

Editorial Introduction

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This special issue of *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry* emerged from papers presented at the CGCER Conference on Decolonizing Global Citizenship Education, hosted by the Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research at the University of Alberta in November 2013. The CGCER conference, held in alternate years, has emerged as one of the pre-eminent conferences on critical global citizenship education, bringing together, graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, professors, K-12 teachers, as well as community based and non-governmental organizations from Brazil, China, Germany, Finland, France, Japan, South Africa, the United States and across Canada.

According to Andreotti (2011), decolonizing global citizenship education begins by “moving debates around global citizenship beyond Eurocentrism and unexamined universality” (p. 2). It is in this vein that the central themes of the conference were developed, and authors were invited to submit proposals around the issues of

- the return of local knowledges in the conceptualizations of citizenship
- global social justice education as a liberating praxis
- ways to disrupt/trouble the binary of local/global in citizenship knowledges
- multi-centric knowledges and epistemic decolonization
- false dualities that construct hierarchies of imperial and colonial relations
- global citizenship education as colonizing or decolonizing project

The conference, thus, attempted to make space for “the enunciation and expression of non-Western cosmologies and for the expression of different cultural, political and social memories” (Mignolo, 2000, p. 51), as the creation of spaces in which diverse epistemologies and ontologies are acknowledged and reclaimed is integral in the process of decolonization through the recentering of subjugated knowledges (Wane, 2008).

The three articles chosen for this issue explore critical global citizenship education as a tool in decolonizing hegemonic pedagogical and knowledge systems. The three authors propose decoloniality through a recentering and revisioning of the geopolitics of knowledge production and valuation – an epistemic decolonization – and a critical reflexivity which is contextualized to a specific space, time and place (the return of the local, if necessary). The papers published in this issue call for a world of “lives lived differently, lives constituted around different metaphysics of economics, of law, of science ... of co-existence” (Odora Hoppers & Richards, 2012, p. 10).

In the first article, *Teacher professional development in Brazil: Colonization of teachers' voices*, Daniela Nascimento explores professional development practices implemented in Brazil, and the influence of post-colonial views in the power-relation between the “educational authorities” or “experts” and teachers. Nascimento addresses how this relationship in professional development is mostly “one-sided” often excluding the “voices” of teachers and prioritizing the assumptions many experts have towards teachers' needs for growth, in which the choices of topics and the kind of professional development programs to be designed often follow an “one-fits-all” model or banking model of education as defined by Freire (1970). This article emerged from author's experience during her Master's thesis research in Brazil. Over four consecutive summers, Canadian and Brazilian teachers worked together on a volunteer Canadian/Brazilian professional development program that aimed to encourage teachers to share their teaching experiences and reflect on their practice. Nascimento uses data gathered from this experience to consider from within a larger social justice context, the challenges of teaching in public schools in Brazil, examining the ways in which the inclusion of teachers' voices in professional development programs affects teachers' performance in a Brazilian context. Nascimento concludes that open and democratic dialogue between teachers and educational authorities is needed for an inclusive, socially just education system.

In the second article, *Global citizenship education from across the Pacific: A narrative inquiry of transcultural teacher education in Japan*, Edward Howe uses narratives of transcultural journeys to discuss teachers' personal, practical and professional knowledges and the role(s) played by teachers and teacher educators in ensuring success for both individuals and society in light of globalization, increasing diversity, and growing interdependency. Howe describes pedagogies of GCE within pre-service teacher education classes (focusing predominantly on his own experiences as an teacher educator) and high schools in Japan (through the narratives of former pre-service teachers) and shares the transcultural stories of several teachers. The research brought forward in this article is based on Howe's two decades of experience as a teacher educator in Canada and Japan. Howe's positions this research and subsequent analysis as a practical decolonizing of global citizenship education through the exploration of different conceptual, theoretical, and methodological considerations and the inclusion of non-North American, anti-hegemonical, and non-Eurocentric voices. In conclusion, Howe calls for the learning process to be decolonized by bringing together various Japanese methods of professional development and reflective teaching practices: 1) *kizuki*, critical thinking and a with-it-ness, 2) *kōnaikenshū*, a school- based, teacher driven professional development and 3) *jugyō kenkyū*, public research lessons involving a number of teachers coming together to improve their pedagogical skills.

In the third article, *International economic sanctions, university life, and global citizenship education: The case of Iran*, Shadi Mehrabi contends that economic sanctions against Iran, instigated by the United States in response to Iran's growing nuclear program has had a disastrous effect on the lives of Iranian citizens. Through a socio-historical exploration of the background of the sanctions on Iran, Mehrabi argues that higher education is one of the sectors most affected by these economic sanctions, specifically student life and education. According to Mehrabi, economic sanction have led to 1) the collapse of the Iranian currency, affecting the ability of universities to pay for any technology and service whose medium of exchange is in US dollar and resulted in crowded classrooms and low quality facilities, 2) high tuition fees and

decreased access to university within Iran, 3) marginalization within the international academic community, 4) financial constraints on Iranian students studying abroad and 5) restrictions on international bank transactions. In conclusion, Mehrabi asserts that economic sanctions violate the basic human right to education and proposes propose global citizenship education as a way to counter such a violation.

In addition to the three articles, this issue also includes two book reviews, *Rethinking thinking: Modernity's "other" and the transformation of the university* (2012) by Catherine Odora Hoppers and Howard Richards, reviewed by Thashika Pillay and *Changing schools: Alternative ways to make a world of difference* (2012) by Terry Wrigley, Pat Thomson and Robert Lingard (Eds.), reviewed by Michelle Hawks.

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