Edited by
Moira V. Faul

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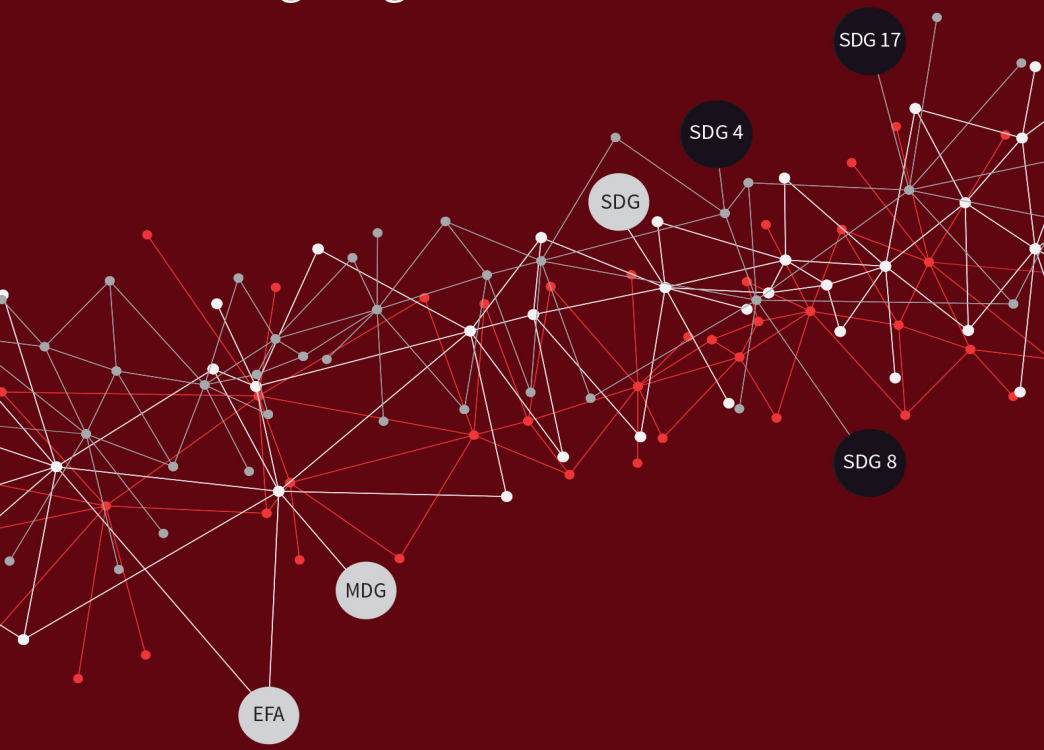
Transforming Development in Education

From Coloniality to Rethinking, Reframing and Reimagining Possibilities



GENEVA GRADUATE INSTITUTE
NORRAG GLOBAL EDUCATION CENTRE

Series on International Education and Development

Transforming Development in Education

NORRAG SERIES ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Series Editors: Moira Faul and Chanwoong Baek, *Network for International Policies and Cooperation in Education and Training (NORRAG)*

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Moira V. Faul

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Edward Elgar PUBLISHING

Cheltenham, UK · Northampton, MA, USA

Cover image: Designed by Anouk Pasquier (source file from Starline/Freepik)

Published by
Edward Elgar Publishing Limited
The Lypiatts
15 Lansdown Road
Cheltenham
Glos GL50 2JA
UK

Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.
William Pratt House
9 Dewey Court
Northampton
Massachusetts 01060
USA

Authorised representative in the EU for GPSR queries only: Easy Access System Europe – Mustamäe tee 50, 10621 Tallinn, Estonia, gpsr.requests@easproject.com

A catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024951212

This book is available electronically in the Elgaronline Sociology, Social Policy and Education subject collection
https://doi.org/10.4337/9781035337798

ISBN 978 1 0353 3778 1 (cased)
ISBN 978 1 0353 3779 8 (eBook)

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Transforming Development in Education: From Coloniality to Rethinking, Reframing and Reimagining Possibilities

Crain Soudien and Moira V. Faul

AN INTRODUCTION

The role of education in the making of colonialism has been well established (see, *inter alia,* Abdi, 2012; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Rizvi et al., 2006). This literature shows how education has been used, first, to authorise and legitimate colonialism, its development narrative and, particularly, the claim it makes of representing the apogee of human achievement. It also shows, secondly, how education has been used to secure the consent of the subjugated, under the premise that it is acting in their best interests. Reflecting on this literature, Matasci et al. (2020) comment that 'these studies demonstrate, among other things, the relevance of long-term historical analyses to the understanding of developmentalism. However, they often fail to fully appreciate the complex, changing and sometimes contradictory processes that shaped the link between education and socioeconomic change' (p. 4). In this volume, we broach some of the complexity to which Matasci and his colleagues alert us. That complexity is the residue left behind by colonialism—the marks it has imprinted on our worldviews, aesthetics and understandings of who we are, our relationships with each other and the imaginaries we are able to draw on in forging pathways into the future for ourselves as individuals and communities. These marks constitute 'dominance', a position of control that seeks to tell us how we should express our humanness, how we think, how we act and how we relate to each other. It seeks to prescribe how we narrate the story of our pasts, manage the complexity of our present and think of the future. As a political project,

this endeavour has been enormously successful. It has configured, even in what we have come to think of as 'radical' thought, our understanding of progress and development. We continue to struggle to see how significantly colonialism has determined our ontological and epistemological framings of who we are as human beings and what we should aspire to.

This volume brings together the contributions of a group of scholars who have had the privilege of serving as NORRAG Senior Fellows. NORRAG is the Global Education Centre of the Geneva Graduate Institute and a Global Network for Policies and International Cooperation in Education and Training, whose mission is to surface under-represented expertise to support diverse stakeholders in addressing the global complexities of education and development. As Fellows, we contribute to this mission by raising different aspects of contemporary decolonisation debates as they pertain to international development and education. Our point of departure is to work consciously and critically with these issues in seeking to make sense of the relationship between education and development. Our hope is that we will contribute to the process of opening up the discussion of how we move forward in the world and position the work of education in deliberately generative ways. Moving beyond geographies of colonisation to its essence—domination—this volume addresses questions of unlearning, data coloniality, the corporatisation of higher education and restorative reinventive and reparative action, and we challenge ourselves and our readers to reimagine pathways to alternative futures by practising epistemic humility (Srivastava, this volume) and epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, 2009) to support action towards epistemic justice (Odora Hoppers, 2002) and more equal futures. The chapter introduces innovative and diverse ways to look at colonial development's legacy—different forms of injustice and the planetary emergencies it has thrust upon us—which, against this backdrop, opens up the question of the reparations and reparative work we now need to be considering before finally envisaging and envisioning alternative futures. Throughout, we engage with these questions in the spirit of dialogue with each other and the reader in a spirit of learning, unlearning and relearning as an act of humility.

In doing so, we align ourselves critically with the manifold decolonial discussions unfolding in many parts of the world. This discussion has many dimensions, accents and interests. Of most concern to us are our planetary and human futures. We ask questions and explore possibilities, as a result, in relation to the concepts of reparation, recuperation, redress, rectification and redistribution. How, we ask, can these concepts—as

analytics and modes of engagement—help us better understand and, thus, develop praxes of justice and possibility beyond the conditions of our present dominance? Are we able, with all the intellectual affordances and social innovations that are being forged in little-known areas of the world, to outline for ourselves alternative syntaxes, vocabularies and perspectives that offer us new sensibilities of what constitutes development? As important, are we, with these affordances and examples, able to model and practise new signifying gestures, habits and modalities that will, first, help us pierce deep through the veil of certainty and into the telos that sits behind colonial understandings of development and, second, engage the full amplitude of our imaginations as we discuss and decide where we as a world could go? In responding to these questions, it is necessary to provide some elaboration on the problems surrounding the processes of development. We begin with the matter of coloniality and, in relation to this, set out our understanding of the role of education.

COLONIALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

To bring us to our first question—that of transforming development—it is necessary to briefly situate the condition of coloniality. Many conversations about decolonisation focus on the colonial project that was formalised at the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884 (when the world's major European powers agreed among themselves how they would divide large parts of Africa), and processes of independence after World War II. However, the formalisation of colonialism (in the Berlin conference) was not a thing in itself. It was not a historical interlude without antecedents and without precipitating and activating impulses. Imperial expansion into and the subjugation and commercial exploitation of colonies by imperial metropoles such as Amsterdam, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Lisbon, London, Madrid, Moscow, Paris and Tokyo pre-date the Berlin Conference. And some continue into the twenty-first century in many areas of the globe. Some colonial projects not only sought to dominate or exploit Indigenous populations and environments but also to displace or replace local peoples with settlers from the colonising power while replacing their previous economic, intellectual, political and social systems. Colonisation involved the subjugation of large swathes of the world and the creation of deep structural inequalities based on complex intersections of 'race', class, culture, religion and gender.

The analysis of *coloniality* that we address in this volume examines the *ongoing effects* of these deliberate efforts to dominate, exploit and

control other territories, people, environments and economic production. That is, how coloniality continues to shape all aspects of the social order in which we think and act; and how it defines that which opposes it or does not conform to it as disorder. Tracing continuities with historical colonialism helps us to better understand our contemporary world and its enduring relations of dominance, and also empowers us to propose ways to rethink, reframe, reimagine, reinvent, restore and repair development and education towards more just and sustainable futures.

COLONIALISM, MODERNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Formalised colonialism was, as Buzan and Lawson (2013, p. 1) argue, a 'downstream' consequence of modernity. We need to understand modernity as the historical period in which we currently find ourselves—what was and what now remains. Modernity began in Europe in the late sixteenth century with the eclipse of feudalism embedded in religious orthodoxy and, consequently, the shift to an 'enlightenment' characterised by new ideas of personal freedom, rational thought and scientific and technological development. Central to modernity, now a 500-year-old project, is that it brought to the world ideas of human progress and development. These ideas, which were cultivated out of the intellectual ferment of a Europe in deep transition, are now assumed to be universal. Europe's passage out of religious fatalism has been transposed onto the world as the only template for *knowing* and *being*—an epistemological encyclical with accompanying ontological prescripts. Most relevant for our discussion here are two of modernity's anchor tenets, namely, (1) scientific rationality—an 'outlook'—as the process by which 'objective truth' can be determined, and (2) growth, the infinite capacity of humankind to bend nature to its interests. The first depended on a classificatory schema that located all of life, natural phenomena and, actually, things in general into identifiable 'types' that could be understood in their pure internal logics. The most damaging of these, deployed in colonial dominance, was racial classification—the ordering of human beings into the base types of 'caucasoid', 'mongoloid', and 'negroid'—in descending order of worth. Out of this emanated, in coalescence with conceits of science, the hubris of human perfectability, expressed in the glory of European civilisation. Thus, in this ordering of the world, anything outside of modernity is judged to be disordered and therefore lacking, behind and deficient. Everything else taking place elsewhere in the world was of no real consequence. From Europe emanated the 'laws' of

civilisation and progress. These were presented to subjected people as gifts to the world to understand and explain all the phenomena, manifestations and expressions of all of nature—including social life—and to bring continual 'progress' to the world. The conceit behind this was that in the example of Europe, the world would find the template for its development.

Colonisation occurs in the broad ambit of modernity's political and economic diffusion into the world. This sixteenth-century project is a crucial element of 'the intertwined configuration of industrialisation, rational state building' processes that subsequently took place in key parts of Northwestern Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century (Buzan & Lawson, 2013, p. 2). Intrinsic to this configuration were two co-constitutive elements, one internal and the other external. The first was state formation; the second was imperialism. State formation involved intense class formation characterised by the emergence of a powerful capitalist stratum alongside a deep and poor working class. External to these new states, representing imperialism, was the establishment of colonies as sites for resource extraction and the control of cheap or free labour. If the state was the engine, the working poor and the colonies supplied the engine with fuel. Control of the colony required different but related strategies in different parts of the world: seizure of territories and land theft, extermination of Indigenous people in some places and complete subjugation in others and dismantling and eradicating of Indigenous modes of knowing, producing and living sustainably. The processes of schooling, which was systematised in many parts of the world in the middle of the nineteenth century, served to produce and reproduce the conditions of exploitation and oppression in the colonies.

We are now well into the twenty-first century and still under the aegis of modernity. The benefits it has brought to the world are abundant. Many people are living longer. For many, states of health have improved. More people can read and write than at any other time in our history. The technological capacity many of us have at our disposal is extraordinary. However, we wish to indicate our resistance to modernity's presumption that it does all that we wish for ourselves. First, we reject its fabricated self-narrative. Science and philosophy are not European inventions. European modernity did not introduce civilisation into the world. What we understand as 'Europe' has a past. That past includes the full inheritance of our global achievements over the last 5,000 years (see Kies, 1953). This global treasure trove includes deeply-grounded understandings of how our world works. Modernity has sought to erase them. We

also reject the idea of progress that European modernity arrogates to itself, its dismissal of alternative epistemologies and the presumption of undisputed authority for making sense of our universe. This 'Northern' way, as it is called, has brought us to the precipice on which we now stand. In its obsessive quest to bend nature to its desire for 'development', it has produced what many now call the 'Anthropocene', the time in our planet's history when humans have significantly impacted the dynamics of climate and ecosystems. In its quest for 'growth', it has ignored the social. We reject the false impression that what is produced in and by the privileged in the Global North (denoted as 'global') is placeless and universal, preferring to use language that underlines (rather than undermines) the actual equality of 'localness'—and the equal potential global usefulness—of knowledge produced in both the Global South and North (Kothari et al., 2019; Mbembe & Blomley, 2015; Savage, 2011). Most urgently, we reject the global inequalities that modernity—through colonialism—has brought to our lives.

The sum total of what we have before us is a paradox. Although the well-being of large proportions of humanity has improved, we are now, among ourselves, riven with unacceptable disparities, inequalities and discriminations. The gap between the rich and the poor in contemporary times has grown every year. In 2020, the world's 2,153 billionaires, based largely on what we call the 'industrialised North', acquired more wealth than 4.6 billion of the world's population put together. The 22 wealthiest men in the world have more wealth than all the women in Africa (Oxfam, 2020: para. 1). Poverty, precarity and social exclusion are the experiences of the majority of the world. Effective disenfranchisement follows. The majority of the world is generally spatially imprisoned in what is referred to as 'the South'. These 'South' and 'North' schemas are embedded in political, socioeconomic and psychosocial realities, most effectively summed up by notions of superiority and inferiority. They hide, however, internal contradictions that have been captured in theorisations of 'economic Souths in the geographic North and Norths in the geographic South' (Mahler, 2017, p. 1) or what Castells (2010) has called 'the Fourth World' to describe geographies of exclusion that are found not only in decolonised territories but also in the metropoles of the colonial 'mother-land'.

Formal decolonisation, as a process of the juridical disengagement of many metropoles or so-called 'mother countries', sees the birth of new countries taking their place as independent and sovereign polities in the global political landscape. With independence came the promise

of new beginnings. Born of the resistance that is inherent in colonial domination, these new beginnings provided opportunities for self-realisation and economic and human prosperity for all, not just the colonial elite. This process had profound implications for the world order. These, as the world discovered during the difficult days of post-colonisation, were complex. Breaking with the metropoles did not instantly yield the expected dividends of political and economic freedom, much less the kinds of development imagined that would lift underserved communities out of oppression and exploitation. Instead, many countries were quickly caught up in cycles of economic failure, political strife and cultural dependence. Formal decolonisation did not entrain decoloniality. Dismantling and recreating modes of governance, regulatory frameworks and instituting new cultures of democracy, social development and human rights proved to be enormously difficult. The effective replacement of colonial worldviews and hierarchies proved—and is still proving—even more difficult. A derivative colonial normative order came to define the texture and routines of the everyday. Old elites were replaced with new, rapidly upwardly mobile social classes. Socially and environmentally extractivist economic practices continued to define how people entered the labour market, participated in the production process and managed their social mobility.

The basic lineaments of colonialism—cultural, economic, political and social domination by the colonisers, alongside environmental and human extractivism—were transferred into the postcolonial period, which was overseen by new role-players drawn from the new elites. Although frequently forgotten, acts of resistance and rebellion are inherent to colonialism and coloniality and persist in contemporary demands for decolonisation. Territorial colonisation has been greatly reduced but coloniality persists. Formal decolonisation, as described above, needs to be understood separately from the contemporary decolonial project, which has arisen in several parts of the world and encompasses more than the formal autonomy of a state.

COLONIALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

It is now clear that education, the second question to which we alluded above, has occupied a central place in the maintenance of modernity and its derivative in colonialism and coloniality. It has been pivotal in producing and reproducing the colonial order in postcolonial societies (see Abdi, 2012). Historically, education has been used to secure

the ideological hegemony of the Global North. The world is ordered according to coloniality. Education systems, which operate everywhere on knowledge systems developed in the Global North based on an ideal rational scientific model, dominate educational thinking and practices (Tikly, 2020). The dominance of Northern 'standards' permeates education, both internationally through unequal comparisons (such as the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]) and domestically through the reproduction of injustice and oppression within educational systems, to the detriment of other knowledge systems and the people who embody them (Takayama et al., 2017). Thus, in 2025, African children continue to be taught about the history of Europe and tested to Northern 'standards', whereas children in the Global North have little systematic exposure to African history or knowledge systems. Moreover, African, Asian and Latin American women and men who defend their societies and land are described in Western media as 'environmental activists'. Their (non-Modern) understandings of their contexts, based on grounded and holistic conceptualisations of environments, societies and economies as essentially entangled that arise from their ontologies, epistemologies and affective systems, are ethnicised and exoticised as local beliefs and are effectively delegitimated.

This is not the 'development' we want. We want to build a world that has the capacity to sustain life. We want a world in which all of us, regardless of our differences, will live lives of dignity with a sense that we will be secure. We want a world where young people can live, learn and dream for themselves in fulfilling and caring ways; a world where they will develop responsibility for themselves and their wider world in generative ways that recognise and respect differences in all of their physical, figurative and mental forms; and to work with these differences sustainably. We want a world where we can live in a respectful relationship with other life forms and with our wider environment.

How we, as scholars, undertake this task is a complex question. We are aware of the multiple contradictions that surround our engagement; so, in this volume, we attempt to open up the discussion. We reflect on our place and role in the discussion of development unfolding in several parts of the world and how we might take it forward in generative ways. We use the word generative not simply to denote the process of being able to produce things, but to emphasise the virtues of sustenance and sustainability, and the capacity to act and respond to the needs of all life in respectful and thoughtful ways. Our principal concern lies with the inequalities and injustices that characterise our lives as people and

the discord that marks our relationships with each other and with our natural world. We also come to it with the deliberate intention of stimulating discussion, debate and, most critically, dialogue. In seeking to stimulate dialogue, we are conscious of the knowledge we have at our disposal, its endowments and its failings, of what it helps us to see and what it obscures. Our purpose, acknowledging the intensity of the arguments surrounding the discussion of education and development, is to clarify what we, from our positions of privilege, could contribute to the immensely important work that fellow scholars, activists and committed groups and individuals everywhere in the world towards imagining and making alternative and sustainable social and ecosystems.

WHAT DOES THIS VOLUME CONTRIBUTE?

As indicated above, we are Senior Fellows of NORRAG, whose conceptual point of departure is that dominant conceptions of development have been premised, even in what we have come to think of as 'radical' forms, on problematic ontological and epistemological understandings of who we are as human beings and what we should aspire to. In this volume, we discuss and debate the concepts of reparation, recuperation, redress, rectification and redistribution. We spar with each other about how these terms promote justice and the possibility of futures beyond the conditions of our present dominance. How might we return to dominance's classificatory and discursive frameworks? Implicitly, as we debate each other, we grapple with the significant and even determinative freight of our language. Can we, we ask, develop new languages, new signifying gestures and modalities that will, first, engage all of our imaginations and, second, pierce deep through the veil of certainty and into the telos that sits behind it?

As a result of this debate between ourselves, in invoking the prefix *Re* on the great acts of finding our humanness, we insist on thinking not of a return to anything, to any stasis, either that which now dominates us or that which dominance has sought to erase, but of beginning afresh. Beginning afresh is building on *all* that is good around us. We look with appreciation and respect to that which has been forgotten or deliberately displaced, and thoughtfully and thankfully recuperate what we need to. We will resolutely dismantle that which obstructs, impairs and harms our world, reminding ourselves repeatedly why we seek to move on from the damage and hurts we have inflicted on each other, and trying to better understand what reparations are appropriate. We will explore, as part

of this agenda, ways of entering discussions where we can, by inserting discordant notes where they are needed, playing with and celebrating the cacophony that exists in the world. To foster dialogue and look for opportunities to provoke. In stepping into this space, we seek to nurture and cultivate (as part of a zeitgeist distinct from the hubris and conceit of dominant understandings of development) comportments of wonder, curiosity and anticipation.

Research on education and development remains important, particularly against the background we have sketched above, and as many people around the world continue to push for greater self-determination and a sense of their own dignity, autonomy and equality, we wish to be active participants in this process. The importance of education has been given impetus by recent struggles in many parts of the world. In some of these struggles, the matter of dominance and its control mechanisms has become a question of urgent discursive and political engagement. In many countries worldwide, the idea of decolonisation/decoloniality has emerged as a holding frame for thinking about dominance and its deconstruction. Decoloniality is not used as an excuse for inaction. Nor is it irrelevant due to the time passed since territorial decolonisation. Coloniality is with us now, shaping what and how we think, live, and value humans and other species. It seeps into all aspects of knowing, education, developing, and sustaining.

Setting the tone, flow and boundaries of conversations about transforming education starts with addressing coloniality. Decolonisation/decoloniality, of course, is interpreted in different ways in many parts of the world. It proceeds, however, from a consensus that the idea of "Europe" or the "West" (or indeed any colonial metropole) does not hold in its amplitude the full repository of how we as human beings comprehend our cosmos. Modernity, the Gobal North or the West do not constitute the last word in how we make sense of our diversity of experiences and is by no means the apex of what we as human beings are able to think and do. Decolonialists also hold in common the idea that the world has multiple stepping-off points for defining issues about our shared existence on this planet, for reasoning, for making arguments and taking positions around difficult questions and for offering solutions to the problems of the world. As emphasised by Garuba (2015, §19), a Nigerian poet who had been based in South Africa, this agreement captures the global urgency for the world to stand together in 'recogni(sing) and according value to the (knowledge of the) previously disadvantaged...'

The edited volume *Transforming International Development and Education: From Coloniality toRethinking, Reframing and Reimagining Possibilities* aims to contribute to the current literature in at least three ways. After this introductory chapter, which sets the scene for the contemporary study of decolonisation, subsequent chapters seek—in innovative and diverse ways—to look at colonial development's legacy, in the different forms of injustices and planetary emergencies it has thrust upon us, and against this backdrop open up the question of the reparations and reparative work we now need to be considering before finally envisaging and envisioning alternative futures. Throughout, we undertake an academic critique of formal decolonisation and contemporary coloniality and move beyond critique to provide potential constructive ways forward to challenge contemporary relations of domination.

The chapters in Part I of this volume aim to rethink development to envisage a common world.

Iveta Silova, Hikaru Komatsu and Jeremy Rappleye encourage readers to shift their focus from the traditional emphasis on lessons learned—long a staple of international development discourse—to the more critical concept of what should be 'unlearned' from ongoing development practices. In this context, 'unlearning' involves fundamentally questioning and reconfiguring the established assumptions that underpin the development project. The authors urge their readers to 'learn to unlearn' (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 32) as a powerful method for deconstructing the Modern/colonial framework of knowledge to explore and articulate alternatives.

Radhika Gorur and Minoli Wijetunga examine how new data technologies offer unprecedented opportunities to redress historical inequities while simultaneously having the potential to reinforce them and create new forms of marginalisation, dispossession and harm. Contemporary datafication—the process of turning many aspects of life into data that are then monetised—is marked by racial, gender and class biases, thus continuing the legacy of coloniality and the empire. To decolonise education data, this chapter explores contemporary 'data coloniality'—profit-driven extraction, dispossession and epistemic dominance—which produces effects similar to those of territorial colonialism on First Nations people and other minority groups, Indigenous knowledge systems and 'vernacular' practices. The authors envision more equitable and inclusive forms of data in education, emphasising the urgent need to address this issue to ensure equity, fair representation and the protection

of marginalised groups' rights while advancing social and environmental sustainability.

Crain Soudien highlights how universities often perpetuate dominance through economic and market-driven logics. This corporatisation of higher education, he argues, prioritises accountability through metrics such as citation rates and research grants, which shapes higher education in specific ways, putting quantifiable outputs before its mission as a force for decolonisation and sustainability. Soudien offers a new direction, envisioning a 'healthy' university (Honig, 2013) through 'cross-border praxes' (Odora Hoppers, 2021), which transgress orthodoxy and promote intellectual boundary crossing. He advocates for institutions that value disruption and transgression and foster an environment where these tendencies can thrive and propagate.

The second section reframes the process of development, centring collective recuperation, reparation and rectificatory justice.

Catherine A. Odora Hoppers questions whether 'development', as traditionally understood, can foster a sense of 'restorative action', creating a feeling of belonging for citizens. She conceptualises development (with Sachs, 1992) as a monoculture that undermines alternative approaches to society's reductionist and exploitative paradigm and limits humanity's ability to creatively contribute to our futures. This chapter pushes development towards future-oriented perspectives, proposing an alternative that promotes ethical, empowering and healing practices on the ground. Odora Hoppers examines the case of development education at the Department of Science and Technology, South African Research Chair at the University of South Africa. This initiative emphasises advancing restorative action theory and practice by utilising Indigenous knowledge systems to break epistemological barriers and applying transdisciplinarity to discourse, practice and thought to develop methodologies for systemic transformation. She concludes that restoration and healing can be achieved by adopting a pluralistic and ethical approach to development.

Arathi Sriprakash contends that despite decades of 'development', education globally remains profoundly affected by inequalities and injustices. She argues that the global development agenda has failed, even in its own limited terms, as a false promise and a flawed agenda that is fundamentally hierarchical, Eurocentric, paternalistic and dehumanising. Sriprakash highlights how, by ignoring the material and ideological links between colonial domination, capitalist exploitation and development itself, the depoliticisation of both education and development upholds rather than challenges the hierarchical structuring of the world.

Sriprakash asserts that while development cannot be 'fixed' within its existing framework, a project of 'repair' in its ruins can be envisioned. Rejecting the notion that development is an essential 'solution' opens the possibility of finding ways to redress the injustices that development has failed to address and has actively perpetuated.

Tavis d. jules and Nigel O. M. Brissett envision new development opportunities for the Anglophone Caribbean through reparations for the enduring impacts of chattel slavery, extractive capitalism and Indigenous dispossession, which have been pivotal in shaping capitalist modernity. They outline the historical contours of the development paradigm and highlight the violence of colonialism, extractive and racial capitalism, and the resulting material and epistemic consequences. Using reparations as their central conceptual framework, they propose two key strategies for transforming the current development paths of Caribbean societies: reforming the aid system and asserting the right to epistemic autonomy.

Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw and Cristina Delgado Vintimilla presents 'microfragmentos' of reparation and reinvention. These microfragmentos—small, fragmented and irregular pieces that remain incomplete—are part of a modest local political initiative stemming from a pedagogical project with Cañari women and children in the highlands of the Ecuadorian Andes, who are facing the twin encroachment of capitalist and neocolonial threats. Three microfragmentos—on growing, cooking and eating—connect reparation and reinvention through food practices. As women collectively embrace their ch'ixi, drawing on the Indigenous aspects of their identities, their practices of cultivating potatoes, preparing meals together and introducing children to their traditional dishes become acts of love, hope, dreams and joy. These acts transform their everyday lives, creating small moments to heal from the colonial traumas they have collectively inherited and continue to face while reinventing their existence in the modernised Ecuadorian Andes.

The third and final section further reimagines possibilities for development and education.

Vanessa Andreotti offers a poem that deconstructs sustainable development education and challenges the reader—viscerally, intellectually and emotionally—to imagine the policies and cooperation that might help to navigate or change the course of our likely future.

Prachi Srivastava questions why the idea of epistemic humility is challenging for some, while for others it has become instinctive, shaped by repeated experiences of marginalisation. She views epistemic humility as unsurprising and essential for all: as scholars and as human beings. In

response to the prompt 'Write it like you said it', she leads us through a blend of introspective narrative and storytelling, examining formal education systems through an anti-colonial perspective. Seeing educational institutions as perpetuating privileged knowledge through covert colonial practices, Srivastava argues that embracing epistemic humility is a crucial first step in reimagining and reconstructing education and its institutions. Although this remaking of education is possible, she stresses that the practice of epistemic humility by those in relatively privileged positions is vital to this reimagining effort.

Keita Takayama and Taeko Okitsu chart a 'middle path' between 'research for development', which informs and supports policy, and critical 'research of development', which scrutinises how policy is influenced by broader material and discursive contexts at the same time as it simultaneously shapes the issue addressed. The authors contend that adopting this 'middle path'—balancing policy practicality with critical reflexivity—requires three interconnected, nonsequential moves. First, they suggest evaluating policy against normative criteria that are external to the policy and its framing. Second, they emphasise the importance of engaging with the policy's overall structure and framing, even when these are problematic. Finally, they propose finding ways to rearticulate these structures and framings to expand the discursive boundaries established by the policy. This middle path ensures that researchers' recommendations remain meaningful to (even if not immediately actionable by) policy practitioners.

Finally, Kathryn Moeller offers a concluding commentary on the volume.

FROM COLONIALITY TO TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

It is difficult to justify ignoring the contemporary perpetuation of inequalities forged in the colonial era. The primary reason to decolonise development and education is, simply, justice. Colonial domination and exploitation enriched the colonisers as they impoverished the colonised, leading to inequalities between countries and between groups within countries. The purpose of decolonisation efforts is not to make people feel guilty, nor is it to provide an excuse for inaction. Rather, to transform education, decoloniality allows us to better understand the politics and power dynamics of what we do and how we do it; of where and how 'what counts'—and what we are instructed to value—as

knowledge, 'development' and education are produced and legitimated, by whom, and with what effect. Decoloniality requires us to take seriously the power relations that shaped the current world order and continue to sustain it. Decoloniality provides us with a more honest and evidence-informed appraisal of colonial pasts, and how they continue to be entangled with our present. If studying colonial pasts and presents as a topic allows us to examine evidence of historical exploitation, domination and abuse, then the move to decoloniality provides profound ontological, theoretical, axiological, and methodological contributions to contemporary research, policy and practice. If Modernity demands that we see knowledge, people and our Earth in one single way, with one single destination, then decoloniality invites us to notice the reality of pluriversality (Mbembe, 2015; Mignolo, 2007). Decoloniality opens our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to equally valuable multiplicities: multiple values and ways of ascribing value, knowledge and ways of knowing; methods and ways of doing; and ways of being and understanding being itself. Crucially, decoloniality brings us closer to realising what we can do differently to allow education to live up to its potential as a crucible for transformation.

We do not approach decolonisation/decoloniality uncritically. We are not interested in a project of recentring knowledge. In the interest of maintaining and building a critical agenda for thinking about alternative ways to development, we proceed on the premise that decolonised education holds the potential to challenge the dominant global narrative and empower marginalised communities, while laying out possibilities through which systemic inequalities can be confronted and exploring opportunities for thinking about the sustainability of our planet. Our aim is simply justice. In thinking then about what we could do, we have come to the decision that the least we can do is keep the dialogue open among ourselves. This volume provides the platform through which we make clear the positions from which we come and the perspectives we hold. However—and still from the places in the academy in which we find ourselves—we will try to advance opportunities for looking at the challenges in ways that are generative and new. We do so in the spirit of hope. In the spirit that we are all able to learn, unlearn and relearn again. Learning and unlearning are acts of humility and vulnerability. We acknowledge that we do not know everything. In this vulnerability we will continue, as we do in this volume, to collaborate to build and foster decolonial educational practices.

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PART I

Rethinking the ‘problem’ of development: Envisaging a common world

1. Unlearning Development: Education in the Era of Planetary Emergency

Iveta Silova, Hikaru Komatsu and Jeremy Rappleye[1]

Despite seven decades of international development efforts, the promise of "development" is now dead. Poverty is persisting (Alston, 2020; World Bank, 2022), inequality is widening (Hickel, 2018; Sullivan & Hickel, 2023; UNDP, 2022), and environmental degradation is accelerating (IPCC, 2022). The United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), launched in 2000, failed to reach their targets by 2015 and were swiftly replaced by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are now also widely off track to end poverty, support well-being, and protect the environment by the year 2030. Today, we are nearing the 2030 deadline, fully aware that extreme poverty will not be eradicated, that the South will never catch up to the North, and that the 1.5°C global warming threshold will be breached. In a report presented to the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council at the 44th General Assembly, Philip Alston (2020) compared the current situation to "sleepwalking toward assured failure," while continuing to generate new and better "portals, dashboards, stakeholder engagement plans, bland reports and colorful posters" (p. 14). Why are we not learning from our failures?

There has been no shortage of critical reflections on the "lessons learned" from international development experiences by different stakeholders. These lessons are routinely discussed in official reports by development agencies (e.g., a simple search for "lessons learned" in the World Bank's e-library produced over ten thousand entries), learning briefs, and collaborative online spaces (e.g., USAID's Learning Lab for staff and partners), podcasts (e.g., World Bank Group, n.d.; 2015), memoirs by former development experts (e.g., Easterly's (2007) reflections on

"Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good"), and investigative citizen reports uncovering failed foreign aid interventions—"whether they are stalled, unfinished, broken, insufficient, unusable, or otherwise unwanted" (e.g., "What Went Wrong?" by Devex, 2019). Whether stirring controversy or rehearsing the status quo, these countless lessons do not seem to have produced any fundamental shifts in international development practice, logic, or predetermined trajectory. Even the harshest criticism seems to be blatantly ignored, quickly forgotten, or carefully swept under the rug.

In this essay, we propose shifting attention from the *lessons* learned—a topic that has occupied the attention of both international development experts and its critics for decades—to what should be *unlearned* from ongoing development practice. In this context, "unlearning" does not mean the incremental improvement of existing systems, processes, and practices (e.g., through lessons learned). Rather, it entails a more fundamental questioning of and reconfiguration of the established assumptions underlying the development project, one that has been officially institutionalized as a "right"[2] and historically naturalized as the only way to become, the only way to do, the only way to know, and the only way to be. Writing from a decolonial perspective, Madina Tlostanova and Walter Mignolo (2012) explain that "learning to unlearn" is one of the most powerful ways of deconstructing the modern/colonial architecture of knowledge by deliberately delinking "from the illusion that knowledge in all spheres of life is bound to *one* set of categories that are both universal and Western" (p. 198, emphasis added). Thus, "unlearning" opens the space for recognizing the limits of the status quo while exploring and articulating alternatives.

LEARNING TO UNLEARN

Although "unlearning" is uncommon in the context of international development (e.g., see (Un)Learning Labs[3] as one of the few exceptions), it is an important pedagogical practice across many Western and non-Western contexts. In Japan, for example, Zen philosophical practice has shaped a particular view of learning based on a constant, recursive movement from the acquisition of knowledge and skills to unlearning, which is followed by creative reemergence (Nishihira & Rappleye, 2022; see also Takayama, 2020). This type of "unlearning" requires a "release, surrendering, or 'putting down' of what one had previously worked so diligently to acquire"—a process focused on rendering the self fluid and

receptive once more and learning to see "unity in opposites" (Nishihira & Rappleye, 2022, p. 1326). In China, a Daoist view of "unlearning" refers to "a nonindividualistic and nonanthropocentric form of study" that draws upon correlative cosmology and entails "suspending or temporarily forgetting those ready-made conceptual frameworks to encounter things or events anew" (Zhao, 2019, p. 270). Similarly, "learning to unlearn in order to relearn" is a central principle in many Indigenous cultures, including the curricula of Amawtay Wasi and the Intercultural University of the People and Nations of Ecuador, which approach learning as "an ongoing and never-ending open process, based on complexity and relationism, complementarity, and reciprocity, the shift from the subject-object relations to the subject-subject model instead of the dominant fragmentation, to the learning-unlearning-relearning path, and from accumulating knowledge to its critical and creative understanding and integration in wisdom" (see Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 14).

In the West, this type of learning is often referred to as Type II and Type III learning (Bateson, 1973), double- and triple-loop learning (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Tosey et al., 2012), and discontinuity in learning (English, 2013). For example, the concept of double- and triple-loop learning explains how "failure" may initiate a process of critical reflection on underlying assumptions, knowledge, and beliefs, thus prompting a change not only in beliefs about the world but also in aspects of our own selves (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Tosey et al., 2012). It is also referred to as "transformative learning" in organizational theory and leadership studies. Importantly, the literature discusses "unlearning" at both the organizational and individual levels, both of which are important and often interconnected in their potential for transformational change (e.g., see Nygren et al., 2017).

Although widely referenced across different professional fields (e.g., from business and management to biodiversity conservation and decolonial studies) and practiced across a variety of cultures (e.g., from Western to non-Western contexts),[4] this type of recursive learning and unlearning is largely absent in the field of international development. Since its inception nearly seven decades ago, the project of development seems to have been stubbornly stuck in a vicious cycle of *single*-loop learning—making repeated attempts at incremental changes, with minimal variations in methods without ever questioning the goal. It remains wholly unaware of its fundamental assumptions and, thus, is unable to shift course. With this in mind, it is critical to begin the process of learning to unlearn in the field of international development to critically reassess its fundamental

assumptions and existing routines while bringing into focus alternatives to the development project.

This chapter is an attempt to tentatively sketch some initial and certainly incomplete sets of ideas (or provocations) to help initiate the process of "unlearning," specifically focusing on the role of education in international development. The focus on education is intentional for several reasons. First, education has a long history as an international development priority. From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) to the MDGs and SDGs, education has been described as a basic human right—and one of the central mechanisms—working "to raise men and women out of poverty, level inequalities and ensure sustainable development" (UNESCO, 2023). The link between education and development has been so strong that Wilson (1994) has referred to comparative and international (development) education as "Siamese twins," noting their intertwined nature and commitment to meliorism. Second, the model of education in international development has been "generally fixed since the inception of the field," and has become even further cemented over recent decades, promoting "a near-hegemonic understanding of and belief in formal, Western-style, state-provided, mass schooling as constituting 'education' (for development) in the twenty-first century" (Kandell, 2009, p. 422). While the assumption is that increasing access to quality education would automatically translate into economic growth, increased equity, and environmental sustainability, evidence from nearly seven decades of international development suggests otherwise. Orr (2004) notes:

> Education is not widely regarded as a problem, although the lack of it is. The conventional wisdom holds that all education is good, and the more of it one has, the better.... The truth is that without significant precautions, education can equip people merely to be more effective vandals of the earth. (p. 5)

Indeed, critics have long argued that the dominant model of modern (Western-style) schooling is deeply implicated in the current socio-economic and ecological crises (e.g., Bowers, 1995, 2002; Orr, 2004, 2009; Komatsu et al., 2020; Schumacher, 1973). Today, schools and higher education systems (especially in Western countries) continue to prioritize workforce supply for economic growth over environmental sustainability. They perpetuate the logic of (neo)liberal individualism and competitiveness over interdependence and collaboration. And they inculcate the values of human exceptionalism and superiority to justify

the exploitation of nature to benefit (some) humans. In the current context of accelerating ecological breakdown, we need a radical (re)imagination and reconfiguration of education because tinkering with the minutiae puts both people and the planet in jeopardy (Rappleye et al., 2024). For these and many other reasons, there is no better place to begin the process of "unlearning" development than through education.

HOW TO UNLEARN DEVELOPMENT: INITIAL (AND INCOMPLETE) SET OF PROVOCATIONS

"'Development' is a companion concept to modernity," which has a darker side—coloniality (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 38). Used as a dyad term in the decolonial literature, "modernity/coloniality" constitutes a complex matrix of power that shapes all spheres of economy, authority, the public realm, and knowledge and subjectivity through benevolent rhetoric and often violent means (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2009; see also Mignolo, 2011; Quijano, 2007). It functions as a reminder that the benefits associated with modernity stem from historical legacies that are at once coercive and unsustainable, thus making visible its many paradoxes "of war and humanitarian support, of ongoing colonialism and reconciliation, of imperialism and education, of poverty creation and alleviation, of exponential growth and sustainability" (Machado De Oliveira, 2021, p. 40). However, the vision of modernity/coloniality, along with its companion project of development, remains stubbornly ingrained in many minds and modern institutions, becoming "an obsession, an addiction, a pathological mania" (Esteva & Esobar, 2020, p. 112).

Although the matrix of modernity/coloniality appears to be both universal and invincible, it is not. Across disciplines, scholars and activists have pursued different ways of unlearning modernity/coloniality while articulating viable alternatives. For example, decolonial scholars have employed strategies of "delinking" from the modern/colonial matrix of power by shifting the geography of reasoning beyond the Western horizon, bringing into focus alternative worlds and worldviews (Silova, 2020; Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012; see also Chen, 2010). Others have begun preparations for "hospicing modernity," a ritual process that entails the acceptance of "the eventual inevitable end of modernity's fundamentally unethical and unsustainable institutions" but "sees the necessity of enabling a 'good' death through which important lessons are processed" (Machado De Oliveira, 2021, p. 223). These lessons may include critical reflections on the accomplishments and atrocities of the dying system,

as well as our own investment and complicity in it (see Machado De Oliveira, 2021; see also chapters by Soudien and Odora Hoppers, in this volume). Yet others, including ecofeminists such as Donna Haraway (2016), have actively engaged in "material-semiotic composting" of modernity, inviting us to "collect up the trash of the Anthropocene, the extremism of the Capitalocene, chipping and shredding and layering like a mad gardener, [in order to] make a much hotter compost pile for still possible pasts, presents, and futures" (p. 57). These acts of reparation, regeneration, and reinvention—often in the midst of multiple contradictions—are the focus of several chapters in this book (see the chapters by Pacini-Ketchabaw, Sriprakash, and others).

Regardless of the approach—delinking, hospicing, composting, regenerating, repairing, or rebelling of any other kind—the common thread is learning to unlearn the foundational premises of modernity/coloniality to relearn alternative ways of knowing, doing, and being. In the context of international development, this means unlearning modernity/coloniality as a single vision for surviving on the damaged Earth, while relearning new ways of responding to cascading crises such as climate, health, and military emergencies rippling across our contemporary world. This also means learning to unlearn our attraction to and desire for infinite growth, universal formulas, best practices, consensual definitions and conceptual divisions, technoscientific solutions, or the promises of progress and salvation of any kind. As Arturo Escobar (2020) explains, unlearning modernity means that we need to "stop thinking about our worlds with the dominant categories that created these crises, and instead move forward in a process of relearning the real/possible, beyond the certitudes of modernity and the conventional categories that, it is worth underlining, are the very ones used by the institutions perpetuating the crisis: the World Bank, great corporations, most states, organized religions, and also to a large extent the academy" (p. 6). Education, at least in the form of modern mass schooling, must also be added to this list.

What follows is an initial set of provocations to trigger unlearning in the field of development, with a specific focus on education. Although these provocations are grouped around particular themes and presented separately from each other, they are, in fact, highly interrelated. With full awareness that this list is neither exhaustive nor absolute, we invite readers to add to (and/or edit) this list of provocations as we begin the journey of learning to unlearn development.

#1 Unlearning Modern/Colonial Cartography

Unlearning development entails unlearning the modern/colonial division of the world into North–South (or West–East) divisions, wherein much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America are positioned as inferior vis-a-vis the rest of the world. In this framework, "New York and London represent the normal, healthy state of humankind. By comparison, Accra and Rio are diseased" (Esteva et al., 2013, p. 29). Structurally bound to the (neo)liberal economic model of the West, such partitioning of the world assumes that the "diseased" (the so-called "underdeveloped" and "developing") will eventually catch up with the so-called "developed" world with the help of international development aid. In practice, however, this modern/colonial cartography has only enabled economic growth in the North at the expense of continued exploitation of the Global South, e.g., the extraction of southern resources and labor and appropriation of the atmosphere (Ladfha & Murphy, 2022, p. 48; see also Hickel, 2018; Kothari, 2005; Said, 1978). In the words of Mignolo (2014), "The belief that modernity is something you have to catch up with was the most successful fiction of the European imaginary." However, it continues to haunt the public imagination and fuel the development industry, providing the legitimation for the purportedly "advanced" policies to be rolled out in the developing world.

Learning to unlearn this modern/colonial cartography entails reorienting the conventional reference points away from the "West" as the apex of development and instead focusing on the relational interconnectedness of the different regions of the world. By focusing instead on knowledge "inter-referencing" within particular regions (e.g., the Asian region), it is possible to recenter global power dynamics and, thus, interrupt the hegemony of Western knowledge. Chen's (2010) *Asia as Method* is just one example of re-centering Asia "as the source of a multiplicity of new [knowledge] flows" (p. 8), effectively illustrating "how local history, in dialectical interaction with the colonial and other historical forces, transforms its internal formation on the one hand and articulates the local to world history and the structure of global capital on the other hand" (p. 66). In this way, "Asia as method" opens ways to bring to the foreground multiple histories while revealing the relationality and interdependence of different global spaces. Similarly, the work of decolonial scholars emphasizing pluriversality—as opposed to universality—brings into focus multiple "trajectories that do not pretend to compete with modern Western epistemology," but, rather, intend "to

move in a different direction, to delink, to shift the geography of reasoning" (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 12). In this context, the idea of the pluriverse becomes a collective project based on a multiplicity of worlds and their coexistence, perhaps most succinctly and eloquently expressed by the Zapatistas as *"Un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos"* or "a world in which many worlds might fit."[5]

#2 Unlearning the Logic of Infinite Growth

The work of major international development agencies in the area of education converges around the logic of economic growth, while largely ignoring the negative implications of infinite growth for environmental sustainability. The general claim is that increasing access to education while raising test scores will result in greater economic growth, as measured by gross domestic product (GDP) (see Hanushek & Woessmann, 2015; for a critique, see Komatsu & Rappleye, 2017). In fact, most education-related work by leading international development agencies—ranging from the World Bank to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)—is explicitly predicated on an extremist version of human capital theory, one subscribing to an infinite growth paradigm (OECD, 2016; World Bank, 2011; for a critique, see Auld et al., 2018; Komatsu et al., 2020). Although recent official statements by the World Bank, the OECD, and UNESCO might suggest alignment with the SDG vision, there has been little change from the economic growth "status quo" since the 1990s. More alarmingly, international development work in education continues to be based on the assumption that there is no conflict between continued economic growth and environmental sustainability (e.g., UNESCO, 2016, pp. 16–62), despite persistent critiques that underscore the incompatibility between the two (see Hickel & Kallis, 2020; Jackson, 2009; Meadows et al., 1972).

Although the logic of perpetual growth remains central to mainstream economics—with a notable shift toward green growth in recent years—critics have called for a more radical paradigm shift from growth to *de*growth (Hickel, 2021). The argument is that in the absence of negative-emissions technologies, "the only feasible way to remain within safe carbon budgets is for high-income nations to actively slow down the pace of material production and consumption" (Hickel, 2021, p. 1106; see also Grubler et al., 2018; IPCC, 2018, 2022). In addition to challenging the central tenets of neoliberal globalization, a degrowth paradigm "rejects the notion (introduced by colonizers and international financial

institutions) that GDP growth should be pursued for its own sake," and, instead, proposes a focus on human and planetary well-being (Hickel, 2021, p. 1110; see also Kothari et al., 2019; Komatsu et al., 2022). From this perspective, education must also be decoupled from the growth logic and delinked from its historically narrow function of boosting national GDP. If we do not unlearn the growth logic and rearticulate education purposes in broader ecological terms, education—and SDGs more broadly—will only lead to greater unsustainability.

#3 Unlearning Best Practices

The concept of "best practices" is one of the most distinctive features of international development. It entails highlighting examples, setting standards and agendas, and aims to assist "evidence-based" policy-making on a global scale (Blake et al., 2021). The assumption is that there is a consensus on what constitutes "best practice" in education across all contexts. The underlying principle is the replication and transfer of these so-called "best practices" as blueprints to propel change worldwide (Rappleye, 2012, 2019; Silova, 2012; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004; Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow, 2012). Typically, "best practices" travel to their final destinations in neatly prepared "reform packages," which are assembled by international financial institutions, bilateral and multilateral organizations, international or local NGOs, and consultant academics. Assembled in the image of the West, and backed by "scientific" quantitative data from empirically validated studies and cross-national student achievement studies (e.g., Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA] and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study [TIMSS]), the "packages" may include all overly familiar policies and practices such as student-centered learning, the introduction of curriculum standards, the decentralization of educational finance and governance, the privatization of higher education, the standardization of student assessment, the liberalization of textbook publishing, and many others (Silova & Steiner-Khamsi, 2008). In the process of education transfer, local knowledge is effectively marginalized and sometimes forcefully erased, while Western education reform "packages" and pathways are introduced as universal and universalizing solutions—no matter how inadequate, inequitable, or irrelevant they may be.

Learning to unlearn "best practices" is already underway in many contexts by people "who become epistemically and politically disobedient, who realize that knowledge cannot be framed and packaged in the bags

of Greece, Rome, France, Germany, England, and the US" (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 235). Regarding "best practices" in education, this entails unlearning our investments in the mainstream modern/colonial education system supported by large-scale student achievement tests, competitive education league tables, global ranking exercises, human-centric pedagogies, and other so-called "best practices" that only accelerate unsustainability. Because knowledge is concrete, participatory, situated, and unique in each cultural and geopolitical context, education transfer is not generalizable and copyable, regardless of different contexts (Rappleye & Un, 2018). From this perspective, the assumption of universality becomes irrelevant, and the mechanism of learning from (Western) "best" practices becomes obsolete (Gong et al., 2023). Instead, we can begin *re*learning that knowledge sharing can occur in more relational and reciprocal ways.

#4 Unlearning Expertise

The project of international development is led and managed by Western "experts" who have positioned themselves as all-knowing subjects vis-à-vis local policymakers and practitioners who have been framed as passive, ignorant, and incapable of meaningful thought and action. Whether affiliated with higher education institutions, development agencies, or nongovernmental organizations, these "experts" tend to discursively construct the South (or the East) as rife with conflict and danger or, in the best-case scenarios, as facing an imminent "learning crisis" (for a critique, see Silova, 2012; Sriprakash et al., 2020; Thompson & Heathershaw, 2005). From the World Bank to the UN, the messaging has been consistently clear: "the developing world is facing a learning crisis" (World Bank, 2018, p. 71) and, thus, is in desperate need of development assistance. The implication is also clear—the "know-how" for overcoming the crisis rests with the Western "experts" who are readily available to offer (and to profit from) technical assistance across the world by enabling themselves to speak for those who supposedly lack expert knowledge to independently determine their own futures (Silova & Brehm, 2013). Rooted in modern/colonial hierarchies, such "expertise" subordinates, mutilates, invalidates, and incapacitates. It, too, must be unlearned.

Unlearning expertise also means unlearning racism and white saviorism. Khan et al. (2023) purposefully chose the term "white saviorism" rather than "white savior complex" or "white savior syndrome" to

emphasize the racialized structure of power in the international development industry rather than an individually held attitude. They remind us that it is time "for organizations founded in predominantly white countries to know that they are *not* 'experts' and *cannot* effectively solve problems impacting communities that have been overexploited" (p. 13, emphasis added). When rethinking the role of education in development, this means rewriting the narrative that the African continent or the Global South is in "crisis" and needs "saving." It requires acknowledging the field's entanglements in systems of racial domination and its complicity in (re)producing knowledge divides along racial and geopolitical lines (Sriprakash et al., 2020). As Khan et al. (2023) suggest, we can start the urgent process of unlearning "expertise" by:

> Questioning whose expertise we value, whom we listen to, who holds the levers of power, and who gets a vote. We need to dismantle how we construct the communities we work in as the 'other', i.e., places overseas with problems and needs, rather than places where solutions are generated and capabilities are in place. This starts with being humble about who we are and how we go about things. (p. 309)

Various chapters in this book share powerful examples of unlearning "expertise" and redefine the practice of development in more humble and relational terms, whether at the individual, community, or institutional levels (e.g., see the chapters by Takayama & Okitsu, Soudien, Odora Hoppers, and others).

#5 Unlearning (Neo)liberal Individualism

Although (neo)liberal individualism has traditionally been a major cornerstone of Western civilization and a key to achieving modernity (Taylor, 1989; see also Komatsu et al., 2019; Rappleye & Komatsu, 2020), it has been called into question in the context of an escalating climate crisis. This is because (neo)liberal individualism places personal freedoms and individual gains above all else, reducing the concept of "society" to an agglomeration of atomized (neo)liberal individuals competing for rapidly shrinking resources on Earth while undermining support for collective action (Rappleye et al., 2021). In particular, some cultures tend to operate under the assumption that individuals are free to pursue their own goals and interests (i.e., independent self), while others perceive the individual as fully embedded in social and natural networks (i.e., interdependent self). Although "independent" selfhood is valorized in mainstream

(Western) culture and promoted globally through international development assistance (e.g., education projects focusing on student-centered learning), it is associated with greater environmental impacts, including carbon dioxide emissions and the ecological footprint (Komatsu et al., 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022). Meanwhile, cultures with predominantly interdependent selves tend to have lower environmental impacts, prioritizing reciprocal relations among humans as well as among humans and nature.

Reflecting on the dominant ontology of individualism, Escobar (2020) describes it as the "antirelational Trojan horse that inhabits each of us in modern worlds" (p. xxxi), urging us to unlearn the culture of (neo) liberal individualism along with unlearning patriarchy, racism, and heterosexism. Education is central to unlearning (neo)liberal individualism by rearticulating the dominant culture and its underpinning concept of selfhood. Although there are few attempts in Western countries to introduce practices promoting interdependent selfhood in formal schooling settings (Sterling et al., 2018), there are many examples of educational practices in non-Western and Indigenous contexts that prioritize interdependent selfhood and successfully reintegrate alternative ways of coexisting with nature and the Earth within the modern school curriculum (Glasson et al., 2010; Masuku van Damme & Neluvhalani, 2004; Shukla et al., 2017; Tom et al., 2019). These examples offer alternative resources and pedagogical inspirations for rearticulating Western modernity's dominant concept of independent selfhood in more interdependent, relational terms.

#6 Unlearning Human Exceptionalism

Human exceptionalism is one of the distinguishing features of Western modernity/coloniality, and in the words of Val Plumwood (2007), it is also "the chief mark of its ecological failure." Based on the idea that humans are radically different and apart from the rest of the living world, human exceptionalism fuels the ideology of "hyperseparation," a structure of dominance that drives all Western binaries, including nature/culture, female/male, matter/mind, self/other, developed/underdeveloped, and more. This structure of "hyperseparation" places value on one side of the binary while relegating the other side to a position of oppositional subordination, thus legitimating its domination and exploitation (Rose, 2013). For centuries, educational institutions (from schools to universities) have perpetuated the ideology of "hyperseparation" through curriculum and pedagogies, introducing and systematically reinforcing the

hierarchical divides that position (some) humans as superior, all-knowing subjects and the world "out there" as an inert matter to be studied, managed, and acted upon at will (Common Worlds Research Collective, 2020). In the context of escalating climate and biodiversity crises, the logic of human exceptionalism has shifted to emphasize human ingenuity as the key to finding technoscientific solutions for environmental problems while maintaining the very human/nature divide at the root of the crisis.

Despite its systematic uptake within mainstream modern schooling, the ideology of human exceptionalism has not been universally embraced (Common Worlds Research Collective, 2020). Inspiration for *un*learning human exceptionalism can be found all around us—in Indigenous and African cosmologies that bring into focus land knowledge (LeGrange, 2012, 2018; Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003; Rose, 1992; Rose & D'Amico, 2011; Styres, 2019), in a multiplicity of local knowledge systems and eco-activist movements in the South Americas (Escobar, 2018; Mignolo, 2011; Viveiros de Castro, 2004), and Asian philosophical and cultural traditions (Abe, 2014; Komatsu & Rappleye, 2020; Sevilla, 2016; Zhao, 2009). In Western scholarship, alternatives to human/nature hierarchies are articulated in terms of "assemblages" and "networks" of multiple human and nonhuman actors (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Latour, 2004, 2005, 2018), the hybrid concepts of "cyborgs" and "naturecultures" (Haraway, 1985, 1988), or the lively inter- and intra-actions between all kinds of matter (Alaimo & Hekman, 2009; Barad, 2007; Bennett, 2010). These alternatives share a commitment to deeply relational, animate worldviews, which presuppose that human and more-than-human worlds are intrinsically interconnected and radically interdependent. We do not need to look far to begin the process of *re*learning.

FROM *UN*LEARNING TO *RE*LEARNING: THE CASE OF "INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM"

The preceding discussion was based on the idea that the lessons of unlearning are interconnected, all converging toward a common point. These lessons challenge the prevailing notions of development, including the role of education in development, which is typically seen as the means of liberating "independent" individuals—the autonomous, disembedded individuals valorized by modernity. The UN Declaration on the Right to Development, for instance, states in its preamble that it aims to "promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom"

(United Nations, 1986). While we agree with the goal of achieving "better standards of life," we are concerned with the proposition that this comes through a "larger freedom." Does not "freedom" mean, simply, greater disembedding of "independent" individuals who erase the cultural and community bonds/relations in the name of liberating the individual?

Let us look closer at three inherent assumptions about the "freedom" present in the aforementioned UN Declaration on the Right to Development (United Nations, 1986) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948). These assumptions are as follows: (1) "freedom" is inherent to individuals prior to any interactions with others, (2) interactions with others are generally seen as impeding individual freedom, and (3) political institutions should be established to reconcile conflicts among individuals. It is crucial to recognize the presumptive foundations upon which virtually all contemporary "development" is predicated.

The first assumption is evident in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." While we acknowledge the theoretical nature of this assumption, it is worth noting that freedom is defined without considering interactions with others. The second assumption is reflected in both declarations, which primarily address interactions that curtail freedom (e.g., slavery and torture) rather than those that enable it. The third assumption about the role of government is also apparent in these declarations: governing states should promote "universal respect for" and observe "human rights and fundamental freedoms."

It is important to highlight that this conceptualization of freedom aligns precisely with social contract theorists such as Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. Despite their significant differences, all these theorists assume that individuals are freest when they have no interactions with others. Interactions with others are seen as constraints on one's freedom, leading to circumstances described by Hobbes as a "war of every man against every man" (1651); by Locke as a state where the "enjoyment and security of property" are "very unsafe" and "very insecure" (1689); and by Rousseau as a scenario of "usurpation by the rich, robbery by the poor, and unbridled passions of both" (1754). Consequently, these theorists advocate for the establishment of governing states as a means to address this situation and restore order. This genealogy of assumptions regarding "freedom" underlies the dominant concept of development.[6] However, are there truly no other ways of being outside the Western philosophical tradition? No other ways of organizing society?

It is at this level that assumptions need to be reevaluated through the lessons of unlearning outlined in the previous section. Human exceptionalism, neoliberal individualism, and an emphasis on economic growth are all deemed necessary to overcome the limitations imposed by interactions with others, including nature. Human exceptionalism enables humans to exploit natural resources, liberating them from the constraints imposed by nature. Neoliberal individualism allows individuals to limit close interactions with others and maximize their own interests. Economic growth reduces economic constraints and ensures individuals' freedom within a market economy.

Best practices and expertise are, in turn, considered efficient means of liberating individuals. When the absence of interactions with others is regarded as the epitome of freedom, it becomes the universal objective of development. Consequently, all societies are ranked according to one universal criterion: the closer a society is to this universal goal, the more "advanced" it is perceived to be. This universality leads to the disregard of locality because locality is destined to diminish with development. As a result, borrowing best practices from a more "advanced" society is believed to be an efficient way of promoting development, with experts being instrumental in implementing these developmental initiatives. The disembedded expert, usually from an advanced Western country, is an embodiment of the purportedly "advanced" knowledge and ways of being that the development seeks to foster, unbound by anything, blissfully unconstrained by context, and unaccountable for any consequences. In this way, the very concept of "freedom" needs to be reexamined and unlearned. We suggest doing so by focusing on the following two points.

First, we must question whether others primarily limit one's freedom. Can we truly assume that individuals, particularly children, become free individuals without any interactions with others? Rousseau would affirmatively answer this question. Indeed, Rousseau argued that educators should shield children from social interactions, depicting them as "saplings chance sown in the midst of the highway, bent hither and thither and soon crushed by the passers-by" (Rousseau, 1762, p. 85). Romantic Rousseau proposed that educators should "remove this young tree from the highway and shield it from the crushing force of social conventions" (p. 85), effectively suggesting that social interactions corrupt the natural goodness of children.[7] However, many education theorists argue otherwise, suggesting that interactions with others are vital for achieving personal freedom (Dewey, 1926; Komatsu & Rappleye, 2017; Oakeshott, 2001; Vygotsky, 1930). Dewey himself once labeled the

"illusion of being able to stand alone" the biggest pathology in education and a source of problems in the world.

> There is always a danger that increased personal independence will decrease the social capacity of an individual. In making him more self-reliant, it may make him more self-sufficient; it may lead to aloofness and indifference. It often makes an individual so insensitive in his relations to others as to develop an illusion of being really able to stand and act alone—an unnamed form of insanity which is responsible for a large part of the remediable suffering of the world. (1916, Chapter 4)

Indeed, assuming that others primarily limit one's freedom may have significant negative consequences. This assumption can foster individuals' irresponsibility toward others, including nature. Although social contract theorists acknowledge the importance of interactions with others for survival, making this assumption implies that individuals accept others only as long as they are useful to them. Philosophers have repeatedly asserted that such strong self-centeredness is a major cause of social and environmental problems (Bowers, 1995; Naess, 1989; Plumwood, 1993; Uchiyama, 2010; White, 1967). This assertion has gained empirical support in recent decades. For example, psychological studies have reported that individuals with strong self-centeredness tend not to behave prosocially or pro-environmentally (Arnocky et al., 2007; Chuang et al., 2016; Martinsson et al., 2012; see also Komatsu et al., 2019, 2021).

Second, we must question whether freedom is truly static. In current discourses, it appears that reaching absolute freedom is equated with a state of noninteraction with others. We cordon ourselves off from others to ensure our freedom. However, the ability to truly "stand alone" is merely an illusion. This notion of freedom needs to be unlearned, while relational freedom needs to be relearned. The definition of freedom shifts to "becoming free" of one's past parochialisms and learning to engage in a dynamic process of coexistence and co-creation. If the project of development was founded on such a view of freedom, it would render it impossible to rank societies by a single universal criterion. The goal would be enhancing dynamic interaction, "freeing" the space of obstacles to co-creation. It is difficult to imagine that existing assumptions about freedom will easily be overturned because they are now institutionalized at the very foundations of development, including in foundational UN documents. Nevertheless, it is obvious that, sooner or later, the failure of development to address the planetary emergency will force us to undertake a deep reexamination. The question is whether we

can unlearn our assumptions in time or whether we will simply respond to these myriad crises with "more" development (Rappleye et al., 2024).

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In this piece, we have provocatively argued for the case of "unlearning development." It is increasingly evident that twentieth-century development and the eighteenth-century Western worldview that underpins it are unable to address contemporary planetary emergencies, particularly climate crises. Education is the primary cultural arena where learning unfolds, these assumptions are transmitted, and development intervenes. For this reason, unlearning must begin in education, helping us unravel the assumed fictions that constrain us—modern/colonial cartography, infinite growth, best practices, white expertise, (neo)liberal individualism, human exceptionalism, and nonrelational "freedom." In this context, unlearning entails cultivating the capacity "to forget what we have been taught, to break free from the thinking programs imposed on us by education, culture, and social environment, always marked by Western imperial reason" (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 7). More importantly, unlearning is an inevitable prerequisite to the process of *re*learning, that is, thinking more broadly and radically about possible futures while reconfiguring our ways of knowing and being on a finite planet.

NOTES

1. All authors contributed equally.
2. For example, see the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1986).
3. (Un)Learning Labs are designed as a collaborative space to interrogate our existing ways of thinking, doing, and learning while learning from each other and with each other. The assumption is that "(un)learning is the first step in learning in international development and humanitarian spaces." For more information, see https://mcld.org/unlearning/
4. There are also interesting comparisons between Western and non-Western practices of unlearning and exploring connections and synergies across different cultures, such as Sevilla's (2016) insightful work comparing discontinuity and negative education or Nishihira and Rappleye's (2022) research that brings into conversation the work of the thirteenth-century Zen-inspired playwright Zeami (e.g., the concept of double-eyes) with the ideas of Bateson on double-loop learning to deepen our understanding of unlearning.
5. See Escobar (2020) for a detailed discussion on decolonial delinking and pluriversal futures.

6. The assumptions outlined in this paper have received limited attention even in recent mainstream literature. For instance, while Amartya Sen (2000) explores key ideas employed in development discourses (e.g., human rights), he does not extensively examine the underlying assumptions addressed in this study.
7. This is precisely why Rousseau's pedagogy enables the disregard of context and locality (Dussel, 2019).

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2. Decolonising Education Data: Theories and Prospects

Radhika Gorur and Minoli Wijetunga

Data are vital instruments of governance and control (Desrosières, 1993). Data make social phenomena and populations visible, measurable, trackable and manageable in ways that mobilise favoured political and administrative courses of action (Gorur, 2015; Scott, 1998). As a result, data are deeply political. What data are generated, to what extent they are trusted and used, how they are produced and by whom are matters of great consequence. Until a few decades ago, it was mainly governments and international organisations that had the resources and infrastructure for generating large-scale data on public policy matters such as education, health and demographics. The high cost of producing data meant that data gathering was limited in scope and less frequent than it currently is.

Recent advances such as digitisation have enabled vast amounts of data to be routinely generated at a relatively low cost. Although data continues to support policy decisions, the key purpose of data is commercial. Private corporations now generate far more data than most governments. Data are seen as the new oil – a highly sought-after, tradeable commodity. The ability to produce and distribute data is now in the hands of anyone with a smartphone, an app, or a social media account. Governments as well as private companies invite us to voluntarily provide information, and they also collect information we produce involuntarily – scooping up our digital traces as we go about our lives (Couldry & Mejias, 2019). The apps we use and our everyday devices and gadgets – refrigerators, cars, phones and watches – now generate data about every aspect of our lives: our sleep patterns, what we eat, how much water we have drunk, and when we menstruate.

These new data technologies offer unprecedented opportunities to redress historical inequities, but they can also reinforce them and, indeed, create new forms of marginalisation, dispossession and harm

(UNESCO, 2023). Although many of the issues related to older forms of data generation and use, such as reductionism, bias, inaccuracy, misuse and collateral damage, remain (Gorur, 2017), with digital data technologies, the risks and benefits are magnified and multiplied in ways that are not yet well understood. New modes of datafication provide information that could produce nuanced and tailored policy and practice responses (e.g., precision medicine and adaptive learning). The lowered cost of generating data can theoretically facilitate the participation of marginalised, remote and smaller groups and communities, making data more inclusive. This is why there is such a focus on promoting these data technologies, particularly in the Global South. On the other hand, several important works in recent times have called attention to the racialised, gendered and classed nature of contemporary datafication projects, which are seen as the continuation of the project of coloniality and empire. Contemporary 'data coloniality', which can be characterised by extraction for profit, dispossession, racialised and gendered discrimination and epistemic dominance, is linked to the project of modernity and Empire, with similar consequences for First Nations people and other minority groups, Indigenous knowledge and vernacular practices.

These issues have provoked calls to 'decolonise' data. However, what does this mean and how can it be done? In this chapter, we explore the concept of 'data colonialism' and engage with this notion in relation to education data. We then provide a brief overview of critiques of data colonialism. We explore recent frameworks and principles that seek to uphold data sovereignty and data rights, particularly those promoted by First Nations peoples such as the Māori. We conclude by outlining the key challenges that remain in developing strategies for 'decolonising data' and for visualising what more equitable and inclusive forms of data might look like in education.

DATA COLONIALISM

Data provided the tools with which the strong grip of colonial domination – economic, political, cultural and epistemic – could be maintained. Census data, household surveys, and forms of identification ensured that populations remained confined within prescribed limits and that their activities could be regulated (Isin & Ruppert, 2019). Census data were critical not only for understanding the composition of the population but also for categorising people in ways that enabled the colonials to designate groups as deviant and to enable and justify surveillance (Cormack

& Kukutai, 2022). Maps and surveys of land enabled the extraction of a range of natural resources using the labour of colonised populations, which kept industries in the homeland thriving (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

In addition to economic and political exploitation, cultural and epistemic domination played a key role in enabling colonialism to flourish for sustained periods (Mignolo, 2007). The data gathered on Indigenous languages, cultural practices and traditions were used to undermine these forms of knowledge and ways of being and to enable the imposition of colonial values and norms. The data were produced to favour colonial narratives, which showed them and their knowledge traditions to be superior. The erasure of certain data and the overwriting of Indigenous data helped establish ongoing colonial dominance. The narrative of 'civilisation' created a logic that was used to justify colonialism and to subdue the colonised (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

Colonial rule ended by the 1960s in many parts of the world. However, the decades – and in some cases centuries – of resource extraction, the exploitation of labour and the dispossession of cultural and linguistic resources left newly independent nations poor and extremely vulnerable. This vulnerability was seen as dangerous to the global order. Global organisations, such as UNESCO, the World Bank and the OECD, then began to engage in large-scale data generation to enable the 'development' of former colonies, which were classified as 'underdeveloped' and 'the third world' (Gorur, 2018). Although these terms have now been replaced with somewhat less offensive 'low- and middle-income countries' (LMICs) and 'the Global South', the modernising instincts and the idea that Western systems, knowledge and modes of order must be imposed on LMICs continue. Advances in the global standardisation of various indicators have enabled the mobilisation of vast amounts of comparable data, most generated annually. The imposition of global standards derived through Western epistemologies and based on Western ideals in diverse and often extremely divergent contexts has led to various forms of marginalisation and invisibility, if not erasure, through omission, on the one hand, and the intensification of focus on particular groups as sites of intervention, on the other hand.

In the name of development, data is often taken from the Global South at the community level without consent from intergovernmental organisations, international nongovernmental organisations and commercial and philanthropic organisations to make consequential decisions that affect those communities. Ramanathan (2003) contends that, sometimes, when data are presented on some countries in national or international

forums, even ministers from that country are surprised to hear how their country is presented. She argues that if a country owns the data and presents the data in context, much more value can be derived from those data. Such understandings have given rise to the concept of data sovereignty. Critics see the project of development as a neocolonial project influenced by the same modernistic impulse and using the same tools – data and epistemic and cultural dominance – to impose their influence, legitimise their tactics, and gain the compliance of local actors (Crewe & Harrison, 1998). They see narratives of progress and development as an iteration of the colonial narratives of civilisation.

In the latter part of the twentieth century, the generation and use of data became even more widespread, becoming a predominant tool of governance both within nations and at the international level (Rose, 1991). Data was key to the neoliberal principles of transparency, devolution, evidence-based policy and marketisation. The data came to be trusted with almost superstitious fervour, and processes such as audit and accountability became rituals that were utilised almost blindly (Power, 1997). Ranking and comparison reorganised workplaces, changed institutions and impacted individuals in significant ways. These measures reflected the extent to which the global neocolonial development project had become embedded in national and institutional governance.

DIGITAL COLONIALISM

With the dawn of digital data technologies, accompanied by the widespread use of digital devices and the increasing popularity of social media at the turn of the century, data have begun to influence individuals, institutions and societies in profound, unprecedented and largely unknown ways. The use of digital devices made 'big data' possible – data that could be mechanically harvested and continually analysed by machines. The conversion of everyday activities into machine-readable data – that is, datafication – enables even the most intimate aspects of human experience to be extracted in all its detail and nuance by distant corporations in unprecedented ways to generate profit (Thatcher et al., 2016; Zuboff, 2019). Ironically, we pay for these devices and voluntarily generate data that can then be used to target us for tailored advertising and even to influence our political and social behaviours. Thus, we are incorporated into the data extraction project in the same way that the colonials co-opted Indigenous populations into their projects of extracting labour for profit (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

The term 'digital colonialism' brings attention to the logic and constraints of technological infrastructures that can generate unique kinds of marginalisation and inequities. Technological infrastructures are distributed across various material and human resources and practices, linking and interfacing with other technologies and infrastructures; thus, some of the effects are generated not through deliberate action, but simply as a function of the nature of technology itself. Marginalisation, dispossession or oppression are sometimes collateral damage that results from infrastructural logic.

Digital infrastructures are reconfiguring social relations (our interactions are now largely mediated by technology) and reorganising the ways in which we know the world by controlling our cognitive and epistemic resources (Google and YouTube are now key sources of knowledge) (Couldry & Mejias, 2019). However, these technologies are often trained on skewed databases that reproduce (and magnify) historical racialised and gendered inequities (Benjamin, 2020; D'Ignazio & Klein, 2020; Kitchin, 2014; Yadav & Heath, 2022). The practices of surveillance, data extraction and dispossession (loss of control over how one's data is used), the racialised and gendered inequities embedded in these technologies and the epistemic domination they establish are characteristic of contemporary data colonialism (Coleman, 2018). The colonial imperative of 'civilisation' is now replaced by the imperative for connectivity – an imperative that encourages us to participate and become complicit in the commercial agenda of technology corporations (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

DATA COLONIALITY IN EDUCATION

The generation of education data – both nationally and internationally – has a long history. Education was recognised as a field of statistical inquiry as early as 1853 by the International Statistics Congress (Heyneman, 1999). Since then, the amount of data, the variety of indicators, the level of detail, the frequency and the diversity of actors generating and using education data have increased tremendously at both national and international levels (Gorur, 2018). The large education aid programmes mobilised by UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and the EU, as well as the comparative education metrics programmes of the OECD, have increasingly led to the standardisation of learning, teaching, curricula and assessment. The need to track returns on investment led to the strong encouragement of standardised national and regional

assessments and other data. Capacity-building programmes led to the entrenchment of statistical methodologies such as the item response theory (IRT) (Gorur & Addey, 2021). International assessments such as the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) have already reconfigured – we might provocatively say 'colonised' – education policies and practices in much of the world, including in nations that have never participated in these assessments, through the development of universal benchmarks and 'best practices'. There has been a global effort to influence education using data through global agendas, such as Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Currently, the global agenda in education revolves around Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), the major thrust of which is to improve equity and quality in education. The key strategies for achieving these aims are extensive datafication to inform governance and administration, ensure accountability and influence teaching and learning through the introduction and expansion of EdTech (education technologies). The UNESCO Institute for Statistics has stepped up the generation of data, declaring that a 'data crisis' is a key barrier to reform. A vast system has been developed whereby the 193 signatories to UNESCO's Agenda 2030 report data annually on 43 thematic indicators, which are mapped on a global education database. The production of data to help global and national monitoring is often a condition of aid so nations are forced to commit to data generation as part of their Education Sector Plans.

A single framework of metrics for education performance data from every part of the world, arranged within a global data dashboard, may appear equitable. However, the impulses that drive such thinking often disregard the diversity of cultural and spiritual realities, the different worldviews and the varied epistemological and ontological frameworks of the populations whose data are gathered and displayed on these dashboards. This extends neocolonial thinking and practices to postcolonial times.

The second development is the embrace of EdTech, which is promoted by UNESCO and other global agencies as imperative for improving access to quality education. Governments in both high- and low-income nations are now embracing education technologies (EdTech) to reduce historical inequities and deliver unprecedented improvements in quality (Machmud et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic created an enormous spurt in the rise of EdTech in education, as in-person education was unavailable in most parts of the world for extended periods. As an

increasing number of systems have been forced to adopt remote learning technologies, their potential – both as products to be marketed and as technologies that could aid learning – has excited the global community. UNESCO has teamed up with a range of corporations, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and philanthropies to set up the Global Education Coalition (GEC), which has, among its founding members, corporations such as Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Ericsson and IBM. The group is described as a 'multisector Coalition to protect the right to education during unprecedented disruption from response to recovery and has the hashtag #LearningNeverStops. In 2023, the GEC formed a 'tech-focused subgroup' – the Digital Transformation Collaborative (DTC) – that seeks to enable nations to digitise their education systems, reforming the 5Cs: 'content and curriculum, coordination and leadership, cost and sustainability, connectivity and infrastructure, capacity and culture' (UNESCO, n.d., n.p.). This agenda is mobilised by the generation of large amounts of data:

> Feeding into all Cs are data: the data to identify gaps in these five areas of digital transformation, to know which children are learning, what they were [sic] learning, and to make data-informed decisions to move from emerging to progressing to excelling. New data also emerges as a result of the process of digital transformation in education. As elements of learning, teaching, management and administration processes are digitalized, new digital data is produced. (UNESCO, n.d., n.p.)

This merging of key commercial Big Tech companies with global intergovernmental agencies and their sanctioned participation in global reform initiatives and the production of data is a new and significant development. The link with UNESCO provides these corporations with legitimacy and standing, which enables them to venture into relationships with national governments that might not have been possible had they entered negotiations as individual corporations.

Although this participation in education via global agencies is recent, the EdTech industry has been in a strong and growing position in education for the past few years. With an increasing number of institutions adopting digital platforms, new hardware and software and new ways of teaching and learning, EdTech is now a multibillion-dollar industry globally, that continues to expand rapidly. The entry of EdTech into schools and universities has been associated with harm, discrimination, bias, inequities and exclusions (Pangrazio et al., 2023; Selwyn et al., 2021, 2022). The EdTech industry is intensifying and restructuring

education markets and blurring the lines between 'public' and 'private' (Williamson & Hogan, 2021). The infrastructures, instruments, logics and practices of EdTech, produced mainly by companies in Silicon Valley, are spreading generic, Euro-American forms of rationality and epistemology, displacing more place-appropriate forms of wisdom (Adam, 2019; Zembylas, 2023) while enabling new forms of discrimination and inequities. New digital technologies are displacing the notion of learning as a social activity, offering atomised forms of individual maximisation through 'precision learning' and 'personalised learning' (Watters, 2019).

Much of the literature on data coloniality is concerned with the explosion of EdTech and the growing grip of large tech companies on what and how learning occurs and how education and education systems are assessed and evaluated. Less attention has been given to state-driven datafication efforts and the dilemmas and contradictions these might pose for the generation of data and for regulating its access and use. Basu and Nachiappa (2020) found that high-income nations such as the US favour free flow and minimal regulation, while BRICS nations focus on data sovereignty – the right of nations to make their own decisions about how data are to be regulated. Governments in these nations are aware that the Global South can simply become annexed to the capitalist machinery of the Global North.

However, these governments might become aggressive about the exploitation of their citizens' data to support their own entrepreneurial ambitions and domestic businesses, with whom governments might even have business ties (Kaulgud, 2022). States may also exploit data to regulate and marginalise communities in ways that favour the party in power. When this happens, citizens have fewer options for protecting their data. The subtlety of this form of politics makes it more challenging to identify and address. Understanding and countering data coloniality has now become an urgent, important and globally relevant political and moral project (Harari, 2019).

DECOLONISING DATA: THEORIES AND PRACTICES

Decolonising data involves centring knowledge, practices and structures that are outside or beyond modernity and coloniality in their underpinnings. Processes of decolonising data seek to protect the rights of citizens to control data relating to themselves – control over what data is extracted, how they are used, with whom they are shared, how they are

stored and so on. A key aspect of data colonialism and digital colonialism is the extraction and ownership of data by commercial entities or governments. The UN proposed the notion of 'stewardship' rather than 'ownership' of data for data and promoted the protection of privacy and the right of people to determine how their data can be used, including whether the data can be sold. Roberts and Montoya (2022) summarised the UN Roadmap for Digital Cooperation as follows:

- Global digital cooperation
- Digital trust and security
- Digital human rights
- Human and institutional capacity building
- Inclusive digital economy and society

At the national level, there are many experiments currently in this rapidly shifting arena based on differing notions of rights and fairness, with governments trying to reap the commercial benefits of the free flow of data while not giving away their own data for the benefit of other nations. At the same time, some movements seek to make data 'open' through initiatives such as open data and open government, which make available data to wider groups of people to enable more ideas and initiatives to emerge.

Proponents of open data call for the implementation of the FAIR framework (Wilkinson et al., 2016), which asks for data to be findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable. However, these principles are still set in a Western epistemology and ideology and clash with what Indigenous people consider fair and appropriate. A framework that is more aligned with First Nations worldviews is the CARE framework (Roberts & Montoya, 2022) where the acronym stands for collective benefit, authority to control, responsibility and ethics, as elaborated in Table 2.1.

Ngā Tikanga Paihere, Aotearoa New Zealand's Māori Statistical Framework (Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa, 2020) is an example of the state incorporation of Indigenous values and principles on the use of data on First Nations peoples. Developed by Stats NZ, the framework is designed 'to guide the appropriate use of microdata in the integrated data infrastructure (IDI), with a focus on how data about Māori and other underrepresented subgroups is used for research purposes' (Stats NZ, 2020). Drawing on 10 Tkanga, that is, Māori world concepts, the

Table 2.1 Care principles

Name	Description
Collective Benefit	Data ecosystems shall be designed and function in ways that enable Indigenous Peoples to derive benefit from the data.
Authority to Control	Indigenous Peoples' rights and interests in their own data must be recognised and their authority to control such data must be empowered. Indigenous data governance enables Indigenous Peoples and governing bodies to determine how they, as well as their lands, territories, resources, knowledge and geographical indicators, are represented and identified within data.
Responsibility	Those working with Indigenous data have a responsibility to share how those data are used to support Indigenous Peoples' self-determination and collective benefit. Accountability requires meaningful and openly available evidence of these efforts and the benefits accruing to Indigenous Peoples.
Ethics	Indigenous Peoples' rights and well-being should be the primary concern at all stages of the data life cycle and across the data ecosystem.

Source: Reproduced from Roberts & Montoya (2022).

framework consists of five principles that guide researchers. Researchers must:

- Have appropriate expertise, skills and relationships with communities
- Maintain public confidence and trust in using data
- Use good data standards and practices
- Have a clear purpose and action
- Balance benefits and risks (Stats NZ 2020, p. 10)

The Tikanga considerations adapted in this framework first appeared in early Māori data advocacy work and were developed according to their current formulation with Maui Hudson from the University of Waikato. Key elements of this framework that directly address problem areas of current colonial data practice include the involvement of the community not only at the stage of data collection but also in data analysis to reduce the possibility of data misinterpretation and decontextualisation; the acknowledgement of restricted topics and topics of sensitivity from surveys and other data-gathering exercises; and ensuring that the data

exercises benefit the community through community action and use (as opposed to their use at the policy level alone). A key benefit of Ngā Tikanga Paihere is that they are flexible and transferable:

> Tikanga Māori accompanies Māori wherever they go and whatever they do. Tikanga Māori is adaptable, flexible, transferable, and capable of being applied to entirely new situations. (Hirini Moko Mead, as cited in Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa, 2020, n.p.)

Although the principles above are put forward by the state to ensure that researchers use data in appropriate ways, the Māori Data Sovereignty Network's principles, Te Mana Raraunga (TMR), have been proposed to 'support tribal sovereignty and the realisation of Māori and Iwi aspirations' by a Māori data advocacy group (Te Mana Raraunga, n.d.). The six principles of TMR are as follows:

- Asserting Māori rights and interests in relation to data
- Ensuring data for and about Māori can be safeguarded and protected
- Requiring the quality and integrity of Māori data and its collection
- Advocating for Māori involvement in the governance of data repositories
- Supporting the development of Māori data infrastructure and security systems
- Supporting the development of sustainable Māori digital businesses and innovations (Te Mana Raraunga, n.d., n.p.)

Pushing beyond protecting and facilitating good data practices, especially when they involve Indigenous communities, TMR supports the development of Māori data infrastructure and security systems. This is perhaps because they frame data as taonga (i.e., treasure). They take a holistic approach to data by advocating for the development of sustainable Māori digital businesses and innovations. In essence, the Māori Data Sovereignty Network aims at systemic institutional change. Their work asks not only for the treasure to be shared equally but also for Māori organisations to be intimately involved in all aspects of dealing with and benefitting from the treasure.

This sentiment of data as treasure is shared by Ceal Tournier, the Chair of the First Nations Indigenous Governance Centre (FNIGC), who states, 'he [sic] who controls the data controls the gold' (Tournier, 2002). The FNIGC is an incorporated not-for-profit, which was established after its

deep involvement with the 1997 Regional Health Survey (RHS). It looks at data as a renewable resource, highlighting that First Nations' information is useful to First Nations people, to non-natives, to the Crown, to pharmaceutical companies and so forth. In emphasising the importance of data, the FNIGC equates First Nation people's relationship with data with their relationship with their land. Thus, FNIGC's work seeks to defend and protect data and information just as they defend and protect their lands, forests, animals and fish. In fact, Espey (2002) calls the framework developed by FNIGC – OCAP® – a 'political response to colonialism and the role of knowledge production in reproducing colonial relations' (p. 6). OCAP® stands for ownership, control, access and possession, the four core pillars of the framework. Each of these is elaborated below:

- The principle of ownership (which is distinct from stewardship) states that 'a community or group owns information collectively in the same way that an individual owns their personal information'.
- The principle of control affirms that 'First Nations people, their communities and representative bodies must control how information about them is collected, used and disclosed'.
- The access principle involves not only First Nations communities having access to their own data, but also 'the right of First Nations communities and organisations to manage and make decisions regarding who can access their collective information'.
- The principle of possession refers to stewardship. This principle allows data to remain within the jurisdiction of the First Nations and thus within their control. This is a significant development – a departure from previous practice where data remained in the possession of others, including governments – over which the First Nations have little to no control (FNIGC, 2016, pp. 149–150).

Like First Nations people, women are another historically oppressed category of people who suffer from data injustice. #NiUnaMenos (Not One Woman Less), an activist programme that originated in Argentina, has led a data activism campaign that has proven that data activism can be effectively used to highlight inequities and secure basic rights. In this project, the movement created the first 'índice nacional de violencia machista' (National Index of Misogynistic Violence). It collected data about male-enacted violence from the ground up, using surveys and

other forms of data collection available to the masses. A significant feature of the movement was the autonomy of the civil society initiative. In contrast to many projects that take place in the Global South, this project was not externally funded, nor did it involve the government or the private sector. Instead, it was created 'only with collective goodwill and the selfless collaboration of specialists, journalists and volunteers' (Beck & Romeo, 2016, p. 19). In opposition to big data, these activists used 'big enough data'; that is, a sufficient amount of data for advocating for policy change, without falling prey to big data pitfalls. This resulted in data on 59,380 cases of male-enacted violence collected over a period of three months (Chenou & Cepeda-Màsmela, 2019). One of the main reasons behind its success, Chenou and Cepeda-Màsmela (2019) write, was the political atmosphere of Argentina, where a strong tradition of social movements and community mobilisation has existed for years. This played a key role in enabling activists to combine traditional forms of mobilisation with self-organised data gathering to create a Southern practice of data activism.

In comparing these different approaches to data decolonisation, several common themes emerge: the notion of *ownership*, the notion of *access* and the notion of *respect*. In terms of ownership, these approaches invert the existing status quo and hand over ownership of data to those who might otherwise have been mere data points. As such, corporations and state organisations are displaced from their positions of power. Similarly, the principle of access manifests as both communities having access to the data, as well as communities determining who else can access the data. The aforementioned locates agency and power in the communities involved in data production, once again challenging the hegemonic tendencies of mainstream data work. The involvement of local communities in data analysis ensures that the analysis is context sensitive. The designation of certain topics and fields as restricted ensures the principle of respect. This is arguably one way of reclaiming the dignity snatched during the othering processes of colonialism. Together, these principles can effectively empower historically marginalised groups, ensure that they are heard by influential decision-makers, and develop more authentic, nuanced and contextualised data that are ultimately more useful to all stakeholders.

These principles and examples of data activism provide both direction and hope for reducing the harms of data colonialism and distributing control and authority over how data are generated and used. However, a focus on the protection of marginalised groups, while extremely

important, deflects attention from the generalised modalities and effects of data colonialism. The effects of data colonialism are widespread. For example, children and teachers are impacted by data colonialism through the incursion of Big Tech – and these are not only very large groups, but they are also very diverse. Moreover, the frameworks described above are a response to data colonialism rather than an alternative. They do not address issues such as racialised and gendered harms and inequities that are built into data infrastructures and the epistemologies that support them. To some extent, these frameworks incorporate the notion of 'data as commodity' and focus on ownership rather than on the long chain of epistemic, political, economic and cultural assemblages that have resulted in attaching this value to data. These frameworks appear to be a reactionary response – a 'solution' that may create only an illusory sense of dignity and control.

CONCLUSION

Although the increasing interest in 'decolonising data' is a much-needed response to the exploitation, harm and injustice caused by data colonialism, there is a long way to go before data colonialism can be effectively resisted. A key reason for this is that data colonialism requires strong theorisation of coloniality, capitalism and data in the contemporary context, based on a historical understanding of the infrastructures and mechanisms of ongoing domination and violence. Data colonialism is a multifaceted phenomenon related to capitalism and wealth concentration, law, knowledge appropriation, epistemic and material violence, labour and work, technologies and infrastructures and surveillance and control. As such, interdisciplinary approaches are required to theorise and trace its mechanisms.

Another key challenge is that in the contemporary modes of data colonialism, diverse actors are involved in the project of extraction, dispossession, epistemic violence, the creation of hierarchies of knowledge and so on. Their diversity, different agendas and modes of operation make theorising trickier. The embedding of Big Tech into global development agendas that advocate for data justice and data rights is an example of the complexity and hybridity of agents of power in contemporary datascapes. A focus on traditional 'colonial aspects' – data sovereignty, epistemic dominance and so forth – may mask some of the effects of state-led data projects, such as marginalisation, domination and various types of violence *within* nations – both deliberate and incidental. With massive

digital infrastructures that articulate across various systems, infrastructural logic may create collateral damage in the form of bias and inequities, making it difficult to identify sources of power and domination.

Although specific frameworks have been developed for data relating to First Nations groups, there is a need to develop frameworks and practices that take the protection of citizens' and communities' data rights as a default position and an inalienable right, rather than something for which strong advocacy becomes necessary. In the educational setting, students are perhaps the most susceptible to the violation of their data rights. Students are in a position of little power in the relentless march towards the digitisation of education. With schools and universities adopting platforms that coordinate various aspects of institutional activities, students cannot opt out of situations in which their data are captured. Often, students – and even institutions – may not be aware of the kinds of data that are being captured through these platforms and apps.

In addition to rights over how one's data is collected, analysed, shared and owned, more theorisation is needed to understand how data is creating new inequities and perhaps new forms of coloniality through the changing relations that are emerging in this datafied world, which emphasises connectivity (Couldry & Mejias, 2019). More broadly, Milan and Treré (2019) argue that the field of critical data studies is itself in need of some critical examination, arguing that there is a tendency to universalise the effects of datafication, as well as an inability to visualise 'the South' as a plural entity. They advocate that agency, rather than data, should be at the core of analysis and that we must 'embrace the novel imaginaries of datafication emerging from the Souths, zooming in on the specific ways of thinking data from the margins' (p. 234). We echo these sentiments, emphasising the importance of new theories and community-led experiments to understand and resist data colonialism.

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3. Sustaining Disruptive Development Possibilities in the University: A Conceptual Exploration

Crain Soudien

The impetus for this contribution comes from having to deal with a series of disappointments over the last 10 years about the trajectory of contemporary universities. Disappointment began with the loss of two key intellectual interventions to which I was connected. The first, in which I had been an active participant as a Fellow, was the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) in Development Education (DE) under the leadership of Catherine Odora Hoppers at the University of South Africa (UNISA). The second, which I had come to know through my association with the DE initiative, was Marcus Garvey University (MGU) in Uganda, founded by the visionary scholar Dani Nabudere, and led by its vice-chancellor, Professor Babuuzibwa Luutu. Professor Luutu was also a Fellow in the DE program. Both African initiatives are in danger of passing out of our consciousness unceremoniously without, it seems, even a backward glance. Extinguishing them were a variety of factors, primarily simple financial ones—they were not 'bankable investments' for their principals—but also straightforward ideological hostilities. When I had to process the news of their passing, at about the time of the student uprising in South Africa in 2015, I was filled with a sense of loss. My disappointment was compounded by the news of the closing, in 2022, of the Center for Global Citizenship Education (CGCE) at the University of Alberta in Canada, led by Lynette Schultz. Where to now? Why is it, I asked—and this is the problem I seek to address in this paper—that our most explorative attempts to build alternative sites of knowledge production are so easily disposed of? Why does the idea of transgression, which is so critical to the renewal of the moral, ethical,

social, and epistemological orthodoxies that normatively order our world and are embodied in these initiatives, matter so little to us?

The initiatives I describe represent courageous attempts to confront the hegemony of academic capitalism and to offer an outline of what alternative pathways of thinking our way into the future for humankind could be. They sought to think of the challenge of development—what it meant, what it had to be conscious of, and what would be needed for managing the challenge of the sustainability of all life on Earth—in deeply inclusive and reflective ways.

Odora Hoppers' initiative expressly sought to expose our unthinking instincts to promote only those which we think are our own, and to confront those ethnocentricized conceits that 'our own' epistemologies and cosmologies contain all the questions, intellectual and spiritual substance, and, based on these, the answers for the well-being and prosperity of all humankind and, indeed, all of life. Odora Hoppers sought to put on the intellectual agenda of the university that life, its sustainability, and development, in all its multiplicity and complexity were urgent questions to which it had to respond. Odora Hoppers demanded the best that was available in the full repertoire of our human knowing – acknowledging our anthropocentric conceit.

Luutu at Marcus Garvey University sought to deliberately bring the marginalized and delegitimated knowledge of our ancient forebears, wherever they came from, into active engagement with the formal knowledge of hegemony. Memorably, he described the complete ineptness of the local authorities in the community in which he lived upon the discovery of a snake in the home of a villager. Despite the protestations of the villagers, who read the event through a sense of awe—not just fear—the snake was cruelly dispatched. The opportunity was lost to explore the different knowledge that was in play, and to initiate a productive conversation about the right to life, the dignity of being, the important ecological principle of co-ownership, and what could be called planetary citizenship—our rights and obligations on our shared planet.

The CGCE sought to foreground the educational value of living in a world of social difference and inequality, and the importance of social justice.

My exposure to these important interventions, I need to explain, had happened a few years before the dramatic events of the symbolic toppling of colonial hegemony at the University of Cape Town (UCT), which occurred during my term there as a senior administrator. The statue of Cecil John Rhodes, an arch-icon of colonial politics, was defaced and

ultimately torn down. For the students and many who were sympathetic to their analyses, it represented the worst of the colonial imaginary and the epistemic dominance it had achieved in the contemporary university. Deepening my disappointment, too, it needs to be said that the DE intervention at the seemingly less important university of UNISA and the significance of what the MGU stood for were not known to the young people who were leading the campaign against the UCT establishment.

As these developments played out, I have been asked a few times to speak about the state of higher education, its decolonization turn, and its ability to respond to the problems of the world. In doing so, I have often spoken about the instrumentalization of the university in what is taught and what is researched. I have also, on these occasions, spoken about the opposite of instrumentalization—critique and the value of reflective practice. In doing so, I have tried to keep in mind a vision of the university 'in health,' an expression developed by Bonnie Honig (2013) to whom I shall return below, as opposed to the university 'in efficiency' in the instrumentalized university. More recently, I have begun to speak of the danger of wholly substituting 'in health' for 'in efficiency.' In preparation for these talks, I began to talk to trusted colleagues around the world and told them that I was interested in developing a presentation on the politics of what Odora Hoppers (2021) calls 'cross-border praxes' in the university—praxes that are hospitable to the transgression of orthodoxy and encourage the breaching of their intellectual ramparts. I explained that I was anxious about our ability as institutions to not only value transgression and disruption but also to produce the conditions in and through which these dispositions could reproduce themselves. In addition, I asked, where in the world was disruption taking place and what did it look like? Where are our 'in health' examples around the world?

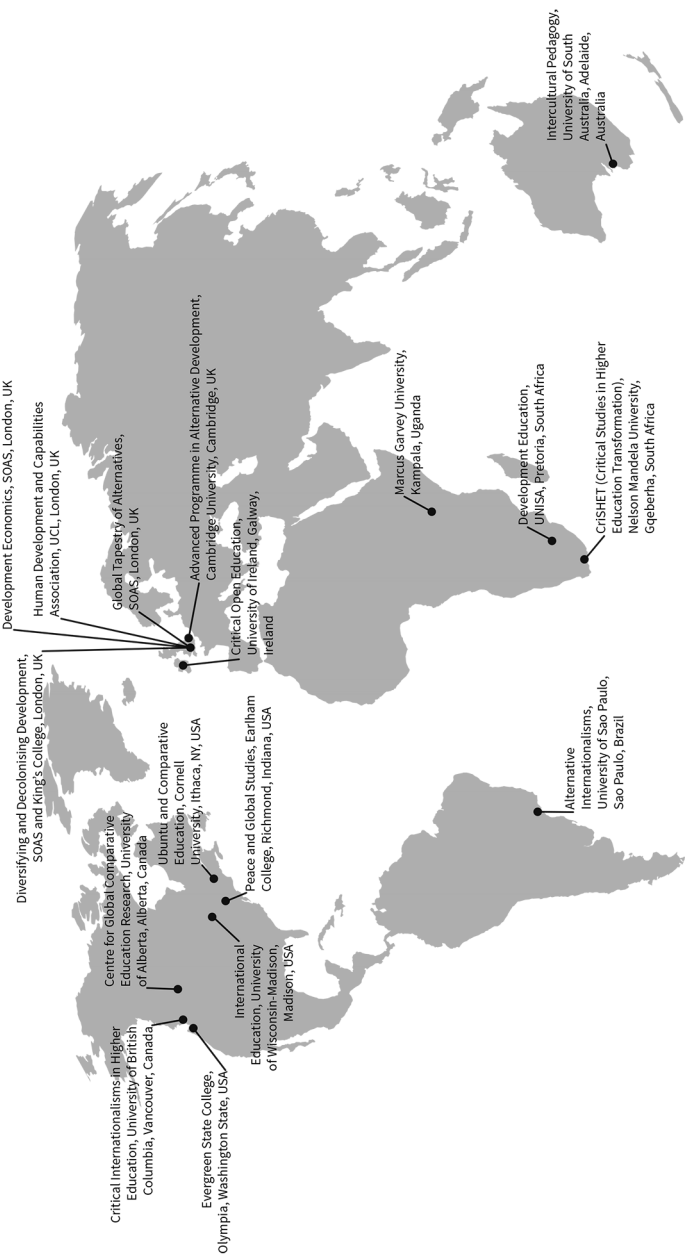
Happily, significantly alleviating my distress, they provided me with a list of almost 20 key examples of disruptive practices. Many of these, though not all, have been able to withstand the depredations of hegemony and, more significantly, have been able to survive the departure of major interlocutors. Critically, I understood from the notes sent to me by my colleagues/informants that there were individuals, processes, and colleagues in the institutions who not only facilitated the development of these initiatives but also worked to keep them in good health. Some had active institutional leaders not only putting their backing behind them but also deliberately providing them with material and psychological support. One colleague spoke of the president of the university coming

to him in another country to ask him to set up the intervention. Another spoke of institutional buy-in. Colleagues outside of the intervention deliberately put their support behind it when times were difficult. Others had the support of influential outside agencies that had both supported their establishment and given leverage to processes for continuing the interventions. All of these were in play at moments for the three interventions that I reference here but were not consistently present or, more critically, were absent at key moments in the interventions' histories. Odora Hoppers' work at UNISA, for example, began to struggle when the top leadership of the university changed. The new leaders liked what they saw but were not able to withstand the hostility of other senior leaders who saw no value in Odora Hoppers' work. Marcus Garvey University essentially could not make it past its beginning years. There was simply no corporate, public, or government interest in the project.

However, out of what my colleagues were able to share with me, I was able to construct what I describe here as an emerging map of the sites of disruptive/transgressive knowledge practice in the world—spots on the globe of initiatives that were 'in health' practices. The map is, of course—and this cannot be emphasized enough—entirely preliminary and, to be clear, an obvious description of what my own networks look like, where the institutions in this network find themselves, and what they do. As a research artefact, whatever methodological angle one wishes to invoke, it is patently not a strong piece of evidence. It is, however, suggestive and, returning to the question of my cast of mind, something on which to hold. According to the diagram below, in a global landscape of almost 35,000 institutions around the world, the institutions described as universities are almost insignificant. It offers, however, some hope.[1]

THERE REMAINS A PROBLEM THOUGH

With knowledge of the ability of these disruptive initiatives to reproduce themselves, it is, of course, an exaggeration to say that the modern university has lost its sense of purpose. It has not entirely handed over its capacity to the wiles of single-minded capitalism. Universities all over the world continue to make extraordinary scientific contributions, build enriching learning communities, and maintain relationships of generative symbiosis with the communities they serve. The 2017–2019/20 Research Report for the Max Planck Institute for Human Development (2020), to cite an almost random example, provides one with a sense of the broad range of possibilities that a modern and resourced knowledge-producing



Source: Author.

Figure 3.1 Towards a Map of Disruption

institution offers the world—the Institute's work ranges from the social and organic to the technical and the synthetic. It is also simplistic, as Rauna Kuokkanen (2007, p. xvi) reminds us, to see the university as a monolithic singularity. The university is many things.

However, there remains a problem with the ways in which dominance has come to configure universities. In attempting to explain this dominance and the problems it precipitates, it is important to understand how the university is assembled. As an institution, it has many moving parts inside it. These are often in tension with one another. This tension is the product of individuals and communities in institutions coming, as Cardinal John Newman said of the ideal university in 1854, from all quarters, with knowledge from all quarters (Newman, 1852/2015). In its ideal setting, this knowledge inevitably collides to produce possibilities of what the philosopher Rancière (2010, pp. 58–59), working with Derrida's thinking about practical democracy, describes as 'infinite openness.' This is the promise of Newman's ideal university. It is a promise—and a difficult one at that. It struggles to realize itself because it involves an 'infinite openness to the other.' Involved in this characterization of the university is, precisely, a relationship between an institution, the university, and the transcendental horizon it sets for itself. The practice of working in the space between the university and the horizon it sets for itself is important. As Newman's strangers, with their strange knowledge, come into the university, they enter a space of subjectification. This subjectification is a *constitutive* process. Individuals are enrolled in rituals of becoming and of being constituted. How this subjectification, in its constitutive modalities, acknowledges and works with otherness and otherness of thought is the challenge of openness.

The problem that remains with us, the issue with which this contribution works, is the struggle of the modern university to work with the challenge of openness. I argue that it struggles to constitute the tension that makes it a catalytic space because it can often be, *as* and *into* a feature of its identity. It struggles to bring to material reality the lofty and high-minded commitment to producing new knowledge, informed by what Watson et al. (2011, p. xxvi), speaking in the context of the work of the Talloires Network (a global university alliance committed to strengthening the university's civic and social responsibilities), described as 'self-study and self-critical reflection.' Instead, universities have become sites for the reproduction of particular forms of dominance that have economic and market rationale, validated discursively, as Bill Readings (1996, pp. 39–43) astutely observed almost 25 years ago, by the invocation of

'excellence.' Who can, he asks, be against excellence? However, when excellence, he says, 'marks nothing more than the moment of technology's self-reflection. All the system requires is for an activity to take place, and the empty notion of excellence refers to nothing other than the optimal input-output ratio in terms of information' (1996, pp. 39–43). In this analysis, Readings distinguishes between institutions in the service of the state and institutions that have taken on corporate and bureaucratic identities. As a corporation, the major concern of universities is their sustainability. Excellence is its currency. This currency, it believes, secures its ability to keep going. It provides it with the credibility it requires to not only survive in the world of market rationality but also to prosper—to distinguish itself from its competitors.

This sustainability preoccupation of the university is important. Bringing us to the purpose of this contribution is its internal regulation, which has come to be premised almost entirely on accountability. Accountability, however, is not to the state, as the university at the turn of the nineteenth century might have been, but to performance targets (see Ball, 2016; Jones et al., 2020). Performance is commodified around citation rates and research grants. The purpose of corporatisation is to configure the institution in particular ways. It by no means loses its internal diversity or internal tension. These remain. They are, however, suborned—a strong word—behind metricised outputs—bibliometrics in the main—that contribute to a reconstitution of the intellectual and the intellectual project. This reconfigured tension modulates, controls, and ultimately determines what is possible in the university: what is privileged or disprivileged, and what is encouraged, tolerated, or, perhaps, prohibited. What 'we are here dealing with,' explains Gayatri Spivak, is 'the aggregative apparatus of Euro-American university education, where weapons for the play of power/knowledge as *puissance/connaissance* are daily put together "bit by bit"' (1993, p. 53). Strikingly, she describes this development as a 'structural ruse' whose purpose is to establish this accountability 'as the cottage-industry of mere *pouvoir/savoir* or the ontic, the everyday, the ground of our identity' (Spivak, 1993, p. 53). The naturalization of this puissance/connaissance configuration is the constitutive feature of the modern university. Accountability has come to resemble a particular kind of academic policing. Talking of the world's leading universities, Cedric Denis-Remis and Armand Hatchuel (2017) state the following:

> Today, global universities have the same universalist vocation (to integrate all fields of knowledge). Beyond its graduating activities, the university also exerts a power of knowledge, one that determines global development, ethics and norms …. This … Power results directly from the global dimension now assigned to the traditional missions of the most ambitious universities … Large universities … Can now build successful alliances with governments they are interested in … (They) place their troops everywhere. (§ 5 & 12).

As Maria do Mar Pereira emphasises, significant in this organization of the academic realm is 'what tends to become *impossible* in the current scholarly context' (2016, p. 102).

Against this 'impossibility,' what might we do to keep our eyes on the promise—the promise of openness and its potential to hold in play the ideal of the innovative, democratically minded, and socially just motivated university? What might we do to keep that ideal alive and reproduce it? How do we then institutionalize that which is latent in the university, that which constitutes the university subject around the disruptive ideal?

This contribution works critically with Bonnie Honig's (2013) ideas of 'holding environments'—environments that provide minimal conditions for subjects and stakeholders to support each other in democratic ways.

A WAY FORWARD

Bonnie Honig's (2013) work on democracy's future, particularly her thinking about 'holding environments,' is important for the argument I am seeking to build here. Honig's work is largely framed by object relations theory, as expounded by the psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott. As Honig explains, while objects have a life of their own and the power to 'enchant the world around them' (2013, p. 60), they provide the human world with stability and form and are essential for human development. Important about the 'thing,' the object, however, is not the thing itself, it is our relationship to it. That relationship, she explains, when talking about public affordances, such as a simple public telephone, is about our need for them. We take them for granted when they are available. We understand the significance they hold in our lives only when they are unavailable. Their disappearance can cause alarm, distress, and even failure. They function as 'transitional objects' in our lives. They mediate key transitions in our human development, 'from dependence … to more independent capacities' (Honig, 2013, p. 60).

With Honig (2013, p. 65), I use the idea of a 'thing' here as a 'metaphor.' In Winnicott, the 'thing' is material—a doll, a mother figure. Working with the idea of the metaphorical, Honig says, 'is this a metaphor for democracy, whose public things are not always in use, not always efficient, but are always there, providing a *holding environment* (my emphasis), by hiding in plain sight (the parks, the prisons, the schools, the streets, the water, the transport system)' (2013, p. 65). Public things, then, are the great taken-for-granted affordances of our everyday lives. To her list, we add the university. She explains that the difference between these 'things' and Winnicott's 'mother-figure,' his major exemplar 'thing,' who can 'in health' be trusted to more or less appear when needed, is that the 'thing' in the democratic space, schools, parks, trains, buses, needs tending: 'These things in the world may become ruins. They may decay if untended. They may be sold off, if unguarded, privatized if undefended' (Honig, 2013, p. 65). In neoliberal contexts, she argues, 'things become more and more like Wittgenstein's imagined lumps of cheese, undergoing sudden and unimaginable changes that strike us as more fantasy-like than real. … National companies become global giants …' (Honig, 2013, p. 65).

'Tending' is a critical activity for keeping the 'thing' in democracy in health. It takes place in what Honig (2013, p. 59) describes as 'holding environments.' Holding environments are social spaces that enable and make possible the reproduction of practices, traditions, and cultures. These practices, traditions, and cultures can be anything. They can also carry with them all kinds of attributes—virtuous, venal, inward- or outward-looking, challenging, productive, degenerative, and more. The site of the 'holding environment' on which her analysis is focused is the polis. This finding is different from ours. Hers is the space of public decision-making: public governance. Ours is the university: the republic of knowledge. The activities that characterize their basic structure, however, are the same: deliberation, debate, and discourse. How this activity is protected and provided with the basic conditions for its reproduction is what concerns her. 'In health,' she says, 'democracy is rooted in a common love for contestation of public things' (Honig, 2013, p. 60). Looking at the neoliberal order, she sees mainly threats and dangers—the withering of the democratic ideal and a retreat from contestation. Public things are taken out of the realm of the commons and placed within the control and remit of the individual. They become the objects of personal decision-making. She says, '(w)ithout such things, citizenship in neoliberal democracies risks being reduced to repetitive (private work)' (Honig, 2013, p.

60). Private work diminishes people's opportunities to work together, which she describes as 'democratic deliberation and will-formation' (Honig, 2013, p. 61). Instead, what the shift to the private does is parse our identities in both syllogisms and algorithms—logics and habits—of unbounded self-glorification and self-interest (see Shymko & Frémeaux, 2022, p. 215). The neoliberalization of work forces individuals into competitive mindsets. They have the effect of 'uprooting' individuals from the commons in which they are located and instilling pride in self-sufficiency. As uprooted selves, they detach themselves from opportunities to work together. They make themselves vulnerable to a particular kind of alienation: loneliness (Shymko & Frémeaux, 2022, p. 219). Public things, Honig (2013, p. 65) argues, here drawing on Winnicott but, importantly, acknowledging his difficulty in explaining our psychological attachment to them, draw us into the desire and disposition to do things in solidarity to focus on those things that we have in common. Critically, as she says, they are things that need tending (Honig, 2013, p. 65).

When holding environments are 'in health,' they can hold, engender, and reproduce. They reproduce the capacity and ability for particular ways of seeing, particular ways of being at the university, and particular socialities—of self and other—of developing.

How do we sustain the 'in health' university? How do we facilitate the conditions for development in the university, not only for it to exist but also to have possibilities for reproduction within itself?

NURTURING A COMMON LOVE FOR AND CONTESTATION OF THE DISRUPTIVE IDEAL

The first requirement for thinking about how we develop or tend to 'hold culture' is to suggest what a healthy 'holding culture' in the university is. It is easy to say that this is the opposite of policed and marketized accountability, which normatively orders the modern university. Development, however, is not just to be policed. It must be located within our political imaginations—beyond regulation. Of course, regulatory frameworks are needed to remind us of what might be important. However, a 'healthy' university has to be a 'thing' that we desire and love.

How do we sustain the university as a gathering site for both consent and contestation? Taking Honig's basic arguments about 'holding environments,' the work of Bergdahl and Langmann (2021) offers us practical ways forward. The immediate purpose of their work is to develop a pedagogical response to the question of climate emergencies. They

look particularly at how political commitments can be translated into educational commitments. Especially valuable, however, is their interest in how the translation process might unfold in the educational space. Exploring this interest, they distinguish between what they call 'public pedagogy' and 'pedagogical publics' (Bergdahl & Langmann, 2021, para. 6). Public pedagogy refers to a wide range of spaces beyond formal schools where processes of teaching and learning occur. Pedagogical publics hold environments that can bring people together 'in joint democratic action in times of political crisis' (Bergdahl & Langmann, 2021, para. 6). They are environments that help make issues meaningful to and for people, which instill a sense of care and interest in the things that matter. They mediate the ground between the individual locations where individuals find themselves and the larger landscapes of the commons.

Bergdahl and Langmann (2021, para. 20), here building on Honig (2015), draw our attention to the absence in privatized environments of psycho-symbolic work and the enchantment and meaning-making that public issues may offer. How, on the one hand, the 'magic' and enchantment—the qualities of desire—and, on the other hand, the active work—the substance—of the pedagogical public might be developed is what they help us understand. Possibly less explored, I argue, is how the neoliberal organization can be disrupted—how, in the face of the enfolding seduction of efficiency and competition, the reinstatement of democratic possibility is enabled and how it is sustained. Bergdahl and Langmann draw attention to three qualities for the establishment of pedagogical publics: making room for rituals and ritualization; inviting narratives that can frame sustainability challenges in more supportive registers; and reinstating a certain kind of intergenerational difference that gives back hopes and dreams to both adults and young people. I reformulate these in what I call the Bergdahl and Langmann ways of generating holding cultures. The first is offering *alternative forms*; the second is ideological *substantiation*; and the third is deliberative *practice*. To their three essentials, I add a prerequirement and a post hoc safeguard to suggest an *outline* or *schema* for the development and sustenance of a holding culture. This outline/schema, I emphasize, is not intended to be read as either a blueprint or a manifesto. It offers a frame based on five principles within which to think of the problem of engaging with dominance.

The first principle is *authorisation*. An initiating or catalytic move that sets off the process of disrupting orthodoxy is signaled here. Authorization is shown to be an *enablement*. This finding emphasizes the moral necessity of finding ways to loosen the grip of dominance.

Authorized *enablement*, I want to suggest, is critical for the establishment of a holding culture. In university environments where preservative and conservative-holding cultures have solidified, it is an organizational prerequisite that some form of unsettlement is initiated. Conservative-holding cultures are ostensibly free. They describe themselves as free. 'Autonomous' intellectuals are the foremost citizens of the university. They are, however, say Shymko and Frémeaux (2022, para. 1), the denizens of a 'fantasy land of freedom'. Individuals become entrapped in a libertarian fantasy where they have the freedom to perform the accountabilities that neoliberalism has structured for them—the 'matrix of recognizable achievement' (Shymko & Frémeaux, 2022, para. 28). In opposition, the democratic organization recognizes this fantasy as a depoliticized and deideologized dismissal of people's rights to individual expression and collective agency. Fixing the individual's parameters and horizons within the 'accountable order' delegitimizes opportunities for transgression. It is precisely at this moment, I argue, that enablement is needed. It can take multiple forms, from the outrage of protest and vocal dissent to simple abstention. However, the instantiation of political agency is critical. Political agency is never, of course, innocent. It proceeds from an awareness of the prohibitions of neoliberalism and a desire to oppose them. It disrupts. It transgresses. It takes the known and the familiar and upends it. It installs alternative authority. To the old are brought new ways of seeing, feeling, and making sense. It comes, however, without any guarantees. Its virtue lies in what it makes possible. Anything can be done with it. A holding culture, however, requires a spark.

Making the enablement moment *generative* is where Bergdahl and Langmann's contribution begins to work. Their first move, our second principle, is that of *formation.* Drawing on Honig (2015, p. 628), *formation* is to 'ritualise rather than catastrophize radical change.' In that moment of *enabling* what is needed, they argue that new infrastructures support new perspectives: 'that is, collective rituals that offer meaning, permanence, and stability to the world and help support new ways of living' (Bergdahl & Langmann, 2021, para. 27). As examples of new rituals, they refer to Greta Thunberg's *Fridays for Future* Global Campaign, which introduced public and collective rituals to widely disparate and geographically distant locations that steered people away from catastrophic inevitability toward opportunities for collective solidarity and possibility. These rituals perform two functions. First, they offer everybody a place of meaningful engagement—they constitute what we might

call an intellectual infrastructure or form—that they can reach. As unsettlement brings fears of disorder and chaos—even anomie—they offer a sense of stability in the formation of a recognizable routine. In this sense, they deliberately manufacture interventions—teach-ins, feedback sessions, reading groups, reflection times, and gripe sessions—spaces and occasions where people can gather to regroup, hash difficult things out, and come to new perspectives. They are also, second, 'coping spaces,' which allow people to deal with the loss of the old way of doing things. They do, however, require tending. They must be creatively maintained.

Bergdahl and Langmann's (2021, paras 27–28) next move, our third principle, is about *legitimation,* the importance of filling the new or reimagined forms or infrastructures we describe above with new stories. They ask, '(W)hat stories do we tell in addressing sustainability challenges in pedagogical publics and how does it matter how we tell them?' (Bergdahl & Langmann, 2021, para. 28). Their rationale for suggesting this move is the need to provide the holding culture with more supportive frames and to develop ways of speaking in the public domain that are more conscious of the intensity of public feelings—those of deep antagonism, but also those of indifference. Stoknes (2015, p. 163), referring to the public debate around climate change, describes this phenomenon as 'the psychological climate paradox.' Behind the paradox, he argues, are discursive registers whose content and objective are to dramatize the coming of the apocalypse. End-times. They demand of individuals and communities unrealistic sacrifices: 'Thou shalt not fly. Thou shalt eat less meat. Thou shalt not consume' (Stoknes, 2015, p. 163).

A supportive holding frame, which can be seen as the broad approach of Stoknes (2015), suggests finding ways of talking and communicating that manage questions of blame, agency, and political will in terms of relative openness. This openness, as Bergdahl and Langmann suggest, 'offers time and space where old and new narratives can be collectively examined, debated and contested, interpreted and explored … Of telling hitherto untold stories that instead of evoking guilt and shame can evoke a desire and willingness to protect, care for and respect nature and all living things' (2021, para. 39). In deeply contested spaces where the complex amalgam of feelings—resentment, shame, guilt, obduracy, and denial—presents us with the paralyzing challenge of how to proceed, a supportive holding frame seeks to work strategically. Its animating impulse is about supporting *everyone* in the discussion. To facilitate this, Bergdahl and Langmann (2021, para. 28) emphasize that stories need to be developed that people will want to identify with. Identification

provides *legitimation* with a repertory of complex stories. In the climate debate, these stories are stories of 'good lives.' Theoretically, the university is an easier space than the wider polis in which stories can proliferate and multiply. The wonder it generates *ought* to nurture the desire for people to want to keep it alive. Neoliberal prohibition, however, polices the range and amplitude of what and how people will speak. Critical here, I want to argue, is the urgency of finding ways to bring the whole university into the discussion. The form I spoke of earlier is crucial. The ritual of the seminar, the open forum, for example, is a powerful affirmation of what the university is. However, legitimation needs tending. This means careful curation of the engagement in terms of what and how it manages itself. It operates optimally when there is lively debate; a debate that is resistant to the seductions of over-policing and overdetermination.

How content and substance are curated is critical. However, it cannot be brought to its full potential without openly constituting it. It fails—the seminar, the dialogue, the conference, and the classroom itself—when it is constituted in self-enclosed and self-reproductive ways. It fails when it is, as in the racialized South African, American, and United Kingdom contexts, old, white, and male. Constructed even as self-aware people, the participants in such groups need to be disposed to bring into the room their most dependable interlocutors *and* their critics. On these occasions, bearers of self-authorization and self-legitimation, whatever their narratives are, *need to be invited*. Bergdahl and Langmann, given their climate crisis focus, talk specifically about working with intergenerational differences and using space as a place where 'the adult generation can existentially recharge themselves with the hope that is represented by the young and where the young can become witnesses to hope in seeing adults take on responsibility for action' (2021, para. 31). For Bergdahl and Langmann (2021), this is a move of hope. It is also thinking more pointedly about political differences and the principle of *hospitality*. This principle, in these terms, demands the protection and acknowledgment of the dignity of the other. The other comes into the space of engagement on the understanding that he/she/they enter as legitimate interpreters of the world they jointly inhabit and share. It is their ontological legitimacy that they carry. They ask for it to be acknowledged and worked with.

And this, the activity of working with endless differences, is the safeguard premium I raised earlier and, thus, our final principle: *cohering*. The holding culture might be able to assemble everybody in the space of the university, but it must safeguard their inherent value and worth as human subjects. This safeguarding is essential for facilitating their

agency and their will to act. However, it must be tended. It will not create itself. It will not arise naturally. It must be absorbed into the way the organization works as a constitutive commitment. Its stakeholders need to work self-critically and in critical engagement with each other. The capacity to receive criticism and work with it productively is a defining mark of their membership in the university. The membership of the university that they need to understand is marked by their joint and collective responsibility for each other.

CONCLUSION

My purpose in this contribution has been to ask how, in the face of dominance's grip on the intellectual imagination and its prescription of what is in the global interest, we might begin to explore alternative modes of self-management and collective management at the university, which are beginning to rethink the larger idea of development.

I argue that, against the totalizing impulse of the modern university, what is needed now is a profound reontologization of ourselves as subjects. Within this totalizing project are powerful authorizing discourses legitimated by the precepts of neoliberal accountability. These discourses are political and economic but are much more problematically social. At its heart, this discourse is an incontrovertible apotheosis, an incontestable narration of the ideal modern subject. This modern subject is represented by the liberal-reasoning human being—the human being who has overcome all of history's weaknesses. The subject that stands, in Fukuyama's terms, *at the end of history.* The effect of this narrative is ultimately legitimation, the kind of modernity in which we find ourselves. Its cultural impulses socialize us into its orthodoxies—orthodoxies that repeatedly and insistently return us to the comfort of the dominant order—and its sanctification of the underpinning's lineaments, the substance of our normative order, and what it ought to be. In these terms, the university presents itself with essentially preservative impulses.

Although the discursive register of the modern university is regularly framed by and in the rhetorics of inquiry—its understanding of its basic and foundational distinctive character—that very active inquiry has been encoded by neoliberalism in fundamentally ideological terms. Out of it has come what is perceived to be good science. In this good science, what are perceived to be foundational and canonical truths provide a sense of certainty. As important as this posture is, it has also legitimized

intolerance and inhospitability, and it makes it difficult to see possibilities outside the narratives of dominance. It produces the conditions for what Pereira (2016, p. 103) describes as the '(Im)possibilities for [the] articulation of activism and scholarly work' (Pereira, 2016, p. 103).

However, the combustive conditions of protest—their inflammatory beginnings, their precipitation of institutional crisis, and their denouement, both in victory and in defeat—might explain the difficulty of holding onto, for example, the decolonial impetus of a movement such as #RhodesMustFall, which, in some ways, is the question of the rendering 'possible' of initiatives such as the SARChI initiative at UNISA, the Marcus Garvey initiative in Uganda, and the CGCE in Canada. I argue that doing so requires conscious work and effort. That conscious work demands political agency—the courage to stand in the face of orthodoxy—but much more substantially, the strategic and principled work of awareness of and hospitality to the *other*, and the deliberate work of holding the tensions, contradictions, and disruptive offerings of difference in generative motion. Some guidelines with which to work are offered in this contribution.

NOTE

1. I am, as my explanation above indicates, deeply aware of how preliminary and unsatisfactory this map-making exercise is, and offer apologies to all those colleagues who would have wished for their institutions/interventions to be recognized here. I invite colleagues, however, to let me know about their institutions and interventions to make possible the development of a more authoritative representation of disruptive/transgressive institutions. I would not wish to be categorical in defining the terms about what might be included but simply suggest that if the example makes possible the transgression of dominant thinking, to forward the name.

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PART II

Reframing the process of development: Collective recuperation, reparation, rectificatory justice

4. Development Education as a Methodology for Systems Transformation: What does Restorative Action and Cognitive Justice Represent?

Catherine A. Odora Hoppers

INTRODUCTION: FEELING THE STINK

If there was only one world, it would be unbearable. A human universe requires the existence of at least two worlds: a battlefield and shelter; an outward and return journey; a past and future; an earth and heaven; a velocity and slowness; sunrise and sunset; east and west; a point of departure and port of destination; and an origin and horizon. If our lives are strained exclusively toward the future, we fall apart. Our imagination needs two worlds if we are not to be exiled and banished from the world, just as we need the world's full presence to dream of conceiving another (Béji, 2004).

From the unburied corpse of development, in which the West sowed myths of unlimited affluence and progress without end and sat on the unburied corpses of the outcast people of the Third World—the homeland of castaways, shipwrecked on the inhospitable shores of modernity (Latouche1991, p. 3), every kind of pest, as well as new ideas, have started to unravel and spread.

"Underdevelopment," in particular, as a derogatory discourse, generated a stink and odor like no other ever since the statement of President Harry Truman of the United States, on the occasion of his Second Inaugural Address on 20th January 1949, when he raised the question of the challenge of international aid (Truman 1949/1999). Although Wilfred Benson of the International Labor Organization used the concept,

Truman's use of it as an emblem of his policy took on an unsuspected colonizing virulence. On that day, two billion people became underdeveloped. As Esteva puts it,

> In a real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were, here in all their diversity, and were transmogrified to an inverted mirror of other's identity: a mirror that belittled them sends them off to the end of the queue, a mirror defines their identity, which is truly of a heterogeneous and diverse majority, simply in terms of a homogenizing and narrow minority (Esteva, 1992, pp. 6–7).

The rest is history. Colonialism was reborn and held in its left hand development and in its right hand science, proceeding to "save the earth."

In a way, it is true that colonialism, here seen as a framework subject, undermines subordinates and then replaces what it eliminates with its own exemplar. The heritage of inequality—inaugurated and cemented during the twentieth century—has remained intact today. The cultural projects of the West, including its science, claim compelling primacy and universal validity only because of their congenital relationships with the political throne of global power, extending hegemony as we have witnessed it through intimidation, propaganda, catechism, and political force (Alvares, 1992, p. 220).

However, from the point of view of the center, global space is transformed into a time sequence, with Europeans as the only contemporaries and the sole inhabitants of modernity, a perspective that served very successfully as a manual for the imperial management of societies at different evolutionary stages. Africa and the Third World, which are needed as unpaid subsidies for Western development, were at the bottom of these schemata. Within this framework, Europe (i.e., the "West") defined the world and gave names to phenomena in the genesis of the new world society brought forth in the wake of European expansion and conquest, the Industrial Revolution, and the advance of the world market. The naming process itself was an extension of the process of conquest, becoming a means of becoming Western, which was completed with the adoption of Western institutions, including the definition of democracy, which, in the context of modernization, is the exercise of citizenship rights by the propertied class.

The term "underdevelopment" took on an unsuspected colonizing virulence, making development connote at least one thing: to escape from the undignified form called underdevelopment. For someone to conceive of the possibility of escaping at all from this "condition," it is necessary

first to feel that one has fallen into that condition. Moreover, for those who make up two-thirds of the world's population today, the pressure to "feel" this condition is exerted regularly in the very process of executing development (Sachs, 1992, pp. 1–5). For the so-called underdeveloped to think of and comprehend "development" as stipulated, expected, or demanded by the West, they are assisted, by means of various statistical and other forms of written material emanating from the West, to form and internalize the perception of themselves as underdeveloped, with the whole burden of connotations that this carries.

As the mental space in which people dream is occupied by Western imagery, the innumerable variety of "being human" is eliminated. On the other hand, as the "other" has vanished with the coming of development, the spreading monoculture continues to erode viable alternatives to the reductionist, exploitative paradigm of society and cripple humankind's capacity to meet an increasingly different future with creative responses (Sachs, 1992).

According to Sachs, somewhere between Wolff (1759) and Darwin (1859), development evolved from a conception of transformation that moved toward appropriate forms to a conception of transformation that moved toward an ever more perfect form. However, when the metaphor turned vernacular in the context of the brutality of European imperialism, it acquired a violent colonizing power, converting history into a program. This made the industrial mode of production, which was no more than one among many forms of social life, into the definition of the terminal stage of a unilinear way of social evolution. By reformulating history in Western terms, global hegemony was self-awarded to a purely Western genealogy of history, robbing people of different cultures of the opportunity to define the forms of their social lives (Sachs, 1992).

RESPONDING TO THE DISTURBING ODORS

Here, we draw from Serge Latouche's analysis, which asserts that the appalling destitution of the Third World is not simply the result of centuries of exploitation—colonial plunder followed by further appropriation of surplus value through a market dynamic of unequal exchange between the "Center and Periphery" (as the Marxist-Leninist view has it). Rather, prior to and alongside material exploitation, there is cultural domination. He argues that each society furnishes its own "construction" of the world, creating its own world in the sense that it invests "what is" with its distinctive significance. Each society establishes a mode of

existence, a distinct way of understanding itself, its activity, its history, and the world it inhabits, specific to, and all-embracing in its compass (Latouche, 1991).

In this regard, there emerges a particular view of social science as methodologically and epistemologically distinct from natural science—being, in the first instance, the study of the intersubjective grounds of human action (i.e., socially shared and instituted meanings through which people live). It is argued by Latouche and reiterated here that, as a field, social science does not have much of a choice but to take cognizance of the polysemy of history (its many meanings, its possibilities, and ambiguities), on the one hand, and in the achievement of social life, on the other hand. It is incumbent upon each of the branches of the social sciences to elaborate with insistence that each situation, each moment in history, and each element of the complex texture of social life is always open to a plurality of reasonable interpretations (several ensembles or trajectories), differing by reason of cultural or individual context. Culture can be seen as nothing more than the totality of the responses given by each human group to the problem of social existence (Latouche, 1991, pp. 5–6).

Thus, the following propositions can be made:

- if "development" can be seen for what it is, that is, as a specifically Western cultural concern, transplanted badly, or with multiple levels of coercion in societies now known as the Third World;
- if it is a cultural experiment not viable even for the West itself in the long term, as both mounting environmental problems and increasing manifestations of human alienation are demonstrating; and
- if it is understood that underdevelopment is, thus, not just a "blockage" or backwardness, that it does not simply derive from a mere "absence" of productive potentials, neither is it a transitionary phase, a stage in society's ineluctable upward ascent to some fully developed state, but a situation that stems from the collision of very different cultural universes with the expansionary West.

The informal was *not* a budding alternative path of development but, rather, alternatives to development maintained or invented by groups confronted with the impasses of the colonial and imperial projects.

The informal is a reaction to the meaninglessness or even undesirability of this cultural approach to life. It is a rejection of a model of

development that is premised on the negation of others or the imperialist conquest of others. The success of the modern North—material affluence, industrial prowess, now held invitingly to the South—had its basis in these historical, geographical, and cultural conjunctures. It is a pragmatic act, which recognizes that the proposed "development" of the South cannot possibly be a repeat of the North's history. Thus, when the Third World has to follow the development model of the West, it has to find a place, people, or group to conquer, exploit, or cultivate structural asymmetry.

FROM CRUEL INSCRIPTION TO RECIPROCAL VALORIZATION

As the vitality of a culture resides in the capacity of culture to give (both symbolically and materially), the receipt of a gift (whether it is willing, inadvertent, or forced) is prima facie evidence of its valorization by the recipient. The gift and the capacity to give and receive the gift signify the existence and potency of the donor as an active agent in the world (Latouche, 1991, p. 10).

Currently, the West's primary domination of the world lies in its monopolization of the very terms by which value is conceived and its domination of the basic institutions that codify social life (Latouche, 1991, p. 10). The deculturation of the dominated societies is shown by the fact that, increasingly, they exclusively voice their predicaments and aspirations in terms of the categories sanctioned by the invading culture. Western culture has imposed the obligation of acceptance on invaded cultures. This entails the asphyxiation of the recipient culture and the loss of vitality and coherence of the indigenous cultural forms. Third world societies are, under these conditions, made to feel that there is little—or nothing—they have ever given to others.

This most basic "unequal exchange" in "Center–Periphery" relations is the fundamental logic behind their description as poor and backward, irrational, and so forth. It is the devaluation of non-Occidental societies in this way that is both the price *and* precondition of their entry onto the path of economic development. In short, underdevelopment is a process of real deculturation without the material (and symbolic) benefits of complementary or reciprocal acculturation. Underdevelopment signifies the cruel inscription of entire societies to what is only nominal salvation. Therefore, it is for their own survival, says Latouche, that Third-World societies must resist and somehow subvert this homogenizing movement.

They must change their terms of reference to escape the disempowerment inherent in the limbo-like condition of underdevelopment and escape the straitjacket of the impossible model of development, with its very real dependency on the West.

The accomplishments of the West in science, politics, and technological capability are truly remarkable. However, Western civilization is now confronted with the dark side of its "progress": the perception that the power to create is also the power to destroy. People of the Third World must reinvent themselves. They must create or recreate esteemed concrete solidarities and knowledge. They must reinvent it, remake themselves, and become nouveaux riches in other ways (Latouche, 1991, pp. 11–13).

Behind this valorization of the informal and choice, to see it as the heralding of social forms, is, however, an ethical stance, which is anchored in the possibility of an authentic dialogue between cultures that could also mean an authentic coexistence of different cultures. This may imply that certain cultures renounce their barbarity to have the other renounce their own. In the meantime, the hope is to propagate the willingness to tolerate contradiction and act generously in situations of unresolved antagonism.

Over the past 200 years, the West has taken a monopoly over the very definition of the problems of the existence of all societies in the world. The crucial challenge for those in the West wishing to afford genuine respect to those "others" than themselves would be to relinquish this monopoly and listen more openly to the discordant messages of silenced populations. The search for reciprocity—of a "space of fraternal coexistence"—is itself an ethical choice that has some real implications. This implies affirming the richness of the other, even in their material poverty. This implies that this is not a matter of quantity but, rather, of quality of life and that all helping is reciprocal, just as learning must be reciprocal. Respect for the other implies acceptance of dissension and loss and death, translated into a life for the "other" (Latouche, 1991, p. 17).

Earlier, science had linked itself with enlightenment and millennial claims before going on to associate itself with racism, sexism, imperialism, and colonialism, and then settling itself with development, an idea in which most of these earlier inheritances are coded. Development was desired by us—non-Western societies—because it was associated with science. We were told that what we had obtained prior to development, either in the form of nature or non-Western knowledge and subsistence, was not the rationality, slickness, or efficiency of modern science.

People, societies, and nature were considered backward because of their absence. Developmental planners labeled entire zones "backward" simply because they lacked "factories." Come "development," and all the "backward" things were substituted by "development," in which one could obtain unlimited progress and riches.

If development had no special links with science, there would have been no need to displace subsistence for the new standards of living that development proposed. Therefore, modern science and development appear akin to an imported brand of toothpaste.

CHANGING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF CULTURE, PARADIGMS, AND PRACTICES IN THE ACADEMY

Elsewhere, I have outlined key areas in which Indigenous knowledge systems demand academic institutions, fundamental transformation of culture, practices, spaces, paradigms, and realms of intellectual work (Odora Hoppers, 2001, 2021). Some of the crucial ones will be recapped below.

Establishing knowledge as an intrinsic part of democratic politics: If, as we now know, our formal institutions of learning have been functioning using cultural canons premised on Western systems, a factor that has led to denigration by inertia, subjugation in practice, and exploitation through research, then Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) compel us to challenge the very knowledge generation and legitimation processes and become overt about the extent to which the knowledge we are producing reflects the true diversity of knowledge heritages. Hence, we need to explore deeper into the interface between epistemology, diversity, and democracy and the potential for true exchange—what Hountondji refers to as the "reciprocal valorization among knowledge systems" (1997, p. 13). The intention here is to establish knowledge as an intrinsic part of democratic politics (Visvanathan, 1997, p. 2).

Facilitating authentic and active reappropriation: By engaging in critical evaluation and careful validation while recognizing inner truths and coherence, we can work to facilitate active reappropriation and authentication in current living research (Hountondji, 1997, p. 15). Through working critically with all of our knowledge affordances, we recover that which is of value. Closely related to this is the recognition of the fundamental intolerance of modern science toward the legitimacy of folk or ethnic knowledge, leading to our increasing inability to develop

an ecologically coded society. Therefore, engaging with IKS enables us to reopen crucial files that were summarily closed somewhere in the chaos and violence of colonialism (Visvanathan, 1997, pp. 38–40).

Interrogation of colonial discourses and epistemological frameworks: For many Africans and Indigenous communities worldwide, the time has come to subject to direct interrogation the historical, scientific, and colonial discourses behind the semantic shift that turned the illiterate from someone who is ignorant of the alphabet to an absolute ignorant, pitting what is not written as thoughtless, as a weakness, and, at its limit, as primitivism (Hountondji, 1997, pp. 33–34), which has been central to the strategic disempowerment of African societies since the advent of colonialism. Colonialism remains a factor insofar as it provides the framework for the organized subjugation of the cultural, scientific, and economic life of many people on the African continent (Mugo, 1999, p. vi) and the Third World. This subjugation extended in a spectrum from people's "way of seeing," their "way of being," their way of negotiating life processes in different environments, and their survival techniques to technologies for ecologically sensitive exploitation of natural resources.

Opening new moral and cognitive spaces: This will enable us to move the frontiers of discourse and understanding in the sciences as a whole and open new moral and cognitive spaces within which constructive dialogue and engagement for sustainable development can begin. In effect, it makes it possible for us to "clear space" to enable new issues in science development to be generated and fostered and thus determine new directions for philosophy and sociology as well as the political economy of the sciences (Visvanathan, 1997, pp. 7–8).

Understanding the political economy of othering": Finally, we need to develop a clearer sense of the ethical and judicial domain within which science works and begin to understand the political economy of "othering." More importantly, IKS humanizes our practice, enabling us to become part of an empowering process for those silent witnesses of marginalization (i.e., those regarded as refractory to the scientific gaze), and strengthens their capacity to take an active part in questioning the competence and ethics of professional experts (Visvanathan, 1997, pp. 9–13).

From a research point of view, *academic institutions* in Africa, and the social sciences in particular, need to pay attention to the following:

1. the increasing chorus of voices reaffirming the contingence of the social and historical as well as the affirmation of the multiplicity of worlds and forms of life (i.e., social heterogeneity and complexity);
2. perspectives that are working toward the redefinition of the relationship between objectivity and representation, between subject and object, and, thus, questioning the status of scientific truth itself (CODESRIA, 1998, pp. 1–2);
3. the manner in which decentered understandings of knowledge systems and other forms of universal conscience are emerging and gaining grounds outside the exclusivist frameworks of Western modernity;
4. those questions about language and the production of arguments that are emerging, the conditions for true statements, and the modalities for understanding are now also on the witness stand;
5. the call for a return of philosophy to the social sciences and to the evolution of emergent "open" nonlinear and flowing spaces of information" (CODESRIA, 1998, p. 3);
6. the recognition that the legitimacy of the social sciences no longer rests on the obligation to produce objective knowledge alone, but also on the identification of a nexus between the development of knowledge and the transformation of societies;
7. the increasing demand that the sites for the production of knowledge on Africa and about Africa have to be subjected to interrogation and deconstruction to clear space for authentic participation by Africans in such an endeavor (CODESRIA, 1998, pp. 4–5);
8. the very urgent imperative to actively move to shift the paradigm and discourse of development from one preoccupied with what the people do not have (Rahman, 1993, p. 216), one that is trapped in a negative dependency orientation that it generates, to one in which people are the subject and which motivates society to become constructively engaged in moving forward;
9. the call to ensure that academic practice does not condone or encourage the further trapping of the poor in the cold condescending gaze of the rich; and
10. the assertion that endogenous development begins at the point when people start to pride themselves as worthy human beings inferior to none and where such pride is lost, development begins at the point at which this pride is restored, and history recovers.

Scholars also have work to do. In terms of their micropractices, they must do the following:

1. "Clear space" in institutional and other policy arrangements for diverse knowledge to exist and participate in unfolding modernization processes;
2. Safeguard against exploitation of Indigenous knowledge without recompense;
3. Develop new research protocols by initiating a critical reflection on the ethical questions surrounding research in the human and natural sciences, raising new research questions;
4. Use local languages in research collaboration as well as the dissemination of research findings so that communities can partake critically in what is said about them;
5. Ensure that IKS research initiatives are not ignoring the epistemological dimension of emancipation, especially on the task of enlarging epistemic cognition not only for previously subjugated groups but also for all; and
6. Making sure that IKS initiatives are repositioning what were called "objects of research" in a new dispensation, not just as "sources of information" meant for extraction but also as authorities in an epistemological domain that has been purposefully kept subjugated.

SETTING BOUNDARIES WITH UNIVERSITIES

Given the unprecedented evacuation of millions of Africa's population (mostly in rural areas) from the arena of knowledge production, the persistent question remains: What are the terms and conditions under which their fullest integration as knowledge producers into the formal and public arena—including their recognition in the policy sphere—should occur? Given the ambivalent and often problematic "distance" between universities and society in Africa, what kind of realignment is essential to turn universities from a closed-loop culture of expertise to one that sees itself as part of the "commons," a civic space with the capability to develop horizontal relationships, especially with its rural base? Capacity building for moral and ethical reasoning must be taken very seriously, especially in these times when the skills to accumulate money and wealth are exalted, but those required to cope cumulatively with the

imperatives of coexistence, solidarity, and human dignity are in such short supply. Therefore, the stakes for humanity are high.

As Nandy observes, every generation is confronted with prototypical violence to which it must respond with the fullest capacity possible. Therefore, the task for this generation is that of a renegotiation of human agency, in which social justice is seen as a condition in which all members of a society have the same basic rights, security, opportunities, obligations, and social benefits. In other words, social justice cannot be defined by whatever a strong decision is (Nandy, 1997). Social justice cannot be defined by whatever the powerful in the world decide is in all of our interests.

From the perspective of colonialism, the task of this generation is to corrode and exhaust the narrative of colonialism in its numerous guises, technologies, and ruses, including those alibis that are couched in the recesses of the academy, and to affirm that the history taking place on the outer limits of the subject/object is now giving rise to new moments of defiance that rip through the sly civility of that grand old narrative, exposing its violence (Bhabha, 1995; Prakash, 1995).

Subaltern agency now emerges as a process of reversing, displacing, and seizing the apparatus of value coding, which had been monopolized by the colonial default drive. The contestation of the "given" symbols of authority systematically shifts the terrain of antagonism. Bhabha agrees that this is the moment of the renegotiation of agency. It is the voice of an interrogative, calculative agency, the moment when we lose resemblance with the colonizer, the moment (in Toni Morrison's words) of "rememoration" that turns the narrative of enunciation into a haunting memorial of what has been excluded, excised, and evicted (Bhabha, 1995).

This process of critique and engagement is no longer about documenting the history of the resistance of the colonized to colonialism and "development." Rather, it is about turning those accounts into theoretical events that make those struggles relevant not only for their moment in time but also for other moments in times to come. The "people without history" not only then returned to their central place in history, ultimately away from the dingy "ethnography corner" to which colonial discourse wanted them confined for eternity, but also became full agents and makers of history, current and future.

The engagement is about changing the very direction of the citizen's gaze directly onto the naked emperor. Hence, the light that began by being cast on colonialism and the legacy of domination and abuse is changed to a vigilant analysis of its failures, silences, and systematic

spotting of transformative nodes that were not recognizable before but that are now released into public spaces. This casting of generative light at last onto subjugated peoples, knowledges, histories, and ways of living unsettles the toxic pond and transforms passive analysis into a generative force that valorizes and recreates life for those previously museumized (Odora Hoppers, 2008; Prakash, 1995; Visvanathan, 1997), throwing open for realignment the conflictual, discrepant, and even violent processes that formed the precipitous basis of colonialism. In other words, it is a process of engaging with colonialism in a manner that produces a program for its dislocation (Prakash, 1995, p. 6). A dislocation that is made possible not only by permitting subalterns direct space for engaging with the structures and manifestations of colonialism but also by inserting completely different meanings and registers from other traditions into the discourse arena. It is here that subaltern and heterogeneous forms of knowledge, such as Indigenous knowledge systems and related forms of agency–that had no place in the fields of knowledge that grew in compact with colonialism and science–at last have a place, and by their stirring presence, they become revolutionary heuristics in a postcolonial transformation agenda (Rahnema, 1997).

CHANGING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE IN THE ACADEMY: INTRODUCING DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

In 2008, the Parliament of South Africa mandated that the Ministry of Science and Technology create the 200 South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI), which would be an intervention in the higher education landscape. The SARChI Chair in Development Education was one of the first 50 of that group and was established to provide a forum for contemporary social science research that examines its own origins, reviews current practice, and develops research and training areas with a view to building transdisciplinary leadership.

The overarching goals of the government's SARChI initiative are to stimulate strategic research across the knowledge spectrum, increase the level of excellence in research areas of national and international importance, and create research career pathways for highly skilled, high-quality young and mid-career researchers, thus making South Africa competitive in the knowledge economy, underpinned by the Chair's strategy.

The Chair invested considerable intellectual energy in scrutinizing the structures and codes that have underpinned development (thinking, practice, and theory) and examining their impact on current practice across different disciplines, including education. Education, along with other key areas, such as law, economics, and science, was subjected to critical examination from the perspective of societal development in Africa, thereby promoting a transdisciplinary and trans-sectoral approach to inquiry and scholarship. By integrating citizenship education with academic explorations, research outcomes, and innovations, the Chair brought society closer to the work and insights generated through the academy. This was the first of its kind.

The moral and pragmatic task was to develop new cognitive tools and propositions capable of deciphering the erasure cryptogram that hierarchized and excised the majority of African people from global collective memory as positive and substantive contributors to world civilization—thus denying them active citizenship in key areas of contemporary global currency, including knowledge and science. What this meant in practice was that there was an underlying process of continuously and critically examining through research the legacy of Africa's relationship with international systems. The way to do this in a teaching and learning context was to introduce transdisciplinary focal areas for theoretical, applied, and strategic research explorations; for example, science and society, peace and human development, indigenous knowledge systems and innovation, and universities and societies in Africa, all of which contain powerful heuristics in terms of theory building, methodological perspectives, and practical interventions in a new ethical dispensation.

Human development as a working concept can be seen as an attempt to rescue "development" from its toxic associations with serial displacements, linearity, epistemological disenfranchisement, and the logic of consumption, accumulation, and "progress." Although the prefix "human" does not save "development" from its inherent baggage, introducing "human" to it introduces a multidimensional approach to social change, in which "human-ness," linked to livelihood as a chain, connects life with life-cycle, lifeworlds, and cosmology.

However, in the operation of this Chair, it was recognized that Africa, like most of the Global South, cannot develop the way the West did—sequentially and linearly, according to the idea of progress where the tribal and the peasant evolved into an industrial system with the associated violence explained as "necessary." Africa must develop

synchronically in a model in which the tribe, the peasant, the rural, and industry must coevolve.

Taking on the idea of human development in the twenty-first century would recognize that the present understanding of "economics" is a global exercise basically because of the power it wields; otherwise, it is parochial and ethnocentric. It is one culture's view of what economics should be. Many societies in the world work on the basis of the economics of abundance and sharing. To insist on an economics of scarcity makes it the single tenet for studying economics, and to impose it as universal would not only be sheer ethnocentrism, but also absurdity taken to gross proportions. Accordingly, specific attention will be given to the scrutiny of the role that Roman law has played and continues to play in the market framework.

The task for social science, for instance, is to take a more perceptive view of the regularities observed in social behavior. Needless to say, a great deal of social science, in particular neoclassical economics, has ignored discourse, language, and practice and taken the mechanism instead of language as its implicit and sometimes explicit metaphysics (i.e., the system of basic concepts that frames the outlook and basis for both epistemology and ethics).

Thus, much of the vocabulary of economics is borrowed from the science of mechanics: equilibrium, stability, elasticity, expansion, inflation, contraction, flow, pressure, resistance, reaction, movement, and friction. For human behavior to be force-fitted into the mechanical metaphor, it has become simplified (Richards, 2004). Transformative theory building requires a different metaphysics.

Bringing human development to the fore in a transformed setting compels us to undertake that metaphysical shift. Taking up the question of human development as a method of intellectual inquiry, critical reappraisal, and citizenship education, for instance, brings back the human to the inhuman and enables us to, for once, develop cognitive indifference to the European model, and to the methods of science and its impact on livelihood. It enables us to develop a weave of ethics, a set of attitudes, and an ethics of the margins capable of producing perspectives on subsistence and survival that are not stymied by the Western obsession with hierarchization and alienation of the "other" but which are civilizational in their own way.

Here, the victim, by going beyond demands for compensation and injecting a demand for compassion, claims a different ontology of dignity … the cosmopolitanism of the victim over the perpetrator asserting

itself spontaneously (Visvanathan, 2000). It makes it possible to articulate a theory of practice that strengthens ties, cultivates affinity, and absorbs and welcomes the "other." It is a paradigm of practice in which the renegotiation of human agency prepares us for the moment of misrecognition that occurs when the object begins to have a voice, to speak, and to make claims to public, non-museumized space.

In such a process, new questions about the link between development and deskilling, between development and homelessness/rootlessness, and between the disruption of people's integrity and memory can be raised in a legitimate manner as part of academic policy and ethical inquiry. The disappearance of a whole "commons of expertise" (i.e., the myriad of skills and ways to: plant, conserve, and protect landraces; to weave, sculpt, and cook) can now become not only an intellectual or ethical question but also a political one.

It is here that a link is made between democracy and epistemology, between science and plurality, and contemplations around a new knowledge society relating pluralistically to other forms of knowledge are at last possible.

In the context of this Chair, indigenous knowledge is seen as part of the subaltern and heterogeneous forms of knowledge that had no place in the fields of knowledge that grew in compact with colonialism and science. By linking the memory of its survival from the 'epistemological death row' and casting this emerging drama within the task of the renegotiation of human agency and Indigenous knowledge, its carriers and holders in communities around the African continent and the Global South at last have a place. With their stirring, they become revolutionary heuristics on a postcolonial transformation agenda.

As Visvanathan so poignantly put it, local knowledge, tribal knowledge, civilizational knowledge, and dying knowledge all need a site, a theater of encounter that is not patronizing, not preservationist, and not fundamentalist, but open and playful (Visvanathan, 2000). Within this Chair, the university is seen as an enabling environment in which the "other" can articulate its conceptions of an alternative world and its vision of the university in it. Understanding and recommitting to human dignity entails the understanding of humiliation, deprivation, cognitive justice, and related disenfranchisements.

As we survey the wreckage and note the unprecedented evacuation of billions of people from the arena of substantive innovation essential to their existence, we need to turn with force to the task of redefining key concepts such as "innovation," its link with the goals of building

sustainable societies, and cognitive justice as key to the attainment of long-term and sustainable development (Odora Hoppers, 2008). At another level, the task of redefining these concepts is a process of rapprochement, a rapprochement of modern and older cultures, including modern culture's older roots, where each complementing the other opens up the possibility of a viable future for humankind (Fatnowna & Pickett, 2002; Huntington, 1998).

RESEARCH ON DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

The research in development education aims at restorative action. Restorative action uses indigenous knowledge systems as an approach to opening up the gridlock in epistemology between the West and the "others" going forward. Restorative justice consolidates transdisciplinarity as an approach to discourse, practice, and thought. All the Chair's focal areas aim at fostering methodologies for systems transformation. A number of methodologies have been developed, as follows:

Transformation by Enlargement: This methodology challenges modernity, and has been omitted from knowledge-producing arenas. As an approach, this methodology provides schemata that cut across all sectors and fields, in particular the universities and the disciplines they hold, and so forth, seeking to expand or enlarge them in the current plural and inclusive paradigm. Transformation by enlargement cuts across the knowledge spectrum and then populates each discipline or zone with the codes that modernity leaves out.

Cognitive Justice: Cognitive justice addresses the diversity of knowledge. It combines transformation by enlargement to provide a framework for the plurality of knowledge to coexist without duress.

Transdisciplinarity: In-Action and Leadership Building: This methodology addresses the transformation of the disciplines in terms of the knowledge that will be produced and confronts the structures of the disciplines in terms of the exclusiveness/inclusiveness of the concerns of cognitive justice and plural knowledge systems. When taken and applied to postgraduate training, it brings self-conscious knowledge and agency into the transformed disciplines and produces leadership building by producing scholars with a holistic view of the problems facing society. In practice, the methodology is applied to distinguished fellows (themselves from many disciplines and from many thought patterns), students, research themes, and research networks.

Immersion: Immersion is aimed at the people involved in different levels of transformation. It is a methodology that offers scholars, as change agents, the tools to effect change by expanding their cognition Africawards and humanitywards. Immersion is the methodology used by the SARChI Chair to generate leaders from the corpus of SARChI students from the point at which they enter the Chair until they graduate.

Second-Level Indigenization: Second-level indigenization differs from post-independence 'indigenization' attempts in that while the first focuses on the inclusion of Black people in the game or the drama, the second-level indigenization questions the rules of the game and provides alternative or complementary plots to the drama. It engages the paradigmatic frames, the apparatus for value coding, and the constitutive (i.e., not the regulatory) rules of systems.

Sociotechnology of Humility: The sociotechnology of humility is based on the value of humanism when transposed on science, the principle of cognitive justice and diversity, and the need for co-experimentation linking local and academic knowledge. It requests special attention from science and technology for the process of understanding and knowledge mediation between knowledge with different epistemologies and makes specific proposals to strengthen such ethical mediation capacities.

Establish an IKS Advisory Faculty: An IKS Advisory Faculty, consisting of a core group of IK custodians, was established within each context and internationally. In the SARChI Chair, IK sages from South Africa and a selected group of knowledgeable international IK authorities from the rest of Africa, First Nations Canada, South America, Australia (Aboriginal), Aoretorea New Zealand (Māori), and Scandinavia (Saami) were gathered and paired with leading thinkers in quantum physics, law, economics, philosophy of science, education, and so forth. The remit of the Advisory Faculty is to emphasize that all cultures can contribute scientific knowledge of universal value, thus there is a need for a vigorous, informed, and constructive intercultural and democratic debate on the production and use of scientific knowledge. It urges the scientific community to open itself to a permanent dialog with society, especially a dialog with other forms of knowledge. It is to affirm that modern science does not constitute the only form of knowledge, and closer links need to be established with other forms, systems, and approaches to knowledge for their mutual enrichment and benefit in order that better ways are found to link modern science to the broader heritage of humankind. The advisory faculty members are selected on account of their epistemological competence, competence in articulating the local-global-local

interface (IK and global systems), competence in reframing the knowledge-metaphysics problématique (academic systems), and knowledge of the link between IK and livelihood (IK in negotiating its existence and survival of humanity).

CONCLUSION: AFFIRMING COGNITIVE JUSTICE

When we spell out concepts such as cognitive justice, for instance, it is no longer about the pros and cons of debating whether the colonized peoples have a history or a philosophy, but it is directly about the right of different forms of knowledge to survive—and to do so creatively and sustainably, in public without duress, turning the toxic hierarchy left behind by colonialism into a circle (Visvanathan, 1997, 2000; Odora Hoppers, 2015) in which the inner cry for self-determination meets the outer voice of codetermination. This is a method for exploring differences that rejects hierarchization and attendant humiliation, and provides reciprocity and empathy (Lindner, 2006; Odora Hoppers, 2009).

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5. Reparations in the Ruins of Development

Arathi Sriprakash

INTRODUCTION

Despite decades of 'development', education across the world continues to be deeply marked by inequalities and injustices. The global development project has arguably failed, even in its own limited terms. As Aram Ziai (2015) surveys, the post-World War II development project has been critiqued along multiple lines: for being a false promise, a failed agenda, a construct that is constitutively hierarchical, Euro-centric, and paternalistic, and for being in service of the dehumanising logics of global capitalism. These concerns are echoed within the field of education too. For example, in making and then chasing narrowly-conceived targets, the global development industry – variously involving intergovernmental actors, private and corporate agencies, states, and non-governmental organisations – has become captured by market-oriented and technocratic approaches to education reform (Klees 2020). Despite its failures, and in the face of continuing inequality and injustice, global development continues to perpetuate itself as a powerful industry. Fuelling this, critics have argued, is the depoliticisation of both education and development – an approach that protects rather than challenges the hierarchical ordering of the world – specifically by ignoring the material and ideological connections between colonial domination, capitalist exploitation, and development itself. In other words, a paternalistic development 'gaze' has been used to validate dominant agendas, institutions, and interventions – a self-reinforcing system that does little to transform structures of inequality in education and beyond (Pailey 2020; Moeller 2018).

Indeed, it is perhaps most troubling that education development policy and programming are able to so easily turn away from the structural injustices – both past and present – that are at the heart of unequal

schooling: state violence, enduring histories of colonial and racial dispossession, and political economies of exploitation. The wilful erasures of such forms of domination arguably mean that despite a stated investment in 'progress', or claimed intentions to make more equitable educational futures, the global development project has been *active* in the maintenance of injustice (Sriprakash et al. 2020).

If, as Wolfgang Sachs declared thirty years ago, development is 'a ruin in the intellectual landscape' (Sachs 1992, p. 1), then the complex and persisting problems of global injustice require not just alternative modes of development but 'alternatives *to* development' (Escobar 1995, p. 215). This, of course, has been a well-known line of thinking within the post-development theory, positioning development as being a 'ruin beyond repair'. However, the post-development stance has also been charged with failing to offer clear alternatives (Matthews 2004). In this chapter, I argue that while development cannot be 'fixed' within its own terms, we might envisage a different project of 'repair' within its ruins. This requires us to reject assumptions that development is a necessary 'solution' and instead seek means of redress for the injustices which development has both failed to address and has actively created.

Following this line of thinking, then, I explore how we might engage in constructing guiding ideas for global justice in education through the lens of reparations. Reparations offer an action-oriented approach that, in its project of making just futures, is attentive to attending to past and present structural injustice. This is to imagine a form of repair that does not fall into the reformist trap of existing development thinking (*if we can just implement it better, development would work!*). Nor does it presume a 'return' to an assumed ideal type of development: the constitutive hierarchies of the post-war development project have never been ideal and are thus not worth sustaining. Instead, I look to the possibilities of reparation and repair as a kind of praxis through which new norms, relations, and institutions can be made *in place of* the development industry (Aslam 2022). A framework of reparations, in this view, offers future-looking reconstructive ideas for global justice; a view that needs to be collectively imagined and urgently so, given the ruins around us.

This short reflective piece begins by examining the structural injustices of colonialism and the post-war development project, focussing particularly on their entangled dynamics of racial capitalism. In identifying extraction, dispossession, and dehumanisation as constitutive logics of the contemporary development industry, I ask: what is to be done? Inspired by the growing literature on reparations in the humanities,

social sciences, and education, which has itself emerged from a much longer history of reparation activism, the chapter goes on to reflect on the kinds of alternatives that might tackle development's failure to imagine and work towards global justice. Reparation is not a new idea in the imagination of a just world – as anti-colonial, Black, and Indigenous activists have long shown us, not least through landback movements and the struggles for political and economic reparation that continue today (Biondi 2003; Frith & Scott 2018; see also Jules & Brissett, 2025, in this volume). It is, therefore, very much past time for the field of education and international development to imagine a reparatory world too; to mend the harms of its ongoing complicity with colonial and capitalist exploitation and make way for something else.

COLONIAL RACIAL CAPITALISM, EDUCATION AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

European colonialism unequally divided the world; these are fault lines that continue today. This is to say, colonialism is not a thing of the past, it endures in the present – within our norms, our institutions, and through global relations. In this sense, coloniality and development are two sides of the same coin (see also: Quijano 2007). For instance, we can see in many ways how the hierarchic ordering of metropole/colony has been reworked in the constitution of the 'global north' and 'global south' within contemporary development discourse. The power asymmetries and knowledge hierarchies of global education policy and governance have led some scholars to examine development as a form of 'new imperialism' (Tikly 2004). Of course, enduring relations of coloniality/development are always being reconfigured and can become entwined with new geopolitical power relations. Indeed, while Euro-American hegemony persists, development is increasingly also shaped by extractive and colonising interests beyond the West. A case in point is China's major Belt and Road Initiative, which, among its development activities, is seeking to transform the Xinjiang Autonomous Region as a key global trade hub. Vincent Wong has recently examined how this project of Chinese state capitalism under the banner of development has intensified discriminatory repression against Uyghurs and other non-Han native populations in Xinjiang, in part through a 'colonial imperative to eradicate Indigenous claims to the land' (Wong 2022, p. 3).

Indeed, it is important to recognise that colonial/development projects, both past and present, have often also been a project of capitalist

exploitation, dispossession, bondage, and plunder. Political scientist Onur Ulas Ince proposes the conjoined analytic of 'colonial capitalism' (Ince 2018). According to Ince, who focusses his analysis on British colonialism, the lens of colonial capitalism 'grasps capitalist relations as having developed in and through colonial networks of commodities, peoples, ideas and practices, which formed a planetary web of value chains connecting multiple and heterogenous sites of production across oceanic distances' (ibid., p. 4). Considering its continuing relevance today, this lens helps train our attention on:

1. the materialities of colonial/development projects – not least their occupation of Indigenous land, dispossession of people, and exploitation of labour (see Coulthard 2014; Wong 2022);
2. the globally-interlinked nature of capitalism and development – in which exploitation fuels the political economies of accumulation. As an example, Anthony Kalulu recently reports that '99% of anti-poverty funding stays in the hands of the global development sector, which means western agencies' (Kalulu 2022); and,
3. the racialization that occurs through these processes – the valorisation of colonizer and the dehumanization of the colonised that are made and sustained through justifications of power and accumulation. For example, European colonialism was fuelled by the ideology of white supremacy which is echoed in development discourse today (Pailey 2020; Lake and Reynolds 2008) and contemporary Chinese capitalist development is steeped in colonial projects of Han-domination (Wong 2022).

In a recent collection, Susan Koshy, Lisa Marie Cacho, Jodi A. Byrd, and Brian Jordan Jefferson explore the interconnections between colonialism, racism, and capitalism to put forward an analysis of 'colonial racial capitalism' (Koshy et al. 2022). The authors worked with Cedric Robinson's groundbreaking ideas on racial capitalism, which argued that capitalism requires the hierarchical differentiation of people (landed/landless, worker/owner, etc.). This differentiation of people means that processes of racialization (that is, distinctions created between groups) are *intrinsic* to capitalist systems rather than being an extrinsic phenomenon (Robinson 2000). Hence, in Robinson's view, capitalism *is* racial capitalism. The analysis taken up by Koshy and colleagues points squarely to the racial grammars of capitalist global development – in

which the economic and political interventions of the global development industry are rationalised through the maintenance and making of hierarchical distinctions between populations (evident in terms such as developed/developing; advanced/backwards).

The lens of colonial racial capitalism can help us examine the myriad forms of racialised exploitation and dispossession on a global scale: the incarceration, expulsion, precarity, and poverty levelled against some for the benefit of others. It is therefore a particularly useful framework for more fully understanding the injustices that contemporary development ought to address. As Koshy and colleagues argue, 'Racism and colonialism naturalize not just brutal economic inequalities but also the legal and extralegal violences and killings that come from making dehumanization and devaluation seem endemic to impoverished places and/or a product of people's choices rather than as central to regimes of accumulation' (Koshy et al. 2022, p. 12). Within the field of education, too, an analysis of colonial racial capitalism draws attention to the ways in which the very production of education systems and infrastructures has been steeped in relations of exploitation: the dispossession of people and land for material resources that go into education systems; the racialised divisions of labour that education systems and practices rest upon; and the extraction of value from students or communities to make and bolster hierarchies and inequalities (Gerrard et al. 2022).

A growing body of scholarship is examining how the dominant approach of education and international development remains not just beholden to, but an active sponsor of, capitalist expropriation and exploitation – not least through the mainstreaming of corporatised development and the centrality of neoliberal technocracy (Moeller 2018; Struckmann 2018; see also Hajir 2023). Here we can consider how colonial racial capitalism profoundly shapes the priorities, structures, and workings of the education and global development industry today. For example, Jason Hickel has examined what he calls the 'duplicity of development', which has seen powerful agencies and corporations – from the World Bank and the IMF to Nike and Goldman Sachs – sponsor the 'empowerment' of women and girls while ignoring 'the most substantive drivers of poverty and hunger: structural adjustment, debt, tax evasion, labour exploitation, financial crisis and corruption in the global governance system' (Hickel 2014, p. 1356). Not only are the structural determinants of poverty overlooked, but also, the active role of such development institutions in *themselves* producing and shoring up such injustices – which sees wealth extraction from the global periphery to the centre – is completely

obfuscated. The lens of colonial racial capitalism focusses our attention on precisely these systems of domination in development, helping us recognise more fully development's ruins.

Indeed, there are many ways in which education and global development have been captured by for-profit industries, normalising capitalist exploitation and accumulation in their very practices. This can be seen, for example, within the industries of standardised testing and the production of curricular products, as well as the expansion of corporate-backed low-fee private schooling. The aggressive sponsorship and growing centrality of educational technology (EdTech) in the global development arena is another significant case in point, not least as it spans all aspects of education (for example, curriculum delivery, student tracking, parental interventions, teacher training, monitoring, and governance systems) (Rodriguez-Segura 2022). As Ben Williamson recently reports, 'global spending on EdTech will reach $404bn by 2025'; a figure indicative of the power and reach of the industry (Williamson 2022). It is perhaps no surprise that the EdTech industry, which by and large pivots on techno-solutionism, should find a natural partner in global development – an industry similarly enamoured by its self-image as a solution maker.

The lens of colonial racial capitalism draws our attention to the manifold injustices that EdTech creates and entrenches. For example, Dan McQuillan recently reported on 'the dependency of AI on extractive labour practices' – the ways in which data labelling (upon which AI technologies rely) involves poorly paid and largely invisible work under precarious labour conditions, often by women and vulnerable groups, and often in the global south (McQuillan 2022, p. 24; see also Perrigo 2023). These material forces of exploitation are underacknowledged despite growing rhetoric around 'ethical AI'. Indeed, Adrienne Williams, Milagros Miceli, and Timnit Gebru advance this critique through their reporting of the exploitation of AI workers in Venezuela, Mexico, India, Kenya, and the Philippines (Williams et al. 2022). Furthermore, as Neil Selwyn surveys, EdTech's digital hardware is often sourced from 'dirty' extractive industries. Its data processing and storage require energy-intensive server farms, and its e-waste and emission of carbon dioxide through energy consumption all pose significant environmental burdens (Selwyn 2021). As he goes on to conclude, 'digital education is founded on a technology industry that has an "explosive" footprint …' (Selwyn 2021, p. 502). The costs of environmental degradation are already being most acutely felt by the poorest in the world, not least on lands plundered by colonialism (Sultana 2022; Ramanujam 2022). The EdTech industry

turns on the exploitation and dispossession of the very same people the development industry claims to help.

Looking at the management and reform of schooling systems, we can also see the many workings of colonial racial capitalism (Herbert 2023). For example, Tyler Hook has recently examined the Liberian Education Advancement Programme (LEAP) – an education reform programme that has outsourced public schooling in Liberia to international for-profit providers (Hook 2023). Hook identifies this as a form of 'corporatized' education reform that not only peddles simplistic technopolitical 'solutions' to educational inequality to entrench Western-led governance in development, but also establishes highly standardised surveilled and precarious labour regimes within schools 'to commodify and homogenize schooling and students themselves' (Hook 2023, p. 90). Mobilising the lens of racial capitalism, Hook's ethnographic research demonstrates how corporatised education reform in Liberia mirrors the logics of plantation systems: 'characterized by large-scale export-oriented extraction, monoculture, and indentured labor, and a complex social system meant to create a specific economic, social, and political norm' (ibid., p. 91). As racialised systems of exploitation, historically steeped in anti-Blackness, plantations 'continue to mark the Global South, carving out landscapes and confining people for capitalist extraction' (ibid., p. 91). We see in this work how the global development industry enriches itself through plantation logics. There is, perhaps, no stronger moral argument for its abolition.

Across these examples, we see how development continues to be completely enmeshed in colonial projects of extraction, exploitation, and dehumanisation. Understanding colonial racial capitalism as a constitutive dynamic of the development project allows us to name and understand the vast number of material injustices that are otherwise actively overlooked through development's appeals of 'doing good'. Arguably, a clear-eyed view of these injustices reveals not only the constitutive failures of the development project but also the urgency with which it must be dismantled. What might be built in its ruins?

REPARATIONS: TOWARDS A RECONSTRUCTIVE AGENDA?

There has been growing interest in re-examining 'development' through the lens of reparation. For example, the think tank ODI (formerly the Overseas Development Institute) recently hosted a dialogue with scholars

Carmen Leon-Himmelstine and Gurminder Bhambra on the idea of 'justice-centred' models of development, exploring the ways in which 'aid' might be 'redefined as reparations rather than charity' (ODI 2022). In their discussion, the long activist histories of calling for reparative models of justice were highlighted to demonstrate the overdue need for the field of international development to 'break with the logics of the colonial project that preceded it' (ibid. 2022). As Jason Hickel describes, the challenge of reparations is that 'it completely upends the usual narrative of development. It suggests that poverty in the global south is not a natural phenomenon, but has been actively created. And it casts western countries in the role not of benefactors, but of plunderers' (Hickel 2015). This idea is echoed in the work of Priya Lukka who writes that 'reparations mean questioning why people are living in poverty and rejecting political decisions that underscore our acceptance of its causes' (Lukka 2020). To build a justice-centred approach, then, the project of global development needs to be recognised as (a) being thoroughly entangled with colonial racial capitalism, and, *therefore*, (b) an injustice that requires active redress.

There is somewhat of a 'reparatory turn' in the social sciences and humanities, opening up new scholar-activist spaces for examining the modes of repair for past and present injustices, particularly related to colonial racial capitalism and anti-Blackness (Hall 2018; Scott 2017; Bhabha et al. 2021; Inwood et al. 2021; Bhambra 2021; Táíwò 2022; ross 2021). Citing David Scott, Catherine Hall reflects on the global significance of these ideas since the injustices of colonialism 'is not the story of a mere episode in a marginal history; it is the integrated story of the making of the modern world itself' (Hall 2018, p. 10). Indeed, while reparations are often thought of as 'backwards looking', in that they are concerned with injustices of the past, Olúfẹ́mi O. Táíwò asks us to consider reparations as a future-facing approach, given their potential to act as a constructive agenda. That is, reparations have the capacity to build something new, nothing short of remaking the world (Táíwò 2022). As I have argued elsewhere, reparative thinking has profound significance for addressing injustices in education too, not least to reckon with education's role in sustaining the violence and harms of colonial racial capitalism (Sriprakash 2022; Sriprakash et al. 2022). The radical constructive potential of reparative agendas is echoed too in kihana miraya ross' (2021) reflections on 'educational reparations'. Here she argues that systemic anti-Blackness can only be addressed by 'reimagining the Black educational landscape in its entirety' (p. 231). How, then, might we

consider the potential for reparations to break development's complicity with colonial racial capitalism and to build something just instead?

To be sure, reparations can be conceptualised in many different and often interlocking ways: material, epistemic, symbolic, and so on. While claims for reparation might validly involve direct compensation to individuals for specific harms or past injustices visited upon them, the discussions here instead take a structural and future-facing approach to repair. That is, I suggest that reparations in the ruins of development would seek a world-making agenda no longer structured around colonial racial capitalism. This requires a robust and collective recognition of past and present injustices of global development, rejecting the blind assertions of the 'good intentions' of the industry, and instead asking what is *owed* to repair those injustices and create just futures.

Materially, this would require interventions in the political economy: untethering our imagination of the future from the perpetuation of colonial racial capitalism. What would such material commitments look like? And, perhaps the more challenging question, how would we get there? The Common Worlds Research Collective (2020) has sketched out a complete paradigm shift for education and planetary survival, an example of the kind of bold and visionary thinking that is required for global reparative justice. Collective recognition of development's past and present harms would lay the foundations for setting out collective obligations of redress. This would involve a complete departure from the industry's business as usual, upturning the proliferation of initiatives that accumulate and concentrate wealth (as in the examples of EdTech and school reform above) and instead face fully towards a redistributive agenda for global justice. A reparative approach would fundamentally shift research, policy, and practice in global education – taking seriously principles of racial justice that have been otherwise erased from the development industry (Sriprakash et al. 2020). A move in this direction has been recently outlined by Krystal Strong, Sharon Walker, and colleagues who envisage the 'abolitionist horizons' for education that are inspired by the 13 guiding principles of the Movement for Black Lives (Strong et al. 2023). On the reconstructive, reparative potential of this approach, they reflect, 'The 13 guiding principles offer a collective set of values that attempt to undo the effects of anti-Black racism *by rebuilding community through movement*' (ibid., p. 17, emphasis added).

Could such a radical re-imagining of global justice occur *within* the global development industry? The histories of social justice movements would, arguably, suggest not. But, there are perhaps openings for

building greater recognition of development's ruins and, crucially, for recognising the constructive potential of reparations as a world-making project to redress these. The *how* is as important as the *what* here. How might a collective understanding of reparations for global justice be formulated, working with and across the deep divisions carved into the world? Here, perhaps the work of Julia Paulson (2023) on 'reparative pedagogies' is both helpful and, cautiously, hopeful. Through the idea of reparative pedagogies, Paulson foregrounds the processual and relational nature of reparative justice – it is neither an idea nor an outcome that is fixed but rather it is given meaning in dialogic relation with others. That is, material reparations are brought to life through praxis and modes of collective recognition. On the reparative approaches of social movements, Paulson reflects that an 'attention to healing, care and protection from the daily lived experience of harm [is] both an outcome of and crucial part of the processes of repair …' (Paulson 2023). Reparative pedagogies, she suggests, might involve processes that support dignity, truth-telling, multiplicity, responsibility, and creativity in the working-through of past and present injustice. The power and hope here is the recognition that 'Reparative pedagogies can and do proceed without waiting for formalized programmes of reparation …' (Paulson 2023). Looked at in this way, reparative futures out of the ruins of development are already being created. Will we listen, participate, create, and take responsibility?

CODA

I wrote this piece in 2022, but the publishing process is frustratingly long and slow. It is now mid-2024, and the urgency to address the ruins of development is ever more clear. For months, we have been witnessing unfolding genocide in Gaza. Israel has destroyed every university and much of the school education infrastructure. Some 14,500 children have been killed in Israel's military attacks, funded by Western governments, with many more children left traumatised, severely injured, and without family. Despite the immediacy and severity of the humanitarian crises visited upon Palestinians in these months, funding to UNRWA has been jeopardised and aid corridors cut off, or impeded in the name of politics. At the same time, the ongoing structures of settler-colonialism, apartheid, and occupation are rarely acknowledged, despite being crucial to understanding the ongoing violence. In the last few weeks, as Israel's attacks against Palestinians continue, we have been witnessing student-led solidarity movements emerge in university campuses across

the world, setting up encampments for Palestinian justice. Perhaps we can understand such solidarity movements as a kind of reparative politics. After all, many of the encampments are calling for universities to divest from the weapons and arms manufacturers implicated in Israel's violence against Palestinians. Such movements are asking us to dismantle the harmful, potentially even genocidal, investments of our social and political institutions. They know you shouldn't bomb a population with one hand and deliver aid to it with the other. They know that 'development' under colonial racial capitalism does not mean justice.

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6. Delinking Development: Material and Epistemic Justice and Caribbean Reparations

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, international development and education scholars have urged the reconsideration of development, emphasizing a more progressive, inclusive, and equitable approach, with reparations playing a central role in this agenda (Soudien, 2022). We take up this challenge and use the Caribbean as our entry point to reflect on the violent making of today's capitalist modernity project, engage with the context surrounding the call and rationalization for reparatory justice, and briefly propose two paths to material and epistemic reparations in re/thinking development. We call for the re/thinking of Caribbean development through the lens of reparations using two approaches. First, materially, we advocate for a structural overhaul of the global aid system to restore economic wealth that was unjustly appropriated from the Caribbean, enriching former colonizing powers and contributing to socioeconomic underdevelopment in Caribbean societies. Second, we emphasize the necessity for epistemic reparations, manifesting practically through recognizing the right of Caribbean societies to consider their ways of knowing and knowledge systems legitimate and the right to shape their educational trajectories to align with their context-specific needs. These approaches are presented as entry points into reparations and as a way to re/think the Caribbean development project. We do not suggest that these are sufficient for full reparations or to create developed/sustainable Caribbean societies by any means fully.

We note that colonialism and enslavement, which were fundamental to the making of modernist capitalist development and contemporary

Caribbean societies, constitute crimes against humanity for which there is no ethical or moral statute of limitation. Even within a profoundly flawed international legal framework that often mutes the interests of the less powerful under international law, it is outlined in the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal that "the Permanent Court of International Justice [argues that] 'reparation must, as far as possible, wipe out all the consequences of the illegal act'" (as cited in Gifford, 2019, p. 250). In conveying the logic for a call for reparations, we link the resulting underdevelopment that has plagued the Caribbean region to a profound understanding of the material and epistemic dominance of Western modernity and the exploitation of the region—how the Amerindians (the Indigenous population) were decimated, Africans enslaved, and East Asians indentured. Therefore, we cannot separate the issues of material exploitation and race/racism in its various forms (including epistemic) from the modernist development project in which extractivist capitalism is central in shaping the historical and modern categorization and stratification of race. Thus, the region has a strong case for reparations and reparatory justice, especially as we attempt to address the global inequalities embedded in global development markers. Although the call for reparations is as old as slavery itself, it has not been very successful in the Global South, but there have been renewed calls for it elsewhere in the world, including in the United States. The present paper adds to this call.

In what follows, we briefly describe the modernist paradigm and outline its historical geometries and links to colonialism, extractive and racial capitalism, and material and epistemic effects. We then discuss reparations using the case of the Caribbean, where we place the simultaneous development, operation, and legacies of chattel slavery and indigenous dispossession alongside one another. We then re/frame the modernity/development nexus by briefly describing two interrelated paths for material and epistemic reparation. We conclude by seeking to move the discussion of reparation further forward.

Authors' Positionality

Any conceptualization of change must engage with its exponents' positionalities, given the subjectivity of their "thoughts and judgment" (Madison, 2006, p. 32) and the implications of the related change on others. We are both black male immigrants from former colonies in the Global South who are working as academics in the Global North. We

are both scholars in the fields of comparative and international education and international development and education. In significant ways, we share specific critical values about education, its potential and limitations, but we also have substantial trauma and privilege of going through a Caribbean education system that was developed out of British colonialism, which has left an indelible mark on Caribbean societies (Brissett, 2018; Hickling-Hudson, 2004). We are also aware of both the socioeconomic challenges of our birth societies and the Global South in general through our lived experiences. Nevertheless, our identities, for example, being highly educated, living in the West, and being male, endow us with some privilege and even mask some disadvantages—including gender, class, and mobility—that often characterize the experiences of people in the Global South. Therefore, we are acutely aware that our worldviews, analyses, and propositions are not universal.

THE GEOMETRIES AND TRAJECTORIES OF THE MODERNIST DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT

The Caribbean Today

Today's Caribbean is a quilt of multiethnicity composed of descendants derived from the Amerindians, chattel—moveable, inheritable property—enslaved from Africa, and indentured servants from Asia. A significant majority of these descendants endure profound and persistent poverty, coupled with social despair, which is primarily attributable to the harsh realities of colonial brutality faced by their ancestors, and as such, these must "be acknowledged, adjudicated and settled in a manner supportive of development" (Beckles, 2021, p. 14). The contemporary Caribbean sustains very high levels of indebtedness, whereby two-thirds of the countries in the region are well above the debt-to-GDP ratio of a 60% threshold used by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to define high-level public debt vulnerability (OECD, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, CAF Development Bank of Latin America, & European Commission). The Caribbean region has one of the highest debt-to-gross-domestic-product ratios globally. Crime, which is often attributed to the legacy of the violent plantation system of slavery and colonial history, as well as the living conditions exacerbated by neoliberal structural adjustment policies, is a significant concern. It is estimated that 15% of individuals in capital cities are crime victims (Agozino et al., 2009; Sutton & Ruprah, 2017). Additionally, the region

serves as a trans-shipment point for illicit drugs and arms en route to North America, contributing to the proliferation of violent gang activity (Agozino et al., 2009). According to Western benchmarks, the region is regarded as a development failure and grapples with the absence of the Western development ethos, coupled with crippling foreign debt, a brain drain, high underemployment and unemployment, pervasive poverty, climate devastation, a youth bulge, elevated crime rates, and the world's second-highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (Brissett, 2018; 2022). These challenges have perpetuated poverty in a region that initially lacked the necessary infrastructure for development. However, how did we get here?

Colonialism, Modernity, and Development: Constructing the "Modern" Caribbean Project

The current incarnation of the modern development project is often traced to the post-World War II era, as the capitalist West—led by the United States after emerging from the war as the sole allied superpower—attempted to help rebuild Western Europe and pave a path away from communism for newly decolonizing societies that were once part of various European colonial empires (McMichael & Weber, 2020). In the postwar era, notions of Western ideas about progress and development sprung up. However, these ideas about "good life," wealth accumulation, societal hierarchies, political economic models, and scientific rationality, among others, have long histories dating back to Christopher Columbus's first voyage and his so-called "discovery" of the "New" World. What followed after Columbus's arrival was the genocide of the Indigenous peoples; the enslavement and displacement of Africans from their continent; centuries of European looting, plunder, and colonial exploitation; European land grab; the exploitation of natural resources; and the deliberate extraction and transfer of wealth from these colonized societies to Europe, all of which culminated in a process that supported the rise of the Industrial Revolution and the spread of Eurocentric capitalism. Therefore, these phenomena are linked to the existing power structures that dominate the world and the current incarnation of development models endorsed by knowledge banks (Brissett, 2022; McMichael & Weber, 2020; Williams, 1993). These practices were accompanied by an early set of ideas that justified colonialism as a necessary process to indoctrinate and civilize native populations, whom the Europeans considered to be backward heathens, uncivilized, and lower-class races of populations that the Europeans encountered on their wealth-seeking voyages. Such

thinking also led to the cementation of race as a social and biological construct. The seventeenth to eighteenth centuries period of European enlightenment/age of reason, which is often referred to in the Western Canon as the age of scientific rationality, replaced traditionalism superstition, and an unflinching belief in religion with a belief in scientific rationality intellectual reason, and notions of individualism and human rights. These ideas laid the foundation for the so-called age of Western modernity. In significant ways, these are axiological, ontological, and epistemological ideas that emerged and are considered to be Western/European. As Wynter (2003) observes, such ideas have become "overrepresented" in the modern era in shaping what it means to be human, even though there are many realities other than those of Europeans. Often neglected from the age of scientific rationality is the fact that other societies and peoples have their own indigenous knowledge systems.

Europeans were never the only ones with ideas about the meaning of life, what humans should aspire to, and the process of social change. Other societies had their own fundamental principles. What was unique about the European ideas was the sheer arrogance and hubris that theirs were universal—that their notions of progress either applied or should apply to every other society and, therefore, that all societies should submit to European ways (Nisbet, 1980; Wynter, 2003). The eighteenth to nineteenth centuries also saw the emergence of the guiding principles of capitalism, the nation-state, and modern global governance systems. Although this period also spawned some ideas that form the basis of critical contemporary notions of individual rights and universal human rights, people from beyond European societies were often seen as falling outside these seemingly progressive values, given that the West often viewed non-Western societies as less than full humans and therefore not deserving of such humane principles. Western principles were also employed to establish systems of Western global governance in areas of trade and commerce, knowledge production, and military might—or what might be called coloniality—many of which are still in place today and continue to shape and maintain the white supremacists' structures and global asymmetries of power that help to drive global inequality (Brissett, 2018; McMichael & Weber, 2020).

Extractivist Capitalism and Caribbean Underdevelopment

At the heart of colonial exploitation, historically and in the current era, is the development and promulgation of capitalism, which was in large part

fueled by its extractive characteristics that were racialized in their application. Robinson (1983) argues that with the development, organization, and expansion of capitalist society, racialism has "inevitably permeat[ed] the social structures emergent from capitalism" (p. 2). Robinson's (1983) argument, which is consequential to Caribbean societies, is that capitalism was detrimental to the colonized and, therefore, cannot be separated from colonial racialism and all the disastrous effects it produced. Capitalism, more specifically Caribbean extractivist capitalism, ushered in a new world order that glorified discriminatory practices that became intertwined with various forms of racial oppression: "slavery, violence, imperialism, and genocide" (p. xiii). He refers to this web of connections and intricate processes as *racial capitalism*.

Williams (1944) argues that Britain's ability to abolish the slave trade and end slavery was economic rather than moral. As Beckles (2021) added, "the plantation system was more than an economic institution. It was also a social culture with a distinctive race-based ideology to give White colonial its power over the others, with no accountability" (p. 54). However, with reference to Williams (1944), one cannot ignore the vast wealth and power that slavery and the slave trade accrued to its practitioners. As Williams (1944) submits, Britain's industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was only made possible because of the extraction of wealth from slavery, and "when Britain had extracted enough wealth from the enslaved and the Caribbean trade and productive system, it freed the blacks, continued their social and racial subjugation, and abandoned and ignored them for one hundred years" (as cited in Anthony, 2019, p. 230). Cox (1948) reminds us that "above all else, the *slave* was a worker whose labor was exploited in production for profit in a capitalist market" (p. xxxii, emphasis original).

However, Britain's excuse for the underdevelopment of the colonial Caribbean was that "black men are poor because they are lazy and incompetent and that white men are wealthy because they have the organizing ability and a sense of responsibility" (as cited in Beckles, 2021, p. 73). By the turn of the nineteenth century, numerous reports presented by the Royal Commission after they outlined that the Negro was indolent and that, notwithstanding colonialism, economic salvation was linked to the worker's willingness to do more work. This narrative implies that the mentality of the workers was what was holding back industrial and economic development across the region, and not the fact that the region had been exploited, and this exploitation thus contributed to the social ills it was experiencing (a nod to epistemic violence that we

engage with later). The primary fear for the British was what they called the "Haitianization"[1] of the region, and fending this off became the orthodoxy of denigrating West Indian (Anglophone Caribbean) development. Thus, Beckford (1972) has convincingly argued that the persistent poverty rooted in the economic structure of the Caribbean has historically been designed by British models to maximize wealth extraction and keep capital away from the region. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2005) notes that "the oppressive anti-development institutional and ideological structures of British rule, in both sociocultural and economic aspects, remain deeply ingrained and are spectacularly resilient" (pp. iv–v). This meant that, eventually, with the later advent of rising debt, newly emerging states in the Caribbean had to dig themselves out of debt by borrowing monies from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank). This would begin the trajectory of Caribbean governments' dependency on external aid, the rise of the debt trap used as a form of coercive governance, and, eventually, the emergence of neoliberal free market disciplinary tools such as structural adjustment programs (Brissett, 2018). Thus, the global rise of capitalism, as an idea governing political and economic practice, has been institutionalized through economic and epistemic violence because capitalism signified a set of ideas that have come to dominate the Caribbean through force, even resisting other forms of political and economic ideas explored by various countries in the region (Brunner, 2021; Potter, 1993).

Epistemic Violence and Injustice

Although economic and material capitalist extraction has striking importance and is consequential to colonial exploitation, the epistemic (ways of knowing, knowledge construction, and validation) components have at least a long-lasting and detrimental effect on Caribbean societies, resulting in lost, diminished, and unrecoverable pasts as well as a present where Caribbean epistemic frames are not sufficiently validated. As Byskov (2021) notes, "epistemic injustice is the idea that we can be unfairly discriminated against in our capacity as a knower based on prejudices about the speaker, such as gender, social background, ethnicity, race, sexuality, tone of voice, accent, and so on" (p. 116). Dotson (2011) holds that "an epistemic side of colonialism is the devastating effect of the 'disappearing' of knowledge, where local or provincial knowledge is dismissed because of privileging alternative, often Western, epistemic

practices" (p. 236). Like Wynters (2003), Stojnić (2017) has added that "colonialism connected the concepts of knowledge and science with the authority of power and race by establishing the hegemony of western *[sic]* Eurocentric model of knowledge as the only valid one" and that this "hegemony has survived the historic colonialism and maintained till present day" (p. 107). Thus, "modernity is an alterity-generating machine that, in the name of reason and humanism, excludes from its imaginary the hybridity, multiplicity, ambiguity, and contingency of different forms of life" (Castro-Gómez, 2019, p. 211), including those of the Caribbean.

Epistemic violence is present across educational systems, genealogical memories, native cultures, and philosophies, and has significant implications for regional development. The region's schooling systems lack a clear Caribbean epistemic foundation and are functionally weak and unsuitable for Caribbean social change and development (Brissett, 2018; Hickling-Hudson, 2004; jules, 2008). More specifically, formal education in the Caribbean emerged out of colonialism and was based on and operated as an inherently exclusionary project along the lines of race, social class, and gender, among other markers of identity (Brissett, 2018; Hickling-Hudson, 2004; jules, 2008). Formal schooling materialized to educate the children of white plantation overseers and plantation owners who could not study in England. Later, through the efforts of Christian missionaries and at the initial chagrin of enslavers, a watered-down version (of an already watered-down version) of education was extended to free mulatos (mixed-race children of white male enslavers and enslaved black women through sexual encounters characterized by inequality) and much later to the black population (Whyte, 1983). This education was mainly based on the social and Christian values of the oppressor group, which did not seek the input of the colonized or include their ways of knowing (Lavia, 2007). The lack of attention given to the indigenous knowledge of colonized people resulted in the emergence of a regional educational project that is exclusionary and deliberately epistemically violent. This continues today through global educational influences of the former "colonizing" powers and the institutions they control, such as the World Bank and the OECD, in the name of "development" or "progress" in formerly colonized countries. Altbach (1984) notes how this process has entered the modern era through international institutional systems of knowledge production, including Western universities, aid organizations, educational aid, and benchmarks that impact knowledge (un)production and schooling in the Global South.

Manifested in the Caribbean, the results of Western-led development blueprints have been disastrous. There are high levels of inequalities, so much so that even after extensive post-World War II and postindependence investments in education, there continue to be significant divisions regarding who has access to quality education. The CARICOM (2018) identifies "low levels of performance among secondary school students, male disengagement from the education system, large numbers of out-of-school children and youth not engaged in education, [and a] mismatch between the skills of graduates and the needs of the 21st century and society" (p. 29), in addition to the critical challenges. For example, at the secondary level, the CARICOM (2018) notes that the examination system (the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate) does not serve a majority of students well, as evidenced by the fact that only approximately 30% of the eligible age cohort is allowed to undergo these examinations, and of those who do, only 25% obtain enough passes (five or more subjects) for entry into most tertiary programs or to meet minimum requirements for decent quality jobs in the labor market. Scholars and educators have also pointed to the still deeply colonially influenced "plantation pedagogy" that characterizes pedagogy across the Caribbean, whereby classroom spaces are defined not by creative learning but by command-and-control forms of knowledge transfer (Bailey, 2019; Brissett, 2018; jules, 2008; Lavia, 2006). English—a colonial language that was imposed on the subjects of the empire as a form of epistemic violence—deleted many Caribbean people's history and demeaned their indigenous languages. In addition, those languages that the Caribbean people developed through the processes of creolization are looked upon and relegated to expressions of the unschooled and ignorant classes, and are not considered legitimate for the purposes of formal schooling. At the tertiary educational level, while there appears to be some increase in access through government investment, especially starting in the mid-1990s, the international neoliberal turn, in part promulgated by organizations such as the World Bank, has increasingly limited access to the poorest people in societies (Brissett, 2011). In significant ways, colonial epistemic violence is profound and far-reaching.

THE GENEALOGICAL LANDSCAPE OF REPARATIONS

Theorizing Reparations

Evans and Newnham (1998) proposed that reparations are "compensated claims made of and effected upon vanquished by the victors following the cessation of hostilities," which "may involve financial payments and/or physical requisitions of goods" (p. 477). Material compensation is often seen as the overriding imperative, yet some scholars have pointed out that reparations are about justice (Beckles, 2021a; Lewis, 1968); therefore, we argue that reparations can and should, in the case of the Caribbean, go beyond material justice. The United Nations (2005) acknowledges that "reparation is intended to promote justice by redressing gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law" (p. 11). Thus, we need to move beyond viewing reparations as "compensated claims" and also go beyond the material limits to include, for example, epistemic reparations. Reparations are not merely an academic idea limited to theory; in several instances, reparations have been demanded by and paid to Western countries, including those extracted from Germany after World War I. Even the French, the very nation that colonized, enslaved, and exploited Haiti in 1825, forcibly demanded and received from Haiti reparations amounting to 90 million gold francs (worth approximately $21 billion in today's currency, counting interest) for the "cost" to France of Haiti freeing themselves from their French slave "masters," something that has cost Haiti dearly and continues to impact their autonomy and development even to this day (O'Marde, 2019; Rosalsky, 2021). In fact, former colonial empires, some of which are now wealthy Western nations, engaged extensively in this type of what we, the authors, call "perverse-reverse" reparation practice, where the colonial enslavers sought reparations from the formerly enslaved and exploited. For instance, after slavery was abolished in Britain in 1833, several plantation owners were given reparations amounting to approximately 40% of British public expenditure for the loss of their slaves (Shepherd & Reid, 2019). However, when countries in the Global South asked for reparations to compensate for hundreds of years of colonialism and enslavement, they are often ignored. Various reparation movements have occurred, including those of the National

African American Reparations Commission (NAARC, 2022) and the CARICOM Reparations Commission (CRC, 2022).

Anthony (2019) reminds us that "the Caribbean Reparatory Justice Movement is as old as slavery itself" (p. 227); therefore, Indigenous peoples were the pioneers of the reparation movement in their fight against conquest and colonialism (Beckles, 2019). The twentieth century commenced with a call for reparations, but in the postindependent periods, there was a call for lump sum payments to former colonies, but these fell on deaf ears. During the 1940s and 1950s, building upon the ideas of the Pan-African movement and Garveyism, the Rastafari movement[2] also called for reparations in the form of repatriation to Africa and ex-indentured Indians to India,[3] but to no avail (Barnett, 2019; Beckles, 2019; Shepherd & Reid, 2019). For almost 40 years, the call for reparations was not heard by the West or was relegated to the backrooms of boardrooms. The 2001 World Conference[4] against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Intolerance in Durban, South Africa was instrumental in placing reparations front and center. This led to the establishment of the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and a few reparations committees in a few countries in the Caribbean. In March 2007, Anthony (Tony) Blair, a former UK Prime Minister, admitted in a statement that trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans was a source of British enrichment that gave rise to global power, and concluded that the "British industry and ports were intimately intertwined in it [TTA]." In 2015, when former British Prime Minister David Cameron visited Jamacia, the Jamaica Reparations Commission called for him to address the demand for reparations, but he failed to do so. Cameron reminded the CARICOM of the UK's longstanding position that "the British Government does not believe that reparations are the answer" (as cited in Shepherd & Reid, 2019, p. 53) and hoped "we can move on" (Campbell, 2015, p. 1).

Thus, our endeavor is not new, but we must acknowledge that it currently exists merely at the margins of Western academic agenda and institutional thinking, which one could surmise is also a form of epistemic violence. Reparations are about Europeans taking responsibility for what they did to colonized people. Europe (and other Western beneficiaries) has an economic, legal, and moral right to repair the harm they did and alleviate continuing suffering.

RE/CONCEPTUALIZING DEVELOPMENT: CENTERING REPARATIONS

While avoiding being descriptive, Soudien's (2022) call provides the context within which we can be "generative" in how we, as scholars, re/conceptualize development. Voicing their "sense of deep concern about the state of our planet and its many challenges," the NORRAG Fellows highlight the "inequalities and injustices that characterize our lives as people and the discord that marks our relationship with each other and with our larger natural world" (Soudien, 2022, p. 5). At the center of this historical and current challenge, they locate "the dominant conceptions of development" that have been "premised on problematic ontological and epistemological understandings of who we are as human beings and what we should aspire to" (p. 8). They astutely note and trace the particular Western-formed beliefs/ideas that have hubristically elevated modernist European/Western ideals to a pedestal and base, around which every aspect of our reality (economic, social, cultural, ecological, racial, etc.) and how we come to know it revolves. However, the Western perspective often forgets that Western modernity and its pursuit of capitalism were largely built upon enslaved peoples' backs. As we have discussed extensively above, the foundations of industrial capitalism are chattel slavery and colonialism. These ideas have produced human conditions, such as Eurocentrism, crude racial and gender categorizations, ecological precarity, oppressive global socioeconomic systems, and other destructive hierarchies of various forms. Although the NORRAG Fellows note that modernity's scientific method, the principal organizing methodology of the development project, "has yielded strengths and benefits" (Soudien, 2022, p. 10) that have produced positive outcomes, they posit that, to a great extent, the results have been harmful in the era of the Anthropocene, especially to societies of the Global South, because of the blind faith that has been placed in it and the resulting exclusion of other ways of existing, knowing, and doing. Although there have been many discoveries and actions resulting from the discourse of Western modernity—including medical advances, communications, and so forth—there is also profound human suffering, particularly in the Global South, and the environmental degradation of catastrophic proportions. Moreover, Western thought has forgotten the contributions that scholars from the Global South have made to science and instead portrays the Age of Enlightenment as the zenith of human civilization. However, as NAARC (2022) reminds us,

"the Enlightenment took both reason and feeling to extremes – it drained reason of all values, and deprived emotion of rational thought" (p. 6). Ultimately, we need to remember "what makes modernity modern is, first and foremost capitalism itself" (Sayer, 2002, p. 12) and its "restless movement of more and more accumulation" (Heinrich, 2004, p. 16). As such, we can view development as "products of modernity, diseased by neo-liberalism, unchanged and increasing[ly] irrelevant in postnormal times" (NAARC, 2022, p. 5).

We agree with the views of Senior NORRAG Fellows about the violent history and present workings of development. As we take up their challenge to engage in reflection and analysis and generate new ideas about a better world and the attendant role of education, central to our approach is the de-centering of Eurocentrism/Westernization/Northernism as the primary organizing ideas around which everything orbits, including development and education. In other words, we aim to look beyond "the epistemic order of European modernity – a 500-year-old project" (Soudien, 2022, p. 9). We also lean upon NORRAG Fellows' prompting of the importance of the concept and practice of reparations as a way to "move on from the damage and hurts we [in particular, through the ideas and practices of modernist development] have inflicted on each other …" (Soudien, 2022, p. 13), especially the peoples of the Global South. Here, reparations and reparative justice lay at the center of a constellation of ideas aimed at "recuperation, redress, rectification, and redistribution" (Soudien, 2022, p. 12). When viewed over *longue durée*, reparations are a central conceptual framework guiding our generative engagement in reconceptualizing development. Clearly, it is not possible here in one paper to explore every component of development that can and should be re/imagined through the lens of reparations. Therefore, we have chosen two entry points: reforming the international aid system and selecting epistemic reparations through education.

We do not suggest that re/conceptualizing development beyond its historical and current Eurocentric foundations is easy because several conditions limit our capacity to shed the old stubborn concepts and devise ways forward beyond the traditional modernist development framework. One such limitation is the ontological and epistemic frames that have conditioned how we have been educated (or schooled or trained) to think of the world as it is and the possibilities beyond. In significant ways, modern education, of which both authors are beneficiaries and victims simultaneously, has been shaped significantly by the Western ontological and epistemic systems that created the modernist development project

we seek to challenge. Various scholars have observed that "education … is a colonizing project" (Soudien, 2022, p. 11; see also Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Bowman, 1976). Thus, at the heart of some of our limitations as "trained" scholars are the scientific methods we have been exposed to as part of our academic institutional legitimacy and the boundaries they place on our own methods of knowledge production and validation. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to believe that, as subjects of this education and its associated systems, conscious and unconscious boundaries govern the expanse of our thinking. To believe otherwise is the ultimate exercise of Western ontological and epistemic hubris. For example, how do we envision development (and education) beyond the nation-state, a Western/European construct into which all societies are now subsumed, regardless of their internal diversity, varying interests, and so on? How can we think of education outside of the factory assembly line system, which is now universal, and deferred to in methods of schooling worldwide? How can we envision a world in which aid donors do not drive educational change and reform? Can we imagine a world of education and development without international knowledge banks, such as the World Bank, or with it in a reduced role and a radical departure from its traditional preeminence? Can we picture international knowledge banks deferring to the individual context-specific needs of their "recipient countries" in the Global South? And, regarding our conceptual frame of reparations, are we willing to conceive of the West with all its power, making significant concessions, repayment, and redress—of material and intellectual power—to the historically dispossessed, exploited, and marginalized? How do we, as scholars, avoid grand narratives of development, given their ubiquity in development discourses? These are just a few ways in which our own thinking, even as progressive as we hope to be, is potentially limited in our capacity and ability to rethink development and education. We are sure there are many others. Although we do not address all of these issues in this paper, it is essential to acknowledge them, and we hope that they will serve as entry points for other scholars to pursue a rethinking of development.

Reparations Through the (Reformed) International Economic Aid System and Education

Enslavement and colonialism left the Caribbean region with the intergenerational effect of slavery, "staggering rates of illiteracy and a scientific and technological knowledge narrowed to the support of the sugar

industry" (O'Marde, 2019, p. 246), which has led to debt and aid dependence. Overall, in addition to the specific aid tools used by the World Bank and the IMF, the Official Development Assistance (ODA) system, which the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) manages, has been used as the "gold standard" of foreign aid since 1969, and it remains the main source of financing for development aid" (OECD, 2022, p. 1). ODA is "defined as government aid [from wealthy industrialized countries] that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries" (OECD, 2022, p. 1). This aid must also be concessional in character and must consist of a grant element. However, the history of aid has shown that, only in very rare cases, aid is interpreted more liberatory ways by donors; instead, historically, aid has been used as a form of coercive governance (McMichael & Weber, 2020). Additionally, the conservative target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) was set for developed countries' contributions to developing countries' development, yet the actual aid percentage has been historically low, with the "2021 ODA total [being] equivalent to 0.33% of DAC donors' combined gross national income (GNI) and still below the U.N. target of 0.7% ODA to GNI" (OECD, 2022, p. 1). The changes we propose here concern not only wealth transfer to sustain dependency, but also the creation of a system that minimizes the structural underdevelopment of postcolonial countries. Foreign aid is not a panacea for non- and underdevelopment, but it can represent, according to Richards (2019), an attempt to wrong the rights of slavery and colonialism. Aid positively impacts social indicators, and portions of reparation payments can utilize the current aid patterns, where a monetary commitment is dispersed over time but by different rules and governance systems (Richards, 2019).

We propose that this aid system be reformed from being used by the West as a coercive disciplinary technology to one that serves as a mechanism to reverse the harm done to the Caribbean. Given the history of exploitation of the now developing countries by now developed countries that has enriched the latter, which we have laid out, we do not believe this international development aid is a charity; instead, we see this system as serving an essential purpose in helping to repair the economic damage that has been done to these formerly colonized, oppressed, and exploited societies. Thus, this overhaul should be conducted collaboratively with social justice movements, including Caribbean reparations and other global movements that have been established and institutionalized to represent the interests of formerly colonized societies. Such reforms should include, among other things, a review of appropriate levels of reparations

calculated for various societies and how best to integrate some repayments through the aid system. Therefore, this would mean that conditions such as the level of Gross National Income commitment by former colonizing empires/donor countries, aid conditionalities, loan versus grant percentages, monitoring of developed country contributions, and the control of aid mechanisms all must be revised. We are not suggesting that the ODA should be the sole or primary mechanism for reparations, but given the institutional prominence of aid in the international transfer and retention of wealth and power historically, it would be an essential mechanism for the process of economic reparations. Furthermore, we see the aid system as a way to institutionalize what we expect to be a long process of reparations to facilitate the slow course of social change and to reverse the centuries-long process of wealth extraction from non-Western societies by colonizing empires. In other words, wealth transfer was a long process—repairing it will also be extended, and this must be planned for, methodically scheduled, and carefully coordinated to the benefit of the Caribbean.

The reform of the aid mechanism should impact education in some significant ways and help facilitate the shift from primarily exclusionary education systems to those that are more inclusive in the quality of material provisions available to the Caribbean dispossessed. According to Sriprakash (2023), this "requires us to reimagine just futures for education, departing from common assumptive frameworks that position education either as a force of social reproduction or as a track to upward social mobility" (p. 2). For example, we are well aware of the discrepancy in the shifting views of the World Bank's prioritization of various levels of education—basic, secondary, vocational, and higher—often predicated on the economic models of rate of return (Robertson, 2009). This fluctuating prioritization of educational levels has disenfranchised different social groups at different times and the overall society by the inability of governments to develop holistic educational frameworks for their societies. We suggest the recognition of "educational injustices" (Sriprakash, 2023) and that ideologies such as the rate-of-return prioritization of different education levels based on economic efficiency should be relegated to history and a more holistic approach to education is taken, where learning is seen as a lifelong process that is not subject to truncated structures. Since the World Bank justified this prioritization of educational levels as a response to flawed and not context-specific interpretations of the human capital theory (and supposedly in the face of scarce resources), the above restructuring of "aid" as a form of reparation

should address this policy concern. Given the broad view that education is essential to social change, this approach should facilitate the extension of formal schooling, whichever form it takes in each Caribbean society, for every single person. Thus, we are advocating for a significant increase in funding for education through aid systems, combined with a fundamental restructuring of the aid governance system by repositioning the role of the Global South generally and the Caribbean specifically in this framework.

Epistemic Reparations (and Implications for Racial Capitalism)

We must start by admitting the difficulty of undoing the scars of epistemic violence – given that the world is now an epistemic territory fundamentally constructed through modernist epistemic violence (Brunner, 2021; Wynter, 2003). However, what can we reasonably change for better outcomes for the majority of Caribbean societies and, by extension, other parts of the Global South? To think about justice in the form of epistemic reparation for the damage of colonialism, we must first acknowledge the relationship between race and the ideologies of extractivist capitalism that occurred with Western European mercantile expansion into the Americas through colonialism. Second, as Wynter (2003) notes, we need to understand the link between racialization and the diminishing epistemes of colonized peoples, in this case, those of the Caribbean. In other words, we must come to terms with the notion that the ways of thinking about non-European societies and especially the Caribbean as subhuman and, therefore, merely expendable in the making of capitalist wealth constitute a form of epistemic damage exacted through colonialism. As noted earlier, "epistemic injustice is the idea that we can be unfairly discriminated against in our capacity as a knower based on prejudices about the speaker's … ethnicity, race, tone of voice, accent, and so on" (Byskov, 2021, p. 116). In this regard, Longman-Mills et al. (2019) argue that "slavery in the Caribbean was different from that typically seen outside of the Americas, as racism was the premise for slavery, specifically, that black people were subhuman and inferior" (p. 85). Epistemic reparations, therefore, are one way to address the racialized violence of extractive capitalism.

The systems of racial capitalism and slavery were intertwined through the colonial plantation structure, which was hierarchical and taught that enslaved people were inferior based on genetics, skin color, hair texture, and the shape of their noses (Longman-Mills et al., 2019). Therefore,

part of epistemic justice is the formal and explicit recognition by global powers within modernist development structures that historical trauma has affected the descendants of enslaved peoples beyond materialist ways. Longman-Mills et al. (2019) noted that the myth that Caribbean slavery ended in the nineteenth century is incorrect because "mental slavery has persisted even into the twenty-first century" (p. 86) through various mechanisms; therefore, the intergenerational transmission of trauma has continued. Manjapra (2019) claims that "if slavery and colonialism can be shown to have legacies that are ongoing into our present day, and not closed off in the distant past, then we are not only justified but also required, to reckon with slavery" (p. 170). These processes have fundamentally restructured societies while reinforcing racist discriminatory practices, including the forms of knowledge produced and validated within and beyond education systems, which is the site for much development focus. As such, epistemic reparations require an emancipatory project that moves beyond the rhetoric of "equality" and addresses the root problems caused by Western notions of modernity, including schooling. In this way, we aim to make the underside of colonialism transparent as we seek to "rehistoricize, decolonialize, and educate" (Cossa, 2022, p. 1). This becomes particularly important in education, where our legitimacy is enacted through our proximity to and embrace of (Western) education and its methods of knowledge construction and validation (Gautherin, 1993).

To (partly) repair epistemic violence, we need to employ deliberate efforts to focus on the role that colonialism and capitalism played in racism's genesis and reproduction, and to make efforts to undo epistemic damage to our social institutions, especially education. As such, epistemic reparations focus on alleviating the "persistent poverty, racial marginalization, and psychological abuse" (Anthony, 2019, p. 227) that the descendants of slavery have suffered, even within educational spaces. Stojnić (2017) offers some valuable guidelines for epistemic reparations that we take up here. Stojnić (2017) suggests that we undertake an "epistemological questioning of the idea of totality and critique of modernity" (p. 109) in concrete ways. In the Caribbean context, this would include an interrogation of what we teach in our schools and how we teach it, as well as the need to move away from what several authors have referred to as colonialism's destructive "plantation pedagogy" that continues to define classrooms across the region, whereby learning spaces are characterized by coercive command-and-control forms of pedagogy and knowledge transfer (Lavia, 2007; Bailey, 2019). In such cases, students

are (unequally) fed mostly Western information under the guise of education, which is often taken for granted instead of being creatively engaged and encouraged to interact with knowledge as something that is produced and, therefore, not free from bias. Thus, rather than students' eyes being opened and their social consciousness being raised to construct their own new societies, they are forced into accepting and perpetuating the status quo of inequality between each other and reifying Eurocentric education, which dictates what it means to be "man"/human (see Wynter, 2003). In this regard, Stojnić (2017) calls for epistemic delinking from Eurocentric knowledge, which "requires recognition of the 'Other epistemologies' and 'Other knowledge' as well as liberation from Western disciplinary and methodological limitations" (p. 105). The author clarifies that delinking does not mean that we "dismiss modernity as a widespread concept"; rather, it is a new kind of "border thinking and border epistemology" that recognizes the limitations of modernity, even while recognizing its presence and potential. Such an approach reveals, while not dismissing Western knowledge, the danger of modernist knowledge "when placed in epistemic power relations where it is established as universal and the only valid model of knowledge" (p. 109), as in the case of the Caribbean. Practically, epistemic reparations in this context mean an acceptance and encouragement within the development community of the need for and right of Caribbean societies to explore *their* ways of knowledge as legitimate and the right to construct their schooling in ways that elevate and integrate *their* own ideas beyond simply accepting universal notions of schooling and education, which are often circulated from the global powerful through educational initiatives, targets, and benchmarks (such as Education for All, Sustainable Development Goals, etc.) that are linked to or are conditions for aid. Like Mignolo (2002), we envision epistemic reparations involving the following:

> … [a] shift in the geopolitics of knowledge that would lead to establishing epistemic pluriversality. This concept supposes the world in which many worlds co-exist, opening the possibilities for inter-epistemic and intercultural dialogues based on experiences of modern-colonial societies. It calls for abolishing of the hierarchies between different epistemologies, where other formations of knowledge with their specific sources and methodologies, are not less valid or 'not scientific enough'. The world in which epistemologies include material embodied knowledge as lived historical embodied experiences.

As such, we suggest a movement in the Caribbean (and global) curriculum revision that idealizes the capitalist labor market system and excludes essential knowledge about history, racism, identity, and the importance of social transformation for justice. In other words, where global curriculum reform discourses exist, they should advocate for a more inclusive social transformation (Maclure et al., 2009). This is similar to the "reparative pedagogy" proposed by Smith (2019), which is "reflective, promote[s] learning and critical thinking, culturally keen, and grounded in the language and history of the region" (p. 239) so that children and adults can become critically aware. This type of Caribbean decolonial education would entail bringing to light that people are suffering today from the consequences and harm of European exploitation. Such reparative pedagogy takes root in reparative justice and first begins with the process of unlearning and then relearning by thinking "critically about our history, which has been tainted coming through the eyes of the Europeans" (Smith, 2019, p. 240). These epistemic changes are more likely to produce pedagogies of hope that can guide the construction of genuinely liberatory Caribbean societies.

TOWARD A CONCLUSION

The present chapter aimed to confront the challenge of re/imagining development through a more progressive, inclusive, and equitable lens. We used reparations as a conceptual framework for this agenda, explicitly focusing on the Caribbean as our analytical entry point. The violent underpinnings of today's capitalist modernity, driven by neoliberalism and market fundamentalism, which have shaped the exploitation of native genocide, black chattel slavery, Indian indentured servitude, and colonial crimes, underscore the call for reparative justice. The historical legacies of enslavement, indentureship, indigenous genocide, colonialism, and coloniality have profoundly hindered Caribbean development. Reparations, while not a comprehensive solution to the underdevelopment that the Caribbean region faces, represent a crucial step in the path toward redress. This call is not only legally and morally legitimate but also imperative for the Caribbean and other Global South regions to shape their desired and deserved futures.

Historical injustices have been further exacerbated by the rise of extractive capitalism, particularly choreographed by Western countries such as Britain in the Anglophone Caribbean. Moreover, the emergence of racial capitalism as a central theme in understanding the exploitative

consequences of colonial and postcolonial Caribbean existence has further revealed the pernicious and persistent nature of colonialism and extractive capitalism. The enduring consequences have been the manifestation of material and epistemic violence persisting through European modernist development systems and coercive mechanisms, resulting in significant power imbalances within Caribbean societies. As a result, Caribbean societies find themselves socioeconomically fragile and marginalized, with limited autonomy in determining their economic, political, and social trajectories.

Our advocacy for reparations is grounded in the well-established foundations above. The impracticality of comprehensive coverage of all reparative approaches has led us to specifically address two areas—the aid system and educational episteme—that we believe can yield profound results, given the historical impact of oppressing Caribbean societies. Structural reform and decolonization of the global aid system are proposed to systematically return stolen resources to the region over extended periods. Simultaneously, the profound epistemic damage inflicted on the region warrants a focus on psychological trauma and the loss of histories, voices, and indigenous knowledge systems. We proposed critically examining the educational system, calling for a recovery and centering of the various kinds of knowledge of Caribbean exploited peoples simultaneously with the provincializing of European modernity's epistemic order. In the Caribbean context, we advocate re-evaluating school curricula and teaching methodologies and rejecting the deleterious "plantation pedagogy" prevalent in classrooms across the region. In practical terms, epistemic reparations entail recognizing and endorsing within the development community the right of Caribbean societies to explore their knowledge as legitimate, and construct their educational systems in ways that go beyond universalized notions of schooling and education.

Acknowledgments: This project was initially conceived as part of the NORRAG Senior Fellow Program (of which tavis d. jules is a Senior Fellow) and several aspects of this work were published in the journal *Race Ethnicity and Education* (Brisset & jules, 2023). In this chapter, we have sought to update our thinking around the call for reparations since the original publication. These two authors contributed equally to this work.

NOTES

1. Haiti declared independence in 1804 from France, but this was not acknowledged for 20 years by France. Eventually, King Charles recognized Haiti's independence, and it came with a price tag of 150 million francs—which was more than 10 years of the Haitian government's entire revenue. This meant that Haiti had to borrow monies from French banks to pay for its independence, and the payments occurred over 122 years from 1825 to 1947, with some 7,900 former slave owners and their descendants in France receiving monies. As such, Haitianization entered the British lexicon as a way to describe what had happened to France with its Haitian colony and ensure that British colonies did not call for independence.
2. For the Rastafari movement, reparations were about "moving outta Babylon and stepping into Zion" (Barnett, 2019, p. 63) as they hold the view that traveling back to Africa is returning home to their homeland, which they were ripped away involuntarily from and brought to the Caribbean to work on sugar plantations, in cotton fields, and other enterprises. For them, the return to the homeland was coupled with the eradication of disease and the development of the infrastructure to engender empowerment.
3. Unlike Africans, ex-indentured East Asian Indian's contracts included repatriation.
4. The First Pan African Conference on Reparations was held in 1993 in Abuja.

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7. Microfragmentos of Reparation and Reinvention: Ch'ixi Food Practices with Women and Children

Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw and Cristina Delgado Vintimilla

This article relates *microfragmentos* of reparation and reinvention around food practices (Varela, 2019, p. 13). Microfragmentos translates into English as microfragments or small broken or irregular components that remain incomplete. The microfragmentos we present are a modest local political initiative growing from a pedagogical project among Cañari women and children in the high Ecuadorian Andes who are confronting the incursion of capitalist and neocolonial threats. Food production and food security are crucial to their fight for survival. The mixed Andean forests that captured water for millennia have been cleared and replaced by fast-growing exotic pine forests subsidized by international organizations, promising a future timber industry. Many of the local crop species that fed the community's ancestors have been extinguished, traditional farming practices that used the steep slopes of the Andes to maintain productive fields from various ecological zones have been displaced by modern industrial agricultural techniques, and the once-rich Andean soil has been contaminated with agrochemicals that promised higher, quicker economic returns.

We are non-Indigenous education researchers who migrated to Canada from Argentina and Ecuador (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Vintimilla, & Berry, 2021). We offer these microfragmentos as a project of reparation that acknowledges Cañari ways of knowing, doing, and being in the world (Wilson-Sanchez, 2022). This chapter contributes to the literature on

reparation, which has a long history in the English-speaking world (see chapters in this volume).

In the case of Andean women and children, we take a slightly different approach. For Bolivian scholar Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2010, 2012, 2018, 2021), when speaking with Andean peoples, the language of reparation is somewhat inadequate. For her, reparation involves reinvention. Through reinvention, Cusicanqui proposes that Andean peoples might avoid seeing and judging themselves through the neoliberal and neocolonial state. The microfragmentos not only avoid a romanticized idea of returning to a pure past, but also struggle to "overcome the merely essentialist and static level of interpretation of the Indigenous question and take charge of a reality that is much more complex" (Cusicanqui, 2018, p. 12).

In her unique sociological theory, Cusicanqui (2021) proposes the Aymara concept of *ch'ixi* as a reinvention of the colonial term *mestizaje* that already exercises a hierarchical binary (European/Indigenous) and, in turn, maintains Indigenous peoples within the legitimation of the state (settler/Indigenous). Ch'ixi subjectivities/entities are impure and in constant movement; they involve juxtapositions without dissolution, they cross borders, and they never overcome the colonial contradictions and conflicts they have inherited. For Cusicanqui, reinventions such as ch'ixi not only serve as "an Andean system of survival that has existed since before the colonial invasion" (Wilson-Sanchez, 2022, p. 212) but also to "render strength to resist" because the very contradiction radicalizes "the coming together of two" (Cusicanqui, 2021, n.p.). It is the friction this fusion creates that allows ch'ixi subjectivities "to work with one's Indigenous side" (Cusicanqui, n.p.). Ch'ixi involves a kind of memory work yielding both "hidden layers of colonial terror and of Indigenous pride" (n.p.). However, ch'ixi does not just emerge; it requires one to nurture what is often denied (one's Indigenous side).

We pose microfragmentos as imperfect modes of working the ch'ixi—nurturing Cañari ways of knowing, being, and doing in the thick of violent educational, religious, and linguistic imperialism. Perhaps what the women and children in Cañar are doing can be seen as working the cosmologies that are sunken but not erased (Santillán & Troncone, 2022). These microfragmentos are feminist moves toward reparation and reinvention because they avoid heroic masculinist narratives. Again, Cusicanqui's scholarship guides us:

> Cusicanqui assures that there are no theoretical or leading revolutionary macro movement heroes because the idea of revolution gets diluted, but there are "microfragmentos" in the midst of the current macro violence that build "tiny dawns" [amaneceres] in today's dark world and are not of the new man but of the "new woman." She insists that it is necessary to "feminize utopias," looking for new words that flow from the blood not yet digested, to avoid outbursts of fury. (Varela, 2019, p. 13, our translation)

There is certainly nothing grandiose in the actions of these Cañari women and children, but there is a subjective stylization filled with possibilities. Below, following an introduction to the project and the research context, we proceed with three microfragmentos: growing, cooking, and eating.

THROUGH A PEDAGOGICAL PROJECT

This chapter builds on decades of collaborative education scholarship and our half-decade collaboration in Ecuador. The microfragmentos that follow emerged from a pedagogical project in Ingapirca in the high Ecuadorean Andes. For us, bringing pedagogical intention to our work involves creating processes for "the careful work of the coproduction of subjects who collectively engage with the question of how we might live well at this time and in this place" (Vintimilla & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2020). Working pedagogically entails both becoming "ever more attuned to the situated complexities in which we live" and activating an inventive and imaginative life-making curriculum process "that intentionally, slowly, and thoughtfully, in all its gestures, undoes capitalism's [and colonialism's] stranglehold" (Vintimilla & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2020, p. 638). Serving as our methodological framework, our pedagogical method involves working intentionally to bring life to the situations that strangle it. This life-making process is profoundly inventive and far from predetermined. We do life through the small, everyday, mundane gestures of cocomposing through rituals, encounters, exposures, working at dissensus, interrupting hegemony and normativity, working through rather than intervening in problems (p. 638).

In this life-making, we enact pedagogical processes that are attentive to the intimate relation between the collective and the singular and to the different nuances that characterize the lives of women and children. The steady and careful creation of these processes of life-making has the potential to enable reinventing oneself in ever-new forms of subjectivity that emerge within the affective and relational experience of making

a collective life—a life that often does not shy away from exchange and friction as a material practice of interweaving. These pedagogical processes enable different and simultaneous practices full of creative potential.

The desire to make a life brings together a group of eight Cañari women and twelve children under a common creative project through textiles, agriculture, and storytelling. Although these practices are considered separate activities, they are intimately related and woven into the making of Cañari life. In this project, they are the threads that attempt to heal the social and cultural fabric devastated by colonial violence. Although women and children have been gathering twice a week since 2019, we have joined them four times for two weeks each time. Women organize weekly meetings, and for the past year, once a month, a textile artisan and an agroecologist have joined the women in their endeavors. The children meet with an art educator twice a month and use artistic and pedagogical processes to restory their place. Often, children also join women in their activities. They gather around their mothers, play, observe, and sometimes join in. They notice their mothers' laughter and ways of collectively moving with the land, with the wool, and with their stories. The children are infused in an atmosphere made out of everyday practices that have the pedagogical force to reinvent knowledge and forms or organizations.

The microfragmentos we share here emerged from a combination of audio recordings, photography, filming, and field notes from gatherings as well as conversations and informal interviews during our visits. Our pedagogical processes are similar to Patricio Guerrero Arias's (2012) praxis of *corazonar*. For Guerrero Arias, corazonar "opens spaces" for "insurgent wisdoms or wisdoms of the heart and existences" to "express themselves from their own living territories, names, and expressions, from their own categories" (p. 203). Corazonar is practiced when Sara, an elder in the group, interjects with her insurgent wisdom: "*We want to stop the practices of individualism (each one for oneself); we need to return to each person caring for the collective candela (spark) that keeps the community alive*." This corazonar activates ways of knowing and being that emerge from the heart:

> In the heart … is the possibility not only of beginning to "know" life in a different way, but of beginning to "cosmoser" [be with the cosmos], that is, to build a feeling-thought articulated with the totality of the cosmos and the existence. (Guerrero Arias, 2012, p. 92)

When Sara invites the other women and the children to embrace the wisdom of the collective *candela*, she calls upon the Cañari collective memory that is articulated in their *cosmoser*. Cusicanqui (quoted in Gago, 2016) is also instructive here; she writes that "it is about knowing with the *chuyma*, which includes the lung, heart, and liver. Knowing is breathing and beating. In addition, it supposes a metabolism and a rhythm with the cosmos" ("Thinking in Movement," in Gago, 2016, para. 1).

ÑUKANCHIK ALLPMAMANTA WARMIKUNA

In their small community of approximately 600 people, located uphill from the Ingapirca archaeological site, these Cañari women and children's lives can be described as ch'ixi. As we wrote elsewhere, women and children here are engaged in a search that has to do with establishing a dialog between their ancestral memory and land, as well as rescuing such episteme from the envelopments that are capitalistic, consumeristic, and alienating, to which the history of capitalism has condemned them (Cusicanqui, 2010, p. 148; Pacini-Ketchabaw, Vintimilla, & Berry, 2021). Illegal migration to North America is the most recent colonial enactment that Cañari people live with on a daily basis, following the survival of the Inca invasion, Spaniard imperialism, and brutal hacienda economies. Migration has impoverished the community socially, financially, and culturally, leaving a ghost town of abandoned homes, few services, and deep fractures. Those who remain in the community (mostly women and young children) are left with enormous debts incurred to support family members' illegal entry into the USA, and as youngsters dream of the North as their only survival strategy, rich ancestral traditions dwindle.

However, a group of eight women decided to shift these conditions for themselves and the community's remaining children. In Cusicanqui's terms, they are working on affirming their subjective and material ch'ixi contradictions. They have created an association—Ñukanchik Allpmamanta Warmikuna (Women Caring for the Land)—with great opposition from their husbands, who maintain inherited colonial patriarchal relations within their homes and the community; from the local municipal organization, which perpetuates the hacienda's practices of fines and prohibitions; and from the school principal, who opposes the women's organizing by reprimanding their children. The newly founded association promotes the revitalization of agroecological practices and the knowledge of Cañari people.

We joined the community in 2018, following an invitation from Alfredo, the community president, who shared his concerns about the future of the children whose parents were forced to migrate to the USA for survival. Alfredo told us that these children had lost their connection to ancestral knowledge, while giving themselves to the allure of the North as the legitimate horizon of existence. These allures, Alfredo shared, intensified the capitalist logics that shaped the children's daily lives and deeply changed the land. During our first meeting with community members five years ago, the women's presence was powerful. By carefully listening to our invitation to participate in the project, they enthusiastically committed themselves and their children to reinvigorating their ancestral connections to the land, water, air, and spirits.

MODERNIZATION OF FOOD PRODUCTION

The women of Ñukanchik (from Quechua, "we're the ones") were part of the extensive redistribution of land—*reforma agraria*—led by the national government in the late twentieth century. Although the reforma agraria is outside the purview of this chapter, we want to make two important points about it that are relevant to the lives of Ñukanchik women and children. First, as Goodwin (2017) writes, this land reform shifted the fabric of Ecuadorian society, intensifying entrenched land inequalities and facilitating new struggles over the ownership and control of land:

> [The] timing, character and reach [of the reforma agraria] varied significantly, but its impact was typically profound, dismantling the traditional hacienda complex, transforming rural societies and reconfiguring state-society relations. Its initial role in capitalist development was diverse and complex, placing restrictions on the use, ownership and exchange of land on the one hand, while incorporating peasant producers and agricultural cooperatives into markets and promoting capitalist production on the other. (p. 571)

Second, the redistribution of land positioned Ñukanchik women in even more precarious conditions: "While redistribution of land in Cañar in the 1970s was extensive, '[I]ndigenous families generally received low-quality land and rarely obtained the agricultural inputs or credit that agrarian reform laws promised'" (Andolina, 2012; James, 2014, p. 133).

As Ñukanchik women explain, the agrarian reform, as in other countries in the Global South, "modernized" ancestral agricultural practices through "agricultural extension programs" that introduced new technologies (Abbott, 2005, p. 200). This technological shift included "the use

of labor-saving chemical inputs, the purchase of improved [seeds], and the practice of weeding plants with herbicides" (Abbott, 2005, p. 208), which quickly created a soil crisis in the province of Cañar. In Ecuador, the use of pesticides "has almost doubled from approximately 32,145 metric tons of active ingredients annually used on agricultural fields in 2010 to almost 61,708 metric tons in 2018" (De Cock et al., 2021, p. 289). Local case studies suggest that the introduction of pesticides and chemical fertilizers has had devastating effects, including "eutrophication, water toxicity, groundwater contamination, air pollution, soil, and ecosystem degradation, biological imbalances, and reduction of biodiversity" (Alava Mora, 2021, abstract, our translation).

The violence on the soil is visible as one walks the Ingapirca geographies. Plastic bags full of agrochemicals can often be found lying on the soil side by side with a crop and are ready to be used. Sharp, intense odors assault one's senses. The women often speak of how the land cannot be without these chemicals, evoking metaphors of addiction and dependence. *"If they don't use the chemicals, the land won't produce,*" Marta whispers, as we collectively discuss what it would take to grow food without chemicals.

Although agrochemicals are important deterrents to more sustainable ancestral Cañari agricultural practices, their use is not the only aspect of modernization. As noted above, in Ingapirca, mixed agriculture gave way to dairy farming. Potatoes, wheat, and barley crops became pastures for cows. Currently, the sale of milk to large- and medium-sized dairies is the main source of income for families, a form of "secure" capital. As the agricultural tradition was lost, families—specifically women—went from community and collective work to isolated work where women (sometimes with the help of other family members) spend a large part of the day milking, watering, and moving cows between pastures. This individual work has greatly weakened the social fabric that previously existed, such as work in *minga* and labor reciprocity in the form of lending a hand.

ACTS OF REPAIR AND REINVENTION

Although Ñukanchik women face myriad obstacles, they are determined to work their ch'ixi, nurturing Cañari wisdom, affects, and spirituality around their food practices. As a political move to transform their own and their children's existence, their work not only involves returning to traditional knowledge but also involves cultivating other meanings and

alternatives of existence that are at the same time active commitments to heal collective wounds and the earth. Guerrero Arias formulates this political move in his description of corazonar:

> The processes of material and symbolic insurgency that social diversities are carrying out in their struggles for existence require different paths, different ways of looking at reality, which does not imply looking back but rather makes it necessary to look back to take from the past what allows us to look at the roads that we have not been able to build well, to evaluate our mistakes, to continue walking, fighting, planting, and building. (Guerrero Arias, 2012, p. 214, our translation)

Ñukanchik women and children are weaving life-making possibilities, not only for themselves but also for future generations and the planet. In doing so, they are engaging with difficult processes that can be haunted by doubt because women's ways of relating and knowing are often not legitimized, even within their own community. These are difficult processes to nourish because women's ability to trust each other is corroded by many shades of inherited familial and communal conflict. However, at every turn, these women and children conjured their desire to circumvent these perverse relational structures and weave their paths into owning their space as healers and makers of a different future.

On Growing

Lined up side by side, women open up the earth with their mattocks. Their hands, full of memories, hold the mattocks as they propel them toward the earth. The iron blade falls, and little by little, it opens the earth—preparing it to receive the seed. The encounter between the mattocks and the earth creates a collective rhythm, almost as if one mattock is responding to the other, almost as if they were narrating the effort and perseverance of each woman. These rhythmic, synchronized movements open up the earth, making small holes that reveal its colors at the same time sunlight enters, warming the exposed soil. The children are part of these daily activities as they play near their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers.

The women are happy to sow the seeds of potato varieties that had been lost in the area. As they work, they reminisce about the beautiful potatoes they once grew with their abuelitxs (grandparents). The relationship their ancestors had with Pachamama has been lost, they agree, as the old agricultural practices to livestock and North American models

of life. To find potato seeds, after trying several nearby markets, Sonia, Ester, and Sara traveled a few hours to a market on the other side of the mountain. Most chola and super chola potatoes are sold in the area, a modified variety based on the global market. However, the women were determined to find ancestral varieties they remembered from their childhoods. They found eight seed potato varieties, some of which belong to the chaucha potato species: roja, bolona, bolona negra, suscaleña, jubaleña, chaucha colorada, naranjilla, and chía.

The women managed to borrow three portions of land from community members: one from which to plant potatoes, a second from which to plant mellocos and ocas, and a third from which to plant vegetables, broad beans, and medicinal herbs. No terrain is easy: the first piece of land has an impressive slope; the second is full of grass; and the third is covered with rubbish, including glass, a rusty stove, and old pots. Women have an impressive capacity for hard work.

They are sowing the potatoes on the hilly piece of land at the beginning of the páramo, where straw can already be found and where some families have their cows. The land belongs to Antonia, a member of Ñukanchik. After chopping (cleaning the land with mattocks), they proceed to make furrows from the lowest part of the land, going up horizontally. In the first furrow, Antonia offers a prayer to the land by blowing a drink along it in the same way one blows to cure fright or bad air. Then, three women pray for San Francisquito (the patron saint of agriculture) to bless the crops. One of them blessed the earth in a cross; another prayed the Our Father and the Hail Mary. They all took off their hats as a sign of respect. The children paused their play to attend the ceremony.

As Vandana Shiva suggests, within the context of the Global South, it is through such acts that life on earth is regenerated. She joyously writes that women and children are "caretakers of [the planet's] soil and biodiversity, healers who mend broken cycles and broken communities" (Navdanya, 2016, n.p.). In the process of "cocreating" with the earth, Ñukanchik women and children reinvent "economies of care and sharing" and, in turn, produce forms of nourishment that link them back to land that has been violated through colonial practices (n.p.). Importantly, there is no purity in these reparation practices. Paradoxes abound as women bless the crop. As Cusicanqui (2010) explains, these actions show that indigenous peoples in the Andes "were and are, above all, contemporary beings and peers, and in this dimension, [they] perform and display [their] own commitment to modernity" (p. 47).

On Cooking

On rainy, cold, and windy mornings, six women come together to prepare a meal to celebrate the challenging collective work they have been engaged in over the past four years. At the same time, they are sealing a new phase for the project we named Comadrada (a type of relationship that involves mutual care in the process of raising something/someone beyond ourselves).

Seven children participate in the preparation, as they share tasks among themselves and with their mothers, aunties, and grandmothers. Collectively, women and children weave this meal, which consists of mellocos, ancestral potatoes, and habas (beans) that they have planted and cared for around their many other household responsibilities. Eight cuyes that the children helped to raise with freshly cut hierbas roast in an outdoor barbecue. While a grandmother, Sara, ensures that the coals are perfectly distributed, children take turns rotating the roaster while Ester brushes the cuyes with achiote.

We arrive at 9 a.m. to the school, where women have secured two empty classrooms to meet twice a week to reconnect to their ancestral textile and agricultural practices and to pass these practices on to their children. At the entrance, we bump into Sonia and Evelyn, who are returning from one of the fields they have cultivated. We peek into the bags they hold in their hands as they announce, "These are the mellocos we planted and harvested" in the terreno lent by community member Don Francisco. The uneven and colorful mellocos, still carrying bits of the soil that nourished them, show the care that the hands and hearts of these hard-working women and children have given to each melloco plant.

In the meantime, Sara and Ester are already washing the potatoes they harvested the day before. It took many buckets of cold water from the school's outdoor faucet to clean the ancestral potatoes the community thought had been lost. A year ago, the women were able to find these threatened potato seeds from a woman in a nearby community.

In the classroom, Antonia tends to contain pots of boiling water awaiting potatoes and mellocos, while Isabel chops cilantro and other local herbs accompany the feast. Sonia prepares the salsa, thinly slicing onions and tomatoes they have brought from their home gardens. Collectively, but without much conversation, Antonia, Isabel, and Sonia cook a large pot of habas that they harvested from the field at the bottom of the mountain, lent by Esteban, the owner of the only posada in

the area, which centuries ago belonged first to the Catholic Church and later to the patron of the local hacienda.

Sonia, Isabel, and Antonia seem to enter into another type of dialog that does not require words but includes symbiotic gestures that are in tune with the intention of nourishing others. This intention is quite evident as they prepare agua de frescos, which is made with various plants and flowers found in their gardens and in the Andean fields. The room is filled with the sweet aromas of sarcillo flowers, lemongrass, mint, lemon balm, sangoracha, violets, and pampa poleo.

This is not the first time that collective approaches to cooking have taken place among these women. As Cusicanqui notes, cooking for Andean women is a way of dialoging with worlds, with the earth, and with their own existence (Cusicanqui & Pazzarelli, 2017). Shifting the renowned expression "food for thought," Cusicanqui proposes "thought for food" because eating is philosophizing and engaging with the cycles of energy that connect women with the earth. Cooking and eating are ways of becoming and knowing. Similarly, Pazzarelli (2010) argues that these choreographies of cooking among women "appeal to the ontological terms in which they are defined" (p. 178):

> The incorporation of food into the pots and then into the body requires these transformations, the expenditure of these energies, and it is then that culinary techniques are revealed as a set of operations that are essential for the continuity of life (and not only for the biological reproduction of the group or for the production of a particular soup). (p. 76)

Boiling, chopping, cutting, washing, and roasting are practices of transformation for Ñukanchik women and children.

On Eating

Sara and Antonia still remember how they ate when they were children. "Many of the new generation no longer know what was eaten before," they share. Potatoes and mellocos, along with grains such as barley and wheat, make up a substantial part of their families' diet. The women carefully chronicle the "cocido": a mixture of potatoes and root vegetables that is removed from the stove hot, and the whole family eats with their hands. Some of them still eat it at harvest time. This conversation evokes memories of soups they used to enjoy: barley rice soup, wheat rice soup, and quinoa soup. "Instead of rice," they recall, "we grew up

eating dry barley and wheat rice. Each family roasted and ground, or had the barley ground to make máchica. This was done on the plow disc, similar to the other grains. Now few young (or 'reborn') women know how to roast beans."

Perhaps the food consumption patterns changed when colonial modern agriculture was introduced, or perhaps it was because of male emigration to the coast. White rice is the food that Ñukanchik women and children consume today, not only daily, but three times a day: at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. White rice is combined with potatoes, noodles, cheese, and eggs. Few families are able to eat meat or chicken once or twice a week, and a staple meal in the Andes, guinea pig meat, is offered only at parties.

In the midst of this conversation, one of the women proposed introducing the children to the ancestral foods they used to eat. As the proposal is enthusiastically received, they plan recipes with the products to which they have access. Weekend gatherings to eat with the children reenergize Ñukanchik.

Doña Rosaura, an elderly individual from the community, is invited to participate. Methodically, she teaches Ñukanchik women how to cook dry barley rice, with strict instructions about how to prepare it with achiote, long onions, garlic, water, and barley. They also made "quinoa tortillas" and "quinoa rice." Unfortunately, quinoa, once the main source of protein and calcium for the Andean people, has disappeared from agriculture in the area. They reinvent a recipe using the following ingredients: tortillas with carrot, onion, egg, quinoa, cheese, whole flour, and oats. The idea is twofold: learn to make dry quinoa to replace or complement white rice and recover the tradition of tortillas, an ancestral way of preparing grains. Despite the fact that the tortillas do not come out as consistently as they had hoped, the practice of grinding the tortillas becomes an important ritual not only for the women but also for the children who participate alongside them.

Eating together plays a central role in Andean notions of kinship. Carreño (2016), drawing on Weismantel's (1995) ethnographic research, points out that "by taking children into [one's] family and nurturing their physical needs through the same substances as those eaten by the rest of the social group, [one] can make of those children a son or a daughter (sic) who is physically as well and jurally their own" (p. 7). Poignantly, he continues, "Food is the substance that constitutes and relates Quechua bodies to each other. Those who eat together in the same household share

the same flesh in a quite literal sense: they are made of the same stuff" (p. 7).

The processes of continuous caring and provision of food are not isolated practices for the Ñukanchik women; rather, they have become processes of coexistence as the group participates in shared rituals through which the children "acquire similar habits, etiquettes, values, and tastes" (Carreño, 2016, p. 9). Notably, these processes of everyday practices around eating blur notions of individual responsibility and even ownership among women. They tend carefully and collectively to the eating spaces they gather in with the children, inviting them to eat as a mode of existence. There is no attention to whose children they are feeding, but a profound care and preoccupation that all the children are eating and the food is there for them.

DISCUSSION: POSSIBILITIES AND PROSPECTS

These practices of collective food growth, cooking, and eating are expressions of affection, hope, dreams, and joy that transform the dimensions of Ñukanchik women and children's daily lives, allowing them to find small moments to repair the colonial tragedies they have collectively inherited as they reinvent their lives in Ingapirca. These processes of reparation are not grandiose; they happen, as Guerrero Arias (2012) writes, in the act of living:

> It has been the insurgent force of tenderness, hope, dreams, and joy of women, men, elderly individuals, youth, and children—not as rhetorical or theoretical resources, but as irreplaceable insurgent forces to transform all dimensions of life that have been woven from their own territories of living—the one that has allowed those people subordinated by power, despite being cornered by death, not only to recover the word and be able to speak for themselves, but above all, to fight, dance, smile and sing, to find from the depth of their pain ways to continue loving, to continue dreaming and believing, to cheat death and to continue weaving the sacred web of life. (Guerrero Arias, 2012, p. 93, our translation)

The scale is relevant to this discussion. The reparation and reinvention work that Ñukanchik women and children are engaged in is situated, embodied, and partial. As a pedagogical and feminist project, these acts of reparation and reinvention are precarious, yet they instigate otherwise worlds. These would-be worlds are ones in which ch'ixi subjectivities are constantly in the making. Without overreaching and romanticizing

Ñukanchik women's and children's efforts, we offer these acts to open up possibilities for transformation that account for the doings of women and children on the ground—beyond neoliberal and neocolonial portrayals of revolution.

Ñukanchik women and children are together active, they need to reclaim space and recreate their lives in a collective. They are becoming visible to themselves and to the community. Reinventing their food practices has energized many relationships and has also made colonial patriarchal relations visible. Memory and knowledge reparation/reinvention processes take place in the midst of mundane everyday life. It is possible that these seemingly small practices are helping to revalue Cañari's ways of being, doing, and knowing. The task of these women and children is now to reinvent themselves in the midst of the contradictions in which they exist.

Acknowledgment: a version of this chapter was originally published in the journal *Ethnography & Education*.

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PART III

Reimagining possibilities for development and education

8. Sustainable Development Education: A Poem

Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti

DEVELOPMENT

Whose idea of "forward"?
A choice made in whose name?
For whose benefit?
At what costs?
At whose expense?

SUSTAINABILITY

Of what?
For what?
For whom?
Decided by whom?
Imposed on whom?

EDUCATION

As continuity?
As interruption?
For compliance?
For transgression?
For whose future?
On what livable planet?
We cannot talk about a sustainable future
Without the capacity to talk about
The painful things that haunt us
From where we have come from

From where we are at and
From where we are going
We cannot talk about a sustainable future
Without the capacity to talk about
Occupied territories
Enslaved humans
Exploited labour
Violated bodies and lands
In the name of development
We cannot talk about a sustainable future
Without the capacity to talk about
Expropriation and extraction
Destitution and dispossession
Genocides and ecocides
That underwrite
What we want to see "sustained"
We cannot talk about a sustainable future
Without the capacity to talk about
The harms of colonialisms, of imperialisms
Of wars and slaveries
Of forced migrations and of militarizations
Happening in the name of progress and prosperity
We cannot talk about a sustainable future
Without the capacity to talk about
How education is used to normalize and naturalize
Metropolitan consumer individualism
White/Western supremacy, paternalism and savioursim
Through a harmful single story of civilization as modernization
Climate destabilizations
Biodiversity apocalypse (UN term)
Global mental health crises
Obscene wealth disparities
Looming economic instabilities
Increasing violence, precarity and polarization
The threat of our own premature extinction
At our doorsteps
[No shit, Sherlock.]

What policies and cooperation
In education and training
Could prepare us to navigate
[Let alone change the course]
Of the present weaving of this likely future?

9. Why Is Epistemic Humility Provocative? A Reflexive Story

Prachi Srivastava

PROLOGUE

> *I think my job is done because a lot of people were provoked by the concept of humility and epistemic humility. So, I think, in that sense, my job is done. I think, for those of us who have been marginalised and who have occupied positions of marginalities throughout our entire lives, the concept of humility is really not at all provocative. Because we've been conditioned to be humble in* ***every*** *circumstance—in every circumstance to judge ourselves as being, in some way, not of the norm—and what that does is it instils within us an* ***idea*** *of humility. To me, the concept of humility is not at all provocative. It is essential to who we must be—both as academics and as human beings. The idea of acknowledging that we* ***do not*** *know everything, that* ***we cannot know*** *everything, and that what we know is temporal and specific to a particular context, in a particular point in time and space, is just how it is.*—Prachi Srivastava, UNESCO 3rd World Higher Education Conference, Barcelona, 19 May 2022

JUST SURVIVAL AS 'MORE THAN-NESS': THE 'HOW' AND 'WHY' OF THE STORY

Epistemic humility, as I conceive of it in the simplest terms, is the explicit act of acknowledging the limits of knowledge—both in time and in fact, and to further acknowledge the sociopolitical and historical contexts within which knowledges are framed and legitimised. I argue that epistemic humility is essential for engaging with the transformational process of discomfort to deconstruct long-held views and institutionalised structures of relational superiority in knowledge creation, production and sharing. Epistemic humility is essential to consciously and critically

engaging in a process of collective questioning with the hope of reaching epistemic justice and, ultimately, social justice.

In this contribution, I attempt a break from some of the norms of dominantly accepted academic presentation to consider a collective, consciously critical question: Why is 'humility', and in particular, 'epistemic humility', provocative? I do not claim to provide answers to this question. Instead, through a process of overt reflexive narrative exposé, I hope to open a public dialogue. I encourage readers, most of whom I assume are likely to be students, researchers, academics and others involved in higher education and research, to consider this question from the perspectives of our positionalities and hybridities, at once as individuals and as part of socially ascribed groups from the vantage of different points in time and space, as well as from the positionalities that our (academic) institutions of affiliation occupy. Which aspects of our positionalities occupy relative positions of power, in what ways, relative to whom and under which conditions? How are our institutions positioned? Are they part of dominantly privileged centres of knowledge production—locally, regionally, globally? Which positions do we occupy within our institutions, and dialectically, then, what is the relationship between our institutional positionalities and our own?

To consider some of these questions, I combine threads of reflexive exercises spanning nearly four years, starting from the process of writing a commissioned paper for the *UNESCO Education Research and Foresight Series* (Srivastava, 2022); my dialogical interactions with the audience in panels based on this work at the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference in Barcelona, the 30th Anniversary Conference of the UNESCO Chairs andUNITWIN Programme in Paris and the 2023 UKFIET Conference in Oxford; and mutual dialogue with, and interventions from, the cohort of NORRAG Senior Research Fellows whose work appears collectively in this volume. I present threads of my reflexive process in response to a series of reflexive questions and integrate some foundational literature, use parts of transcripts of the Q&A sessions and expand on notes *in situ* from these experiences. The tone breaks from formal to conversational in style,in keeping with narrative and storytelling methods, and usdialogical and reflexive approaches.

Let's begin.

Every work has a biography. Biographies are the stuffing of story. The biography of the commissioned paper was deeply tied to my own and to a collective global existentialism brought on by the pandemic—a unique time in human history where we were all implicated, with varying

degrees of severity, in a truly global phenomenon—not in euphemism or exaggeration but in fact. Terming this window the 'COVID exception', Appadurai (2020) proposed this time as a potential catalyst for transformational change, prompting an imperative, a '… need to observe, nurture and mobilise this new moment of possibility for society, in contrast to the state, as the only reliable site for a politics of survival' (p. 222). As we discerned then but can state in no uncertain terms now, with an estimated 14.8 million global excess deaths during 2020 and 2021 attributable to the virus (Msemburi et al., 2023), the politics of survival during this time was literal. The primacy of the biological took centre stage in a shared, but uneven and unequal, global human experience at scale.

This is not to imply that the politics of survival ceases to be such now, that it is divorced from the political or that it was only metaphorical prior—it could not have been or be in the face of imperialism, colonialism, domination and conflict that were, and still are, occurring in the most violent and inhumane ways. Thus, the literal fact of biological life cannot be separated from the political. It cannot be separated from the violent imperial and colonial legacies of genocide, past and present, in which the annihilation of Black and Indigenous Peoples and Peoples of the Global South in and on their lands was, and is, in consort with epistemicide; that is, the systematic annihilation of ways of knowing and of traditional knowledges (Hall & Tandon, 2017; Odora Hoppers, 2021 and this volume; Horsthemke, 2022). No, what struck me about Appadurai's assessment at the time, perhaps more so now, was the underlying inferred hope and promise in society—that is, in the collective, in the 'we', in 'us'—to demand and enact change, not just for survival but for *just survival*.

Just survival is inextricable with 'more than-ness'. To take Derrida's end-of-life words, 'Survival is life beyond life, life more than life' (Derrida qtd. in Fassin, 2010, p. 82). For just survival, this more than-ness must be rooted in ideals and actions of social justice and in unflinching fervent collective expectations of, and demands for, equal terms, equal opportunities, and equal freedoms for all. Explicating Derrida's views, Fassin (2010) explains, 'To survive is to be still fully alive and to live beyond death. It is the *''unconditional affirmation'' of life* and the pleasure of living, and it is *the hope of ''surviving'' through the traces left for the living*' (p. 83, emphasis added).

What are those traces?

Ways of knowing and knowledges are the collective 'traces left for the living', the embodied generational legacies of hope that are proof

of survival. They are the essence that provide affirmations of life for future generations. As scholars of Black, Indigenous and subaltern studies have shown, epistemicide is the most violent and explicit erasure of ways of knowing, of ways of being, of rooted ways of life. Erasure leads to silencing. Trouillot's (2015 [1995]) analysis of the silencing of the Haitian Revolution in Western history and in taught curriculum shows that silencing is linked to the erasure of narratives that are 'bundled' with lived experiences and particular knowledges: 'any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences, the result of a unique process, and the operation required to deconstruct these silences will vary accordingly' (p. 28). We may, however, consider that while epistemicide is the most violently explicit, 'cognitive imperialism', a term introduced and defined by the Mi'kmaq scholar Marie Battiste, may be more insidious. She defines it as 'the product of the Eurocentric hegemony of education and languages of instruction and the forced assimilation that has been imposed on Indigenous peoples as a form of "white washing" the brain' (Battiste, 2011, p. xix). Just survival must have an objective of epistemic justice.

How may we realise such potential from an epistemological view? How does humility, and in particular, epistemic humility, insert itself into such a project?

These are the foundational recurrent questions of my conceptual preoccupations. I am drawn to Mitchell-Walthour's (2023) thinking from a Black feminist and intersectional perspective on the politics of survival as a daily practice of resistance under otherwise oppressive dominant structures. With empathy and humanity, and by intertwining story, narrative and what would be recognised as 'quantifiable data', she describes in detail the dynamics of the gendered, racialised, colourist, and class-based experiences of 'poor' Black women in Brazil and the US when accessing social welfare benefits. They are not presented as passive beneficiaries or bystanders but as powerful agents of change in their and their families' lives. The words of the women in her study engender humility in the reader—an explicit reckoning with myth about those who are typically thought of as disempowered and oppressed, against the *sagesse* beautifully expressed in their own accounts—an overt necessitated acknowledgement that until and unless 'we' listen with intention *'we' do not, and cannot, 'know'*.[1] For some, this final clause of proposition may signal a long-awaited opening to seize and redirect the dominant Othering gaze; for some, it may cause discomfort, while for others,

it may cause provocation. My purpose here is to consider epistemic humility as experienced provocation.

For this, I must tell the story.

EPISTEMIC HUMILITY AS EXPERIENCED PROVOCATION: A SHORT STORY

This is the story of exchanges I have had on panels where I have spoken on the idea of epistemic humility. I am inspired by Katherine McKittrick (2021), whose deep engagement with Black and diasporic methodologies ruptures ideas of dominant ways of scientific presentation in form and in content. She weaves in and out of story, song, poetry, letter, analysis and fact and, in so doing, creates a liminal space that is rich, fantastical *and* conceptually robust, all within the structure of a dominantly accepted academic work—a single-authored monograph published by a well-recognised university press—to redefine the artefacts of knowledge.

For me, engaging with the text had the experiential effect of being consciously aware that the form and content of this work problematises how we come to know what we know. The mirror is held up, and we must see and collectively question: what is 'THE' knowledge, what is 'THE' canon, are there even such things, and if so, how do/did they come to be? McKittrick's primary method of exposé and theory building is storytelling. She argues that stories and storytelling are essential to:

> Sharing, [which] is not understood as an act of disclosure but instead signals collaboration and collaborative ways to enact and engender struggle […] *Stories and storytelling signal the fictive work of theory.*
>
> […]
>
> With this in mind, the content of the story is a lesson (you, we, recode and forge and invent, *this is how we live*, I will keep your secret); the act of teaching and telling the story is collaborative (I will share this with you, coauthor this with you, and live this life with you, I will tell you my secret); the contents of the story are multifarious and interdisciplinary (characters, plots, twists, metaphors, unexplained codes, places, secrets, connotations, structure the lesson and telling). The lesson, the telling, the contents, are ways of life (ways of being). The story, too, Dina Georgis writes, has the capacity to affectively move us and, at the same time, incite a listening practice that is 'neither disengaged nor wanting to master what it sees and hears' (McKittrick, 2021, pp. 7–8; emphasis added).

What happens in my story?

It's Barcelona, May 2022. I was invited to speak on a roundtable panel on knowledge co-construction as part of the futures of education agenda organised by the UNESCO Future of Learning and Innovation Division for the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. This was the third such high-level UNESCO conference on higher education in 30 years, with a typical frequency of one per decade. Among the co-panellists was Catherine Odora Hoppers (this volume),[2] internationally recognised for her contributions to scholarship and action in higher education regarding African Indigenous knowledges (Odora Hoppers, 2021; see also Soudien, this volume). It was the first conference I had attended in person since the onset of the pandemic, as was the case for most attendees. In a full room of invited delegates from all over the world, including UNESCO Research Chairs, university administrators, researchers, high-level policymakers and government administrators, most of whose professional positions would likely confer some level of relative status in their institutions, I proposed that we rethink our ways of knowing, 'professing' and creating through the lens of epistemic humility.

The proposal received, from some corners of the room, pin-drop shock and silence—the kind one may encounter by visitors at the Louvre had one just thrown a pie at the Mona Lisa.

Of all the concepts discussed, the assertion of epistemic humility received the most critically engaged discussion. It continued well after the session concluded. I was approached in coffee breaks and halls throughout the conference. Some of whom had been in the audience were genuinely wrestling with the proposal. They asked, 'I don't understand. What does it mean, 'humility'? Why this word? Why do we need it?'

The tone of these comments was confusion for both parties. For those who approached me, the confusions seemed to come from a place of questioning: Was the taken-for-granted authority and status of the Academy as 'THE' knowledge creator and gatekeeper, in fact, rocky? Was it valid? If not, what did it mean for their own past contributions, for their own knowledge-creating endeavours, for their own achievements?

This is where the entanglement of positionalities asserts its messiness. I am not implying that the specific individuals occupying these positions would necessarily be privileged in their societies or be inserted in their institutions on wholly equal terms. Gender, inherited class, race, caste and other social identifiers mitigate against positional privilege. This is especially true of individuals from groups that are marginalised in their wider societies, as research about the experience of diasporic and minoritised scholars shows, which extends epistemic injustice to their

claims to epistemic recognition and attribution (Ahmed, 2017; Bacevic, 2023). However, by virtue of their presence at this invitation-only high-level conference, we could concede that, at the least, many would have achieved some measure of nominal positional success and privilege.

For me, the confusions were experienced as dissonance: Why did something so seemingly benign to me spark such discussion? I am no stranger to relatively controversial topics of research in the field. The heated debates on education privatisation in global education over the last 20 years and the primary focus of my empirical work are well known. Furthermore, coinciding with this period of developing conceptual ideas on epistemic humility, I was on the receiving end of some less-than-desirable reactions to extensive pandemic-related public engagement against mis-/disinformation. Yet, it was the reactions at this conference on this topic that left me genuinely surprised. Nearly two years later during the time of writing, as is evident from this reflexive sense-making exercise, I still was, and am.

Some six months on, I was invited to speak at another panel. This time, in Paris for the 30th Anniversary Conference of the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Programme.[3] The conference opened with a thought-provoking live plenary keynote in a full auditorium by the Cameroonian philosopher, Achille Mbembe. He spoke on the need for 'a new planetary consciousness' to address the significant interlocking challenges affecting the survival of humanity and that of the planet. His perspective rests on the African principle of *ubuntu*; that is, the inter-connectedness of all people and all living things. Mbembe argued that developing this consciousness requires breaking from a 'Western'-centric view of knowledge, and instead one '*qui tire des archives de toutes des connaissances du monde*' (Srivastava's notes on Mbembe keynote, *in-situ*, 3 November 2022), roughly translated as one 'that draws on | pulls from the archives of all the knowledges of the world' (see Mbembe, 2023).[4]

This planetary consciousness must be inclusive of knowledges and knowledge systems that have been historically neglected, marginalised or erased through colonisation. His proposal is to re-orient dominant views of 'development' for reimagined collective futures. The keynote was followed by an engaging plenary Q&A between Mbembe and Arathi Sriprakash, which took forward the idea of the necessity of reparations in education as part of a larger project for social justice in view of the complicity of education systems in maintaining colonial systems of power (Sriprakash, 2023 and this volume). Like Sriprakash, Mbembe was clear on the view that reparations '*restent sur un projet du justice*

qui est internationale', (Srivastava's notes on Mbembe-Sriprakash Q&A, *in-situ*, 3 November 2022), roughly translated as, reparations 'rest on a project of justice that is | must be international' in scope.

I provide this context to highlight how well the keynote and Q&A were received and to outline the conceptual scaffolding within which our panel was positioned. The keynote was referenced by many attendees in informal conversations over the two days, and by speakers in round-table sessions who applied some of those insights to their talks. Our panel, 'Towards a Research Agenda to Transform Education' followed this.[5] Within this context, my expectation was that the ideas would be discussed with the same openness, especially as the overall theme of the conference was 'Transforming Knowledge for Just and Sustainable Futures'.

As in Barcelona, it was a similarly full room and a similar audience. However, this time the concept of epistemic humility was received with outright rejection by some:

> *'All this talk of decolonisation—you all say decolonise, change it. It has a very negative starting point'.*
>
> *'What does it mean to be inclusive of different ways of knowing, of other types of knowledges? There is bad science. Good knowledge means not including it'.*
>
> *'This seems to be an emotional response. What does it even mean to be humble?'* (Expanded from *in situ* notes, 4 November 2022)

These comments from the floor were largely made by high-ranking, senior (male) academics from, and based in, well-networked research institutions and universities in the Global South. Similar to the attendees who were provoked in Barcelona, they occupied positions of status and relative positional privilege in their institutions, which also occupied relatively high status in their regions. By some others, both Global South and Northern scholars, the concept and panel were celebrated. A mixed group of scholars from Northern Europe and South Asia huddled after the session and came up to the riser to the presenters' table for further discussion. Upon reflexion, I should have expected this diversity in experienced responses as a relatively common outcome, that is, a result of discomfort when we are confronted with new ideas that destabilise our taken-for-granted assumptions.

Applying a critical feminist lens to understanding the epistemic processes of confronting new perspectives and ideas may be helpful: 'to know differently, we have to feel differently' (Hemmings, 2012, p. 150).

Chadwick argues (2021), 'Epistemic processes and ways of knowing are thus matters of affective politics. If discomfort, as a feeling-sense, moment or process of rupture, is theorised as a possible critical impetus for change and for thinking and knowing differently, then it becomes an important affective resource for our methodological practices and knowledge production processes' (p. 560). From such a perspective, discomfort or feelings of hostility, anger, frustration, grief—feelings both experienced and received as negative—may 'function as a starting point for transformative and anticolonial modes of feminist research praxis' (Chadwick, 2021, p. 560). Put another way, if discomfort is consciously actioned for social change—if we ask ourselves why we feel discomfort either when confronted by new propositions or when we hear someone express feelings normatively understood as negative—we may move beyond dismissal or beyond the normalising tendencies of empathy to ask, instead, more radical questions, such as why just survival is denied and what the implications are for social justice, or more pointedly, as is the focus here, for epistemic justice.

What, then, may have caused this level of discomfort, leading to 'epistemic humility' being received as provocative?

MOVING BEYOND BINARIES TO CONSIDER 'POSITIONALITIES AT PLAY'

I have begun to understand this provocation as resulting from 'positionalities at play'—from the forced reckoning, particularly by those whose attributes have conferred relational privilege—that this privilege has come from an inherently unequal starting point, most likely largely defined by an accident of birth, in which the time and space one occupies have valued certain ascribed characteristics over others, of which one has had no control, and where that privilege extends over other individuals or groups by formal institutional and informal normative design. I submit that the provocation is rooted in discomfort, as described above. However, the reported exchanges in Barcelona and Paris highlight a further point of nuance.

Given that the objects of resistance in conceptual engagement in knowledge construction have (rightly) been dominant structures of colonisation and subjugation, most anticolonial, postcolonial and critical-theory-informed scholarship has been framed by examining positionalities built on binaries, for example, Global South–Global North, East–West, Third World–First World, with the unintended consequence of erring

on homogenisation. My experiences of presenting ideas on epistemic humility in various fora serve to question such binaries and encourage an intersectional approach to explicitly problematise and move beyond the idea of provocation regarding epistemic humility and broader cognitive imperialism as simply stemming from unequal Global North–Global South, coloniser–colonised dynamics, but also to consider the dynamics at play regarding marginalities within and across the Global South, within and across the Global North and the interrelationships of marginalities across them. I attempted to explicate this distinction in Oxford at my latest presentation on epistemic humility prior to the time of writing:

> *I've been thinking a lot about what it is that's distinctive about this moment in time […] I think we have a number of simultaneous things that are happening, for example, the technological revolution that we're seeing, AI, the, the oppressiveness of that, the environmental crisis, the about 'right' turn globally, but at the* ***same*** *time we're seeing quite resolute movements for social justice across* ***all*** *these marginalised communities that, that we haven't seen, I think in, in such strength. And, it leads me to think about – at one time we're atomised, the technological revolutions have, and the capitalistic framework within which we live, atomises us – it, it, it, it, it disenfranchises us, it disconnects us from one another – but at the* ***same*** *time there's this idea of how it is that we are all somehow* ***connected by virtue*** *of our disconnectedness, by virtue of our exclusions. How is it that different marginalities, or people occupying different positions of marginalities … how is it that* ***they*** *are connected with one another? Castells talks about the Fourth World, and he says very much the Fourth World are all those, are the networks of constellations that we can draw across Territory 1, 2, 3, 4 in the sameness of their experience of exclusion, right? And,* ***that*** *actually is what brings us together. So, there is where there is strength.*—Prachi Srivastava, Q&A, Panel on 'Decolonising Education and Development', 2023 UKFIET Conference, Oxford, 14 September 2023

Here, I invoke Manuel Castells's compelling analysis of the interconnectedness of marginalised peoples across territories, the collective 'Fourth World', which he attributes to the overarching oppressive and exclusionary effects of capitalism within the framework of economic globalisation. He argues the following:

> … the Third World has disappeared as a relevant entity, emptied of its geopolitical meaning, and extraordinarily diversified in its economic and social development. Yet, the First World has not become the all-embracing universe of neo-liberal mythology. Because *a new world, the Fourth World, has emerged, made up of multiple black holes of social exclusion throughout the planet*. The Fourth World comprises large areas of the globe, such as much

> of Sub-Saharan Africa, and impoverished rural areas of Latin America and Asia. But it is also present in literally every country, and every city, in this new geography of social exclusion. It is formed of American inner-city ghettos, Spanish enclaves of mass youth unemployment, French banlieues warehousing North Africans, Japanese Yoseba quarters, and Asian mega-cities' shanty towns. (Castells, 2010, pp. 169–170; emphasis added)

Although on a very different starting point of relational privilege compared with those referred to by Castells, my entry point to conceptual engagement with epistemic humility is one that identifies with marginalities owing to the nature of my own shifting positionalities across time and space. As a child of highly educated immigrants of the 1960s from India to Canada, having grown up as a Brown allophone girl in Montreal in the 1970s and 1980s amid calls for the separation of Quebec from Canada, having been educated at 'elite' universities (McGill and Oxford), having been an immigrant myself as an adult in the UK, having lived and worked otherwise in at least seven countries in North America, Europe and Asia (including inconflict zones) and at the time of writing, a tenured, visible minority, racialised woman professor in a U15 university in Canada, there are threads of privilege and marginalities that I can tease from every point of my biography.[6]

This is, of course, a basic relational sketch of my originary time and positionalities in Montreal and of the current time as a primary function of my academic position in Canada. What attributes are most relevant to this version of this sketch? Race? Language? Gender? What about ascribed caste? Ascribed religion? For diasporic people like me, does one explicate every nuance in every territory one has lived, and over time, and over life circumstances and according topolitical conditions? How far back does one go? Does one extend that lens to one's foremothers and forefathers in their countries of origin? And if so, to how many generations? How would ascribed positionalities change in those contexts and in those times? How do these historical, generational positionalities affect one's positionalities in the present? How do these legacies, both present and past, affect what we know and how we know?

Perhaps linkages with multiple diasporas allow more explicit and deepened engagement with the idea of positionalities at play, and as part of a larger epistemic project. In my own experiences, the ascribed construct of race has assumed prominence in determining relational positionalities of marginalities in all lived contexts except India (where privileged ascribed caste would assume ascendence).[7] Returning to McKittrick's

analytical framework, which incorporates Black methodologies and 'diaspora literacy', provides a way forward.[8] Diaspora/diasporic literacy is viewed as resulting from 'globally subordinated peoples moving out of their Western assigned places and calling into question what was, in effect, the structures of a global world system' (p. 36). I would venture to extend this notion to those of the 'new' diasporic constellations of their descendants. Here, I am invoking Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's (1996) notion of 'new diasporas' in transnational contexts where populations are less unified and homogenous along static ethnic lines, even if they may share an historic or genealogical place of origin.

As McKittrick (2021) explains, diasporic literacy is central to destabilising myths of relational superiority inherent to the subjugation of peoples and 'place'. That is, it seriously calls into question:

> A referential beginning (of colonial and plantocratic geographies) that is driven by a logic of accumulation, dispossession, exclusion, and dehumanization [which] cannot, therefore, capture a black sense of place […] Diasporic literacy emerges from our collective (opaque relational) knowledge of the open boat; the open boat necessitates black freedom – inspired purpose as a lesson; the lessons cite and site how we might live black outside the taxonomies that swirl around us. (McKittrick, 2021, p. 34)

Thus, when 'place' is not uniform or unifying—as in the case of Black and diasporic peoples in McKittrick's analysis, or for diasporic transnational women in Spivak's or for excluded peoples in the Fourth World as in Castells's—we may apply McKittrick's (2021) analysis to understand that relational superiority is achieved by promulgating race as the attribute that 'shapes a range of knowledge systems … [in which] racism and self-alienation are part of a larger self-replicating system that, within the context of capitalism profits from maintaining a biocentric order' (p. 37).

Crucially, then, how do we come to know what we know?

In analysing this question, my fundamental premise is to consider how knowledges are formalised and structured in education systems and, further, the interactions with our individual and collective positionalities (see Srivastava, 2022 for a detailed explication from which the following section of the paper heavily draws). I posit that education systems are the formal institutionalisations of the selected knowledges and values our societies privilege, who they privilege, how and on what terms. They are imbued with assumptions. These assumptions inform how systems are structured. They also frame collective and individual interactions within

systems and how individuals, and particular groups of individuals, are inserted therein.

This insertion may be better understood as framed by nonbinary dynamics across a spectrum of inclusion and exclusion, which are understood both as processes and outcomes. The multiple collectivities of social identifiers (e.g., race, gender, caste, language, religious affiliation, class affiliation, etc.) of individuals and groups of individuals structure and constrain their insertion into all areas of institutional life (Fraser, 1989; Kabeer, 2000), as in education. The specific combination of these collectivities can result in what I term 'synergistic empowerment' at one end of a spectrum; namely, the fortuitous combination of social identifiers that may be institutionally valued or privileged, and 'hard-core exclusion' (Kabeer, 2000) on the other, or 'the product of the "destructive synergies"' (Gore & Figueiredo, 1997, as cited in Kabeer, 2000) between different kinds of disadvantage.

From anticolonial and critical perspectives, we can consider that formal education systems institutionalise privileged ways of knowing through insidious processes of colonial imperialism and, most violently, through epistemicide. As I, and many others employing such perspectives have argued, a critical discursive view exposes the dualistic relational superiority of 'Western' education systems against those of the Majority World as the product of colonial and neocolonial enterprises. This enterprise rests on affixing the centrality of Stuart Hall's ([1993], 2018) classic formulation of 'the West and the Rest' and is propagated by myths on the relational superiority of 'the West'. This dynamic is rooted in the construction and legitimisation of particular knowledges and knowledge regimes, which are then taken for granted and valued over others and, thus, become dominant.

This exercise is furthered by a supporting technocratic logic for education (Lyotard, [1979], 1984) that runs simultaneously alongside positing formalised knowledges of 'the West', or legitimised through 'Western'-replicating systems, as 'more'—scientific, efficient, effective, objective, valid, reasoned—that is, as imbibing the qualities favouring the application of knowledge for technical, material and capitalistic enterprises. This is internalised by subjugated peoples within and across societies, that is, the Fourth World—by way of example, African peoples regarding Indigenous knowledges in the continent (Odora Hoppers, 2021 and this volume), Indigenous peoples' knowledges in Canada (Battiste, 2011) or tribal knowledges in India (Hall & Tandon, 2017). Borrowing from

Castells's imagery, one could picture these examples as points in a constellation of excluded knowledges of the Fourth World.

In closing, I return to my opening questioning: Why is epistemic humility provocative?

And here, I wish to have a conversation.

ON THE PROACTIVENESS OF EPISTEMIC HUMILITY: BACKSTORY TO THE CONVERSATION

'Write it like you said it'.

That suggestion unlocked it.

The backstory begins with the genesis of the commissioned paper. The conceptual ideas were too many, too complex, too intertwined and meant to be written for too visible an outlet, all of which plagued me with writer's block.

It was the first time in my academic career, stretching back to when I was a student, that I began the work of deep conceptual writing through oral story. It is strange for the descendant of a rich ancient oral tradition to be divorced from such a way of knowing and learning. However, during the processes of further developing my ideas on epistemic humility, reading works by anticolonial, diasporic, Black and Indigenous scholars and presenting my ideas, it became clearer that this self-alienation from traditional ways of knowing and knowledge sharing is perhaps not so strange when considering the ways of knowing that are valorised in dominant centres of knowledge production. This self-alienation, or 'unknowing', is perhaps what brings us closer to an orientation favouring epistemic humility: 'Unknowing does not seek or provide answers: the steady focus is, instead, on working out how to share ideas relationally' (McKittrick, 2021, p. 17).

As stated in the opening excerpt in the prologue, for me, the concept of humility is not at all provocative. It is essential to who we must be—both as academics and, more importantly, as human beings—the idea of acknowledging that *we do not know* everything, that *we cannot know* everything and that what we know is temporal and specific to a particular context at a particular point in time and space is just how it is. This is an explicitly epistemological position at once, resting on an ontological claim.

I can only begin by understanding the presupposed banality of the concept of epistemic humility from my initial perspective by saying that it is because for those of us who have been marginalised and who have

occupied positions of marginalities throughout our lives, the concept of humility is not at all provocative. We have been conditioned to be humble in *every* circumstance—in every circumstance to judge ourselves as being the Other, as not of the norm. This, I feel, instils within us an idea of humility. Or, perhaps, an idea of humility is forced upon us even when it is not in our interest, even when it may normalise inherently unequal and unjust power asymmetries. Perhaps when those who have occupied positions of latent power or of assumed relational superiority are confronted with the suggestion or the need for humility, it is decentring and challenging, resulting in deep discomfort. This may be the most explicitly experienced tension and articulation of positionalities at play.

Perhaps that is why epistemic humility, which seemed, at first consideration a most benign suggestion from my view, is in fact, provocative.

It is provocative because it is destabilising, particularly for those whose individual positionalities have largely led them to experience synergistic empowerment and, further, whose institutions have legitimised and been legitimised in the dominant knowledge systems. However, for those who occupy positionalities of marginalities, the tentative nature of knowledge claims is second nature—it is usual to have claims challenged, unaccepted and scrutinised. The process of gaining legitimacy is necessarily fraught—it is negotiated and piecemeal—with certain claims that may be accepted and others often rejected, marginalised or dismissed. Thus, humility becomes both a shield to disarm criticism and a less threatening way to engage with dominant structures in the long process of seeking acceptance of knowledge claims and of thought.

In the project to achieve epistemic justice, the overwhelming duty to practice epistemic humility is onindividuals and institutions with relational privilege to engage sincerely and across multiple imaginary lines that have been created to divide. I argue that, practising collective epistemic humility, particularly by those who have occupied valorised and legitimised positions, we may begin to reimagine education and education systems. We can start by asking deeper reflexive questions about education and knowledges—for what purposes? Based on which assumptions? Towards which values? For whom? By whom? With whom? Without whom? I submit such an exercise can identify potential windows for change, however incremental, and, if we are tenacious, enact opportunities to institute radical change.

In tandem, we must harness the collective power of marginalised and othered knowledges and ways of knowing. And, we must tell our stories.

EPILOGUE

> *So, the idea that you propose, umm, that there is power in smallness, that there is power in the 'Other', that is part of the concept of epistemic humility. And, the end goal is to reach social justice and epistemic justice. Without these ideas, without questioning those assumptions of the university as the Ivory Tower that holds all the questions, we cannot 'rage against the machine', we cannot 'fight the power' – we cannot do it. And so, really when we talk about institutions … institutions for new institutional theorists are the rules of the game. They are what structure our human interactions, both informally and formally. Who devises the institutions? Who is part of the institution? We create those institutions. That's us […] institutions are the collective learned processes that we formalise. And, who does that? WE do. If we decide that we do not want those institutions to be exclusionary or exclusive, we must appropriate different mental models. And it* ***will*** *change […] The face will change. But, it requires for us to be very open about it, and for us to make that change in the institutions that govern us.*—Prachi Srivastava, UNESCO 3rd World Higher Education Conference, Barcelona, 19 May 2022

NOTES

1. The use of the collective pronoun 'we' is meant to infer 'we' as the collective, as society, in which all of us are implicated. It is not meant to be taken in binary opposition to 'them' or connote a self/Other distinction.
2. Including myself, copanellists were Catherine Odora Hoppers (Gulu University, Uganda), Vainola Makan (Ubuntu Rural Women and Youth Movement, South Africa), Joel Samoff (Stanford University, US), introduced by Sobhi Tawil (UNESCO) and chaired by Leon Tikly (Bristol University, UK). Only primary institutional affiliations here.
3. UNESCO defines UNESCO Chairs as such: 'A UNESCO Chair is a team led by a higher education or research institution that partners with UNESCO on a project to advance knowledge and practice in an area of common priority.' A UNITWIN Network is 'a partnership between UNESCO and a network of higher education or research institutions of at least three institutions in different countries, at least two of which must be located in the Global South, and which pool their competencies and resources around particular theme(s).' (UNESCO, 9 November 2023, website, https://www.unesco.org/en/unitwin/about. Date of last access 16 May 2024.)
4. I originally took my notes in French/English. The reference provided is the official translated version of the keynote that was further developed.

5. Including myself, copanellists were, Catherine Odora Hoppers (Gulu University, Uganda), Maureen Reed (University of Saskatchewan, Canada), Rajesh Tandon (PRIA India), and Leon Tikly (Bristol University, UK), moderated by Sobhi Tawil (UNESCO). Only primary institutional affiliations here.
6. 'Visible minority' is a designated group under the *Employment Equity Act* of Canada, defined as 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour'.
7. I do not enter into ascribed caste-based discussions here, while recognising the contextual privilege it has afforded me and my ancestors. I am at the beginnings of reflexive understandings of the intersectionalities of race and caste in earlier diasporic contexts due to my own predetermined insertion in the 'Western' context of my birth, and in subsequent migrations.
8. McKittrick attributes 'diaspora literacy' to Clark (1990).

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10. How to Excavate "Good Sense" in International Educational Development: The "Middle Way" Approach to the EDU-Port Japan

Keita Takayama and Taeko Okitsu

THE "MIDDLE WAY"

Based on earlier classification work in educational policy studies (e.g., Ball, 1997; Whitty, 2002), much of the research on international educational development can be classified into two groups. The first kind is the research for international educational development, wherein researchers examine the impact of given policy interventions with a view toward offering practical suggestions to improve them. In such policy studies, researchers assess the efficacy of the interventions in terms of their goals and objectives. This also means that researchers remain within the discursive boundaries set by the policy itself, with the goals and objectives unquestioned. The practical relevance of the suggestions provided is prioritized, while more substantive questions about the very parameter of the policy, here as defined by the goals and objectives, as well as its unspoken assumptions as embedded in the policy framing, are bracketed out. The purpose of this research is to provide empirical evidence contributing to the effectiveness of the policy.

The second kind is the research *of* international educational development, or so-called "critical" social research, wherein the very assumptions and parameters of a given educational policy, as well as the wider social relations that constitute them, become the focal point of research. Here, researchers interrogate how broader social relations condition the way in which the policy frames the problem they are meant to address (Ball, 1997; Whitty, 2002). These studies are often normatively driven,

assessing the legitimacy of the policy in terms of social and educational goals derived from broader scholarly debates. Being external to the policy itself, they invite a different way of defining the problem and imagining the solutions rather than those offered by the policy. In summary, the former focuses on offering pragmatic solutions relevant to policy practitioners, while the latter focuses on unpacking the broader ideological/discursive/material context, or "the bigger picture" (Whitty, 2002), within which the policy emerges and operates.

Needless to say, few existing studies of international educational development fit either of the two classifications perfectly. The reality is that most of the studies assume some aspects of both kinds in different combinations. However, it is nonetheless important to point out that they tend to incline toward one way or another. Arguably, this has resulted in bifurcation between international education policy practitioners and critically informed researchers, despite numerous calls over the years for bridging this gap (e.g., Arnove, 2001; Heyneman, 1993; Mundy, 2023). Though the research communities of comparative and international education have long aspired to exercise influence over the direction of international educational development policies, there is a sense in the field that influential multilateral organizations and bilateral partners pay little attention to the empirical and conceptual work generated through critically informed research (e.g., Klees, 2008). An impasse has been reached, therefore, where the need to "bridge academic and practical knowledge, critical and more pragmatic approaches" is felt more than ever (Mundy, 2023, p. 5).

In our view, simultaneously aiming for policy practicality and critical reflexivity—or pursuing the "middle way"—necessitates three interrelated, nonsequential moves. First, we must perform a critical analysis of the policy; that is, assess the policy in terms of the normative criteria that are external to the policy and its framing. This is a standard practice of critical social research *of* international educational development (Hashimoto, 2017). Second, we must "stay with" the overall structure and framing of the policy, which are deemed problematic, and then try to rearticulate them in a way that pushes the discursive boundaries set by the policy structure and framing. This is done to ensure that what researchers propose will remain "within the bounds," so to speak, hence, sufficiently meaningful, if not readily doable, from a policy practitioner's point of view. It is an attempt to disarticulate the policy from its original framing and then rearticulate it into a slightly different set of goals and objectives that are more aligned with researchers' normative principles.

Doing so, however, requires that we pursue the third move, that is, to excavate "good sense" buried within the policy, that is, those aspects of the policy that seem at odds with its problematic "official" aims and objectives that, when pushed in a different direction, can be realigned with researchers' normative values. This work will necessitate that researchers look attentively to the "seeds" of alternative visions in and among the very insights offered by policy actors who are required to operate within the discursive and material boundaries set by the policy goals and objectives. This rearticulation work draws its inspiration from the Gramscian understanding of politics in social policy; any social policy constitutes a complex assemblage of multiple, often contradictory, interests and goals within it (Apple, 2006). Hence, our task as researchers is not to be blinded by the seeming smoothness fabricated through policy rhetoric and to view the policy as monolithic and ideologically coherent, but to look for rough "seams" where different elements are tentatively held together and thus can be unstitched for different articulations.

Informed by this conceptualization of the "middle way" approach, we aim to show how we practiced it as a way to address the persistent problem of the practitioner-critical scholar divide in the field of comparative and international education. That is, how we heeded those moments of "discordance" within an international educational development policy, out of which different visions and assumptions about what the policy does and what it is for can be articulated, while still staying with the policy actors' pragmatic concerns. The following discussion will be situated within the context of our recently completed, government-funded research on Japan's latest education export/international cooperation strategy, the EDU-Port Japan (the EDU-Port, hereafter).

Established in 2016 and touted as a new public-private consortium, the EDU-Port supports both for-profit and nonprofit entities to promote "Japanese-style" education internationally, particularly to the "developing" parts of the world. The EDU-Port characterizes itself an "all Japan" initiative, with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) partnering with the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO). The EDU-Port was historic in that MEXT achieved a rare alliance with METI and JETRO, the two governmental institutions mandated to promote international trade and business, in addition to the MOFA and JICA, which are MEXT's traditional partners of international educational cooperation. It was also historic in that

MEXT assumed strong leadership for the first time, not only in proactive promotion of "Japanese-style education" overseas but also in facilitating for-profit corporations' educational exports. Both of us (Keita and Taeko) were part of the research team commissioned by MEXT in 2020 to undertake a program evaluation (see Takayama et al., 2021).[1] This chapter draws upon our experience to discuss how we experimented with a research approach that aspires to address both the practicality of policy practitioners and the critical reflexivity of social researchers.

It is important to acknowledge, however, that the "middle" approach was not as explicitly formulated at the onset of our research project. It is more accurate to say that it emerged and was further articulated through the process of writing up the report and through the subsequent reflections on the whole process of undertaking the research. Since the report was submitted in the Spring of 2021, we have had many opportunities to reread the report and present some of the findings at various seminars and conferences both in and outside Japan, including those sponsored by the EDU-Port. These opportunities assisted us in recognizing and then elaborating upon the distinct research approach that had remained rather implicit at the time of conducting the research and writing the reports. The request to write a chapter for this book also encouraged us to revisit the report and engaged us back in further conversation/reflection about how we had gone about evaluating the EDU-Port and the approach we had implicitly taken. This chapter offers many of the same findings as those included in the report, but they are framed differently to demonstrate how we engaged in the "middle way" approach to international educational development research. To be truthful to the rather serendipitous nature of how we gradually "uncovered" our research approach, we have decided to make this chapter partly self-reflective.

SITUATING THE EDU-PORT

According to the policy document unveiled in the first year of its implementation, the EDU-Port aims to achieve the following three goals: 1) to contribute to Japan's economic growth by supporting Japanese edu-business's international operations; 2) to enhance Japan's soft power and diplomatic status while contributing to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD); and 3) to internationalize education in Japan through transnational education exchanges (MEXT, 2017). Notwithstanding the possible

tensions among these three goals, they are to be pursued simultaneously through the promotion of "Japanese-style" education internationally.

To this end, the scheme launched a series of publicity campaigns in and out of Japan, while numerous information-sharing seminars have been held on the "strengths" of Japanese-style education that are considered worth transferring/exporting abroad. By the time of our 2020 research, the scheme had supported nearly 55 organizations, including nonprofit organizations, universities, local school boards, and private corporations, which planned to undertake their respective pilot projects of spreading/exporting Japanese-style education to countries around the world. Most of the countries targeted were low- or middle-income countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, with the emerging economies of Southeast Asia and the Middle East being among the prime targets. The size of the EDU-Port annual budget has remained relatively small, although it has steadily increased from 63 million yen (USD 455,005) (2016) to 74 million yen (USD 534,450)[2] (2023) (MEXT, 2017, p. 2023).

Since its establishment in 2016, the EDU-Port has been critiqued by several education scholars in Japan. They typically view the EDU-Port as a national education export strategy, similar to those pursued by Finland and Singapore, which capitalize on their emerging status as new reference societies in the global education market as a result of their high rankings in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) (see Hashimoto, 2019; Hayashi, 2016). Indeed, Japan's high performance in PISA since 2009 and the recent increase in overseas attention to various aspects of Japanese schooling, including lesson studies, *tokkatsu* (a holistic model of child development in Japanese schooling), and *kosen* (a college of technologies), served as important drivers of the EDU-Port, often mentioned in official documents to legitimize the proactive transfer/export of Japanese-style education (Takayama et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the shrinking domestic education market, driven by the declining population, has propelled Japanese edu-business to actively seek overseas markets, not only in neighboring ASEAN countries but also in other parts of the world. However, they have faced fierce competition with other nations in the global education market, thus demanding government support for their overseas operations. The need for such government support has been recognized by METI (2016) in recent years.

Under the administration of late Shinzō Abe's Second and Third Cabinet (2012–2017), the Japanese government took a series of proactive

measures to promote the exportation of the "Japanese model" (*nihon-gata*) or "Japanese style" (*nihon-shiki*) not only in education but also in broader economic and social infrastructure projects, often under the label of the "Japan brand" (King, 2016). The word "Japanese style," as used in the EDU-Port, closely echoes the broader policy discourse of the Cabinet-led "Infrastructure Systems Export Strategies (*Keikyō Infura Yushutsu Senryaku*),"[3] which mostly targets ASEAN countries. It is also known that some of the private corporations that participated in the EDU-Port pilot project were lobbying for MEXT's support prior to the establishment of the EDU-Port. They were struggling to enter public education systems in developing countries, and their participation in the EDU-Port, which came with MEXT's official endorsement and sometimes with logistical support, facilitated their subsequent entry into foreign education systems (Takayama et al., 2021). Clearly, domestic economic interests were among the most powerful driving forces behind the EDU-Port; hence, the critical appraisals of the EDU-Port as nothing but a neoliberal education export strategy (see Hashimoto, 2019; Hayashi, 2016).

Although sympathetic to such critiques, we were prepared to explore the different sides of the EDU-Port that are ignored by such totalizing criticism. As discussed earlier, the EDU-Port is historic in that MEXT is taking a leadership role in international educational cooperation and education exports. We believe that MEXT's ownership of the scheme could result in a project that is qualitatively different from the typical educational development schemes pursued by aid agencies such as the JICA or from the export promotion scheme pursued by the METI and JETRO.[4] We also recognized the pedagogical potential of the MEXT commissioned report that we were about to author; the report could be read by many MEXT officials, although we were also aware that the report could be simply shelved and never looked at. At least, we knew, however, that those MEXT officials who were directly in charge of the EDU-Port, including those who were interviewed by us, would have to read our report carefully as part of their bureaucratic duties for any potential errors and omissions. Hence, we were keen to write a report that was constructively critical and hence pedagogical, a report written in a way to promote their/our renewed understanding of the EDU-Port, as well as readjustment and rethinking of its goals and objectives, both official and unofficial. Part of the strategies adopted toward this end were to listen attentively to what the officials and EDU-Port-funded actors had to say about their activities and their struggles, and explore whether

any of their statements might indicate a degree of misalignment with the stated goals and objectives. We were seeking such evidence of discordance, not to expose their glaring contradictions and inconsistencies but to locate in them a radical opening toward a different articulation of the policy, which was informed by the voices of the policy actors themselves.

In March 2021, a research team led by one of us (Keita Takayama) submitted an evaluation report on the EDU-Port to MEXT (Takayama et al., 2021). Our research—undertaken in 2020, the year seriously affected by the global pandemic—included extensive interviews with five MEXT officials who were directly involved in the initial establishment and day-to-day administration of the EDU-Port as well as seven steering committee members overseeing its operations and strategic directions, including two members who played instrumental roles in its initial gestation and representatives from the JICA, METI, and JETRO, who acted as close partners for the EDU-Port platform. We also interviewed a dozen individuals who assisted the day-to-day operation of the EDU-Port, including staff members of the consultancy firm contracted by MEXT to provide logistical support to the EDU-Port and education researchers who provided technical support to the EDU-Port in various ways. We also interviewed 12 individuals representing 10 pilot projects conducted by both for-profit and nonprofit entities (i.e., edu-business, universities, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs)). Supported by and operated under the EDU-Port scheme, these pilot projects were implemented in many different countries, including Cambodia, Egypt, India, Myanmar, Uganda, and Vietnam. Although our original research plan included participant observation at the different sites of the international pilot projects and interviews with the local people who participated in the EDU-Port-supported projects, this plan was abandoned because of the global pandemic. This constraint forced us to look closely at how the Japanese actors, ranging from the MEXT officials and the steering committee members to individual pilot project implementors, made sense of what the EDU-Port aimed to accomplish and its challenges and how their "good senses" could be identified to inform the recommendation we were to make to MEXT.

THE "TRADITION"

One of the most troubling aspects of the existing critiques of the EDU-Port is their complete disregard for the "Japanese" approach to international educational development, which is recognized internationally

(King, 2016), and the lack of serious attempts to examine the EDU-Port within this "tradition." Central to the Japanese approach to international development assistance (or "cooperation," as preferably called in Japan) is the notion of self-help, or respect for the initiatives and needs of the recipient countries. Calling it the "client-centered approach" to international development, Shimomura (2020) stresses its distinctiveness by contrasting it with the mainstream approach adopted by multilateral organizations and Western bilateral "partners," where the realization of universal ideas—such as human rights, democracy, market economy, and good governance—is assumed to benefit developing countries and, hence, the moral responsibility of the benevolent West. To put it differently, the postwar Japanese approach to international development is premised upon the rejection of the Western transcendental worldview, where it is assumed that the transcendental category (or the model of development) exists and can serve "as a prominent model to be imitated by others" (Gong et al., 2023, p. 291). As reflected in the preferred use of the term "cooperation" as opposed to "aid," the Japanese approach to international development aspires to obtain a horizontal relationship between the donor and the recipient, although this aspiration has not always been practiced on the ground.

Indeed, there seems to be a near consensus among Japanese education development practitioners and researchers that the client-centered approach was the key characteristic of Japan's international educational development scheme (see Kuroda, 2023; Kuroda, 2010; Kuroda and Kayashima, 2019; Sawamura, 2002, 2004). The approach stresses cultural relativity, client ownership, contextual differences, and awareness around the danger of imposition (*oshitsuke*) as its central features. Similarly, Sawamura (2004) contends that the Japanese approach to international educational development is distinct from that of the West in that it emphasizes mutual learning and knowledge cocreation rather than unidirectional knowledge transfer from Japan to the recipient country. According to Kuroda and Kayashima (2019), Japanese respect for recipient countries' values, wishes, aspirations, and ownership was so firmly established that many initially rejected the idea of using the Japanese experience as a resource for international educational development when it emerged as a focus of Japan's educational development strategy in the middle of the 2000s (Kuroda, 2023). *The History of Japan's Educational Development: What Implications Can Be Drawn for Developing Countries Today*, edited by JICA (2005), was arguably the first book written explicitly for this purpose. The book was so

contentious, it encouraged the editors to state explicitly in its preface that the book is not intended for transferring the Japanese experience to developing countries (Kuroda, 2023, p. 222). Many Japanese contributors to the book stressed the importance of the specific cultural and social context of Japan in understanding the educational practices within Japanese schools (e.g., Baba & Kojima, 2003, p. 272), hence indirectly warning against transferring in a mechanical fashion the Japanese experience and practices to "developing" countries.

It is important to situate Japanese context sensitivity, as expressed above, within the historical experiences of the country. Many Japanese international education development researchers and practitioners attribute this sensitivity to the following three historical experiences: 1) early modern experience of educational borrowing from the "advanced" West, 2) Japan's wartime aggression and imperialism during World War II, and 3) the postwar experience of US "imposition" in education during military occupation (1945–1952).

First, they frequently mention the country's experience of educational borrowing as part of its early modernization drive in the late nineteenth century. In its drive to establish a modern nation state to protect its sovereignty against encroaching Western powers, Japan relied heavily on Western experts to establish modern state institutions, including the education system. In particular, American educational ideas were imported directly to Japanese primary schools through the hiring of American teachers and the use of translated American school textbooks (JICA, 2005). Subsequently, Japan's modern education system underwent a series of adaptations of imported models in a way suitable for the country's cultural and social context. Sawamura (2004) argues that the Japanese approach to international educational development is rooted in the country's own modernization experience, out of which the strong conviction was formed that "no knowledge is completely free of the culture from which it came, and that seldom is knowledge globally applicable" (2004, p. 343). This same historical experience is also mentioned about the recent policy drive to use Japan's own experience—especially the experience of local adaptation—as a resource for the country's international educational assistance (Kuroda, 2008).

Second, it is often mentioned that Japanese official development aid/cooperation began partly as war compensation for the damages and losses of neighboring Asian countries in the 1960s. Consequently, the country's development assistance could not be separated from the postwar generation's deep sense of remorse toward Japan's wartime

aggression and cultural imperialism pursued through colonial education policies, hence the principle of "request-based aid" as a modus operandi of Japanese official development assistance (ODA) (Kuroda, 2010; Saito, 2019; Sawamura, 2002, 2004).[5] This historical awareness was further reinforced in the 1970s and 1980s, when Japanese ODA loan schemes were criticized by recipient countries in Asia for being "tied" to the supply of products and services from Japan, reigniting the past memory of imperial violence and, hence, widespread anti-Japanese protests (Kuroda, 2023; Saito, 2019). These experiences eventually resulted in heightened sensitivity toward nationalism and the view of education as the sovereign state's sanctity over which any foreign influence through aid programs should be avoided at all costs (Saito, 2019). In educational development policy terms, such sensitivity was translated into strong aversion toward any educational development project that interferes with the "internal" matters of education, especially in basic education (Saito, 2019), although this tradition has been relaxed in recent decades (King, 2016; Kuroda, 2023).[6]

Last, Japan's experience of the US occupation in the aftermath of World War II is also recognized as a crucial historical backdrop against which Japan's caution about possible imposition has been expressed. Although there have been a considerable number of debates within Japan in terms of how to assess the postwar educational reconstruction pursued during the US occupation (1945–1952), and the term "imposition" is often mobilized by political conservatives to delegitimize the postwar pacifist and democratic constitutional frameworks that are said to be imposed by the US, there is no doubt that many of the new reform measures instituted in the immediate aftermath of the war were driven by the interests of US reformers (Dowers, 1999). Once the occupation formally ended in 1952, many of what appeared to the Japanese government to be exceedingly liberal and decentralizing policies were terminated for political and pragmatic reasons. Herein, a lesson about education policy borrowing emerges: the danger of policy imposition and the importance of local context and adaptation. According to Nakazato (2020, p. 19), this experience of having one's own education system radically reshaped by the occupation has acted as a reminder for Japanese practitioners and researchers about the danger of imposition and the need for contextual sensibility (see also Kuroda, 2010; Saito, 2019). In sum, Japan's experience as a non-Western "late developer," coupled with the past experience of war aggression and war defeat, as well as its subsequent history of foreign aid initiated partly as postwar compensation, form a crucial

historical backdrop against which to understand Japanese sensitivity to the danger of imposition and cultural imperialism as well as to contextual difference—or what Kuroda (2010, p. 93) calls "the reserved attitude"—in international educational transfer.

When writing the evaluation report on the EDU-Port, this historical backdrop was important to us; hence, we foregrounded it as the crucial historical backdrop out of which the particularly sensitive approach to international development and education emerged in Japan, defining it as "the Japanese tradition" (Takayama et al., 2021). We did this because we wanted to remind MEXT officials of this arguably "admirable" tradition (King, 2016, p. 17), which some observers consider as rapidly diminishing over the last decade or so (Kuroda, 2023; Shimomura, 2020). In retrospect, we now realize that we were exploring the extent to which this "tradition" remained as part of the vocabularies that various EDU-Port actors, ranging from MEXT officials to pilot project implementors, used to discuss what they had done and why, and how their awareness and enactment of the Japanese "tradition" might have caused tensions with the EDU-Port's explicit goals and objectives. To put it differently, we were interested in identifying the rough "seams" in the policy from which its alternative potentials could be articulated. We also realize that this tradition echoes strongly with the recent philosophical works of Noriyuki Hashimoto (2017, 2019) on the ethics of international educational development. Although we drew upon his work in our evaluation report (Takayama et al., 2021), we were not as cognizant of the connection between his normative discussion around ethics and the historical context of international educational development in Japan.

"HESITATION" IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Central to Noriyuki Hashimoto's (2017, 2019) normative discussion of ethics in international educational development is the notion of hesitation—that is, the ability, on the part of those who offer international development assistance, to doubt and critically reflect upon what they do. Hashimoto draws extensively upon postcolonial and feminist thinkers, including Spivak and Chow, along with Japanese philosophers influenced by postcolonial and feminist works. His theoretical exposition begins with an open admission that international educational development work is inherently unethical in two senses. In the first sense, education is fundamentally unethical, as it presumes uneven relations

between those who educate and those who are educated. Those who are in the position to teach enjoy the privilege of deciding upon what to teach and how, hence making teacher–student relationships "unidirectional" (p. 309). Although the students can resist and negotiate what is on offer to a degree, it does not abate the asymmetry of the teacher–student relationship; it is a relationship necessarily premised upon the assumption of students' deficiency, which justifies intervention in the first place. Furthermore, Hashimoto (2017) stresses the inherently "irreversible" nature of education: Once taught, students can no longer return to their state of being before being taught, pointing to the virtually unidirectional flow of influence in pedagogical work. Confronted with the fundamentally unethical conditions required for education to take place, Hashimoto (2017) concludes that the very condition of education, asymmetricity, denies any possibility that education can be ethical (p. 324). For Hashimoto, then, the only way for education to be ethically practiced is when it is pursued with strong reflexivity about the very possibility that education cannot be ethical. To put it differently, "the act of teaching must be trusted and questioned at the same time" (p. 324); we try to educate others while remaining vigilant to its inherent unethicality.

Then, Hashimoto (2017) explores the unethicality of international educational development in the second sense. Here, he draws on the postcolonial and feminist literature on positionality to illuminate the problem. He begins by clarifying what the concept of positionality entails; it refers to the positionalities of collective entities, as opposed to individuals, that are historically and relationally constituted, including the First World (and the Third World), the developed (and the underdeveloped), and the West (and the Rest). Such relational concepts are hierarchically positioned, empowering and disempowering those assigned to specific positionalities. What is important to stress here is that positionalities are historical and discursive products; hence, people cannot choose which positionalities they assume. Instead, they are automatically assigned to us by virtue of where and when we are born. Whether one likes it or not, therefore, we are automatically positioned in a relational web of asymmetricities, privileged and underprivileged depending on how we are positioned within the local, national, and global relations that are intersected by gender, "race," class, sexuality, disability, and so forth. Hashimoto carefully distinguishes the notion of positionality from identification, which, as he argues, can be picked or unpicked at one's will, and the distinction becomes relevant later to his discussion of who can speak for whom under what circumstances in international development.

The notion of positionality, thus articulated, is relevant to the ethics of international development because the aid donor-recipient relationship is largely shaped by the positionalities mentioned above: the First versus Third World, the developed versus underdeveloped, and the West versus the Rest. Indeed, as those who are part of the developed world, "we" are positioned to influence what is good for "them" through the kind of material, institutional, and economic resources that "we" can, intentionally or unintentionally, mobilize in shaping international development policy discourses. And there is no way for "us" to unpick this historically constituted positionality. This raises a serious question as to whether "we" can ever know what the "real" interests and needs of those in developing countries are and whether "we" can legitimately represent them. The inherent asymmetry in international development, however, does not lead to a hasty conclusion, either that "we" should withdraw from international educational development work, maintains Hashimoto (2017). Opting out is not an option, because it simply invites someone else who pays far less attention to these ethical issues to take over developmental work and potentially cause more irreparable harm (Hashimoto, 2017, p. 71). Then, the only ethically defensible option is to acknowledge in the first place the uneven relationship as the very condition for international educational development work and then exercise strong reflexivity about how one's positionality both enables and disables her/his relationship with those "in need."

In sum, Hashimoto's discussion drills down to what he calls *chuucho* and *shunjun* in Japanese, or hesitation in English. Both education and international development are acts of hubris by those in the dominant positionalities; both education and international development legitimize themselves by problematizing "their" present state of being and by unilaterally defining "them" as being in need of "our" assistance. It is assumed that "they" can be educated/developed further so that "they" can be in a more desirable state of being (p. 88). The unidirectional and irreversible nature of education requires "us" to remain permanently vigilant to the potential damages and violence committed through "our" good will as well as to the possibility of other ways of being and knowing that are made inaccessible by "our" interjections.

In a later publication, Hashimoto (2019) applies his normative discussion of ethics in international educational development to his critical assessment of the EDU-Port. Drawing on the critiques of cultural imperialism and colonial relations by Sakai, Spivak, and Thomlinson, among others, Hashimoto (2019) delineates a normative standard by which the

EDU-Port's attempt to export Japanese-style education can be assessed. In his view, the EDU-Port can be pursued ethically only when its act of exporting Japanese education overseas actively disrupts what cultural imperialism promotes; that is, the reification and false universalization of the Japanese self. Cultural imperialism establishes the putative notion of the West as the normative standard upon which the "civility" of Others is judged. To put it differently, cultural imperialism appropriates the Otherness of Others as an instrumental resource to reinforce the self-identification of the West as a pure, unified, and superior entity. Henceforth, the symbolic violence of cultural imperialism is inflicted through its rearticulation of the quasi-universalization of the self and its associated hubris as a form of human "salvation."

It is these forces of cultural imperialism that the EDU-Port would need to actively resist to enact its ethicality, maintains Hashimoto (2019). That is, the EDU-Port would have to demonstrate how its act of promoting Japanese-style education disrupts its preconceived notion of the desirable self through the "emergence of otherness within" (Hashimoto, 2017, p. 7). Here, otherness refers to negativity, or the aspects of Japanese education that are considered "failures" or "unresolved problems" (p. 10). Only with a critical reflection on its own negativities could the EDU-Port become an adequately "hesitant" and an ethically defensible project. Hashimoto (2019) sees no sign of hesitation in the official description of the EDU-Port, arguing that it is likely to fail to distinguish itself from the hubris of cultural imperialism. Although we disagree with Hashimoto's sweeping critique, we embrace as part of our analytical lens his normative discussion around ethics in international education development.

Having reviewed Hashimoto's discussion far more carefully and extensively than in the evaluation report, we can now recognize how his normative discussion lends clarity to what we were trying to pursue and achieve in the evaluation report. His work has helped us reappreciate the earlier discussion of the history of international educational development in Japan. It is no longer just a background historical context that informs our evaluation study; rather, it has formed part of our conceptual lens through which we could reassess the interview data. It has helped us make a better sense of what we were trying to achieve in the interviews; that is, to dig deep into interviewees' hesitation about what the EDU-Port aimed to achieve and what they had done in the targeted countries, so we could begin to reap its ethical potential.

In what follows, we revisit the actual interview data, including those used in our evaluation report, to explore how we invited the interviewees

to engage with ethical questions as articulated by Hashimoto. We also reengage with the data to show how we used interviews as pedagogical opportunities to prompt the interviewees to reflect upon their respective international cooperation/development projects and to engage with the kind of ethical questions in which we were only implicitly interested. Finally, as a way to provisionally conclude our discussion, we turn the question of ethics back on us and share our own hesitation about the policy recommendations we presented to the MEXT and the unresolved dilemma caused by our "middle way" approach to the EDU-Port.

LOCATING THE "TRADITION": EDU-PORT LEADERS

Hesitation is not something one would expect to witness when interviewing those who are leading an international educational development/cooperation project. However, we were struck by the number of times that the MEXT officials and EDU-Port steering committee members (hereafter, the EDU-Port leaders) expressed their sense of hesitation about the notion of educational export/transfer. We were baffled because it was not something we expected after closely examining the EDU-Port's published policy documents. The MEXT official, Ms. M, who was reassigned to a different division within MEXT at the time of the interview, was involved in the initial gestation of the EDU-Port. She explained to us the general lack of interest among MEXT officials in promoting Japanese education internationally. When further probed by us, she offered the following explanation:

> I am not sure what it is, but it is probably the sense of remorse about cultural imperialism (during the wartime). It is difficult to describe it, but there is a sense of hesitation among MEXT officials about promoting what is good about Japanese education internationally, let alone the idea of spreading Japanese cultural things internationally or to education systems overseas, though I am not too sure about politicians. (…)

What she expressed here was remarkably consistent with the Japanese "tradition," as reviewed earlier. Indeed, Ms. M was not the only MEXT official who spoke about some sense of hesitation within the Ministry. Mr. O was another MEXT official who was in charge of the EDU-Port at the time of our interview and who was assigned to work for the EDU-Port two years after Ms. M left. In the following quote, Mr. O responds to our question about the danger of possible imposition of values:

> We have repeatedly said to the (EDU-Port grantee) organizations that "they cannot simply copy and paste the Japanese education system, because education is closely linked with the country's tradition and culture, its DNA. Please be mindful of this point." There were some grantees who simply thought that they could copy what we do in Japan and that it would achieve wonderful results. However, that is not what the EDU-Port is about (…). The essence of the EDU-Port is truly about understanding what works in Japan and its contents.

From Mr. O's point of view, the EDU-Port is a means to access the renewed self-understanding through trying out Japanese educational practices outside Japan. Particularly highlighted in this quote is his understanding of education as a country's "DNA," which speaks to the notion of education as a sovereign state's sanctity, as discussed in the earlier review of Japan's international educational development.

The same sense of caution about imposition and focus on self-learning was elaborated on by Education Professor D, who served as one of the core members of the EDU-Port steering committee. Professor D was approached by MEXT officials, who were developing the original idea for the EDU-Port in 2015. Since then, he has been involved in the EDU-Port as one of the steering committee members, acting as the MC or keynote speaker for a number of symposiums and events held and sponsored by the EDU-Port. In response to our question about what distinguishes the EDU-Port from international educational development work by the JICA or education export projects by the METI/JETRO, Professor D has the following to say:

> I understand that the significance of the EDU-Port is to rethink (*toinaosu*) Japanese education. If you tell them (aid recipients) that "Japanese education is wonderful, so you should try it, too," then, it is cultural imperialism, isn't it? Instead, we are going to have Japanese education practiced there, by a different country, and with that comes an opportunity to rethink (what we do). That is like looking at ourselves with two mirrors, one in front and the other behind us. We get to learn what is excellent (about Japanese education) and what is otherwise (not so excellent). Through such an experience, we can begin to rethink our own education. I truly believe that this is the key rationale for MEXT implementing this project, and it is precisely why I decided to get involved in it in the first place.

Hence, there was remarkable consistency in the way the EDU-Port leaders stressed the importance of a cautious approach to education exports that fully respects the contextual differences and the danger of imposition.

In the report, we situated these statements within a broader overview of the history of Japan's international aid/cooperation and called it the Japanese "tradition." Interestingly, this tradition was hardly reflected in the three official policy objectives of the EDU-Port mentioned earlier, except that one of the objectives (internationalization of Japanese education) indicated mutual learning and self-reflection in a limited sense. We asked ourselves whether we could take the EDU-Port leaders' words at face value. Is there any chance that they would speak to each other before the interviews so that they could communicate a consistent message to us? Although the doubt remained in us, we were also impressed by the passion and sincerity with which they spoke about these concerns. In the end, we decided to capitalize on the dissonance created by the gap between their expressed hesitation and the explicit goals and objectives of the policy. We highlighted the dissonance in the report not as evidence of glaring contradictions for which the EDU-Port should be criticized, but as a radical opening for different articulations of what the EDU-Port could represent. After interviewing the core members at the top bureaucratic level, we proceeded to interview the representatives of the organizations funded or endorsed by the EDU-Port to determine whether a similar sense of hesitation and self-doubt could be excavated from the interviews.

EXCAVATING "GOOD SENSE": THE EDU-PORT PILOT PROJECTS

Most of the 11 organizations supported by the EDU-Port that we interviewed barely expressed any sense of hesitation in discussing their experiences. Many of the interviewees remained convinced of the superiority of whatever the Japanese educational practice or system that they were meant to transfer to the targeted countries, whether in the training system or primary, secondary, or higher education systems. They justified their interventions on the presumption of the "deficiencies" they identified in the targeted country's population or in the education systems. For instance, Mr. S represented a Japanese edu-business company supported by the EDU-Port to implement Japanese-style dietary education (*Shokuiku*) in Vietnam, including student lunch serving. He described how Vietnamese children suffer from obesity because of the lack of pedagogical attention given to what students eat at home and at school. The project provided him with opportunities to work closely with Japanese nutrition experts and dietary educators to develop an intimate

understanding of how Japanese pedagogy around food and nutrition works in schools. Having witnessed how positively his pilot project was received by local children and educators, he became even firmer in his conviction about Japanese superiority: "Japan has developed such an incredibly well-developed dietary education program, and it should be promoted around the world." To many organizations we interviewed, the act of exporting Japanese-style education overseas simply resulted in a false universalization of the Japanese self as a source of "best practice."

As discussed earlier, however, we were more interested in identifying a good sense or any indication of ethics or hesitation in their cross-national cooperation/export activities. To this end, we asked a series of questions in the interviews that were meant to prompt them to reflect critically on any possible contradictions and dangers in their benign activities. Although they were not frequent, there were more than a few moments in our interviews where our questions indeed engaged the interviewees in serious rethinking of some of the assumptions about "Japanese-style education," which remained unquestioned until we interviewed them. Professor M's EDU-Port pilot project, for instance, aimed at transferring Japanese-style physical education to Uganda. Previously, he worked as a technical advisor to JICA volunteers who were dispatched as PE teachers to primary and secondary schools in low-income countries. In explaining his original impetus for the EDU-Port project, Professor M painted a bleak picture of the situation in Uganda, describing the physical condition of the schools and student bodies as "underdeveloped," discussing how the tradition of physical education practice from Japan could benefit the people in Uganda.

During the interview, we attempted to encourage Professor M to rethink the unproblematized narrative of international aid and the asymmetry embedded in the narrative. In particular, we encouraged him to discuss what he had learned from the experience, including any opportunities to rethink the Japanese pedagogy of physical education. After some pause, Professor M started telling us about the model class that one invited Ugandan teacher taught at a Japanese primary school in Tokyo, where the teacher made full use of popular music as he was introducing different types of preparatory physical activities at the beginning of the lesson. Professor M confessed that the idea of using music in physical education was not common in Japanese schools, and he was impressed by how much fun the Japanese students were having in the lesson. Then, upon our further prompts, he shared a critical reflection on Japanese physical education, questioning the overly regimented and controlling

nature of class instructions. He openly questioned whether the highly structured nature of instruction in Japan could breed conformity and suffocate individual differences. Although it is unclear whether this new awareness resulted in a sustained form of critical reflection that subsequently forced him to alter the nature of his project, it was evident that his initial conviction about the superiority of Japanese practice was disrupted during our conversation.

Mr. T was the director of a NPO established to promote *Undokai*, the athletic carnival practiced in Japanese schools. The NPO was closely affiliated with a for-profit company also directed by Mr. T, which trades a range of school athletic equipment, including that commonly used in the *Undokai*. Hence, we were unsure of the genuineness of its NPO status. The NPO applied for EDU-Port funding to introduce *Undokai* to a school and a community in India. Mr. T's narrative followed a predictable, similarly dismissive description of the state of physical education activities and the overall educational experiences in India. Once again, we tried, very carefully and subtly, to raise a few questions, prompting him to trouble the asymmetricity underpinning the narrative.

Over the course of the conversation, Mr. T gradually developed a more refined understanding of what *Undokai* represented to him. At the onset of the conversation, he struggled to answer our question about the uniqueness of *Undokai*. Then, we asked him to talk about the challenges he encountered in implementing *Undokai* in India. One of the challenges was that the participants became too competitive, trying to win the races at all costs and, consequently, creating tensions among the participants. He explained that he had to repeatedly remind the participants that *Undokai* is not just about winning but, more importantly, about team building and cooperation as well as respecting the rules of the games. It was through describing the challenges to us that he was able to discuss what makes *Undokai* pedagogically unique and thus distinct from a mere sports competition event. Later in the conversation, he was much more articulate about the distinct features of *Undokai* when asked the same question.

Then, toward the end of the interview, we prompted him to talk about how *Undokai* is practiced in Japanese schools today. In response, he explained that he had been deeply troubled by the way *Undokai* was practiced in Japan and that few teachers knew the true "essence" of *Undokai*. Then he stated, "In a way, I am trying to promote *Undokai* internationally so that when Japanese people realize that it is now practiced in many countries around the world, they could finally appreciate

what it represents and hence take it more seriously." Herein lies a critical reflection in which the "negativity" of *Undokai*, as currently practiced in Japanese schools, is acknowledged. Notably, Mr. T now reverses the aid giver (teacher)-aid recipient (student) relationship; now, Japanese people are positioned as those who need to learn from international participants who appreciate and practice *Undokai* as it should be. Once again, we wondered how literally we should accept his statements, given that his crusade to promote *Undokai* internationally could benefit his company financially. However, the sincerity, passion, and thoughtfulness with which he spoke to us ultimately persuaded us to push aside such concerns.

THE REPORT

Our report to MEXT pointed out two contradictory tendencies among the EDU-Port grantees. One tendency was to enact cultural imperialism as defined by Hashimoto (2019); the EDU-Port grantees ended up experiencing false universalization of the Japanese self or unquestioned belief in the universal good of Japanese educational systems and practices, which is underpinned by the presumption of deficiencies in the targeted country. The other was to enact ethics by engaging in self-doubt and allowing negativity to emerge in their understanding of the Japanese practices that they were meant to transfer. The former breeds hubris among the EDU-Port actors, while the latter breeds hesitation and thoughtful reflection on their part. Focusing too much on the hubris side will make our report too scathingly critical and perhaps irrelevant for MEXT, while focusing too much on hesitation will let the EDU-Port "off the hook," so to speak. Our challenge in writing the report was to strike an appropriate balance so that our messages could be delivered in a way that would be consistent with our normative stance while at the same time be constructively meaningful to the EDU-Port actors.

Ultimately, we focused our recommendations on what changes could be introduced to the EDU-Port so that it could honor and build on MEXT's and/or Japan's "tradition" without suggesting radical changes to the structure and design of the policy. We recommended various ways in which opportunities could be created for grantees to reflect critically on their activities and share their doubts and hesitations among the EDU-Port actors and with the broader public (Takayama et al., 2021). We did not recommend that the EDU-Port reconsider the three policy aims, nor did we advocate for the removal of for-profit actors and the termination

of MEXT's financial and symbolic support for their profit-seeking activities overseas. We knew that these recommendations would not fly well, given that MEXT would need the rare multiministerial partnership with powerful METI, which would demand this support for corporate actors.

"HESITANT" CONCLUSION

In the present paper, we have revisited our recent research project on Japan's education export scheme and explored how the "middle way"—both practicality and critical reflexivity—can be pursued in researching international education development projects. The "middle way" approach was not part of our original research plan but, rather, emerged through a series of post-research discussions and reflections between us. We now see this approach as one possible strategy to narrow the persistent gap between policy practitioners and critical policy researchers in the field of education policy and comparative and international education. Having constantly revisited the report after its public release has encouraged us to make sense of what we did back then and what new insights can be drawn from the experience. What has transpired through our post-research dialog is that we actually used interviews to promote participants' deep reflection about the ethicality of their acts. We can now recognize how our questions prompted the interviewees to engage in the kind of critical reflections that Hashimoto (2017, 2019) considered the condition for ethics in international educational development.

In retrospect, however, we feel that doing all this was somehow made easier by a certain shift in our purpose over the course of the interview. It was a shift from trying to expose the EDU-Port's unethicality toward excavating their good senses and using them as a potential resource for our constructive feedback. The shift required us to abandon our usual stance as a critical social researcher, including taking a moral high ground over policy actors and judging (and often dismissing) their thoughts and actions. Instead, we came to terms with—and eventually embrace—the assumption that anyone involved in international educational development work would have to experience a degree of moral and ethical ambivalence and dilemma, though these might not be brought to their consciousness in the first place. From this perspective, our job as researchers is to assist them in articulating their often fleeting sense of discombobulation and hesitation. Once we accepted this view, it was only a short step away from reconceptualizing our research as an act of "excavating" good sense.

We do not know exactly how the shift took place. Nor were we cognizant of the shift while undertaking the research. It was brought to the fore only after we revisited the interview data and further reflected upon the entire research process while writing this chapter. Learning about Japan's "tradition" in international educational development certainly prepared us to seek good sense in the EDU-Port. The relationships and rapport that we established with the MEXT officials through extensive interviews certainly contributed to this shift, too. However, by far the most significant source of influence was passion, sincerity, and thoughtfulness, with which many EDU-Port leaders and grantees spoke to us about their activities. We might be too optimistic here, but we began to see potential in the EDU-Port as an alternative international educational cooperation project striving to "do development" differently (see Gong et al., 2023).

All this does not mean at all that we, as the researchers, can be exempt from the very demand for the ethics/hesitation we placed upon the EDU-Port. Indeed, it seems utterly unethical not to talk about how we struggled to resist the temptation to falsely universalize ourselves through research work. By keeping our recommendations within the discursive and material boundaries set by the policy, did we not obscure more problematic aspects of the EDU-Port, including the fact that MEXT now supports for-profit corporations' overseas business expansion? By foregrounding the hesitations expressed by the EDU-Port leaders and pilot project implementors, did we not let them off the hook? Indeed, at a public forum held after our evaluation report was released, one of the steering committee members referred to our report as if it had been a validation of "what we have been doing." Clearly, it is a truncated reading of our report, but were we not complicit in creating the possibility of such "misreading"? Is there no chance that the core aim of the EDU-Port was to support corporate overseas operations, and does it camouflage its true intent by including a dozen NPOs, universities, and local school boards?

Furthermore, a question should be raised as to whether we sufficiently practiced ethicality in the process of conducting our research. In our attempt to "excavate" good sense in the EDU-Port, did we not judge research participants' ethicality on the basis of our unilateral moral standard and normative values? By adopting the "middle way" approach, we intended our research to be "pedagogical" by providing constructive feedback to the EDU-Port leaders. However, would not it be considered an act of enlightening "others" by reproducing the asymmetry between the researcher and the researched? Although we found it difficult to

defend our research against such critiques, we noticed how the asymmetry between "us" as researchers and "them" as the researched had been disrupted through our research work. As demonstrated in this chapter, the research process caused major shifts in our research focus and approach in response to what we had learned from the participants. Hence, we were "taught" how to open ourselves up to a different articulation of ourselves and our project. Our experience confirms the view that knowing (or researching) necessarily involves a degree of disruption, which is a necessary condition for self-transformation or self-overcoming, or, to put it simply, "to be taught" (see Biesta, 2013; Takayama, 2020).

As demonstrated in the chapter, Japan's particular historical experience has shaped the noticeably "humble" approach to international educational development. It could be argued, then, that postwar Japan was a particularly fertile ground for ethical sensibilities in international educational development. However, the relatively recent experiences of war aggression, devastation, and defeat are not particular to Japan, and the insights gained from Japan's experience assume particular significance in light of the emerging international educational development landscape wherein non-Western, formerly colonized nations, including China, India, and South Korea, have begun to play more prominent roles (see King, 2013). Japan's experience should encourage us to observe how the historical experiences of these non-Western countries might inform their approaches to international educational development, and how their participation in multilateral schemes might reshape the broader discourse around development and ethics. The exploration of educational cooperation initiatives that do not necessarily embrace the Western Enlightenment paradigm might help us better address the persistent bifurcation between critical social research and international education policy practitioners, which is widely recognized in the field.

Finally, it remains to be seen to what extent the Japanese "hesitant" approach to international educational development will remain as the "tradition" under the rapidly changing global and domestic aid policy landscapes. We have already witnessed the Cabinet Office's increasing demands for private sector involvement and Japan's proactive participation in global norm setting, both of which are fueled partly by the rise of China's international presence. The "tradition" is also under growing pressure to conform to the global standards guided by SDG4's 2030 goals, where the progress toward those goals is to be measured by global learning metrics. When the Western transcendental worldview dictates the global discourse of international educational development (Gong et

al., 2023), would there be space left for the Japanese "tradition" at all? Coming to this point, we have now realized that it was this sense of urgency that drove us to stay away from the sweeping criticism of the EDU-Port in the first place. Instead, we thought we should try to excavate "good sense" in this education export scheme so that we can bring to the fore "the tradition" that MEXT officials and those involved in the project must honor. Reflecting on our work three years ago has made us realize the extent to which this very circumstance guided many of our decisions during the research, including the decision to explore the "middle way" approach. Writing this chapter in English is a bit like what Mr. T was doing with the international promotion of *Undokai*, which, in his view, was standing at a crossroads, to gain overseas recognition of the Japanese "tradition" so that it can be resuscitated at home.

NOTES

1. The Terms of Reference for our commissioned research was "to identify the achievements and challenges of the EDU-port pilot projects conducted between 2017 and 2020 and verify the kind of 'Japanese-style education' that can be effectively transferred overseas as well as to identify contributing factors and obstacles to overseas expansion" (MEXT, 2020).
2. Exchange rate (1USD = 138.46 Yen) for 24 May 2023 is used.
3. "Infrastructure Systems Export Strategy" was one of the flagship policies of the Second Abe administration's proactive economic diplomacy, aiming to end Japan's prolonged economic stagnation and to adopt a more assertive foreign policy at a time of growing power of China (Yoshimizu, 2017). The overseas expansion of Japanese-style education was explicitly incorporated in the revised strategic plan in 2016 as essential elements to contribute to the development of human resources required for Japan's overseas infrastructure projects (Cabinet Office, 2016).
4. METI and JETRO similarly launched another education export scheme under their "Future Classrooms" program in 2020, which specifically aims to expand Japanese EdTech firms' overseas operation.
5. However, in 2023 the government announced a plan to move away from the principle of "request-based aid" toward "offer-type aid," where Japan is to act more proactively to leverage its "strengths" in international aid (see MOFA, 2023).
6. In assessing the revised Development Cooperation Charter of 2015, King (2016) identifies the following three features; 1) the emerging narratives of "soft power" and Japan's "proactive role" in international cooperation, 2) the emphasis on universal values such as freedom, democracy, and

respect for human rights, and 3) the promotion of private sector involvement in international development. All these indicate to King (2016) a break away from Japan's traditional aid principles of self-help.

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PART IV

Conclusion

11. Conclusion: Reflections and Provocations on De/colonising Development and Education

Kathryn Moeller

I am humbled to reflect on this collection of essays on the theme of de/colonising development and education by colleagues whose work I consciously and unconsciously draw on in this reflection and my broader work (Lucas, 2013). In doing so, I am building on opportunities I had to speak alongside the authors in this volume at UKFIET in Oxford, UK, in September 2023 and the annual meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society in Miami, USA, in March 2024. I hope that my reflection builds on my colleagues' chapters to illuminate the ways in which the existing hegemonic structures of education and international development distort our collective possibilities for shared thriving and freedom while also creating a terrain of struggle for more just visions of the world and opportunities for repair.

WHERE I AM SPEAKING AND WRITING FROM

When one speaks and writes, one does so from a place on the map, a place in history, and a place in the geopolitical and sociocultural order of things. One also does so from their embodied, situated positions within these relations of forces. I write this reflection from the University of Cambridge in the UK, an institution that has been, and continues to be, at the heart of empire, colonisation, development, and epistemic violence worldwide. Cambridge is what scholars Piya Chatterjee and Sunaina Maira (2014) call an imperial university, like so many universities in the UK, the US, and other Global North countries.

Thus, in many ways, it is problematic to speak from Cambridge (or Oxford University, where UKFIET was held) about de/colonising

education and international development, particularly from my position within it as a class-privileged White scholar from the US and trained there, since the physical, virtual, and metaphoric chasms between these medieval-colonial-modern universities and communities around the world seem insurmountably wide by design. Thus, when I speak and write about the uneven relations of power within education and development, it is from this contradictory position within these relations of forces. To note these contradictions, as Alexandra Allweiss generously suggested to me, I use the forward slash when writing de/colonial and de/colonising to represent the slipperiness and non-binary nature between the decolonial and the colonial.

As a critical feminist scholar, I study the relationships among capitalism, de/coloniality, international development, and education. Over the past 15 years, I have studied two problem spaces in the political economy of education and development that illuminate the tensions, contradictions, and harms of practices and policies in these intersecting fields. I draw an understanding of capitalism that accounts for the historical and present-day forces of racial and gendered capitalism and the inequities that capitalism produces and relies on. As geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2020) explained, 'capitalism requires inequality, and racism enshrines it'. Furthermore, as is known, racism is deeply co-formed, using Paola Bacchetta's (2007) concept of co-formations, with relations of power like heteropatriarchy, ableism, Islamophobia, and anthropocentrism, among other forms of power, that influence education and development policy and practice.

The first problem space I study is global investment in girls and women's education and economic development by transnational corporations like Nike, Goldman Sachs, and Exxon Mobil in partnership with development institutions. I have written about this in my 2018 book, *The Gender Effect: Capitalism, Feminism and the Corporate Politics of Development*, where I argue that through 'corporatised development' programmes and policies, poor Black and Brown girls and women in the Global South have become sites for expanding the frontiers of corporate profit and the terrain of capitalism itself in the name of 'gender equity' (Moeller, 2018, p. 23).

The second problem space I explore is venture capital (VC) investment in education technology (edtech) companies. My current book project, *Silicon Futures: How Silicon Valley Venture Capitalists are Shaping Education around the World*, examines how VCs are funding, profiting from, and losing vast quantities of money without the public ever

knowing – despite public funds and development money being used to purchase these technologies that are used in classrooms and schools worldwide, often as part of development programmes and partnerships with ministries, NGOs, foundations, and other development institutions. This use of public funds and development money is occurring despite well-documented concerns regarding the 'discriminatory designs' built into these technologies, to use Ruha Benjamin's (2019) language, the harvesting of data from consumers, the surveillance of users and communities, the exploitation of precarious labourers powering AI and machine learning, and the environmental extraction necessary for technological production and use.

Together, these problem spaces provide insight into the uneven power relations among unequally positioned and resourced social and institutional actors and the deleterious effects of these power relations on marginalised individuals and communities.

With global investment in girls' education and edtech as my empirical points of reference, I will briefly attempt to summarise the problem space my colleagues discussed in this volume.

THE COLONIALITY OF GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Coloniality as an enduring epistemic, ontological, and material structure has persisted long after colonial administrations were replaced by new nation-states, development institutions, and transnational corporations within the post-war system (Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015). Birthed out of dying European colonialism, the desire was to develop a global governance and development structure, with new institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations, that still allowed these empires political-economic and sociocultural influence and/or control over formerly colonised, newly independent nations.

These development institutions were designed from their inception, at least in part, to serve the interests of global capital, with corporations positioned as one of development's primary beneficiaries. The roots of their privileged position originated in the birth of modern capitalism and centuries of colonial empires in which corporations and the state were deeply embedded within one another (Goldman, 2005). Some of the world's first and most powerful transnational corporations include the Royal African Company and the East India Company, which profited from the enslavement of African peoples at the service and to the

benefit of the British monarchy and state and the university where I work (University of Cambridge, 2022).

As a result of this historical embeddedness, from their inception, corporations were recipients of the development regime's lucrative contracts to build dams and highways – the inheritors of privatised public sector services, such as water, sanitation, and energy, as a result of loan conditionalities in structural adjustment programmes or, more broadly, the beneficiaries of economic growth strategies favouring corporate interests and global financial integration (Peet, 2003). However, corporations were minimally involved in the everyday processes of designing, funding, branding, marketing, and executing development programmes and policies. These processes were principally conducted by multilateral and bilateral organisations and NGOs.

Today, as Dinah Rajak (2011) explained, they are both – development's primary beneficiaries *and* some of its principal architects. As I show in my research on global investment in girls' education and edtech, since the beginning of the new millennium, US-based transnational corporations and their powerful foundations have become increasingly influential actors in the development regime. They have forged relationships with traditional development institutions to implement programmes and policies focused on a broad array of issues, including education, the environment, health, infrastructure, technology, and finance. In my book *The Gender Effect,* I identified this phenomenon as an instantiation of *corporatised development*, which I define as the practices, processes, and power relations of corporations and corporate foundations operating in and through the institutionalised regime of power of the post-World War II project of international development embedded within broader historical processes of capitalism. In this way, corporatised development is an articulation of the post-World War II project of international development and the ongoing, uneven processes of capitalist development as they are historically embedded within (post)colonial relations (Hart, 2002). On the one hand, corporatised development represents the still emergent yet disproportionate weight of corporate actors in funding, advocating, designing, implementing, and branding development practices, programmes, and policies in the new millennium (Rajak, 2011). On the other hand, it signifies the use of business logic and strategies in solving development problems. These include an emphasis on market-based rationales for development interventions, the measurement of rates of return in terms of direct and indirect benefits to business, the branding and marketing of development populations and projects (Moeller, 2018),

and the contemporary datafication of education, as Radhika Gorur and Minoli Wijetunga discussed in this volume.

As global stability is also considered a prerequisite for capitalist growth and corporate profit, the institutions of this post-World War II order were also tasked with ensuring security and human rights – specifically through the creation of the United Nations Security Council, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the International Criminal Court (ICC). In the wake of the Holocaust, which had unleashed the horrors of European white supremacy on those who were Jewish, Roma, and disabled, and those who politically dissented from the Nazi regime, among others, these institutions were intended to protect the world from yet another genocide. However, these institutions maintained the underlying logic of European white supremacy and racial hierarchy, as Crain Soudien and Moira Faul discussed in the introduction to this volume. For people to be imagined as rights-bearing subjects and their state to be recognised as legitimate within the global order, they must be understood as fully human. However, as scholars illuminate, 'being human' is 'a privileged status that is occupied in different ways, and to varying degrees, by various peoples and populations in the world. . The terms by which we constitute the borders of the human are historically contingent and socially articulated' (Eng et al., 2011, p. 4). The universal conception of human rights has always been based on a particular, racialised conception of 'Man' and 'its subjugated Human Others', as Sylvia Wynter (2003, p. 288e) elucidated (see also Lee & Allweiss, 2023).

The contours of this racialised exclusion – influencing who has the right to humanity, to life, to education, and to a future – have been laid brutally bare in the genocidal war on Gaza in the months since Hamas attacked Israel, following 76 years of Israeli occupation of Palestine and the earlier British Mandate. At the time of writing, the global institutions tasked with ensuring security, human rights, and development – the United Nations, the ICJ, and the ICC – have been unable to stop Israel's war between October 2023 and June 2024, resulting in over 35,000 lives lost, with women and children accounting for about '60 percent' of those killed (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – World Health Organisation, 2024); 'catastrophic hunger and famine-like conditions', including thousands of children with acute and severe acute malnutrition (World Health Organisation, 2024); the destruction of Gaza's systems of education, housing, healthcare, infrastructure, and economy; and the devastation of Gazan land and environment.

If development is imagined to create the possibilities for human and more-than-human flourishing, then Palestine and Palestinians, in a state of 'colonial captivity', in Sarah Ihmoud's (2024) language, bear the devastating effects of a system of global development and governance predicated on the ontologies of white supremacy, militarism, and empire and the complete failure of the system of global governance and development to protect and foster life (p. 211).

Thus, when considering how we might reimagine development and education, I cannot *not* think and write about Palestine. As Fargo Nissim Tbakhi illuminated, 'Palestine and all the struggles with which it is bound up require of us, in any and all forms of speech going forward, a commitment to constant and escalating betrayals of this machine' (Nissim Tbakhi, 2023).

Within this historical and present-day reality, how then do we think about the problem(s) of education within the colonial, capitalist logic of global development and governance?

THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION WITHIN THE LOGIC OF GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

First, there is the problem of ontological and epistemological violence at the heart of the educational development project, as Catherine Odora Hopper, Crain Soudien, and Moira Faul discussed (this volume). Knowledge production, citizenship formation, and modern schooling systems have left largely intact the violent racialised and gendered hierarchies born out of empire, enslavement, indigenous genocide, and sexual violence against women, and continued the destruction of languages, religions, and cosmologies, which Vanessa Andreotti reflected in her poem (this volume), and many others have illuminated in their scholarship (Carnoy, 1974; Dei & Kempf, 2006; Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011; Peña-Pincheira & Allweiss, 2022; Simpson, 2007; Sriprakash, et. al., 2022; Tikly, 1999, 2004; Willinsky, 1998). Colonising ways of thinking and being have been constitutive of educating the modern nation-state within the development project. Thus, education development within this hegemonic structure inherently carries with it these legacies that continue to structure, but never determine, the present and extend into the future, particularly as they become embedded within techno-capitalism's data and algorithmic structures with the expanding role of edtech in schooling, higher education, and society.

Second, there is the problem of the material relations of coloniality within the political economy of the educational development project. Its infrastructures of extraction, its financing and debt structures, its labour regimes, and systems of discipline have, in large part, not only been built on structures of enslavement, indentured servitude, and other forms of labour and political-economic control but have also deepened in the modern capitalist system as new frontiers of capitalist growth absorb humans, ecologies, cultures, and knowledge forms within a system that has to expand and secure its hegemony to survive (Gerrard et. al., 2022; Hook, 2023; Moeller, 2018).

These extractive relations in education are predicated on what my colleagues Klint Kanopka, Tyler Hook, Mariam Sedighi, Joanna French, and I (2024) call *educational capitalisation* or the uneven processes and social relations through which value is extracted from educational processes and practices, and, thus, education is valued in terms of expected monetary return on investment (p. 6). Here, education itself is for sale – whether through the educational technologies everyone depends on or through for-profit schools. Public funding, data extraction, and experimentation become the source of profit, and entrepreneurial or corporate failure is absorbed by marginalised individuals, communities, and institutions who may have the most to lose in the largely unregulated global education industry. Radhika Gorur and Minoli Wijetunga (this volume) discussed the pernicious effects of these forms of extraction and the possibilities of imagining otherwise in their chapter.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Given that this volume is committed to 'challeng[ing] contemporary relations of domination', as Crain Soudien and Moira Faul (this volume) asked, where do we go from here as academics, development practitioners, and/or activists given our current historical moment of interrelated crises – a climate catastrophe, unceasing militarism and wars, rising fascism and right-wing authoritarianism, the global COVID-19 pandemic, and the unprecedented inequality of the racist, heteropatriarchal capitalist system that governs the global economy?

Or, as Robin D. G Kelley ([2002] 2022) asked, 'What shall we build on the ashes of a nightmare'?

To echo Ananya Roy (2010), is it possible to carefully move within our historical and present-day reality, as Keita Takayama and Taeko Okitsu considered, without getting snared in the hubris of imperial knowledge

production and exploitation, on the one hand, or paralysed by the fear of reproducing this imperialism through our scholarship and activist practice, on the other?

Is it possible, then, from these hegemonic institutional spaces that many of us occupy, to contribute to transforming these power relations in light of histories of domination that continue to structure, but never determine, our political, economic, cultural, and epistemic present?

Could it be that, from the interstices, the cracks that are not determined (Devarajan et al., 2022; Walsh, 2022), we have openings to listen and respond to feminist, indigenous, queer, and decolonial ways of knowing and being together as humans and other species in an ever more precarious existence together? Our interrelations on the planet demand, and will ultimately and inevitably insist, that we radically rethink hegemonic ways of knowing, being, and relating to each other and the Earth in order that we might create a future of solidarity and shared thriving and freedom.

Thus, to echo the words of the late bell hooks (1994), from these spaces, how do we speak, teach, and learn to transgress together?

Drawing on the work of my colleagues in this volume and my own scholarship, I suggest we contemplate how we can work towards the following: rethinking, repairing, reprioritising, and resisting.

First, we cannot rethink or 'unlearn', as Iveta Silova, Hikaru Komatsu, and Jeremy Rappleye discussed in their chapter, the existing structure of the world using white supremacist, heteropatriarchal, anthropocentric, and colonising ways of knowing. These are fundamentally violent and erase people, traditions, and possibilities from existing. Therefore, for those of us in hegemonic institutions, particularly in the Global North, we must teach, learn, create, and distribute knowledge differently, as Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw and Cristina Delgado Vintimilla also reflected in their chapter (Stein & Andreotti, 2016). This does not come without struggle or consequences. I often feel that my students, colleagues, and I are throwing pebbles against a medieval fortress and then wondering why they bounce back and hit us.

Second, the acts of violences of the past and the present have often not been acknowledged by development institutions, NGOs, foundations, universities, museums, and nations, and where they have been, the breaches of trust and the inequalities of the present have often not been repaired. As Arathi Sriprakash, tavis jules, and Nigel Brissett discussed in their chapters, institutions need to address the cumulative, intergenerational harms to people, cultures, and land, and the ongoing harms

of the present through both substantive acknowledgements and material and other forms of reparations. Reparations are then also about preparations for our collective futures, which Cecilia Lucas, José Arias, and I thought about as p/reparations, and, thus, the necessary preconditions for transformation.[1]

Third, reprioritise. Global education systems – across multiple scales – are operating within a political economy where the logics of profit, market, and scale dictate the goals of schooling, the provision of learning, the definition of problems in education, the outcomes of assessment, and the extraction of data and meaning in education while foreclosing pluriversal educational futures that operate outside of these market logics. Imagining new ways of organising, funding, and assessing education is necessary for transforming the political economy of education.

Fourth, resist. The institutions that we occupy – whether the academy or development institutions – are terrains of struggle and places where we can work towards prefiguring in the current moment the pluriversal futures we want to create. We should be inspired by decades of movement struggles around the world – most powerfully today, in Palestinian and Indigenous struggles around the world for sovereignty, the global movement for Black lives, the struggles of the Dalit castes in India, and the feminist struggles of women in Iran. This resistance can happen through and within educational and development institutions but cannot be led by these institutions, particularly by those of us from dominant groups, as Prachi Srivastava's chapter in this volume on 'epistemic humility' reminds us. The resistance must emerge from communities that have been historically marginalised by these elite institutions and their effects on the world. In this way, as Crain Soudien explained (this volume), these institutions need to engage in the humbling role of deep listening rather than leading.

These four practices – rethinking, repairing, reprioritising, and resisting – are not only part of a struggle for a more just world; they are also integral to developing a framework and practice for transformation or simply for breathing and imagining otherwise in the ashes of a nightmare.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & ATTRIBUTIONS

Thank you to Moira Faul and Alexandra Allweiss for their generous comments on this chapter.

The sections, 'Where I Am Speaking and Writing From' and 'Where Do We Go from Here?', are drawn from my recent article in

Globalisation, Societies & Education (Moeller, 2024). The discussion of corporations within the section 'The Coloniality of Global Development' is drawn from my book, *The Gender Effect: Capitalism, Feminism, and the Corporate Politics of Development*.

NOTE

1. I first began thinking about reparations as preparations for the future alongside my graduate school colleagues Cecilia Lucas and José Arias in the Social and Cultural Studies programme at the Graduate School of Education at UC Berkeley. Cecilia developed the concept as a philosophy and praxis in her beautiful dissertation (Lucas, 2013).

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