

## RECLAIMING INDIGENOUS VOICE AND VISION

In 2019, my research assistant, as of this writing (April 2024) an assistant professor at York University<sup>1</sup>, Kiera Brant-Birioukov judged this book – edited by Marie Battiste<sup>2</sup> - “an interesting commentary on the questions, demands and concerns surrounding ‘Aboriginal education’ at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” as it focused on (in Kiera’s words) “concerns of Aboriginal language and traditional knowledge in the modern world; notions of sovereignty and reclaiming of self-determination; considering the possibilities and limits of postcolonial theory; and, questions concerning where the colonized mind ends and the Indigenous mind begins.”<sup>3</sup> While (still Kiera) “not a traditional curriculum studies/theory text, it is often referred to as where Battiste first introduced the notion of cognitive imperialism in relation to Indigenous education, alongside other respected Indigenous scholars such as Cajete and Youngblood Henderson.”<sup>4</sup> Kiera reported that she omitted from her report to me the chapters focused on “international law in relation to treaty rights; the Hawaiian sovereignty movement; Māori language and self-determination through education.”<sup>5</sup>

Keywords (by chapter)<sup>6</sup>

Page #	Chapter	Keywords
2-3	<b>Introduction: Unfolding the lessons of colonization</b> <i>Marie Battiste</i>	Introduction; postcolonial thought; Indigenous knowledge
3-5	<b>Chapter 5: Jagged Worldviews Colliding</b> <i>Leroy Little Bear</i>	Worldview; Aboriginal philosophy; Aboriginal language; education; de/colonized consciousness
5-7	<b>Chapter 9: From hand to mouth: The postcolonial politics of oral and written traditions</b> <i>J. Edward Chamberlin</i>	Postcolonial theory; oral traditions; traditional literacy
7-8	<b>Chapter 11: Processes of decolonization</b> <i>Poka Laenui (Hayden F. Burgess)</i>	Decolonization; theories of decolonization

8-10	<b>Chapter 14: Indigenous knowledge: The Pueblo metaphor of Indigenous education</b>  <i>Gregory Cajete</i>	Indigenous knowledge; Indigenous values; traditional education; curriculum theory
10-13	<b>Chapter 15: Maintaining Aboriginal identity, language, and culture in modern society</b>  <i>Marie Battiste</i>	Cognitive imperialism; Aboriginal education; Aboriginal learners; Aboriginal language; traditional knowledge; curriculum
13-17	<b>Chapter 18: Ayukpachi: Empowering Aboriginal thought</b>  <i>James (Sakej) Youngblood Henderson</i>	Colonization; Eurocentric thought; Aboriginal thought; colonized mind

“The writings in this book,” Battiste begins, “firmly embed the fundamental concept that Indigenous knowledge exists and is a legitimate research issue,” adding that “many parts of the existing Eurocentric academy have not fully accepted this principle, arguing that there is no such thing as an Indigenous perspective,” a fact that “postcolonial, Aboriginal, and postmodern scholars have had to confront,” given that “most delegates from university communities were having trouble articulating the differences between these two systems of knowledge, but through the shared dialogues they became aware of the singularity of Eurocentric thought - even if some of the issues around the diversity of approaches to life and nature remained unresolved.”<sup>7</sup> “Indigenous knowledge,” Battiste continues, “including its oral modes of transmission, is a vital, integral, and significant process for Indigenous educators and scholars,” knowledge that “has been upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada as a legitimate form for understanding and transmitting Indigenous knowledge, history, and consciousness.”<sup>8</sup>

In the case of *Delgamuukw v. The Queen* (1997), the Supreme Court of Canada “ordered the legal profession ... to include and respect Indigenous oral traditions in standards of evidence, overruling centuries of development of the British rules of evidence,” a decision that, Battiste suggests, “offers a powerful analogy for the interpretive monopoly of existing standards of research scholarship.”<sup>9</sup> “If the courts are required to consider oral traditions,” she reasons, “then all other decision makers should likewise consider the validity of oral traditions, including oral dissemination within Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, as significant sources for the distribution and dissemination of Aboriginal knowledge and scholarship.”<sup>10</sup> Then Battiste goes a step further, asserting that “Indigenous scholarship, along with research that requires moral dialogue with and the participation of Indigenous communities, is

the foundation for postcolonial transformation.”<sup>11</sup> Such “scholarship,” Battiste explains, “evolves from a need to comprehend, resist, and transform the crises related to the dual concerns of the effect that colonization has had on Indigenous peoples and the ongoing erosion of Indigenous languages, knowledge, and culture as a result of colonization.”<sup>12</sup> Such scholarship has also “involved clarifying the contested interests that occur in the many disciplines and fields of thought.”<sup>13</sup>

After praise comes critique, with Battiste writing that “much of the focus of Indigenous scholarship in the early years was on liberal solutions that attempted to make modal adjustments to existing institutions and their modes of delivery,” although “there has been a growing awareness of later that we need a more systemic analysis of the complex and subtle ideologies that continue to shape postcolonial Indigenous educational policy and pedagogy. The writings in this book document action-oriented research practices. These practices identify sites of oppression and emancipation.”<sup>14</sup> “This book,” Battiste explains, “seeks to clarify postcolonial Indigenous thought at the end of the twentieth century,” adding: “It is not a definitive work, but it is a good reflection.”<sup>15</sup> Apparently the chapters represent Indigenous scholarship from the “early years,” focused on finding “liberal solutions,” scholarship Battiste appeared to devalue, as the book “represents the voices of the first generation of Indigenous scholars and seeks to bring those voices, their analyses, and their dreams of a decolonized context further into the academic arena,” and “it urges an agenda of restoration within a multidisciplinary context for human dignity and the collective dignity of Indigenous peoples,” as “it recognizes the existing right of self-determination, and it urges Indigenous peoples to promote, develop, exercise, and maintain their orders and laws and to determine their political status and pursue freely their cultural destiny within supportive social and economic development.”<sup>16</sup>

In his chapter – “Jagged Worldviews Colliding,” a title that conveys the cultural incommensurability I see structuring the Indigenous challenge – Leroy Little Bear notes that “no matter how dominant a worldview is, there are always other ways of interpreting the world,” interpretations that “are manifest through different cultures, which are often in opposition to one another.”<sup>17</sup> Little Bear continues: “One of the problems with colonialism is that it tries to maintain a singular social order by means of force and law, suppressing the diversity of human worldviews,” resulting in “oppression and discrimination.”<sup>18</sup> One difference in these worldviews, he suggests, is that “in Aboriginal philosophy, existence consists of energy,” and so “all things are animate, imbued with spirit, and in constant motion.”<sup>19</sup> “In this realm of energy and spirit,” he explains, “interrelationships between all entities are of paramount importance, and space is a more important referent than time.”<sup>20</sup> Little Bear notes he is “referring to the philosophy of the Plains Indians, [but] there is enough similarity among North American Indian philosophies to apply the concepts generally, even though there may be individual differences or differing emphases.”<sup>21</sup>

“Aboriginal languages,” Little Bear explains, “are, for the most part, verb-rich

languages that are process- or action-oriented, as “they are generally aimed at describing ‘happenings’ rather than objects.”<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the “languages of Aboriginal peoples allow for the transcendence of boundaries,” an example of which is that “many Aboriginal languages do not make use of the dichotomies either/or, black/white, saint/sinner,” nor is there an animate/inanimate dichotomy, as “everything is more or less animate.”<sup>23</sup> As a consequence, “Aboriginal languages allow for talking to trees and rocks, an allowance not accorded in English.”<sup>24</sup> “If everything is animate,” Little Bear reasons, “then everything has spirit and knowledge,” and “if everything has spirit and knowledge, then all are like me,” and “if all are like me, then all are my relations.”<sup>25</sup>

Little Bear tells us it was not his “intent ... to describe in detail every Aboriginal custom; anthropologists have done enough of that.”<sup>26</sup> He credits anthropologists with having “done a fairly decent job of describing the customs themselves, but they have failed miserably in finding and interpreting the meanings behind the customs.”<sup>27</sup> He moves from “meanings” to “function,” revealing that the “function of Aboriginal values and customs is to maintain the relationships that hold creation together,” reasoning that “if creation manifests itself in terms of cyclical patterns and repetitions, then the maintenance and renewal of those patterns is all-important.”<sup>28</sup> And so “values and customs are the participatory part that Aboriginal people play in the maintenance of creation.”<sup>29</sup>

“How do Aboriginal peoples educate and inculcate the philosophy, values, and customs of their cultures?” Little Bear answers the question by telling us that: “For the most part, education and socialization are achieved through praise, reward, recognition, and renewal ceremonies and by example, actual experience, and storytelling.”<sup>30</sup> “Children are greatly valued and are considered gifts from the Creator,” in fact (he continues): “From the moment of birth, children are the objects of love and kindness from a large circle of relatives and friends.”<sup>31</sup> Children may be “strictly trained but in a ‘sea’ of love and kindness,” receiving “praise and recognition for their achievements both by the extended family and by the group as a whole.”<sup>32</sup> “Group recognition” occurs through “public ceremonies performed for a child, giveaways in a child's honour, and songs created and sung in a child's honour.”<sup>33</sup> Qualifying his earlier depiction of children being “strictly trained,” Little Bear tells us that Indigenous children are “seldom physically punished, but they are sternly lectured about the implications of wrongful and unacceptable behaviour.”<sup>34</sup>

As is the case for non-Indigenous children, “there are many people involved in the education and socialization of a child.”<sup>35</sup> In fact, “anyone” – not only trained teachers – “can participate in educating a child because education is a collective responsibility.”<sup>36</sup> Storytellers are especially important because “storytelling is a very important part of the educational process,” as “it is through stories that customs and values are taught and shared,” stories that number in the “hundreds of stories,” often “of real-life experiences, spirits, creation, customs, and values” and often featuring a “trickster figure,” a figure “about chaos, the unexpected, the ‘why’ of creation, and the

consequences of unacceptable behaviour.”<sup>37</sup> Such “education ... transcends the boundary between the physical and the spiritual.”<sup>38</sup> Even “the boundary between the state of being awake and the reality in dreamtime is almost nonexistent,”<sup>39</sup> Little Bear reports. Nor is “anthropomorphic form ... important, as “it is assumed that a being can readily go through metamorphosis.”<sup>40</sup> As is the case in non-Indigenous education, “all of the knowledge is primarily transmitted from the older to the younger generation through language; consequently, language is of paramount importance.”<sup>41</sup> For Martin Heidegger, language is likened to the “house of being.”<sup>42</sup>

“Colonization,” Little Bear continues, “created a fragmentary worldview among Aboriginal peoples,” employing “force, terror, and educational policy,” attempting to “destroy the Aboriginal worldview,” but it “failed,” although it behind a “heritage of jagged worldviews among Indigenous peoples,” Indigenous “consciousness ... a random puzzle, a jigsaw puzzle that each person has to attempt to understand,” as “Aboriginal consciousness became a site of overlapping, contentious, fragmented, competing desires and values.”<sup>43</sup> Reminiscent of Pasolini’s concept of “contamination,”<sup>44</sup> Little Bear contends that “all colonial people, both the colonizer and the colonized, have shared or collective views of the world embedded in their languages, stories, or narratives,” even though “this shared worldview is always contested, and this paradox is part of what it means to be colonized.”<sup>45</sup> In fact, he continues, “no one has a pure worldview that is 100 percent Indigenous or Eurocentric; rather, everyone has an integrated mind, a fluxing and ambidextrous consciousness, a precolonized consciousness that flows into a colonized consciousness and back again,” a “clash of worldviews that is at the heart of many current difficulties with effective means of social control in postcolonial North America.”<sup>46</sup> “It is also this clash that suppresses diversity in choices and denies Aboriginal people harmony in their daily lives.”<sup>47</sup>

“My topic,” J. Edward Chamberlin, begins, “is postcolonial theory and what it can tell us about oral and written traditions and the circumstances of many Aboriginal communities,” adding that “like these traditions I am beginning with language rather than politics.”<sup>48</sup> Rather than focus on “what language *is*, what it means, what it conveys by way of thoughts and feelings, what it cannot convey,” Chamberlin turns “to what language *does*, what it makes happen, what it creates (also in terms of thoughts and feelings), what it brings into being that nothing else does (which is crucially important when we think about the loss of language or of some of its functions).”<sup>49</sup> “Words of power and words of survival have one thing in common,” he continues: “We remember them.”<sup>50</sup> From an assertion about empirical reality he moves to admonition, telling us “we need a set of remembered words and occasions in order to maintain the coherence and continuity of our societies and to satisfy our spiritual and material needs.”<sup>51</sup> “These,” he continues, “are the words and the phrases that last.”<sup>52</sup>

For Chamberlin, “postcolonial history is ultimately about all this which is to say, it's about how language is an instrument of both survival and power,” two terms too

“easy to bandy about, [so] I want to try out a couple of others - "subsistence" and "sovereignty" - and consider them in a different kind of way,” as “these words [that] are highly charged - and widely misrepresented - politically, and for that reason they may give us a sense of how postcolonial theory can open up new understandings of the situation faced by peoples who are involved in the challenge of decolonization.”<sup>53</sup> Chamberlin confesses he finds "postcolonial theory" a “rather intimidating phrase, partly because the word *theory* has become a mantra of the high priests of my profession and partly because postcolonial seems to assume that we're in a state of political grace - or a state of mind - that it's not always easy to recognize looking around at the conditions in which many people live.”<sup>54</sup> “Yet that is the key,” he continues, “that state of mind, for the hopeful fact is that, despite the conditions of dislocation, dispossession, and disease that colonialism creates and postcolonialism chronicles, Aboriginal peoples the world over are still in possession of *powers*.”<sup>55</sup> Those “powers” aren’t only political, but also “spiritual and imaginative ... [.] powers that defy the instrumental brutalities, the sheep-unit busyness of colonialism ... and the purely instrumental understandings of postcolonialism too.”<sup>56</sup>

“Every culture not only sees things but also *reads* them,” Chamberlin continues, “whether in the stars or in the sand, whether spelled out by alphabet or animal, whether communicated across natural or supernatural boundaries.”<sup>57</sup> For example, “no hunter-gatherer society would last the year without sophisticated traditions of interpreting and evaluating written signs, and most such societies have generated forms of nonalphabetic writing (often in ancient days sufficiently sophisticated that we still haven't figured them out), using knotted and coloured strings, beads, and various performative and pictographic designs.”<sup>58</sup> Still making sweeping generalizations, Chamberlin then tells us that “every culture not only hears but also *listens* to things,” something that “my own culture, which ostensibly is a written culture dedicated to the privileges of written texts,”<sup>59</sup> apparently doesn’t do so well.<sup>60</sup> Chamberlin tells us that “I spend much of my professional life *talking* about writing, and the most important institutions of this culture - the churches, the courts, and the parliaments - are places where speech has a considerable presence,” concluding that: “Separating oral and written traditions into tidy oppositions is like separating the worthy and the worthless. It is a debilitating preoccupation, about a foolish choice, between false alternatives.”<sup>61</sup>

“In saying all this,” Chamberlin emphasizes that “I am not discounting how many imperial cultures have discredited the oral traditions of colonized Indigenous peoples, often in ways that have deeply damaged their viability in both of these worlds the real world and the world of the imagination - to which I referred earlier.”<sup>62</sup> He reports that “one of the central challenges that postcolonial theory presents to us is to counteract this, and one of the ways of doing this is to delineate the ways in which oral traditions have been misrepresented,” for example “people” [being] inclined to think of oral traditions as less evolved than written traditions and of communities in which oral traditions flourish as correspondingly less developed - socially, culturally, and

perhaps emotionally and intellectually.”<sup>63</sup> He concludes that “whether someone else believes what you say and do is much less important than whether you believe it,” and that (to my mind quite questionable) assertion constitutes “postcolonial theory at its purest and surest.”<sup>64</sup> Somehow that “reminds” him “that we all need - and we all have - a grammar of assent, a way of saying yes,” adding: “Now *that's* a word with power. Postcolonial theory, I hope, is ultimately less about finding ways of saying no and more about finding ways of saying yes.”

Poka Laenui “suggest[s] five distinct phases of a people's decolonization: (1) “*rediscovery and recovery*, (2) *mourning*, (3) *dreaming*, (4) *commitment*, and (5) *action*, phases that “can be experienced at the same time or in various combinations.”<sup>65</sup> Moreover, “like the steps of colonization, these phases of decolonization do not have clear demarcations from one to the next.”<sup>66</sup> Laenui suggests that the first phase – “*rediscovery and recovery*” - sets the stage for the “eventual decolonization of the society,” noting that those “who have undergone colonization are inevitably suffering from concepts of inferiority in relation to their historical cultural/social background,” meaning that “they live in a colonial society that is a constant and overwhelming reminder of the superiority of that society over the underlying Indigenous one.”<sup>67</sup> The second phase – a “natural outgrowth of the first” – is “*mourning*” - a “time when a people are able to lament their victimization,” what Laenui understands “is an essential phase of healing,” likening it to “individual tragedies in which one is a victim of a crime, has experienced the death of a close loved one, or has suffered from a sexual assault” - the “victim must be permitted a time of mourning.”<sup>68</sup>

The third phase – “*dreaming*” is the “most crucial for decolonization,” wherein the “full panorama of possibilities is expressed, considered through debate, consultation, and building dreams on further dreams, which eventually become the flooring for the creation of a new social order.”<sup>69</sup> Next comes “*commitment*,” a “process of dreaming,” a time when “the people will have the opportunity to weigh the voices rather than becoming caught up with counting votes or bullets.”<sup>70</sup> Through “*commitment*” the colonized will “wade through the cult of personalities and family histories and to release themselves from the shackles of colonial patriotism,” becoming be “ready” to move in a “single direction in which the society must move,” culminating in “combining their voices in a clear statement of their desired direction.”<sup>71</sup> Laenui advises that “there is no single ‘way’ or process for a people's expression of commitment,” but “over time the commitment will become so clear that a formal process becomes merely a pro forma expression of the people's will.”<sup>72</sup> The final phase is “*action*,” a phase that “can be properly taken only upon reaching a consensus of commitment in the fourth phase,” without which the “action taken cannot truly be said to be the choice of the colonized people.”<sup>73</sup>

Gregory Cajete tells us his essay “reflects the efforts of Indigenous people to explore our own understanding of colonization relative to Indigenous education and the possibilities that Indigenous education may provide for creating the context we

need to evolve a contemporized guiding philosophy for educating Indigenous people in the twenty-first century.”<sup>74</sup> “In exploring our own expression of Indigenous education, an expression of education that is truly ours, truly coming from our sensibility, our understanding of the world and who we are,” Cajete continues, “we are empowering not only ourselves but also the vision of a brighter future through education.”<sup>75</sup> The “Pueblo metaphors of Indigenous education I present here are a way to bring together some of the thoughts and ideas of various scholars about how to heal and transcend the effects of colonization,” metaphors that are “represented in words, images, and symbols,” that “provide food for thought and a way to reflect on how we can use the tools of education in this process of reinventing a contemporary philosophy of Indigenous education.”<sup>76</sup>

Cajete reports that “there is a shared body of understanding among many Indigenous peoples that education is really about helping an individual find his or her face, which means finding out who you are, where you come from, and your unique character,”<sup>77</sup> a view of education widely shared by non-Indigenous educators.<sup>78</sup> “That education should also help you to find your heart, which is that passionate sense of self that motivates you and moves you along in life,” Cajete continues, adding: “In addition, education should help you to find a foundation on which you may most completely develop and express both your heart and your face,” and, he adds, “that foundation is your vocation, the work that you do, whether it be as an artist, lawyer, or teacher.”<sup>79</sup> “This, then, is the intent of Indigenous education.”<sup>80</sup> In “its truest form,” Indigenous education is “about learning relationships in context,” the first of which is “family,” which “extends to the clan, to the community and tribe, and to all of the world,”<sup>81</sup> a conception not unlike George Grant’s.<sup>82</sup> “The purpose of Indigenous education,” Cajete continues, “is to help the individual become a complete man or woman,” a purpose overlapping if not coinciding with holistic education.<sup>83</sup>

“The goal,” Cajete emphasizes, “is completeness.”<sup>84</sup> Then the metaphor shifts to journey, another well-worn (non-Indigenous) conception of education: “This is similar to the idea that we move through different worlds, evolving through these contexts to become more fully human.”<sup>85</sup> Then a concept more akin to the holism invoked earlier: “Our idea of education is a reflection of that social ecology.”<sup>86</sup> The example Cajete offers is that “old people among Pueblos are loved not only as the carriers of the oral tradition, the history, and the customs of the community but also as people who are coming close to that ideal of completeness.”<sup>87</sup> Certainly that differs from many non-Indigenous cultures.

Next, Cajete reports that “there are five major foundations that underlie Indigenous education,” the first of which is “community.”<sup>88</sup> The “next foundation has to do with technical environmental knowledge or making a living in a place by understanding and interacting with it.”<sup>89</sup> As an example Cajete reports that “Pueblo people have a style of adobe architecture that reflects a particular way of living in the land.”<sup>90</sup> Third is the “visionary or dream tradition based on an understanding that one



learns through visions and dreams.”<sup>91</sup> The fourth foundation Cajete characterizes as “mythic,” as “it reflects how we view the world through our mythic traditions.”<sup>92</sup> The fifth foundation he calls “spiritual ecology,” referencing the “variety of expressions of Indigenous religion that we find around the world,” which he summarizes as the “intimate relationship that people establish with place and with the environment and with all of the things that make them or give them life.”<sup>93</sup>

“Among my people, the Tewa, we have a concept known as *pin geh beh*,” which Cajete translates as “split mind,” meaning “that you're not doing something with a whole mind,” that “you're acting in a foolish or silly manner,” a condition not only of childhood but of “colonization” as well, as “Indigenous people are in many ways acting like the *pin geh beh* - we lead lives of paradoxical conflict and contrast.”<sup>94</sup> Cajete admits: “I've seen the *pin geh beh* not only in myself but also in many of the students whom I have taught over the past twenty-five years.”<sup>95</sup> He does not consider himself “successful in the teaching process unless I can at least begin a process of healing this split.”<sup>96</sup> The “split mind” syndrome puts people at risk of “suicide; self-hate; the disintegration of our cultures; the lack of knowing where we are, where we are going, and where we are coming from.”<sup>97</sup> “When I am frustrated,” Cajete confides, “I pull this image out and look at it closely because it is a reflection not only of many of my students but also of how I deal with two worlds and two ways of knowing.”<sup>98</sup>

“I remember a quotation from Vine Deloria,”<sup>99</sup> Cajete continues. “He had asked an elder what it was that allowed him to know his environment and how he knew things without being in a place or even ever having been there,” to which the Elder replied: “I have a map in my head.”<sup>100</sup> “Indigenous curricula are maps,” Cajete reasons, distinguishing this metaphor from “Western education,” wherein “curriculum is a contract a teacher makes to organize the content and to teach in a certain way.”<sup>101</sup> Continuing his overgeneralization, Cajete asserts that “in Western education, curricula are very political,” as “the system itself has a constructed sense of what it is about that it needs to defend.”<sup>102</sup> The distinction blurs when he then tells us that “the map is the educational/political/social contract,” as “the maps we as contemporary Indigenous people have been using have in many ways suppressed us,” maps that “support the very system that colonized us.”<sup>103</sup> “It's only when we can become our own ‘cartographers’ that we will be able to find our way through the territory and move once again into the Tao of teaching, into Indigenous education.”<sup>104</sup> “It's hard to be a teacher,” Cajete concludes, and “even harder to be an Indigenous teacher because you constantly have to work between two worlds.”<sup>105</sup> “Many times,” he admits, “you don't know if you are coming or going,” but “as an Indigenous teacher, you have a responsibility,” what he terms an “oath,” one akin to what physicians take, an oath “to be responsible to the children who are given to our care and to the information and the knowledge that we convey.”<sup>106</sup> “Thinking that they know the Native person's mind and being is a mistake that has been made many times by many non-Native people,” he notes, and “that's the reason Native people have to begin to reflect and to write in

their voices about their own experience,” as “that is the only way to begin to correct that process of misunderstanding.”<sup>107</sup>

“Aboriginal people in Canada pose a serious question to the Canadian educational system,” Battiste begins: “How should schools be structured and content developed and delivered to offer equitable outcomes for Aboriginal peoples in Canada?”<sup>108</sup> Battiste cites the 1972 goals devised by the National Indian Brotherhood, goals that “have not changed in the intervening years.”<sup>109</sup> “Aboriginal parents,” she reports, “still wish for their children to participate fully in Canadian society but also to develop their personal and community potential through a fully actualized linguistic and cultural identity and from within their own Aboriginal context.”<sup>110</sup> Battiste acknowledges that “there have been innovations in Aboriginal education in the past twenty-five years, both at the First Nations and at the provincial levels, but these reforms have not gone far enough,” as the “existing curriculum has given Aboriginal people new knowledge to help them participate in Canadian society, but it has not empowered Aboriginal identity by promoting an understanding of Aboriginal worldviews, languages, and knowledge.”<sup>111</sup> The problem, she continues, is the “lack of a clear, comprehensive, and consistent policy about Aboriginal consciousness,” the consequence of which are “educational acts that suppress these integral cultures and identities.”<sup>112</sup> Battiste alleges that “most public schools in Canada today do not have coherent plans about how teachers and students can know Aboriginal thought and apply it in current educational processes.”<sup>113</sup>

Battiste alleges that “educators have suggested that problems arise because the ‘style of learning’ through which Aboriginal students are enculturated at home differs markedly from the teaching style of the classroom,” citing “linguists” [who] have pointed out that these differences may lead to sociolinguistic interference when teachers and students do not recognize them.”<sup>114</sup> “These theories, however, do not get to the root of the problem,” she advises, as “non-Aboriginal scholars have avoided the major evaluative issue, which I have previously called cognitive imperialism or cognitive assimilation.”<sup>115</sup> “Cognitive imperialism, also known as cultural racism,” Battiste explains, “is the imposition of one worldview on a people who have an alternative worldview, with the implication that the imposed worldview is superior to the alternative worldview.”<sup>116</sup>

Apparently Battiste’s insistence that “Aboriginal identity, languages, and cultures” be taught in Canadian schools, and presumably not only to Aboriginal students, does not qualify as “cognitive imperialism.”<sup>117</sup> Not only taught, but “Aboriginal languages, cultures, and identity” must characterize any “education that respects and nourishes” these.<sup>118</sup> The present Canadian “educational system is a form of cognitive imperialism,” an institution “used as a means to perpetuate damaging myths about Aboriginal cultures, languages, beliefs, and ways of life.”<sup>119</sup> “It has also,” she continues, “established Western science as a dominant mode of thought that distrusts diversity and jeopardizes us all as we move into the next century,”<sup>120</sup> that last

allegation left unspecified. Not only has it been a “failure” in “liberat[ing] the human potential among Aboriginal peoples,” but “its quest [is] to limit thought to cognitive imperialistic policies and practices,” a quest [that] denies Aboriginal people access to and participation in the formulation of government policy, constrains the use and development of Aboriginal cultures in schools, and confines education to a narrow scientific view of the world that threatens the global future.”<sup>121</sup>

“There are two different points at issue here,” Battiste continues, the “first [being] the right of Aboriginal peoples to exercise their own culture,” and the “second [being] the benefit that the Western world can derive from this culture.”<sup>122</sup> Her evidence for this assertion is “Western scholars” who are, we are told, “gradually realizing how important Aboriginal knowledge may be to the future survival of our world.”<sup>123</sup> Despite “Western scholars” recognition of “how important Aboriginal knowledge may be,” the educational future looks grim, as “cultural racism in Canada ... is a systemic form of racism that cannot be dealt with in schools through classroom supplements or add-on courses.”<sup>124</sup> Apparently it can be “dealt with,” however: “Confronting the problem requires a holistic understanding of modern thought and the purpose of education.”<sup>125</sup>

Such “understanding” yields the conclusion that “when most non-Aboriginal people think of why they would support the maintenance of Aboriginal consciousness and language in modern education, they view it as enabling Aboriginal students to compete successfully with non-Aboriginal students in the imagined immigrant society.”<sup>126</sup> That “view” is a “form of cognitive manipulation used to disclaim other knowledge bases and values,” manipulation that has been “validated through one's knowledge base and empowered through public education,” and which “has been the means by which whole groups of people have been denied existence and have had their wealth confiscated.”<sup>127</sup> “Cognitive imperialism,” Battiste continues, “denies people their language and cultural integrity by maintaining the legitimacy of only one language, one culture, and one frame of reference,” a “result” of which has been “cultural minorities hav[ing] been led to believe that their poverty and impotence are a result of their race.”<sup>128</sup> “In the Canadian educational system today,” Battiste reports, “Aboriginal people continue to be invisible,” as those “occasional pictures in books are the only images of our participation in the educational world,” content that “does not represent our worldview.”<sup>129</sup> Moreover, “Aboriginal people have had to endure a ‘planting out’ of our systems when students were boarded in white homes to learn proper behaviour and acceptable skills for working in lower-class occupations.”<sup>130</sup>

As many Indigenous scholars have emphasized, Battiste notes that “Aboriginal languages are the basic media for the transmission and survival of Aboriginal consciousness, cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values.”<sup>131</sup> Aboriginal languages “provide distinctive perspectives on and understandings of the world, which educational research has ignored.”<sup>132</sup> “The suppression or extermination of this consciousness in education through the

destruction of Aboriginal languages is inconsistent with the modern constitutional rights of Aboriginal peoples.”<sup>133</sup> Battiste emphasizes: “Where Aboriginal knowledge survives, it is transmitted through Aboriginal language.”<sup>134</sup> The solution?

Instead of requiring Aboriginal students to submit to a third language (French in English-speaking Canada and English in French-speaking Canada), they should have the opportunity to explore their first language in a provincially accredited course in elementary and secondary school, as well as to find appropriate ways to explore their understandings and expand their knowledge and usage of their second language of English or French. Being required to learn French or English as a third language, without a good handle on their first or second language, imposes yet another major hurdle that impedes Aboriginal students from achieving educational equity.<sup>135</sup>

This seems a cosmopolitan curricular suggestion.

Returning to the issue of curricular content, Battiste alleges that “books and materials in provincial public schools do not accurately depict the history and cultural diversity of Canada.”<sup>136</sup> She acknowledges that “some provinces have made great strides in correcting the blatant racism found in texts,” but “the truth is still obscured in favour of a more rational and polished early existence in Canada.”<sup>137</sup> “Beautiful images of Aboriginal peoples in Native regalia,” she adds, “cannot be allowed to subvert the historical truths that publishers wish not to discuss,” as such “polished texts obscure Aboriginal history, cultures, and languages while perpetuating the myth of an empty land in the New World that was ripe for discovery by European explorers.”<sup>138</sup> Dishonesty is followed by deception, as Battiste tells us that the “real justification for including Aboriginal knowledge in the modern curriculum is not so that Aboriginal students can compete with non-Aboriginal students in an imagined world. It is, rather, that immigrant society is sorely in need of what Aboriginal knowledge has to offer.”<sup>139</sup> What “we are witnessing throughout the world,” she summarizes, is “the weaknesses in knowledge based on science and technology,” adding: “It is costing us our air, our water, our earth; our very lives are at stake.”<sup>140</sup>

“The public-school curriculum is limiting the knowledge base of our children,” Battiste continues, denying to them what they need to know to “sustain themselves and the planet in the future.”<sup>141</sup> Not only the non-Indigenous are being denied, Aboriginal children are denied as well: “To deny that tribal epistemology exists and serves a lasting purpose is to deprive Aboriginal children of their inheritance, as well as to perpetuate the belief that different cultures have nothing to offer but exotic food and dance or a shallow first chapter in the story of what is to come.”<sup>142</sup> “To allow tribal epistemology to die through the loss of the Aboriginal languages,” Battiste asserts, “is to allow another world of knowledge to die, one that could help to sustain us.”<sup>143</sup> “As Aboriginal peoples of this land,” she reminds, “we have the knowledge to enable us to survive and flourish in our own homeland,” that contained in “our stories of ancient times [that] tell us how.”<sup>144</sup> “Our languages provide those instructions.”<sup>145</sup>

I am reminded of research brief #1 when Battiste writes: “Experience has shown, however, that it is not enough to formulate policy that recognizes the viability of community-based educational institutions for Aboriginal people in an act,” as “funding and administrative policies must ensure that weighing criteria exist for preserving and developing Aboriginal consciousness and languages in those educational institutions.”<sup>146</sup> Not sure how land-based “consciousness” and “languages” could survive becoming institutionalized, but Battiste is undaunted, complaining that “There are more than enough modern thought-based schools and classrooms in Canada; the problem is to create an Aboriginal language-based curriculum.”<sup>147</sup> “No politician, administrator, or educator should be able to destroy Aboriginal consciousness or language because of other priorities,” she continues, meaning that “explicit funding and policies must ensure that First Nations politicians or administrators cannot confiscate funding designated for the preservation of Aboriginal consciousness or languages for other temporal schemes,” that “the lesson of our history with education.”<sup>148</sup> “The strength of tribalism lies in our collective values,” Battiste concludes, “which must be fostered toward a collective consciousness as opposed to individual gain,” so “schools and community leaders must seek to nurture among the youth these traditional attitudes of collective community as they seek to develop their nation's growth.”<sup>149</sup> “As the collective gains,” she surmises (against the history of, say, the Soviet Union), “so also do its parts.” That “gain” is not economic, as it is “collective healing in our community of the pains of the past and present [that] will shape the attitudes of the youth,” it is “they [who] must understand their past and the context of their present to embark on a new vision of the future.”<sup>150</sup>

In the final chapter that Kiera Brant-Virioukov chose, James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson starts by reminding readers that “Aboriginal people are daily asked to acquiesce to Eurocentric theories of legal context that are based firmly on fictitious state-of-nature theories and cultural differences.”<sup>151</sup> “In one way or another,” he continues, “they are being asked to validate the colonialists' libel ... being asked to affirm alien values and to sacrifice Aboriginal values for them.”<sup>152</sup> What “contemporary liberal society argues [is] that the best Aboriginal people can do is to avoid unnecessary exclusion by fitting in with the Eurocentric version of society.”<sup>153</sup> “In effect,” he alleges, “colonized people are being asked to give up their constitutional rights (that is, their Aboriginal and treaty rights) and to recognize a Eurocentric and individualistic legal tradition that perpetuates the colonial rule of law.”<sup>154</sup> “To acquire freedom in the decolonized and delineated order,” Youngblood Henderson continues, “the colonized must break their silence and struggle to retake possession of their humanity and identity,” requiring (as his essay testifies) that “they have to share Eurocentric thought and discourse with their oppressors; however, to exist with dignity and integrity, they must renounce Eurocentric models and live with the ambiguity of thinking against themselves,” requiring Aboriginal peoples “to create models to help them take their bearings in unexplored territory,” admitting that “educated Aboriginal thinkers have to

understand and reconsider Eurocentric discourse in order to reinvent an Aboriginal discourse based on heritage and language and to develop new postcolonial syntheses of knowledge and law to protect them from old and new dominators and oppressors.”<sup>155</sup> That’s such a tall order I can’t imagine anyone scaling that height. And I’m reminded of Audre Lorde’s admonition that the “master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.”<sup>156</sup>

“In Eurocentric thought,” as Youngblood Henderson cuts “the master’s house” down to size, “it is essential to learn to think and act in a fragmentary manner, balancing the tensions of failing polarities.”<sup>157</sup> “To have mutually exclusive, contradictory opposites, or dualism,” he explains, “requires a certain uniformity of thought about unpacking events in such a way that the opposites will come out the same regardless who does the unpacking.”<sup>158</sup> In reasoning that could be used against his own assertions, he continues: “If there is no agreement on how to divide events or situations between the two poles or categories (or if one concludes that it no longer seems to make a difference), then the distinctions collapse into indeterminacy or contradictions,” and “this collapse of dualism is fatal since modern legal thought is founded on a strategy of differences,” examples of which include “distinctions between public/private, state/society, legislative/judicial, power/law, and law/policy.”<sup>159</sup> “The collapse of difference illustrates the decline of a legal culture and a transformation (or paradigm shift) in contemporary thought,”<sup>160</sup> an assertion that ignores that anti-Aboriginal attitudes derive from “difference” devalued.

“Eurocentric thinkers do not understand the elegance of Aboriginal thought,” Youngblood Henderson continues, adding that Eurocentric thinkers “do not question the negative myths of colonial thought,” in fact they “easily conclude that Aboriginal knowledge, consciousness, and language are irrelevant to contemporary Canadian thought.”<sup>161</sup> “They see Aboriginal life as life-worlds without systems (anarchy),” a state of asocial organization not evident in even 1950s Hollywood-produced cowboy movies. “Yet,” he continues, “when one aspires to decolonize Aboriginal people, these neglected life-worlds contain the authority to heal Aboriginal identities and communities,” and, Youngblood Henderson adds: “Restoring Aboriginal worldviews and languages is essential to realizing Aboriginal solidarity and power.”<sup>162</sup> Those two, however, depend on a third: “Aboriginal thought and identity are centred on the environment in which Aboriginal people live.”<sup>163</sup> How? “As Aboriginal people experienced the forces of an ecosystem,” he explains, “Aboriginal worldviews, languages, consciousness, and order arose.”<sup>164</sup> And so “with the elders’ calls to return to Aboriginal worldviews, languages, knowledge, and order, we need to reexamine their ecological context,” as “such an inquiry requires us to learn from the ecosystem as our ancestors did, as well as to learn from our elders’ experiences.”<sup>165</sup>

“Some Aboriginal thinkers have begun to deal with the gap between Eurocentric and Aboriginal worldviews and language structures,” Youngblood Henderson advises, but “this reexamination is difficult,” as “Eurocentric thought was

created on a negative vision of Aboriginal thought and life.”<sup>166</sup> “It,” like Youngblood Henderson’s essay, “stressed the dissimilarities between Europeans and Aboriginal people, and it used this distinction to create barriers to Aboriginal rights and solidarity.”<sup>167</sup> “At the heart of the conceptual oppression and confusion,” he asserts, “is the idea of the unimaginative savage with little culture or order who needs European civilization and thought to progress,”<sup>168</sup> an idea that apparently infiltrated those who studied native peoples. Imagining themselves as emissaries of a “superior civilization, classic ethnographers assumed an illusion of objectivity, although few of them actually mastered Aboriginal worldviews, consciousness, or languages.”<sup>169</sup> “Most re-created the Aboriginal realm in their own likeness” – earlier he said Eurocentric thinkers only thought in terms of “difference” – “and confidently taught it to Eurocentric society as the actual Aboriginal truth,” as “classic notions of Aboriginal stability, orderliness, and equilibrium still dominate contemporary thought,” that “derived from the Eurocentric illusion of a timeless culture.”<sup>170</sup> This “classic understanding of how Aboriginal people should look and act, and even of what lies ahead for them, is now seen as part of Eurocentric time and thought.”<sup>171</sup>

“Aboriginal people's identities and aspirations suffer under the legacy of these entangling Eurocentric doctrines, names, and methodologies,” Youngblood Henderson continues, “because the classic works do not present clear or fair interpretations of Aboriginal worldviews,” so that “Aboriginal people have had to suggest a total revision of anthropological and social analyses.”<sup>172</sup> “Eurocentric thought has been resistant to such a revision,” and, as a consequence, “around the globe, Aboriginal thinkers have had to prove that the received notion of ‘culture’ as unchanging and homogeneous is not only mistaken but also irrelevant.”<sup>173</sup> If “irrelevant,” I wonder why Youngblood Henderson would think that “we have had to prove to modern society that our worldview is distinct from the cultural ethnographies constructed for us by Eurocentric thought[,] ... prove that we are not brute, timeless events in the state of nature.”<sup>174</sup> Again testifying against Lourde’s admonition, he reports that “we have had to use social analysis to attempt to reverse the process: to dismantle the ideological in order to reveal the cultural (a peculiar blend of objective arbitrariness and subjective taken-for-grantedness),” the “interplay between making the familiar strange and the strange familiar is part of the ongoing transformation of knowledge,”<sup>175</sup> that last idea one associated with Maxine Greene.<sup>176</sup> The “Aboriginal worldview teaches Aboriginal people to feel humble about their existence,” Youngblood Henderson continues, adding: “They are but one strand in the web of life,”<sup>177</sup> an insight shared by Tetsuo Aoki.<sup>178</sup> “In the circle of which all life forms a part,” Youngblood Henderson suggests that “humans are dependent upon all the other forces for their survival.”<sup>179</sup> Sounding slightly like Karl Marx for the moment,<sup>180</sup> Youngblood Henderson tells us that “Aboriginal worldviews also teach that humans exist to share life according to their abilities,” more mystical than Marx but the echo is there: “They exist to care for and renew the web of life, and therefore they must respect

and value all the forces of life,” a “worldview (now echoing Aoki) “often ... called the process of humility.”<sup>181</sup>

“Aboriginal understandings, languages, teachings, and practices developed through direct interaction with the forces of the natural order or ecology,” Youngblood Henderson continues, “experience [that] intimately connects their worldviews and knowledge with a certain space,” one “more than mere ecological awareness; it is a living relationship with a specific environment that is not conceived of as either universal or conventional.”<sup>182</sup> What can that mean? Youngblood Henderson explains: “The Aboriginal worldview may be understood from four complementary perspectives: as a manifestation of Aboriginal language; as a specialized knowledge system; as a unity with many diverse consciousnesses; and as a mode of social order, law, and solidarity. Each perspective of the worldview is learned, not genetically or racially encoded.”<sup>183</sup> Again rejecting any “claims of universal civilization and values,” Aboriginal knowledge “instead ... reflects the complexity of a state of being within a certain ecology.”<sup>184</sup> Sounds somewhat like regionalism, the phenomenon – marked across Canada<sup>185</sup> but evident in every country – of local affiliation (cultural, political, economic) often with linguistic specificity, i.e. dialects or “accents.” Apparently not empirical, Youngblood Henderson then tells us that “Aboriginal knowledge is not a description of reality but an understanding of the processes of ecological change and ever-changing insights about diverse patterns or styles of flux,” complaining that “concepts about ‘what is’ define human awareness of the changes but add little to the actual processes of change,”<sup>186</sup> a complaint that could be made about his depictions of “what is” Aboriginal knowledge.

“To see things as permanent is to be confused about everything,”<sup>187</sup> he cautions, although I’m unsure to whom the caution is directed, as surely historians – to name just one group – hardly “see things as permanent.” Anyway, “an alternative to that understanding is the need to create temporary harmonies through alliances and relationships among all forms and forces,” and “this web of interdependence is a never-ending source of wonder to the Aboriginal mind and to other forces that contribute to the harmony.”<sup>188</sup> “While Eurocentric literature creates a sharp contrast between insiders and strangers in Aboriginal societies,” he alleges, “Aboriginal languages have no concept of ‘strangers,’ as ‘guests’ are “typically assigned to local families or clans for education and responsibilities.”<sup>189</sup> If guests are put to work or assumed to require education, I’m guessing guests were infrequent in Aboriginal communities. Youngblood Henderson doesn’t see this as a liability but a matter of “kinship,” a “necessary part of Aboriginal peace and good order.”<sup>190</sup> “The diplomacy and treaties with the Crown dramatically illustrate this point,” he continues, “because they used kinship as their model,” meaning that: “Within the vast fabric of energies, life forms, families, clans, and confederacies, every person stands in a specific, personal relationship to all the others.”<sup>191</sup> Youngblood Henderson summarizes: “Thus, Aboriginal thought values the group over the individual and the extended family over



the immediate or biological family.”<sup>192</sup>

“As the Seventh Fire teachings say,” Youngblood Henderson recounts, “in rekindling the old flame of the Seventh Fire, the new people will emerge.”<sup>193</sup> Aboriginal peoples “will have to retrace their steps to find what was left by the trail,” and “the task will not be easy,” as it is one of “reclaim[ing] our worldviews, knowledge, languages, and order to find the path ahead.”<sup>194</sup> To do so requires that (1) “we ... sustain our relationship with our environment and follow our elders' advice,” (2) “we must rebuild our nations on our worldviews and our good values,” (3) “we must be patient and thorough, because there are no shortcuts in rebuilding ourselves, our families, our relationships, our spiritual ceremonies, and our solidarity,” and (5) “we must use our abilities to make good choices.”<sup>195</sup> “To remain rational,” he advises, “all human societies must become more ecologically sustainable.”<sup>196</sup>

In her commentary (as referenced at the outset of this brief), Kiera Brant-Birioukov emphasizes the book’s publication date “at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” No “traditional curriculum studies/theory text,” she continues, “it is often referred to as where Battiste first introduced the notion of cognitive imperialism in relation to Indigenous education, alongside other respected Indigenous scholars such as Cajete and Youngblood Henderson.” She reports that “other chapters were left out, including those “focusing on international law in relation to treaty rights; the Hawaiian sovereignty movement; Māori language and self-determination through education.” I was struck by the tone of the chapters she retained, expressing indignation, even outrage, over what has happened since settlers arrived. I was also struck – as noted in the text – by contrasting expressions of Aboriginal thought and knowledge, for instance that between Little Bear’s depiction of Indigenous time as circular and Cajete’s depiction of it as linear, even in phases. From an Aboriginal perspective, such an observation, I suppose, could be considered as beside the point, maybe even disrespectful, but for me underscoring the cultural incommensurability that structures the Indigenous challenge to curriculum studies in Canada.

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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> <https://edu.yorku.ca/edu-profiles/index.php?mid=1986777>

<sup>2</sup> Battiste 2000a.

<sup>3</sup> From Brant-Birioukov's commentary on the book. Upon request, I can provide Kiera's original submission.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Keywords have become a key concept in curriculum studies in Canada: see Wearing et al. 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Battiste 2000b, xix-xx. Of course, many post-colonial and post-modern scholars were not, are not, Indigenous. There is no "singularity of Eurocentric thought."

<sup>8</sup> Battiste, 2000b, xx. The Supreme Court of Canada has limited if any jurisdiction over academic research; it seems a stretch to cite the Court to legitimate Battiste's assertion of the legitimacy of "Indigenous knowledge." (Should not "knowledge" be plural, or is there a "singularity" of Indigenous thought?)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> "Significant sources" oral accounts can be, but definitive? As noted in research brief #121, Gibson and Case disagree.

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- 11 Battiste 2000b, xx-xxi. Is “moral dialogue” dialogue at all? Or is it simply acceding to whatever Indigenous voices say?
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 2000, xxi.
- 15 Ibid. Seems a rather tepid endorsement, no?
- 16 Ibid. “Cultural destiny” with social and economic “support”? Certainly, a post-contact vision of “destiny,” one that leaves one wondering what “restoration” – with its implication of pre-contact cultures, i.e. Indigenous cultures before their corrosion by settlers – can possibly mean.
- 17 2000, 77.
- 18 Ibid. Surely that’s a “problem” with “colonialism,” but if cultures are in “opposition” – conflict – with each other, isn’t it likely that whichever culture that wins – in the settlers’ case by dirty tricks coupled with disease and sheer numbers – will suppress the culture that lost? Certainly that was the case in pre-contact Indigenous-Indigenous conflict, even genocide: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/military-history/history-heritage/popular-books/aboriginal-people-canadian-military/warfare-pre-columbian-north-america.html>
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 2000, 78.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid. It’s not the English language that discourages talking to rocks – of course an English-speaking person can do that – but custom, that fear of involuntary psychiatric hospitalization.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 2000, 81
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 2000, 81-82. For more on Indigenous storytelling, see Archibald 2008. The trickster figure plays a prominent role in African Indigenous culture as well. “Both a trickster

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and the messenger of the gods like the European figure of Hermes, Esu figures prominently in the mythologies of Yoruba cultures found in Nigeria, Benin, Brazil, Cuba, and Haiti” as the “guardian of the crossroads, master of style and of stylus, the phallic god of generation and fecundity, master of that elusive, mystical barrier that separates the divine world from the profane” (Gates 1988, 6).

<sup>38</sup> 2000, 82.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. For maybe the most famous metamorphosis in twentieth-century European literature, see: <https://www.kafka-online.info/the-metamorphosis.html>

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example: <https://www.socratic-method.com/quote-meanings-and-interpretations/martin-heidegger-language-is-the-house-of-the-truth-of-being>

<sup>43</sup> 2000, 84-85.

<sup>44</sup> For Pasolini, Rohdie (1995, 11) explains, “linguistic contamination conflates categories, defies logic, exceeds order; it turns language inside-out, topsy-turvy; as dialect, from below, from a nether world beneath the bourgeois one, corrupts the official bourgeois language that dominates at the top.” For Pasolini, then, “contamination” has no “pejorative connotation,” as “it refers to the action of one element on another with which it finds itself associated” (Lawton 2005, xxxii.)

<sup>45</sup> 2000, 85. An assertion shared by John Ralston Saul (2008).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> 2000, 125.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> 2000, 127-128.

<sup>54</sup> 2000, 131.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> 2000, 138.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Not for lack of trying – see for example: Lipari 2014.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> 2000, 139.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> 2000, 141.

<sup>65</sup> 2000, 152.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>67</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>68</sup> 2000, 154.
- <sup>69</sup> 2000, 155.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>71</sup> 2000, 157.
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>73</sup> 2000, 158.
- <sup>74</sup> 2000, 181.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>77</sup> 2000, 183.
- <sup>78</sup> Probably many non-Indigenous would not, however, associate the uniqueness of the individual person – and education’s role in self-understanding – as finding one’s face. Other metaphors – finding one’s heart, finding one’s way – are more common. But the main point seems the same. Cajete switches from “face” to “heart” in the next sentence.
- <sup>79</sup> 2000, 183. In non-Indigenous conceptions, the concept of “calling” correlates. Non-Indigenous conceptions of vocational education are often linked less with expressing who is through work than with attaining skills for what is, or will be, in demand in the economy.
- <sup>80</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>82</sup> For Grant, I explain (2019, 13), “love of one’s own seemed the centrepiece of his conception of charity that extended beyond his family to humanity.”
- <sup>83</sup> The canonical work on this topic is Miller’s (2019).
- <sup>84</sup> 2000, 183.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>86</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>87</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>88</sup> 2000, 184.
- <sup>89</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>90</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid. Mary Aswell Doll has also studied the educational potential of dreams: see Doll 1982, 1988.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>93</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>94</sup> 2000, 186-187.
- <sup>95</sup> 2000, 187.
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>97</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>98</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>99</sup> 2000, 188.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> 2000, 189.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> 2000c, 192. That's not a serious question, but an in principle impossible question, as "equitable outcomes" is in principle impossible - unless in a future I trust I won't live to see when devices are implanted in schoolchildren that ensure everything comes out equitably, i.e. the same.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. That seems another impossible aspiration - participating "fully" in Canadian society while realizing her/his full potential as Aboriginal. Assimilation is inevitable if participating "fully." Self-segregation might shield Aboriginal culture from is contamination by modernity, but only if "modern" technology is also shunned. Not likely, is it.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> If the Cajete essay is an example, "coherence" does not characterize at least his Indigenous educational thought, and "applying" it ensures misunderstanding. As Aoki (2005 [1987], 154) appreciated decades ago, "applying is reproducing something general in a concrete situation," a "reproductive view of application [that] embraces the view that application is separated from understanding, and, in fact, follows it. It is an instrumental view."

<sup>114</sup> 2000, 192.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> 2000, 192-193.

<sup>117</sup> 2000, 193.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> 2000, 194.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> 2000, 197.

<sup>127</sup> 2000, 198.

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- 128 Ibid.
- 129 Ibid.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 2000, 199.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Ibid.
- 134 Ibid.
- 135 2000, 200.
- 136 Ibid.
- 137 Ibid.
- 138 Ibid.
- 139 2000, 201.
- 140 Ibid.
- 141 2000, 202.
- 142 Ibid.
- 143 Ibid.
- 144 Ibid.
- 145 Ibid.
- 146 2000, 203.
- 147 Ibid.
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 2000, 207.
- 150 Ibid.
- 151 2000, 248.
- 152 Ibid.
- 153 Ibid.
- 154 Ibid. That’s an odd assertion, given that the very notion of “rights” derives from Europe: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/human-rights#:~:text=The%20conception%20of%20human%20rights%20as%20natural%20rights,the%20Renaissance%20to%20the%20Peace%20of%20Westphalia%20%281648%29.>
- 155 2000, 249-250.
- 156 <https://www.socratic-method.com/quote-meanings/audre-lorde-the-masters-tools-will-never-dismantle-the-masters-house>
- 157 2000, 251.
- 158 Ibid. While there are a number of moving parts in that sentence, I stop with “dualism” to note that the concept is not uncritically accepted in “Eurocentric thought”: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dualism/>
- 159 Ibid.
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 2000, 252.



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- 162 Ibid.
- 163 Ibid.
- 164 Ibid.
- 165 Ibid.
- 166 2000, 253.
- 167 Ibid.
- 168 Ibid.
- 169 2000, 255.
- 170 Ibid. So Aboriginal worldviews are chaotic? That allegation Youngblood Henderson dismissed earlier.
- 171 Ibid.
- 172 Ibid.
- 173 Ibid. I am reminded of Lear's analysis of the post-contact cultural collapse of the Crow, raising the "question of how one could be psychologically equipped to face a cultural collapse" (2006, 62). Cultural collapse is, Lear notes, also a "subjective catastrophe" (2006, 96). "It is as though there is no longer an I there" (2006, 3).
- 174 Ibid.
- 175 Ibid.
- 176 See Greene 1973.
- 177 2000, 259.
- 178 "The Chinese knew well what it is for humans to live in wisdom," Aoki (2005 [1993], 213) writes, "for in their language, wisdom is inscribed in a family of words: human, humility, humus, and humor, all etymologically related as they are, too, in our language."
- 179 2000, 259.
- 180 <https://www.socratic-method.com/quote-meanings-and-interpretations/karl-marx-from-each-according-to-his-abilities-to-each-according-to-his-needs>
- 181 2000, 259.
- 182 2000, 260.
- 183 2000, 261.
- 184 2000, 264.
- 185 <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/regionalism>
- 186 2000, 265.
- 187 Ibid.
- 188 Ibid.
- 189 2000, 270.
- 190 Ibid.
- 191 Ibid.
- 192 Ibid.
- 193 2000, 274. Concerning the Seven Fire teachings, see: <https://www.ya-native.com/nativeamerica/theteachingsofthesevenfiresprophecy.html>

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.