (*Mischkultur*), a term that was formulated by the Luxembourg journalist Batty Weber at the beginning of the twentieth century (Weber, 1909). Weber employs the idea of a “mixed culture” to describe the specifically Luxembourg form of identity formation, in which elements of both French and German culture are united, as can be seen, among other things, in the way that languages are used. Luxembourg’s particularism has often been attributed to its role as mediator between France and Germany (Péporté, Kmec, Majerus, & Margue, 2010, p. 12). The concept of a “mixed culture”, though, represents Luxembourg’s attempt to benefit from its closeness to its neighbours, but also to distance itself from them. Taking the example of the neighbouring countries, Weber similarly deduces particular functional fields for Luxembourg, like the legal texts taking their inspiration from France, or German customs (Kmec, 2014, p. 51f.). The conclusion from this would be that the conglomerate of German and French borrowings was not the result of a lack of culture in Luxembourg but, rather, that the unique feature of Luxembourg was this intertwining of cultural regions. According to Weber, culture changes historically refers to something that has been acquired. Moreover, he criticises a too narrow definition of culture (Weber, 1909, p. 121). This allows us to see that Weber’s understanding of culture was a relatively liberal one, in that he did not tie his ideal of culture as such to a people. Admittedly, there are reasons for thinking that the term “mixed culture” is not in itself unproblematic, so that Weber’s term cannot be treated simply as a concept of culture, but rather as an idea or a figure of thought.

In the context of a concern with curricular planning, however, what is of interest at this point is the question of the extent to which the concept

of a “mixed culture” was used by the educational system in Luxembourg in order to propagate a specifically Luxembourgian kind of identity ascription, and thus an ideal in schools. The idea of a “mixed culture” has to be understood as a homogenization project in which the attempt is made to bundle together specific identity ascriptions and integrate various social strata. Especially in respect of linguistic identity, it transpired that a social differentiation went hand in hand with the choice of a common language. Thus, at the time of the foundation of the Luxembourgian state in 1839 it was above all the French-speaking administrative élite that influenced political decisions. Its members, however, did not understand themselves as ‘typical’ Luxembourgers, because, apart from anything else, national pride was at the time little developed, by comparison with other European nation-states. It was rather the case that these élite citizens oriented themselves not only linguistically but also culturally towards neighbouring French-speaking countries. Moreover, the predominantly peasant rural population, which primarily spoke the German dialect which we would today call Luxembourgish, was excluded, both politically and culturally, to the point where there was the threat of a divided society evolving.

In a “mixed culture”, on the other hand, German and French are on an equal footing: after all, it was not only the educationally privileged who spoke French but also—because of proximity to the border, for example—tradesmen who went and still go about their work in French-speaking regions (see Kmec, 2014, p. 52). Moreover, Weber shows in his essay about “mixed culture” that the Luxembourgish idiom was spoken not only by the ordinary man, but also “in the highest circles” (Weber, 1909, p. 121). The idea of a “mixed culture” must therefore be considered as a proposal to bind the élites, the middle classes and the workers together, and to establish distance from neighbouring countries.

Of course there is no ‘true’ interpretation of Weber’s “mixed culture” concept, and even though he did not explicitly prepare his idea for the school context, parallels can be observed from the perspective of educational planning. At school, the latent structure that lies behind a “mixed culture” was put into practice through the dependence of the languages on each other. Weber for instance valorises the Luxembourgish dialect as “our mother tongue” (ibid., p. 123), but without acknowledging it as an autonomous language. Since at his time there was no unified orthography for Luxembourgish and because of its closeness to the standard German language, pupils were—as they still are today—taught to read and write in German. German must therefore be considered as a vehicle for

the acquisition of written self-expression, although Weber clearly points out that thoughts in Luxembourgish cannot automatically be transferred into the German written language and would lose their specific cultural content (*ibid.*, p. 124). After German, the language for acquiring literacy, French, was introduced, a language that was considered necessary in order also to speak Luxembourgish. After all, Luxembourgish contains a host of French borrowings. From this follows, an inversion of the argument, that the Luxembourger is essentially led to French via Luxembourgish, since this was the language that he or she used at the beginning of their schooling to communicate informally in the classroom with teachers and fellow pupils. This trilingual language practice allows us to see that the three individual languages were arranged from the beginning in a reciprocal relationship to each other within the Luxembourg school system and that, in the process, a specific understanding of identity was constructed. In terms of the curriculum, this meant above all that pupils should be able to move entirely freely between three languages, and that behind the idea of homogenization a kind of *élite* project was hidden. Pupils should be prepared to study abroad with their language skills, and therefore their linguistic mobility allows Luxembourg and its inhabitants to be more cosmopolitan. Weber's concept was used correspondingly by educational planning to create an ideological superstructure of linguistic and cultural features in Luxembourg.

The curricular formulation of this pattern of ideas was, in terms of educational policy, realised through the adoption of Luxembourgish in the primary-school framework legislation of 1912. Since then, the previously bilingual school system has officially been a trilingual one, even if teaching in Luxembourgish was more a question of teaching national history than language-teaching as such. On the one hand, the mention of 'Luxembourgish' in the school curriculum has had a symbolic implication but was not really perceived as a linguistic emancipation from German. On the other hand, one might assume that educational policy during that time took for granted that Luxembourgish was the pupils' first language. The school system was conceived, correspondingly, for indigenous Luxembourgers.

However, especially after the end of the Second World War, the social structure changed rapidly. The economic recovery was accompanied by the immigration of Italian and above all Portuguese guest-workers, who, in the course of reuniting with their families in the 1970s, brought their children into the country. Thus, for example, there were also Portuguese

children going through the trilingual Luxembourg school system. In addition, Luxembourg has since the mid-1970s transformed into being a global location for international finance. Moreover, Luxembourg is one of the main locations for EU institutions. Because of this international character, the Grand Duchy has up to the present attracted many cross-border commuters and other specialists from abroad who sometimes stay with their families in Luxembourg only for a limited period. In the wake of these migration streams, there have evolved what one might call two school systems. That is to say, beside the mainstream schools, which follow the national curriculum, there is an increasing number of International Schools or European Schools, whose main teaching languages are either English, German or French. The curricular agenda of these schools generally includes the consolidation of individual languages, which does not necessarily conform with the country's institutional trilingualism.

In total, the proportion of foreigners rose from 26.3% at the beginning of the 1980s to 36.9% around the turn of the millennium, and they now constitute almost half of the population (STATEC, 2020a). This social composition is reflected in the schools. Pupils' first language is therefore not necessarily Luxembourgish. In the academic year 2016–2017, fewer than half the pupils (42.5%) who follow the national curriculum said that Luxembourgish was their first language (Lenz & Heinz, 2018, p. 28). Despite these social changes, the school legislation of 1912 remained valid until 2009, apart from a small number of modifications. The trilingual school system and the sequence of languages in the organisation of teaching represent a barrier for children with different linguistic biographies. At the same time, language competence often correlates with other valuables—for instance, socio-economic status, as shown by the recent National Education Report for Luxembourg (LUCET & SCRIPT, 2018). As with the idea of a “mixed culture” at the beginning of the twentieth century, there are for that reason signs of a demand for a concept for levelling out linguistic and (especially in Luxembourg) also social differences.

This is the background necessary to understand the most recent primary school reform of 2009—and thus the replacement of the 1912 legal framework—as the trigger for adaptations of social policy and language policy that took place in the realm of education. This reform represents an attempt to redefine institutional trilingualism for schools and to open the language curriculum to non-Luxembourg as well as Luxembourgish-speaking pupils. So, for example, stronger measures were

introduced for pupils having difficulties with the teaching languages. One starting-point for these developments was the sobering conclusions of the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), around the turn of the millennium, according to which Luxembourg came out significantly below average. The primary reason cited for this was the language barrier. As in other countries, too, following the PISA shock of 2000, the curriculum was developed anew and was defined against supranational standards. New actors appeared in the education sector, and curriculum-making became gradually rationalised (Lenz, Rohstock, & Schreiber, 2013, p. 315). Moreover, international exchange was intensified. Consequently, the discussion around PISA meant for the Luxembourg Curriculum, in particular, a:

‘scientification’ of curriculum research and curriculum content. At first sight, both developments seemed to indicate a rather radical break with the past: Over the past two centuries, curriculum research in Luxembourg was almost exclusively initiated from within the schools, and a scientific or academic tradition of curriculum research did not exist. (ibid., p. 315)

Various levels of competence, ranging from “elementary language usage A1” to “competent language usage C2”, based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), are accordingly intended to ensure the transparency of language learning. The primary school curriculum (plan d'études) was correspondingly restructured and organised according to competence-oriented teaching and learning. For Luxembourg's multilingualism, this change of paradigm meant that the institutional trilingualism had to be redefined for indigenous Luxembourgers, too. However, this reform had no effect on the sequence of language learning.⁶ The dependence of the three languages on each other that was realised in it continued to be protected, even if in the process Luxembourgish was declared in terms of educational policy to be the definitive basis of the trilingual organisation of education, as German had been for Weber. Thus, since 2009 Luxembourgish has been given the role of “language of integration” for children of non-Luxembourg origin, and

⁶Since a reform of early childhood education in 2017, pre-school children are by means of play increasingly brought into contact with oral French in parallel to Luxembourgish, even if they continue to be taught literacy in German.

is furthermore supposed to help in the transition to literacy in German.⁷ It is frequently argued that this somehow “natural” transition refers to the syntactic similarity between the two languages. The flagship “language of integration” nevertheless indicates that this is in reality a policy of language protectionism. This is also due to the fact that Luxembourgish is more often used as a written language in informal situations. In this respect, the status of Luxembourgish evidently becomes ambivalent when looking at its use in the school system. The number of teaching hours for Luxembourgish in the whole of the school system is, compared to other language subjects, significantly low. As a consequence, students do not perceive Luxembourgish to be a proper subject, and so, as part of the hidden curriculum, they learn that Luxembourgish is not a real language (Fehlen, 2007, p. 35). Moreover, the discussion about the competence arrangement from A1 to C2 in German and French implies that national languages are treated as foreign languages, something heavily debated in the various committees during the reform.⁸ In this regard, the output-oriented curriculum reform threatens the linguistic identity which was formulated in Weber’s “mixed culture”.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, both the law of 1912 and also its reform in 2009 must be considered as turning-points with reference to a collective awareness of language. This, however, was shaped in different social contexts. By contrast with the impression given by Weber’s idea of a “mixed culture”, it has been recognised since the 2009 reform that the abstractly constructed ideal Luxembourger does not slip with absolute confidence between two or three languages. Differences of a linguistic nature are, by contrast, allowed, at least to a certain extent. While the equal command of the three national languages was, in the context of the 2009 reform, was shown to be illusory, today this notion still plays a central role in

⁷Recent results of the National Educational Report Luxembourg (2018) show for instance that there is no automatic transfer from Luxembourgish to German listening comprehension (see Hoffmann et al., 2018, p. 88).

⁸The PhD project analyses, for instance, systematically, on the basis of expert interviews with central actors of the reform of 2009, press releases, parliamentary debates etc., how the arrangement of the different language levels and with it the discussion around first, second or foreign language took place, and the background lines of argumentation.

discussions of educational policy. As far as linguistic identity is concerned, the application of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in German and French shows that these are, in the end, implicitly recognised foreign languages.⁹ The linguistic differences are made transparent by the arrangement in levels of competence in the curriculum. The idea of the multilingual child was therefore reconceived in terms of curriculum making.

As with the “mixed culture” project, there has been a concern since 2009 to find a compromise for various linguistic or social groups. In the process, admittedly, the ideal of trilingualism inside and outside school is maintained, even if, in the establishment of linguistic levels of competence, there is no intention of speaking of a nearly mother-tongue level (C2) equally in the three national languages. However, the ideal of the trilingual (or in general, the multilingual) child, presented as if it were given in nature, continues to be perpetuated in the curriculum. Even after the reform of 2009, despite the admission of linguistic differences, the question of equality of opportunity, which is closely related to knowledge of languages, is repeatedly being raised. At present, for example, the state is increasingly adopting international models of schooling into its concept of education in order to allow the sequence of languages to be structured more flexibly and to do justice to the linguistic repertoire of the individual pupil. In this respect, the 2009 school reform marks a symbolic turning-point without which this gradual restructuring and the associated rethinking of educational planning would not have been possible, at least in this form.

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⁹The second version of the *plan d'études* (MENFP, 2011) shows that the competencies in both national languages, French and German but not Luxembourgish, are classified in the CEFR language levels. Since the Secondary Education Act of 2017 it is moreover on the secondary school level legally anchored that pupils have to accomplish a C1-level in both, French and German, after completing their secondary education (Mémorial A789, 2017, p. 17; 19). As part of the hidden versions of the curriculum, using the CEFR descriptors means that it is implicitly recognised that French and German are foreign languages.

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PART IV

Curriculum Challenges for the Future



Distal Confabulation and Transnational Literacy: Complicating “Complicated Conversation” in Curriculum Inquiry

Patrick Roberts

INTRODUCTION

A critical issue facing the curriculum studies field in the United States is the need for recalibration of the field’s engagement with the current realities of “post-truth” politics. It is easy enough to point to what these realities are in the US context: Resurgent white nationalism, the militarization of immigration policy, gun violence, the erosion of voting rights, campaign finance abuses, the gutting of environmental and consumer protections, and the steady creep of hate groups into the political mainstream. The politics of accusation, of overt trafficking in lies, false claims, “fake news”, and misattribution have disrupted and destabilized the normative parameters for effective communicative action (Habermas,

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1998) and deliberative democracy (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). Such circumstances are not confined to the United States. As Ungureanu and Monti (2017, p. 521) note: “The recent rise of populism and nationalist majoritarianism in various countries from the United States and India to Turkey, Hungary, and Israel poses a challenge to constitutional democracy and human rights around the globe”.

Against the backdrop of global neo-nationalist movements, the internationalization of the curriculum studies field has continued to dominate contemporary curriculum discourses in the US, with texts that might be called “trans-synoptic” coming to occupy a central position in the curriculum studies literature. Often published as edited volumes devoted to a single national context (see for example, Pinar, 2011a; Pinar, 2011b), trans-synoptic curriculum texts organized around national unities can provide a set of historical and cultural coordinates that facilitate deep-level analysis. In explaining his choice to organize the *International Handbook of Curriculum Research* (2014) by country, Pinar notes: “In political terms, such an organization challenges the ‘obsessive contemporality’ that effaces history and thus renders globalization ‘reasonable’” (p. 12).

This essay takes up several critical questions that I believe arise from the US curriculum studies field’s interest in establishing a global outlook. It is important, therefore, to distinguish between the internationalization of curriculum studies and transnational curriculum inquiry.¹ As I am relating the term to the US field, internationalization reflects intellectual movement towards familiarity with and understanding of international perspectives and experiences. Transnational curriculum inquiry, on the other hand, suggests a developing interest in the articulation of a worldwide “ecology of knowledge” (Santos, 2009). It is the difference between a centred, outward expansion of disciplinary boundaries and a de-centred, generative reflexiveness that propagates disciplinary diversification. That internationalization can be construed as a form of intellectual colonialism gives an indication as to the political timbre associated with transnational curriculum inquiry. I will address this point later in the essay.

Identifying “three waves of the internationalization of the US field of curriculum”, Johnson-Mardones (2018) observes that the current third wave has been dominated by “national accounts of the situation of Curriculum Studies in different countries”. As Pinar (2009, p. 6) notes,

¹I am grateful to Bill Green for calling my attention to this distinction.

the US field's engagement with international perspectives, experiences, and histories helps show us that "what and how we know – including our very subjective structuration of knowledge – can be reconstructed" (p. 35). However, there may be limits to this formulation of the goals of internationalization: how effectively can they guard against intellectual slippage into what I call a passively comparative cosmopolitanism. Johnson-Mardones (2018, p. 9) notes:

The next step is to develop international or transnational research on curriculum focused on the interrelationships among national developments and their discontinuities. It is within this interpretive space that a more comprehensive theory of curriculum and education can emerge.

Clues to the challenges associated with navigating the "next step" into "this interpretive space" may be found in the conceits that continue to dominate the rhetoric of curriculum inquiry. The curriculum field has long relied on analogy to express the relation between our object of study and our methods of understanding; we seem to know curriculum only *as* something else. Recourse to nation-states as the unit of analysis in the discourse of internationalization carries contradictory meanings that are foregrounded by an uncomplicated view of one of the field's most widely deployed tropes: *curriculum as complicated conversation* (Pinar, 2006). Consideration of whether this trope holds up under the pressures of a "rapidly accelerating internationalization of curriculum research" (Pinar, 2014, p. 1) is the primary focus of this essay. Simply put, conceiving of *curriculum as complicated conversation* may no longer offer an adequate figuration of a global field that increasingly relies on translation as its performative centre.

Let me be clear that I do not intend my complication of complicated conversation in this essay to be read as a rejection of the invaluable contributions that this turn of phrase has made to the curriculum studies field. The analogy has proved to be an important vehicle for bringing world-wide curriculum discourses into closer proximity. However, the critiques to which internationalization as a marker of the US field is susceptible sparks the need to problematize, and perhaps reconfigure, the figures of speech that have provided the US field, at least, a good deal of its intellectual scaffolding. When we employ comparative tropes, we are wrestling with both conception and articulation. Curriculum as complicated conversation is a simile, of course, and similes work because we are

willing to entertain some degree of likeness between two seemingly unlike terms. But similes can run their course and exhaust their meaning. When such a point is reached, the terms of the simile's construction (in this case, curriculum and conversation) are no longer able to adequately bear the weight of comparison.

As I have already suggested, the purposes associated with internationalizing the US curriculum field risk becoming reified as a passive cosmopolitanism structured around a comparative orientation. Curriculum as a complicated international conversation reinforces an overdetermined commitment to cosmopolitan "sensibilities" (Jupp, 2016) within the field. In discussing the direction in which the internationalization of the US curriculum field might head, Johnson-Mardones (2018, p. 124) writes: "I would like ... to propose that a space for cosmopolitan educational scholarship, ergo intercultural, ergo decolonizing, can be reached by focusing on the translation of the untranslatable". Untranslatable words, according to Johnson-Mardones, are "words that trigger conversation" as they require explanation in response to the question "what do you mean by that?" (p. 124). Although I find Johnson-Mardones's focus on translation of the untranslatable compelling (I will discuss translation later in this essay, using similar language), his thinking here suggests the intellectual pull that cosmopolitan discourses and the complementary trope of complicated conversation can exert when discussing internationalization. In his critique of cosmopolitanism, Brennan (2010, p. 37) writes: "What this means for the discourse of cosmopolitanism is that mobility, mixedness, and the multiple become the abstract imperatives inherited from literary modernism that can be applied, with intentional ambivalence, to a variety of discordant facts and contingencies. They hide the critic from his or her critical self and make their inquiry to that degree unfree as well as blind to the limits of its good intentions".

Brennan's (2010) pointed analysis finds within the rhetoric of cosmopolitanism an "erasure" of political realities. "Politics", he writes, "is precisely about deciding one's constituency, and then assuming responsibility for power, not dissimulating it or withdrawing to an imaginary space where one pretends not to wield it" (Brennan, 2010, p. 45). It seems to me that this quote from Brennan reasserts the always already political imperatives of curriculum work, political imperatives made more salient, I would argue, through the lenses and practices of transnational curriculum inquiry, and made less salient through the rhetorics associated with internationalization. Paraskeva's (2016a, p. 19) argument that

“[t]he main goal for critical progressive educators should be social justice and real democracy, coupled with an acknowledgement that there is no social justice without cognitive justice”, suggests a globalized reframing of a political curriculum question: How does a diverse international field establish a universal baseline from which to formulate and advance a shared normative (and thus political) vision for what social justice and real democracy mean without forcing into totalizing, Anglo-European epistemologies globally diverse idiomatic expressions of the same? Paraskeva’s call for “cognitive justice” spins in the direction of what Green (2010) refers to as the “representation problem in curriculum inquiry”, for it is a call that stakes a claim for the right to represent, without epistemological coercion, diverse and localized idiomatic expressions of radical democracy. The representational character of figurative language speaks to, or undermines, the affinitive mutuality connoted by a framing of curriculum as cosmopolitan encounter, complicated or otherwise. As Brennan (2010, p. 30) notes, “How many ... are willing to concede that an ethical view, to be ethical, often involves enacting principles by force if necessary? Cosmopolitanism is vexed by precisely this kind of showdown”.

Elsewhere I have suggested that “contemporary curriculum studies is a transnational, transdisciplinary ‘distal confabulation’ of scholars and practitioners committed to disarticulating the ideals that define our past and present” (Roberts, 2017, p. 13). The translational concept of distal confabulation can be linked to the larger aims of contemporary curriculum theory primarily in terms of an ethical-political imperative that requires a conceptual shift in the US curriculum field. Although discourses of internationalization have held out the hope that such a shift can be achieved, there remains to be reconciled some of the tensions associated with the call for “cognitive justice” (Paraskeva, 2016a) noted in the preceding paragraph. It is here that I turn to Gutayari Spivak’s (2012b) concept of “transnational literacy”. Spivak’s formulation of transnational literacy provides an important contrast to conceptualizing curriculum as complicated conversation, which, I have suggested, tilts towards a passive comparative cosmopolitanism. In what follows, I briefly relate Spivak’s thoughts on comparative literature to the comparative dilemmas faced by the internationalization of the US curriculum field.

TRANSNATIONAL LITERACY

In considering the direction of the “next step” (Johnson-Mardones, 2018) in the internationalization of curriculum studies in the US, it is important to ask to what degree does the current focus on intercultural encounter and dialogue—precisely the complicated conversation at question—reinforce a limited comparative approach to the study of international curriculum perspectives. Identifying the limitations associated with a comparative approach is important when we in the US engage “epistemologies of the South” (Santos, 2018), as comparative readings may make such epistemologies less expressive of particular, localized histories and experiences (in other words, less idiomatic) as they are removed from context and undergo forced translation, circulating in orbits ever further from their fabled points of origin. In her essay “Rethinking Comparativism”, Gayatri Spivak (2012a, p. 467) asks: “What is it that one ‘compares’ in Comparative Literature?”. As a young scholar, Spivak had believed that the goal of comparative work was to seek affinity across literatures through “encompassing structures and archetypal texture” (p. 470). However, she later came to understand that “[t]o discover varieties of sameness is to give in too easily to the false promises of a level playing field” (p. 470). Rather than affinity, Spivak argues that the focus of comparative literature should be on the “irreducibility of idiom, even as it insists on translation as commonly understood.... We translate, not the content, but the very moves of languaging” (p. 471). Language equivalency rests on language’s capacity to “inscribe” (p. 474), she writes, and “[t]he diversity and singularity of idiom remain a constant reminder of the singularity of languages” (p. 474). As applied to the curriculum field, understanding internationalization in terms of idiomatic equivalence (rather than comparative patterns of affinity) potentially frees us from what Spivak refers to as “nationalist or national language-based reading” (p. 472).

Conceptualizing curriculum inquiry in terms of transnational literacy helps curriculum scholars achieve, I think, the kind of “interruptive praxis” that can characterize a renewed ethics of engagement with the global public sphere. I believe it can also shake internationalization free from the gripping impulses for canonical expansion, which can reasonably be read as a form of “epistemicide” (Paraskeva, 2016b). In framing curriculum inquiry as a constellation of idiomatic, “transnational articulations” (Santos & Avritzer, 2005), transnational literacy focuses on the

idiomatic figuration that languaging brings to the fore. It is a political call for representational indeterminacy (cf. Green, 2010). It is that translational imperative that transnational literacy allows us to “read”.

But why offer *distal confabulation* as a trope more apt than *complicated conversation* when discussing the global encounters that transnational literacy scaffolds? Distal, of course, suggests distance, a situatedness at some remove from the centre. As scholars engaged in intellectual exchange, our tales are spun over distances of space, time, and understanding. We work at some remove from one another – both geographically and epistemologically—and often communicate through translation (typically into English). It may seem odd, given the dangers presented by “post-truth” politics, that I would argue for a positive figuration of the international curriculum studies field as *confabulation*, the practice, art, and/or delusion of speaking in untruths, falsehoods, and fictions. Shouldn’t our political aim be to “speak truth to power?” At its root, confabulation means “to talk with others; to chat”, but it also carries within it the word “fable”—a brief story that is told in order to convey some moral point or lesson. In this literary sense, fables are truths disguised as untruths. It is this element of representational ambiguity that gives the word “confabulation” a more relevant meaning than the word *conversation* when it comes to characterizing the politics of globalized intellectual exchange.

As a psychological phenomenon, confabulation is of considerable interest to researchers in the field of cognitive science. Hirstein (2005) notes that there are three types of confabulation: *mnemonic*, *linguistic*, and *epistemic*. Mnemonic confabulation refers to “stories produced to cover gaps in memory” (p. 19), linguistic confabulation refers to “the production of false narratives” (p. 20), and epistemic confabulation refers to “a certain type of epistemically ill-grounded claim that the confabulator does not know is ill-grounded” (p. 20). According to Strijbos and de Bruin (2015, p. 299), “In the traditional sense, ‘confabulation’ designated the phenomenon of people unintentionally making false reports about their memory”. As agents in the world, we constantly seek to understand our motives for the choices we make and the beliefs that we hold. In doing so, we risk “failed attempts at self-interpretation” (p. 299). Confabulation is the condition of this interpretive dilemma and functions as a kind of ex post facto rationalization.

Writing about the productive value of confabulation, Paula Droege (2015, p. 154) notes: “Confabulation is an adaptive response to memory

dysfunction; it preserves a sense of self in time despite the loss of reliable information about past experiences” (p. 153). Confabulation in this sense is rational, except when there is “persistence in believing [the confabulation] in the face of counterevidence”. It is here that we can begin to forge some linkages to the de/canonizing dialectic that gives many fields of study their animating character—including curriculum inquiry. Canons function as “adaptive responses” that preserve a sense of disciplinary cohesion and identity. Perhaps canons are akin to “false memories” (Droege, 2015) that seek to “temporally extend” a discipline’s own justification for what was, is, and will be. A problem arises, however, when the productive value of confabulation gives way to confabulatory self-delusion, analogous to canonical reification: the canon becomes mistaken for the field itself, with fidelity the primary virtue. A theory of transnational literacy counters this risk of canonical reification by keeping our eyes and ears open to the interpretive disruptions and representational indeterminacies that characterize “the very moves of languaging” (Spivak, 2012a, p. 471). Imagining transnational curriculum inquiry as a distal confabulation signals just how complicated (and even just how impossible) conversation can be.

IDIOMATIC ARTICULATIONS AND ECOLOGIES OF KNOWLEDGE

Thus far I have tried to suggest that the internationalization of the US curriculum field has reached a critical juncture. Maneuvering through and beyond this juncture requires rethinking the conceits the field has come to over-rely on—first among them, *curriculum as complicated conversation*—so that the ethical-political imperatives potentially associated with internationalization do not become flattened by passive cosmopolitanism and reductive models of comparative analysis. “Rethinking the conceits” means, in part, displacing the nation-state as the unit of analysis for US curriculum scholars seeking to integrate international perspectives and histories into their own “curriculum-curriculum”² (Schubert, 2003). As a

²The “curriculum-curriculum” refers to the ideas, texts, materials, thinkers, constructs, dialogues, and experiences—in other words, the curriculum—relied upon to guide the study of curriculum, including our own life’s journey (in keeping with the notion of *currere*). The point I am making here is that international perspectives and histories should be a part of the curriculum that guides our study of curriculum.

way into this move, I turn now to some thoughts on Jurgen Habermas's formulation of post-secular liberal society.

It may seem odd that my argument thus far has led me to Habermas, who, in his theory of communication action, seems to embrace a foundational perspective on deliberative discourse. Because of this, many curriculum scholars treat Habermas's work with some ambivalence, a function, perhaps, of postmodern unease with the modernist grounds of critical theory (cf. Green, 2010). Elizabeth Macedo (2011, p. 136), for example, notes her initial interest in and eventual "withdrawal from [Jurgen Habermas's theory of] communicative action", which she characterizes as "a consensus based on rational principles and guided by a discourse ethic that [has] the status of foundation" (p. 136). Similarly, Autio (2009, p. 9; original emphasis) argues: "Instrumentalism is there in Habermas's theory, but immersed and contextualized within the ideals of communicative action and democratic practice, which in turn is located, arguably and fatally, *within the discourse of universalized nation-state*". In my view, such criticisms of a supposed universalizing or foundational impulse in Habermas's theory of communicative action are misplaced. The reasons for my position are beyond the scope of this essay. Suffice to say, the constructs of inter-cultural dialogue upon which passive cosmopolitanism is based can only be validated through recourse to a foundational subject-centred reason. Habermas (1987) opposes this formulation by offering a "procedural concept of rationality" that is "richer than that of purposive rationality ... because it integrates moral-practical as well as the aesthetic-expressive domains; it is an explication of the rational potential built into the validity basis of speech" (pp. 314–315).

My focus on Habermas's relatively recent interest in post-secularism is motivated by political events in the United States, where religion represented an important fault-line in the US presidential election of 2016. Eighty-one per cent of self-identified white born again/evangelical Christians who voted, voted for Donald Trump in that election (Smith & Martínez, 2016), despite the apparent fact that Trump has a personal history of behaving in ways clearly in conflict with evangelical Christian moral values. The top two issues factoring into evangelicals' choice between Trump and democratic candidate Hillary Clinton were terrorism and the economy, followed by immigration and gun laws (Renaud, 2017). I cite these data because they illustrate an interesting paradox in the

United States, one that offers a paradigmatic analog for thinking through the issues associated with internationalization.

In his essay “Religion in the Public Sphere”, Habermas (2006) makes clear that the post-secular liberal state “cannot ... expect of *all* citizens that they also justify their political statements independently of their religious convictions and worldviews” (p. 8). Thus, religious citizens “should therefore be allowed to express and justify their convictions in a religious language [i.e., idiomatically] if they cannot find secular ‘translations’ for them” (p. 10). Furthermore, secularists too are expected to undergo a difficult “cognitive act of adaptation” that extends far beyond “the political virtue of mere tolerance” (p. 15). What is required is “a self-reflexive transcending of a secularist self-understanding of Modernity” (p. 15), or as he also puts it, the development of “an epistemic mindset ... that would originate from a self-critical assessment of the limits of secular reason” (p. 15). As he notes, deliberative democracy is “an epistemically discerning form of government that is, as it were, truth-sensitive” (p. 18), and it requires that democratic mindsets be brought about equally among all citizens via “complementary learning processes” (p. 18).

These complementary learning processes capture my attention as a curriculum theorist. The epistemological shift these learning processes represent reflects an openness to revising the boundaries of self-knowledge on the part of both “citizens of faith”, who must accept the value of having the religious language they contribute to the public arena subject to subsequent translation by civil society, and secular citizens, who “must open their minds to the possible truth content of those [religious, faith-based] presentations and enter into dialogues from which religious reasons then might well emerge in the transformed guise of generally accessible arguments” (Habermas, 2006, p. 11). This quote from Habermas certainly seems to reflect Pinar’s (2009) thoughts on the value of placing into complicated conversation international curriculum perspectives, experiences, and histories. However, I do not believe that Habermas (or Pinar for that matter) means to suggest that dialogue/conversation offers a means of resolving epistemological differences. Indeed, Habermas goes on to say that “[t]he normative expectations of an ethics of citizenship have absolutely no impact unless a required change in mentality has been forthcoming first; indeed they then serve only to kindle resentment on the part of those who feel misunderstood and their capacities over-taxed” (p. 13). Ideally, the internationalization of the US curriculum studies field helps bring about this

“required change in mentality”, or as Pinar (2009, p. 2) says, a reconstruction of our “very subjective structuration of knowledge”. But such change or reconstruction is not a matter of complicated conversation; it is a matter of the figurative (and also, of course, the literal) translations that must occur prior to any dialogue or conversation taking place.

Habermas’s work “internationalizes” for me that most basic of curriculum questions—*What knowledge is of most worth?*—through a provocative, political reframing: How do we identify and effectuate the epistemic pre-conditions upon which the “normative expectations associated with democratic citizenship” depend? And how do we ensure those “epistemic pre-conditions” are not simply mechanisms for a totalizing, subject-centred rationalism and Western-centric conception of democracy that fronts epistemic violence? These questions parallel the one I asked earlier in my essay in relation to curriculum studies—How does a diverse international field establish a universal baseline from which to formulate and advance a shared normative (and thus political) vision for what social justice and real democracy mean without forcing into totalizing, Anglo-European epistemologies the globally diverse, idiomatic expressions of the same? According to Santos and Avritzer (2005, p. lxxviii) the “counter-hegemonic alternative” to totalizing conceptions of democracy “lies in the transnational articulations between different local experiments in participatory democracy or between those local experiments and transnational movements and organizations interested in promoting participatory democracy”. Such “transnational articulations”, I argue, depend upon the *translational* (rather than conversational) imperatives of communicative action. This is the universe of distal confabulation and transnational curriculum inquiry.

Yet, upon what normative grounds can “counter-hegemonic alternatives” be established? In terms of post-secular society, Habermas must defend his argument against the charge that post-secularism is simply a type of secularism that values religious pluralism in the name of tolerance, while nonetheless insisting that religious world views be “translated into the language of reason” if they are to have any currency in the public sphere (Possamai, 2017, p. 826). That places an enormous cognitive burden on religious citizens, and, according to Possamai (2017, p. 823), amounts to little more than the “neoliberal management of religion in the public sphere”. This charge serves as an analog for my concern that the values associated with comparative cosmopolitanism and the trope

of complicated conversation are potentially reductive of non-Western epistemologies.

Santos and Habermas both point out that a closed epistemological mindset is not capable of posing problems beyond the horizons of its own worldview. The value, then, in exposure to a diversity of epistemologies and worldviews is the potential for “crossed interpellation of ways of knowing” (Santos, 2009, p. 18) that disrupt—or disarticulate—closed systems. For Santos, “[t]he ecology of knowledge is the epistemological dimension of a new kind of solidarity among social actors or groups. It is an internally diverse solidarity, in which each group gets mobilized by its own, autonomous mobilization reasons, while believing that the collective actions which may turn such reasons into practical results go way beyond what is possible to carry out by a single social actor or group” (p. 117). Solidarity is made possible by a shared commitment to a universal value translated across difference. But translated into what language? How do we navigate the waters of internationalization, tacking between local, idiomatic expressions, and the ethical ideals that drive the normative discourse of human rights?

Just as religion can provide normative justifications for action in facing some of the challenges noted in this chapter’s opening paragraph, so too can the communicative rationality associated with transnational literacy orient the international curriculum field towards a shared set of normative goals. Ungureanu and Monti (2017, p. 523) write: “Habermas convincingly argues that neither believers nor nonbelievers can claim exclusive ownership over the prepolitical foundations of democracy and the moral imagination, from the standards of practical reasoning to the repertoires of public justification and the symbolic resources of civic motivation”. This point echoes a point made by Santos (2009, p. 116) regarding international encounters: “The impossibility of grasping the infinite epistemological diversity of the world does not release us from trying to know it; on the contrary it demands that we do. This demand, or exigency, I call ecology of knowledge. In other words, if the truth exists only in the search for truth, knowledge exists only as ecology of knowledge”. I suggest that here again surface the political imperatives and representational indeterminacies to which transnational literacy provides access.

CONCLUSION

In this essay I have tried to argue that as curriculum scholars in the United States reflect on how best to approach the internationalization of the US field, the goal of transnational literacy as figured through the metaphor of *distal confabulation* offers a far more powerful disciplinary response to the degradation of the global public sphere than does a passive cosmopolitanism often represented as *complicated conversation*. “All too clearly”, writes Boike Rehbein (2015, p. 1), “the postcolonial critique has revealed the blindness of the Eurocentric tradition to colonial and other hegemonic structures with regard to both thought and reality”. Although this is hardly news, it is worth asking whether extending the *curriculum as complicated conversation* turn of phrase to internationalization does not somehow suggest a stubborn blindness, or perhaps a deaf ear, to an Anglo-Eurocentric expectation of reasonable and mutual comprehensibility.

Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges (1999) once characterized the English translation of William Bradford’s French novel *Vathek* in this way: “The original is unfaithful to the translation”. All translation is confabulatory—a fiction of verisimilitude unsanctioned and unofficial, excluded and excommunicated, of doubtful parentage and dubious origin, circulating outside hermetic boundaries of official knowledge and epistemological privilege, always distal to the truth with which it strains to lie. And we, the unfaithful confabulators, tell tales out of school but never out of time, across distances that are both geographic and idiomatic. We are a distal confabulation of researchers and practitioners, activists and advocates, intellectuals and individuals, who, through a shared commitment to transnational literacy, delve into the idiomatic expressions that voice the world-wide curriculum field’s diverse ethical visions and moral imaginings.

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Curriculum for Teacher Formation: Antagonism and Discursive Interpellations

Veronica Borges and Alice Casimiro Lopes

INTRODUCTION: INTERPELLATIONS OF PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSE TO CURRICULUM POLICIES

In this chapter, we present a study of teacher formation in the Brazilian context. Bearing in mind the constant play of discourses (Derrida, 1978; 1982), there is no fixed boundary for what we call the Brazilian context. Global movements necessarily operate by boosting other, consonant chains of meanings but nonetheless leave traces that constitute disputes of meaning. Social instability causes isolated demands to be dislocated in some form of ghostly articulation (Laclau, 1990). Our theoretical-strategic concerns include an effort to avoid establishing a hierarchy within the texts chosen for investigation, along with the intention to

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approach all as “curricular texts”. We operate with the discursive context of teacher education from meanings mobilized in a privileged manner via the National Association for the Training of Education (ANFOPE) reports produced in the years 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012. These reports are collectively written texts resulting from a wide variety of discussions regarding teacher formation, some of them from conventions and assemblies. ANFOPE is a Brazilian national association for the formation¹ of professionals in education, and is widely recognized on a national scale for its academic-scientific and union sectors in the field of education. It is openly linked to leftist positions, while opposing policies considered neoliberal and conservative.

Articles about teacher education constitute another research source. They were selected using the keywords “profissionalização docente (teacher professionalization)”, “profissionalismo docente (teaching professionalism)”, “trabalho docente (teaching work)”, “profissão docente (teaching profession)”, and “ocupação docente (teaching occupation)”.² We also consulted the most commonly cited bibliographic references in the articles related to teacher professionalization, as a theoretical strategy aiming to broaden the possibilities of interpretation and provide opportunity for desedimentation of the discourses studied, in an effort to increase the connections made.

In highlighting research sources and, even more importantly, questioning them, we seek—through processes of desedimentation—those contingent, precarious, and provisional aspects that promote the emergence of discursive practices.

There are countless enunciations of pedagogical discourse that have repercussions in curriculum policies for teacher education and vice versa. By stating this, we have no pretence of making these different discourses coincide. To the contrary, we assume the deconstruction movement of the logic of representation (Laclau, 1996), questioning the idea that there is a complete identification between represented and representative. The mark

¹We use *formation* as synonymous with teacher training, but also incorporating all the processes that try to build a professional identity of the teacher. As sometimes this expression refers to a limited concept of training, one that is more instrumental, we often choose to use teacher education.

²Via the search field portal of Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES). The Capes Journal Portal is a virtual library that brings together and makes available to teaching and research institutions in Brazil the best of international scientific production.

of ambivalence inhabits the field of disputes, making the possible decisions disseminative. The decision—any and all of them—generates other decisions, with undetermined results. With these devices, we conduct the investigation using interpreted discourses via the selected curriculum texts.

*The Reflective Teacher/Epistemology of Teaching Practice
and Knowledge*

There are common points between the notions of a reflective teacher/epistemology of teaching practice and knowledge. For Schön, reflective action is not a set of techniques, but an active, persistent, and careful process of investigating what motivates the practice, as well as its consequences (Zeichner, 1993). Schön led curriculum researchers to argue for the possibility of a humanistic technology of curricular theory, based on the articulation of practical competence and professional artistry (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1996). The use of the notion of reflexivity gains strength with many authors (Alarcão, 1996, 2001; Zeichner, 1993; 2008) who incorporate this theory and are widely cited in Brazil. However, in Brazilian education discourses, Schön's ideas are mainly utilized to mobilize critical discourses of instrumentalism and technology curriculum design.

It seems to us that a relationship that places instrumental discourses in defence of the reflective teacher in antagonistic positions has emerged. Discourse defending reflective action is strengthened by critiquing the idea that the teacher is a mere technician who applies knowledge/content produced by the experts, for example. Discourses that support the latter sedimentation involve binaries such as active/passive, expert/generalist, technical/reflective, training/formation of the teacher, reducing and naturalizing more complex heterogeneous relations. Such critiques of the instrumental approach function as a unifying element for ideas, if we consider the realities of the Brazilian socio-political moment at the time of this discourse's emergence. An antagonistic section is constructed, in which technicalism—a critical term commonly used to refer to instrumentalism—functions as the signifier placed outside the chain of meanings (Laclau, 1990), favouring circumstances under which other discourses begin disputing and reconfiguring themselves in opposition to this discursive practice.

Notions like reflection and autonomy (Schön, 2000) strengthen the human and rational dimensions of individuals as subjects. Both principles—reflection and autonomy—promote sliding meanings in the historical-cultural matrix, serving well the pedagogical conceptions that are opposed to technicalism. They are elements that operate spectrally in the discourses of practice, supporting the link reflection-autonomy, associated with the idea that “the greater the reflection, the greater the capacity for autonomization” (Alarcão, 1996, p. 177).

These processes take place through displacements and condensations of the key signifiers in each discursive chain. Alarcão (1996, p. 177) associates reflection-autonomization with Freire’s concept of praxis, arguing that this is the sense that attributes “awareness as a base element of a questioning attitude”. For the author, there is a formative and pragmatic dimension supported by the notion of reflection. Teachers, when reflecting on the grounds that lead them to act, as well as while acting in a certain way, are in charge of their own formation, thereby contemplating and acting on their own autonomy. This reflection on action subsidizes teachers’ practice in other situations, and tends to be incorporated into their teaching.

This discourse of reflexivity is also based on the establishment of cause and effect relationships, determining certain aspects as the grounds upon which the teacher will act. In this case, the first grounding aspect is the reflective essence of the human being in which reflexivity is based on universal ideas that attribute a certain first condition to human beings: “I think, therefore I am”. This Cartesian rationality seems to be subsumed in notion of the reflective teacher, reaffirming the dissociation between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*. With respect to the idea of autonomy, this carries implications such as, for example, *freedom*, *acting on your own*, and *detaching yourself from the other*. Associated with one another, these meanings tend to reiterate causality positions: each indicates a grounding in which the first order is reflection/reason, and from which other characteristics are derived.

As the centrality of this primary ground gains prominence, it exposes an incompatibility with reflective teacher discourse. This discourse weakens and loses its force in the face of technicalism. To assume non-rationality as antagonism could be something unthinkable in the reflexivity discourse. However, this relationship is presented as a universal principle. It promotes the formation of a hierarchy and relegates the idea of *praxis* to a secondary position. In short, theory and practice become

inseparable via the radicalization of the relational dimension. One must wonder how this condition would hold up under the affirmation that there is a first principle.

The antagonism which stabilized the discourse of the reflective teacher involves the rejection of technicality in the field of teacher education, and affirms, at the same time, the autonomy of teaching and the rational/intentional character of teaching work. This discursive articulation (Laclau, 1990; 1996) to an extent carries the senses of reflective teachers for strengthening the discourses on teacher professionalization. Another facet of this discourse that connects pragmatism with reflection emerges via teaching knowledge—that is, the exaltation of teaching knowledge (Tardif, 2002)—with the teaching role as central in the production of knowledge of the practice.

Both Schön and Tardif value teachers' work knowledge and their knowledge within the scope of teaching duties, situating these forms of knowledge either as a result of the reflective condition (Schön) or as emerging from teachers' knowledge production (Tardif). For both of them, only teachers are capable of these unique ways of knowing. In addition, Tardif (2002), using the expression “mobilization of knowledge”, promotes meanings around the construction and valuation of knowledge in various dimensions that are not limited only to so-called cognitive knowledge.

The various forms of teaching knowledge do not fit into the logic of transmission of previously established knowledge (Tardif, 2002). Teaching knowledge focuses on differentiated knowledge, to which teachers also relate in different ways. It is a plural knowledge, consisting of several dimensions, including those of professional, disciplinary, experiential, and curricular knowledge.

This discourse advocates the idea that knowledge is a constitutive element of the teaching practice. Thus, the ideal teacher is considered to be one who dominates the scientific knowledge in the educational and pedagogical fields, and who is also capable of developing practical knowledge as a result of his or her own experience (Tardif, 2002, p. 39).

Tardif does not ignore the fact that the teacher occupies a devalued position. However, he emphatically affirms how strategic teaching is. The discourses of teacher professionalization rely on several different aspects: These include teacher devaluation, de-professionalization, emancipation, teacher formation deficits, and the semi-professional condition (Brzezinski, 2008; Freitas, 2002; Oliveira, 2010; Scheibe, 2002). From

the point of view of teaching knowledge, in turn, the teacher gains a prominent position. It is only the teacher (and not the expert, or the government) who can take into account all the other knowledge in dispute, exercise the professional condition of human interaction, and construct/produce knowledge from this practice (Tardif, 2002).

On the other hand, Tardif notes that teachers often incorporate knowledge from professional, disciplinary, and curriculum training without due legitimacy in their teaching practice. In this case, they assume the position of transmitters of knowledge. This removes the teacher from the role of knowledge producer, as well as from the condition of being a professional with a legitimate role in society.

This relationship of externality with curricular and disciplinary knowledge tends to favour the discursive chain of teacher instrumentality. This externality also occurs in relation to professional knowledge that establishes a subordinate relationship with universities and/or university education professionals (actors considered legitimate producers of such knowledge). Tardif emphasizes that the legitimacy of teaching knowledge arises from an emphasis on practice and a focus on experience, as well as on the creation of the supposed curriculum as real (objective, determined, transparent). Recognition of the knowledge of teaching experience often results from this instrumental articulation.

One of the effects of this stance is the dissociation between practice and policy: the presumption that there are a space/time which is possible to implement knowledge produced in other contexts, like universities. These effects negatively impact teaching professionals, because they weaken the teacher's authority and legitimacy with respect to other knowledge fields. On the other hand, it can increase their perceived valuation via framing the practice as a privileged locus of teaching.

This discourse of the teacher who produces knowledge enters the teaching professionalization debate by strengthening the teacher as an active protagonist, capable of confronting the logic of the expert who removes the possibility of exercising this prominent position. In addition, we contend that, within such a discourse, the teacher—focused on teaching—gains centrality, broadening the discursive valuation practices for thinking/acting, traditions, and values as important aspects of understanding this duty.

Given the understanding that there are several educational elements that also inform the teaching profession, a dominant discourse in ANFOPE, for example, involves understanding the practice of teaching

not only in the classroom, but also in the production of teaching knowledge inserted into a broader context.

Therefore, ANFOPE operates by reiterating “the need for a socio-historical conception of the educator”, asserting that “teaching is the basis of their professional identity”. When accessing ANFOPE texts regarding teacher professionalization, it is possible to interpret the idea of “teaching as the basis of professional identity” as stressing what is understood to be professionalization. It brings in another element that not only refers to the epistemological dimension (the nature of knowledge), but tends to aggregate meanings from the social and policy dimensions. Reinstatements, reiterations, and remarks are carried out vis-à-vis these meanings (Derrida, 2006), contributing to the construction of teachers’ professional identities as based on teaching, a discursive practice that asserts itself in the field as indispensable for the status of the teaching professional.

The Teacher as Agent for Social Change

The discourse of the teacher as an agent for change, in contrast to others that advocate the maintenance of teachers’ policy neutrality (i.e. certain academic and instrumental perspectives), advocates that teachers always embody policy positions, whether explicitly or implicitly. This position is defended as conducive to the development of the critical spirit of the social actors involved in this process. Above and beyond exposing policy positions, there is a conception of the world, the school, and a way of understanding the subject—the emancipated subject—that is widely diffused, both in pedagogical discourse and, more specifically, in the field of teacher education.

Garcia (2001) relates critical pedagogy to the constitution of modes of subjectivation in discussing the emancipated subject of critical pedagogies: “the redemption and salvation of self and humanity, by the liberating power of reason and of action (of human agency)” adhere to those pedagogical principles recognized as “revolutionary, socio-historical, historical-critical, critical-social pedagogy of content, which liberate awareness, autonomy, and hope...” (Garcia, 2001, p. 41).

Facets of these pedagogies—recognized as critical—are found spectrally in the discourse consolidated around the signifier “teacher as an agent for change”. Signifiers such as reflection, rational, autonomous, and humanity shift through various discursive formations, and forge ways of being for

subjects. They entail processes of subjectivation that constitute discursive disputes around what is proposed for the teaching profession.

Freire's notion of *praxis*, in which our "own theoretical discourse, necessary for critical reflection, has to be so concrete that it is almost confused with practice" (Freire, 1997, p. 39), is of particular impact. By conceiving of a praxis that encompasses both reflection and action, Freire points out the indissociability of theory and practice and criticizes those models of education that base themselves on verticalized and hierarchical relationships among social actors. For him, critical reflection is the grounds for the unveiling of reality, for all knowledge of the material conditions of existence, and for awareness of disputing forces. This all serves as impetus for self-reflection, along with reflecting on the world and on the transformation of society. To become a political subject, one must acquire awareness of the world and mobilize oneself in its transformation; for teachers, that entails making the field of education a fighting-rink for political action, wagering that acquiring critical awareness has a transformational, liberating, and emancipating effect on other subjects.

Still exploring discourses from a critical perspective, we investigated other ways of signifying the teacher as an agent for change, with an aim towards highlighting the extent to which this is a heterogeneous problem, besides being hegemonic in the field. In a more specific study of the field of teacher education and teaching work—a recurring agenda in Brazil in the movement for return to democracy in the 1980s—, discourses link the teacher with the strategic (unnecessary) role of an agent for change (Shiroma & Evangelista, 2003; Weber, 2003). Shiroma and Evangelista (2007) point out that in the 1990s, however, the teacher is framed as both a protagonist and an obstacle to reform, given a scenario of educational reform that has little to do with actual education issues and much more with the search for a new governability of public education.

We highlight differentiated discursive practices and the contingencies that act in the subjectivation of the social actors. In the 1980s, in a scenario in which Brazil was returning to democracy, it was possible to discuss agency in the teaching profession. In the 1990s, with ongoing curriculum reforms and under the emergence/consolidation of neoliberal projects, teachers were potential creators of obstacles, since other facets of the profession had gained centrality with the "excessive emphasis on what happens in the classroom, to the detriment of the school as a whole" (Freitas, 2002, p. 141).

The expressions that appear to inform critical pedagogies, emerging with greater or lesser force at various moments, are comprised of dislocations/condensations of terms that convey meanings for the signifiers *reason* and *engagement*. Together, they reverberate with other possibilities for discursive practices given by contextual contingencies. In the expression “teacher as an agent for change”, critical thinking is employed as a condition for the transformation of society. The “critical” signifier blocks such meanings as agreement, stability, continuity, accommodation. Affirming this critical character strengthens meanings that draw something from their former place (without value judgements). Critique translates into “transformation” in a Brazilian political scenario in which the movement to return to democracy wagers the teacher as the grounding (and strategic) social agent in the face of the strong demand for the universalization of elementary education.

The discourse of the teacher as an agent for change was created with the rejection of the traditional teacher profile, in which the teaching function is identified as a model of humanist, rationalist, and liberating schools of thought (Nóvoa, 1991; 1992; 1995). This traditional vision maintained a separation between schools and teachers, on the one hand, and the policy field, on the other. The influence in Brazil of correspondence theorists (such as Althusser and Bourdieu) has led to questions about the safeguarded position of the teacher—notably, his/her apolitical character and his/her capacity to contribute to society through his/her work. At the same time, this questioning also produced a certain reification of this position, favouring the consolidation of the idea of the teacher as a mere agent of the State, since it also implied an understanding that teaching—as a mission performed by a public official—involved a certain representation of the social/society. This entire dynamic mobilizes a series of reconfigurations in the field of teacher education that oscillates between exaltation of the teacher as a hero, capable of transforming his/her surrounding society and even the world, and teacher disqualification through the responsibility of this professional to merely reproduce oppressive relationships (consciously or otherwise). These forms of teacher subjectivation in Western society tend to lend value to myths around teacher identities: the vocational teacher, the technical teacher, the teaching professional, the reflective teacher, the teacher as an agent of change, etc. In the argument that we defend throughout this work, these forms of being a teacher lose their stable “places” when defining positions are questioned.

*Skills and Abilities: Promoting Know-How in Doing, Being
and Learning*

Just as in other parts of the world (Labaree, 1992; Popkewitz, 2013; Ropé, 2011; Ropé & Tanguy, 1997), a competencies discourse has reverberated both in curricular reforms and in educational thinking in Brazil. Competency is a quality that can be possessed by an individual and which entails the ability to appreciate and solve certain problems. This is a common-sense meaning as well as being one that resonates widely in educational discourses: “the ability to mobilize a set of cognitive resources such as knowledge, skills and information to resolve a number of situations pertinently and efficiently” (Ropé, 2011, p. 722). In addition, “competencies are considered unstable properties that must always be submitted to objectification and validation inside and outside work, opposing the qualification assessed by the diploma in this aspect, a title given once and forever” (p. 722).

Meanings of competencies are translated-betrayed (Derrida, 2007) in the discursive practices being enacted among different social/educational actors in Brazil, as well as from the institutions involved in large-scale assessments that have grown in recent decades in various levels of education. Teachers are urged to demonstrate their performance through continued training and assessment, with the notion of competencies as guarantor of these practices. As already widely discussed (Jones & Moore, 1993; Müller, 1998; Taubman, 2009), this interpretation may be connected to behavioural theories and instrumental approaches. In this manner, the links between the market and schooling are also updated and reinforced via discourses that circulate in the social imagination, as well as among teachers in general.

Dissonant voices regarding the relevance of this concept emerge in certain pedagogical discourses that are considered more progressive, in response to a wider articulation of academic, government, and non-government sectors, as well as multilateral development bodies and private institutions that overestimate the notion of competencies. Nevertheless, within the scope of discourses around teacher professionalization, this notion is reiterated due to a certain consensus with respect to the need to implant an organized set of knowledge, know-how, and attitudes, which make it possible to expand the number of tasks to be performed, reduce resources in a use relationship, and produce a certain vision of education as a commodity.

In some specialized Brazilian literature (Brzezinski, 2008; Freitas, 2002; Libâneo & Pimenta, 1999; Scheibe, 2002; Shiroma & Evangelista, 2003), this discourse has been framed as exerting a strong private-interest influence on the public system and acting in new policy networks (Ball, 2012). On the other hand, private agencies like UNESCO, defend their positions, stating that the notion of competencies responds to a concrete demand in the educational field and offers practices that seek social justice and quality of education (Brazil/MEC, 2017; Freitas, 2011).

We contend that meaning-stabilization processes operate in a discursive chain that produces emptying, in order to condense around a name (a concept, a practice, a discourse) that names nothing. There is no first essence or ground capable of clarifying or determining the paths to be followed a priori. However, this does not mean that any meaning is possible or desirable. The possibility of building such condensations depends on the game of disputing forces and of the character of the contingencies that present themselves in a given situation.

Many theorists argue that a focus on competencies is in tune with stances that oppose the defence of content—especially vis-à-vis school subjects—and thus consider competence theories to be “modern and progressive” because they share this antagonism. By assuming that content is associated with rational education (or, as Freire calls it, “banking education”), they block and antagonize this pedagogical practice, allowing competency to present itself as another educational concept.

We consider it important not to lose the dimension from which dislocations in meanings are being operated. Competencies move away from the pedagogies considered transformative/progressive when they lend value to instrumental rationality. As examples, we affirm that *the discourse of the reflective professor*, *the discourse of teaching knowledge*, and *the discourse of the teacher as an agent for change* expel the defence of instrumental rationality from their discursive chains and are stabilized via this antagonism. In the case of competencies, there is a redefinition of the idea that, more than knowing (accumulating) content, citizens must have “know-how”, operating (in a complex manner) with content, with schemes, to reconfigure the habitus in order to efficiently attend to social and economic productivity, reaffirming instrumental logic. The content is redefined, but continues to carry meaning in the discursive formation of competencies. The idea of the accumulation/transmission of content is rejected, while a utilitarian relationship is valued and considered instrumental in working with such content.

This discursive chain has been operating as a mobilizer for teacher professionalization, taken in its most instrumental meaning. Traces of this perspective are remitted to the professional teacher as “effectiveness” and “efficiency”. The terms “professional” and “competence” indicate success, objectivity, science, effectiveness, socially legitimized knowledge, and competitiveness; and these meanings, although not theoretically required, are the ones that mobilize, in general, certain discursive practices related to expressions around “competency” and “professionalism”.

In the dispute for meaning, curricular documents are urged to provide answers to critiques of the notion of competencies, probably in response to the militancy of several educational entities that join many others that question and denounce aspects of such documents, such as the close links between private and public that influence their development and implementation.

CONCLUSIONS: CONTROLLING THE TEACHER PROFESSIONALIZATION DEBATE

Dissemination and the discursive constitution of the subject challenge the possibilities of control, and they haunt the discourses of teacher professionalization (Bartholomew, 1998). If we are constituted in that change all the time, it is necessary to question whether some form of controlling logic is possible, such as that which teacher professionalization tries to establish.

Bringing teacher professionalization and competency discourses together strengthens conceptions that it is possible to transport meanings from one side to the other, through instrumental rationality and based on an assumption of the transparent character of language. On the other hand, we understand that the discourses of the *reflective teacher* and of *teaching knowledge*, as well as the discourses of the *teacher as an agent for social change* establish (contextually) an antagonistic division that rejects instrumental rationality, as well as the centrality of predefined methods, disconnected from the act of teaching—even if they are also permeated by other canonical logics of modernity such as determinism and objectivism, for example. As such, we consider that the discourses of *reflexivity*, *teaching knowledge*, and *the teacher as an agent for social change* bring performance traces to teacher professionalization. This invariably reconfigures the established connection with control logic that, in this case, strengthens the conception of the teacher who exercises professionalism in

his/her work, from the pragmatic effects resulting from his/her singular reflection/action. Autonomy, emancipation, human interaction, and the reflection-action pair have access to this discursive field. To some extent, these discourses further strengthen the idiosyncrasy of teacher action.

The idea of a *reflective teacher* who constitutes *teaching knowledge*—both aspects being affiliated with the epistemology of practice—makes up the discursive field of teacher professionalization in a movement of successive approximations, giving the sense that it is possible to anticipate, foresee, and control formative processes in order to produce the ideal teacher. These are methods of teacher subjectivation that control, and are also controlled by, the regulatory processes of teaching. As well argued by Perryman et al. (2017), and supported by Foucault, the discourse that subjectivates the teacher as a truly reflective practitioner is also a form of regulation associated with self-improvement, self-reflection, and the subtle persuasions of governmentality.

We consider it a lost fight: meanings are fluid, incessantly shifting; in the same movement in which they are instituted, they are already changing; they are contingent, provisional, and precarious. Therefore, we operate with the idea of the “impossibility” of teacher formation, society, or indeed of any project, being defined before political negotiation (Lopes & Borges, 2015). However, this does not mean that there is nothing to do or that nothing can be done. To the contrary, strengthening formation/training processes that involve disputes over meanings, knowing that these meanings will be contingently set, can be a productive path for curricular policies for teacher education.

What is clear, in concluding, is that other possibilities emerge with each shift/condensation of meanings. This means that, furthermore, and given the impossibility of achieving any final resolution, dispute remains permanently on the horizon.

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Curriculum Design in the Anthropocene: Challenges to Human Intentionality

Lucinda McKnight

INTRODUCTION: TROUBLING CURRICULUM DESIGN AND THE DESIGNER

One of the key curriculum dilemmas for the Anthropocene is the way that the status of the designer has been disrupted by new materialist and posthumanist thought. Theories around curriculum design have been predicated on the notion of the designer as, for example, scientific maker (Bobbitt, 1918/2017), rational planner (Popham, 1997) or reflexive conversationalist (Pinar, 2011). Yet this figure is generally implied, rather than described, and has received little specific theoretical attention. If the humanist project of education, emerging from the Enlightenment, has been predicated on the Cartesian binary and the devaluing of women, black and brown people, children, animals, plants and matter itself (Shah-jahan, 2011), what exists beyond plans for the making of better humans? New materialism and posthumanism suggest that these “others” are

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schooled by curriculum into inferiority, even as they are exhorted to become more like the idealised white, able-bodied adult male.

Traditional curriculum theorists from John Franklin Bobbitt to Grant Wiggins have described what needs to be fixed in education, via a linear, scientific and largely masculinist form of curriculum intervention by a supreme and controlling human designer. This deterministic, God-like figure imagines and creates future human (and humanist) subjects. Means-end approaches, scope and sequence charts, outcomes, objectives, learning intentions, audits, inventories, benchmarks, measurements, assessment-focused planning templates, standardised testing and deficit models of students are the tools for enacting this particular curricular vision.

Yet recent theory upends all this in novel ways, for example by proposing that machines might write curriculum (Braidotti, 2013), or that the voices of animals should be as important in curriculum as those of humans (Snaza & Weaver, 2015) or that soil should be the ground for all curriculum planning (McKnight, 2018b). If human intentionality is complicated by other agencies, the designer as rhetor (Kress, 2010), or independent, all-powerful political actor, becomes a problematic figure. Political aims that may be imagined to be achieved through curriculum design become more like fictions of control or illusory linear destinations. Instead, linear planning for desired outcomes potentially becomes merely part of a more complex curricular assemblage, as curriculum is again reconceptualised.

This chapter explores the history of this figure of the curriculum designer, and also outlines developments in thought that have particular relevance for curriculum inquiry's capacity to challenge human dominance; focusing on Rosi Braidotti's (2013) work on defining the posthuman, and Karen Barad's (2007) belief that humans can meet the material universe halfway. This articulation of fields serves as a primer for those new to the material turn and suggests, for all readers, ways that this thinking can inform the theory and practice of curriculum design, to move beyond an apparent impasse, or inability to "think" the designer in posthuman or new materialist terms. The question of whether and how this figure can survive becomes a curriculum dilemma for the times.

Curriculum design is here understood to take place in government through policy writing, in companies creating classroom programmes and materials, and above all in educational institutions, in the work of teachers

and (sometimes) students. Yet each of these apparently easily defined locations is still just a part of the complex web of interactions (or rather, intra-actions) coalescing as curriculum. This is much more complicated than the linear categories of formal (official), enacted (teacher-executed) and received (student-experienced) curriculum (Applebee, 1996, p. 68) with which many curriculum studies scholars are familiar; instead, new materialism and posthumanism call these seemingly straightforward categories into question via feminist orientations that trouble linearity and reception theory.

A FEMINIST CRITIQUE

This chapter's attempt to complicate curriculum is conceived as feminist work, bringing gender as cultural organiser (Harding, 1986) to the fore. Much of the material turn in philosophy is similarly feminist, particularly in its desire to expose and challenge binary thinking that invariably privileges what is culturally inscribed as masculine, white and able-bodied. Such binaries include lecturer/student, university/home, science/art, human/animal, person/thing, discourse/matter, rationality/emotion, curriculum/pedagogy and nature/culture; the part of each binary perceived as inferior is invariably what is considered as more 'feminine'. Despite the important achievements of feminist education scholars such as Maxine Greene, Madeleine Grumet, Patti Lather and Janet Miller, the contemporary field of curriculum studies is largely dominated by theory and theorists who have not considered gender to be a vital part of the curriculum conversation. These are the experts that we study in our core curriculum units at my university, from John Dewey to John Hattie, especially in relation to the specific work of planning for teaching.

Elsewhere, I have argued that the edifice of neoliberal education is founded on a masculinist paradigm of linearity, metrics, rationality and the abjectification of the feminine, particularly realised in the pursuit of 'hard data' (McKnight, 2016a; McKnight & Whitburn, 2018). Versions of this argument have been made before (Grumet, 1988; Francis, 2001; Connell, 2013). Yet today, vitriol awaits those who attempt to make this case or to highlight this binary. The discrete, bounded, powerful figure of the master/designer is resilient and central to conceptualising the design process.

Alternative readings of ‘designer’ and ‘designed’ are destabilising and confronting for those committed to education as behaviourist impact, inputs and outputs. Other readings challenge definitions of students as performative data to be mined, processed and tabled for the benefit of systems and politicians. In Australia, normative understandings of curriculum simply as ‘what works’ inform plans for a new national institute of evidence-based education. This institute will ensure that planning for teaching is based on randomised controlled trials, above all else (Productivity Commission, 2016), in a triumph for scientism and the privileging of a narrow version of positivist science over the wealth of qualitative research that has long informed educational policy and practice.

Ironically, the figure of the teacher designer is also under threat, not only from the radical ideas of posthumanist and new materialism, and their privileging of non-human agencies, but also, and importantly, from conservative neo-Taylorist regimes that seek to separate design and production and also to teacher-proof materials. These regimes desire to standardise practice in the name of quality. Such threats, aligned with corporate and technological interests, attempt to remove the teacher from the equation through log-on learning via purchased programmes. To understand the origins of these threats is to better understand their appeal, and their trajectory from the factory and the production line into the classroom. The fiction of the rationalist, scientific designer is used to justify the elimination of the teacher from learning, and potentially to prepare populations for large scale online learning. Troubling this figure is urgent work, especially considering his (and I use this pronoun deliberately, as the language used throughout the history of curriculum studies has largely been masculinist) resilience despite twentieth-century attempts to oust him from the driver’s seat, particularly by the reconceptualists from the 1970s onwards. The following section gives a fuller account of this figure in history, to better understand his enduring appeal, and also his limitations.

THE DESIGNER’S TRAJECTORY IN CURRICULUM STUDIES

The supreme rationality of curriculum design, understood as enacting the linear thrust of human intentionality, is a twentieth-century phenomenon. In parallel with the development of management in industry, the process

of formulating objectives for learning based on idealised adult capacities was originally touted as ‘scientific’ and efficient. Yet finding where children fall short of adults is a deficit model, grounded in the othering of children, and of the feminised realm beyond the rationality of positivist science. Just as ‘scientific’ management has despoiled the earth (Carson, 1962; Shiva, 1993), such management of education may have squandered human potential by merely slotting students into an existing order (Flinders & Thornton, 2017b, p. 3), one that is profoundly (hu)man-centric.

Curriculum’s history regularly revisits debates around linearity. Through John Franklin Bobbitt and beyond, curriculum scholars can trace a Gradgrindian obsession with hard facts known and delivered, just as “an age of science is demanding exactness and particularity” (Bobbitt, 1918/2017, p.12) predicated on the needs of men and pursuing pre-determined objectives that must be “numerous, definite and particularised” (Bobbitt, 1918/2017, p. 13). Yet the early decades of the twentieth century also produced alternative scholars such as John Dewey and Maria Montessori, whose theories might now be linked to posthuman and new materialist thought. These theorists’ notions of freedom and sociality in education, though humanist, broaden the field by recognising multiple actors in complex relationships as constituting education. Dewey’s concept that animals, vegetables and soil should not be treated as mere objects (described in Tanner, 1991/2017, p. 43) could even be considered a precursor to recognising the materialist vitality of matter (Bennett, 2010).

Ralph Tyler (1949) reinstates the means-end model which remains dominant in curriculum design today, at least in Australia, via Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) as a curriculum planning tool. It is conveniently little remembered, however, that Tyler also values and esteems intuition in teachers, a less rational but also powerful capacity. Elliot Eisner challenges objectives as a starting place and critiques scientific notions of ‘what works’, preferring instead a concept of dynamic rationality that is interactive rather than mechanistic (Flinders & Thornton, 2017a, p. 70). He calls for the celebration of the unpredictable and the surprising (Eisner, 1967/2017, p. 131) in education; notions of dynamism, experimentation and interactivity foreshadow new materialist agencies and concepts such as *intra-action* (Barad, 2007), which describes the ways that entities call each other into being, rather than being understood as pre-existing.

Jerome Bruner (2017, p. 100) describes curriculum as “man’s urge to explain”, and considers education to be driven by notions of contest: “man vs higher primates, man vs prehistoric man, contemporary technological man vs...” (Bruner, 2017, p. 110). This combative, competitive and masculinist version of curriculum has been repeatedly reinscribed by regimes that seek to ‘deliver’ curriculum, surely the ultimate version of ‘mansplaining’, in which teachers and students who bring their own knowledges and experiences to the learning encounter are simply told what to think by policy-makers. The flawed development of Australia’s national curriculum, with its superficial add-on Indigenous perspectives (Lowe & Yunkaporta, 2013), is a classic example of ‘whitemansplaining’.

Walker’s naturalistic model of curriculum development describes objectives as merely diversions or appendices, including them in what might be understood as a kind of assemblage, yet blunting their purported or desired trajectories. This anticipates the way that new materialism and posthumanism follow on from and incorporate humanism (Bennett, 2010), rather than rejecting it entirely. Occasions when curriculum has been understood as a set of relations embodied in the materials-in-use (Flinders & Thornton, 2017a, p. 138), when curriculum is perceived as relational, not necessarily pre-determined by the master/designer or limited to his plans, allow for dialogue with the new material turn.

The 1980s was the period in which these occasions were most frequent. Reconceptualist curriculum scholars such as William Pinar, Maxine Greene and Madeleine Grumet, while generally speaking proudly humanist, argue, as does Paulo Freire, that curriculum cannot be pre-made. This assertion became part of an explosion of diverse critique, drawing on gender and race theory, that itself led to the backlash starting in the 1990s and expanding into the first decades of the twenty-first century, when audit and accountability cultures continue to rule. Under neoliberal regimes, pre-determined objectives, rigour, measurement and rationalisation take the curriculum scholar directly back to the Enlightenment (Eisner, 2001/2017, p. 315), and to early twentieth-century curriculum initiatives. We have come full circle, and back to the all powerful and controlling figure of the (traditional) curriculum designer.

Why then is this resilient figure again under threat? ‘He’ has survived the attacks of decades of opponents. Yet curriculum theory has started to become attuned to ecology, even though climate crisis denial is prevalent even among the leaders of Western nations. Planetary imperatives mean that curriculum understood as (white) man’s desire to manage and

explain is increasingly bankrupt. His role as custodian of planetary wisdom is exposed as a delusion, as the planet faces mass distinctions and the upheaval created by human impact. So how can curriculum scholars draw from the seeds in the historical imagination of curriculum theory, as I have described above, to create new conditions for the cross-fertilisation of ideas with the material turn? This project might start with immersion in recent philosophy, commencing with Rosi Braidotti and Karen Barad.

STRATEGIC READING IN POSTHUMANISM AND NEW MATERIALISM

Moving Beyond Humanism: Rosi Braidotti

If the imagined ideal man who writes curriculum to reproduce himself is understood to be Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian man, then Braidotti dismantles him convincingly in *The Posthuman* (2013). Rather than culture (man) humanising nature (children, women, diverse races) in his image, Braidotti proposes a non-dualistic understanding of *nature-culture* (2013, p. 3). What could this mean? Curriculum that posits animals as just as important as humans (Snaza & Weaver, 2015)? Curriculum that can be led by children, or at least negotiated with them, as Garth Boomer (1992) proposes? Diverse and multicultural understandings of curriculum as spiral, circle, wheel, web or tangle?

Exploring these options is fraught, however, whether in education or other areas of academia. Anti-intellectualism, the tyranny of common sense, the denigration of theory that accompanies rising populism and the pursuit of profit and self-interest (Braidotti, 2013, p. 4), combine to ridicule other ways of knowing and being. Braidotti laments that data mining has become the norm in research (a familiar refrain in schools), and also regrets the “zombified landscape of repetition without difference and lingering melancholia” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 6) that has followed the explosion of critical thinking in the 1970s and 1980s. She argues that humanity's goal should be to ‘rethink our interaction with both human and non-human agents on a planetary scale’ (Braidotti, 2013, p. 6), which could also serve as a remit for all curriculum. Rather than proposing to abandon social constructivism, she wants to develop a “posthuman humanity” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 11) that is active, creative and critical, and recognises social, ethical and discursive subject formation.

A key chapter in Braidotti's book, titled 'Posthuman: Life beyond the Self', provides provocative questions for education. Curriculum scholars might ask what curriculum is, beyond the replication of the white, middle-class, able-bodied man self, beyond Protagorus, beyond rational progress towards human perfectibility. Could curriculum scholars replace the unitary subject of humanism with "a more complex and relational subject framed by embodiment, sexuality, affectivity, empathy and desire as core qualities" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 26)? Yet even progressive curriculum theorists have themselves been enamoured of this humanist subject.

Curriculum scholarship has long been intrigued by the way that curriculum as textual artefact can be complicated by story, for example in Connelly and Clandinin's (1988) exploration of teachers' curriculum planning narratives. Curriculum as story is a theme that has recurred as a riposte to means-end dictates, for example in the work of Arthur Applebee, Douglas Barnes, Elliot Eisner and William Pinar. Poststructuralism suggests, however, that these narratives are not as stable or coherent as they may seem (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007).

Flowing from this and further complicating these challenges to straightforward story, posthumanism would accept that an assemblage of both human and non-human actors makes decisions; the curricular imagination, and the curriculum story, encompass more than just human life trajectories and passions. New tools for thinking curriculum are needed to push this further in the field, tools that support Braidotti's desire for an ethical sense of inter-connectedness between self and others, including the 'earth' other (Braidotti, 2013, p. 49). She calls, for example, for the removal of self-centred individualism. Can curriculum scholars then aspire to a theory and practice of curriculum composition that instead "locates the subject in the flow of relations with others" (p. 49)? Is it possible to reconfigure the word 'accountability', so representative of neoliberal education, to be based on "collectivity, relationality and community building", as Braidotti (2013, p. 49) hopes, rather than testing and surveillance?

Braidotti (2013, p. 55) writes of the need to hear author George Eliot's roar of existence, and to recognise the human as in flux, and in the process of becoming animal, becoming machine and becoming earth (Braidotti, 2013, p. 67). What could this mean for curriculum inquiry? Hearing the roar of existence, in all its multitudinous din, relates closely to the desire for *attunement* (Pinar, 2011). In curriculum theory, this could mean knowing that the *taptap* of the designer's fingertips on the

keyboard, sequencing and refining a lesson plan, is just a tiny part of what is going on. This designer's agency will encounter multiple other agencies in the phenomena of teaching and learning. In subject English, this could mean studying texts not as pawns to authorial voice, but as relay points 'between different moments in space and time' (Braidotti, 2013, p. 166), between multiple voices. Authorial intention becomes merely one part of an assemblage that includes a cross-species and material heteroglossia. This is relevant both to literature studied in classrooms, and to the work of curriculum designers.

It is possible to move beyond the linear, while not denouncing the line. Curriculum can be about moving outwards, not just moving forwards. Lines inevitably form webs of encounters with ideas, others, texts and things; they are not idealised as always single, or always straight. This echoes the distinction between intended and enacted curriculum already central to curriculum inquiry, and hence is not so very radical. Yet reading new materialist and posthumanist theory does give rise to questions that feel radical.

What if the linear temporality of 'intended' and 'enacted' is rejected? What would a curriculum constituted out of multi-species and material relationality be like? What is a trans-corporeal curriculum? How could curriculum foreground the materiality of human and non-human bodies, rather than existing in the discursive abstract? What is a curriculum enmeshed with the natural world? Scholars are already taking up these questions, positing "permeable learning" (McKnight, 2018b), a "post-carbon curriculum" (Morgan, 2018) and even textbooks in a range of disciplines that teach "as if the planet matters" (Matthewman, 2018). All those working in this area, however, need to resist the pull back to Vitruvian man as saviour and custodian, and the impetus just to reinstate him as a better manager of learning in the future. The extent of the planetary crisis that he has overseen precludes this as an option.

Meeting the Universe Halfway: Karen Barad

Karen Barad's work offers further questions for reconceptualising intentionality in curriculum inquiry. She writes about intentionality as "attributable to a complex network of human and non-human agents, including historically specific sets of material conditions that exceed the traditional notion of the individual" (Barad, 2007, p. 23). Intent becomes "an entangled state of agencies" (Barad, 2007, p. 23); a linear humanist

curriculum that takes for granted what needs to be ‘covered’ allows anthropocentrist and representationalist assumptions to foreclose what education might be.

Two further key concepts of her work have particular relevance for curriculum. Firstly, within her “agential realism”, the representational work of curriculum design would not be a depiction of what awaits, but itself the “condensation of multiple practices” (Barad, 2007, p. 49) of entanglement. For Barad, entities do not pre-exist, but are produced through intra-action with each other. The discursive is still present, forming through intra-action, but is not privileged over the material. Her call to meet the universe halfway is a direct challenge to those who want to stand back and view the world from a discursive distance, rather than through direct material encounters.

Cause and effect themselves emerge through intra-action, rather than as what can be pre-identified and pre-planned. Sam Sellar has begun to take steps in this direction, describing pedagogy as an “inherently relational, emergent and non-linear process that is unpredictable and unknowable in advance” (Sellar, 2009, p. 351). For Barad, object and subject cannot be determined prior, giving rise to her need to substitute diffraction for reflection; rather than a linear looking back, she posits a movement through the narrows, setting off ripples in multiple directions. These ideas are deeply unsettling for curriculum, pedagogy and reflective practice, when these three concepts are reduced to: (1) what is to be taught, (2) how it is to be taught and (3) how it can be done better next time, by the reflective practitioner (Schon, 1991). This figure of the all-knowing (hu)man, who perceives truths through retrospective visions of a separate and distant past, has already been troubled and challenged (McKnight, 2016b).

What if curriculum inquiry could instead constitute the investigation of “the iterative production of boundaries” (Barad, p. 93), including those between human and non-human, and the reasons for their repetition and maintenance? What if curriculum inquiry was about tracing the interference patterns on our bodies (Donna Haraway, cited in Barad, 2007, p. 94) created by multiple agencies during the process of design? How can curriculum inquiry recognise cyborgian forms of agency, in the age of artificial intelligence and machine learning? The challenge here, too, as Braidotti would say, is to conceptualise these not as other, but as becoming-us, as humans merge with the digital technologies that construct identity through data, or are even implanted in human bodies;

pacemakers and hearts, for example, form, or assume their meaning, as they come together to make a life force.

REVITALISED CURRICULUM SCHOLARSHIP: FURTHER LINKS

Tackling binaries and boundaries, this new curriculum scholarship is therefore a continuation of, and in dialogue with, certain traditions of curriculum inquiry, especially those of progressive and reconceptualist streams. The material turn invites the kind of writing sensibility in curriculum inquiry that already been proposed (Green, 2018, p. 3), an imaginative and speculative engagement with what could be. This has been the goal of much of my own work, too, including imagining public pedagogy through agential encounters in a public swimming pool (McKnight, 2016b), or complicating a girls' afterschool science club held in a shed (McKnight, 2018b). These projects have highlighted the multiple actors in these spaces that coalesce as 'curriculum'.

The kinds of thinking described above fit with Green's call for curriculum to be rethought as a *concept* (Green, 2018, p. 3), even as scholars continue to engage explicitly with the discipline's theory and history (p. 6). There are key places where his recent writing on curriculum articulates with new materialist and posthumanist thought. For example, he calls for taking account of representation differently, for attending to complexity, and for a more ethical orientation (p. 36). In new materialist or posthumanist thinking, representation, and the creation of plans, models and theories, become part of more complex assemblages, rather than dominant reflections of the 'real' anthropocentric world. In Barad's paradigm, they are produced through intra-action, not by the sole efforts of pre-existing humans. She also reconceptualises ethics as part of *ethico-onto-epistem-ology*, intimately siting ethics as integral to theories of being and knowing; this is an exciting prospect for curriculum work, and a way to move beyond representational epistemologies' separation of knower and world (Green, 2018, p. 34).

The field could reconfigure Green's (2005, p. 10) pedagogical imagination—"the imagination of otherness"—to incorporate multiple human and non-human others. Green's elucidation of Garth Boomer's work, also, provides ways into the material turn; education as unfinishable project, and the privileging of the encounter at the centre of teaching

are concepts readily relatable to intra-action and assemblage. Similarly, Maxine Greene’s “wide awakesness” (Henderson, Hutchinson, & Newman, 1998), aligning with desires for greater “attunement” (Pinar, 2011, p. 190) in curriculum thinking, gestures towards Braidotti’s attention to the roar of existence. Grumet’s “poor curriculum” (1976) is another generative complication of curriculum, as are various iterations of *currevere* (Pinar, 2011), especially those with feminist or literary influences; all open doors for the material turn.

What if scholars could take curriculum theory—in particular, curriculum as conversation (Applebee, 1996; Barnes, 1992; Pinar, 2011), with its previously humanist limitations—and expand this to encompass multiple, distributed agencies and bodies, all calling each other into being as they ‘speak’? This is utterly antithetical to curriculum as a defined and sequenced mass of pre-existing information selected for insertion into students’ heads. It also opposes romantic versions of teaching as autobiographical, as teachers ‘thread’ (Pinar, 2011, p. 6) subjectivity through subject matter, exposing such thinking as a humanist fiction of mastery and control. Emphasis on the hero teacher, a figure realised through reflexivity and self-criticism (Pinar, 2011, p. 9), becomes deeply problematic. Yet the material turn would not reject these things entirely, positing them instead as forming in entanglements with other kinds of agency. Applebee’s interest in what matters (in Pinar, 2011, p. 194) foreshadows posthumanist and new materialist interest in what matters, and in particular, how matter matters.

Curriculum inquiry, then, could be about improvisation, about experiment and experience, in how to become attuned to what matters, not just for humans, but for the planet. Again, I want to emphasise that this is not to throw out the human or deny human agency. Critics of posthumanism and new materialism all too readily assume this, and dismiss the turn accordingly. It can be challenging to think with this recent theory. What kinds of thinking, writing, working and noticing will give rise to the ambitious new conceptualisations of curriculum that the questions in this chapter propose? How will these conceptualisations be materially expressed and explored?

CURRICULUM INQUIRY FOR THE ANTHROPOCENE: A POEM

In this final section, I provide an example of this kind of thinking and writing about a particular unit of work, a Teamwork unit I designed

and taught within my university's Associate-Degree pathway programme. Instead of merely reflecting on my experiences, I seek to diffract them, by reading them through Barad. Rather than asking 'what worked' about my teaching, I ask instead what is being produced, what is happening, what is forming, not only 'back then', but now, as I recreate the encounters that characterised this unit. Instead of asking how I planned, what I intended, and whether that came to pass, I experiment with trying to describe how the entanglement of entities distributes impact beyond human intentionality.

'Design' is not only the lesson planning I ostensibly do prior to my seminars, but also the work I am doing here, by defining an encounter that takes place over and over with each of my memories and iterations of it. I don't just 'apply' theory to achieve realisation of a curricular event, but call theory into being. In line with this thinking, I start in the middle, not with pre-determined outcomes. With this writerly approach, I push the encounter through the narrows of my writing, as well, not reflecting on what happened, but doing the happening, *actually* happening, now, as I write, and now for the reader: now is iterative too.

I have been using poetry (or perhaps it has been using me) for some years now, to explore the potential of new materialist and posthumanist thinking for curriculum inquiry (see for example McKnight, 2016b, 2018a, b). Barad herself has recently announced that she is turning to poetry to further her thinking. This is writing as inquiry (St. Pierre, 2008), not writing to report research results, but writing to re-assert that "imagination is at the heart of learning" (Boomer, cited in Green, 2005, p. 10), even if we also re-imagine that heart itself as always forming, with the nutrients of consumed animals and plants, with the stairs that make it pound, or the emotions that cause it to skip a beat. This poem flattens my lesson plans, my PowerPoint slides and my teacher self into a landscape in which the architecture of the building, the layout of the room and the bodies of the students are just as important as my goals, and inevitably complicate them.

TEAMWORK

1
Concrete pillars, three in all,
off-centred,
uphold my lofty goals,

my learning outcomes, criteria,
 dot-points, proof.
 Agents bind
 sand, aggregate, cement
 around the steel rods of my will,
 bear the load
 of the slab above.

And I, lanyard woman,
 have made my piece
 with Tuckman and Jensen,
 Belsin's Team Model
 and even Myers-Briggs. Their names
 flicker onscreen through the bright dust.
 Just another day
 in the limestone quarries.

In the audience, students
 tilt their phone-lit faces
 down. 8am. Metal sky. Somewhere, the architect
 yawns, roundly, hits snooze.
 While we all, tables, desks, chairs,
 pillars, shoes, tonsils,
 coins, cells, souls, pursue
 our box-cut classroom destinies.

2
 As always, he is late.
 The pillar fronts him, tasks him.
 Left. No chairs.
 Right. He veers, sits
 in the flank of the L, alone.
 The wall faces him, brown-brick,
 brutalist gloom. Exposed.
 Not me, though. I must
 lean around the pillar,
 speak to his temple. His cheek.
 His shoulder-arm. If I move to find
 his eye... Ow, these desks.

Their corners lock
 in vertebral clanks, or catch
 a hip. Industrial
 chic. Industrial cheap.
 They are too heavy to move
 from their rows and doctrines.
 So he cannot join
 the flock.
 By tenure you have lost
 the tug of war.

Teamwork.
 So he sits, the one black student,
 while the busy white teams ignore
 the recalcitrant, the always
 late. Why does he
 even bother?
 Sigh. I must engineer a way, shoehorn
 him in, and expect his thanks
 for that.

Rain spatters the windows
 with white noise
 and I stand back
 behind the lectern, where
 the mike picks up
 my voice, where
 I am a sidekick to the screen, where
 I must squint and glare, perform
 my clickclick tricks
 on the carpet stage.

3

Wish there was time to refine
 this lecture's mustard acrylic. I am all
 the bitterness I pretend. Lick
 my teamwork scars. Then,
 at the end, he

is waiting there. *Miss, I am from
Somalia but I live in
[insert outer suburb]. It takes me
Two and a half hours to get here.
The buses don't start in time. So
that's why.*

Welcome to infrastructure
soup, where his words
and mine
combine with timetable numbers, 7.23,
public transport budgets, percentages, twenty-first
century skills, badges, consensus and
cement, mixed in with
weighted average marks to shore up
load-bearing capacity
or bring it down. Concrete, so they say,
is the most destructive material
on earth.

In writing this poem, I work through how classroom entities are constructed through each other, and how the student I judge and find wanting, always late and conveniently hiding behind a pillar, is created through a complex material-discursive assemblage. This assemblage is both political and physical, incorporating refugee policy, tertiary funding, public transport systems, and multiple bodies such as humans and tables, as well as physical matter such as concrete and air. The writing flattens an arrogant, linear curriculum narrative into an environment that is much richer and more lively than just a backdrop to human action. My planned learning intentions for the teamwork lecture cannot be achieved by this student, not through recalcitrance, but because there is much more in the mix than my intent, or even his. The ‘others’ of my beginning are not the ‘others’ of my ending. This writing allows small gestures towards understanding the designer as “a more complex and relational subject” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 26), combining critique with creativity (p. 11), and called into being in multiple ways and instances by assemblages as they form.

CONCLUSION: BACK FROM THE BRINK OF THE UNTHINKABLE

I have sought to demonstrate here that curriculum has not become unthinkable, and that the figure of the designer endures, although now as part of, and produced by, diverse agencies within assemblages. Posthumanism and new materialism, and their feminist rejection of binaries and Cartesian, humanist logic, are not so alien to curriculum inquiry, *if* curriculum itself can be reconceptualised. Bodies matter. Feelings and affect matter. Things matter. Processes of attunement, and of writing around curriculum that enact the always-becoming, can be understood as an evolution of curriculum theory. This development may be useful in combating scientism, positivism, the worship of data cults and gurus and the demotion of teachers to technicians (Pinar, 2011). To address and undermine the dualisms of Cartesian thinking, including those dividing masculine/feminine, and nature/culture, Haraway (1991, p.181) has argued that we need a “powerful infidel heteroglossia”. Yet in the early twenty-first century, this call seems to operate via another binary, that of West/East, and new language is needed, language that does not enact hierarchies based on binaries.

Boomer’s rejection of curriculum as noun (in Green, 2005, p. 8) and Grumet’s rejection of curriculum as discrete artefact (1976, p. 71) alike celebrate a dynamism that is also found in new materialist and posthumanist thinking, although it is no longer confined to the human, and the social world. If Applebee’s conversational domains (Applebee, 1996, p. 37) could be expanded to include the voice of the earth, if his relatedness (Applebee, 1996, p. 55) in effective curriculum might include more than humans, then here are concepts that have not exhausted their usefulness for a more dynamic, inclusive curriculum scholarship. This project of articulation and expansion, however, is time-consuming and involves extensive reading of theory. Braidotti and Barad are generative places to start, if this time is available.

How can all of this be useful for teachers, as practical scholars in classrooms, for schools and for systems? It defies narrow definitions of learning as progress on external tests, such as those delivered by Australia’s national testing regime, NAPLAN. It brings curriculum up to date with planetary imperatives, beyond the flawed notion of better custodianship, and foregrounds how humanist fictions have allowed us to sleepwalk into climate crisis.

If my poem assists even one principal to contemplate an alternative to concrete, such as straw or bamboo, in construction of a new school wing, or helps a teacher to decide not to inter the earth under a concrete slab for a home extension, this thinking is doing good work. If one teacher suspends judgement of a student, having read this chapter, and considers the complex discursive-material relationships at work to produce classroom subjectivities, then this writing has achieved something. My curriculum planning work has broadened; now when working with students who often travel from more distant suburbs, I request later lecture times. I also request rooms with lighter tables that can easily be moved and joined, to resist the ways power relationships can become inscribed by furniture. I do not assume that my curricular goals will be met simply by following a plan, and starring in, or delivering, my own humanist lecture. This chapter serves merely as an introduction, and hopefully an enticement, to explore and experiment with the feminist orientations of new materialism and posthumanism, and to consider what they have to offer curriculum inquiry. The figure of the designer does not need to be relinquished, but instead understood differently, and relationally, in a much more complex and vibrant world than that imagined by humanism.

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From the Fossil Curriculum to the Post-Carbon Curriculum: Histories and Dilemmas

John Morgan

As Timothy Mitchell (2011, p. 231) writes:

We are entering the declining decades of the fossil-fuel era, that brief episode of human time when coal miners and oil workers moved an extraordinary quantity of energy, buried underground in coal seams and hydrocarbon traps to the surface, where engines, boilers, blast furnaces and turbines burned it at an ever-increasing rate, providing the mechanical force that made possible modern industrial life, the megalopolis and the suburb, industrialized agriculture, the chemically transformed world of synthetic materials, electrical power and communications global trade, military-run empires, and the opportunity for more democratic forms of politics.

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“Yet”, he continues, “even as the passing of this strange episode comes into view we are unable to abandon the unusual practice to which it gave rise: ways of living and thinking that treat nature as an infinite resource” (Mitchell, 2011, p. 231). His assessment of how the fossil-fuel era gave rise to “ways of living and thinking that treat nature as an infinite resource” should give educators and students of curriculum pause to think. While oil is not about to run out (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013), there is growing understanding and awareness of how the fossil-fuel era has taken stores of carbon that were once stored into the ground and dispersed it into the atmosphere. The ‘enhanced greenhouse effect’ (once a quaint artifact of school geography lessons) is now recognised as threatening a climate catastrophe.

In terms of education, there are signs that these developments are finally being recognised. From the early days when ‘Environmental Education’ was the province of self-styled ‘green’ teachers possessed of a new age mentality, there has been a growing acceptance of the concept of Education for Sustainable Development and Education for Sustainability, and more recently there have been calls for climate-change education and Anthropocene Education.

Starting from Mitchell’s observation, the first task of this chapter is to speculate about how the fossil-fuel era gave rise to a ‘fossil curriculum’. I explore the idea that many of the assumptions about ways to live and think that characterised the fossil-fuel era were reflected in what was considered important to teach about and for students to learn in formal schooling. The apotheosis of the fossil curriculum was reached in the three decades after 1945, a period that Anthropocenists (those who seek to delimit and date the Anthropocene—see Lewis & Maslin, 2018) call “The Great Acceleration”. It was at this point, as advanced capitalist societies were most confident about their capacity to provide continued economic growth and hence prosperity for their populations, that models of curriculum planning were most clearly divorced from their grounding in ecological and material processes—the curriculum, it seemed, could float free from nature. It was in this period that students in schools were likely to be taught about the capacity of humans to control and manage nature. Ironically, this was happening just as there was an awakening of an ‘environmental consciousness’ and a realisation of the limits to growth.

That checking of faith in progress as the costs of development and economic growth became evident gave rise to “the adjectival curriculum” (Dufour, 1990), a loose collection of ‘studies’ (e.g. Development Studies,

World Studies, Global Studies, Peace Studies) and ‘educations’ (e.g. Environmental Education, Development Education, Peace Education) that critiqued the subjects that comprised the fossil or carbon curriculum.

Although at no point did the “adjectival curriculum” threaten dominant conceptions of the curriculum, which were based on the twin tenets of liberal humanism and preparation for the world of work, it represented an important set of resources for thinking through the challenges of a post-carbon society. A key tension in the ‘adjectival studies’ curriculum centred on the distinction between ‘red’ and ‘green’ perspectives, and between eco-socialist and ‘green economy’ versions of the transition to a sustainable society. At the root of these distinctions are very different conceptions of the relationship between ‘society’ and ‘nature’, which have quite profound implications for answering the key curriculum question: What is to be taught to students?

The final section of the chapter then focuses on the contemporary discussion about nature and society and sets this up in terms of the distinction between recent developments in Marxist studies that stress the importance of distinguishing between society and nature, insisting that they be analyzed separately, and more constructionist versions that stress how society and nature are entangled. I use the example of urban studies to point to the curriculum implications of these different perspectives. All in all, the chapter aims to provide a provisional mapping of debates about the development of a post-carbon curriculum, and one that I hope will lead to further study and argument.

THE GROWTH OF THE FOSSIL CURRICULUM

Mass modern school systems, borne out of the twin processes of industrialisation and urbanisation, assumed the availability of energy derived from fossil fuels. Realising this adds a material (ecological) dimension to widely accepted accounts of the rise of mass schooling.

In the eighteenth century, Britain, like the rest of Europe, had an organic economy in which the limits of agricultural land and forests formed a strong constraint on economic growth. By the middle ages, parts of Europe were facing a fuel crisis, their forests were decimated and they were short of wood. One solution to the fuel crisis was to dig and burn coal buried at or near the surface, which, as fossilised sunlight, provided larger amounts of energy per unit of mass. While this worked to an extent, it was not until the invention of the steam engine in 1784 that

the amount of coal per unit of power could be significantly reduced, and from this point, the “fossil economy” was established: “an economy of self-sustaining growth predicated on the growing consumption of fossil fuels” (Malm, 2014, p. 11).

At first the rate of adoption of steam power was slow. Malm shows that, a century after Watt’s invention, steam-powered cotton mills only just outnumbered water-driven mills. The factor that eventually led mill owners to convert to steam power was its potential to enable control over the labour force. Water-driven mills required rivers and waterfalls, which were usually found in rural areas where labour was sparse and unreliable, and therefore costly. The shift to towns and cities meant that owners could have access to large numbers of workers who were used to factory work, and where there existed a large reserve of unemployed workers. Thus it seems the main reason mill owners sought to locate in cities and towns was to take advantage of supplies of cheap and more easily disciplined labour.

This account adds a dimension to accounts of the growth of modern school systems. State-sponsored mass education in Britain was established with the 1870 Education Act in response to the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation, just as mill owners were looking to locate in large cities. Authorities were concerned with how to regulate morally the presence of a large and potentially unruly working-class, and how to prepare people for their future lives as workers. Schooling offered a means to ‘gentle the masses’. The curriculum and the subjects that were taught were, therefore, forged in the context of the growth of ‘fossil capitalism’. As the cognitive component of schooling increased, the curriculum was codified. School subjects reflected both the world views of the cultural elites, and also the assumptions about how the world operated as societies underwent the shift from ‘traditional’ (agrarian) to ‘modern’ (industrial). This is not to claim that the ‘design’ of the curriculum consciously reflected the emerging energy-regime; rather, it is to note that the subjects that made up the curriculum came to assume that the energy-regime based around the extraction of fossil fuel was a common-place reality.

In order to harness and utilise natural resources, it was necessary to know about how things worked and where things were. For example, Geology was central to the discovery of coal reserves, which relied upon the establishment of stratigraphy and the visualisation of the geological strata in William Smith’s famous geological map of Britain (1815). The Geological Society of London received its Royal Charter in 1825.

Other natural sciences such as Chemistry and Physics had obvious links to the growth of an industrial society. Think of the periodic table of the elements, which allowed for the isolation of properties essential to understanding their potential uses in everyday life and industry. The natural sciences of Physics, Chemistry and Biology were all part of the development of a scientific world-view that provided the basis for the making of the modern world. “Seeing like a state” required the separation of nature and society, so that ‘Nature’ came to be seen as a resource that is ‘out there’, ready for human use and appropriation (Scott, 1998). This separation provided the basis for the intellectual division of labour between the natural and social sciences.

Although the social sciences emerged in the transformation from agrarian to carbon-based industrial societies, they tended to take nature for granted (Urry, 2010). Thus, the social sciences set out to describe and explain the institutions of societies based upon industries that relied upon the release of fossil energy, but paid little attention to the energy regimes that enabled their continued existence. For example, Economics placed to one side as ‘externalities’—questions about the natural resources and systems upon which the capitalism it seeks to describe and explain relied. The same is true for the so-called ‘English subjects’, which were established towards the end of the nineteenth century (Doyle, 1989). Thus, historians largely ignored questions of the environment, assuming a teleological view of progress associated with humanity’s ability to colonise and utilise nature tended to focus on achievements such as increasing agricultural production, draining wetlands, building cities and harnessing the power of water. These Promethean tasks pointed to the power of humanity to control and dominate the natural world. Similarly, Geography was also concerned with narrating the story of conquest and colonisation, providing a division of the world’s people into more or less developed and examining the resources available for economic progress. Finally, the literary and artistic culture that thrived in the past 150 years has rested on carbon-based economic growth. The classic English novels of the Victorian period described the complex shifts in social relations as society underwent the great shift to industrial organisation, and the romantic sensibility that recorded objections to the despoliation of the natural world by industry (and, more generally, the accoutrements of modernity) was a counter-reaction to these events.

These few examples suggest that, from the inception of mass schooling, the *content* of the curriculum was reflective of the era of fossil capitalism.

It tended to stress ‘man’s achievements’ and ability to assert control over nature. The following section shows how, in the period since 1945, in the context of rapid economic and social change, the school curriculum became even more closely geared to the carbon-based society.

THE GREAT ACCELERATION

By now, we are familiar with graphs which show the rise of carbon emissions from around 1750, the onset of the Industrial Revolution. This is seen as eventually leading to rising global average temperatures, as observed by Charles Keeling in 1966. By the late 1980s, there was a recognition of the role of so-called ‘greenhouse gases’ in the establishment of an ‘enhanced greenhouse effect’. Most recently, these events have been associated with the concept of the Anthropocene, a term proposed by Nobel Prize-winning scientist Paul Crutzen in 2000. The Anthropocene describes a new period (epoch, era, or period) in which human actions overshadow the Earth’s natural processes and therefore define the age. Among Anthropocene scientists, there is heated argument about the dating of the Anthropocene. For some it is 1780. For others it is 1610, or 1492, or further back. More recently, Anthropocenists have argued that it is the years since 1945 as truly transformative. After this date, on a wide array of graphs plotting outputs, there are dramatic spurts of growth. This has become known as “The Great Acceleration” (Steffen, Broadgate, Deutsch, Gaffney, & Ludwig, 2015). It is the most advanced or fully developed stage of fossil capitalism (Angus, 2016).¹ From the middle of the twentieth century, human action became the most important factor governing biochemical cycles. To give some headlines: The years since 1945 accounted for 75% of the human-caused increase in atmospheric carbon; the number of motor cars increased from 40 to 850 million; the human population tripled and the number of city dwellers increased from 700 million to 3.7 billion.

This dramatic transformation required the extraction and consumption of fossil fuels, most notably the change from (solid) coal to (liquefied) oil and gas. In terms of the global energy mix, coal outstripped biomass to become the world’s primary fuel by about 1890. King Coal dominated for the next 70 years, until it was replaced by oil in around 1960. Since then,

¹The following paragraphs summarising aspects of the Great Acceleration are based on McNeill and Engelke (2015).

natural gas has come to represent around one-quarter of total energy consumption by 2013. By 1960 most of the world outside of North America and Europe used little energy. However, since then China has increased its energy use 16 times, India by 11 times and Egypt by 10 or 11. In the same period, the United States' energy use has increased by around 40%. In 2010 China surpassed the United States to become the world's largest consumer of energy. Global population tripled from 2.3 to 7.2 billion between 1945 and 2015, an annual growth rate of around 1%—an extraordinary achievement in historical terms.

After 1945 the application of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in agricultural production allowed for the intensification and the growth of large industrial-sized farms. It transformed the social structure of rural areas, and prompted the migration of subsistence and peasant farmers from the countryside to towns and cities. Agricultural intensification was accomplished through the transformation of forests and the drainage of wetlands to increase the area of land under production. Linked to this were major changes in the use of ecosystems. Global deforestation continued apace, especially in the tropical rainforests of the equatorial zones. The transformation of forests into agricultural grasslands and the intensification of agriculture enabled the development of a global food system on an industrial scale. Such developments were underpinned by a dramatic change in the global economy. The years since 1945 saw the rise of the consumer society. There were important shifts, with rural to urban migration and the growth of large cities that fuelled rapid economic development in the newly industrialising economies. These economic processes were complicated by the ideological struggle over the Cold War, which saw the industrialisation of the formerly agricultural-based Soviet Union and China.

These are some of the momentous changes that have occurred in the past 70 years. It is no exaggeration to say that we live in a 'glurbanized' world (an ugly neologism for an ugly process)—a world that has evolved complex ways of living, working and playing that, although ultimately reliant on nature and the resources it provides, is able to function without direct acknowledgement and reference to these (Dalby, 2009). It is hardly coincidence that this period also gave rise to the global revolution in education—to what has been called the schooled society (Baker, 2014). After 1945, more and more of the world's population experienced the culture of education, based on ideas of scientific rationalisation and bureaucratic organisation. This was geared to producing

a more educated citizenry. The rise of curriculum studies as a field can be understood as an example of the type of thinking associated with the post-industrial society. It is common to date the rise of the curriculum development movement to the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik in 1957, and this was part of a wider attempt to improve the quality of education. Rational curriculum planning—with its objectives and outputs—was part of the move to increase efficiency, underpinned by the insights of developmental psychology; the state-sponsored Science and Mathematics curriculum development projects of the 1960s were a direct response to calls for more scientists to improve competitiveness (Spring, 1976). The modernisation of the curriculum was based on assumption of continued growth of an industrial society underpinned by extraction of resources and energy. This continues even today. For example, the field of Educational Effectiveness Research has recently stated its faith that its models can be applied to schools to take in ecological concerns and improve sustainability (Clarke, 2012). However, as the next section argues, as the costs of the industrial society became more apparent, a series of curriculum critiques emerged that argued for a greening of the school curriculum.

THE GREENING OF THE CURRICULUM

As the 'long boom' of the post-war years came to an end, Western societies saw the rise of the global environmental movement, which was focused on the costs of economic growth and development. From the 1960s the costs of the affluent society were becoming clear. As Boris Frankel wrote in 1987:

In the past 20 years there has been a significant growth in movements, parties, journals and individual campaigns focusing on humane alternatives to the ugly reality of impersonal bureaucracies, exploitation of Third World peoples, the arms race, dangerous new technology, unsafe products, irrational health, education and transport systems, economic growth which destroys the environment, and agribusiness profits in a world of starvation. (pp. 6–7)

Important publications and landmarks in this process include Rachel Carson's (1962) *Silent Spring*, which drew attention to the ecological impact of pesticide use on wildlife, and Barry Commoner's (1972) *The Closing Circle*, which popularised a series of ecological laws. These were

accompanied by the development—from the mid-1960s—of Ecology as a science that sought to integrate perspectives from the traditional sciences (Haila & Levins, 1992). The first Earth Day was held in 1970, followed by The Stockholm Conference in 1972. The ‘founding texts’ of the modern environmental movement included E.F. Schumacher’s *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if the Planet Mattered*, the Ecologist Magazine’s *Blueprint for Survival*, Garrett Hardin’s *The Tragedy of the Commons* and the Club of Rome’s 1971 report *The Limits to Growth*.

The educational corollary of these developments was the emergence of a series of ‘adjectival studies’ which challenged the authority of existing curriculum subjects (Dufour, 1990). These new subjects—Peace Studies, Global Education, Development Education and Environmental Education, etc.—were part of a critique of existing school subjects, which were seen as rooted in the past, socially exclusive, and failing to engage with important issues that faced individuals and society (see Hicks, 1990). For example, the ‘Global Impact’ project at the Centre for Global Education at the University of York reached a stark conclusion about the damaging effects of the Western ‘mindset’:

In the West our understanding of the world has been largely shaped through science which, until this century, has sought to understand the world by dissecting it, bit by bit. But this approach leaves unanswered the question of how the parts interact to sustain life and evolve. A shift of perspective is now occurring in many disciplines towards a focus on whole systems instead of constituent parts. A system, whether it is a human family or a tropical rainforest, can only be understood by looking at the relationships between the individual elements; that is the constant flow of energy, matter or information throughout the system.

Inspired by publications such as Fritjof Capra’s (1982) *The Turning Point* and Marilyn Ferguson’s (1980) *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, in the late 1980s and early 1990s some teachers identified themselves as ‘Global Teachers’ and critique of the environmental consequences of growth filtered into the school curriculum. A sense of the (counter-)cultural space occupied by early Environmental Education can be gained from reading the collection of articles in *Teaching Green* (Randle, 1989), which offered a radical critique of schooling and located the alternatives in a radically different set of values. Randle listed the characteristics of ‘green teachers’ who: co-operate with and care for Earth; co-operate with and care for

each other; grow as independent, self-confident individuals; design and use technologies that support these aims; work at new ways of ‘doing politics’ and, take part in the spiritual transformation that underlies the ‘shifted paradigms’ (Randle, 1989, p. 54).

FROM GREEN TEACHING TO EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Randle’s list suggests that in the 1970s and through most of the 1980s, to be a ‘green teacher’ was to challenge the mainstream of educational theory and practice. The main arguments within these fields surrounded the issue of ‘red’ or ‘green’ environmentalism (Weston, 1983). Although there were many different approaches and strands to the social movements that underpinned the ‘adjectival studies’, they shared a disenchantment with industrial modernity, reflected in the claim that modern industrial societies had reached a critical point in their evolution. A combination of economic, ecological, political, social and cultural crises coalesced to necessitate a fundamental rethink of further societal development.

The counter-cultural nature of Environmental Education was largely lost as ‘green’ ideas were accepted and formed part of policies of environmental modernisation, which suggest that ‘business as usual’ can be maintained as long as this is accompanied by the ‘greening’ of organisations and institutions, and the adoption of green consumerism. For example, the late 1980s saw a ‘greening’ of Britain, symbolised by Prime Minister Thatcher’s address to the Royal Society in 1988, in which she laid claim to the Conservative Party being the ‘true’ conservationists. This was followed by the 1990 White Paper *Our Common Inheritance*, the first ever government White Paper on the environment, making use of the “green accounting” of the economist David Pearce to seek to put a monetary value on environmental assets. The Rio Earth Summit of 1992 spawned *Local Agenda 21*, which ensured that action could take place at the local level, and was supported by the 1994 *UK Sustainable Development Plan*, which provided an analysis of the environmental problems and a justification for action. By the mid-1990s there was a growing argument about the question of whether sustainable development was a suitable term or whether the term ‘sustainability’ captured more accurately the changes required to move towards a more ecologically stable society (Huckle & Sterling, 1996). The establishment of specialist journals—such as *Environmental Education Research* and *Journal for Education*

for Sustainable Development—along with initiatives such as the UN Decade for Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals (now the Sustainable Development Goals, signal a slow but steady ‘greening’ of the curriculum over the past four decades.

However, it is important to think about the different ways in which these ideas are being taken up in the educational literature, as environmental education has been marginal to the mainstream of educational studies and curriculum studies. Thus, Gottesman’s (2016) intellectual history of the critical turn in education contains no reference to environmental education. Furthermore, the way that critical studies in education moved from political economy to feminist poststructuralist accounts means that, in recent years, when the environment has come to educators’ attention, the default position has been to adopt a view of nature that seeks to break down distinctions between human and non-human actors. As the next part of this chapter suggests, this fault-line represents a major sticking-point in conceptualising curriculum studies of the environment.²

ENVIRONMENTAL WAVES

How might various perspectives in the literatures about society and nature be used to inform curriculum critique in an era characterised by post-carbon? First, it is important to identify shifts in the ways in which the relationship between society and nature have been conceptualised.

‘First wave’ environmental education took as its inspiration the work of writers such as Rachel Carson, Barry Commoner and E.F. Schumacher. This literature was largely concerned with providing a critique of industrialism—the large-scale systems of mass production, distribution and consumption that were generating environmental problems. Such first-wave environmentalism rejected socialism as an alternative on two counts. First, that actually existing socialist societies, such as China, the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, had poor records in terms of protecting the environment. Second, as a political ideology, Marxism was part of the problem, since, in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels seemed to praise the Promethean powers of the capitalist system.

²See Matthewman and Morgan (2013) for an early engagement with this project. They provide an account of the “post-carbon challenge” for various school subjects, focusing on English and Geography.

In the wake of this environmental awakening, a series of studies were published that explored the implications of environmental issues for socialist politics. For example, the French social theorist Andre Gorz argued that traditional Marxism, which had prophesied the development of the means of production to the point where there would be abundance, announced that growth-orientated capitalism was dead, and that growth-orientated socialism pointed to the past, rather than the future (Gorz, 1983). By the early 1980s, it was possible to talk of a ‘red-green’ debate in environmental politics; while the green perspective valued certain types of environment and pointed to the effects of heavy polluting industries, socialists argued that the effects of green policies would be to undermine workers and organised labour. Socialists, too, were closely linked to the incentive to expand production (SERA, 1980).³

Second-wave environmentalism developed from the late 1980s and was strongly taken up by human geographers, who stressed that nature (1) does not exist in a pristine form, outside of the imprint of human activity; and (2) cannot be represented without human frameworks of meaning (Croon, 1996). This “production of nature” perspective is represented by Neil Smith (1984), who made the distinction between “first nature” and “second nature”—that produced as capitalism created new landscapes and incorporated the physical world into its circuits and flows. As Braun and Castree (1998) remarked, “More than ever before, then, nature is something made”. Subsequently, and as Geography as a discipline took its place in the centre of the social scientific disciplines, it became common to signal the collapsing of the distinctions between categories, as in “social nature” (Castree & Braun, 2000), “societies environments ecologies”, “technonatures” or “natures cultures spaces”. These moves to deconstruct the binaries between society and nature chimed well with the notion of the social construction of knowledge, and thus the postmodern and poststructuralist turns, and have proved attractive to critical education scholars attempting to “make sense of nature” (Castree, 2015). As Malm (2019, p. 156) puts it:

³Useful summaries of the red-green debate can be found in Weston (1983) and Ryle (1988), and the educational implications of these arguments were explored by Pepper (1984) and Huckle (1985), although they had limited impact upon educational studies as a whole.

It is fashionable to argue that nature and society are obsolete categories. The two, we are told, can no longer be distinguished from one another; continuing loyalty to the ‘binary’ of the natural and the social blinds us to the logic of current ecological crises.

The fact that first-wave environmentalism was largely ignored by critical educators means that subsequent responses to the ecological crisis have been interpreted through the ‘deconstructive’ and ‘post-structural’ theories that dominate the field (see Gottesman, 2016). The idea that society and nature cannot be separated for analytical purposes has become a dominant position in social science and the post-humanities, and some educators working within the field have eagerly taken up these arguments.

A particular interest has been in the ‘more-than-human’ and the idea of relational ecologies. This developed out of the animal turn in geography (e.g. Wolch & Emel, 1998) and humanities (e.g. Baker, 2001). For example, geographer and early childhood educator Africa Taylor (2013) describes a pedagogical approach which draws upon ‘more-than-human’ perspectives in order to disrupt ideas about children and nature. Just as it is impossible to neatly separate nature from culture, so it is impossible to separate children’s lives from the worlds in which they live with a host of others, both human and more-than-human. She proposes the need for “common worlds pedagogies” which: (1) focus on relations of difference; (2) involve a relational ethics and (3) understand place as a “lively assembly of human and more than human others” (p. 123). This interest in the ‘posthuman’ is also evident in Lloro-Bidart’s (2015) calls for a political-ecology of education for/in the Anthropocene which seeks to challenge the educational humanism that has informed schooling, and Jickling, Blenkinsop, Timmerman, and De Danann Sitka-Sage (2018) call for “wild pedagogies” which aim to “re-examine relationships with places, landscapes, nature, more-than-human beings, and the wild. This requires rethinking the concepts wilderness, wildness, and freedom”. Educators are urged to “trouble the dominant versions of education that are enacted in powerful ways and that bend outcomes towards a human-centred and unecological status quo”.

Along with a focus on these nature-society ‘entanglements’, there is a growing interest in the significance of the fact that we are now entering the Anthropocene—and that geology, long regarded as the stable ‘bedrock’ on which human life has been based, must be understood as an active agent. Nigel Clark’s (2011) reminds us that if we extend our global

historical timescales, then the idea that nature is socially produced tends to fade.

Notwithstanding the significance of the fact that is geologists, rather than historians, who now claim to be able to offer the most convincing narratives about the Earth, for educators there is an undoubted appeal in an approach that emphasises the contingent, indeterminate and ambivalent aspects of ‘entangled worlds’, not least because it resonates with idea that children in both formal and informal educational settings are in the process of ‘becoming’. New theoretical perspectives such as ‘Object-Oriented Ontology’ (OOO), ‘cosmic pessimism’ and ‘speculative materialism’ propose new ways of thinking about issues from the perspectives of non-human forces, objects, factors, materialities and life forms. It is perhaps easy to understand why these ideas are taken up by educators in tertiary settings. They are cutting-edge, draw upon the latest theorists, and allow for new rounds of ‘language games’ which seem to designate something important. On the other hand, such writers have been accused of “dithering whilst the planet burns” (Hornborg, 2017). It is unclear, for instance, where post-human educational researcher Carol Taylor’s (2016) call for cacophonous educational research can take us in helping students to understand the nature of the environmental crisis, which, as we have increasingly seen, is very real. She calls for research as a “cacophonous ecology” marked by “enactments of the plunge: letting go, diving, freefall, surfing, swimming, waving and drowning” in order to “do away with the binaries that have held ‘man’ and ‘human’ so securely in place as a means to other everything/everyone else”.

A ‘third wave’ of environmental thought, to date little discussed in educational literature, focuses on the theory of the metabolic rift. Nature consists of biophysical processes and cycles. So does society. Human bodies must engage in metabolic exchanges with non-human nature. This is not necessarily a problem. However, over the course of history, the ways in which humans have organised this exchange has become ‘fractured’ and forcibly rearranged. This may be harmful: a metabolic rift has opened up. This comes from an insight in the third volume of Marx’s *Capital*, where Marx discusses capital’s tendency to violate or disregard these connections between humanity and nature. As Marx put it: “capitalist production turns towards the land only after its influence has exhausted it and after it has devastated its natural qualities”. This occurs, for example, in the removal of nutrients from soils or the pollution of water courses. The fact that production and consumption are now organised across the globe

means that the metabolic rift operates at a global scale, reflected in the existence of planetary boundaries, the limits of which are now being reached.

According to this perspective, nature and society are separate categories. Andreas Malm makes a distinction between what he terms “substance monism” and “property dualism”. This means that nature and society do share the same world. To give a common example, it is clear that urban and rural spaces (the city and the countryside) are part of the same world, though they are made up of different combinations of matter. This is substance monism. But this does not mean that they cannot be separated or distinguished between. There is property dualism. They are subject to (or caused by) different laws of motion. Thus there is a distinction to be made between ‘nature’ and ‘society’. They co-exist—indeed, they are made of the same substance—but they operate according to different logics. To understand how they operate as a whole, it is necessary to analyze them separately; to isolate their properties. The tree in a forest and a chain saw occupy the same space—a forest—but the chainsaw is capable of felling the tree. But to understand why a tree or forest is felled requires us to grasp the economic and social decisions that led to it.

The important point here is that the crisis of ecology cannot be understood without an understanding of the operations of capitalism. The metabolic rift between the economic system and the planetary ecology suggests the need for the abolition of that political economic system—capitalism—and its replacement with another—socialism (see Magdoff & Williams, 2017).

AN EXAMPLE: AUCKLAND

These different views of the relationship between nature and society have curriculum implications—that is, on what is to be taught and how knowledge is organised. Consider the city in which I am writing this chapter: Auckland, New Zealand. Auckland is New Zealand’s largest city, with around 1.5 million of the country’s 5 million inhabitants. It is located on a volcanic field (which at present is dormant, the last volcanic eruption occurring 600 years ago). It is built on an isthmus, and the city is extensive, with its spatial extent the same as Los Angeles. Waves of migration have come from Britain, along with Pacific Islanders from the 1970s, and after 1996 a more open policy so that the city is ethnically diverse, and growing rapidly. The city’s Council has pursued a

strategy to encourage innovation-led growth, which requires migration, without the concomitant investment in infrastructure. The effect of this is a rising housing market, which, along with asset-based welfare, means that housing is largely an investment. Two-fifths of the city's housing stock is made up of investment property, which raises house prices for first-time buyers who feel left out of the 'Kiwi-dream' of a quarter-acre lot, and which fuels suspicion of Chinese immigrants. The high-earning sectors of law, banking and finance, and accountancy mean that the city's income distribution is skewed, and there are shortages of workers in key public-sector industries. Coupled with this is an increase in residential density, and a strained transport system highly reliant on private cars. These pressures have an impact on urban ecosystems, with storm-water flows increasing through intensity of rainfall and stores reduced through concrete subdivisions, leading to suburban beaches declared unfit for bathing.

As a geographer, I am faced with the question of how I should teach about this city to my students. In doing so, I am mindful of a comment by the geographer Susan Smith that "the interpretation of urbanism is essentially a political rather than an ontological question" (p. 245). The study of 'the urban', she suggested, is "as much a contest of ideas as a quest for reality; as much a statement of how things ought to be as an account of how they are" (p. 245). Moreover, it is increasingly inconceivable to teach about cities without reference to ecological processes (Benton-Short & Short, 2008).

The urban age is welcomed by many expert and popular commentators, who see this as a species change—humanity is now predominantly an urban species: *Homo Urbanis*. At the level of regional government, Auckland has embraced the challenge of competing in a global economy to attract tourist dollars, the creative class and places in the rankings of 'Liveable Cities'. Indeed, the city's leaders host the latest 'gurus' of what has been called the new 'urbanology', including Edward Glaesner (*The Triumph of the City*), Leo Hollis (*Cities are Good for Us*) and of course, Richard Florida (*The Great Reset*). These 'city boosters' regard city growth as the outcome of a series of natural processes or market-driven processes of agglomeration. They line up to advise policy-makers on how they can 'nudge' their citizens to behave in different ways. The new urbanism, with its signature architecture and impressive design, takes sustenance from the Promethean urges that continue to make cities exciting and vibrant places.

Here then, is an approach to the city which focuses on the goals of economic growth and progress, and one which involves boosting GDP by whatever means necessary. The physical environment of the city—nature—is seen as a backdrop for these activities, which are recognised to have an impact on water resources (e.g. supply of water, quality of water, etc.) or on ecosystems (e.g. loss of tree cover as the city expands). These are all set within a paradigm of management of the impacts of society on the natural world, but this is treated quite uncritically, since it is assumed that growth (or at least ‘managed growth’) is good.

An alternative way to approach Auckland is to try to “see like a city” (Amin & Thrift, 2018). Rather than seek to take an overview of urban space, we are encouraged to take an ‘under view’. The focus is on the everyday or quotidian, the unremarkable, almost as if we are concerned with ‘the secret life of cities’. Here the challenge is to try to move away from grand narratives or over-arching models of urban processes towards a more grounded, local and partial approach.⁴ All of this is predicated on the fact that we can never really claim to *know* the city; at best, we can gain only partial access to it and that there are always other stories to tell. By focusing on objects and flows of materials in such an approach, it is possible to “avoid the traps of the humanist ontology”, which assumes that humans are the only actors that do anything of significance (Franklin, 2017). We might begin to think about Auckland as an urban space made up of complex entanglements of nature, technologies, flows of energy, human and non-human objects. To “see like a city” means to consider the complex entanglements of things (living and non-living) that make the city come to life. It would be to pay attention, for instance, to urban trees and what they make possible—what they are homes for, what processes they support, what meanings are attached to them by different groups in the city.

A third perspective comes from a view that sees Auckland as a complex unity, but one in which two different systems operate in very different ways. As geographer Harvey Franklin noted in 1978, “New Zealand’s geography displays the wholesale and exclusive impact of capitalism,

⁴A model can be found, for instance, in Pile and Thrift’s (2000) *City A-Z*, which takes the form of a compendium of short essays that focus on objects within the city, such as pigeons or buses, signposts. The editors make no attempt in these essays to provide an over-arching commentary or narrative; there is no one way in which to read an A-Z or guidebook.

its associated technologies and institutions” (p. 1). The environmental history of the city has been closely linked with the fluctuating fortunes of New Zealand capitalism. Until the 1939s, Auckland remained somewhat apart from mainstream New Zealand, which was dominated by grass-land monoculture. The 1930s saw the Depression and moves by the state to pursue an import substitution strategy that would reduce reliance on overseas trade, and boost domestic demand as well as countering unemployment. A sustained period of economic growth saw Auckland grow in both population and spatial extent, eating up formerly fertile farmland on the urban–rural fringe, and making the city reliant on food from elsewhere. Streams were diverted and culverted. By the mid-1970s, Auckland faced many of the same problems as other large urban centres, relating to transport, quality of housing and growing inequality. It was transformed by the effects of the ‘neoliberal experiment’ of the 1980s, as its leaders set about constructing its own city-myth, entailing its shift from a city of production to a city of consumption, and locating the city in a competitive race to attract investment and visitors. Its population has grown rapidly as New Zealand sought to solve its long-standing productivity problem by attracting new people. This has placed huge demands on Auckland’s physical environment. Its agricultural land has been replaced by suburban growth, and large dams have been constructed to supply the city with water.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has sought to make the argument that, as curriculum scholars, we should take seriously the fact that, for much of the twentieth century, our curriculum thinking has been underpinned by the assumption that our world will be based on an energy-regime based on fossil fuels—coal, oil and natural gas. The fact that we are faced with the transition to a post-carbon future will have profound implications for what is taught in schools, and how knowledge is organised (Matthewman & Morgan, 2013). One of the key arguments made here is that, from the 1970s at least, a body of work has emerged concerned with environmental education, and that this can help to reconfigure the curriculum (Morgan, 2019). However, it is important to note that there are intense arguments about how the relationship between society and nature are conceptualised, and these lead to very different views of a post-carbon

curriculum. Hopefully this chapter goes some way to prompting further work in this area.

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Afterword

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This provoking collection has both interrogated and advanced the field of curriculum inquiry. Framed by an international curriculum conference held in Melbourne, Australia (2018), yet looking further afield, the chapters taken together present a compelling argument for why questions about what counts as curriculum are fundamental to how we theorise, understand and engage with the purposes of education. But the book also does more, in its privileging of place and critical attention to the situated-ness of curriculum inquiry and practice. The importance of recognising the geo-politics of knowledge is both a well-known mantra and a statement that demands more substantial consideration than it is often accorded. This book speaks precisely to these matters through nuanced and insightful combinations of theorising and empirical research.

Two aspects in particular have grabbed my attention and these return to us to the opening reflections from the Editors: the underlying motif of the ‘international’ and questions of time and history, both of which also speak to the ‘situated-knowledge’ of the book.

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As the Editors observe, definitional and conceptual disputes characterise how processes of internationalisation and globalisation as well as cosmopolitan and transnational sensibilities are distinguished (or overlap) in curriculum research. While each has its own lineage and reference points, they all imply relationships beyond national, regional or local borders and bring these boundaries and layers of affiliation under scrutiny (McLeod, Sobe, & Seddon, 2018). To these longstanding debates, this book brings into sharp view decolonising agendas that unsettle and reframe what advocacy for either an international or transnational view onto curriculum might entail (see too López López, 2018). This is not only by attending to curriculum and theorising from the ‘south’ (as a corrective to the hegemony of the northern metropole) but by creating a space to examine the entangled histories of ‘north/south’, local/global and the cutting across histories and connected legacies of colonialism. In doing so, the book, and the conversations it builds from, invites a more hopeful sense of the possibilities of ‘being international’ than is usually evoked under the sign of either internationalisation or globalisation in education. These terms are frequently tethered to discussions of national or institutional ranking systems—e.g. PISA, university league tables, etc.—or the economics of education, such as capturing student markets, or to mobilities (of people, capital, ideas, policies). Even the language of policy borrowing, coined to describe the globalising movement of policy logics, seems couched in market hierarchies and suggests a reductive or thin sense of global connectivities.

Almost a century ago, interwar progressive education and experiential, child-centred curriculum flourished in the context of a cultural internationalism that prized intellectual cooperation among nations and optimistically looked to greater communication across borders, with hopes for better understanding between nations. The path to international peace was seen to lie in enhanced opportunities for cultural exchange and collaboration to enable a sense of shared values amid difference (Sluga & Clavin, 2016). While these hopes may seem too distant from the educational politics of today, this collection of essays nevertheless has set out new directions and hopes for curriculum inquiry in the current era of internationalism, re-asserting the multiple dimensions of curriculum—knowledge, identity, ethics—and its transformative aspirations.

The book addresses themes of curriculum history across various chapters and in its inviting introductory essay. But history intrudes in other ways too. There is inevitably a temporal lag between reflection and

writing, when ideas imagined in one time or the outcomes of completed research come to light in another time. For the most part, these time-lags tend to be papered over in much of our work, perhaps because shifts in time are subtle, or cumulative, or less noticeable as we are immersed in what feels like the continuous familiarity of the present. However, the nature of the time-travel between the conception of this book (coinciding with the conference which informs it) the writing and editing of papers and then the curating of the whole, has been dramatic. This is not because of the passage of time but because of the massive differences in times as a result of the (social, economic, political, affective educational...) disruptions caused by the still unfolding consequences of the COVID-19 global pandemic. This same time, mid-2020, has also seen the rise of the global Black Lives Matter movement and greater prominence of anti-racist and decolonial struggles. These events will continue to matter for education and for curriculum inquiry, and demand an historically attuned response. This book, with its thoughtful and powerful contributions, will become an essential interlocuter in these dialogues.

Books, 'like words, are not fictitious, or even simply material, objects'. They are, Burton and Hofmyer (2014, p. 9) continue, 'themselves material *agents*: path-makers for the circulation of ideas and discourses and, as such, makers of history in the bargain'. This book emerges at a critical time in world history and itself is poised to become an event, a 'maker of history', part of shaping the history of this educational present and our understandings of curriculum inquiry in a new transnational order.

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