Postcolonial Directions in Education

Volume 10 Issue 1, 2021

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L-Università ta' Malta
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This is an international journal published by the Faculty of Education, University of Malta

Postcolonial Directions in Education

Focus and Scope

Postcolonial Directions in Education is a peer reviewed open access journal produced twice a year. It is a scholarly journal intended to foster further understanding, advancement and reshaping of the field of postcolonial education. We welcome articles that contribute to advancing the field. As indicated in the Editorial for the inaugural issue, the purview of this journal is broad enough to encompass a variety of disciplinary approaches, including but not confined to the following: sociological, anthropological, historical and social psychological approaches. The areas embraced include anti-racist education, decolonizing education, critical multiculturalism, critical racism theory, direct colonial experiences in education and their legacies for present day educational structures and practice, educational experiences reflecting the culture and 'imagination' of empire, the impact of neoliberalism/globalisation/structural adjustment programmes on education, colonial curricula and subaltern alternatives, education and liberation movements, challenging hegemonic languages, the promotion of local literacies and linguistic diversity, neo-colonial education and identity construction, colonialism and the construction of patriarchy, canon and canonicity, Indigenous knowledges, supranational bodies and their educational frameworks, north-south and east-west relations in education, the politics of representation, unlearning colonial stereotypes, internal colonialism and education, cultural hybridity and learning in postcolonial contexts, education and the politics of dislocation, biographies / autobiographies reflecting the above themes, deconstruction of colonial narratives of civilization within educational contexts. Once again, the field cannot be exhausted.

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TALKING GLOBAL CRITICALITY

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
Columbia University
and
Noelani Arista
McGill University
Emily Apter
New York University
Luis Tapia-Mealla
Universidad Mayor de San Andrés
Moinak Biswas
Jadavpur University
Surya Parekh
Binghamton University
Hortense Spillers
Vanderbilt University

ABSTRACT: This paper presents excerpts from the 2021 session of a roundtable at the Modern Language Association, repeated for the last four years and connecting each year to the Presidential theme because of interest expressed by the upper administration of the MLA. In 2021, the roundtable focused on Davida Malo's *Moʻolelo Hawaiʻi*, the first text in written Hawaiian and on the Presidential theme of persistence. The introductory remarks frame the paper in terms of the persistent need for a humanities pedagogy which might teach the gendered realization that every generation needs to have the human affects of greed, fear, and violence undone.

Keywords: Translation, Global criticality, Imaginative activism, Nuclear weapons, Archipelagic

These remarks appear in *Postcolonial Directions in Education*.

A group of members of the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) – the authors of this piece – with some more added as the context changes each year, have been focusing on globality because, although the legacy and practice of colonialism is very much with us, the movement of capital is no longer siloed to nation-states and their colonial masters. We have been focusing on the contingency of education itself – the gendered realization that every generation needs to have greed, fear, and violence undone in order to transform the public world – by way of the counter-intuitive feeling of equality with those who do not resemble the "normal" or "developed." This is the persistent need for humanities pedagogy, not a goal to be achieved for moving on, for "the majority of [human beings] resent and always have resented the idea of equality with most of their fellow [beings]" (Du Bois, 2014). As with the last three years, the group's contextual focus will be the lack of fit between the specifically cultural capital of the metropolitan center and the anonymity of capital as such (commercial, industrial, financial, etc) in the global. How does our understanding of the task of humanities education – to persist in approaching the "other text" as globalization advances - affect the membership of the MLA, mostly literary critics and teachers in various languages – and beyond? We were able to bring someone from Bolivia (rather than a diasporic Bolivian) the last three years, and someone from India (rather than a diasporic Indian) the last two years, and this year a Hawaiian – neither native nor foreign. Please read everything that follows in that context – I am describing our latest attempt in this series.

This roundtable is a call. We are calling on ourselves to reconfigure the global. We are already globalized. Globalization carries with it the assurance of a *level* playing field. The ethical field, the ethico-political field, the ethico-politico-juridico-economic field, as we indefinitely expand the characteristics of this single field,

is seen to be seriously uneven, diversified by race, class, gender, language, idiom. Training into literary studies opens the imagination towards ethics because it teaches us to suspend ourselves and go into the text on its own terms. How do we develop "global criticality" when we are divided by different diachronies to achieve an apparent synchrony at the touch of a finger? When we have no historical background, no access to the specificity of language and no particular reason to expand our specialization with reference to the text we confront? We imagine this inevitably reconfigures the global. Persistence is important for us because this epistemological change – knowing ourselves as knowers of a different kind of object known – is not performed easily and does not last, unless persistently practiced, generation after generation. Therefore our call for *persistence* in reconfiguring the global.

In the last three years, our roundtable has discussed the work of René Mercado Zavaleta from Bolivia, the films of Ritwik Ghatak from India, and a written text in Sesotho by Sophonia Mofokeng.

This year, our text is *Mo'olelo Hawai'i*, the first written text in the previously oral language of Hawai'i, produced by Davida Malo, *formed* by the pre-colonial culture, Christianized, and then asked to report on his culture by the missionaries as part of a class exercise. This puts him in a classic double bind. Even behind this, as the critical editorial apparatus tells us that there is a spoken language previous to "systematization" by the missionaries that the editors had to tame. The untamed version stands behind what we read; although we are also told that the language of the healers can now be understood digitally.

Specific Reading of Davida Malo's *Mo'olelo Hawai'i*,\\ the first written text in the Hawai'ian language.

Spivak (Columbia University)

Malo was a busy man, on the cusp of what was going to be an unevenly complicit appropriation into the United States, that was not at the time generalizable, except in the line of separation between missionaries and "foreigners" buying land and naturalizing, as the Sandwich Islands changed from passing-through point to something else. We cannot force this into the already-existing models of colonial or imperial discourse.

Malo was a controversial man, an intelligence that has left an open text for us, repeating repeatedly that it is incomplete. His lists, orality organized like the Bible, are of flora and fauna, and every detail of human life, telling us, for example, that sexuality was not clamped into the missionary position until Christianization – I wish we had Foucault's ear – his lists remind us that we are moving from memory-writing to pen and paper writing as he comments on the tradition mis-remembered. This bilingual book also reminds us that all translation starts with the death of the text's phonetic body.

Noelani Arista speaks repeatedly of the labor that Malo had to undertake in order for this text to be produced – ending in the middle of an uneven genealogical record, falling short of a description of ritual male circumcision that reminds me of the way *Capital* III (Marx, 1993) ends in the middle of a discussion of class. Apparently the digital practice that saves intellectual labor will produce "meaning" out of traditional transcendental texts. Arista's powerful biography allows us to say that such "meanings" should certainly be recorded but with a strong textual reminder that this is meaning without a noema – a performance of the intellectual labor to "know," imperfectly, rather than with digital perfection. Malo's

entire textual position is a double bind. And, Gregory Bateson, who invented the phrase as we know it, writes – "all science is an attempt to cover with explanatory devices, and thereby to obscure -- the vast darkness of the subject."(Bateson, 1958: 280)

The text invites its own transgression through its detailed account of the performance of ritual and sport, the names of multitudinous gods, the clear indication that old objects were handmade and better, except for the new import Jehovah; perhaps because I am an atheist from within a secular polytheist upbringing. The Polynesian months, months of farming and sailing, are written within the Gregorian – Malo's text is a text of translation within its original language – culture itself as translation, as I have suggested elsewhere. Lilikala Kameileihiwa and some Hawaiian women took me under the barbed wire to service Tutu Pele's magma laden vagina with little bottles of Jack Daniel's saved from airplanes and I spoke of Kali, so let me misread: "'o Pele . . . ke akua o kahi po'e wahine."

And Hawai'i is outside in. It is part of the United States. Its history therefore also began in 1619 with the arrival of the first enslaved Africans, and it was also re-formed by the Civil War and it is part of the current electoral horror. This peculiar extra-moral requirement accompanying an exchange of civil society, especially into an exceptionalist ideological superpower practicing repressive and divisive tolerance of opposition, makes Malo's case exemplary for much well-meaning diasporic global intervention today.

And there is more. This is the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. In an artificial centrality, Hawai'i is the direct cause of the entry of the U.S. into World War II. But Hawai'i is also part of the politically and geographically diversified phenomenon of the hundred-plus islands of Oceania. Holding on to the cusp-figure of Davida Malo, who felt the unease of the peculiar colonial confrontation with the U.S., we note that the nuclear weapons test

legacy is the overriding issue in the Marshall Islands today and that the U.S. buried nuclear waste in the Pacific after WWII. Malo's lists are an absolute reminder, in today's terrifying context, of what the nuclear has erased. The aetiologies of the human he gives are from cliffs, from fish, from varieties of water and air. Every chapter speaks of changefulness in a poetry of geography.

Global criticality, old and new histories. "Asia" and "Israel," words in Malo, ask us for reconfiguration. Let us respond to this task, rather than only preserve traditional languages, as the United Nations does, and indeed as do most educational and linguistic institutions.

I now quote extracts from the contributions of some of the other members of the roundtable.

Noelani Arista (McGill)

To be named a Hawaiian specialist has often come with marginalization, a designation lacking a geographic/oceanic space of normativity. As a Hawaiian writer and translator I am placed in difficult positions, often seen as a native informant, a cultural consultant, a knowledge keeper, these roles keep the depth of epistemological knowledge and methodological innovation that Hawaiian can convey in abeyance. At best I may be able to be heard saying that the text is complex, singular. At worst, I can augment other people's passing interest in the field.

The trained historian wants to push back all the time and provide data: it may be singular that the Hawaiian language textual archive (which holds within it much oral performative material), is the largest in any native language in North America and the Polynesian Pacific. It seems paradoxical that in the face of the immensity of Hawaiian language textual archives, literature, letters, journals, prose, chant and prayers in many genres that

our work should be viewed, dismissed? as narrow, the purview of the specialist.

That the texts once they are translated from Hawaiian into English have become the site of extractive practices, used solely for the harvesting of momi (pearls) on Hawaiian culture, people, on Hawai'i, by native and non-native scholars alike, signals that we need to develop better relational practices, and that this may require reading the text in broader global contexts to liberate Malo's work from the distortions of America's production of Hawai'i and away from the corrosive influence of American identity politics that have shaped the most recent Hawaiian scholarly discourses and practices.

Emily Apter (NYU)

Spivak's sense of translation is a medium of social harming and violation. It is offset, however, by her formulation of a reparative translation that takes its cue from Melanie Klein's 1937 essay "Love, Guilt and Reparation," where she casts translation as a response to the Kleinian *Schuldigsein*, associated with what she calls an unrepayable mother-debt, the guilt in seeing that one can treat one's mother tongue as one language among many.(Spivak, 2012: 243) It struck me that the new edition of *Mo'olelo Hawai'i* offers a single case of reparative translation by reconstituting this monumental work through careful collective labor and making it available in English to a wide public, it redresses past wrongs attributable to the text's repeated vulgarization. All that is spelled out in the book's Introduction.

Dr. Nathaniel Emerson, an early 20th-century translator, imposed his own Christian ethnocentrism on it by giving it the title *Hawaiian Antiquities* (Malo, 2013), and he framed it as an ethnographic artifact suited for exhibition under Western curatorial eyes. In compiling

footnotes on some of the more archaic terms, he consulted native Hawaiians only to consign them to the oblivion of anonymity. In an act of restorative justice, translators Langlas and Lyon try native informants then at least an expanded sourcebook of the text's archaic vocabulary. But even they acknowledge that this is really impossible. They consult Polynesian dictionaries and periodicals, but in the end, they say, you have to look at the original if you really want to get at the knowledge that it's offering, on the left hand side of our book. Here, one could say the translator's affirmation of *Mo'olelo*'s reparative indifference to anglification is of a piece with Natalie Diaz's post-colonial love poem "Manhattan is a Lenape Word," in which the siren song of the disappeared Native American tongue is picked up in the siren of an ambulance and the ghostly coyote is spied wandering west Twenty Ninth Street by offering its long list of light.

Luis Tapia (Universidad San Andrés, Bolivia)

Mo'olelo Hawai'i, or the history of Hawaii, is a vision of social totality, it is a combination of ethnography, oral history, elements of sociology, to put it in terms of modern culture, especially about the emergence of authority within this culture.

Malo makes an interesting reflection on how it is impossible to reconstruct the original. What there is is a set of versions which respond to the way in which each person and family remembers and transmits the memory of their history, their customs and beliefs, Malo builds his Mo'olelo Hawaii based on this plurality of versions with the idea that there will be no original version but a historical description. In principle, it could be said that this conception of the world and this history of Hawaii as a look of totality has a horizontal structure as a description of

geography, economic practices, bird species, the formation of couples, gods, food and all other aspects have more or less the same weight. Malo values and defends the political customs of caring for the community against the new customs brought by the new dominant culture. This means that everything new, that not everything new is always better.

Moinak Biswas (Jadavpur)

This strangely beautiful book asks us to think of the productive role of unfamiliarity. As the editors point out, unfamiliarity made both the missionaries and the indigenous Hawaii chiefs unhappy about this account. To the former, it did not conform to the Western rules of writing such accounts. To the chiefs, it was not a proper Mo'olelo. The word Mo'olelo itself is difficult to enter into another language. The difficulty of translating between the two worlds starts from the date of finding common names, Malo's in between-ness extended within each world. Within the old, he was critical of a certain political and racial order, but refrained, unlike his Christian peers, from excoriating it wholesale. He uses the oral systems of lists and genealogies, but says that these are not accurate. He's also critical of the mythical nature of the oldest stories of creation. I would like to speak briefly about historical resonances, that the lists and genealogies evoke. Unfamiliarity does not dissolve with these resonances. They just help a reader like me connect the text with other things.

Genealogy seems to have played a crucial role in all reconstructing accounts where a foreign system forced change among the people. The Indian historian Ranajit Guha showed in a series of lectures how the early colonial historians in India used local genealogies, chronicles, and oral accounts but brought them under a narrative

discipline that he likens to the post Enlightenment historiography of Europe. These histories became essential to the colonial rulers for collecting revenue by figuring out complicated land relations. Davida Malo was meant to explain an unfamiliar world that seemed irrational and therefore deceitful. He was conducting this operation on himself, which seems to have left marks of unfinished business in the text. Malo writes of the inconstancy of the old oral tradition: "the great ignorance of the ancient people of this place was the cause of their mistaken words and of the inconstancy of their oral tradition" (71). This strikes a distant chord.

It brings to mind the anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro's book, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul*, which speaks of the Portuguese Catholic missionaries' encounter with the Amerindians in Brazil.(de Castro, 2011)[1] Several 16th and 17th century missionary texts complain bitterly of the malleability of the native mind that would accept a new faith too easily, for the same malleability meant they could abandon this new faith with ease as well. They had no God, no king, no proper religion, no reason; only deceitful interpretations of the world.

Malo's lists of fish, canoes, birds, animals, food, directions, winds, rain, do not stay on the same plane always. As a list takes a lateral turn, he sometimes prefaces the unexpected new item with the phrase "here is another thing." Thus, in Chapter 6, we have a list of winds: from the mountain and the ocean, etc., then "there is another thing:" The place below where a person stood, the one below that, the place within the ocean where the fish live, the atmosphere where the birds live, etc.

[1] Eduardo Vivieros de Castro.

Surya Parekh (Binghamton)

Davida Malo's *Moʻolelo Hawaiʻi* is an unfinished text breaking off abruptly in Chapter 57. We don't know what it would have looked like in finalized form. Malo was intently working on the book in the last two years of his life (1852-1853), suffering from illness, working during the evenings and according to his secretary, tearing up and correcting a succession of copies. The manuscript was not published during Malo's life and first appears in Emerson's misleading translation some 50 years later.

In this brief presentation, I want to ask the impossible question about what the readership of this unfinished text might be. Malo's life (1795-1853), spans the period from Kamehameha I's military consolidation of Hawaii as a nation state in 1795 through to the Hawaiian constitutions of 1840 and 1852, establishing a formal system of written laws and rights. Malo was raised in pre-Christian Hawaii, trained in oral traditions and practices as a child, becoming a counselor and trusted adviser to Ali'i. In the 1820s, the arrival of the Christian missionaries, Congregationalists from Northeastern United States, brought with it an effort to codify Hawai'ian into a written language, at roughly the same time as Maori and Tahitian were also being codified and systematized. Samoan was codified a little bit later. Already an adult by this time, Malo was one of the earliest Hawaiians to become literate, and he was a student in the first class at the Lahainaluna Seminary run by missionaries, later staying on to teach. Malo's relationship to both the oral traditions he grew up in and to the literacy promoted by the missionaries is complex. For the missionaries, teaching literacy in Hawaiian to Hawaiian students necessitated breaking the habits that they associated with orality: memorization, reading aloud and a pleasure in recounting genealogy.

Malo's relationship to Christianity can't be easily reduced to dogmatic stances. It's with the help of missionaries that Malo protests the holding of important positions by foreigners in the Hawaiian government and questions of land redistribution. And it's the missionary, Dwight Baldwin, who initiates the process through which Malo was commissioned to write the *Moʻolelo Hawaiʻi.* Malo writes at a moment when there is intense interest in literacy by Hawaiians. . .

John Charlot has argued that Hawai'ian was the predominant language used by both Hawai'ians and most non-Hawai'ians for much of the 19th century, relaying an account where a Cantonese laborer on a plantation speaks to a Fukienese laborer in Hawai'ian. I want then to speculate as I end here that we might imagine the diversified readership of *Moʻolelo Hawaiʻi* to include both the first generation of literate Hawai'ians and also non-Hawai'ians speaking and reading the Hawai'ian language. It's a time when, for Malo and others, proficiency in English or other European languages wasn't necessary for political and religious engagements with Americans and Europeans. And so I wonder, as I finish here, whether or not we can think of Malo in his space imagining Hawai'ian as a global language, a situation that changes some 50 years later with Hawaii's annexation.

Hortense Spillers (Vanderbilt)

Moʻolelo Hawaiʻi, has a posture of displacement that lends an identity to worldlings, perhaps across cultures in so far as such postures signal homelessness if by the latter we mean the caught place, or the place in between. By that I am not referring to pieces of real estate and whether or not one has access to them. Homelessness refers to the loosening of the bonds that tie us to the continuity of generations, families, surnames, tribes, regions.

I would regard this kind of homelessness as a loosening of the bonds of love, which goes far to explain, I believe, the exilic consciousness that accompanies displacement. It's solitudinous quiddity. It must explore loneliness as a genuine human possibility and try to redeem its malformations. I believe that Malo's world is the world flooded with literacy, and in that sense, it looks rather like our own; a Viconian withdrawal of the mythic sense. In any case, what I am describing might have had some relevance in David Malo's life in so far as he experienced the dying of the traditional world and the birth pangs of the Hawai'ian modern.

As a translator, as a go-between, as himself in-between, David Malo might be thought of as a kind of native informant. As a member of this initial class of Hawai'ian clerks, Malo lends us a glimpse into his complicated cultural order at nodal points of change. But does such a posture involve cultural criticism and as a result, a kind of betrayal? In other words, culture work seems to take us far from home.

Q&A

The Q&A gave a preliminary sense of this collective response and so we include its edited version.

Hosam Aboul-Ela:
Would you consider rephrasing some things you've already said. What possibility is there of reading Malo as critical theory avoiding comparing him or producing him as general indigeneity. Would he be good for as critical theory for other contexts?

Spillers:
You know as you were asking that question, I was thinking about my sense of this text as I was reading it. I couldn't get over — and I don't know if this will be helpful toward

getting at what you're asking, I think I understand what you're asking — but naively what I kept feeling as I was reading this was that I was reading a kind of Genesis. That I was reading a kind of Pentateuch, right? The first five books of Holy Christian Scripture, where not only is the grid filled in but it's named, right? I mean existence or reality from top to bottom. I mean in some ways it was comparable also to reading Milton, what the world is like when Heaven and Earth change places, and it takes Satan so many days to fall to earth and when he does he hews out Hell, I mean that is tremendous work. I was thinking of all these other texts that we're familiar with, and the sense of this work as that which names the world that it has come into — [it] strikes me as a profound act of not only naming but, by naming, creating.

So that, well, I don't know if I want to say therefore that that's what critical theoretical texts are about — giving names to things — but that was my sense as a foreign reader of what is for me nothing that is really very familiar. I was very struck by the power and the beauty of naming, I mean everything that you can think of, clouds and Earth, and how things are situated, and perspectives — in relationship to what? I mean it's all there, so that it really is for me a kind of text that creates as it describes. Creation is describing or describing is creating. I think of it really as a kind of Scripture.

Emlyn Hughes:
I'm a professor of physics at Columbia. I'm very much outside this kind of discussion. But I've spent quite a lot of time on the topic of nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands and on contaminated those islands got because of the nuclear weapons. I am going to refer a little bit to what Gayatri said in her introduction. A big issue today on the nuclear weapons tests that were done right after World War II is how damaged the islands are and what the impact on the people has been.

Even 70 years later, this is a big topic and it's about what the Marshallese refer to as nuclear justice. There is no comparable text to Davida Malo's for the Marshallese to describe their background and the culture. In terms of the reparation and justice, the US government has a responsibility to the Marshallese people and understanding the Marshallese culture. And obviously, the tie to the land is incredibly deep and the land was destroyed by these nuclear weapons. To what extent can one call the Marshall Islands as part of Oceania and use Davida Malo's text as a representation of the people of the entire Pacific?

Anupama Mohan:
I'm Anupama Mohan from Presidency University. And my question is simple: With a text like Malo's, is it relevant to think of strategies of reading such as close and distant reading?

Spivak:
I could just come into Emlyn's question. For me, it would be like the way Assia Djebar went into male texts to find moments where there were openings for women. And she imagined women's work to fill those moments. It is imaginative work, imaginative activism so that it is not just top-down philanthropy or organizing against the harm done by the nuclear intervention. If we can look at those places in Malo's text where he's clearly indicating that the spacing of his island is in a huge cluster of islands and insert this imagining. Tahiti stands in sometimes for all of them. Harry Garuba, a Professor at the University of Cape Town who is recently dead has an extraordinary idea of how to produce a simulacrum of historical origin when an African writes within a global context of production.

> [M]ost if not all African literary texts in English are always already determined by an absence, a

> lost origin which the text seeks to restore even while recognising the impossibility of such a restoration. This then is the postcolonial muse that haunts African writing – that it is a writing that seeks to restore an origin/original which, because of its absence in the language of the text, has to be continually simulated,
> Garuba writes in the unfinished work "Beyond the Postcolonial: Language, Translation and the Making of African Literature in English."[2]

As I wrote in the piece on Garuba: “Here again, my thoughts of history as lost object resonates very strongly with Harry's intuition. The past in a ceaseless series of strategies of simulation making and unmaking the vanishing present.”

So we take Malo not as a rational origin so much as an imaginative origin. We have to learn that to engage with the imagination, which is neither rational nor irrational, it's a different kind of status that you have to give to Malo. That's my answer to Emlyn, directing us toward a tough bit of imaginative activist labor. And as for the question about close reading, I think what we are looking at is not becoming a specialist. To an extent, this is about the impossibility of close reading. And yet. And yet. And yet, you know, I kept looking. This is why I think bilingual editions are very, very important.

In fact, I'm myself now engaged in trying to move into a bilingual edition of Bengali material, because it seems to me that if you can look at the other side and think about how to match up to it as a comparative literature person, it almost goes towards the impossibility of learning the original. I was constantly reading aloud the other side, knowing that, of course, I was not actually reproducing anything, but somehow it seems to me we have to

[2] Spivak, “A Few Words About Harry,” https://casstup.co.za. If text unavailable, email ns@cas.au.dk

recognize that what we are looking at when we do this kind of thing, global criticality, we are looking at the impossibility of genuine close reading; that this is the nature of the beast. That's why I asked the question, when it's not going to become one of our specialisms, what do we do? I think then of what Hortense was saying. I think then we connect on just one level above through structural connections like lists. You know, she was talking about Milton when she was reading the lists. I was thinking about Rosa Luxemburg. She was clearly opposing Marx and Engels in her thinking about general strikes in her influential pamphlet *The Mass Strike.*(Luxemburg,[1906] 1986)

In that book, rather than theorize, she just lists one mass strike after the other. This happened. This happened. This happened. All these strikes, they succeeded, beginning in Baku. I thought of Milton, Lucifer falling in *Paradise Lost* (Bush, 1949). And I was thinking, reading Malo, let's look at the list making aspect of it and relate it to the other oralities rather than Milton, the best example we English teachers know, etc. That's just one example because it occurred to both Hortense and me. So, once again, the nature of global criticality (we used to say "transnational literacy," but literacy about world events is no longer enough. In the so-called globalization of our discipline, we ask, how do we remain active critics even when we do not and will not have the ingredients for close reading? Is the choice between being imprisoned within a specialty and academic tourism? No, if we can't touch texture (close reading based on language), we can move with structure.

Participant 1:
Aloha, thank you so much for holding this plenary, a quick question, given what you're saying about wanting to allow this text to circulate in different ways. I'm just wondering

if people could say more about the extent to which they think in the classroom this text will be allowed to decenter the inevitable. I hear intention in the presentations between the recognition that the list is a central conceptual organizing genre. But at the same time, we are stuck in the historical classroom logic that doesn't really play with the archipelagic or the expanding and contracting plurality that Malo's text gestures at. So I'm wondering again, the question is, to what extent do you think it's possible to allow this text to decenter those returning structures of ours.

Jesús Ramos-Kitrell:
Yes, thank you very much, Jesús Ramos-Kittrell University of Connecticut. This question is first directed to Professor Spillers and in a way, touches with a piece that Professor Spivak wrote a while ago on an analysis of Mahasweta Devi in terms of how the novel stages a sort of precarious situation that a previous generation in which a previous generation tries to stage a context that only the next generation can exceed. And in that relation, I was considering how you were talking about the act of translation, this point of homelessness, not in terms of cartography, but of losing connections to other generations or to ancestral connections. And I'm wondering if perhaps this act of homelessness could stage a context for creating connections for further generations to counteract the effects of dislocation.

Spillers:
I want to address the question that Jésus has just raised. I want to do it by way of an example or analogy. I think one of the things that bothers me about the era that we're in is the way the police respond to people who are different from themselves — and it does look conspiratorial, as what happened earlier this week [the Insurrection on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021] looks exactly like something

like that but on a very different scale. What I think I believe about police power is that the police naively look at the world as if it is the repetition of intimacies that they understand from their mother's house. In other words they never broke the ties that bind them to the intimate connections of family and tribe. And so when they get out in the world, the demands that you live with and accept people other than yourself, unlike yourself — they can't do it! Their response is therefore violent. So it seems to me that what you're looking at in the United States today is that problem writ huge. It is huge. That everywhere one goes one expects to find one's mother, right? One's brother. One's kinfolk. But that's not the world that we live in. The world that we live in is difference. That's the modern world. That's the contemporary world. That's the changing world. It's not the traditional world, the world that is full of manna, the world that is full of the undifferentiated infant who can't tell himself from his mamma, right, and therefore you get the violence that has to kill the Other because the Self never really grew up, it never really gave up its infancy.

So this homelessness that I'm talking about really is a new way for us to try to come to grips with a world that is not me, right? A world that is not going to love me and embrace me like my mother and my father and my sisters and my brothers and the little girl next door whom I love and the boy across the street whom I love. That's not the world that we grow into. We grow away from families, we grow away from tribes, we grow away from the surname, we grow away from the father's name — and it hurts! I mean I understand how, or I think I understand, the older I get, the extent to which the modern world is a wound. It wounds me every day. It makes me lonely every day precisely because I have to live in globality or something other than my father's house, right. And so that's the way, it really is the way that I read homelessness.

It is a form of melancholy. It is not happiness. It demands that I understand freedom in a way that takes me further and further away from infancy, childhood, feeling good, feeling beloved in the world — that's not it. And so that really is the way I read homelessness or telling family secrets. I mean in the world that I'm talking about, dirty laundry — you have to spill it. I mean you have to tell the secrets, right? If you're going to, how to say this, if you're going to cauterize the wound, and the way to live with being wounded — that means you have to give up those self-prohibitions that make it impossible for those policemen at the capitol the other day from going in there and tearing down those idiots who were destroying the capitol. I mean, how does a policeman take a selfie with somebody who is going to destroy the capitol? Because he identifies that person in the same way that he identified with the member of his tribe. He needs to stop doing that. And he needs to stop shooting people who look like me if we just simply raise our hand, or even if we're running away — [we] get shot. It is a massive sickness.

It is a psychoanalytic moment in U.S. culture. And it is that sickness that sees my family everywhere in the world. Your family is not imprinted on the world. Otherness is imprinted on the modern world that we live in, the one that is changing every day. Every day there's an earthquake because there's something new I have to learn. So somebody's going to have to tell me by the time this is over what the hell Tik Tok is.

Basuli Deb:

There seems to be here a logic of the local, perhaps the regional and local, but also a planetary and even a cosmic logic from what I have gathered. If we were to use this text to teach degrowth, to contest the logic of colonality, then how do we practice degrowth in universities which are based on principles of growth and progress?

Spivak:
I just want to say to the person who asked about how to manage to teach Malo when there's such a different structure imposed on us, you actually just described how you would teach Malo in a classroom. How can we use this text to decenter the existing ideology of the classroom? Well, what you gave was a way in which you could actually decentralize and teach it through making it archipelagic. That's what I was saying in answer to Emlyn's question. It seems to me that rather than ask the question, you become the answer. It requires effort.

I would say to Jésus, adding to Hortense's lovely response that this is the question of staging, structure. There are moments in the text where the text asks to be taken somewhere else. This is why I think not only is the book, in fact incomplete, as Surya pointed out, the topos of "I am incomplete" is in the text as a central topos. So apart from lists, you can also take that it is a self-transgressive text, that asks to be moved out into something else. I have elsewhere defined that as the political text which asks for action by the reader to be opened up.

And to the last question I'll say yes. When I tried out my thinking on Planetarity in 1997, the reason why I recommended it was because it would take on board stuff from animisms all the way to white mythologies of rationality, the algebraic irrational, as it were. This text is cosmic in that way. But as to how you change the university for degrowth, it's a different undertaking. Maybe by teaching an archipelagic cosmic text imaginatively in the classroom, you produce students who work for degrowth when they enter the world of work. It's the hope we live in.

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DECOLONISATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION: THEORY, POLITICS AND GLOBAL PRAXIS

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ABSTRACT This essay addresses decolonization as a praxis involving "thinking and doing" (Mignolo, 2011) aimed at the critical education goals of representation, equity and social justice in the higher education context (Mbembe, 2016). It starts with an exposition of the notion (Amin, 1990; Ngugi, 1996), drawing principally on the work of Latin American theorist Walter Mignolo (2007, 2009, 2011) as well as African theorists (Amin, 1990; Mudimbe, 1988; Ngugi, 1996). It then explores the deployment of decolonization in contestations over environmental education (Tuck, McKenzie & McCoy, 2014) and central notions such as "science," "objectivity" and "the environment"; the positioning of Indigeneity, both in terms of representation within traditional (i.e. hegemonic, Eurocentric passing as universal) higher education (Windchief & Joseph, 2015) and the articulation of Indigenous alternative higher education institutions , including Indigenous thought, extramural work and the diversification of epistemology. Finally, taking as guide the crucial assertion that "decolonization is not a metaphor," (Tuck & Yang, 2012) and what we are distinguishing as "decolonization light" and "true decolonization," the essay turns to the prospects of decolonization of the university in a specific context, namely South Africa, as an example. We conclude that rather than a self-contained, self-sufficient discourse and praxis, decoloniality ought to be (re)conceptualized as necessarily opening up additional issues which need to be addressed for its fulfilment as concrete and fully viable representation, equity and social justice oriented education.

KEYWORDS: Higher Education, Praxis, Subaltern, Decolonial, Indigenous

Introduction: Decoloniality's Origins and Characteristics

This essay attempts to introduce the concept of decolonization in general and more specifically how it is or can be applied in higher education (and some of its sub-fields) as well as in a specific national context as example. In terms of ontology and epistemology and indeed the world order, decolonization helps us see that another world is possible. In terms of education a central premise of decolonization is that the entire project of education in the (formerly?) colonized nation-state is one that is not merely tainted by but in fact built on a foundation of colonialism.

It should make sense to start an essay on decolonization and decolonizing higher education with origins and definitions but we are uncomfortable with that task since we share Stuart Hall's (1992) suspicion of and ambivalence about assertions of definitive origins and singular histories (they end up giving altogether too much power to what Adichie (2009) has decried as "the single story" and leave little space for viable alternative and especially subaltern perspectives, timelines and histories). But for those coming newly to the topic we do need to provide something of an introduction to the notion of decolonization (Jansen, 2017), give some indication of origin and characteristics, however necessarily provisionally and ambivalently we put them forward. In attempting to provide something of an origin story we could do a lot worse than turn Walter Mignolo, who is a particularly ardent and prolific exponent of decolonial thought. Mignolo holds that decolonial thought and

project has its origin in the Bandung Conference of 1955 which brought together 29 African and Asian countries and resulted in the articulation of the notion (and political positioning) of the Third World. Before it became a pejorative term, "Third World" was originally articulated at that conference as a rejection of the binary of the two macro-narratives of capitalism and communism, a veritable "third way" of being situated in geopolitics. For the cultural side of things, Mignolo identifies the work of Frantz Fanon as the origin of the psychic and cultural aspect of this rejection of the totalized western conception of the world (and much as we love Fanon, for us this attribution is too definitive, singular and prescriptive). Decoloniality has since been more fully articulated and has been taken up around the world as discourse and political project, including in Latin America, in North America (especially in Canada) and in Africa (particularly South Africa). It is worth noting that it is Latin American scholars who are at the forefront of this articulation and who are doing the most at taking the project up most ardently and consistently, including the important aspect of connecting the dots between far-flung international projects of decolonization across the world.

Mignolo provides a list involving wide flung, global contributory theorists and thinkers, asserting that one of two pillars of the history of decolonization includes "individual thinkers and activists like Waman Puma de Ayala in colonial Peru, Ottabah Cugoano in the British Caribbean and then in London, in the eighteenth century; Mahatma Gandhi in nineteenth and twentieth century India; Amilcar Cabral in the Portuguese colonies of Africa; Aime´ Ce´saire and Frantz Fanon in the French Caribbean; W.E.B Dubois and Gloria Anzaldu´a in the US" (p.163). Clearly, then, decolonization can be said to be an articulation of diverse progressive thinkers and projects from (former?) colonies around the world.

It could be argued that in addition to the figures identified by Mignolo, there are other originary and contemporary contributors to what we can now identify as a global decolonization discourse. In the continental African context, for example, we can take up as formative the work of figures such as V.Y Mudimbe (1988), Samir Amin (1990), and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986, 1993). V.Y. Mudimbe could be said to set the groundwork for decolonial thought in Africa with his arguments in *The Invention of Africa* that the Africa and Africans that we know are "invented," by which he means not only that our knowledge is necessarily subjective but that the disciplines and discourses that represent, indeed produce Africa and Africans (philosophy, anthropology, missionary work) are Eurocentric, colonialist and colonizing. It is this always already distorted knowledge that everyone, from Europeans and other non-Africans in general, Africanists and even ("educated") Africans themselves, have about Africa and Africans. Mudimbe stresses that there is therefore a pivotal need for the acknowledgement and utilization of indigenous African ways of knowing (African gnosis if you will) to be taken up as alternative to Eurocentric Africanist work, to produce and come to know Africa and Africans very differently. His arguments contain some of the premises of decolonial thought, including variously, the subjective and potentially distorting nature of epistemology (and ontology), the idea that epistemology is (or can be) location based, the potential for a rejection of Eurocentric and colonizing epistemology passing itself off as neutral and universal and the articulation of a philosophical (or rather local, gnosis based) self-identity and identification of the (previously?) colonized.

In the case of the Egyptian Marxist political economist, Samir Amin, his text *Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World* is, or ought to be considered foundational to

decolonial thought. Amin contributed to the possibility of thinking outside the taken for granted, naturalized and supposedly inevitable organization of the world into Euro-American, Eurocentric, capitalist and colonialist centre and third world, colonized periphery. His proposal of a polycentric world involves the argument that there ought to be a reconceptualization in which a number of centres (and alternatives to capitalism), based on taking the nation state and its region as centre, can emerge globally. A rethinking of the organization of the world order from singular capitalist centre-periphery model to diffuse, polycentric model and with more than one single hegemonic economic ideology, is a precursor to the conceptualization of epistemic and cultural decolonization and empowerment and political, cultural and especially economic emancipation of the Third World. Furthermore, he put forward the very notion of delinking (which is an essential element of Mignolo's decolonial framework) as the means of facilitating the emergence of a polycentric world. Instead of the nations on the so-called periphery submitting their political and especially economic orientation and output towards, in support of and in subjugation to capitalism and the taken for granted Euro-Western centre, Amin proposed that the periphery "delink" from the capitalist market system and its world order and instead take the internal needs and self conception of peripheral nations as centres and priority and make what comes from the outside (including "the market") serve those needs.

In *Moving the Centre*, Ngugi makes a parallel argument to Amin, taking up the cultural and literary world and meaning making rather than Amin's emphasis on the economic. Ngugi speaks to the need for Africans to not consider themselves and their artistic and cultural work to be peripheral, to be judged by western, Eurocentric aesthetics. Instead, he argues, African cultural producers

and critics ought to make indigenous aesthetics the basis of production and evaluation of African works. Where Amin sees delinking as an means to the emergence of a polycentric world and the latter as an end in itself, Ngugi insists that moving the centre serves not as an end but as a means of bringing about a genuinely universal(ist) world, based presumably on multiple, coexisting and equally valued worldviews. In *Decolonizing the Mind* Ngugi addresses the notion of decolonization directly, observing that in the current neo-colonial period, the "educated" African's mind (and hence values, worldview, etc.) are still colonized after the period of actual colonization. There is a need, therefore, for Africans to take on the task of decolonizing their minds (a literary and linguistic version of Amin's economy based delinking) from Eurocentric and colonized self-conception and the revival of African ways of knowing, communicating and cultural production.

Mignolo's work on decoloniality

Decoloniality is a radical praxis project, necessarily involving both "thinking and doing," (Mignolo, 2011 xxvii) that offers the Third World (including, importantly, the Third World within the First World), the opportunity to opt out of the white, Eurocentric way of conceptualizating and engaging the world and the alternative of a social justice oriented third world to third world (re)conception of self and world order. Decoloniality is about delinking from the hegemonic game and constructing and participating in a new game. For example, the discourse of modernity (and struggle of the modern, ideas of pre-modern and whether we are currently post-modern) is evacuated by the assertion that those of us who have been designated peripheral need not engage modernity since no matter how we play that game we end up at the margin (either acknowledging we have yet to become modern or desperately asserting an alternative conception of the

modern). Mignolo holds that the West's domination of episteme and our conception of geopolitics means that we appear to have only two options for future organization of the globe, namely re-westernization (and the unfinished project of Western modernity) or de-westernization (and declaration of the limits of western modernity). Mignolo asserts a third option is possible- decoloniality- and the emergence of the global political society and polity delinked from rewesternization and dewesternization, one characterized by local and global social justice and the centering of the Indigenous and the Third World. This praxis project as envisioned by Mignolo includes several key elements:

1. Epistemic disobedience. This involves the articulation of a discomfort with the hegemonic world order and the positioning of some at the periphery and subsequently, rebelling against the world order.
2. Delinking. Opting out of the current conception of the way the world is ordered including materially and epistemologically.
3. Border Thinking. Delinking frees us up to think the world differently, including and especially orienting our thinking relationally, third world to third world (rather than third world to first world).
4. Theorizing the world. This involves drawing principally if not exclusively from "other" ways of knowing, theory from the South rather than received western and Eurocentric theory and episteme.
5. Eschewing Cartesian "worldview" for more holistic "world sensing." For Mignolo world sensing involves consciousness and getting to know the world not just through the eyes and the mind but by utilizing all our senses and importantly, including embodied knowledge.
6. Identity of alterity rather than otherness. Otherness is a trap since it too readily involves being

(mis)recognized by the dominant, hegemonic self (the variously fetishized opposite or exotic and repository of negative characteristics). Alterity insists on being unknown and unknowable and offers the possibility of identity outside the frame of binary self/other.

7. Decolonial epistemic perspective. This would be identity based, place based involving all the senses and embodied knowledge.
8. Rejection of the universal for the pluriversal. Western, Eurocentic knowledge and worldview passing off as universal is to be rejected in favour of multiple, co-existing, equivalent worldviews/worldsenses (with the important caveat that pluriversalism is not to become another metanarrative; rather it is a disposition characterized by humility and recognition of many ways of seeing the world)
9. The goal of decoloniality is the emergence of a new world order; the conviction that another world is possible. This involves an alternative conception of the world, the rebellious rejection of the current world order leading to the conception and production of a world that is more socially and globally just, a pluriverse in which the Third World can contribute to the emergence of multiple centres.

In what follows we begin to outline how decolonization (given the characteristics outlined by Mignolo and others) can play out in sub-fields of education studies.

Changes and Contestations around "Science", "Objectivity", and "Environment"

Decolonization is a praxis project that questions the Eurocentric, universal claims on "science" and "objectivity", and the western monopoly on epistemology. We would like to point to concrete examples of how this plays out in terms of the paradigmatic shift involved in the

field of education. One of the emerging paradigmatic shifts could be seen in environmental studies curricula where integrations of different ways of sensing and knowing are coming to the fore. There are two main positions, both using interdisciplinary approaches: there is a softer, reformist approach that includes Indigenous perspectives in the environmental studies curriculum and assumes epistemological commensurability. We consider this very important work of accommodation and inclusion but as not quite decolonization. Rather, such work is, at best, "decolonization light." There is a more radical approach that centres Indigenous epistemological and ontological accounts of land, and assumes ontological incommensurability between settlers and Indigenous peoples, especially when it comes to cosmology and the relationship to the land. We consider this second approach to be "true" decolonization.

An example of the first approach, i.e. what we are calling "decolonization light," is a special issue of the journal *Environmental Studies and Sciences (ESS)* on the theme, "Why link Indigenous ways of knowing with the teaching of environmental studies and sciences." *ESS* is an academic journal that addresses the coupling of human-nature system sustainability and in this particular issue tells successful stories of accommodation, knowledge integration, and mutual learning between Indigenous and Western knowledge, with mutual, compatible concern for the Earth (Rich, 2012). Contributors to this special issue include faculty and researchers from biological science, plant ecology, integrative science, sustainability, Indigenous environmental studies, and education. They identify as members of specific Native American, First Nations or Aboriginal communities, and/or Anglo-European or European heritages, working in public, private, and tribal and band institutions in the USA and Canada, and serving

Indigenous and mainstream students. The introduction highlights the crucial need to move beyond interdisciplinary teaching and learning, with a commitment towards integration of different ways of knowing, because "academic disciplines are part of the Western intellectual tradition, relying primarily on a framing of 'interdisciplinarity' to define field identity perpetuates the long-standing invisibility and exclusion of knowledges that exist outside of the Western intellectual tradition" (Rich, 2012, p.308). Many of the successful stories revolve around the principle of "Two-Eyed Seeing": the idea of integrating Western knowledge and Indigenous knowledge in designing integrative science programs, environmental education curricula, etc., especially for students who were largely unaware of other epistemologies. One challenge, though, was the risk of Indigenous knowledge being tokenized and trivialized. Sylvia Moore (2012), a Mi'kmaw independent researcher, warns of this by contributing a trickster tale that illustrates in a humorous yet telling narrative, the contradictions and difficulties of moving from Eurocentric to Indigenous worldview when bringing traditional Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing into education programs.

It is in acknowledgement of the ambivalence and challenge leveled by figures such as Moore that lead us to the identification the second, more radical approach that we would identify as "true decolonization." For this, we will use the example of a special issue of *Environmental Education Research* (Eve Tuck et al., 2014) on the theme "Land education: Indigenous, post-colonial, and decolonizing perspectives on place and environmental education research," which examined the workings of decolonization and curriculum in both formal Kindergarten to Grade12 and higher education contexts, as well as informal, popular education context in the

society. Two points are worth noting about this project, that make it truly decolonial. First, the radical element lies in its assertion of epistemological and sometimes ontological incommensurability. Second, the journal issue centres Indigenous people's relationships to the land, and urges interrogation and transformation of the political links between academic curriculum, knowledge production, and the historical, social reality of settler colonialism in North America (Tuck et al., 2014). In addressing the context of higher education, Engel-Di Mauro & Carroll (2014) showcase concrete examples from Africana Studies and Geography to introduce how an African-centred approach can contribute to the development of a Land Education perspective and improve college-level environmental education in the United States of America. Dwelling on African diasporic histories and geographies and disrupting European settlers' perspective on Africanness, Africa, and America, the authors argue that "African-centred perspectives complement most Indigenous approaches by providing alternative means for the transmission of knowledge and understanding of land and one's place in it that brings to prominence diasporic connections to places erased by settler colonial approaches" (p.79). Collectively, the authors in this collection stress that "decolonization is not just symbolic; its material core is repatriation of native life and land, which is incommensurable with settler re-inhabitation of native land" in the U.S (or indeed elsewhere).

Decolonization and the University

As asserted earlier, the entire project of education in the (formerly?) colonized nation-state is one that is not merely tainted by but in fact built on a foundation of colonialism. Almeida and Kumalo (2018) point out for example that education in Canada is firmly based on settler colonialism with the result that universities and the academy are not

only built on Indigenous land (in some cases un-ceded Indigenous territory) but in their Eurocentric nature have the effect of erasure and elimination of Indigenous peoples and ways of knowing. Even more insidiously, not only Eurocentric bodies of knowledge and epistemologies but even supposedly progressive, social justice oriented discourses and pedagogies can end up marginalizing Indigenous curricular content, perspectives and students (St. Denis, 2011).

Decolonial education, therefore, has very substantial implications for the university beyond curriculum as knowledge as circumscribed within academia to the very contours and spatiality of the university. The first of these is that it demands a shift from the university as ivory tower model and even university-community links- what in North America has been popularized as "town-gown" relations (Blumenstyk, 1988; Martin, Smith & Phillips, 2002; Massey, Filed, & Chan, 2014)), to breaking down the barriers between the university and community in the conception, production, engagement and dissemination of knowledge.

Extramural, extracurricular work, and Indigenous claiming of higher education spaces

What types of radical cross-curricular projects of decolonization could be undertaken, more broadly and collaboratively, between universities and local communities? A concrete example is what has been called the "Meeting of Knowledges" project in Latin American contexts (De Carvalho & Flórez-Flórez, 2014): Academic activist intellectual participants such as Florez-Florez aruge for an audacious move beyond interdisciplinarity onto transdisciplinarity in order to focus on "knowledges with rules and logics that are not always inscribed in the academic canons" (p.122), and the Meeting of Knowledges

project exemplifies a political stand to decolonize Latin American universities, which is "based on the inclusion of the knowledge of Indigenous, Black and other traditional peoples of the region as part of the repertoire of valid knowledges that should be taught and expanded, on an equal footing with modern Western knowledge" (p.123). The project started at the University of Brasilia in Brazil in 2003, inviting masters of all knowledge systems to teach in the university, with the creation of a curriculum open to all knowledges visible today in the local areas and on the continent – reintroducing traditional arts and crafts, and different Afro, Indigenous, and popular worldviews not as anthropological data but as sources of knowledge. In particular, there were five modules: Dance, Music, and Theatre; Environmental Education and Reforestation: Learning to Live in the Land; Sociomusical Knowledges; The Wisdom of Medicinal Plants in Afro-Brazilian Communities; The Architecture of the Traditional Xingu House (pp.131-132).

In terms of identity, the Meeting Knowledges model involves Indigenous students and staff taking up space in and making distinct cultural identity based contributions to higher education. One example, in North America, is how American Indian/Alaska Native/Inuit students claim higher education spaces as their own: such as through the use of American Indian Student Services programs, digital media, sharing their survival tactics online, and consequently taking ownership of their own educational experiences (Windchief & Joseph, 2015). Another example, in Australia, is an articulation of integrative curriculum, intercultural learning, and Indigenous students' active learning (Nakata, 2011, 2013), which emphasizes skill-learning, cross-curricular representation of Indigenous knowledge, and a rejection of conceptualization of Indigenous and Western as dichotomized knowledges.

As important and radical as this model is, it represents another example of what we would consider "almost decolonial" or "decolonial light" since it is about accommodation and inclusion and opening up the university to community, to previously excluded or underrepresented groups and knowledges, rather than radically transforming the university as an institution.

Intercultural universities

True decolonization education involves even more radical transformation of the university and the production of an alternative model of institution of higher learning, one that can be found, but again only potentially as we will illustrate, in the example of what are being called "intercultural universities" (Tellez, Sandoval, & Gonzalez, 2006; Restorepo, 2014). The intercultural university ought to be taken seriously, as a kind of alternative higher education space strongly tied to local Indigenous knowledge and livelihood, community projects, and potentially, decolonization. As Daniel Mato asserts, "intercultural universities" are designed to "support political and social struggles with culturally and epistemologically appropriate modes of teaching, learning and research" (Mato, 2011), and are "explicitly framed by the actors involved as political responses to centuries of domination and exploitation, and their key aims are to strengthen processes of decolonization, development and autonomy" (Cupples & Glynn, 2014, p.57)

We draw attention to two illustrative cases, each highlighting a different decolonization process and resultant effects of "intercultural universities." The first case highlights the social class mobility and Indigenous consciousness-raising of rural Indigenous youth in Mexico, where the Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural played an important role to produce "Indigenous

professionals" and "Indigenous intellectuals" (Mateos Cortés, 2017, pp.159-160). At this university, the degree course programmes offered are characterized by their "constructivist elements, the flexible framework of their curricula, as well as the links they forge with the surrounding communities and their promotion of community participation" (p.156). In the second half of the four-year B.A. degree studies, courses start to diversify towards five labour-market employability oriented study profiles: languages, law, sustainability, communication and health issues. Marginalized rural Indigenous youth came through these programmes to "rediscover and regain their ethnic identity, which is now combined with a novel, but rather strong identity and pride as pioneer university graduates and as Indigenous professionals" (p.165). Upon graduation, many rural Indigenous youth were self-employed and most explicitly self-identified as professional 'intermediaries', 'brokers' and/or as 'translators' between institutions, associations, government levels on the one hand and Indigenous communities on the other.

Intercultural universities are a radical departure from the traditional model and, as might be anticipated, they have met with considerable resistance. The second case we want to point to therefore is one that highlights ideological contestations around the building and running of intercultural universities. This is the case of Intercultural University 'Amawtay Wasi' in Ecuador, which was created in 2003 out of Indigenous movements with intellectual, activists, and grassroots supports, and yet suspended in 2014 from university system of Ecuador (Martín-Díaz, 2017). In the confluence of community activism, intellectual interventions, legal regulations, higher education reforms, and state policies that contributed to this model, there were three main contesting discourses supporting or criticizing the

creation of an intercultural university. First, those against intercultural universities also argued against interculturality/interculturidad (the Latin American discourse similar to multiculturalism- but with an emphasis on inclusion of Indigeneity rather than the supposed level playing field of a multiplicity of cultures and ethnoracial groupings in society- Howard, 2009; Stolle-McAllister, 2007)), their arguments a combination of fear of social fragmentation and rejection of identity politics. Second, there were those supportive of the intercultural movement but who had a quite static, fixed vision of ancestral culture. Third, intellectual and academic supporters, the main source of support for the intercultural university, who believed that the true decolonization model should operate even more radically in terms of both materiality and epistemology and through both militant activism as well as academic production (pp.81-85). The most telling message, however, might be the author's conclusion that the decolonial, radical version of interculturidad is still not quite ready, at least in the context of Ecuador. On the one hand, "other knowledges" are likely to remain in the curriculum as long as they are positioned as subaltern and as reflective only of the logics of an interested clientele. On the other hand, "a higher education institution focused on the production and dissemination of localized knowledge, with a firm commitment to the recognition of cultural identity not only in academia, but, above all, politically, is [considered] a troublesome institution" (p.86). In other words the intercultural university as true decolonial institution is not manifest but aspirational.

Decolonization theory operates effectively and usefully as a critique of Eurocentrism but needs a corollary of place based knowledge to make it a complete project. In geopolitical terms it is about reconceptualizing the world in terms of acknowledgement at least and active links at

best between decolonized projects around the world. On the African continent a project of decolonial education, including decolonizing the university, knowledge systems and the disciplines is being engaged (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Zondi, 2016). In terms of place based knowledge, for Africa it is about taking up African knowledge systems and theorizing from Africa. To concretize this, take the example of Achile Mbembe (2016) who discusses the anticolonial work of Frantz Fanon and in particular draws on the "Africanization" perspective of Ngugi wa Thiong'o to foreground linguistic decolonization: "A decolonized university in Africa should put African languages at the center of its teaching and learning project. Colonialism rhymes with monolingualism. The African university of tomorrow will be multilingual. It will teach [in] Swahili, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Shona, Yoruba, Hausa, Lingala, Gikuyu and it will teach all those other African languages French, Portuguese or Arabic have become, while making a space for Chinese, Hindi, etc." (p.36). While recognizing a more general point of decolonized university future as pluriversity with knowledge production that is open to epistemic diversity, Mbembe (2016) more specifically underscores the strategic importance of reconceptualizing diasporic intellectual networks that would enable "scholars of African descent in the rest of the world to transfer their skills and expertise without necessarily settling here [in Africa] permanently" (p.41).

Of relevance here is the deeper and wider engagement with complex African knowledges in the curricula and in the world. For example, in a special issue of the journal *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, Wright, Nashon & Anderson (2007) argue for "the need to recover, critically engage in, and selectively incorporate African values and customs into educational systems," in particular, "troubling the taken-for-grantedness of the hegemony of Eurocentric worldviews" (pp.243-244). In the

moves towards a polycentric world, also of relevance is how a diasporic African intellectual might speak to the decolonization potential in Western/Euro-American academic contexts. Dei (2000) in particular sees "the project of 'decolonization' as breaking with the ways in which the (African) Indigenous human condition is defined and shaped by dominant Euro-American cultures, and asserting an understanding of the Indigenous social reality informed by local experiences and practices"(p.111). His definition of "Indigenous knowledge" is a very broad one: grounded in long-term practices in the places and struggling for knowledge validity in relation to dominant Euro-American cultures. In this sense, and drawing on Frantz Fanon and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Dei (2000) proposed the anticolonial perspective as "an epistemology of the colonized, anchored in the Indigenous sense of collective and common colonial consciousness …. also a celebration of oral, visual, textual, political and material resistances of colonized groups – a shift away from a sole preoccupation with victimization" (p.117).

Towards a Conclusion: If Decolonization is Not a Metaphor Are We Ready for "True Decolonization?"

Our final point and for us the most important point we wish to underscore is the assertion, indeed warning by North America scholars Tuck & Yang (2012) that "decolonization is not a metaphor." While noting that decolonization in the literature might well be increasingly, variously adopted in educational advocacy and scholarship (e.g, decolonizing a discipline/theory/method/education, etc.), it is important to emphasize that decolonization is "not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools" (p.1). Focusing on North America and centring the political intent of decolonization as unsettling settler colonialism, Tuck & Yang (2012) (Canadian and American

respectively), considered an ethics of incommensurability, pointedly asserting that "social justice, critical methodologies, or approaches that decenter settler perspectives have objectives that may be incommensurable with decolonization … [and] can be entangled in resettlement, reoccupation, and reinhabitation that actually further settler colonialism" (p.1). Tuck and Yang's remark, to our mind, anticipates the dangers of watering down decolonization, of taking up decolonization light as the real thing, of putting other projects, from the conservative to the very progressive, under this new umbrella, this latest, sexist discourse; the danger of diluting or even emptying decoloniality of its specific radical politics and agenda; the danger of rendering decolonization a floating signifier at best and an unfocused and toothless tiger of a fad at worst. Their assertion should act as a warning that the term must be used with some accuracy and strictly with relation to projects and goals that do come up to the characteristics and standards and overarching goals of the decolonial movement.

Given the arguments we have made and specific examples we have given (and especially the last point we have just made), our question to those advocating decolonizing the curriculum in the South African university would be not so much how do we decolonize the curriculum but rather do we really wish to take on the project of decolonizing the curriculum? Decolonization is seductive in its radical promise but in the end if taken literally and whole-heartedly, might be too radical as a practical agenda for the individual university let alone the entirety of an educational system.

Even if we answer in the affirmative, we would hold that decolonizing the higher education curriculum is an incomplete project. This is because we hold that decolonization is rather like deconstruction (and as

Gayatri Spivak, perhaps the most ardent proponent of deconstruction once declared, "deconstruction never constructed anything"). Similarly, we see decolonization as a powerful tool of critique of the status quo rather than a fleshed out alternative to it. It functions best as a means of exposing Eurocentrism in the curriculum, bodies of knowledge that are western or national or even local posing as universal. It is a way of pointing to a move from the absurdity of the universal to the modesty and honesty of the transversal. But decolonization does not fill in the blanks for us, it does not give us the body of knowledge that is at the local level, let alone how the dots of all those local knowledges connect at that final transversal destination. It does not give us, prepackaged, a body of knowledge to replace that vast prepackaged Eurocentic body of knowledge which, for good or ill, we have all accumulated and can readily access. It does not tell us (beyond critique of it) what we are to do with European/Eurocentric knowledge. How do we unlearn the Foucault we've read, how do we forget the Shakespeare and John Donne we've loved and quoted? And if we cannot unlearn nor forget, what do we do with that knowledge? And decolonization does not tell us what to do with the paradoxically familiar and foreign epistemology we have garnered, it does not reward us for the double work we on the margins have had to undertake (using what Du Bois (1903) referred to as our "double consciousness"): that tremendous multilingualism and code switching that means that while the average Canadian only has to use English in all spheres of life, the average South African student might have to use English for school work, Afrikaans for most interactions when she travels to the Free State and Zulu with her grandparents and the community in her home village.

In our view decolonization demands a corollary, a follow-up or, better yet, a parallel process of localization,

Africanization, Third Worldization of knowledge (both in terms of episteme and curriculum) for the process to be complete and for something to replace both the Eurocentric body of knowledge and, more importantly, Eurocentric epistemology. That, we would venture to say, is a monumental task – what is to be included and what is to be excluded, what is to be taken up at what level for what students with what politics and to what end, in other words how to wade through that considerable conundrum of the always already politicized field of curriculum studies (Pinar, 2000; Wright, 2000, 2005)? Who is to teach the new curriculum and with what qualifications and expertise and what role should the university have in making that determination? In other words, there is a serious curriculum agenda to be worked out. It would be a curriculum that begs certain questions, many of them rather difficult and discomfiting. For example, in the context of African epistemologies and Blackness, we would ask:

1. How are different bodies of knowledge to be positioned and taken up in the new decolonized and Africanized curriculum?
2. What is to replace universal or even worldsense (since worldview won't do for decolonization? In other words, what is to be the worldsense (or what are to be the worldsenses, if plural) that will inform and guide the "new," (albeit always already existing but not previously utilized) curriculum?
3. How does body politics operate given the new curriculum? Now that the hegemony of whiteness has been exposed (not only in terms of the curriculum but in terms of the overrepresentation of whiteness in administration, faculty and even student body), how are various bodies (Black, white, colored, Indian, immigrant and other bodies) to be made to fit in relation to the new curriculum and what is to be done

about the highly probable reversed racial hierarchy (now that blackness- black thought, even black bodies is now emphasized, perhaps even (hopefully uncomfortably) valorized)?

4. How is spatiality (under erasure), perhaps better expressed as "nature including humans" to be taken up (i.e. which land locally and what relation to land and what new politics of belonging beyond nominal citizenship is to be taken up).
5. Putting points 3 and 4 together – what is to be the now overt and necessary politics of belonging to (or alienation from) the curriculum and knowledge making? Black, white, colored, Indian South Africans will not all be equally well positioned in relation to the new curriculum. How well are you positioned to deal with Blackness moving, as bell hooks cogently puts it, "from margin to centre"?
6. Is the decolonized curriculum to be local, national, continental or more generally transversal? There is value and beauty in the local but also the danger of parochialism. The national might be attractive but we see a strong need for addressing the creeping problem of xenophobia and the potential for a continental curriculum or better yet a transversal curriculum to address such problems of identity, belonging and acceptance of difference nationally and outer nationally.

Given the points we have made, you might well disagree with our conception and depiction of decolonization and the project of decolonizing the curriculum. From our end our final questions for South African institutions of higher education remain: are you really ready to decolonize the curriculum in education, at this university, in the academy? Are you ready to make and drink the decolonial project lemonade, to march in formation with other decolonial projects to that pluriversal destination?

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COLONIAL PALIMPSESTS[1] IN SCHOOLING: TRACING CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT Using the image of a palimpsest, this paper illustrates how patterns laid down in the colonial past linger on after colonial governments are dismantled, in this case in South Africa. As in a palimpsest, historical patterns are partially but unevenly erased as new forms are inscribed on the template when governments change. Arguing that palimpsests need to be analysed in context, the paper looks at three periods: settler colonialism up to 1910 when the major script of colonial schooling was written; the period of apartheid (1948-1994) when the initial colonial script was modified to intensify inequalities; and the post-1994 period, when fundamental changes to the colonial script were envisaged, but the deeply etched inequalities of the past have endured, albeit in different configurations. With theorists of coloniality, the paper suggests that more radical changes are needed to shift historically embedded inequalities of class, race, gender, locality, culture, language and identity associated with colonialism. The palimpsest of schooling would then require further erasures and rewriting to reflect greater social justice.

KEYWORDS: Settler colonialism, Apartheid, Privilege, Historical redress, Palimpsest, Social justice

[1] Palimpsest: a manuscript or piece of writing material on which later writing has been superimposed on effaced earlier writing. It is something reused or altered but still bearing visible traces of its earlier form. (Oxford Languages, 2021)

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In 1994, South Africa held its first democratic elections, signalling not only an end to apartheid but also an end to the colonisation of Africa. In a highly symbolic ceremony, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as state president at South Africa's seat of administrative government, Pretoria's magisterial Union Buildings. These imposing buildings, designed with two wings around a central colonnade and amphitheatre, represented the coming together of Boer and British polities into the Union of South Africa in 1910, following Boer defeat in the Anglo Boer War.[3] As the seat of government of a British dominion, the buildings symbolised a settlement between colonising groups that specifically excluded the colonised African majority. In 1948, when the Afrikaner Nationalist Party won electoral power, the buildings became the seat of apartheid government and another variant of colonialism was introduced which denied the possibility of common citizenship to African people, instead allocating them to ethnically defined 'homelands'. The inauguration of President Mandela at the Union Buildings provided a vivid symbol of the shift of governmental power. In the presence of global and local dignitaries as well as a massive crowd filling the terraced gardens, Mandela took the oath of office to usher in the new democratic order of equal rights and citizenship. Fighter jets – previously part of apartheid's military force – flew in formation across the sky, displaying the colours of the country's new flag. The southernmost country of Africa was finally free, and the era of colonisation had come to an end. Or had it?

[3] The Union Buildings were designed by a prominent English architect, who also designed government buildings in India and Kenya. They are a powerful symbol of government as well as British imperialism. South Africa has three capitals: Cape Town is the legislative capital where the historical houses of parliament are located; Pretoria is the administrative capital where the civil service is headquartered in the Union Buildings; and Bloemfontein is the judicial capital where higher courts are located.

Each of the moments mentioned above, with successive governments occupying the symbolic seat of power, points to significant shifts in colonial arrangements. However, as theorists of coloniality argue, the power relations established by colonialism endure well beyond the dismantling of colonial administrations (see eg Mignolo 2007, 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). In the words of Maldonado Torres (2007: 243):

> Coloniality... refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. ... In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day.

South Africa is no exception to this. From the perspective of coloniality theory, it could be argued that historical inequalities of class, race, gender, locality, culture, language and identity have so saturated South Africa's social fabric that changes in government after 1994 have not had much impact on them. This is strongly evident in schooling, where post-apartheid policy changes have not been able to shift the embedded and persistent inequalities stemming from apartheid and colonial segregation before then. Historical inequalities are still evident, lingering on into the present, albeit in somewhat altered forms.

In this article, I use the image of a palimpsest to illustrate how patterns laid down in the colonial past are still evident, in this case in South Africa. As in a palimpsest, historical patterns are partially but unevenly erased as new forms are inscribed on the template of schooling when governments change. New arrangements cannot easily overwrite what has been there before, simply

to replace the past with a new script. Earlier inscriptions, expressing historical cultural interests and powerplays, emerge alongside new inscriptions, often in incomplete or somewhat altered forms that obscure or confound later designs. However certain these scripts for change may seem, the palimpsest is never clear of its past.

Of course, schooling policy palimpsests do not write themselves, nor are they written by invisible hands. They are written by those with authority to allocate values (to use a classic policy definition) and are themselves enfolded into the intersectional power relations and social configurations of places and times, particularly as policies are implemented in local conditions, not always as envisaged. Palimpsests may be better understood as representations of desired arrangements, and certainly should not be regarded as causative in themselves. Inscriptions tell a story that is partial rather than definitive, and they cannot be regarded as accurate historical records. That said, palimpsests do illustrate the lingering of past inscriptions, indicating that policies seldom begin on a clean slate.

In this paper, I argue that the historical processes of European colonisation put Western forms of schooling in place in colonies and these provide the template on which locally specific policies were inscribed. The original template remains visible in post colonies, albeit with local variants, as part of the lingering power relations of coloniality. I illustrate these points through the example of schooling in South Africa, showing the shifting inscriptions of schooling policy in relation to significant historical power shifts. Rather than attempting a comprehensive narrative, this paper is structured around the three moments mentioned in the introduction. First, I look at the period of settler colonialism up to 1910, where the major script of colonial schooling was written. Second,

I turn to the period of apartheid to show how the initial colonial script was modified to intensify inequalities. Finally, I address the post-1994 period, where fundamental changes to the colonial script were envisaged, but persistent inequalities remain that reflect past patterns albeit in different forms. These three moments are presented as snapshots that illustrate the past in the present, rather than being definitive explanations.

Such a broad-ranging account cannot possibly do justice to significant debates on schooling policy and social change, and runs the danger of providing an apparently coherent narrative of what is more accurately understood as a complex and contested history. With these provisos, the following section of the paper shows what I take to be the main inscriptions of settler colonialism and its schooling that are still visible, even as they were later magnified by apartheid, and later still partially erased and overwritten by post-apartheid restructuring.

(1) Settler colonialism and schooling (1652-1910)

South Africa was colonised by two different European powers, both of whom contributed to the warp and weft of its particular forms of colonialism. White settlement began with a trading station established by the Dutch East India Company in 1652 on the shipping route to the east. A small community grew around Cape Town, supplemented over time by settlers from Europe, including France and Germany, with slave labour imported from the East Indies and elsewhere in Africa. Indigenous Khoe and San groups living in the area were largely decimated and displaced. Remnant people were absorbed into the Cape underclass that also included freed slaves and a small Muslim

community, later identified as 'Coloured'. [4] In 1806, in the context of the Napoleonic wars, Britain took over the Cape as a colony because of its strategic value. The British developed a substantial colonial administration and increasingly integrated the Cape into the capitalist world economy of the time (Legassick and Ross, 2012). Both heritages, Dutch and British, are evident in the social and schooling arrangements that were established as colonial settlement expanded.

During the 1800s, Dutch/Boer pastoralists (trekboers), dissatisfied with British control, moved in numbers into the interior, extending British imperial interests with them. Settler expansion brought violent contestation over land and resources as Boers came up against significant African polities (including Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho and Tswana). Over time and through various battles, skirmishes, and negotiations, Africans were dispossessed of their land, concentrated into reserve areas, and proletarianized. A second British colony (Natal) was established, as well as two fragile Boer republics (the Orange Free State and Transvaal), resulting in four governance structures for the two settler groups. (The boundaries of these are shown in Figure 2 below.) British Protectorates were established on the lands of the Tswana, Sotho and Swazi. Additional labour was imported: indentured Indian labourers for sugar cane plantations in Natal, and indentured Chinese labourers for mining on the Witwatersrand.

The discovery of minerals (diamonds and then gold) was decisive in the economic development of the country and entailed significant British investment. British interests in the Boer-held Transvaal goldfields were a major catalyst for the Anglo Boer War of 1899 to 1902, in

[4] It is unfortunately not possible to talk of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa without reference to its racial classification system.

which the British prevailed. During this period, racial and gender hierarchies were hardened and different forms of labour control were put in place in coercive ways, well before apartheid further institutionalised these (see Hamilton, Mbenga, & Ross, 2012; Ross, Mager & Nasson, 2012).

It is important to note that settler penetration into the interior was uneven and often uncertain. Though white settlers succeeded in imposing brutal labour regimes, they did not destroy the cultural roots of African polities (Legassick & Ross, 2012). Colonial rule – whatever its forms – was always contested, with original occupants far from passive in their responses, and hegemony never stably attained by successive governments (see Christie 2020).

A significant feature of colonisation in this period was continuing tension between Dutch/Boer and British interests, as power shifted from one to the other. Dutch pastoralists moving into the interior developed a form of Boer identity that was increasingly distant from the settled areas around Cape Town, and Afrikaans developed as a language of its own, both in Cape Town and the interior. Afrikaner resentment towards British power was intensified by the Anglo Boer War which left a bitter legacy. When the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910, a priority for Britain was to unite the two settler groups (and their four separate governments) into a British dominion – as symbolised by the Union Buildings. The losers in this arrangement were the majority black population, who were excluded from civil law and instead placed under forms of customary law. Before this, the Cape had established a non-racial qualified franchise, but this was not extended under the Act of Union – an indication of British appeasement to the Boers, who were opposed to equality, at the expense of the black population. In

response, the African National Congress was formed in 1912, but protests were to no avail. The 1913 Land Act (adjusted in 1936) confirmed the division of land achieved by settler conquest, confining the land rights of the majority black population to reserve areas making up around 10% of the land.

The Land Act was an enormously significant step in formalising racial and spatial segregation as capitalism became entrenched and the economy developed in mining and manufacturing, heavily depended on cheap black labour power. Sol Plaatje's famous book, *Native Life in South Africa* (1916/2007), opens Chapter 1 with the following statement: 'Awakening on Friday morning, June 20, 1913, the South African native found himself, not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth' (p 20). In the period that followed, segregationist legislation further limited the job opportunities of black workers, reserved skilled labour positions for whites, extended an exploitative migrant labour system, and sought to curtail the freedom of movement and urbanisation of black people - all of this well before the apartheid period.

Schooling

What, then, about schooling policy and provision under early settler colonialism? During this period, public schooling reflected the differing aspirations and worldviews of both sets of European settlers; and it did not include African people, (see Christie, 2020; Malherbe, 1925). For Dutch settlers, schooling fell under the pastoral aegis of the Dutch Reformed Church. Though schooling was sparse as setters moved further into the interior, most Boers had exposure to at least basic literacy in Dutch, since this was required for confirmation in the church. British occupation of the Cape brought a different

governmental approach to schooling: a nondenominational public system with English as medium of instruction and state subsidies for schools established on a voluntary basis by local communities. While more 'elite' Dutch settlers in the Western Cape participated in this system of public schooling, those in the interior were not satisfied with its non-denominational and anglicised orientation, pressing instead for Dutch/Afrikaans medium and closer links to the church.

Tensions around schooling did not abate. When 'uitlanders' moved into the Transvaal goldfields, English-speakers who resisted instruction in Dutch opened their own schools. After defeating the Boers in the war of 1899-1902, the British administration attempted to anglicise schooling, in response to which Boer groups set up their own schools espousing Christian National Education and Dutch/Afrikaans language of instruction. Agreement was soon reached that both languages would be used in public schools, and in the Act of Union, both were recognised as official languages. Schooling was placed under provincial authority, and in the following years, free and compulsory education for whites was extended to secondary level.

By contrast, throughout this period, there was no systematic provision of schooling for indigenous African people. The only schooling available was that provided by the different missionary societies, who were very active in South Africa (Chisholm, 2017; Elphic, 2012; Etherington, 2005). For the most part mission schools provided very elementary, gendered and Biblically-oriented teaching to those who had access to them, including white children. A small handful of mission schools such as Lovedale and Healdtown in the Eastern Cape were notable places of excellence, aiming to educate an elite in institutions that were comparable to schools in Britain. There can be no doubt that missionaries were integral to westernisation

and cultural destabilisation as part of colonial processes. However, one of the contradictions of mission education is that most the leaders of the anti-apartheid struggle attended mission schools, including Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and the women's rights activist Ellen Kuzwayo.

To sum up: In this period of initial colonisation, the basic script for divided and unequal schooling was laid down in South Africa, with both racial and ethnic differences deeply inscribed on the founding palimpsest. Public schools for white settlers were state-aided or state provided, they were segregated by race, and they accommodated both languages that had been points of friction between Boer and British settlers. The seeds of Christian National Education were sown in Boer resistance to anglicisation, to be revived as an expression of Afrikaner nationalism under apartheid. The majority indigenous Africans were not included in the system of public schooling that was reserved for whites, and missionaries were ill-equipped to cope with expanding numbers – a situation that endured until it was addressed by the apartheid government. As I shall show, these features of colonial schooling were not completely overwritten or erased by subsequent changes of government, and their imprint is still visible in schooling provision.

(2) Apartheid and schooling (1948-1994)

Fast forward to 1948 and the introduction of apartheid after the electoral victory of the National Party. At the Union Buildings, in a sealed room buried in the interior with maps of the country covering its walls, the apartheid government planned its 'total strategy' onslaught against opposition to its rule. It lies beyond the scope of this paper

to explore the social and economic changes that provided the background to the ascendency of Afrikaner nationalism and the framework of discriminatory legislation that made up apartheid. Suffice it to say that apartheid laws, notorious for their racial brutality, were forged on the basis of existing inequalities which they refined and extended. While race was foregrounded in apartheid ideology, apartheid was actually a form of racial capitalism, based on the ultra-exploitation of cheap black labour power and the control of the majority black population.

Among other measures, apartheid legislation classified people by race, outlawed racial mixing, and segregated all facilities along racial lines. Labour controls on black workers were tightened, the discriminatory labour regime was further entrenched, and existing restrictions on the movement of black people were extended. Former reserves were turned into separate ethnically-defined 'homelands' or Bantustans with their own administrations, and Africans were denied citizenship of a shared South Africa. Through this combination of measures, more than three and a half million people were forcibly relocated from towns and white designated areas. Estimates are that about 44% of the country's population (17 million people) were living in Bantustans by 1990, with about 800 traditional leaders given financial support by the South African government (Oomen, 2005).

While there is no doubt that apartheid was the apogee of centuries of violent conquest, the nature of its colonial form has been much debated. As discussed in Christie (2020), the apartheid state has been variously theorised as 'internal colonialism', 'colonialism of a special type', 'settler colonialism' and so on. Beyond analytical differences, these terms point to differences in political struggle at particular moments (see Evans, 2012; Everatt,

1992; Hopkins, 2008; Mamdani, 1996; Saunders, 2000). Also to be considered is the colonial nature of the Bantustans, constructed as a form of indirect rule that mimicked colonialism in Africa. Bantustans were administered by government-paid chiefs and officials and were steered towards forms of self-government. Separate administrations, state services and infrastructure were established, including separate departments of education for each Bantustan. Between 1976 and 1981, four of the ten Bantustans were granted 'independent' status by the South African government (though they were not internationally recognised) – a complex variant of 'decolonisation' at the time when much of Africa was being decolonised.

In 1961, the apartheid government declared a Republic and South Africa left the British Commonwealth – with British economic interests remaining in place.

Schooling

Across the country, the impact of apartheid education was profound. Much has been written about this and it is not possible to do justice here to the extensive and detailed debates (for overviews, see Chisholm, 2017; Kallaway,1984). Instead, what I present here are visible continuities and erasures on the policy palimpsest. Through legislation, the apartheid government separated racially classified groups (European/white, Indian, Coloured, African) into different departments of education, with inequalities structured into every aspect of provisioning: inequalities in funding, facilities, teacher education qualifications, and so on. Figure 1 illustrates the distorted allocation of funding, with the majority African population having the lowest expenditure per child, and the minority white population the highest.

Population 1989. Expenditure on schooling (in Rand)

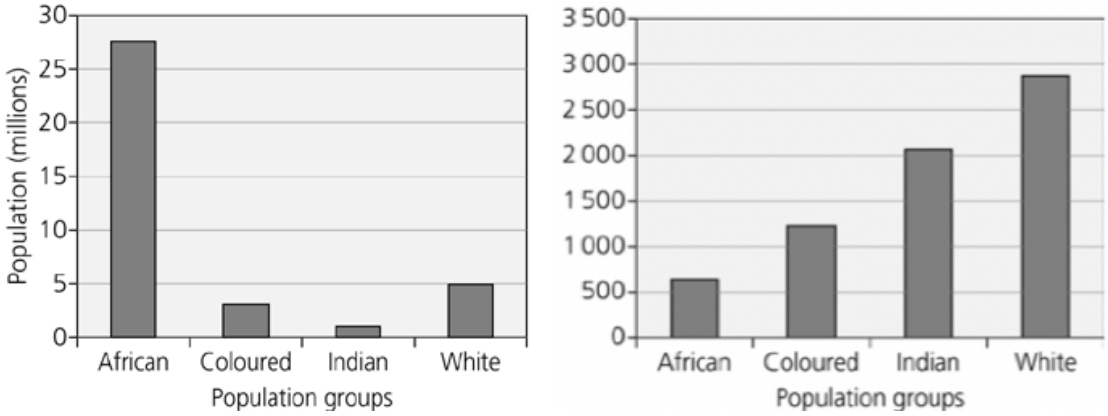

Figure 1: Education expenditure on different population groups, 1989, illustrating the distorted allocation of funding

The Bantu Education Act of 1954 systematised schooling for Africans for the first time. Missionary involvement was halted and almost all mission schools, except for Catholic schools, were closed. In their place, a system of state schooling was introduced, with the explicit aim of linking schooling to different cultural identities as well as to the labour needs of the economy. While Bantu Education is justifiably excoriated for its unequal and inferior education and its cementing of racism in schooling, it is worth recognising that the system of mission schooling that it replaced was inadequate to its task, and missionaries themselves were pressing for change. Bantu Education was apartheid's response to the economic and social changes of the times, providing a distorted version of 'cultural recognition' (which was fashionable in anthropology at the time) to limit the schooling offered to black people and restrict their labour market participation to low-income and low-status jobs. While it is true that schooling provision for Africans expanded and secondary education grew under apartheid, its inferior quality became increasingly intolerable, leading directly to the student protests of the 1970s and 1980s that contributed to apartheid's undoing.

African schooling in 'white' parts of South Africa fell under the racially separate Department of Education and Training, whereas in Bantustans, schooling fell under Bantustan administrations. Very little research exists on Bantustan education, beyond the overall shape and size of provision (see Jacklin and Graaff, 1992). What research there is shows that schools in Bantustans were less well provisioned than their urban Bantu Education counterparts. Previously, these rural communities had mostly fallen outside of areas where public schooling had been established and were served (or underserved) by mission schooling. With minimal schooling provision before apartheid, these areas continued to be relatively disadvantaged under Bantustan administration – though it needs to be recognised that Bantustan infrastructure provided schools where there had been none before. Bantustan education etched the pattern of under-provision in rural schooling even more deeply on the palimpsest of schooling.

With regard to schooling for people classified as European/white, the picture was quite different. In this case, apartheid arrangements reflected another iteration of the long-standing tension, if not enmity, between language groups. The National Education Policy Act of 1967 articulated an Afrikaner nationalist vision for public schooling. The Act stipulated the separation of English or Afrikaans as languages of instruction in white schools and stated that single medium schools would be preferable to dual medium or bilingual schools.[5] And it stipulated that white schooling would be run on a Christian and National basis, with both terms defined. It stated that in 'imprinting' a 'broad national character', education should 'inculcate a spirit of patriotism, founded on loyalty and

[5] Both English and Afrikaans would be taught in all white schools, but the apartheid government wanted to ensure that Afrikaans language and culture would be preserved from English influence by separating schools.

responsibility towards the fatherland, its soil and its natural resources', and it should 'achieve a sense of unity and a spirit of co-operation'. In an exemplary instance of apartheid double speak, references to the 'fatherland' and to 'national unity' applied only to the white minority population. As EG Malherbe observes, the spirit of the 1967 Act was 'reminiscent of the chauvinistic regulations and *richlinien* issued under the early Nazi regime' (1975:148).

In short, apartheid's governance arrangements for schooling extended and deepened existing inequalities. They formalised racial segregation and strengthened ethnic identities, privileging the white population in every dimension of schooling. The 1967 Act expressed the determination of Afrikaner nationalists that their language and culture should be nurtured in public schools – a legacy that is visible in post-apartheid schooling arrangements as well, as the next section will show. It is of course understandable that the education offered to whites was seen as hegemonically desirable in the racialised and unequal dispensation of apartheid education. It is nonetheless ironic that this flawed system – with such an overt ideological bias – should be assumed to be of 'high standard' and serve as the model for post-apartheid education to aspire towards.

(3) Post-apartheid changes and schooling (1994-)

Fast forward to 1994 and the inauguration of Nelson Mandela at the Union Buildings – a moment that would be decisive in ending the logics of colonialism and building an alternative. Much heralded as this moment was, it is important to recognise that it did not signify the 'overthrow of the state'. It was the product of a tough negotiated settlement between erstwhile enemies (the apartheid government and its opponents) that had begun in 1990

with the unbanning of political organisations and the release of Mandela. Negotiations brought a compromise 'government of national unity', led by the ANC and its alliance partners and including the National Party and other minor parties. It was this context of political compromise that ended the formalities of colonialism, but in ways that enabled deep structural inequalities of coloniality to linger on, albeit often in new forms.

A constitutional democracy and rights-based equal citizenship were hallmarks of the new South Africa. Constitutional democracy meant that the repeal of apartheid laws would take place through parliamentary procedures, and the rule of law would prevail. As part of the compromise negotiations, nine new provinces were demarcated from the previous four provinces, and Bantustans were incorporated into provinces (see Figure 2). Existing apartheid legislation was amended as necessary; new laws were passed; and government departments were restructured. 'Sunset clauses' in the constitutional settlement protected the positions of key apartheid bureaucrats for five years, which meant that the new bureaucracy would be a mix of experienced staff (often able to block change) and new political appointees (often lacking in experience).

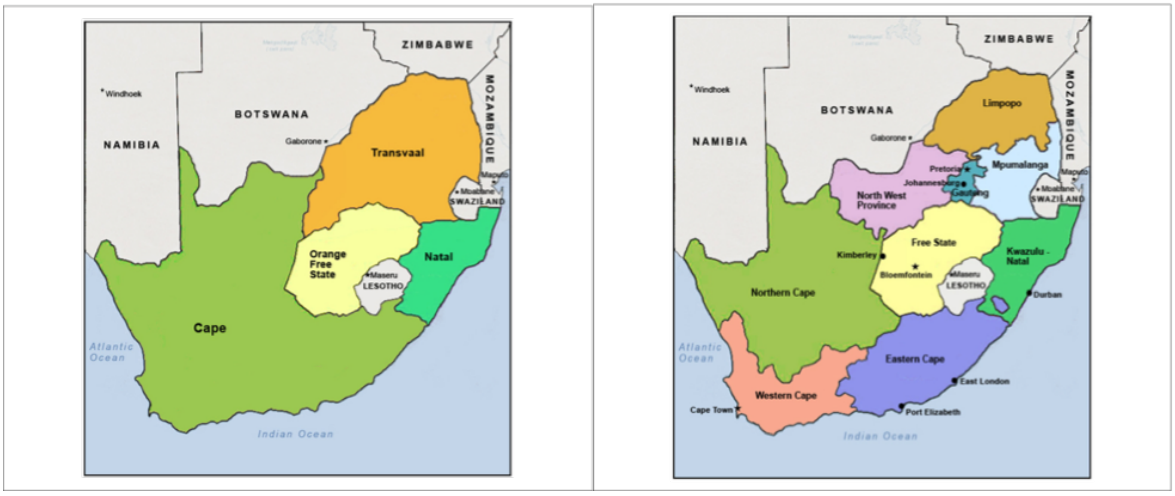

Figure 2: Old and new provincial boundaries, showing adjustments made as part of constitutional negotiations.

A contradiction within this settlement was that the major political changes were not accompanied by economic changes of similar magnitude. Little was done to shift the patterns of economic ownership, though social grants were introduced to alleviate extreme poverty. With neoliberalism in global ascendancy, South Africa soon moved in that direction. The early policy of the Reconstruction and Development Programme ('growth through redistribution') was replaced by a clearly neoliberal framework, ironically known as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy. This signalled that market logics would prevail over possibilities for more radical changes to ownership and redistribution. At time of writing (2021),

South Africa is haunted by continuing problems of high poverty, high inequality and high unemployment (Alvaredo et al. 2018; Branson, Garlick, Lam & Leibbrandt, 2012). Official figures show an unemployment rate of 36.2% in June 2021, with youth unemployment at 63.6%. The templates of apartheid and earlier colonialism are still evident in the social structures of the economy as well as in multiple practices of daily life.

Another contradiction in the post-apartheid settlement relates to Bantustans. Though these were formally dissolved, the 1996 constitution nevertheless made provision for traditional leaders and customary law to operate. This has meant that the structures of indirect rule under colonialism and apartheid still hold valence, alongside common law – an ambiguous position that restricts the land ownership and citizenship rights of rural people living in former Bantustans. Claassens (2014: 761) argues that 'these laws and policies reinforce, rather than address, the legacy of the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts'.

Schooling

What, then, of post-apartheid changes to the palimpsest of schooling policy? Education reform was a priority for both sides in the period of political transition (1990 to 1996) and their different priorities are evident in their approach to the task. For the ANC and its allies, a major concern was the youth protests against Bantu Education that had started in Soweto 1976 were continuing to disrupt schooling across the country. Students had joined with broader mass movements for social change aiming to make the apartheid system ungovernable and black schooling was barely functional. Calls for 'People's Education for People's Power' signalled high expectations for change from the side of the mass democratic movement, and the assumption that the new system would bring a better dispensation for all.

For its part, the National Party (NP) had other concerns. In a canny move in 1990, the NP government took important steps to protect white schools and keep them separate in the face of inevitable changes. It made provision for the management committees of white schools to admit limited numbers of black students under strict conditions, and in effect turned them into state-aided schools. Early in the negotiation process, the NP secured an agreement that that these schools could not be changed without bona fide negotiations with their governing bodies. And at the last minute before the deadline for negotiations to end in 1996, the NP won a significant concession against the wishes of the ANC – that the constitution would allow state-aided public schools to be single-medium (ie Afrikaans-only). The NP was determined to hold onto the Afrikaans language rights that it had secured in the early days of settler colonisation and

further developed under apartheid – surely one of the strongest continuities on the policy palimpsest.

Under South Africa's new constitution, the product of much negotiation, education was affirmed as a basic human right, to be free and progressively available to all. Equal citizenship meant that the values of justice, equity and non-discrimination would underpin new policies, and that the eleven official languages of the country would be recognised. On this basis, the stated task of the new government – with its different interests – was to develop a suite of policies to bring together the divided system of the past and provide education of equal quality for all in a single non-racial system. This meant placing an entirely new script on the policy palimpsest, and to give substance to this in ways that would break with the colonial past.

The first step was to change administrative arrangements, dissolving the plethora of separate education departments and putting in place a national department and provincial departments in each of the nine newly established provinces. The National Education Policy Act (NEPA) of 1996 brought an administrative end to apartheid's racial and ethnic divisions and identities. The next step was to change the arrangements for school governance and funding through the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996. And later, a new curriculum model was put in place and revised several times.

The provisions of SASA were crucial in setting the possibilities and limits to fundamental change. For governance, SASA devolved significant powers to school governing bodies (SGBs), giving them responsibility for a range of policies including admissions and language of instruction, within the bounds of the country's constitution. School-based management had the support of both politically competing groups, but for very different

reasons. From the side of the ANC and its allies, SGBs were seen as a form of democratic participation and a way to restore legitimacy to schools that had been disrupted by protests. For conservative white groups, SGBs were seen as a way of ensuring that established white interests would prevail in the historically privileged schools that had been given special consideration in constitutional negotiations. And indeed, the powers given to SGBs have served to affirm if not deepen inequality. SASA gave schools the status of juristic persons, and over the years, there have been a number of court cases between schools and education departments over issues such as admissions, appointment of teachers and principals, language policies and so on – arguably an unanticipated consequence for the ANC-led government.

The funding of schools presented a major conundrum of its own. Apartheid's distorted funding arrangements meant that schooling for the minority white population was funded at a much higher level than schooling for the majority, and correcting this distortion presented difficult funding challenges. A strategic decision was taken, and enshrined in SASA, that public schools would be allowed to charge fees to supplement state allocations. The justification for this was that fees would increase the resource base for schools, while encouraging middle class (white) parents to remain within the public system. As a measure to recognise that redress was necessary, schools were divided into quintiles from poorest (quintile 1) to least poor (quintile 5), and a small budgetary amount was set aside for allocation on an equity basis. However, this funding was too meagre to make much difference to the historically poorest schools, and over time, schools in quintiles 1, 2, 3 and some in quintile 4 were declared 'fee free' in recognition that communities were too poor to pay – but no additional state funding was provided beyond the quintile formula. At the same time, public schools in upper

quintiles were able to charge fees sufficiently high to double their staffing and broaden their curriculum offerings.

In effect, arrangements for governance and funding enacted in SASA introduced market principles into the state system. Marketisation brought social class more powerfully into play without eliminating racial privilege, and highlighted rather than reduced inequalities in schooling. The new funding arrangements were not adequate to the task of repairing historical inequalities, let alone building a new system of equal quality.

Under the new arrangements, former Bantustan schools were placed under the purview of provinces. The large rural provinces which incorporated former Bantustans have concentrations of historically disadvantaged schools, almost all of which are now fee-free. The provisioning and performance of these schools relative to their privileged counterparts has remained fundamentally unequal over the years. As van der Berg (2015) points out, poverty, politics and rurality have combined to produce schooling that fails the majority of students. The inequalities of the past remain all too visible on the palimpsest, despite attempts to over-write them.

In addition to governance and funding, matters of language and culture have been particularly difficult to address. Given apartheid's construction of essentialised identities of race/ language/ culture as the basis for separate and unequal treatment of people, it has been particularly difficult to justify any form of differentiation in post-apartheid schooling. Curriculum revisions over the years have settled on a form of content that endorses the 'powerful knowledge' of a particular modernist episteme – an approach that does not consider the very different learning conditions in legacy apartheid schools. In

particular, the curriculum does not recognise the linguistic diversity of the population, or the significance of local knowledge. Even although eleven official languages are constitutionally recognised, only two of these are supported as languages of instruction after Grade 4 – English and Afrikaans – and the learning of African languages is not compulsory. This is in spite of the fact that the majority of the country's schools are black schools where African languages are spoken. The effect of this is a structural discrimination, disadvantaging children who speak languages other than English and Afrikaans and casting their language capabilities and cultural knowledges in deficit terms (see McKinney, 2017).

In overall terms, the inequalities in the South African schooling system indicate that the power dynamics of colonialism have not substantially shifted. There is general agreement that the education system as a whole performs very badly, with South Africa ranked among the worst performers on all international comparative scales (Mlachila and Moeletsi, 2019). Moreover, there are distinctively different patterns of performance for students attending different schools, with results varying according to poverty quintiles and former apartheid departments of schools. The results are consistently 'bimodal', with nearly 80% of students attending the poorly functioning part of the system, and a small minority (8%) attending the fee-paying schools (mostly desegregated) that achieve good results (Christie, 2020). Almost all of the poorly performing schools are black schools in townships and rural areas (including former Bantustans).

Figure 3 illustrates the continuing legacy of inequalities, where the first map shows the location of Bantustans under apartheid, and the second map shows the distribution of schools without running water in 2020. The overlap is striking.

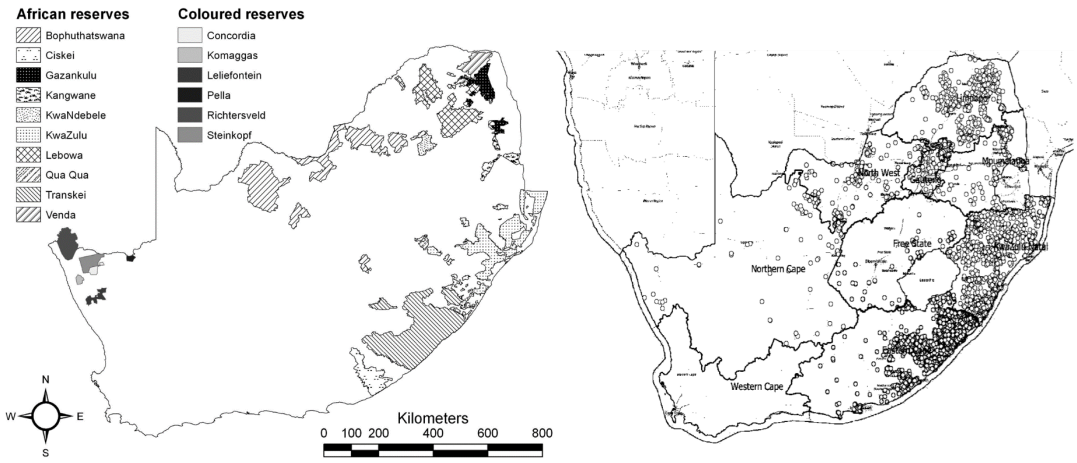

Figure 3: **Distribution of Bantustans compared with distribution of schools without running water, 2020**

Conclusion: colonialism, continuity and change?

The image of a palimpsest, with its multilayered inscriptions, partial erasures, and superimpositions, provides a means of illustrating shifts and continuities in arrangements for schooling over time. As cautioned at the beginning of this paper, palimpsests cannot be read as definitive records, and they cannot provide explanations of what they make visible. They are representations of the shifting power relations and competing interests that produce them. When analysed more fully in their contexts, they show, in the case of South Africa, that the deep etchings of the entangled colonial past in its different phases have been difficult to erase, even as attempts are made to do so.

In looking at three moments of significant change in government in South Africa, it is interesting to see the shifts in schooling arrangements. Changes in government have had significant effects – but as I have shown, the patterns established under early settler colonialism were modified and deepened under apartheid's particular colonial arrangements, and still have effects on the schooling dispensation of South Africa as a post colony. While it would be incorrect to assume that colonial

arrangements have remained basically unchanged, their forms and effects can still be traced as expressions of political interests and power relations. There are two obvious examples of historical continuities in the post-apartheid schooling dispensation. The first is the continuing privileged status of former white schools. A legacy of earlier colonisation, the privileged status of white schools was solidified by apartheid racial discrimination, and protected through steps taken by the National Party government when apartheid was ending and in the subsequent constitutional negotiations. In effect, National Party insistence on maintaining Afrikaans language and culture in schooling meant that *all* former white schools (whether Afrikaans medium or not) were able to moderate the pace of change. The status given to these schools (now referred to colloquially as 'former Model C schools') was consolidated by the considerable powers devolved to school governing bodies in the new policy arrangements. The second major example of continuity is the under-provisioning of schooling for black people in townships and particularly in rural areas. In this case, it is possible to trace continuities between the initial insufficiencies of mission schooling, through the discriminatory policies of Bantu education and the Bantustans, to current funding arrangements which do not make adequate provision for historical redress.

Returning, then, to the question posed at the end of the opening paragraph of this paper: did the liberation of South Africa bring an end to colonisation? In strictly governmental terms, it clearly did. Yet, a brief look at schooling in South Africa shows that the answer to this question is not simple. As I have illustrated, the deeply etched inscriptions of colonial schooling have endured, albeit in altered configurations.

In overall terms, it needs to be acknowledged that the negotiated settlement to end colonialism was limited in its achievements. In spite of major political changes, the structure of the economy remained largely unchanged. Mahmood Mamdani (2020) observes that 'the concessions made to whites during the negotiations to end apartheid ... ensure that the problem of social justice will not be solved any time soon' (149). Nevertheless, he argues, 'even a partial rebirth is something'. He sets out the major achievement of negotiations as follows: 'The response to political violence in South Africa ... was a reframing of political identity so that formerly opposed identities could live together in the new political community. This is the heart of decolonising the political' (195). And certainly, it is important not to under-estimate the significance of this achievement.

Yet, as theorists of coloniality point out, 'decolonising the political' is not in itself sufficient to shift the inequalities that linger on after a long history of colonialization. In South Africa, the palimpsest of schooling shows the limits of what has been achieved so far. It indicates that more radical changes are needed to shift the historically embedded inequalities of class, race, gender, locality, culture, language and identity – inequalities that the schooling system is folded into. Fundamental changes – to be represented by further erasures and inscriptions on the palimpsest of schooling – are essential if greater social justice is to be achieved.

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TOWARDS A CRITICAL PEDAGOGY FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT

THE CONTRIBUTION OF DECOLONIAL THINKING AND THE EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE SOUTH[1]

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ABSTRACT This paper aims to show the validity of categories developed by exponents of Latin-American Decolonial Thinking and Epistemologies of the South for the Mediterranean context. After having introduced these perspectives and identified some criticisms, I will discuss their relevance for the purposes of formulating a pedagogy of and for the Mediterranean, analysing in detail the political-pedagogical practices of SOS Rosarno. This movement, which focuses on the agro-ecological production of foods, is based on collaboration between locals and migrants and is active in Calabria – a region in Southern Italy. Therefore, I will only take Southern Italy into consideration, but thematizing the exchanges, conflicts and representations that connect it to the wider Mediterranean context. The final part will highlight the need for Decolonial Thinking and Epistemologies of the South to contribute to creating political-pedagogical alliances between ongoing movements in different places.

SOMMARIO Questo articolo intende mostrare la validità delle categorie elaborate dal Pensiero Decoloniale Latinoamericano e dalle Epistemologie del Sud per il contesto del Mediterraneo. Dopo aver introdotto queste prospettive e identificato alcune

[1] The paper is based on an ongoing research entitled “Promoting social and epistemic justice in geopolitically complex areas: a research situated in decolonial thinking and epistemologies of the South”, carried out by the author at the Pará State University (Brazil), and funded by the CAPES (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior) – financial code 001. The research began in 2020, therefore the reflections presented are still partial and provisional.

criticità, ne argomenterò la rilevanza ai fini della formulazione di una pedagogia del e per il Mediterraneo, entrando nel merito delle pratiche-politiche pedagogiche di SOS Rosarno, un movimento incentrato sulla produzione agroecologica di alimenti, basato sulla collaborazione tra nativi e migranti e attivo in Calabria – una regione del Sud d'Italia. Dunque prenderò in considerazione solo il Sud d'Italia ma tematizzando scambi, conflitti e rappresentazioni che lo collegano al più ampio contesto del Mediterraneo. Nell'ultima parte evidenzierò la necessità che il Pensiero Decoloniale e le Epistemologie del Sud contribuiscano alla creazione di alleanze politico-pedagogiche tra movimenti impegnati in luoghi diversi.

Keywords: Decolonial Thinking, Epistemologies of the South, Critical Pedagogy, Mediterranean context, SOS Rosarno association

Introduction

For some time now, there has been a pressing urgency for encouraging pedagogical thinking beyond the "western regions" in which it originated (Frabboni, 2008). In fact, pedagogy, like other disciplines, originated in the scientific context of western Modernity and still bears these traces. This limits its heuristic and project potentialities to a white-male-wealthy humanity one, while it neglects the black-female-poor humanity (ibid). It is an "enormous scientific weakness", even more serious in the light of the growing complexity and multi-culturality of social and educational contexts, which risks, according to Frabboni (ibid), transforming pedagogy into something outdated and useless. In light of the current state of the art, pedagogy as a discipline ought to bravely advance towards the exploration of unknown frontiers. This does not imply – in metaphorical terms – the application of grammars and syntaxes elaborated in the West outside its boundaries (this would be nothing new), but rather a radical review and complexification of those grammars and syntaxes in

view of the contributions from other socio-cultural geographies. In this way, pedagogy would be able to acquire an eastern and southern profile (ibid).

To this end postcolonial thinkers have been making a fundamental contribution since the 20th century. In particular, this paper aims to show the validity of categories developed through Latin-American Decolonial Thinking and Epistemologies of the South for the purposes of elaborating a pedagogy of and for the Mediterranean – that is a pedagogy:

a) that is rooted in the social, cultural and political context of the Mediterranean;
b) where the best of the thought, experiences and many, frequently pursued educational genealogies, which are disseminated throughout the region, converge;
and which can thus deliver a critical and transformative interpretation of the challenges that have occurred historically and still strongly appear today.

Some authors, especially Mayo and Vittoria (2017), have highlighted the emergence of and need for this pedagogy. It is one that conceptualises the Mediterranean "as a symbolic place of encounters and conflicts, a crossroads of cultures, migrations, exchanges, discriminations, crossbreeding and, therefore, a symbolic area in terms of globalization dynamics while; at the same time, an ideal ground for establishing the roots of [… a] critical and popular pedagogy" (Tarozzi, 2017, p. 10; translation by the author).

After having introduced Latin-American Decolonial Thinking and Epistemologies of the South, I will discuss their relevance for the Mediterranean context, going into detail with regard to the political-pedagogical practices of SOS Rosarno, a movement[2] which is active in

[2] This category is used in broad terms to indicate the collective subjectivity, political practices and forms of participation that are not primarily expressed through institutional channels. They move in the domain highlighted by the Italian feminism of difference *politica prima* (Graziani et al, 1996).

Calabria. Therefore, I will take only Southern Italy into consideration, but observe it from a Mediterranean viewpoint, thematizing the exchanges, conflicts and reciprocal representations that connect it to the rest of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. The final part will highlight the need for Decolonial Thinking and Epistemologies of the South to contribute to creating political-pedagogical alliances between ongoing movements in different places.

Theoretical contextualisation: the Decolonial Thinking and the Epistemologies of the South

By utilising the expression "epistemologies of the South", Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2016a) expresses hope for an epistemological transformation, essential for a renewed and global social emancipation, based on an engagement with the ways of knowing from the perspectives of those who have systematically been subject to various forms of injustice, domination and oppression caused by colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy. In this sense, the "South" is not simply a geographical concept but more of a metaphor for human suffering caused by these factors and for the resistance meant to overcome their effects. Therefore, the South also exists in the geographical North, among excluded, silenced and marginalised populations (for example, migrants without documents, the unemployed, cultural and religious minorities, victims of sexism, homophobia, racism and Islamophobia) (ibid).

According to Santos (2015), elaborating Epistemologies of the South entails demonstrating other ways of being, thinking, feeling, conceiving time and the relations between human beings and between humans and non-humans, of collectively sharing and organizing life, of producing goods and services and of facing the past and future, that can provide an escape route from

today's global social and ecological crisis (ibid). It is a bold enterprise because modern-western thinking is an "abyssal thinking" (ibid), which operates by establishing radical divisions in such a way that the knowledge that remains "on the other side of the abyssal line" – oral, popular, female, rural, indigenous knowledge etc. – are excluded. These forms of knowledge are viewed as incommensurable and incomprehensible beliefs, opinions, magic, idolatry, intuitive and "subjective" understanding. They are also excluded from what is legitimized as alternative knowledge, within the dominating symbolic universe (Santos and Meneses, 2010). The epistemologies of the South, therefore, risk being "wasted", because the theories and concepts developed in the global North and used throughout the academic world, are not able to recognize them and, when they do, they are not considered as contributions to social transformation (Santos, 2016a).

Despite its relevance, the perspective of Epistemologies of the South has not yet been adequately developed at the pedagogical level and in relation to the Mediterranean[3]. This paper aims to offer a contribution in this regard by acknowledging and strengthening the affinity that this perspective has with Decolonial Thinking, a transformative current of thought in social and human sciences, which arose in Latin America in the 1990s.

It expresses two fundamental break-away points from Post-Colonial Studies, to which it is, at the same time, a part:

[3] Both these dimensions were not contemplated by the research "ALICE – Strange Mirrors Unsuspected Lesson" coordinated by Boaventura de Sousa Santos and financed by the European Research Council. The project, carried out between 2011 to 2016, involved numerous researchers, mainly from the Centre for Social Studies, who conducted various research projects in twelve European countries as well as in Latin America, Asia and Africa. The objective was to develop new theoretical and political paradigms of social transformation with respect to four thematic areas: democratizing democracy; transformative constitutionalism, interculturality and State reform; other economies; human rights and other grammars of human dignity.

a) The assertion of an exclusively Latin-American, or in any case, global South, genealogy of thinking. While postcolonial thinkers converse critically with authors from the Global North – consider for example Gayatri Spivak's dialogue with Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze – Decolonial Thinking rejects these references. And it even distances itself from Marxism, with few exceptions (in particular Gramsci's thought, for his southern positioning)[4].

b) The affirmation of Latin-American specificity as the first laboratory of modern colonial violence (Ballestrin, 2013).

The concept of coloniality, elaborated by Quijano (2000), is the core of Latin-American Decolonial Thinking. Coloniality identifies a power model, experimented for the first time with the conquest of America and founded on the convergence of two elements:

a) The naturalization of the idea of race, an alleged different biological structure, that locates some human beings in a situation of natural inferiority compared to others.

b) The structuring of all forms of control of labour, resources and products around the world market through the dissemination of capitalism (ibid).

Even if none of these elements depend on the others for their existence or transformation, they are connected and consolidate each other (ibid). Power coloniality is therefore a system of social domination and capitalist exploitation of the world's workforce, based on a racial classification that puts the white male at the top of the racial hierarchy (Walsh, 2009).

[4] It must be said that this position was judged to be imprecise and counterproductive (Urrego, 2018). From my point of view, it is interesting as a passage: at a certain moment in its history, feminism also made a clean sweep of male traditions of thought in order to develop autonomous thinking.

Starting from these theoretical assumptions, Latin-American Decolonial Thinking describes the relationship between coloniality and colonialism in original terms. While colonialism, which bowed out after the first (United States, Haiti and Latin-American countries) and second (India, Algeria, Nigeria, etc.) wave of decolonialization, indicates a relationship of political and economic domination of one population (or nation) by another, coloniality, as the unsavoury side of modernity, continues to operate within the current global structure (Mignolo, 2002). In this sense, the "decolonial" category calls into question the existence of a transition from a colonial moment to a non-colonial one, and instead identifies an ongoing process in which positions, transgressions, creations, alternatives and horizons can be traced (Walsh, 2013).

The authors who refer to this perspective have conceptualized various dimensions through which coloniality appears in the multiple spheres of existence – coloniality of being, seeing, nature, gender – particularly pausing on coloniality of knowledge. This refers to the expulsion of sense systems, of symbolic universes and of non-Western knowledges from what is referred to as "knowledge" and the penetration of coloniality in epistemological, academic and disciplinary perspectives (Walsh, 2009).

According to Maldonado-Torres (2013), the bridge between the decolonization of being, knowledge and power is Decolonial Pedagogy. Creating this bridge can be done in the contexts of marginalization, resistance and struggle (Walsh, 2013) and is divided into two moments: a *deconstructive* moment of pedagogies that are based on epistemological silencing and on the ontological denial of anything that is not within the geopolitics of colonial knowledge (Motta & Esteves, 2014) and a *constructive* moment of the alternatives. The latter emerge from communities and subjects that incarnate

genealogies, rationalities and radically different systems of civilization and life (Walsh, 2013).

In order to understand these dynamics, it might be useful to mention the concept of "epistemic colonial difference" that Mignolo (2000) presents as both a consequence of coloniality of knowledge and a *locus* of enunciation. In the first case, epistemic colonial difference has established the importation of Western epistemology (especially philosophy and social and natural sciences) as the only possibility for those places in which thinking was not deemed possible – because they were deemed to be only capable of folklore, magic and myth. However, with regard to *locus* of enunciation, epistemic colonial difference creates the conditions for the emergence of cross-border epistemologies and the germination of decolonial options. Paradoxically, it would therefore appear necessary to generate knowledges starting from colonial difference as *locus* of enunciation in order to call into question colonial difference as an expression of coloniality of knowledge.

The hermeneutic potentialities of Decolonial Thinking and Decolonial Pedagogy have not yet been appropriately explored in European studies. This may be due, on the one hand, to the critical attitude that these approaches express against eurocentrism and, on the other, to their considerable rootedness in the Latin-American context which leads to the assumption that their interpretations are not pertinent to other realities. This paper, however, is based on the idea that conversing with the problematizations that come from non-European authors can lead to innovative research directions. It can offer new interpretations and indications in relation to the social conflicts that are exerting pressure on the borders and very heart of Europe. Moreover, in considering Southern Europe, and Southern Italy in particular, one must observe – as Mayo highlights (2019) – its affinity with Latin America, due to

the effect of migratory flows that marked and connected these two areas of the planet and their historic inheritance of injustice and exploitation in the rural context, associated to the landowner (*Latifundium*) system. This explains why Latin-American authors "have traditionally found, in studies on the Southern Italian question by people like Antonio Gramsci, suggestions and insights that provide them with a better understanding of the reality of political and economic dependence" (ibid, p. 14; translation by the author).

The relevance of these perspectives for the Mediterranean

The validity of Post-Colonial Studies for understanding the dynamics that involve the Mediterranean region has been discussed by several authors[5]. According to Chambers (2008), for example, the Mediterranean is the area in which opposing representations meet and clash, identifying it, on the one hand, as the cradle of western culture (since, over the centuries, it has witnessed the Greek-Roman civilizations, the cultural and historical formation of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the clash between the first modern European empires and the non-European empires of Charles V and Suleiman the Magnificent respectively), and on the other, as the alterity in contrast to which Europe has often elaborated its own identity. Besides its geopolitical and morphological definitions, the Mediterranean is a contested discursive political area that hosts a variety of cultural and historical regimes of truth (ibid). Furthermore, the Mediterranean goes beyond any interpretation which focuses on the nation-state – in other words, that which is considered as the natural form of modern historical backgrounds and of the interpretative mechanisms of social and human

[5] In the Italian context, the Postcolonialitalia research group (www.postcolonialitalia.it) comes to mind.

sciences (ibid). Looking at the Mediterranean therefore means taking into consideration transnational histories and conflictual interpretations which, in this current historical moment, particularly feature migrants – figures that implicitly question the modern-colonial system.

In this framework, the specific contribution of Latin-American Decolonial Thinking is based on the centrality of the concept of "coloniality" with respect to colonialism. While applying the concept of colonialism to some areas of the Mediterranean, such as Southern Italy, may, in fact, appear problematic and often ideological, the two founding elements of coloniality, i.e. the construction of alterity on the basis of racialization processes and the interconnected structuring of workforce control on the global market (Quijano, 2000), can both be found within the region's history and contemporary period. The structural character, for example, that undeclared labour racialization in agriculture has taken on in the neo-liberal political context, is a topic that I will return to later.

In terms of a critical pedagogy for the Mediterranean context, the sophistication of Decolonial analysis in respect of the epistemic, cognitive and disciplinary aspects of coloniality is extremely significant. Indeed, few other critical theories have placed such enormous emphasis on the epistemic dimension of colonialism and the need to deconstruct it[6] (Castro-Gómez, 2005). The approach of Epistemologies of the South also moves in this direction, conceptualizing a structural link between epistemic justice and social justice. More specifically, by

[6] This criticism certainly does not concern postcolonial studies, which focus on the epistemic dimension both in the forms of subjection (with pioneering texts such as "Orientalism" by Edward Said and "Can the subaltern speak?" by Gayatri Spivak) and in experiences of creative resistance (see for example, "The location of culture" by Homi Bhabha), up to indicating – above all thanks to Spivak's contribution – pedagogical practices able to open alternative horizons. For instance, Gastro-Gomez refers to Latin American classical currents, such as dependency theory, which according to him prioritize the historical, economic, political and social dimension of colonialism.

affirming that epistemic justice is an indispensable dimension of social justice, this perspective intends to promote it as part of a wider process of transforming reality. Furthermore, it is necessary to learn to identify, explore and practice alternatives, in a world that is becoming increasingly more unfair, discriminatory, and unequal. This is a world in which the current development model is, for the first time, stretching the limits of nature. Above all, it means beginning to think differently about the alternatives, that is, by seeing them as visions and possible solutions (Santos, 2016a). There are alternatives of course, but it is as if there are none until we have the theoretical, conceptual, cognitive, disciplinary tools required to recognize and assess them (ibid). In this regard, three directions seem to me to be relevant:

1. Promote the thinking of such authors as Antonio Gramsci and Danilo Dolci since they are key, almost *de rigueur*, references for a Mediterranean political-pedagogical genealogy. As is known, owing to his imprisonment, Gramsci's thought on the Southern Question lacked the systematic configuration that he would have liked to provide but significant strands can be found in various sections of his writings (notes, letters and an unfinished tract) on this topic. Gramsci's criticism of essentialist images of the South, often openly discriminatory, even on the part of socialist authors (Mayo & Vittoria, 2017), is worth mentioning, and especially the notion of the need to create an *historical bloc* (more than a simple alliance) between factory workers in the North and farm labourers in the South. This conviction, without undermining the Sardinian author's faith in the historical duty of the proletariat, is a significant contribution to extending Marxist theory. Dolci is one of the most emblematic yet largely forgotten figures of Italy's late twentieth century. His life trajectory, a great deal of which was spent in western Sicily, particularly featured extraordinary creativity in

experimenting political-pedagogical practices inspired by non-violence: reverse strike (*sciopero alla rovescia*), hunger strikes, marches, inquests, radio broadcasts. They were practices characterized by a considerable collectivity in interpreting reality and in searching for alternatives. From a pedagogical point of view, the reciprocal *maieutic* approach, conducted in laboratories involving people from the lowest classes, especially male and female farm labourers, is particularly important. This methodology is based on rediscovering and strengthening the Socratic metaphor[7], since the fundamental assumption is that everyone, through words, reflections and even silences, when those silences are spent in thought and are not a manifestation of oppression, can be maieutic towards others. The core of a reciprocal maieutic approach, therefore, contains a conception of communication as a fundamental, lifelong human need that is necessarily multi-directional.

2. Highlight the educational dimension of political experiences that surfaced during historical periods, that have rarely been studied from this decolonial perspective. Reference can be made, for example, to the season of peasant struggles, that accompanied the end of the Second World War and post-war period (from 1943 to 1949). It should be considered that the decrees promoted by Calabrian Fausto Gullo, Minister of Agriculture from 1944 to 1946, which marked a most significant progress towards agricultural reform in Italy, limited land re-distribution to creating cooperatives or similar formations, with the implicit aim of favouring popular organization (Ciconte, 1981). In this way, an extensive network of organizations was created, linked, at varying degrees, to the Communist Party, in which

[7] In Teetetus, a dialogue by Plato, Socrates compares his philosophical method to the art of midwifery (*maieutics*). In the same way as the midwife helps women to give birth, he too, through dialogue, helps his disciples to bring the truth to light. This metaphor has been highly popular in the history of western education. Dolci's innovation is fundamental: by adding the adjective "reciprocal", he emphasizes that the educational process is multi-directional.

subaltern social groups gained an intense experience of awareness, mainly centred on assembly discussions and land occupation. The expropriation of vast land-estates on the part of the landless cannot be fully understood without considering the widespread activity of popular education that peasant organizations promoted. Furthermore, a leading role in this process was played by women who, in the meantime, due to the upheaval caused by the war, had earned a more authoritative position within the family (Modica, 2000). Re-interpreting the season of peasant struggles, in a historical-educational key, helps us "understand and reconsider the historical processes, starting from the real social conditions, the peoples' cultural formation, the contradictions and social conflicts, seen from no longer a hegemonic viewpoint but a politically complex one based on social studies produced in the South" (Mayo & Vittoria, p. 112; translation by the author).

3. Re-invent some essential methodological experiments inspired by Freirean Pedagogy and Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed. Reference can be made, for example, to the Paulo Freire method of participatory curriculum development through generative themes and the legislative theatre. Freire devised the participatory curriculum development method through generative themes – brilliantly analysed by Torres, O'Cadiz and Wong (1992) – when he was a member of the São Paulo Municipal Chamber (1989-1991). The spirit that animated the method delved its roots into the Popular Culture Movement (MPC), within which Freire had begun to mature his pedagogic vision. At the same time, it exceeded its limits and 'simple-minded' approach. It particularly aimed at establishing a relationship between knowledge gleaned from the community experience, in which schools were immersed, and the world of systematized knowledge, by involving the teachers as practitioner-researchers. The legislative theatre was invented by Augusto Boal when he was a councillor for

the opposition in Rio de Janeiro (1993-1996). The name of this technique can be deceiving. It actually originated as a tool for elaborating legal proposals in collaboration with marginalized people and social groups generally neglected by government action, starting from their essential needs. In reality, it can be widely applied to a variety of fields since it aims to translate needs, objectives and shared visions into transformative and feasible solutions. Legislative theatre is therefore both a research-action practice and a tool for promoting active citizenship, based on the creation of transitive democracy experiences, that bridge the gap between representative and direct democracy. These methodological approaches are united by a considerable participatory and applied nature: they can be defined as "non-extractive" (Santos, 2016b). That is, they oppose the cognitive extraction brought forward by modern science with respect to other forms of knowledge, in a similar way to the natural extraction of natural resources, which is the usual form of capital accumulation in many parts of the world. They promote the construction of knowledge as a collective and dialogical process that starts at the bottom and focuses on action-reflection dynamics. They consist of barely trodden theoretical-methodological paths, that would appear to be extremely promising on both the scientific and social planes.

The political-pedagogical practices of SOS Rosarno

In terms of Epistemologies of the South and Decolonial Thinking, elaborating a Mediterranean pedagogy must include the creation of a collaboration network between educational communities and social movements, and constructing an ethical and political dialogue with the socio-cultural contexts taken into consideration, thus giving voice and visibility to the "social creations" (De Vita, 2009) that arise in the peripheral, interstitial and

bordering areas. Theoretical research is therefore a "theorization practice" (Walsh, 2013) that aims to promote a thinking process "by" and "with" radically other genealogies, rationalities, knowledges and experiences.

For this reason, I would now like to dwell on the political-pedagogical practices of the SOS Rosarno[8] association, currently active in the small town of Rosarno, in the province of Reggio Calabria, and very often at the centre of national news and contradictory rhetoric, due to frequent violent episodes linked to the exploitation of undocumented migrant farm labourers. SOS Rosarno was established following a farm labourer protest in 2010 which shocked the whole of Italy by revealing the unjust social dynamics behind fruit picking, citrus fruits in particular[9]. Re-organizing and re-launching previous initiatives thus gave life to an experience of food production, which involves Calabrians and migrants alike in search of sustainable and mutualist alternatives to the capitalist model of agriculture.

SOS Rosarno's commitment unfolds on several levels. Primarily, through an intense activity of accusation and sensitization, the association has contributed to bringing labour racialization to light according to which some particularly vulnerable worker categories, in this case undocumented African migrant workers, are reserved for the most fragile and less protected labour market segment. It is a phenomenon that the migratory policies of Italian governments of

[8] By using the expression "political-pedagogical practices", I highlight the intrinsic educational dimension of political practices. In fact, even if SOS Rosarno is not primarily active in the educational field, it is an agent of critical education with respect to the society with which it interacts and a context of symbolic, linguistic, reflective, ethical, theoretical, cultural and political learning. In other writings (Muraca 2020; 2019; 2018a; 2017), I have carried out in-depth analysis of the relationship between education and social movements, which can be attributed to four fundamental dimensions, once they are taken into account as pedagogical subjects and agents of transformation; contexts of learning; laboratories of decolonization of knowledge; and generative spaces of pedagogical theories.

[9] In this sense, the name "SOS Rosarno" expresses an appeal for solidarity and justice.

various political orientation have also contributed to since the 1990s. Even if they were justified by a public discourse against illegal immigration, increasingly reducing legalization channels[10] has produced further clandestine situations or – in other words – has created a mass of men and women without rights; people who can easily be exploited by the hidden economy.

In this process, it was necessary to problematize the dominant question of *caporalato* – a term that refers to the illegal hiring of labourers through intermediaries where legally-binding contractual obligations are not respected – which tends to exclusively blame the landowners for farm labourer exploitation. On the contrary, in the words of Giuseppe Pugliese, co-founder of SOS Rosarno: "if we want to use a military image, we must consider that after the 'caporale' (corporal) there is an entire series of further ranks reaching as far as general" (from my field diary dated 30th September 2020)[11]. This means that migrant worker exploitation is not an exception that can be attributed to the criminal behaviour of landowners but more of a structural characteristic of capitalist agriculture. In fact, following the logic of profit maximization, the prices of agricultural produce are determined by large-scale retailers and are influenced by international competition depending on the countries where the cost of labour is much lower. Weighed down by these mechanisms, then, farmers, in turn, find no other choice than to clamp down on labourers by imposing oppressive working conditions. Moreover, the influence wielded by '*ndrangheta* (Calabrian mafia) in the Rosarno area must also be considered: a power that has continued to change structurally since the 1970s in order to obtain total

[10] Currently, the only way to access legal immigrant status in Italy is to obtain an international protection permit or marry an Italian citizen.

[11] This section is based on documentary research and some short field visits. In fact, due to the pandemic, more prolonged and intensive fieldwork has, so far, not been possible.

control over agricultural production and eliminate every form of competition.

Therefore, in analysing SOS Rosarno, the pertinence of conceptualizing coloniality, intended as a model based on the activation of the race category and capitalist labour organization, which still operates on a global scale (Quijano, 2000), can be verified. Furthermore, the creation of alliances between small local landowners and African farm labourers that the association has encouraged, is an important aspect of the decolonial struggle. Above all, it goes against the grain of conventional dynamics of labour market segmentation where the introjection of the shadow of the oppressor[12] leads the oppressed to re-produce oppression, squashing those with less power rather than fighting for mutual liberation (Freire, 1971). In this sense, one of the most significant successes of SOS Rosarno was the creation of a food trade circuit as an alternative to large scale retail. This circuit mainly leverages fair-trade purchasing groups and is based on recognizing a transparent price for farm produce so that small landowners and labourers can receive a fair level of remuneration for their work.

An important step in creating these alliances was the deployment of an otherwise forgotten political genealogy. In fact, the present-day small landowners in Rosarno and the surrounding municipalities are the descendants of landless labourers who, in the season of the peasant struggle, originally occupied 850 uncultivated hectares of government-owned land. Even in the years that followed, Rosarno was the site of some of Calabria's most lively political experiences which involved key figures such as teacher and politician Giuseppe Valarioti, assassinated by the 'Ndrangheta in 1980. In terms of agro-ecological undertakings and anti-

[12] In Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire made an in-depth analysis of this common mechanism of oppression, dialoguing with fundamental postcolonial writings such as "The Wretched of the Earth" by Frantz Fanon and "The Colonizer and the Colonized" by Albert Memmi.

racist conflict, SOS Rosarno is therefore one of the most significant laboratories in Italy. It promoted the national Fuori Mercato network that connects urban and rural organizations, from Lombardy to Sicily, committed to creating "an alternative to the market rather than an alternative market" (www.fuorimercato.com), and is part of international networks as *Via Campesina*.

Conclusions

One of the most significant criticisms brought forward with respect to Decolonial Thinking regards the risk that insisting on the particularities of the *locus* of enunciation might translate into an intensification of the specificities of the various experiences of oppression and therefore lead to counterproductive separations and oppositions (Urrego, 2018). In the awareness of such risk, which must not be underestimated, this paper has tried to move in a different direction. It has attempted to demonstrate the validity of Decolonial Thinking and Epistemologies of the South contributions for the Mediterranean context. In particular, for the emergence of a critical pedagogy, rooted in political-educational genealogies, in processes and historical conflicts, in the practices of educational communities and social movements within the region.

It is an approach that puts to use one of the most important teachings of feminism according to which it is precisely from readings situated in reality that resonances that transcend boundaries can be generated (Mohanty, 2003). In this sense, one of the fundamental duties of the perspective of Epistemologies of the South and Decolonial Thinking should be to promote theoretical and epistemic political-educational alliances starting from developing and strengthening the connections that intersect in struggles for social and ecological justice. Let's think, for example, of struggles for agroecology, which involve social movements in

various corners of the South[13]. In fact, "the maps of the modern world can be entirely distorted, not only by colonial power and violence, but also by new critical associations" (Chambers 2012, p. 19; translation by the author).

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THIRDWORLD-IST PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (PAR), DEVELOPMENT DISPOSSESSION (DD) AND LEARNING IN INDIGENOUS AND PEASANT STRUGGLES IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT This paper addresses Thirdworld-ist PAR and its contributions towards organizing, networking and learning in social action in small peasant and indigenous anti-dispossession struggles addressing agro-extractive related DD in Baras, West Sulawesi, Indonesia. We elucidate the nature and role of Thirdworld-ist PAR praxis by mapping the following dimensions of learning in struggle against state-market led colonial capitalist dispossession: (a) learning to identify the agents of dispossession, the processes which enable dispossession and the related socio-economic impacts of dispossession; and (b) learning in, from and for social action taken to address dispossession. We conclude by taking stock of the current situation and the continued role for Thirdworld-ist PAR in this context of dispossession.

RINGKASAN (Bahasa, Indonesian) Artikel ini membahas PAR Dunia Ketiga dan kontribusinya terhadap pengorganisasian, jejaring, dan pembelajaran dalam aksi sosial perjuangan petani kecil dan masyarakat adat melawan *development dispossession* (DD/perampasan dalam pembangunan) oleh industri agro-ekstraktif di Baras, Sulawesi Barat, Indonesia. Kami membahas sifat dan peran praksis PAR Dunia Ketiga dengan memetakan

dimensi pembelajaran berikut dalam perjuangan melawan perampasan kapitalis kolonial yang dijalankan pasar dan negara: (a) pembelajaran dalam mengidentifikasi agen perampasan, proses yang memungkinkan perampasan dan dampak sosial-ekonomi dari perampasan; dan (b) pembelajaran dalam, dari dan untuk aksi sosial mengatasi perampasan. Kami menutup tulisan ini dengan memaparkan situasi saat ini dan peran berkelanjutan PAR Dunia Ketiga dalam konteks perampasan ini.

Keywords: Thirdworld-ist PAR; Learning in Social Action; Critical adult education; Peasant; Indigenous; Development Dispossession; Indonesia

Thirdworld-ist/Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Thirdworld-ist participatory action research or PAR, as "an endogenous intellectual and practical creation of the peoples of the Third World" (Fals-Borda, 1988, p 5), is embedded in African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean neo/colonial political contexts (Fals-Borda, 1979, 1988; Freire, 1979/2000) and intended as a "critique of colonial scholarship, imperialistic history and continuing neo-colonial presence" (Swantz, 2008, p 36) which "investigates reality in order to transform it" (Fals-Borda, 2006, p 353). PAR is undertaken together with "self-conscious people, those who are currently poor and oppressed, [who] will progressively transform their environment by their own praxis" (Rahman, 1991, p 13). As a problem posing pedagogy striving to undo colonial legacies of the culture of silence (Freire, 1979/2000), Third-Worldist/PAR in indigenous and small peasant contexts of DD is an oppositional and anticolonial politics (Fanon, 1963/1967; Mariategui, 1996; Zibechi, 2012) confronting "colonial continuities pertaining to territory, labor, culture/knowledge, racialized identities and production/social relations, actively working towards extending the potential for flattening hierarchical social

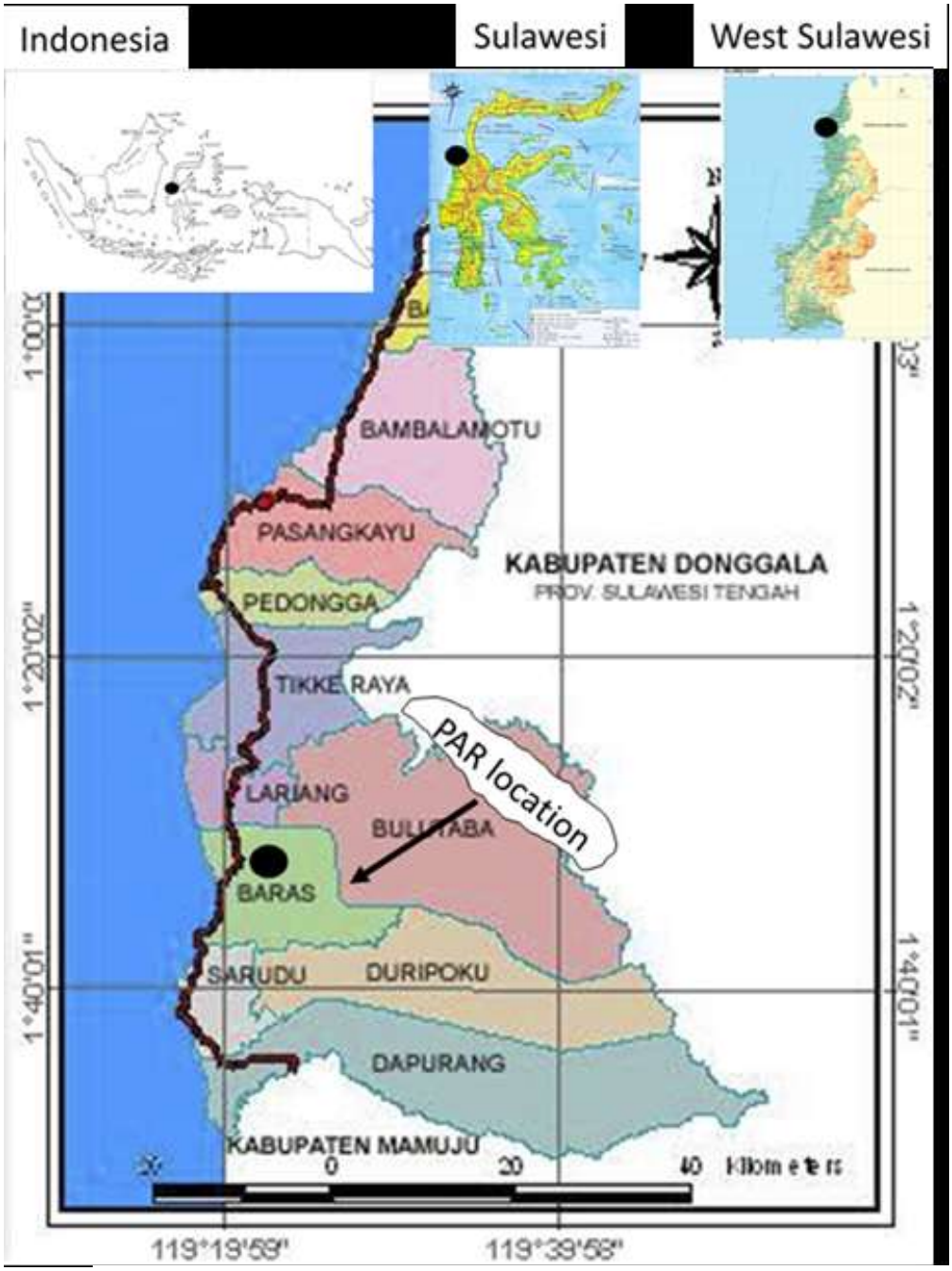
relations of cultural and material production" (Kapoor, 2019, p 87). Neo/colonial historical and contemporary indigenous and small peasant politics is cognizant of the reality "that all the colonized has ever seen on his [their] land is that he can be arrested, beaten and starved with impunity" while knowing well that "the land is the most meaningful…and it is the land that must provide bread and natural dignity" (Fanon, 1963, p 9). In such racial capitalist (Robinson, 1983) contexts of conflict and indigenous and peasant struggle, PAR engages a recurring process of triple praxis cycles of research, education and organized political action for popular democratization with marginalized social groups and classes in rural and urban-peripheral settings (Kapoor, 2020; Masalam, 2019).

This paper elaborates on a PAR process in rural Indonesia with the view to contribute towards engaged research and critical adult education projects in colonial capitalist contexts (Kapoor, 2013; 2021) addressing accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003) wherein peasants and indigenous peoples are forcibly and recurrently separated from their means of production (land/forests/water) and existential realities by the racial/colonial capitalist project of accumulation (Kapoor, 2017; Masalam, 2017; Masalam & Kapoor, 2016).

Regional contexts of dispossession and land struggle in West Sulawesi

The PAR initiative is located in the North Mamuju District of West Sulawesi Province in the eastern part of Indonesia. West Sulawesi is a relatively newer and isolated province established in 2004 as part of the decentralization euphoria after the fall of the centralist and authoritarian Suharto regime. The isolation can be traced back to the 1950's to 60's when the Darul Islam Movement, a

secessionist group fighting the Islamic state, led by Kahar Muzakkar, occupied the area.



Location of North Mamuju District, West Sulawesi, Indonesia.

Massive capital expansion began to open up the region in the 1970's for timber and particularly ebony wood

through legal and illegal logging. The region became the site of plunder for Suharto's cronies through forest concessions. The local communities described this highly valuable forest commodity as "*mainan Cendana*" (Cendana's toys).[1] PAR participants in Baras often recalled the early days of logging concession expansion in 1980's when they were intimidated by the forest concession companies who constantly reminded them that the hardtop vehicles and helicopters transporting the timber (tangible symbols of the company's presence on their land) belong to Ibu Tien, the first lady and wife of General Suharto (Kapohu elder, interview notes, August 2016). The subsequent opening of palm oil plantations by the Astra Group in the 90's, through its subsidiaries, i.e. PT Letawa, PT Pasangkayu, PT Suryaraya Lestari, and PT Mamuang, further exacerbated land alienation of the local indigenous and small/landless peasant population. The plantation companies are now a joint venture which includes: the Soeryadjaya conglomerate (original owner of the Astra Group); Sulawesi Wanabakti Lestari (owned by a timber businessman from Toraja, South Sulawesi, Salahudin Sampetoding); the Salim group (owned by Liem Sioe Liong and Suharto); the Lumbung Sumber Rejeki group (owned by Radius Prawiro, a former minister in the Suharto era); and the Adi Upaya Foundation (owned by Indonesian air force officers) (Sangaji, 2009).

In order to meet the labor needs of these plantations, the region was also a location for transmigration programs encouraged by the government. This scheme was part of the relocation area for rural constituencies facing multiple dispossession including, for instance, those displaced in the 1990s by the construction of the Bili-Bili Dam in Gowa district, South Sulawesi province (Rampisela, *et al*, 2009).

[1] *Cendana* refers to the name of Suharto's family residence in Jakarta and reminds people of the stolen wealth of Suharto's cronies.

The cocoa boom in the 80s and 90s also prompted the influx of people to the area in search of land. Together, these migrations (forced or voluntary) encouraged mainly under the Suharto regime, contributed to local tensions along ethnic and religious lines, especially for the early dwellers (*pakkampong* in local terms) of the area or the Baras.[2]

Under the current decentralization era, which commenced in the early 2000s, local/feudal elites jockeying for bureaucratic positions, exploited these tensions in the competition for resources as well as for influence at the grassroots, fuelling horizontal conflict between these marginalized social groups/classes. The entrance of multinational mining corporations in the region, such as Exxon Mobil or forestry and plantation corporates like the Gulf Investment House of Kuwait, further exacerbated local conflict by, for example, vying to finance local elections by giving out forest concessions to individuals on corporate leases in a bid to exercise corporate control over land (Morrell, 2002).

The participants of this PAR work in Baras and are members of rural social groups (indigenous ethnicities) and small/landless peasant working classes involved in the resistance against PT Unggul Widya Teknologi Lestari, one of the largest palm oil companies in the area. PAR participants are located in four villages/sub-villages including: Sipakainga (199 households); Tamarunang (517 households); Kapohu/Kasano (783 households); and Bantayan/Bulu Parigi (404 households) (North Mamuju Statistics Bureau, 2016). The four villages are currently

[2] Speaking historically, the majority who are now known as the indigenous Baras were from Kulawi, now a part of Central Sulawesi province. They lived in the hinterland in the forested areas until the Darul Islam rebellion in the 1950's forced them to move to their present locations closer to the coastal areas. However, they maintained the *baro to dea* (collectively owned sago forest), which they referred to as *jinja nosa* (poles of life) to describe the importance of the sago forest as food reserves.

administratively located in Baras sub-district and Duripoku sub-district, North Mamuju District, West Sulawesi Province. Sipakainga and Tamarunang villages are relatively new and where the majority of the people are originally from a neighboring province, particularly South Sulawesi. Kapohu and Bantayan have a much longer history dating back to the pre-colonial era as Baras villages are in what is now referred to as the Baras sub-district.

The PAR team included the lead author and a group of rural and now city-based student land activists of the Karsa network; a social movement-oriented non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Palu, the capital of Central Sulawesi. Since the early 2000s, members of the Karsa network have been extensively involved in *anti-perampasan tanah* (anti-land dispossession) activism, especially in Central Sulawesi, and more recently in West Sulawesi, including with the PAR participants in Baras. The lead author's engagement with the Karsa network goes back to 2009 when serving as co-director of Ininnawa Society, a federation of four organizations working in South and West Sulawesi.

Agents, processes and socio-economic impacts of palm-oil development dispossession

The PAR team and participants from five villages in Baras (Sipakainga, Tamarunang, Kapohu/Kasano, Bantayan/Bulu Parigi, including villages with reclaimed land inside the palm oil plantation) organized a series of meetings in each village to conduct joint palm-oil DD conversations over a period of 5 months (June – October 2016). What follows here is a localized analysis pertaining to joint discovery of the agents, processes and related

socio-economic impacts of the expansion of palm oil via a problem-posing PAR praxis. What is depicted below is a final product (artefact) from the engagement which took place over 5 months in Baras, followed by a selective analytical description (for illustrative purposes) of how and what emerged in relation to this diagrammatic representation of multiple dialogues over multiple sessions during this period.

At the commencement of the formal PAR engagement, the participants' analysis of the **actors affecting DD** was generally focused around two key antagonists, PT Unggul Widya Teknologi Lestari (UWTL) or the palm oil company they were in conflict with and Brimob, the special police

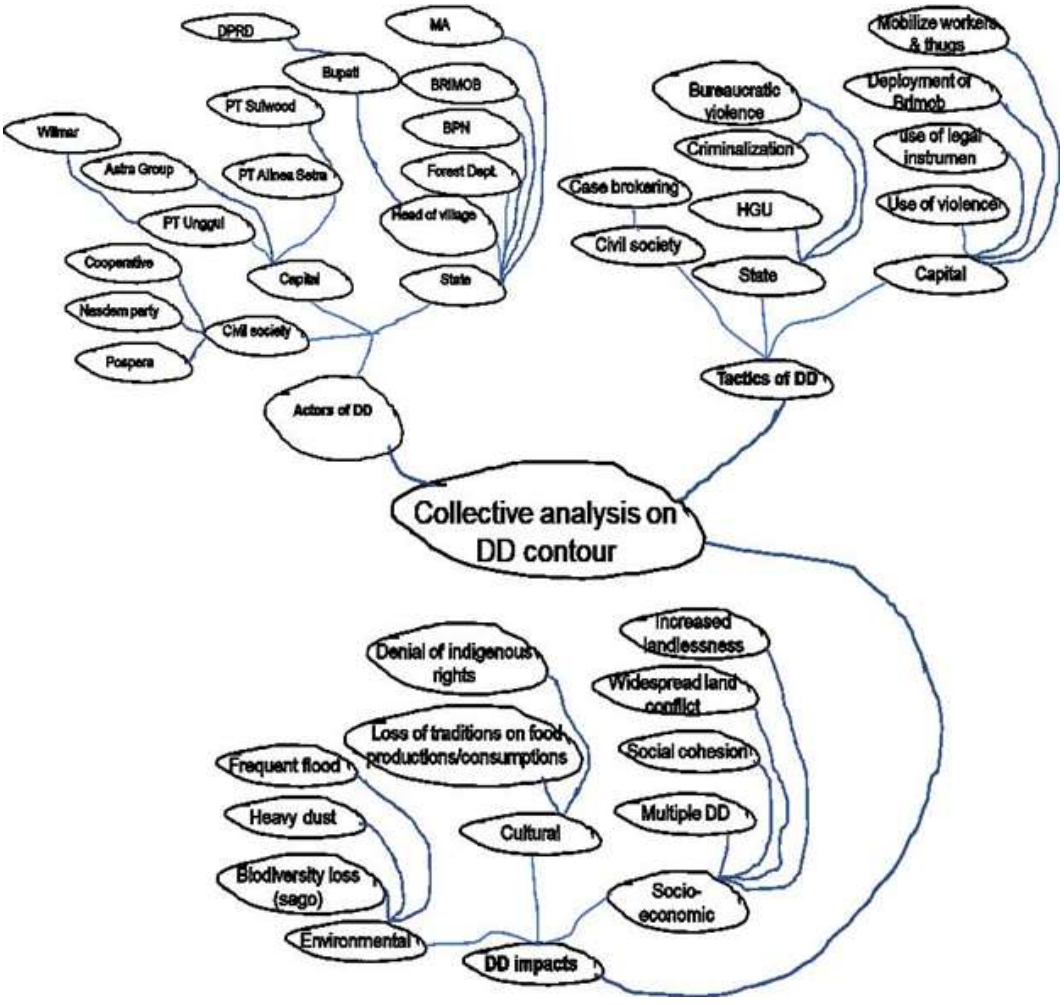


Diagram 1. Collective analysis on DD contour in Baras

force in the region. This initial analysis was understandable considering the fact that these were the most tangible and immediate actors that they had direct contact with in their daily experience as victims of ongoing dispossession. As sketched in the diagram, as the PAR team and participants developed a structural and historical investigation of the micro and macro context of DD, a more complete picture of the various actions of state-capital, institutional and geographical (spatial locations), began to emerge. The emerging complexity of the analysis was influenced by the varied socio-historical backgrounds of the participants. For instance, the historical identifications of agents and actors of DD shared by the *pakkampong* (indigenous) groups involved a much longer time span and variety and was different from that of the small/landless peasant migrants who had a different and relatively recent (including migratory) historical experience.

Karsa activists and the lead author introduced a more historical perspective on DD and wider (spatial and temporal) macro context of various DD actors in problematization exercises (of participant sketches) pertaining to questions of the key actors affecting land dispossession in this location. Such problem-posing dialogues saw *pakkampong* groups beginning to evaluate their DD experiences as being a long term, multi-actor instigated process of gradual dispossession. They gradually (through problem posting macro-historical exchanges) began to focus less on just the current experience, which began in the 1970s and early 1980s when massive capital expansion began to open the region for timber[3], particularly ebony wood, of legal and illegal

[3] There were at least 21 large logging companies operating in the region, Central and West Sulawesi, especially for the multi-million commodities of "black gold"/ebony wood, mostly connected to Bob Hasan (former Minister of Forestry) and long-time crony of Suharto family (Aditjondro, 1998).

logging and rely on historical memory to recall multiple agents/dispossession linked to current situations.

In terms of the later, one of the companies that the participants recalled was PT Sulwood, the logging company owned by Salahuddin Sampetoding; one of the timber barons who was granted a large forest concession in Sulawesi[4] by the Forest Ministry. The company began to operate in the area and brought in migrant workers from outside the region. A subsequent series of massive capital expansions took place in the 1990's through the opening of palm oil plantations by the Astra Group in the 90's, through its subsidiaries, i.e. PT Letawa, PT Pasangkayu, PT Suryaraya Lestari, and PT Mamuang. In addition to opening up land for their own plantation, these companies were also clearing up the forest for the transmigration scheme, mostly from Lombok Island, as part of the company's obligation mandated by the government, to involve smallholders under contract farming.

While the early dweller groups did not initially clearly categorize trans-migrants as actors of DD in these dialogical sessions, they gradually began to see the state's transmigration program as part of the palm oil expansion scheme and hence include migrants (as subordinate and marginalized actors) in the emergent bubble-diagrammatic analysis of key/secondary (captive) actors of DD through land and forest concession schemes (HGU).

Around the same period, some peasant migrants from South Sulawesi, especially Bugis and Mandar ethnic, gradually entered the locale searching for land to cultivate cocoa, an emerging and lucrative export crop. To legalize

[4] As an illustration, today the Sulwood Corporation is operating 500.000 Ha of forest concession in Central Sulawesi for carbon trading in collaboration with Keep the Habitat, an Australian environmental organization. http://nayu2.blogspot.co.id/2009/06/dana-karbon-dukung-pelestarian-hutan.html

the clearing of forest for cocoa cultivation, some local elites established farmer groups and cooperatives in 1997, as part of a state-sanctioned prerequisite to then secure state permission to convert forested land into farming lands. One of these groups was the Teranggi Raya who were granted the rights by the Forestry Department to convert 1050 hectares of forest into farm land which was initially slated for distribution to local small and landless peasants and especially the *pakkampong* affiliated to the farmer's group. However, since these cooperatives did not have the necessary heavy equipment to clear the land, the Forestry Department granted logging concessions to PT Alinea Setra to cut the forest for the timber industry.

After the peasants cleared and cultivated this land since the late 90's, in 2003, PT Unggul Widya Teknologi Lestari, the key perpetrator of land dispossession identified as such by small/landless peasant participant analysis, entered the region. PT Unggul Widya Teknologi Lestari (UWTL)[5], one of the top 50 high-performance palm oil corporations in Indonesia[6], is a subsidiary of Widya Group, a national private corporation producing palm oil commodities with plantation sites located in West Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Bengkulu, and East Kalimantan. Since 1985, the Widya Group has managed palm oil plantations and palm processing over an area of 41.680 hectares. To support the company's operation in producing crude palm oil (CPO**)** and palm kernel, Widya Group also built 5 processing mills with a production capacity of 45 - 60 ton/hour in each operation site, which in turn occupied more land. PT Unggul is a supplier for Indofood Agri Resources Ltd., a subsidiary of Salim Group,

[5] PT WUTL was established in 3 February 1997 by Dr. Ir. Muin Pabinru (director general of Food Crops Agriculture), Ir. Hasjrul Harahap, (former Minister of Forestry during Suharto era), Tjiungwanara Njoman, Johanis Izaak Andi Lolo, and Tjokro Putro Wibowo Tjoa, leading members of Indonesian Palm Oil Association.
[6] http://www.cdmione.com/source/50TopKelapaSawit2015.pdf

and Wilmar, who are leading agribusiness multinational corporations in Asia.

The collective analysis of the PAR participants unearthed such key developments around palm-oil/timber DD in the region and their agents. As far as key actors of DD in the region were concerned-- the singular importance of the special force police personnel (*Brimob*) deployment (state sanctioned coercive protection) to guard PT Unggul's workers from irate peasants whose houses and huts and food crops were being demolished and bulldozed to make way for palm oil plantations became increasingly apparent and central. This coercive arm of the state apparatus was not only involved as guardians of capital but as the participants began to explain through collective dialogue on the matter, there were several cases of local police officers (*Babinsa*) being involved (as small investors or via bribes/graft) in the land transactions over these contested sites. What also emerged here was the realization that police (*Brimob*) served as sales intermediaries for palm oil capital by buying palm oil fruits grown on contested land and selling them to the company's mills for processing thereafter.

> This is the same *Brimob* who used to chase, beat even threaten to shoot us when we were staging the open protests, now one of them came to us to buy the palm oil fruits. They used to call us thieves for harvesting the palm oil trees, so what should we call them now? *Penadah* (receiver of stolen goods)? (Tamarunang villager, interview notes, August 2016)

The diagram speaks to another DD actor that participants identified as indirectly complicit in affecting land dispossession – certain local NGOs and political parties who took advantage of the struggle and contestations over

these land concessions/deals. Both the *pakkampong* and peasant migrant participants mentioned local NGOs and political parties having approached them "offering help" (most often a deception), in return for payments to assist with securing legal recognition from the state for their land claims, which was seldom a real prospect as such. A Sipakainga participant recalls, "All of them admitted having direct access to dignitaries in Jakarta; one even said he knew someone in the president's palace (*istana presiden*) who can make sure that our demand to return our land can be fulfilled".

In terms of the **processes, avenues and tactics** deployed by the state-capital nexus in effecting DD, the two most common tactical avenues identified across the groups were the use of legal instruments to deploy the forest (HPH) and land (HGU) concession by the logging and plantation companies as well as the consistent use of violence and intimidation by the companies or by the in/formal state apparatus. Collective analysis repeatedly described the use of "legal instruments" to dispossess peasants and indigenous groups in the locale from their lands via ongoing (post-independence) colonial territorial policies, i.e., where "the state is independent already but we are still colonized" (*negara sudah merdeka, kami masih dijajah)* (Sipakainga villager, interview note, June 2016).

Participants recalled the early days of logging concession expansion in 1970's when they were intimidated by the logging companies who constantly reminded them that the hardtop vehicles and helicopters transporting the timber belong to Ibu Tien, the first lady of Suharto (Kapohu elder, interview notes, August 2016). During the height of the Suharto authoritarian regime, the logging companies owned by Suharto cronies deployed the powers of a corrupt state to intensify intimidation. Ironically, under the post-Suharto regime that was

supposed to be more democratic, PT Unggul was even more brazen in demonstrating their power to call in the *Brimob* (special force police) to guard their workers while they demolished and bulldozed the crops cultivated on contested land, destroying houses and huts constructed by the villagers, and replacing their crops with corporate palm oil trees for export production. Physical abuse by the police became a daily experience for those who dared to return to the land now planted with corporate palm oil trees. As one Sipakainga villager described it, "they acted like a scarecrow for the company, they shot their guns into the air every day just to scare us away" (Interview notes, August 2016). In addition to using the state apparatus to engage in coercive DD tactics, PT Unggul also mobilized their workers and hired thugs (*preman bayaran*) to intimidate the land struggle constituents, especially after they managed to occupy land in 2014. Since then, violent conflicts between the peasant groups and the company's workers have recurred each time the company tries to enter peasant reclaimed land.

One of the most common experiences among the peasant groups in Baras, as identified in problem-posing conversations pertaining to the tangible **impacts of DD**, is the trend of multiple dispossessions that can be traced back in conjunction with the several waves of massive colonial capitalist expansion related to successive increases in global metropolitan demand for various export commodities from forest products such as timber, cacao and palm oil. In the post-colonial period, particularly during the long years of accelerated economic growth-oriented development under the authoritarian regime of Suharto, the hegemony of developmentalism and modernization ideology during the Green Revolution and modernization of the agricultural sector in Indonesia in the 70's and 80's, increased landlessness and rural

poverty due to the substantial decline in agricultural labor opportunities and land dispossession. Among others, these two factors were the most notable causes of multiple dispossessions as identified in the join analysis in Baras. Some participants left their home villages to migrate to the neighboring provinces, or even to Malaysia, to look for better sources of livelihood with logging and plantation companies, before they arrived in Baras.

The socio-historical context also shapes the collective analysis on DD impacts where the *pakkampong* groups lamented the environmental impacts of gradual deforestation by various actors from the logging era in the 70's to palm oil in the 90's, including frequent flooding over the last several years and other environmental impacts due to company operations, such as the heavy dust in Kapohu, with potentially harmful effects to respiratory health. They also discussed the loss of the *baro to dea* (which literally means, collectively owned sago forest) or the indigenous conception of common space as a food reserve, due to the massive deforestation. The impacts of the Green Revolution campaign favouring rice over indigenous staples in the region, like sago, altered socio-cultural practices around food production and collective traditions related to *jinja nosa* (the poles of life), another indigenous concept honoring the significance of sago in terms of their traditions.

The longer process of gradual dispossession by different actors over time has created a *bannang siroca'* (meaning "the knotted threads"), as one PAR participant described the complex situation in local terms that led to further disruptions of the social fabric and led to tense inter-social group relations pertaining to land struggles. After the initial success of direct action for land occupation and political pressure to protest the deployment of anti-riot Police Mobile Brigade, the land struggle in

Baras/North Mamuju is currently faced with horizontal conflict between peasants and indigenous groups over land claims. The Bugis peasant migrants insist on securing the land that they bought from the local elites, while the *pakkampong*s focus on "*tumpu tanah"* (rights over land territory based on the ancestral claim). This was the primary issue that the PAR work attempted to address by bringing the different land struggle constituents together in order to help consolidate their claim over land being handed over to corporates by the state.

Reflecting on the learning engagement with the land struggle constituents pertaining to the contours of DD, i.e., actors, tactics, and its impacts, the PAR participants pointed out how they have learned to deconstruct and demystify the legalistic logic that the state-backed company has been using to affect DD. For instance, as discussed in the group analysis, participants gained such awareness by problematizing the contradictory roles of special force police (Brimob) stationed in Baras under the request of the company in the name of "law enforcement". They noticed how their characterization of the Brimob personnel changed from "scarecrow" to shoo away the villagers from the land that they have occupied, to "*penadah*" (receiver of stolen goods) as they started purchasing the palm oil fruits harvested from the contested land. For them, such contradictions are indicative of the enactment of a colonial territorial policy deployed by the post-colonial state apparatus on its own citizens.

Another key PAR learning (eye-opener) in relation to affecting DD pertains to the blatant use of legalized violence by the state apparatus and company-hired thugs masked by the logic or discourse of the need for accelerating economic growth-oriented development to "modernize" the rural frontiers allegedly for their benefit.

Especially for indigenous groups, the very idea of modernizing the rural peripheries by issuing land concessions to big capital is what has jeopardized their commons, *baro to dea*, and the sago forests which for generations have provided a collective source of staple food. There is acknowledgement now that the loss of physical commons in turn has dislocated indigenous cosmological beliefs in sago trees as *jinja nosa* (poles of life) thereby compounding the process of deforestation.

Palm oil development dispossession and the learning in, from and for social action

In responding to the government's campaign to turn their ancestral land of *baro to dea* (collectively owned sago forest by the original dwellers from Kulawi), as well as some cacao gardens owned mostly by the Bugis peasant migrants, into concession areas for logging and later in the 90's, for palm oil plantations, the Baras, i.e. the descendants of the Kulawi kept making demands for their ancestral land while the Bugis peasant migrants demanded return of their cacao gardens. Despite the ongoing threats and intimidation, for almost a decade since the plantation company seized their land in 2003, in order to continue cultivating their land, the peasants played "hide and seek" with the *Brimob* troops, who were regularly stationed at the company's compound. The following scheme illustrates the collective analysis pertaining to responses to ongoing dispossession, including the emergence and social grouping of various land struggle constituents, the politics and strategies deployed, as well as the achievements and challenges to date.

The following diagram on resistance addressing DD was generated primarily with the assistance of the Karsa land activists who facilitated separate group discussions with the five social-historical groupings of land struggle constituents, i.e. the Bantayan and Kapohu villagers, primarily where the early dwellers reside; Sipakainga and Tamarunang who were mostly migrant peasants; and the camps inside the reclaimed area that included villagers from both socio-historical situations. Although there were some members from different groups involved in the discussion in the village from outside these villages (e.g. the villagers of Sipakainga attended the discussion in Bantayan and Kapohu), the PAR engagement was not successful in organizing a wider inter-village expanded possibility.

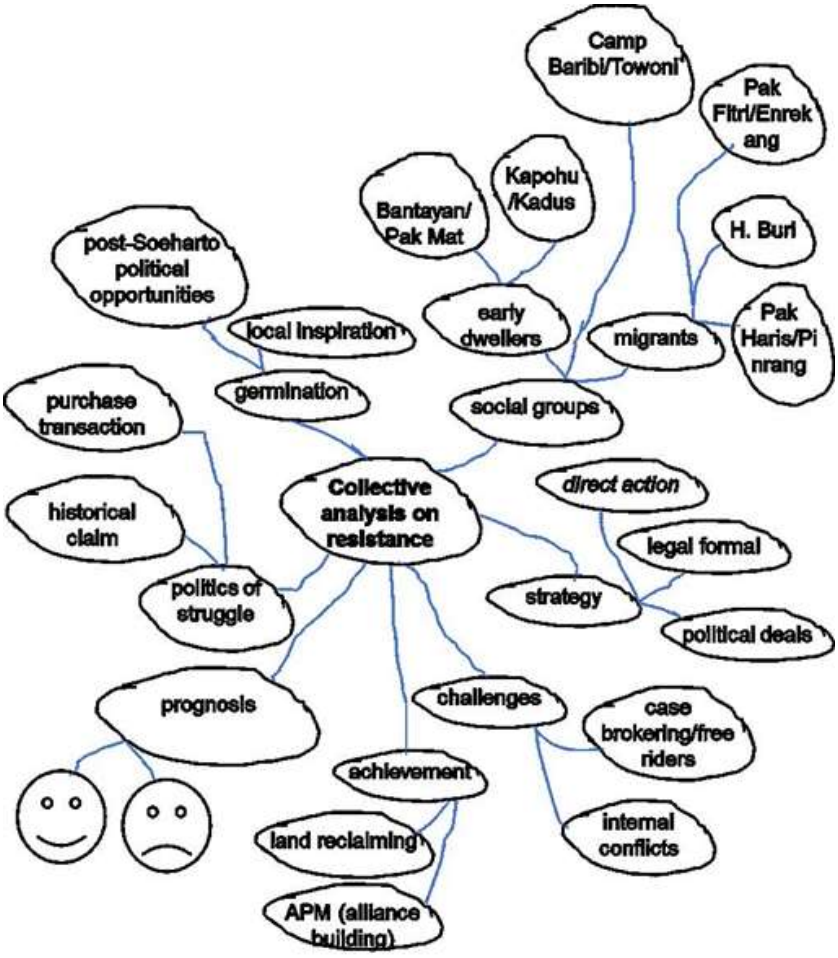


Diagram 2. Collective analysis on resistance in Baras

Emergence of the Aliansi Petani Matra (APM)

The coalition emerged from localized analysis regarding the politics of local dispossession in and in their collective attempts to resist continuous land alienation initiated by corporate expansion with the support of feudal elites and local bureaucrats who profited from the reproduction of a noxious blend of a feudal-capitalist mode of commodity production. The initiative to establish the coalition was taken by the peasant migrants (*pendatang*) in Sipakainga and Tamarunang in 2014 after they found out that the neighboring villages of the early dwellers, Bantayan and Kapohu, were also involved in the same conflict with PT Unggul. The *pendatang* groups invited the Karsa land activists to support them with this coalition building exercise. The above diagram drawn from collective learning sessions illustrates the establishment of the alliance as a considerable achievement for the land struggle constituents.

Initially, Karsa was only supporting the Sipakainga villagers before they managed to expand and consolidate the constituents of the struggle to include other neighboring villages. That was the time when the idea of establishing the North Mamuju Peasants Alliance (*Aliansi Petani Matra/Mamuju Utara*) emerged in a bid to meet the need for a common identity as a unified group contesting PT Unggul's claim to their land as opposed to becoming scattered individuals scouring for land. In the regular meetings leading to the establishment of APM, Karsa activists facilitated the large group discussions with all land struggle constituents from the five villages on possible options that the villagers could pursue and the respective consequences of each avenue. One such avenue was the legal method which according to Karsa

experience, would be more difficult to win, and even when they win in the local court, the company usually wins at a higher level. Another option was extra-institutional action by land reclaiming which would necessitate solidifying unity at the community level to deal with continued repression by the state, the company and the police.

Strategies, Tactics and Mobilization

During a series of meetings with PAR participants, they reflected on their options based on their understanding of their localized context and the wider setting of DD (as discussed in relation to agents and avenues for DD). The first option of going through the courts could provide results, yet with some disadvantages. For example, the peasants as plaintiffs must bear the cost of judicial challenges, and the corrupt judicial system would most likely fail them and eventually compel them to accept the legal decision. The extra-judicial path, on the other hand, would take a long time and could evolve in to an endless contestation, not to mention the severe consequences of such actions including terror tactics used by the company and arrest by corporate-complicit police. The advantage of operating outside the court system is that the learning in land struggle action could strengthen the peasants' collective solidarity and educate them to develop their own responses. All land struggle constituents could gain new knowledge about how to deal with state laws and company repression.

> …our relation is not like a lawyer and a client or a doctor and a patient, where the lawyer and doctor are responsible to treat the client or patient, and they just have to believe in what the lawyer or doctor decide to do on their behalf.

> Here we're all patients and doctors at the same time. Of course, there are lots of challenges, for instance we don't understand about the HGU (concession) law. But we can't avoid it, because we never invited the HGU, instead it's the HGU that came to us. This issue will never happen unless the government issued the HGU for PT Unggul on our land. So, we have to know what HGU is! If we don't know yet, that's what we're all here for, to learn together. By learning it ourselves, we will not be depending on outsiders to help us. Of course, we will not able to answer all the questions in one sitting. That's why we need to get together more often so we can solve the emerging challenges (Oyong, Karsa meeting minutes, 2014).

After considering the available options (as illustrated in the diagram above), the PAR group discussed the possible strategies that they could pursue. In July 2014, the social groups from these five villages had already started land reclamation on their own terms by building huts and planting banana trees as markers or symbols of reclamation on "company land". The police in turn destroyed the huts several times since but these were promptly re-constructed by the Baras. After the occupation, the next stage was building a *bantaya* (traditional building for communal meeting space), which was both a symbolic and functional means of affecting land occupation (see picture below).

Photo 1: *Bantaya, a communal meeting space inside the reclaimed land.*

After an agreement was reached to consider extra-judicial paths, the next collective strategic decision was to convert the contested land into settlements and farming sites. The land struggle constituents considered the reclaimed land as a fortress for defence (*benteng pertahanan*) to demonstrate the symbolic and functional meaning of the newly established settlement, as it would provide them with a safe space to focus on internal strengthening, while continuing to educate themselves about state laws that the company used as a legal grounds to displace them from their land. At the same time, the establishment of the new settlement also attracted many small and landless peasants from neighboring villages who were in conflict with other plantation companies and were interested to learn about the reclaiming process.

To further strengthen their claim and normalize daily life in the newly established settlement surrounded by

palm oil trees planted by the company, the constituents also built a *mushalla* (small prayer space). The *mushalla* is also a symbol of unity in their resistance as they learned from the fact that their temporary huts were destroyed by the *Brimob* (special police force), i.e., "a thousand huts we built and destroyed by Brimob will have no meaning, compared to destroying this one small *mushalla* which will make many people angry" (Group discussion note, June 2016).

Photo 2. Building Mushalla to claim, "We are here to stay!"

For the early dweller groups, historical messaging was also an important strategic and tactical mode of resistance. Some elders were rekindling the history of fighting the colonial Dutch plantations. For example, a symbol of resistance against the Dutch, an old canon that is venerated to this day as a tombstone for honoring their elders and martyrs, is a source of historical learning with

great contemporary potential in movement motivation and organizing.

Photo 3. Canon, an inherited regalia as a symbol of resistance.

To nurture a spirit of unity, elders often repeated the story about when their ancestors collected the coconut harvest, one of the most lucrative commodities at the time and bartered them for guns used in the armed struggle against the Dutch colonialists. They recount how their ancestors managed to halt the expansion of Dutch coconut plantations along the Lariang River in defense of their villages which were subsequently never colonized.

> … I am not a fearless old man, but I am determined to fight for the rights of my people. What will happen to my grandchildren if no more lands are left? They will probably curse me as an irresponsible grandpa!

> I have been involved in this struggle since I was a teenager, accompanying my father to go to the government offices in the city to file our official complaints against the intrusion of all sorts of companies with the state permission on our ancestral land. There was no road connection at that time, so we have to go there by boat. Since then, my family had been going through a lot of hardships to get our land back. Before my father passed away, he requested me to continue the struggle as the symbol of our respect to our ancestors (*penghormatan nenek moyang*). You can see some remnants of our old villages inside the plantation, the bodies of our elders were buried there. If I quit this struggle, wouldn't that be a big betrayal (*pengkhianatan besar*)? (Bantayan elder interview note, June 2016)

To some extent the historical learning was also intended to respond to the need for a sense of unity between the *pakkampong (*early dwellers) and *pendatang* (peasant migrants) as they recognized the "need to know the history of the arrival of people to this land. Hopefully by listening to these stories we can meet again more often" (Group discussion note, June 2016). Similarly, for the peasant migrant it conveyed the message of appreciating their "*bekas tangan*" (results of hard work) because "[a]fter leaving my village, then migrating to Malaysia for so many years, until I managed to secure this piece of land in Baras, would I just let the company to take it from me?" (Interview notes, Tamarunang villager, August 2016).

During collective group reflection on the repertoires of strategies and tactics pursued throughout their struggle since PT Unggul confiscated their land in 2003, participants generally agreed on the importance of direct action, compared to the costly and timely legal standing

and making political deals during the election. Moreover, the struggle constituents across generational and gender groupings developed their own analysis concerning the collusion of power structures, i.e. state apparatus, and capital or palm oil companies. For the elders, especially the original dwellers, this struggle is an expression of their homage to ancestral lands and the accompanying system of social relations that come with it, as well as intergenerational responsibility to provide land for their future offspring, as the key means of production for peasants. Female participants and constituents, especially mothers elaborated on their distinct roles in critical moments of state/market induced violence (e.g. acting as shields by leading marches), which have proven to be very effective as strategic actions to advance these land struggles. For the youth, their involvement with the land occupation have politicized their understanding by developing their appreciation of the political economic structure contributing to the palm oil led-DD as well as in terms of helping to define their contribution to the struggle.

> There are some young university graduates in this village, but they seem to be reluctant in associating themselves with our struggle, so I told them, "If you want to learn about state power (*ilmu kepemerintahan*), get yourself involved in this land dispute. Here, we have to confront with the experts of state laws (*sarjana hukum*) all the time." (Bantayan villager, field notes, June 2016).

Road blocking is another direct-action tactic that has been deployed several times and has proven to be an effective intervention because the groups are aware of the company's urgent need to get the recently harvested palm oil fruits to the mills as soon as possible before they spoil

as it has to be processed in fresh condition. It was an effective way to slow down the company's operation and affect their cost structures and bottom line. They also developed *jalur tikus* (mice road/short cut) to counter the company's control of road systems, passing the plantation area, allowing them to navigate the road connecting the villages inside the plantation. Throughout the joint reflective learning session, out of the three types of tactics mapped in the diagram, direct action was considered the most effective in disrupting and pressing demands on DD actors.

Photo 4. "Mice road" to bypass the security gate inside the plantation.

One important lesson from confronting the police and company's ongoing intimidation through the deployment of direct-action tactics was the importance of documenting such repressions. As Ipul, a young member of the land struggle, mentioned "we now recorded, mostly secretly, any encounter we have with the police. Other than as

evidence of police violent actions, it's also a useful tool to educate my fellow young people here in Baras about the land struggle and why it is important to play more active roles." The participants also learned to involve local media, printed or electronic, as a shield to avoid harsher repression from the state apparatus. On one occasion they even managed to cancel the deployment of Brimob undermining the company's request for them to be stationed in Baras.

For the constituents of the struggle, they are not only fighting for land (means of production); it is also about building a new structure of social relations between different social groups and classes caught up in DD situations. This is a pressing need especially after some signs of division started to emerge after they managed to occupy disputed land and started to plan for redistribution. At this point, PAR praxis became a potential means for re-consolidating the struggle. A group leader refers to the need for strengthening identities that could help with unity and solidarity across social groups through the process of "*duduk bersama*" (literally means sitting together):

> We should solve the rivalry that we now witness among ourselves. We fight against the injustice pursued by PT Unggul to all of us for so long, if someone wants to monopolize the land distribution now, are we not similar to Unggul?
>
> We need to sit together (*duduk bersama*) again to resolve the weakening of our struggle (*perjuangan*). We should be aware by now that sitting together is our strongest weapon against these awfully rich and powerful people. We managed to occupy this land (*pendudukan tanah*) only because of our collective determination

> (*keputusan bersama*) to do so, nothing else. We have spent so much money and energy going through the lengthy court processes (*lewat pengadilan*), but now I am not convinced that the lawyers and NGO people are really working for our cause as they promised. We have tried to make deals with the politicians (*jalur politik*), by giving them our votes, but all we got are empty promises. Enough with all that! If we fight against the company through the legal means available, we are doomed, so we just have to ignore it (*masa bodoh*). (Bantayan elder, field notes, June 2016)

The PAR process with the social groups and emergent classes involved in the struggle against palm-oil DD in Baras are still in their preliminary stages and will require further educational and organizing initiatives to strengthen the politics of resistance, especially in relation to the horizontal differences among the constituents of this formation; differences that the company and the state apparatus are more than happy to exploit to affect DD.

Based on the joint reflection with different land struggle constituents, there are two key learning themes. The first concerns collective identity construction across social groups/classes and organization building to further strengthen the internal consolidation of the different agents of land struggle in Baras. By creating alliances between different social groups participants have learned to demystify and challenge the state-backed legalistic claim by the company. The new organization, however fragile, has provided a platform to sit together and to foster the realization that "learning [the law] ourselves, we will not be depending on outsider" (Karsa meeting minutes, 2014). Second, participants learned about the limits and possibilities of direct action. As social groups/classes whose survival depends on the tactical capacity to

over/side step the law, direct action is a logical choice in terms of the available repertoires of resistance. Participants have learned that the other options they have pursued such as going through the court and making voting deals with local politicians have seldom been fruitful. In fact, as a Bantaya elder put it quite succinctly, the most potent resistance strategy so far is being "*masa bodoh*" (to ignore) the law.

Continued Engagements in Sulawesi and Thirdworld-ist PAR

Initially it was agreed among the struggle constituents that the land would be distributed fairly, with landless members getting priority. Once the early achievement of reclaiming the land was attained, some key figures of the struggle started to use their influence to claim a larger share on the basis of length of involvement in the struggle and legality of ownership evidence, as well as ancestral rights in the case of the *pakkampong* groups. Some peasant migrants could not provide convincing evidence of where exactly the land they bought was located. Receipts for transactions do not specify the exact location of the land purchased and only provide a general geographical site of the plot. In fact, some of the receipts reference the wrong place and wrong address and do not match up with a claim.

The PAR engagement has been focusing on internal reconsolidation to disentangle this *bannang siroca'* (knotted thread) throughout the problem-posing exercises of analyzing the contours of multiple dispossessions that both the *pakkampong* and *pendatang* groups have experienced as well as reflecting on their own tactics and strategies in addressing DD. One possible solution identified in the group discussions with the land struggle

constituents was organizing a series of reconsolidation meetings with the key representatives from each group, followed by larger group meetings with all land struggle constituents from the four villages. These meetings would also be utilized as an opportunity to affirm the agreements over the direction of the land struggle moving forward. Agenda items proposed for this large meeting included: strengthening the claim over the contested land; solving the issue of conflicting claims; and reconsolidating the collective identity of the struggle.

In addition to the primary commitment of Thirdworld-ist PAR to facilitate practical movement interventions, this action oriented participatory inquiry is a continuous attempt to construct locally sensitive analysis based on the lived realities of the marginal peasant and indigenous people, while being attentive to the structural and political impositions of a colonial capitalist political economy of DD; a process which affirms the agency of small/landless peasants and indigenous peoples, replete with all its contradictions and possibilities (Kapoor, 2017). As peasant and indigenous resistance to DD continues to expose the inherent contradictions of capitalism (including the contradictions of movement responses that are embedded in a terrain of capitalist commodification which divides groups variously impacted by DD) and the living legacies of colonialism while producing movement relevant knowledge that is emergent from their struggles addressing cultural and material dispossession, they continue to produce "theory that both explains and enables action" (Foley, 1999, p 130).

The consideration of possibilities and challenges of learning and knowledge production through the PAR praxis with the land struggle constituents in Baras suggests continued directions for a PAR praxis in Sulawesi which embraces the idea of a resurgence of a non-

commodified land-based cosmic vision (Masalam, 2017, 2019; Nichols, 2020) to constantly confront the exploitative, pauperizing and dehumanizing impacts of the continuous intrusions of colonial capital and its cultural ideological attendants in the rural frontiers. For that to happen, peasant affinities to land need to pay attention to the details of the local and immediate political situation (Masalam, 2017, 2019) as the primary basis for building towards the more nebulous process of macro-political efforts to try and address centres of power and actors that are harder for peasants and the indigenous to reach.

Building on the engagements with the land struggle constituents in Baras, the continued direction of this PAR praxis will be particularly geared towards tackling localized dynamics in their respective places while expanding the "trans-local networking" aspect (Masalam & Kapoor, 2016). The focus remains on strengthening the alliance between the migrant peasant and early dweller groups through reconsolidation meetings to deal with the varied interests and understandings of land around a reclamation politics fraught with the contradictions of neo/colonial impositions associated with the problematic and fractious dialectics of land dispossession and possession. To this end, this Thirdword-ist PAR praxis continues to produce peasant and indigenous movement relevant knowledge, while affirming the courage and persistence of the wretched of the earth in localized contestations, despite the odds, embedded in colonial capitalist power structures.

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ACCENTS MATTER: AN ANTICOLONIAL EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF STANDARD ACCENT HEGEMONY ON LINGUISTIC MINORITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT Around the world, English is spoken with a variety of accents. However, due to the legacy of linguistic imperialism, American and British English accents remain the most valued ones. As a result, those whose accent is different are often ill-perceived and treated unjustly in society. This article draws on several case studies and the work of postcolonial theorists and sociolinguists and participants' narratives collected over a semester to examine ways in which English speakers from diverse linguistic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and countries of origin have been subject to accent discrimination in colleges and universities. Study findings suggest that the intersection of participants' native language, ethnicity, and country of origin played various roles in the way and the degree to which they experienced accent discrimination.

KEYWORDS: English, Narratives, Ethnicites, Native language, Immigrants

Around the world, English is spoken with a variety of accents. However, due to the legacy of linguistic imperialism, American and British English accents remain the most valued ones (Phillipson, 1992). Specifically, because of social status being accorded to so-called standard English accents, those whose accent is different

are often ill-perceived and treated unjustly in society. For example, an American Standard English accent is highly valued in American schools and mainstream society. As a result, people who speak with this accent are generally perceived as smart and linguistically sound. By contrast, those whose accent is different are often ill-perceived and treated unjustly in society as well as in schools (Baugh, 2018; Eisenchlas and Tsurutani, 2011; Gee, 2010b; Lippi-Green, 2012).

Indeed, linguistic minorities who speak with a different English accent routinely face "linguistic profiling" (Baugh, 2018). As for immigrants, they are often blamed for not trying hard enough to learn the standard American English accent regardless of their life circumstances (Lippi-Green, 2012; Macedo, 2019; Neuliep and Speten-Hansen, 2013; Wolfram and Schilling, 2015). Speaking English with an identifiable non-dominant English accent often presents a problem for linguistically and culturally diverse groups in the United States, including bilingual students and professionals (Garcia and Kleifgen, 2018; Macedo, 2019; Nieto and Bode, 2018). Nonetheless, these groups have faced such challenge with much resilience. This article draws on several case studies and the work of postcolonial theorists and sociolinguists (Baugh, 2018; Donaldo, 2019; Gee, 2010; Thiong'o, 1986) and participants' narratives collected over a semester to examine ways in which English speakers from diverse linguistic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and countries of origin have been subject to accent discrimination in colleges and universities., While some participants directly experienced this systemic linguistic oppression, others witnessed family members, classmates and family members being subjected to it. The intersection of participants' native language, ethnicity, and country of origin was explored, for the study aimed to highlight the role such intersection played in various forms and the degrees to which they experienced accent discrimination

Language, Accent, and Ethnic Diversity in The United States

There is a tendency in mainstream society to focus on one form of identity and sideline others to the margins, even though research shows that all forms of identities intersect and impact our lives (Crenshow, 2016; Matsuda, 1991; Omoniyi, 2016). For instance, one might be privileged in one context and disenfranchised in another, depending on whether or not one's identity, like one's native language, is valued and respected. Individuals whose linguistic identities reflect the reality of, and fit into, the mainstream Standard English accent tend to receive better treatment than those whose accents are looked down upon in schools and society at large (Baugh, 2018; Macedo, 2019). Specifically, in the United States, linguistic minorities, including immigrants, African Americans and Latinx, whose English accents differ from the alleged standard American accent experience accent discrimination (Baugh, 2018; Rosa and Flores, 2017). Linguistic minorities have faced linguistic discrimination partly because linguistically prejudiced individuals often assume that the latter are intellectually inferior because of their accent. As a consequence, they often do not receive the respect they deserve, despite their academic and professional accomplishments (Omoniyi, 2016; Rosa and Flores, 2017; Torres, 2004).

However, it is worth noting that it is not merely their native language that is the determining factor leading to the discrimination that linguistic minority groups face in schools and society. Other factors, such as their ethnicity and race, play an equal role. For example, Rosa and Flores (2017) examined in their study the manner in which Latinx were routinely mistaken for Mexican immigrants and were treated as second language English learners even though they were born and raised in the United

States. Specifically, Rosa and Flores (2017) noted that the way many Latinx spoke was often linked to their ethnicity and an immigrant status attached to their sociolinguistic identity.

Minoritized linguistic groups often feel pressured to speak in Standard American English accent in schools as well as at work in order to fit in, as it is the accent most valued in these institutions (Lippi-Greene, 2012). However, when they return home from work or school, they switch back to the accent or language familiar to their family members, friends, or neighbors–something those from dominant linguistic groups do not have to do in order to fit in (Rosa and Flores, 2017). While this study is not arguing against Standard English accent, it draws from participants' heartfelt narratives to challenge the hegemony of the Standard American English accent, pointing out its effects on English speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and countries of origin.

Study Design

The data for the case studies stem from a graduate seminar course on language and literacies that I taught at a state university located in Las Cruces, New Mexico. There were 12 students who attended this seminar, and they were from diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds and nationalities. The idea of conducting the case study stemmed from engaging discussions about accent and language hegemony occurring in class during the semester. After the semester ended, I sent an email invitation along with a consent form to students who attended the seminar, asking them if they would volunteer to take part in the study. Although all the attendees were invited to participate in the case study, only eight agreed to do so. While some wrote about their personal experiences with standard accent hegemony, others talked

about classmates, friends, and family members they witnessed experiencing this form of domination. Students expressed their opinion about these issues, drawing from personal, academic, and professional experiences.

Participants' Backgrounds

Individuals taking part in this study spoke in diverse forms of accented English. Specifically, while some were native speakers of English, others were not. They were dominant English speakers but whose first language was Spanish, among others. They were from Ecuador, Colombia, Puerto Rico, India, Ghana, Jamaica, and New Orleans (USA). Whereas, some were k-12 teachers, others were school administrators pursuing doctoral degrees. Their ages varied from 30s to 50s, and they were at different stages in their academic and professional careers (see Table 1 below depicting participants' backgrounds).

Table 1

Participants' Background

Participants' Backgrounds

Total: 8	3	1	1	1	1	1
Ethnicity/ Race	Latino/as	Chicana	African American	Asian	European	African/ Caribbean
Age	36-48	42	52	56	38	23-33
Gender	Female/ male	female	female	Male/female	Male	Male/ female
Native Language	Spanish	Spanish/ English	English/ AAV	Gujarati	Spanish/ Catalan	English/ Twi
Social Class	Working / Middle Class	Middle class	Middle Class	Middle Class	Middle Class	Working Class
Countries	Mexico/ Puerto Rico/ Columbia	USA	USA	India	Spain	Ghana/ Jamaica
Social Status	Students/ Professor	Administrator	Professor	Instructor	Professor	Teacher/ students

Data Analysis

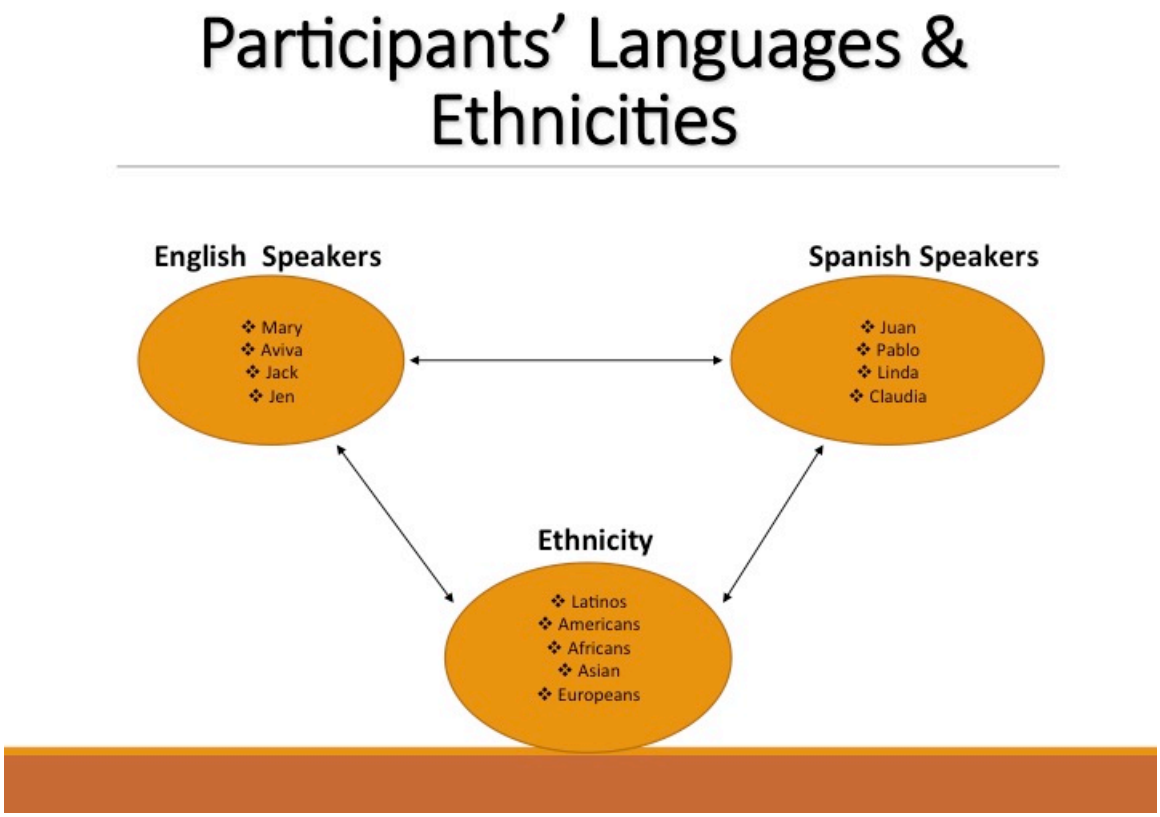
From the whole dataset, two linguistic minoritized groups were selected, based on their experiences with accent discrimination. Since participants' native and dominant languages were English and Spanish, I compared and contrasted speakers of these two languages. This comparative analysis was done to underscore various ways in which diverse English speakers might have been subjected to various degrees of accent discrimination. I used narrative analysis drawing from Johnson's (2014) work in sociolinguistics to interpret and analyze the data.

Narrative analysis helps understand the "personal and social world" of the participants (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Indeed, such analysis helps capture participants' various experiences with language and accent discrimination as well as their views on it. Through this lens, I began the data analysis process by focusing on identifying specific themes emerging from participants' narratives. Patterns, variances, resemblances, and differences in participants' accounts about accent discrimination were noted. Carefully identified themes were highlighted to illuminate plausible connection between accent discrimination participants' experienced and their first language, ethnicity, and country of origin.

Through narrative analysis, the root causes of accent discrimination and the degree to which it affected participants involved in the study surfaced. However, for validity and transparency reasons, participants were granted the opportunity to revisit their stories. Specifically, I emailed participants the interpretation and analysis of their narratives. Some added to comments made about their lived experiences with accent discrimination, while others simply confirmed and approved what was sent to them. Their narratives were

divided in two units addressing their experiences with accent discrimination. For clarity and precision purposes, Figure 1 below features the two group s of participants, divided by their native languages and ethnicities.

Figure 1
Participants' Languages and Ethnicities



Analysis of Case Studies

Unit One: Participants Whose First Language is English

In this unit analysis, narratives across the dataset were used to examine ways and the degree to which study's participants might have experienced accent discrimination because of their diverse English accents. While for some, English is their first language, for others, it is their second language. Their cases draw attention to

the fact that merely being dominant speakers of English, even as one's first language, does not necessarily guarantee protection from accent discrimination. Mary's experience is a case in point.

Mary's Case

Mary (pseudonym) was a former high school English teacher in her 30s, recently pursued a doctoral degree. She immigrated to the United States from Jamaica when she was 11 years old, and she has been living here since. Mary experienced English accent hegemony in American schools when she first moved to the United States. When asked to talk about her experience as an immigrant whose first language is English, Mary began by retracing her journey from her native Jamaica to the United States; she talked about her schooling experiences during which she endured accentism:

> I was born and raised in Jamaica. It hadn't occurred to me when I left Jamaica for the US that my dialect would somehow come to define so much of my social and academic identities. Almost immediately as I arrived, my teacher wanted to place me in a bi-lingual class, never mind that I spoke English. My accent was enough to distinguish me as a non-standard English speaker (My teacher thought I was speaking French creole).

Mary's narrative unveils the extent to which schoolteachers, consciously or not, often impose the hegemony of Standard American English accent on linguistically minoritized groups speaking in distinct English accents. Like many immigrants of color from formerly colonized English-speaking countries, Mary found herself being caught between two accented English worlds. In Jamaica, her middle class English accent is

accepted and treated as standard, whereas in the United States, such accent is seen and treated as a problem that needs immediate remedy rather than being seen as a linguistic asset to cherish, maintain, and build on to teach her.

As soon as Mary's teachers realized that Mary had a distinct English accent, which, according to Mary, was not even recognized as English, she was placed in a bilingual program to learn English even though she already spoke it.

> The complexity of my language experience has made me realize that I sort of exist in an imperfect speech place. I can no longer master my first dialect, and yet I am still not able to master the standard variety I engage with daily. I am self-conscious often, especially because unlike my friends who do speak other languages, English is my first language.

Mary is not the only participant who experienced accent discrimination in American schools despite the fact that English is her first and dominant language. Other speakers of English, born and raised in former British colonies, like India and Ghana, are also targeted because of their distinct English accents, as Aviva's case illuminates.

Aviva's Case

Aviva (pseudonym) is an immigrant from India. She had her first master's degree in Bengali, one of the languages spoken in her native land. While living in India, she taught literature at the Visva-Bharati University, founded by the Nobel Laureate poet and educationist Rabindranath Tagore. After immigrating to North America–Canada and then United States–some 25 years ago, she obtained her

second master's degree in English at a state university. Aviva is currently an Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition at a Community College located in the Southwest of the United States while pursuing a doctoral degree in Language, Literacy, and Culture at a US university. Aviva talked about her experience with accent discrimination:

> A lady is there sitting by me. She and I, too, begin chit-chatting about this and that. Where are you from? Kolkata, India. Oh, how I love talking about my country and my hustling and bustling city! What brings you here? Well, my husband's work. The questioning continues: What do you do? I tell her I teach English at the community college here in town. She pauses, stares at me, and breaks into a laugh. I don't hear the hum anymore.

Aviva's typical South Asian English accent instantly made her become a marker, a foreigner, or simply an outsider. Aviva was ridiculed by this woman who at first showed curiosity to know her and then ridiculed her distinctive English accent. Aviva, who grew up speaking English in her native land and who has lived in two English-speaking countries, continued to face insensitive linguistic comments from both random individuals and her students because of her English accent.

> Suddenly, the world around me falls silent while her laugh in my head keeps on ringing and ringing. Sometimes students, those who do not do well in my composition course, leave comments in course evaluation stating that they do not understand the content subject of what I teach because of my accent. These comments, however, are few and far between.

It does not seem to matter that Aviva is an English college professor who is pursuing a doctoral degree; she is still prone to insensitive linguistic comments about her English accent. Like Mary, Aviva is caught between two accented English worlds without her choosing, and she is not alone. That is, other English-speaking immigrants, like Jack, from a formerly British colony, Ghana, have faced similar linguistic challenges.

Jack's Case

Jack (pseudonym), a 23-year-old college student, is from West Africa. Specifically, Jack was born in Ghana, and he grew up in a middle-class family. Although Twi is one of the dialects spoken in his tribal group, Jack grew up speaking English, which has been his dominant language, particularly since he moved to the United States. Jack stated that his English accent was considered and treated as foreign in comparison to American Standard English accent, particularly when he first moved the United States.

Like other immigrants, Jack moved to the United States to go to college pursuing his dream. At the time of the study, he was on his second year in college. Jack explained how he felt when he was discriminated against in class because of his distinctive English accent.

> When I first started college–I had been at the United States only for a couple of months–my accent was very different. Every time I tried to ask questions in class, I could see some of the students giggling. This continued for a while, which made me feel embarrassed and never wanted to speak uttering a word again in class.

Jack was tongue-tied in his class. He feared his classmates would make fun of his English accent differing

from theirs. Jack's accent was very different when he first started school in the United States, and his peers laughed at it each time he asked questions in class. Facing this form of discrimination must have been frustrating for Jack as an immigrant who grew up speaking English as one of his dominant languages. However, his instructor intervened and tried to stop his peers from bullying him. Jack says, "But the class instructor stepped in and warned those students. I was always overwhelmed with fear when homework, particularly oral presentation, was due because I didn't know how my classmates would react to my English accent."

Like Mary's and Aviva's experiences, Jack's accent discrimination experience shows that growing up speaking English as one's first and/or dominant dialect does not automatically guarantee historically disenfranchised individuals or groups' protection from accent discrimination. Like Jack and Aviva, Jen, an African American University Professor, was subjected to accent discrimination at a store, despite the fact that English is her first language and the only language she speaks.

Jen's Case

Jen (a pseudonym) was born and raised in New Orleans. She is African American. She earned all three of her degrees in Louisiana. She is currently a tenured professor at a university located in the Southwest of the United States. At the time of the accent incident she was narrating below, she was working on her doctorate in education administration and was considered middle class. This was a first-time event. Until then, most people commented on how much she did not sound like she was from New Orleans, so to now be told that she could not be understood because of her accent (and in New Orleans) was news to her.

> All my life, I have hated my voice. I am from New Orleans, and I am reminded often that I do not sound like I am from New Orleans. I guess that could be a compliment, but I am never sure. When I lived in the Northeast, the students told me that they could not tell that I was from the South. However, my husband's Southern accent is more pronounced than mine, and he received negative feedback regularly. My challenge came once when I wore a decorative head wrap to a car dealership. One of my students had visited Greece and bought me a wrap. I was launching a complaint in the car dealership, and I thought I was very clear about my complaint. I thought I had been charged for a diagnostic that was attributed to a recalled part. I thought I should not have to pay the diagnostic fee, so I requested a refund. The White woman became very angry and called over a Hispanic guy to "deal with me" because I wasn't speaking English.

The manager appeared to have assumed that Jen was an immigrant possibly because of her speech pattern, that is, her African American Vernacular English (AAVE) accent combined with the African attire she was wearing. African Americans, particularly those from the South, speak in African American Vernacular English accent. However, Jen stated that people, including students, could not figure out whether she was from the South based on her accent.

Nonetheless, she was discriminated against. Jen added:

> I was disturbed by that because the only thing I think she did was look at the ethnic head wrap

> and made assumptions about my ethnicity. I explained to the gentleman that I was not sure which language she thought I was speaking, but I assured him that English was my primary language.

American African vernacular (AAVE) is a language, or dialect, that plays a fundamental role in cultural and historical aspects of African Americans' lives. Yet, AAVE has hitherto been constructed as inferior in comparison to Standard American English–a view challenged by linguists, like Gilyard (2011), who stated:

> Linguistics teaches us that African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is a legitimate language variety in its own right. It is not a broken version of any other verbal system and has the same standing among linguists as any other variety of language, be it an English version or otherwise. Like spoken languages worldwide, AAVE is fully conceptual; is composed of between ten to seventy meaningful sounds; has rules of syntax; and contains statements, commands, questions, and exclamations. (p.53)

That AAVE accent is inferior to the Standard American English accent is a faulty claim in that up until now, no scientific research has proven that a particular language or accent is superior to or better than another (Baugh 2018; Green, 2002; Labov, 2011; Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 2016; Wolfram & Schilling, 2015). Participants' cases show that speaking English, even as one's first language, does not necessarily exempt one from accent discrimination. That being discriminated against because of one's English accent also depends on underlying factors, such as one's race, ethnicity, and country of origin, as the following narratives illustrate.

Unit 2: Narratives of Participants Whose First Language is Spanish

This unit contains the stories of participants whose first language is Spanish but grew up speaking English as their second language before moving to the United States. Like participants for whom English is their first language, they were discriminated against because of accent, as shown in the following narratives.

Juan's Case

Juan (a pseudonym) was born and raised in Puerto Rico. He grew up speaking English as his second language. After finishing high school in Puerto Rico, Juan moved to the mainland, the United States, to pursue graduate studies. Juan is currently teaching History at a university located in New York; he has been a professor for over a decade. He has been subject to accent discrimination both as a graduate student and a professor. Juan has experienced this form of discrimination both in his first language, Spanish, and his second language, English. Juan maintained, "At the university, the discrimination came from a professor who not only wrote in my first evaluation that my accent in English made me difficult to understand but who also rejected my Spanish because she was used to 'Colombian and Mexican Spanish which were superior to Caribbean Spanish.'" Juan elaborated:

> Mind you that she was not fluent in Spanish, not really. And that Spanish was my only language for 22 years, and my BA-granting institutions was Spanish-Language-based. Finally, though the hundreds of students I had in Rutgers and UMass never complained about my accent, one semester at Marist College (New York), in a particularly difficult section, some five students, aware that they were failing the class, banded

> together and stated in their class evaluations that to improve the class they should "hire an American who spoke English to teach it" and several variations of that comment. I suspect that had something to do with not having my contract renewed next year.

Juan was reminded that his Spanish was not standard enough to be understood and to earn the respect of his professor. The irony is that Spanish is neither the first nor dominant language of this professor, but she deems Juan's Caribbean Spanish accent to be inferior to the Colombian and Mexican Spanish accents to which she is mostly accustomed. Juan was not facing accent discrimination only with his professor. He received unfavorable and a low score on student course evaluation apparently because of students' prejudice against his accent.

Juan claimed that his teaching contract was terminated because students complained about his accent. Juan's experience shows that defenders of the hegemony of standard accents can be linguistically insensitive to those who speak in different accents. In this professor's view, Juan's Spanish accent, originating from Puerto Rico, sounds foreign and incomprehensible, even though such accent reflects Juan's linguistic and social identities. Juan's accent is part of a variety of Spanish accents–some of which are socially constructed as standard, while others are seen and treated as non-standard. Juan was frustrated and disappointed; he felt discriminated against by a university language professor, whom one would expect to be linguistically sensitive and accepting.

Juan's experience is different from that of Pablo, who is from Spain. Even though they are both Spanish

speakers and English second learners, they experienced accentism differently. Juan is from Puerto Rico, while Pablo is from Spain; their ethnicity and race played a role in their linguistic experiences in the United States, as Pablo's narrative illuminates.

Pablo's Case

Pablo (pseudonym) was born and raised in Spain. He is married and has three children who are bilingual. Pablo is mixed; his mother is Spaniard, while his father is an immigrant from Ecuador. Pablo, a former EFL (English as a foreign language) teacher, is currently an assistant professor at a university located in the West Coast of the United States. Pablo immigrated to the United States to work as a Spanish teacher.

He then pursued graduate studies after years of teaching both in his native land and the United States. Upon finishing his doctoral studies, he pursued and secured a university faculty position. Pablo stated that in many of his encounters with people in the United States and Europe make positive comments about his Spaniard accent, while being looking down on by that of his wife, who is from Ecuador.

> People seem to celebrate more some countries over others, same as they do with races. They probably celebrate some countries over others influenced by country variables. When some people have asked me where I'm from and when I say Spain, some of them seem to kind of celebrate. However, when they ask my wife, who is from Ecuador, I notice they don't celebrate anything.

Pablo's narrative further illustrates unequal power relations between standard Spaniard Spanish accent and

Latin American Spanish accents. People who are from Spain, speaking in Standard Spaniard accents tend to be seen through positive linguistic lenses, whereas those from former colonized Spanish territories are often perceived and treated poorly. This linguistic disparity is connected to the persistent effects of the Spanish colonial legacy on Latin America, as linguistically diverse individuals from Latin America and the Caribbean are often ridiculed because of their marked accents. Pablo added:

> Although some people probably celebrate because they know more about Spain than about Ecuador, it seems that same as race (people in Spain are lighter than in Ecuador, a country that is more associated to Indigenous peoples), ethnicity (the culture in Spain is better considered than the culture in Ecuador), class (a European country versus a third-world country), and language (some people tell me about the Castilian Spanish and insist that the Spanish from Spain is the correct and formal Spanish and that Spanish in Latin America is wrong, informal, and non-educated).

Because of European colonial legacy, Spanish accents from Latin America and the Caribbean are treated as low class . This complicates the accent matter. The colonial legacy lingers on and, consequently, places formerly colonized people from Latin America in disadvantageous linguistic position, as Linda's case further illustrates.

Linda's Case

Linda (pseudonym) was a doctoral candidate in a flagship university located in the Midwest of the United States at the time of the study. She was born and was raised in a city near the Atlantic Coast of Colombia, so Spanish is her

first language. She got her undergraduate education in Colombia and started learning French, which became her second language. By the end of her graduate studies, she decided to focus on learning English only, so her French was not used much, and it was quickly forgotten.

She lived and taught English as a foreign language in Europe, Asia, and Central and South America before coming to the US to pursue graduate studies. She considers herself bilingual but has studied at least 5 other languages throughout her life. Linda was pursuing a master's degree at a university located in the Southwest of the United States at the time of the study. Linda stated that one of the most painful discriminations she has ever endured over the years has been connected to her distinctive accent.

> When I think about any experiences with accent discrimination throughout my personal and professional journey, many incidents come to mind. The following is from my professional and personal journey. As the coordinator of a children's program, I was in charge of overseeing groups of young volunteers from different states in the US. These undergraduate students spent their summer helping with our summer ESL camps. I specifically remember one of the volunteers telling me how "thick" my accent was in English and how difficult it was for him to understand me.

Linda was not only looked down because of her accent but also because of her race, ethnicity, and nationality–a brown skinned Latina woman from Latin America with a "foreign Spanish-sound English accent." The White male American student that Linda referred to in her narrative was convinced that Linda was not and could not be

qualified to be the coordinator of that program because of her non-standard English accent. Linda, on the other hand, found his behavior and attitude toward her distinct accent to be discriminatory and biased. Linda went on to say:

> From that incident, I particularly remember the emphatic way in which this male White American student made me feel that no matter how qualified and professionally capable I was as an ESL teacher, my English language skills were not good enough because I didn't have a native accent.

White native-born Americans might not face institutional challenges teaching English as a second or foreign language, the high competence of qualified non-native speaker teachers of English is often questioned. Linda was reminded that her accent did not sound like the typical American English accent; therefore, she could not possibly be qualified to be the coordinator of a program that required strong communication English skills. Regardless of her competence as a coordinator and teacher, Linda's authority was interrogated and doubted because she spoke in a distinct English accent similar to that of many linguistic minorities in the Unites States.

Linda felt that she was discriminated against because she is a brown Latina whose English accent is constructed as colloquial. However, the last participant's narrative in this unit challenged Linda's assumption about the unearned linguistic privileges associated with merely growing speaking English as one's first and dominant language.

Claudia's Case

Claudia (pseudonym) is a Chicana who was born in El Paso, Texas, a third-generation US-born citizen. She is bilingual and bicultural and attended public elementary, middle, and high school in El Paso. She grew up with both English and Spanish because her mother spoke Spanish and understood English (She was an immigrant from Mexico), and her father spoke English but understood Spanish. (He was second generation US-born) So, she and her brother benefitted greatly from their mother with whom they spoke Spanish, while speaking only English with their father. Claudia has a B.A. in political science, an M.A. in higher education, and a Ph.D. in educational leadership with a focus on higher education. She is currently a high school college counselor and academic advisor. At the time of the study, Claudia had just finished her doctorate in educational leadership. What follows is Claudia's experience with accent discrimination.

> I have been told, time and again, that it's surprising I speak my English without a "Mexican" accent and that I pronounce words "so well" as if pronouncing them with a different accent would interrupt their wellness. In true form to my Chicana experience, living in the liminal space of neither here nor there, I have similarly been told by Spanish speakers that it is unfathomable that I speak Spanish so properly and without sounding like a "gringa."

Claudia's experience with accent discrimination underscores that linguistic privileges are also linked to one's ethnicity, race, and country origin. Although Claudia is a third-generation US-born citizen, she is still perceived and treated as a Mexican immigrant, a second language English learner. Claudia received compliments from random individuals about both English and Spanish

accents, depending on the context and the circumstances. She was told that her English accent was very good, as if she was not expected to speak proper English. In other contexts, Spanish speakers were impressed with her oral Spanish skills, as though she was not expected to speak like them. Claudia's narrative suggests that she was mistaken for a Latina immigrant, a second language learner who speaks good English. Perhaps people expect that someone who is Chicana/Mexican American/Latinx should sound like they have an accent from a specific geographic region, usually Mexico or elsewhere in Latin America. Simultaneously, those who do not expect Claudia to speak "good Spanish" presume that as an American, she should have an Anglicized accent and a limited vocabulary in Spanish. Claudia added:

> In people's assessment of my use of either language, I am positioned as different/other/anomaly. Otherwise, why point it out? Is it my sound or their hearing that is actually to be pointed out? The act of "correcting" is an act of pointing a finger, cornering, marginalizing, and putting someone in her place. It is an interruption to the storytelling, an attempt to manipulate the narration, and a hyper act of situating someone away from the center, even of her own story.

In both situations, the limitations exist in the other people by having specific and erroneous presumptions about Claudia and what it means to be of her ethnicity, instead of in her with an inability to speak a language.

General Discussion of Findings

Accent discrimination has affected not only second language English learners but also minority speakers whose English is their first language. For example,

although English is Claudia's first and dominant language, she was perceived and treated as a second-class citizen, a second language English learner. Jen was treated as if she could not make herself understood to the manager at the retail store in the English language she only knows. The manager felt that she had to call another minority, a Spanish guy, to deal with Jen, supposedly because she could not understand her accent. What this manager seemingly failed to realize is that, like Jen, everybody has an accent, including her. Instead of discriminating against Jen, this manager could have inquired about her accent.

This inquiry could have generated conversations about language and accent diversity, including regional diverse accents, while creating space for human closeness and bonding between her, the manager, and Jen, the customer. Unfortunately, this manager, who apparently believed in racial and linguistic stereotypes, ill-treated Jen, an educated African American woman. Similarly, although Claudia is a Chicana, growing up speaking Spanish as her mother's language and English as her father's first language, individuals assumed that Claudia was a second language English and Spanish learner altogether. Claudia finds such comments hurtful and disappointing. Claudia stated, "I have been told time and again that it's surprising I speak my English without a 'Mexican' accent and that I pronounce words 'so well' as if pronouncing them with a different accent would interrupt their wellness." It appears that Claudia was discriminated against because people associated her accent with her ethnicity.

Likewise, Mary, who grew up middle class speaking English with a Caribbean Jamaican English accent, was placed in a bilingual classroom to learn proper English upon the recommendation of one of her school teachers.

The case of English-speaking participants facing accent discrimination in the English language is unfair because they all grew up speaking English as their first language. In the case of Jen in particular, the manager assumed that as a doctoral student then, she was unable to make herself clear in English-a language she grew up speaking in Jamaica. Like African American Vernacular English accent in the United States, Spanish from Latin America and the Caribbean, like that spoken by Pablo's wife and Juan, is hierarchically assessed to be inferior to the Spaniard accent. This is linked to the colonial legacy that has historically influenced hierarchical power relations between dominant languages and marginalized ones (Thiong'o, 1986).

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Participants' narratives underscore ways and the degree to which accent discrimination has affected minorities across native languages, ethnicities/races, nationalities, and countries of origin. Their narratives suggest much work needs to done for accent diversity and inclusion to become a reality for linguistically and culturally disfranchised groups whose distinct English accents do not fit the Standard American accent label. Because of their distinct English accents, these groups frequently face accent discrimination, whereas those whose accents fit such standard are often praised and placed on a higher linguistic pedestal.

As the United States of America is increasingly becoming linguistically and culturally diverse, there must be institutionalized anti-colonial language policies that protect linguistic rights of linguistically minority groups. Such policy should enable all people to speak in accents that deviate from the alleged Standard American English accent without being subjected to accent discrimination.

In institutions, like schools and the workplace, professional workshops and seminars on accent and language diversity need to be offered in which attendees could acquire knowledge and develop understanding and sensitivity about various speech patterns that have shaped different English speakers from diverse linguistic communities across the United States and beyond.

Such workshops or seminars would help attendees acquire knowledge about, and develop understanding of, diverse accents and the cultural and linguistic speech patterns among various linguistic minorities who speak in different accents. Teachers need to embrace in their classrooms various accents spoken by students of diverse linguistic backgrounds. More specifically, teachers must interact with, and show genuine curiosity about, students speaking with different accents. This will serve as a model for other students, by making them less likely to laugh at their classmates speaking with an accent different from the norm, but rather try to engage them with genuine, reflective and friendly curiosity in inquisitive and respectful manner.

Teachers also need to make a genuine effort to incorporate in their lesson plans language-based activities revolved around accent diversity. Doing so would help foster a classroom environment conducive to linguistic awareness about diverse English accents spoken around the world. Likewise, teachers need to engage monolingual English speaker students in such activities, as they might not have had much exposure to diverse accents and dialects growing up. Along the same lines, members of dominant linguistic groups need to be proactive seeking opportunities to interact with linguistic minorities so that they can develop their own awareness about different English accents. Finally, the social construction and imposition of an American Standard English accent must

be challenged, for such construction constitutes an obstacle to accent diversity and inclusion. There are many benefits in accepting and embracing accent diversity and inclusion, and there are teachers who respect, embrace and accept different languages and accents in their classrooms (Nieto and Bode, 2018). However, more work needs to be done to ensure the acceptance of, and respect for, diverse English accents.

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IN MEMORIAM

NAWAL EL SAADAWI (1931-2021): A FIERCE FEMINIST FIGHTER, NOT WITHOUT PROBLEMS

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ABSTRACT: This article provides a critical examination of Nawal El-Saadawi's work: work that articulates the academic, the activist, the experiential, and the literary production. It begins with my own positionality in the context of acquiring/accessing El-Saadawi's books, as I reflect on the education system I and over one and half million Palestinian citizens have and continue to endure, under Israel's settler colonial Apartheid regime. Living under a system of racialization, we, Palestinian citizens, were deprived of a decent education at home, and were prevented from any contact with our Arab heritage, in neighbouring Arab countries. This meant we did not have any access to books or any knowledge production, published in the Arab countries, especially if the products were critical of Israel. The irony is that the books we Palestinian citizens could not individually access were accessible at the University Libraries, hence, reaching much of the Arab literature relatively late. This article reviews El-Saadawi's writings within the social, cultural, political, and patriarchal structure of Egypt and the Arab Middle East. Two specific topics which El-Saadawi focused on, namely, infibulation and the veil will be focused on in this article. The discussion of these topics will be critically assessed within an anti-Orientalist, anti-imperialist feminist framework.

ملخص

تقدم هذا المقالة تقييما نقديا لأعمال الكاتبة نوال السعداوي: أعمال استطاعت أن تقارب الخطاب الأكاديمي والعملاني ومن خلال التجارب الشخصية وكذلك الأعمال الأدبية. تبدأ المقالة بتحديد موقع كاتبة هذه المقالة وتجربتها في ولوج الكتب الأدبية أو العلمية من الدول العربية المجاورة وتجربة الفصل العنصري وتأثيره على فلسطينيي ال١٩٤٨. وتناقش المقالة اثنين من أهم الموضوعات التي تطرقت اليها الأديبة والطبيبة السعداوي وهما: قضية الختان وقضية الحجاب حيث تناقش ان لا علاقة للدين الإسلامي بهما وانهما مجرد تقليد تفرضه الذكورية أو النظام الأبوي العربي (وبالذات المصري). جدير بالتذكير هنا أن هاتين القضيتين تبحثان مع معرفة السعداوي المسبقة انهما تستعملان من قبل بعض النسويات الغربيات وبالذات المناصرات للإمبريالية والفكر الإستشراقي. ولهذا تقر السعداوي وبوضوح موقفها المناصر لحرية المرأة العربية/المسلمة ومعاداتها للعنصرية الرأسمالية، والإمبريالية، وكذلك الصهيونية.

KEYWORDS: El Saadawi, infibulation, veil, patriarchy, Orientalism, female sexuality

Accessing El Saadawi banned books

Before discussing Dr. Nawal El Saadawi and my critical appreciation of her work, it is necessary to take a quick look at how I first became acquainted with her books. Most of El Saadawi's books, particularly *Women and Sex*, were banned in Egypt during the Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak's rules (1970-2011). However, as El Saadawi stated in several interviews, one would find these same books in other Arab cities, especially Beirut.[1] I envied my Palestinian friends and sisters who knew El Saadawi from her writings when they were young. I envied them even when they were under the oppression of the Zionist occupation in 1967 because they had something called "public libraries" in their cities/places or at school.

I completed my primary and secondary education without knowing how a public library or a school library looks. Under Israeli settler colonialism, our education was

1. https://www.facebook.com/Merry.Em.Biya18/posts/1339111259757536k

deprived of the most necessary elements. Most of our classrooms in 1948 Palestine (1) am referring to the towns where there were schools) consisted of rented rooms in people's homes. The proverb that we memorized as children: "We drown in the winter and burn in summer," has stayed with us for many years. This expresses the dire situation of education in the Arab sector or for Palestinians in 48 Palestine/Israel. Israel's racialization of the Indigenous Palestinians has deprived them/us of a normal life. The colonial state banned many books published in the Arab world. As explained in my "Women in Israel ..." (2011), the educational, cultural, health and economic conditions under which Palestinians in Israel have endured have been placed at the bottom of the settler colonial state's priority.(Abdo, 2011)

While the West Bank and Gaza Strip were open to the Arab world and its publications, that was not the case for Palestinians in Israel as they/we were deprived of this cultural heritage or even of meeting families in Arab countries. Until the late 1970s, all leftist cultural books were banned or confiscated, including the collections of resistance poetry, such as Mahmoud Darwish, Samih al-Qasim and Tawfiq Zayyad. Even though all three poets mentioned were citizens and lived all their lives (except for Mahmoud Darwish, who spent many years in exile) in Israel. Tawfiq Zayyad was even a member of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) and served as the Mayor of Nazareth between 1975-1994. The ban on progressive publications included the books of Ghassan Kanafani and Nawal El Saadawi, among others.

Women and Sex

The book *Women and Sex* (the first edition, published in 1968) is considered one of Saadawi's most important books, if not the most important. In 1972, I got a copy of it from the university library and brought it home (to

Nazareth). There was a group of us, friends, who took turns reading it, then we held several sessions to discuss the book. I do not remember, after all these years, if the remarkable "glow" that afflicted us at that time stemmed from the content of this book or from its title, which bears one of the most critical taboos in our Arab society: Sex. There is no doubt, however, that we all agreed on the significance of the book's information.

It is not essential now that we delved into the depth of our ignorance, at that time, of our bodies and sexuality: society in general was and continues to be traditional, patriarchal, if not socially backward. This traditionality has been evident in the home, at school, by the teachers, and in society at large. I remember that the only place where some of us, boys only, enjoyed "freedom of expression in matters of sex" was the street, where female sexual organs were (and still are) mentioned in insulting expressions aimed at degrading the other (women).

The book deals with essential topics in the closed patriarchal society, including female circumcision/ infibulation, virginity issues, especially around the hymen, even if its removal is an inevitable issue after marriage, or if the hymen takes the same shape or thickness for all women. Like the rest of her books, this book aimed to challenge social and sexual ignorance in Arab society and criticize outdated social values. As far as I can remember, none of these subjects was taught in schools, raised at home or publicly discussed at all. In this book, El Saadawi, as in the case of her other books, provided scientific data to support her statements, using her professional experience as a doctor and psychologist and her personal experience as a feminist social activist.

El-Saadawi studied surgical medicine, specialized in thoracic surgery, and then in psychiatry. She worked as a medical doctor for a long time in her village, Kafr Tahla, in Qalyubia Governorate. She also held the position of Director-General of the Health Education Department at

the Ministry of Health in Cairo, the General Secretary of the Medical Syndicate in Cairo, and founded the Association for Health Education. All these roles must be added to her work as a doctor in the university hospital. El Saadawi was also a member of the Supreme Council for Arts and Social Sciences in Cairo. In addition, she founded the Egyptian Women Writers Association; worked for a period as editor-in-chief of the Health Journal in Cairo and editor of the Medical Association Journal.[2] In other words, El Saadawi enjoyed a busy career in the profession of gender and women. Her overall experiences enabled her to explore and analyze these topics with confidence.

Infibulation: another form of rape

The World Health Education defines infibulation, or "female genital mutilation," as "a process that includes the partial or total removal of the female genitalia without a medical or health reason for that. This practice is found in more than 27 countries in Africa, and smaller numbers in Asia and the rest of the Middle East." Infibulated females in 2016 were estimated at 200 million living in the countries mentioned above and a few other regions and societies worldwide[3].

Whether perpetrated on children or adults, female infibulation is a form of sexual rape accompanied by violence and brutality. It differs from male sexual violence in that the perpetrator, in most cases, is a woman with a scalpel or razor. Infibulation is usually wrapped in the name of religion, honour or chastity, and one of its aims is to demonstrate that the female is virgin and her body has never been touched by a man before her husband. However, El-Saadawi believes that infibulation is not

[2]https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A

[3] https://www.facebook.com/100034375700181/videos/532285671260618

related to religion. It is only to prepare the female for complete submission to the man. In *Woman and Sex,* El Saadawi argued that "virginity is a lie," adding that thirty percent of females are born without a hymen.(Antar, 2021)

In her كسر الحدود (breaking the borders, El-Saadawi (2006) affirmed that there is no legal text that approves of infibulation, that this act is illegal, and that there is the absence of any health reason calling for this "heinous" act that is harmful to women. The issue of infibulation has accompanied El Saadawi throughout her life: in her novels, in her education, in interviews, in her public speeches, and on every other occasion. In 2007 she raised this topic again with great force, following the death of the 12-year-old girl, Bodour Shakir, during infibulation, commenting: "Bodour, should you have died to enlighten these dark minds? Did you have to pay this price with your life? Doctors and clerics should know that true religion does not command genital cutting." El-Saadawi continued, "As a doctor and human rights activist, I reject this procedure. I also reject male circumcision. I believe that all children, male and female, should be protected from this kind of operation."(Shaarawi, 1993)

However, despite the banning of these acts and indeed their criminalization, they are still practiced in different regions in Egypt, especially in Upper Egypt. The death of the 12-year-old girl, Nada, during infibulation in 2000 caused a sensation on social media pages. It is also painful to hear the story of three girls (under the age of eighteen) who were infibulated under anesthesia and at the request of the father who lied to his daughters and convinced them that they were being tested for the Corona Virus!(See Mernissi, 1987on such ploys)

The issue of infibulation did not bother us in Palestine because it was and still is known to be an African tradition/rite common in Egypt, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Sudan and never existed among Palestinians, or various other Arab countries. However, even in academia, this

social phenomenon did not receive sufficient attention and analysis until the nineties. In the late eighties and early nineties, the issue became quite popular as many Somali people immigrated/were smuggled to Canada, escaping the harsh living conditions in their country. Most of the immigrants took Toronto and Ottawa as their refuge for the presence of other Somalis there. One of the thorny and disturbing topics for my Somali students in graduate studies has been infibulation, followed by the veil. My students participated in some of the demonstrations they held against FGM (Female Genital Mutilation). The problem was, as expected, that the Muslim (Somali) woman here in Canada would stand on the side of Western women and feminism, and even on the side of the Western system itself - as the Canadian government banned and fought infibulation. This ban was approved by many Muslim women (especially young Somali women). Despite Islamophobia, which used female circumcision as a reason for their hatred of Islam, Muslims, especially educated Somali women, took a stance against infibulation in Canada and defended their position against Islamophobic feminism.

The Veil and the Patriarchal Religious Institutions

El-Saadawi treated the phenomenon of the veil with the same strength and iron will with which she confronted the issue of female infibulation. These two issues relating to women's sexuality, infibulation and the veil, represented the strong sumoud (steadfastness) within which El-Saadawi faced and combatted patriarchal authoritarianism and brutal capitalism in her country. This struggle has also caused her the enmity of many individuals and institutions alike. For El-Saadawi, body covering (using the Niqab, Hijab, Jilbab, veil and so on), on the one hand, and nudity in Western societies, on the other, represent two very similar modes of

behaviour/attitude. Just as she rejected any connection between Islam and infibulation/circumcision, she also rejected the veil as a religious matter, or an issue related to Islam. El-Saadawi insisted that the veil is one of the repressive patriarchal methods that limits women's roles and activities and removes them from their natural place in society: keeping them away from the public realm and in the private one.

It is difficult to cover the wide-ranging and complex issue of the veil, which was strongly debated in Western academic circles (both by Arab and Muslim feminists and Western feminists alike) in the 1990s and seems to be ongoing. In this discourse/debate, one finds the intersectionality of very many different political positions on the veil. This includes the secular and the religious; the proponents of the veil and its opponents; the Orientalists and the Arab/Muslim; the feminists with the non-feminists; etc. Moreover, the debate presented the opinions of those who considered donning the Hijab/veil as a matter of individual freedom of choice, alongside those who believed that most veils were/are donned by force or under socially constructed forms of coercion.

Several Muslim academic feminists, especially among Arab women, took Huda Shaarawy and her experience in removing the veil in 1923 as an example of individual freedom. Her book, *Years of the Harem: Egyptian Feminist Memoirs 1879-1921* (translated and introduced by Margot Badran), was quite popular in the West, used to validate the point of individual choice in donning and taking off the veil.(Shaarawi, 1993) It is worth noting that the book's title might suggest an Orientalist perspective, especially with the term, harem, but this term which is a class term, was originated by the Turkish Empire, which controlled the Arab countries. The Harem belonged to the sultan and the wealthy classes who could support several women with their children. The upper classes, such as Shaarawy and

other well-to-do women, used to wear the Hijab while in their homes.

In *The Hidden Face of Eve*, El-Saadawi adopted a historical approach in researching the phenomenon of the veil, insisting that this phenomenon was not purely Islamic but existed before Islam, among women of other religions such as Christianity and Judaism. To this day, religious Jews still cover their hair with black cloth or wear a wig; Also, Christian women in parts of our Arab homeland still cover their hair when they go to church.(El Saadawi, 2006)

In my opinion, El-Saadawi's position on the veil was not an attack on Islam but rather was directed at the patriarchy within the Arab culture, particularly the patriarchy of religious institutions in Egypt, including Al-Azhar and its teachings. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth and longitudinal study on the extent of the impact of El-Saadawi's works and precisely her position on the veil on Arab, Muslim, and Western feminists. However, the veil issue has been at the forefront of Eastern and Western feminists' work for decades. Therefore, I considered it appropriate to address the discourse of the veil, even if only briefly.

In *Women and Gender in Islam* (published in English in 1992), Laila Ahmed argued that Islam had nothing to do with the veil and that the latter was the result of patriarchy or patriarchal authority in Egypt. Ahmed grew up in Egypt, into a well-off family during the days of Abdel Nasser, and in a primarily secular society. Her position here is very similar to that of El Saadawi.

As for late Fatima Mernissi, who was referred to as the "founder of Islamic feminism," she clarified her position on the veil in her in-depth study of the role of women in the Qur'an and hadith. She was, like El-Saadawi, and later Laila Ahmed, opposed to the veil and the interpretations that try to link it to Islam (Mernissi, 1987).

However, after the US imperialist attack on Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), feminists, globally, were divided on the issue of Islam, the veil and so on. The division was between those who strongly opposed the veil, seeing it as a reactionary act and one of Islam's methods of oppressing women; and those who defended donning it, considering it part of the Islamic tradition, or a matter directly related to women and their freedom of choice. In the first case, in addition to the Western Orientalist feminists, we also witnessed the emergence of those "feminists", who also advocated for imperialism and Zionism, and joined the imperialist and Islamophobic onslaught to elevate their positions and achieve fame at the expense of Islam, and Muslims. Among these, we mention Irshad Manji and her books: *The Problem of Islam Today* (Manji, 2003) and *Allah, Freedom and Love* (Manji, 2012).

Indeed, Manji was not an academic, but her fame as a Muslim critic of Islam preceded her in most Western countries. She attained various academic positions because of her hatred and contempt of Islam and her frequent media appearances. This sudden fame of an Orientalist Muslim feminist requires a pause, albeit a short one. A reader of Manji's books, especially the first one, will be surprised by her hatred of Islam and her racism against Arabs and her anti-Palestinian racism. The most shocking thing about this book is its keen interest in considering Israeli (Jewish) feelings and the right to "historical Israel" in Palestine. The writer accused Muslims of hating the Jews [sic]. But, of course, the book fails to provide any explanation for her statements.

Manji's accusation of Muslims practising anti-Semitism is grave and concerning for Arabs and Muslims alike. Simultaneously, though, her anti-Islam and pro-Zionist views have gained her a free visit to Israel by a Zionist organization which she accepted. One of those commenting on her work said: "She is a free thinker,

beautiful in appearance, and a very acceptable 'Muslim' in the West...But does she know Islam from within? Does she raise issues with their complexities and problems?" He continues: "However, many Muslim women in the West do not take [her] seriously and place [her] in the crucible of hostility to Islam."(Todd, 2008)

At the beginning of the twenty-first millennium, specifically after 9/11/2001 and the imperialist attack on Iraq and Afghanistan, extreme feminist positions have crystallized. The common logic in the feminist discourse on the veil and Islam revolved around two fundamental opposites: the first is Orientalist-culturalist, and the second is anti-Orientalist and anti-imperialist. Some Western Orientalist feminists supported the war on Afghanistan and justified it by claiming that eliminating the Taliban would liberate Afghani women from the arbitrariness of this movement's rule. I have argued elsewhere that these women forgot that it was American colonialism that brought the Taliban movement to the scene to help it get rid of the socialist rule supported by the Soviet Union at the time. The fact is that killing the Afghani people and destroying their economy and their lives did not eliminate the Taliban or the veil (Abdo, 2002: 372-392.).

Today, after over two decades of war, destruction, devastation, and death of many Afghani people by the Americans and their allies, nothing has been achieved; American troops are withdrawing, and the Taliban is back in control! What is worse is that all those Afghanis who supported the American invasion and were promised U.S protection are left behind.

On the other hand, Laila Abu-Lughod took it upon herself to fight against Orientalist feminism. She singled out Laura Bush (the wife of U.S. President George W. Bush) and some of the feminists and academics who defended U.S. colonial wars. And in a famous article titled "Do Muslim Women Need Rescue?"(Abu-Loghod, 2002),

published in 2002 and redeveloped into a book with the same title in 2013 (Abu-Loghod, 2013), Abu-Lughod developed her honest and deep critique of Orientalist feminism and saw in it an arm of Western imperialism aimed at securing its interests at the expense of Muslims. Abu Lughod showed that the hijab and the niqab are a Pashtun tradition that existed before the Taliban and remained after the U.S. attack. Abu Lughod exposed the orientalist feminists who blamed the persecution, violence, and exploitation of Muslim women on Islamic religion, patriarchy, and culture and ignored the role of U.S. imperialism and war.

This also applies to the imperialist attack on Iraq under the lie of 'the Iraqi regime acquiring weapons of mass destruction' and the pretext of ridding the Iraqi people of Saddam Hussein's tyranny. We all witnessed, and continue to, the mass destruction of Iraq and its civilization, the theft of its historical treasures, and the extermination of more than a million Iraqi children, women, and men.

It must be recalled that the Orientalist feminist attack on Muslim and Arab women to this day was and still is confronted by solid academic work by Muslim and Arab feminists. Some Arab/Muslim feminists have changed their positions and reinterpreted the veil as a personal matter for the woman herself. Hence, the case of Leila Ahmed, who in *A Quiet Revolution: The Resurgence of the Hijab, from the Middle East to the U.S. (2011),* has changed her position and turned her focus on the fact that the veil is not imposed on women but rather taken up by their choice (Ahmed, 2011) .

In conclusion, it is essential to remember that El Saadawi's work on women's issues, body, and sexuality, unlike in the case of some Arab/Muslim feminists, was not conducted within the framework of Western knowledge or epistemology. Still, her position against capitalism and Western imperialism was very clear.

Yes, Nawal El-Saadawi was against infibulation/circumcision, against the veil, against religious rituals, against the patriarchy of religious institutions, as well as against the authority and the capitalist system in general and in Egypt in particular. But, in my opinion, she was not orientalist at all and did not collude with Western neoliberalism. In fact, whether we agree with her assertions or not, there is no doubt that El Saadawi had a clear and explicit position: No to colonialism, no to capitalism and no to Zionism, and yes to women's rights and the oppressed.

To Nawal Saadawi's Soul, we say: أرقدي بقوة وسلام (Sleep in Power and Peace).

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Reviews

Rebecca Tarlau, *Occupying Schools, Occupying Land. How the Landless Workers Movement Transformed Brazilian Education*, ISBN 9780190870324 (hbk), 9780190870355 (epub), 2019, New York: Oxford University Press, 391 pages.

This magnificent volume in hardback is the product of painstaking research carried out in Brazil on the work and impact on education of one of the world's most vibrant social movements. This is the Movimento Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (literally: Movement of Landless Rural Workers, shortened as Movimento sem Terra –MST, more commonly referred to colloquially as the 'Sem Terra'). The movement qualifies as what is often referred to, following Dip Kapoor (Kapoor, 2009), as a Southern Subaltern Social Movement.

The book's author, Rebecca Tarlau, adopts a predominantly Gramscian analytic framework, throughout this detailed analysis, that combines a variety of features including in-depth and extensive interviews with a variety of personnel involved as peasants, educators, activists, politicians and policy makers at different levels (Federal, State, Municipal).

This multivaried approach in a Southern Subaltern context, in a country which, rich in mineral resources but characterised for the most part by settler colonialism and conditioned development, serves to provide students, adopting a postcolonial lens, with much grist for the mill. The volume serves as a detailed

contribution to studies of the state in its different forms and, needless to say, given the central focus of this book - the MST - the ever growing domain of social movement studies.

It sheds particular light on state-social movements relations, a complex and delicate area in which the latter want to work 'in, with and against ' the State, at different levels, while maintaining their freedom to mobilise and act in disruptive ways. As O'Cadiz et al (1998) demonstrated with regard to social movements and the municipal government of São Paulo during Freire's tenure as Education Secretary, the MST was careful to retain its autonomy from the State even when the party in office was closer, in its political orientation, to the movement than any other party in the Brazilian political firmament.

The main thrust of the struggle as presented in this book is of a movement guided by a vision that transcended the given Capitalist framework. The movement's goal was not limited to simply providing Landless peasants - *camponesas* and *camponesos* - and their offspring in rural encampments with a better 'share of the cake' in the complex ways and reach of Brazilian *realpolitik*,[1] but to transform the state and its educational provision itself.

They do this in a variety of sites, not only those of public education, although the latter is still regarded as an important site of struggle, but even itinerant and nonformal ones. Education does not change things on its own, as it is not an independent variable, but it is an indispensable contributory variable nevertheless. The struggle concerns school provision in the areas of settlement and in the encampments themselves. It concerns the much contested sector of education in

[1] Realpolitik entails, in this specific case, playing on the concerns of those who thrive on clientele politics, hence even twisting the arm of right wing governments

rural areas, a historically neglected issue in Latin America and other territories worldwide. It concerns the important area of *Educação do Campo* for which Brazilian popular education and the MST have made sterling contributions, an area which saw the development of many *dispositifs* worldwide (rural schools and universities), with an accompanying supportive literature to boot. All one needs is to access, online, the Educação do Campo *dicionario*[2] (Caldart et al, 2012), and peruse the contributions of such activist/luminaries in the field as Roseli Salete Caldart (2012), whose insights feature in this and another forthcoming book (Mayo and Vittoria, 2021). This struggle represents a wider perennial one concerning the development, alongside the historically more favoured urban schools, of rural education. In Latin America, this struggle evokes such figures as socialist and feminist poet (Nobel laureate) and critical educator, Gabriela Mistral and the ideas contained in her verses concerning 'La Maestra Rural' (the rural teacher) (Mayo and Vittoria, 2021, p. 37). In Europe, we find some connection with the struggle to stem the constant exodus, in countries such as Spain and Portugal, from internal rural areas to the more commercially attractive coastal areas, through such projects as La Plataforma Rural (the rural platform), treated some time ago in this journal.

The radical nature of the movement's struggle in Brazil is reflected in the fact that the MST is not content with simply surrounding the inner core of the state with a plethora of educational initiatives as itinerant schools, multi-level learning settings in tents, popular education initiatives with adults and younger ones learning together in intergenerational spaces and much lauded landmarks in social movement education as the Escola

[2]https://www.academia.edu/15087143/DICION%C3%81RIO_DA_EDUCA%C3%87%C3%83O_DO_CAMPO_PDF_1_

Nacional Florestan Fernandez. To the contrary, the movement's effort is to co-direct the publically funded schools themselves.

This is carried out in the form of a Gramscian 'war of position'. It is also reflected in the sources of inspiration for the education ideas its activists bring to the table, radical figures such as Anton Makarenko, Paulo Freire, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, Florestan Fernandez, Antonio Gramsci etc. The book makes use of the contributions of some, notably Gramsci. Perhaps more could have been made of the 'Southern Question' essay by Gramsci, given the widely perceived affinities between the Latin American contexts and the Italian Meridione. This work was widely believed to be an incomplete manuscript, supposedly because of Gramsci's arrest, although more recent research indicates that it is a completed piece.

Of course the success of transforming education radically varies from municipality and state to another. It depends on how supportive the government in question is both on the grounds of political orientation and, in the case of right wing administrations, on those of clientele and populist politics. The reaction varies even among the different communities involved, some being averse to overt ideological influence. This connects on a larger scale with the Bolsonaro mantra, and that of the preceding interim government: Escola Sem Partido (School without Party). This is a case of presenting education as a 'neutral' enterprise, never mind the observation by Freire and many others that this would mean one's siding with the dominant forces, maintaining the status quo in a society marked by stark inequality. It recalls the attack on the D'Alema government in Italy, and then Education Minister, Luigi Berlinguer (cousin of the famous Enrico) for attempting to introduce Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* into schools.

The various reactions to the MST involvement in education vary from state to state and this diversity is shown in the final section of the book which deals with a number of states throughout Brazil. These include states in the impoverished North-East and others in the industrially-oriented South -East, São Paulo in particular. A fine conclusion enables Rebecca Tarlau to pull the strings and she follows this with a text in which she brings the discussion up to date with recent developments under the right wing federal government of Jair Bolsonaro. His policies are deemed by many as fascist marked by his rabid crusade against anything smacking of left wing inspiration. Prime target is Paulo Freire whose image is caricatured in an attempt to denigrate his intellectual legacy and to deny him the title of patron of Brazilian education. Bolsonaro's politics of *negacionismo* (politics of denial), especially with regard to Covid-19, border on the irresponsible, especially with regard to the Indigenous. The MST also suffered the wrath of the right wing oriented interim government when, as reported by Boaventura De Sousa Santos (2017), the Escola Nacional Florestan Fernandez premises were ransacked.

As this excellent book intimates, the MST faces overtly hostile times. This notwithstanding, as the study shows, its adroit handling and renegotiation of the relations of hegemony at different levels of Brazilian society, and the popular bases it managed to consolidate over the years, make it a force to be reckoned with. Hope springs eternal.

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