METHODOLOGY OF DECOLONIZING GENDER AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A VIEW FROM CHINA

by

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Abstract

This research study is an analysis, which I undertook during my internship at UNESCO Office Beijing, of a multilateral inter-governmental agency’s Gender and Development conceptual framework in education and implementation of this framework in education at the field office level. By deconstructing dominant paradigms of development, the study makes a case that international development and Gender and Development paradigms are shot through with hegemonic feminist and dominant development thought which operate to mutually reinforce each other.

In wishing to go beyond a project of deconstruction that implicates “first world developers” and Euroamerican-orientated feminists, this study then shifts to another path. The goal of this path is to extend on Chela Sandoval’s (2000) Methodology of the Oppressed to identify and specify a methodology of decolonizing. This methodology is one which aims to look at possible psychological and ideological aspects of decolonizing mind and heart in development. This approach is profoundly shaped by Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) work and aims to continue a theme she speaks to in Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. Combining this with using love collectively as social movement, this methodology of decolonizing seeks to contribute to the increasing resistance and agitation among a diverse array of thinkers to transform development’s dominant paradigm.

Throughout, I aim to make transparent my herstory, motivations, and locations from which I approach this research topic as well as my personal journey through decolonizing transformations. This journey is stirred by personal experiences of ‘awakening’ that have been inspired by conversations with friends, family, comrades-in-struggle and UNESCO Beijing colleagues, and guided primarily by the works of Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Chela Sandoval, Arturo Escobar, Desmond Tutu, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, James Fadiman and Robert Frager, Gloria Anzaldúa, bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Patricia Monture-Angus, Aihwa Ong, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Cornel West, among many other admirable activists striving for greater humanity in today’s world of gross inequalities.
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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

The fourth daughter of a Chinese father and a Canadian mother, I have been drawn to understand my linguistic, value-laden, cultural and geographical roots from a young age. Given that I was born and raised in Western society in a small northern community in British Columbia, Canada, I am presently more drawn to understanding my Chinese heritage. However, these terms—Canadian, Chinese—as Kirin Narayan (2003) states, “are broad labels deriving from modern nation-states” (p. 288). Should I instead say that my mother, born and raised in upper middle-class Shaughnessy in Vancouver to social and political activist parents with lines of descent from England and Scotland, became involved with my Chinese father while a volunteer nurse’s aid and my father a medical resident interning in Vancouver General Hospital? Yet, shouldn’t I add that it is my father’s parents who are originally from rural Fujian, China and emigrated to British colonial Malaysia in the 1920’s where my father was born and raised? Is it helpful to know that due to my mother’s parents’ social and political activist organizing against the Vietnam War (amongst other unconventional counter-hegemonic activities), they were blacklisted by the United States government as “commies” under the McCarthy era that aimed to stamp out “red commies” in North America who were ‘perceived’ to support communist governments? Or is it useful to know that my maternal grandfather’s father and his family were sent from Ontario in 1905 by a Protestant church for him to serve as a medical missionary in an already previously White-man ‘settled’ First Nations community in northern B.C.? However, should I also mention that in 1917 he left the church because of his discontentment and disillusionment over the church’s support of the First World War?

For anyone familiar with the history of China, shouldn’t I also mention that my father’s father was raised in a Christian village due to missionary influences in the 1800’s while my father’s mother was raised just over and around the hills in a Buddhist village, but after marriage became a very devout Christian exuding quiet, simple strength in her faith? Should I add that my father’s family, along with all other Chinese, Indians and Malays, did not have the right to vote under British colonial power until 1957? Perhaps I should add that in the 1940s my father fled in the middle of the night with his parents and eight siblings under the care of his second sister to escape the Japanese army with whom many Malays joined forces to oust the Chinese out of Malaysia. Or should I mention that when Malaysia did gain independence, my father, like most children in Chinese rubber tree and sugar cane farming families, was not permitted by the Malaysian government to enter higher education institutions? Or should I preface this by first saying that the land my father’s family tilled and ate from was sold by British colonial power as if they owned the land in the first place, not the Malays indigenous to the area? Isn’t it interesting to further note that the rubber my father’s older brother and five older sisters collected each morning before school at 3 a.m. was sent to colonial Britain to be used in the war effort during World War II? Or that the funds that supported my father’s move to North America came from pooled sources through my father’s mother’s church and the hard-earned money from his six older siblings? When my father first came to the southern United States as an international student on scholarship, is it useful to point out that he clearly remembers the

1 I would like to acknowledge Kirin Narayan for inspiring me to write my multiplex identity using this rhetorical method through her article, How native is a “native” anthropologist? (pp. 285-305) in Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader by Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (2003, New York: Routledge).
days when signs read “No Blacks, Whites Only” and thus did not know which restrooms, buses and buildings were ‘appropriate’ for him to enter or sit down so he sat in the middle of the bus and alternated between restrooms designated for black men and those for white men? Or would it better locate my father that since he came to North America on a cargo ship at the age of 16, he has ‘forgotten’ much of his Chinese language?

While this is not the entire sum of my roots, I feel it is critical, as Kirin Narayan (2003) explains, “[to] invoke these threads of a culturally tangled identity to demonstrate that a person may have many strands of identification available, [whether desirable or not] strands that may be tugged into the open or stuffed out of sight” depending on the temporal, geographical, social, cultural and political contexts and spaces one is in. Yet, in these strands of identification, it does not suffice to speak of mixed ancestry as being composed of two ‘halves’ because “two halves cannot adequately account for the complexity of an identity in which multiple countries, regions, religions, [ways of thinking] and classes may come together” (288). As will become more apparent throughout this thesis, it is critical for me to draw attention to these culturally tangled threads because they shape the lenses through which I read the world and act in it, and the ways in which I do research.

Locating Myself—Feminism, Gender, China and International Development

My interest in feminism can be traced back to my growing-up years when my older sisters and I had daily karate workouts with my father. These sessions were not merely about learning well-executed, precise punching, kicking, blocking, throwing and falling techniques or about learning the physical movements required to go through the various levels of kata. We spent just as much, if not more time, listening to and discussing stories about meanings of independence, genuine relationships and togetherness. As well, we learned various martial arts-related philosophies and strategies on how to assess an array of different life situations and their potential harm to us—on an abstract level this included how to turn an opponent into a friend, or at least remain open to friendship in the face of enmity. On a very practical level this included how to emotionally and psychologically deal with conflict and taunting peers in grade school.

I remember one particular workout we had after school when I was nine. My father sternly and passionately shared his thoughts on a particular vision for us: “I want all of you four girls to be able to support yourselves when you are older and married. I don’t want you to have to depend on your future husbands financially, intellectually, physically or emotionally. So get as high an education as you can. And even if something needs fixing or repair—plumbing, flat tire, spark plugs, mudding, tile-laying, fence-building—you should have the capacity to do these things yourself. But it’s a tough world for girls. To do this, you will have to work twice as hard as any boy.”

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2 Kata is the heart of karate (may be referred to as “forms” in other martial arts styles). Because of the potentially fatal nature of seriously practicing martial arts directly on people, moves became incorporated into katas, or forms, which are a series of movements that tell a story of self-defense of an individual against her/his imaginary opponent(s). Each of these movements can then be carefully studied and applied separately with a willing partner in order to fully understand the whole story of a kata’s meaning. There are increasing levels of difficulty of kata—physically, intellectually and conceptually—as one progresses in ability and psychological maturity.
It may seem ironic that these words came from my father, not my mother, a man, not a woman. However, make no mistake in understanding that while these words came from my father, it has been my mother who, through her actions, exemplifies many of these strengths. As a result, throughout my adolescent years I often gauged my skill and ability level against that of my male peers using the image of my mother’s fortitude and strength as a guide. It was only until much later in graduate school that I could articulate my subconscious distaste of using male achievements and standards as the norm to judge female competence and ability. This gender normative is illustrated through the slogan I grew up with in the 1970s ‘girls can do whatever boys can do’ and later, in the 1980s, when it shifted to the implied meaning that girls ‘can even do it better’. These slogans represent, respectively, “liberal feminism” in its concern to demonstrate that women are as “fully human”, as “fully rational” as men, and “radical feminism” in which women are posited as superior to men, in intellect and ability (Jaggar, 1983).

In graduate school I have found solace in feminist theories that understand feminism as a “movement to end sexism” (hooks, 2000b) because that directs attention away from a poisonous, conflict-based approach that sees ‘men as enemy’. Rather, understanding feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression re-directs attention and awareness towards “systems of domination and the interrelatedness of sex, race and class oppression” among several other forms of domination, regardless who upholds and sustains sexism (hooks, 2000b, p. 33). It is the intersection of race and class with gender in these feminist theories that provides explanation for me on the Othering I experienced in elementary school as well as explanation for the exoticization and racialization I continue to experience as an adult woman of mixed ancestry.

However, although the Othering I experienced as a child did not construct me as indolent or immoral, it did construct me as biologically, culturally and socially inferior, impure based on race, gender and class lines. In fact, it was such a problem for teachers and peers to just perceive my sisters and I as hard workers (i.e. rather than indolent “Other”), that the home chores we had to do—gardening, landscaping, construction building and animal raising—were likened to forced child labour through the questioning of my father’s (i.e. not my mother’s) parenting philosophy and skills! I will return to this later in chapter four. Exoticization (another form of Othering), on the other hand, is expressed out of both simple curiosity and honest ignorance. It is also used as a method intended to degrade and debase my person, my mixed race female body (e.g. through hypersexualization as pure sex object). The racialization I refer to is one in which assumptions, in different contexts, are placed on me that place my identity in a confined box that constructs me and expects me to ‘act’ and ‘speak’ as either White or Chinese as if they can only be understood separately rather than seeing that I hold those strands of identification simultaneously.³

It has not been until this level of education that I understand in my ‘head’, not just through my experiences, that ‘Othering’ is a colonizing process of social construction and objectification of women of mixed race heritage. See Parker and Song (2001) in Rethinking ‘Mixed Race’; Camper (1994) in Miscegenation Blues: Voices of Mixed Race Women; and Anzaldúa and Keating (2002) in this bridge we call home: radical visions for transformation.

³ In all of this, I do recognize that many children, youth and adults may be Othered, exoticized and racialized based on any point of difference not seen to be shared with dominant groups. Thus, I am not claiming my experiences are any more important. I believe they simply add to the larger story of the Othering, exoticization and racialization of women of mixed race heritage. See Parker and Song (2001) in Rethinking ‘Mixed Race’; Camper (1994) in Miscegenation Blues: Voices of Mixed Race Women; and Anzaldúa and Keating (2002) in this bridge we call home: radical visions for transformation.
the ‘other’ by dominant groups. It uses attitudes and beliefs underscored by supremacy to construct ‘Others’ as less than, deviant, inferior, indolent and immoral (Dei, 1996; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Sandoval, 2000). In this process, all the anxieties, contradictions and irrationalities of a dominant group are projected onto an excluded group; identity is then constructed through being the antithesis of that other group (Rutherford, 1990; Young, 1997). Thus, Othering is dependant on a way of thinking that produces mutually exclusive binaries and this process in turn represses heterogeneity (Young, 1997). Edward Said (1978) refers to this as a Western discourse of the “Other”. This process of Othering is “expresse[d] and represent[ed]...culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles” (p. 2).

While karate, throughout my childhood and young adulthood, has been an outlet for me—physically, emotionally and intellectually—it also compounds notions of exoticization being a female of mixed race heritage having applicable knowledge of martial arts. It challenges the patriarchal-based spiral of assumptions that karate, or martial arts overall, is a male activity because it is ‘violent’ or simply requires much physical strength. This patriarchal compounded exoticization and debasing of martial arts-abled mixed race women is demonstrated in popular Western cinematic culture. Look at the television series *Dark Angel* where mixed race woman Jessica Alba is the main character playing the role of an escapee of a genetically mutated generation trained in fighting. Or look at the now classic *Charlie’s Angels* that portrays Chinese American Lucy Liu as bi-racial sex object with John Cleese cast as her white father and her Chinese mother reduced to a silent photograph.

In fact, this whole (re)presentation of ‘mixed race’ is highly problematic because it presents a juxtaposition to ‘pure race’¹ which then necessitates raising the question of what ‘race’ is. It is interesting to note that ‘race’ has been set up as a construction since long ago with the European desire to classify ‘the Other’ (Smith, 1999). Combined with the increasing emphasis on scientific methods of research that value and claim objectivity, science was also used to ‘prove’ that some ‘races’ are more biologically advanced, intelligent, capable and aesthetically appealing, than others (Barash, 1990; Schiebinger, 1990). Through the eye of the (male) European beholder, this placed the ‘White’, ‘caucasian’ race at the top of this hierarchy (Jacques, 2003) for whom “the question was how each of these [racial and sexual] subordinate groups measured up to the European male” (Schiebinger, 1990, p. 404). This has been named by those in resistance as ‘scientific racism’. I believe ‘race’ is a socially constructed, relational identity determined by nation-state borders, the dominant social order one lives in and forms and types of relationships that engage oneself. ‘Mixed race’ then is also a social construction. There is also no single conception or experience of it given its multiple histories (e.g. colonization, love, rape) diversity of cultures, languages, regions and individuals involved. However, scientific racism continues to shape the implicit juxtaposition of ‘pure race’ with ‘mixed race’ in that mixed is ‘impure’ and therefore ‘inferior’. I have struggled on and off with the term ‘mixed’ and ‘mixed race’ as identity descriptors for a long time. Although I have not yet found better language that cannot be abused in such dehumanizing ways, nor present

¹ I am grateful to Kogila Adam-Moodley for pointing this out to me.
problematics with ‘race’, I choose to privilege this term and location for myself, if anything, for my mental health.

My interest in gender as it relates particularly to education in China was nourished through the oral childhood stories told by my father about how much my 奶奶 (pronounced ‘nai nai’ meaning paternal grandmother) and many women in our ancestral homeland of China “eat bitter” (吃苦 pronounced ‘chi ku’). My father would share stories about my 奶奶 (nai nai’s) daily life experiences and obstacles she faced in her desire for schooling as a young girl. She was the oldest sibling in a family with two brothers living in the mountainous, rural regions of Fujian province. It was not an option for her to attend school. We were always told such stories to develop our own 吃苦 (chi ku) ability in school and life. These stories intrigued me deeply and planted the seed for my interest in gender relations and China. As well, they served to ground me with oral history and knowledge of my ancestry and the struggles of my foremothers. It was through these stories that a hunger grew within me to know my past; as an adolescent teenager I resolved to find my Chinese ancestral roots. I hungered to find the people my grandparents once lived with, and the soil and fields they once tilled. I craved to connect the stories heard only from my father about my 奶奶 (nai nai) in particular, with the multiple living stories from many relatives today. It was not until several years later I understood that in order to fully realize an understanding of my roots, I needed to make a commitment to connect with relatives in Fujian that we had lost over 75 years earlier with my grandparents’ emigration.

Thus drawn to returning to find my roots, I promptly left Canada for China in 1998 where I ended up making my home for the next three years. Having graduated from the University of British Columbia with an undergraduate degree in Education, I earned my living through teaching English in a public Traditional Chinese Medical College. Having been raised primarily in an English-speaking environment both in the home and at school, I was exposed to views that although English may stand as a national language of democracy in Canada, I use ‘location’ to represent the dynamic, shifting perspectives I carry with me which are influenced by my own various experiences. I follow Linda Alcoff’s (1991) use of locations to mean “social locations, or social identities”, which invariably have an “epistemically significant impact” on how I conceive, perceive and speak about the world and my relationship to it. See her article, “The problem of speaking for others” in Cultural Critique, 20(Winter), pp. 5–32.

To be able to “eat bitter”, ‘吃苦’ (chi ku), refers to one’s ability to bear hardships and suffering silently without complaint regardless of the physical, mental or emotional pain inflicted. In the oral stories I heard, 吃苦 has always been spoken of as a virtuous quality to have because it portrays one’s strength of character, especially of women. It was particularly virtuous for women of my 奶奶 (nai nai)’s era in her rural context to have.

7 I use the concept of “returning” to refer to a culture that is my heritage that I am drawn to understanding, not to refer as if I were physically born in China. I also use it to refer to all the history, recorded and unrecorded, that precedes me which has played and continues to play a large role in shaping me today. It is the knowledge of this history and its embodiment in me—the herstory of myself in relation to my (patrilineal) ancestors—that I return to. I simultaneously experience “belatedness” and “natality” of this herstory through this return. See Natasha Levinson’s (1997) piece entitled, “Teaching in the Midst of Belatedness: The Paradox of Natality in Hannah Arendt’s Educational Thought” in Educational Theory, 47(4), pp. 435-451.

8 My sisters and I were all exposed to various intensities of Chinese language studies (both ‘Mandarin’ and our grandparents’ local hometown dialect) at home and at school. We attended informal Chinese putonghua classes after elementary school and while 奶奶 (nai nai) lived with us for five years, some of us learned our local Fujian dialect (unfortunately I did not until coming to China). However, due to the Othering already occurring at school and the predominant usage of English at home and with/in the community, I, along with my sisters, resisted learning Chinese. This is a great regret for me now as I struggle to learn in my adulthood and to become literate with my own herstorical background and language.
through its instruction materials and teaching methodologies, and “with the expansion of the British empire, English was made an instrument of domination and silencing; it was/is used to regulate and police access to authority and knowledge among colonized peoples” (Willingsky, 1998, p. 191). Thus, as Willingsky (1998) states, it has been and is “a culturally destructive vehicle for imperialism abroad” (p. 210). It cannot be denied that English has been/is the language of the capital seats of global political and economic authority, which lie primarily in the geographic West in Washington, New York, Los Angeles and London. Together, these cities (of which Canadian cities also conform to) operate transnationally; they emanate unity and the West’s global hegemony using English and American language and culture as the medium of communication and foundation for epistemological understanding (Willinsky, 1998).

As such, many students I had in my classes were disgruntled at having to learn the language of the hegemonic West and questioned the usefulness of English in their future careers in Traditional Chinese Medicine. This was a particularly difficult space for me to negotiate—on one hand, for me to encourage my students to learn English meant participating in the hegemony\(^9\) of the West and polarized me with Them on the other side although I was not interested at all in “teach[ing] English as if it were the soul of civilized knowing, the heart of great literature, and the very tongue of democracy” (Willingski, 1998, p. 191). On the other hand, it was a contradiction to reassure students that learning English did not matter as that was what I was hired to do. Hence, the more I taught English, the more I felt uncomfortable teaching it to my college-level students, however gracious and keen they were. Teaching disgruntled or eager students, I was always conscious of a power dynamic that elevated me, as a ‘native'\(^10\) English speaker from a perceived ‘developed’ Western country, to a position of power and dominance, whether I wanted it or not. At times I lived in denial of this power when temptations to use it for greater prestige and privilege ran strong. Wasn’t English language learning just simply part of the national academic requirement that all students had to fulfill in China regardless of my presence in my designated role as ‘Foreign English Teacher’?

Without the language and framework to specifically discuss this imbalance in social power with my students, I subconsciously turned to other methods in an attempt to even out the balance of social power. Combined with more personal reasons\(^11\), I fervently immersed myself in Chinese language studies to show my sincere reciprocal interest in language learning and also engaged in activities with my students that they enjoyed and invited me to participate in. It was only until coming to graduate school that I was able to articulate my intuition and experience about

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\(^9\) My use of “hegemonic” and “hegemony” follows the interpretation that Lynn Kwiatkowski (1998) understands of Jean and John Comaroff (1991), who stated that hegemony “refer[s] to that order of signs and practice, relations and distinctions, images and epistemologies—drawn from a historically situated cultural field—that come to be taken-for-granted as the natural and received shape of the world and everything that inhabits it. [Yet] hegemony is never total... It is always threatened by the vitality that remains in the forms of life it thwarts. It follows then, that the hegemonic is constantly being made—and, by the same token, may be unmade” (Kwiatkowski, 1998, p. 29).

\(^10\) As illuminated by John Willinsky (1998), there is a “linguistic chauvinism embodied in this notion of the native speaker” (p. 197). It divides and sustains those countries where English is historically the national language to be more linguistically, and thus, culturally superior, from those countries where English is either not spoken or was imported and imposed as part of the educational apparatus of the imperialist project. This ‘linguicism’, in effect, creates and reproduces unequal divisions of power, social status and resources among people all defined on the basis of language. As Willinsky quotes Joshua Fishman who observed in 1977, “unfortunately we know far more about how to help the world learn English (little though that may be), than we do about how to help native speakers of English learn about the world.” (p. 194, italics my emphasis to note the previous point on ‘native speaker').

\(^11\) See footnote #8.
this form of domination as a form of neo-colonialism. Thus began the molding, albeit unconsciously, of a decolonizing framework that provides the foundation framework for this thesis.

My interest in international development came out of the desire to find some way to assist my relatives living in rural areas of China; young girls and boys in my community of family could not attend higher levels of formal schooling after junior middle school. Some youth started temporary work to gain practical work experience as a way to enter the workforce; with others it is unclear what happened as they moved to larger cities and rarely, if ever returned. Concerned for the future of the youth and the larger family, the cousin-brothers of my generation initiated a Family Trust Fund in 1992 in the name of my 尼尼's (pronounced 'yeye' meaning paternal grandfather) older brother.

The focus of the Fund is two-fold: (1) To provide support/incentive/reward to those children of family who are able to enter higher levels of education and high quality middle and high schools, and (2) to assist family members in financial need. The way it operates is that families willing to participate contribute 10 Renminbi a month (about CDN $1.60) into an account held in a local bank. Participation through membership fees then allows their children to apply for one-time scholarships from the Fund to assist with the costs of schooling. Financial assistance is given where there is an assessed need as a result of being cheated, unexpected ill health/accident or unemployment.

The Fund is remarkably successful and functions well because of the leadership of older, respected members of the family and the strong emphasis underlying the whole initiative, which is on keeping the family together. Through supporting one another, the Fund brings the family together to meet and discuss the hardships or ill health that some family members endure and find ways that the rest of the family can offer support in action.

When I first came to China in 1998 and found out about the Family Fund, the monthly fee was half that of the present fee so the accumulated funds were too low to offer much assistance for children’s education or families’ needs. On behalf of the concern of my father and family in Canada, I posed some questions about criteria for giving scholarships and financial assistance. I shared stories of my father’s journey from Malaysia to North America that was made possible through the pooled support of his parents and sisters and brothers. As with many others’ stories,

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12 See chapter two, *A Methodology of De-colonizing Hegemonic (Gender and) Development* for further explanation.
13 In the early formations of my thesis writing, I used the term “anti-colonialist” but in the process found it to be highly problematic for me for this study. Rather, I use “de-colonizing” and feel it is critical to differentiate between the two. Anti-colonialist denotes an already inherent dichotomy between two opposing frameworks that sets up the very terms of a colonialist framework to be the standard upon which one acts against, therefore requiring the anti-prefix. This form of semantics actually serves to reinscribe the power of influence of a colonialist framework. Yet I am not dismissing anti-colonial positions and concepts as an important tool of resistance, as a stance to deal with those more hardheaded, hardened colonizers. But where one implicates oneself and/or where one wants to bring others along in understanding and applying social justice concepts, I find a framework of decolonizing to be more appropriate because it is based on healing relations. Also, where decolonizing implies ‘the ends’ or the results as static, I see a de-colonizing framework as a way to move out of a strict, static dichotomy towards a dynamic, ongoing process that is flexible and adaptable to one’s/a community’s changing realities. Thus, beginning at the personal level, through this process a person can face the tangle of complexities of simultaneously (or not simultaneously) being both colonizer and colonized, depending on contexts, realities and the individual. I believe this approach helps one move out of the Us/Them, Self/Other dichotomy.
upon gaining an education and earning an income, my father then financed many of his siblings’ schooling and immigration to North America. As one 叔叔 (pronounced ‘shushu’ meaning father’s younger brother/uncle) put it, it is this education, the cornerstone of my 奶奶 (nai nai’s) quest, that transformed the livelihood of the entire family from struggling to barely make ends meet to living comfortably.

From these long conversations with relatives in China, we agreed the Fund needed a stronger emphasis on investing in the education of the younger generation. An agreed set of criteria was then established for giving financial assistance and scholarships according to the various levels and types of schooling. Combined with some financial support, this question-posing and story-sharing was a catalyst to give the Fund both a more specific focus and the financial means to carry this vision out. Several children and youth have since been able to realize the benefit of such a Family Trust Fund. What’s more, after recently (August 2004) translating and sending this year’s financial statement to family outside China with a call for more extended family to support our relatives in China, more concerted, sincere support is taking place. Borrowing Nancy Fraser’s (1997; Fraser & Naples, 2004) words, this can be thought of as a “politics of redistribution”.

Throughout this process my role turned out to be one of probing with questions, communicating with family abroad, and facilitating discussion, design and implementation of the Fund. However, there have been several times where I had to catch myself from thinking and acting in ways that valued my knowledge (read: intelligent, educated, modern) over the knowledge of my relatives (read: ignorant, uneducated, tradition-bound). Through my involvement in this family project, I realized that my desire to ‘assist’, even my own relatives, leads to a loud prevailing question, ‘What capacities do I think I have that I think I can offer people whose context and reality are much different than my own and the one I was raised in?’ This was a tough question to face.

With my Chinese language skills and sensitivity to the nuances of Chinese culture in China, after coming back to Canada I was offered an opportunity to work as a short-term research assistant for the World Bank on a gender impact study of an agricultural development project in northeastern China. The research team consisted of a Chinese national programme social development specialist from the World Bank office in Beijing and two of us Canadian nationals. As part of this three-person team, I attended meetings, listened to reports from local officials and typed out research notes for my colleagues. After learning agricultural terminology in Chinese, and the types of questions being asked, I then also conducted household interviews with farmers. These interviews sought to understand the possible impacts of the project on the lives of women and men farmers as well as on relationships in their family, and village or township community.

Being a ‘first world developer’, I was all too eager to connect myself to the prestige of a World Bank research activity being carried out within a very large multi-million dollar (USD) project. At this time I was not yet fully aware of the Bank’s policies, practices and procedures for engaging in development. Plus, I could not yet name or read perils and problems that I only felt at a very subconscious level underpin its work. My very first encounter at the beginning of the project stands out however to become a solid rock upon which deeper awareness has come to crack open. This experience was the first informal meeting with one of the provincial level project teams. The research team member from the Beijing World Bank office had not yet
arrived, so it was the two of us women who began introductions. But immediately, discussion centered not on details of the project itself. Rather, the project team raised questions on the ethics of the Bank's project approach and denied the need for a gender impact study at all. The tone of the meeting quickly shifted and became very heated, centering on back and forth criticism and defense of such a gender study. Coming from the project team leader, he also mixed this with heavy criticism of the Bank's policies and conditions for development loans.

In fact, it seemed to me then and even more so now that project staff, represented by their team leader, were venting about the Bank exactly because the two of us were not World Bank staff, but hired contract consultants. And this venting I see as tied to dominant development. For the government, gender in China can be a highly volatile topic for several reasons. One of these is due to the dominant ways gender has been imposed by Western-based development agencies that do not respectfully consider and understand the realities, experiences and histories of a changing gender concept in China. Of course I had no authority, nor any wish to speak during this 'meeting'. Although I wanted to leave many times during its three-hour duration, it was my very first lesson with and from within a major multilateral development agency about both the colonizing practices of development work as well as modes of resistance. However, the dynamics of the entire project were much more complicated than merely describing it as World Bank versus local developer. While corruption and levels of capacity and awareness are acknowledged as particular issues in China\(^\text{14}\), the misuse of funds often cited by Bank staff during this project may also be understood as one of these modes of resistance by this provincial level project team.

This experience, like what I described interacting with my relatives, was extremely disturbing for me. What capacities do development agencies and many of those working in them think they have that they believe others are in so dire need of? Where is the acknowledgement that local people have capacities already? Why don't these agencies ask local people what it is they would like the agency to do, rather than impose the agency's perception of their needs on them?

All these questions served to form the groundwork that directed me to research international development leading me to graduate school.

### Development's Dominant Paradigm

Upon researching, I have found most of the literature to be written (in English) about or from within Western-based development institutions\(^\text{15}\) that operate in countries affecting peoples in the Majority World.\(^\text{16}\) Dominant discourse in Western development agencies' policy documents and reports centers around the influences and impacts these agencies (believe they have) based on their mandates to assist, train, or develop some aspect of society in a Majority World country. However, what is particularly troubling is that mandates and subsequent development reports are written with the heavy-laden assumption that people and governments

\(^{14}\) From conversations with relatives in Fujian, friends and former students in China and UNESCO Beijing office Chinese national staff.

\(^{15}\) Further expand on 'Western-based development institutions' in chapter two.

\(^{16}\) Drawing from one of my graduate classes and many follow-up conversations with Marilou Carrillo, from whom I first heard this term, I use it in resistance to mainstream media and development terms such as 'Third World', 'developing countries', 'in the South', that use these terms without situating their meaning or context and thus often only serve to marginalize and reproduce unequal divisions of power and resources. I will further expand on my use of this term in chapter two.
in Majority World countries are economically, socially or politically poor or ‘backward’ and thus ‘underdeveloped’ deserving ‘Third World’, ‘developing’ status. This type of discourse alludes to simplistic dichotomous models of development: expert/non-expert, us/them, developer/recipient, traditional/modern and civilized/uncivilized. In these binaries the West asserts itself as the ‘developed’, technologized, capitalist, liberal democratic countries toward which all other nations will inevitably develop.\footnote{W.W. Rostow’s modernization theory of stages of economic growth theorized in the late 1950’s has influenced this model of development in this direction. As quoted from Kwiatkowski (1998), Rostow’s five stages of growth include: “the traditional society, the preconditions for takeoff to industrial growth, the takeoff point, the drive to maturity toward an industrial society, and, lastly, the age of high mass consumption” (p. 19).}

These assumed simple dichotomous relationships are typically ignored by international development agencies in the West because of a desire to protect Western agencies’ and state’s interests to maintain power differentials disguised as equal ‘partnerships’ (Crewe and Harrison, 1998; Klees, 1999). Within this dichotomizing, dominant discourse of development, there are several unspoken, hidden tenets as exposed by Crewe and Harrison (1998) that Western development agencies use to legitimize direct intervention and entrance into ‘underdeveloped’, ‘developing’ or ‘Third World’ societies: there are gaps in local knowledge where traditions can be ‘barriers’ that impede development; material gain is the prime motivating factor for individuals or households to engage in development projects; technology is neutral, value-free and \textit{man}-made (versus \textit{people}-made); and development is a social evolutionary process that entails “proceeding through stages from primitive, to savage, to barbaric, to horticultural, to agricultural, and, finally, to Western style [mass-consumer] civilization” (Kwiatkowski, 1998). As Kumar (2003) asserts, what is particularly troubling about this linear notion of development is that it makes value judgments—it “implies that some cultures are backward and lower and that others are advanced and higher.”

To buttress construction of these dichotomies of First World/Third World as developed/developing, Western-based development agencies use colonialist frames to underlie their development programs and resulting scholarship when speaking about/for/to the ‘developing’ ‘Third World’ (Escobar, 1995; Kwiatkowski, 1998; Mohanty, 1991, 2003; Ong, 1988). In these colonialist frames, ‘Third World’ women in particular are homogenized to constitute a singular oppressed group; cultures are essentialized and criticized for customs that are seen as ‘barriers’ to ‘development’; and peoples, mainly women, who are viewed as non-Western (\textit{read}: ignorant, uneducated, poor, tradition-bound, domestic, victimized) are codified as Other (Crewe and Harrison, 1998; Mohanty, 1991, 2003; Narayan, 2000; Ong, 1988). Thus, Western-based development institutions hold particular discursive power through dominating scholarship in the field of development. Much of what is written in policy documents and reports determines resulting discourses of development as scholars in the West and the Majority World react to, or resist engaging in dialogue around this dominant development scholarship.

All these factors combined—childhood stories, personal experiences and research—have led me not only to have a passion for China, gender, rural education and international development, but also more importantly I believe, to have a passion for framing my world and my research through a critical feminist, decolonizing lens. I will further expand on this framework in the following chapter.
Purpose of the Study and Research Questions: Involving UNESCO

Regarding UNESCO, my interest in this particular development institution, or intergovernmental agency, stems from an interest in the work of the United Nations and its related agencies. Since its inception in 1945 in the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations has played a key role in shaping and influencing governmental and discursive powers in the field of development. It intrigues me deeply to understand how such an institution, or the people in them, who geographically, culturally and ideologically come from so many various corners of the world, negotiate within opposing or contradictory frames of development.

In the fall of 2002, I listened to a classmate’s story of his internship experience with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office in Kazakhstan in which he was also able to simultaneously do research for his master’s degree. I also learned that many United Nations agencies have internship positions in offices around the world. At this time I was in my first semester of graduate studies trying to work out my research path; I already knew my research interest was located in gender, education and development in China, but needed solid grounds upon which to base my research. This led me to write UNICEF, UNDP and UNESCO offices in Beijing, China to inquire and apply for an internship position. Of these three agencies, I only heard from UNESCO Beijing and it was a favourable response. Now, although I had a channel through which I could conduct my graduate research, I still needed to form a specific research question with accompanying research objectives.

As a result, it is through this channel and framework that I pose the following research query:

The purpose of this research is to extend on Chela Sandoval’s (2000) “methodology of the oppressed” to identify and specify a “methodology of decolonizing”. Through examining a multilateral inter-governmental agency’s Gender and Development (GAD) conceptual framework in education and its implementation in education at the field office level, this study proposes this methodology to decolonize the apparatus of dominant development.

In this research my objectives are to:

1) Illuminate UNESCO Headquarters’ Gender and Development conceptual framework
2) Explore how this Gender and Development framework is applied to an education perspective in UNESCO discourse
3) Examine how project decision-makers in UNESCO Beijing negotiate, interpret and construct discourses of Gender and Development in education

While these objectives focus on the development institution, I strongly believe they are particularly significant to hear insights from, and answers to girls, women, boys and men themselves who are the individuals and communities intended to benefit from education projects. Hearing these voices of how gender and other social formations are constructed in their relationship to education and development is critical to more fully gain understanding of the needs and realities for girls and boys’, women and men’s education not only in rural China, but many places in the Majority World where development agencies operate. Recognizing the importance of these voices, I must also concede that research from these perspectives is beyond the scope of this particular study.
Also, due to reasons I found problematic throughout the course of this study with what research ‘is’ and how it might best be conducted in at least a dominating way as possible, it is not within the scope here to attempt to give voice to my colleagues’ voices, those working in UNESCO Office Beijing who work around//with/resist hegemonic paradigms of knowing and doing. In effect, I found it least colonizing to ask myself the same questions I might have posed to colleagues and saw a need for those changes to occur before expecting it in other places and bodies. I further illuminate on this in chapter three, Decolonizing the (my?) Research Approach.

I invoke these personal stories and experiences throughout my thesis because my journey navigating through graduate academic life cannot exist mutually exclusive from my personal journey of growth and change in my own worldview. Like a culturally tangled identity, both journeys, the academic and the personal, are further strands of identification that serve to inform the other. Also, tracing my personal stories gives form and understanding to the constant process of decolonizing transformations that I experience.

**Humanizing Meanings of Development**

Given that this study spends a large amount of effort critiquing dominant paradigms of development it would be useful here to clarify what meanings of development I do embrace.

In using a decolonizing process, I am purposefully not adopting what is referred to as a ‘post-development’ stance that rejects development, broadly speaking, or narrows its meaning likening it to ‘Westernization’, or divides the world into evil West and noble South (Kiely, 1999; Nederveen-Pieterse, 2000; Storey, 2001). Echoing Anisur Rahman (1993), I find “the word ‘development’ to be a very powerful means of expressing the conception of societal progress as the flowering of people’s creativity.” As he raises, and which I point to again, it is not the words themselves that are oppressive, but who names and under what conditions: “Must we abandon valuable words because they are abused? What to do then with words like democracy, cooperation, socialism, all of which are abused?” (pp. 213-214).

As with Kumar (2003), I also see development as “sharing”, “friendship” and “reverence for the Earth”. I envision development as a complex interweaving connection among hearts and minds that views the link of one’s own humanity, and thereby dehumanization, as bound up

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18 Kumar also mentions “service” (see section I of chapter two). Although I believe there are many beautiful and positive things to do with the notion of “service”, I believe it is highly personal and not meant to be done for display. I have reservations for viewing development as “service” because of its use as a marketing strategy to exhort people to donate money, time or energy (see Small, 1997). Individuals are convinced to finance or contribute to a cause or a project by appealing to their ego, their feelings of supremacy and by purporting that they can do much to benefit the ‘helpless, powerless poor’. As James Fadiman and Robert Frager (1997) write, this kind of “service is selfish and for the sake of reward: money, praise, or fame” (p. 217). In other words, under first world cultural expansion, even the notion of ‘service’ has been swallowed by capitalist social formations and regurgitated back to individuals in a form that assumes itself as a normative, desirable item for consumption. Although not a material consumption as such, it is neatly packaged and presented as a saleable item to consume for emotional and psychological gratification. In effect, as Small (1997) says, this “exoticizes world poverty and powerlessness and thereby undermines the international solidarity that is needed to fulfill the dual tasks of tackling the causes of growing inequalities in wealth and power, and building sustainable people-centred alternatives” (p. 582).
I especially appreciate Naila Kabeer’s (1994) refreshing look at development that places human life and well-being at the forefront starting from the priorities of those peoples who face systemic barriers to living healthy, active and secure lives that forces them to “run down their only asset—their bodies—simply to survive” (p. 83). Thus, the ‘means’ of the development process are valued in terms of their contribution to such a goal. Reversing the priorities in development thus re-envisions the market as embedded in social relations rather than social relations being at the whim of the market (Balasuriya, 2000).

Kabeer (1994) writes:

All human endeavour, whether concerned with the production of goods and services, tangibles or intangibles, is valued to the extent to which it leads to the immediate satisfaction of human need or assures its future satisfaction. (p. 84)

If the satisfaction of human need rather than the exercise of market rationality is taken as the criterion of production, then clearly a much more holistic view of development becomes necessary. Development is no longer measured by the volume of marketed goods and services alone, but by the extent to which human well-being is assured. (p. 83)

With human life and human well-being at the forefront of development “the most valued activities, then, become those concerned with the care, nourishment and well-being of human life” (p. 83-84). I would suggest here that ensuring the future satisfaction of human need also necessitates every aspect of the natural environment to be tied to human life at the center of this paradigm of development. In this way, rather than the “sole arbiter of ‘value’”, the market then becomes one of several “institutional mechanisms” through which both human needs and the needs of the natural environment can be met (p. 84).

I also understand this vision of development through the way Patricia Monture-Angus (1995) writes about responsibility. She states: “Responsibility as a basis for the structure of a culturally based discourse focuses attention not on what is mine, but on the relationships between people and creation (that is, both the individual and the collective)” (p. 28). Thus, for the well-being of human life and creation to be the focus of development, the notion of ‘individual versus collective’ must be recognized as a false construction (Monture-Angus, 1995). Speaking as a Mohawk woman on the violation of Aboriginal Peoples’ culture through racism and colonialism, she continues further stating, “Any hierarchical ordering of either the notion of collective rights or individual rights will fundamentally violate the culture of Aboriginal peoples” (p. 184). I would like to suggest that this hierarchical ordering is also poisonous to maintaining a vision of development that aims to ensure healthy, active and secure lives of all persons and communities, regardless of race, age, culture, gender, class, religion, nationality, dis/ability, sexuality, language, geopolitical region, marital status. Rather, “[i]ndividual rights exist within collective rights, and the rights of the collective exist in the individual” (Monture-Angus, 1995, p. 184).

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19 From Japan Emergency Non-Governmental Organization (JEN), http://www.jen-npo.org/
Thus, envisioning development where care and nourishment of human life and the natural environment are intimately tied at the center promotes equity in all aspects of social relations—race, class, gender, age, culture, etc. Each person and community—particularly those most disenfranchised by dominant development (such as rural Majority World women, and indigenous peoples)—“take their place as key actors” (Kabeer, 1994, p. 84) in development processes because their contribution to human and environmental survival and well-being is recognized and acted upon in positive and reaffirming ways.

It is from this perspective that I see decolonizing as beginning with the acknowledgment that domination—in any of its multiple forms (colonialism, racism, sexism, etc.) over others is a form of psychological violence (Monture-Angus, 1995). It inescapably dehumanizes oneself as well as the Other. As Tutu magnificently says, “A self-sufficient human being is subhuman. I have gifts that you do not have, so consequently, I am unique—you have gifts that I do not have, so you are unique ... We are made for a delicate network of interdependence” (Battle, 1997, p. 35). Contrary to ‘enlightened’ Reason, and capitalist, liberal individualism, we are made to need each other.

Relevance of this Study

This study first examines how hegemonic Gender and Development in development processes of Western-based development agencies is mutually reinforced by (at least) two ruling dimensions: (1) One in development driven by colonial agendas and cultural imperialist powers operating transnationally with power over capital and resources; and (2) the other in feminism, driven by women informed by a white, middle-class, educated, heterosexual cultural ideal. To make this analysis, and then turn to a path that seeks to offer a methodology of decolonizing dominant development, this study draws insights from several fields, theories and practices, particularly feminism (in its multiple and diverse meanings), development studies, spiritual teachings and indigenous research methodologies.

Hence, this study is not only relevant to existing literature and those interested in or working in the field of development studies, particularly gender and development and GAD in education. It is also relevant to those interested in multiple feminisms as well as intersections of feminism, development and social movements, broadly speaking. In drawing on an “ethics of love” as a critical foundation for moving society along humanizing paths, this study is also relevant to activists, scholars and researchers involved in social movements who believe in and use ethics of loving and/or non-violent means to enable social transformations.

Thesis Overview

Chapter two begins with suggesting a conception of how hegemony and love are understood to this project. It then offers a framework that proposes two paths necessary to this decolonizing project. The first deconstructs dominant development, making a case that international development and Gender and Development paradigms are shot through with hegemonic feminist and dominant development thought which operate to mutually reinforce each other.

This implicates “first world developers” and Euroamerican-orientated feminists in dominant development paradigms. This is looked at in Sections I and II of this chapter.

Through examining psychological and ideological aspects of decolonizing mind and heart in development that is based in ethics of loving, the second path seeks to offer a methodology of decolonizing that developers and feminists can apply to transform from hegemonic paradigms of knowing and doing to critically conscious paradigms of politicized resistance. This is shared in Section III of chapter two.

Chapter three examines the research process as it occurred through my multiple lenses. Critical feminist and decolonizing ways of knowing and researching are interwoven together to discuss the transformational potential of intersectionality feminist politics to Gender and Development (GAD). Here I posit that feminist methodologies need decolonizing to avoid perpetuating neo-forms of domination and that decolonizing methodologies must also be critically feminist in order to address any form of gender oppression. These epistemologies and methodologies are not separate from, or hierarchical in their relationship, but rather exist within the other; they keep each accountable and responsible to a focus on analyses that use multidimensional intersectionality across social locations and identities, material lived realities and sectors (education, agriculture, science, culture, etc.), while ensuring analyses remain ever-constantly vigilant of maintaining a critical, decolonizing approach.

Chapter four analyzes dominant development and hegemonic GAD in education as I view them through the lenses discussed in chapter two. The sources of information and knowledge are related UNESCO documents and my intern experience in the education sector of UNESCO Office Beijing. This chapter asserts there is a discursive colonial agenda in the Organization’s GAD conceptual framework reflected in major UNESCO published material regarding education. At the same time, this study finds that at the level of field offices, in particular for the sub-regional cluster office UNESCO Office Beijing, the hegemonic model of GAD is subverted and positively resisted in ways that also maintain qualitatively rich relationships between colleagues based in ethics of loving. This demonstrates to me an unforeseen and unfound potential in a methodology of decolonizing that uses love collectively as social movement for social transformation.

Chapter five shares some of my experiences both working as an intern at UNESCO Office Beijing and simultaneously and independently researching as part of my graduate studies program. Continuing to challenge my own objectivity in ways that draw insights from the epistemologies that have guided this project, this chapter shares further aspects of this decolonizing journey in more story-like form.

Finally, chapter six offers a pause in this study, looking back so-to-speak on its limitations and significance to social movements, feminist and development studies literature and practices. Keeping in mind that decolonizing processes are continuous, this conclusion is presented as a pause to also look ahead at urgent questions that also need asking and probing using critical feminist, decolonizing frameworks and lenses. This study then finishes this ‘pause’ with a few words of acknowledgement and appreciation.
Chapter Two: A Methodology of De-colonizing Hegemonic (Gender and) Development

The Personal is Political and the Local is in the Global

My core being experienced tremendous shock through the hard-to-face realization that I engaged in unconsciously valuing my knowledge (read: intelligent, educated, modern) over the knowledge of my relatives (read: ignorant, uneducated, tradition-bound) living in rural China, an issue I raised in the previous chapter. This, combined with the experience of working as a short-term research assistant for the World Bank, which I also shared, has awakened in me a consciousness about the role perceptions, motivations, personal gratifications and ideologies play in dominant development. These transformative and awakening experiences have been particularly revealing to the ideological beliefs I did not realize I had been socialized to hold.

Through my own life-changing experiences in this regard, I believe transformation of individuals is rooted in being fully cognizant of one's very deeply embedded ways of thinking, perceiving and receiving the world. This includes being aware of how these ways are manifested, whether through actions, written word, speech or otherwise. I also believe awareness of these embedded ways is important to have 'in the moment' as events and circumstances occur. Assuming that these ways of doing, being, speaking and thinking can always be made, unmade and remade, and that individuals constitute larger units of society, I believe change in institutions, organizations, media and society is then rooted in transformation of individuals. 'If people can change, the world can change'. So there is a need to make the personal political because the local is in the global. The limits and multiple areas of potential for ideologies to change and to transform individuals and broader society thus deserve further attention.

Ideological Hegemony

Ideology is often viewed and spoken about objectively in society as simply a system of ideas and beliefs. However, it is a socially constructed reality that is closely tied to the concepts of power, supremacy and hegemony (Burke, 2004; Gramsci, 1992-1996; McNeill, 1996). Ideology promotes, sustains and universalizes as 'common sense' the values, beliefs, attitudes and morals of the dominant groups in society. It legitimizes and obscures real power relations in society within and across groups (Burke, 2004, McNeill, 1996)—based on class, gender, race, sexual orientation, dis/ability, language, etc. Ideology is hegemonic when the beliefs and values of the dominant group permeate throughout society and are assumed to be the natural order of things and when this power group denigrates ideas challenging to it (Eagleton, 1991). This ideological hegemony is a process, never fixed in time forever (Gramsci, 1992-1996), but slowly, subtly writhes, changing shape, form and expression. It is diffused by the process of socialization and language into every facet of daily life to the extent that this prevailing consciousness of the dominant power is internalized by the public (Burke, 2004; Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991; Gramsci, 1992-1996) at all levels—the individual, family, schools, government, media, corporations and internationally—it is not restricted by any national

21 I follow Haig-Brown and Archibald's (1996) understanding of "transformation" that "refers to the outcome of praxis: As people act and reflect upon their worlds, those worlds are transformed" (p. 265), especially when that action and reflection occurs in relationship with others.
borders (Mohanty, 2003; Smith, 2002). Ideological hegemony means then that the majority of the population views daily events in society as 'the only way of running society'.

However, there is no form of human activity or “occupation [that] is totally devoid of some kind of intellectual activity” (Gramsci, 1992-1996, Vol. 2, p. 214). Moreover, all individuals, within and outside their particular professional activity, “no matter how mechanical and degraded” (p. 200), “carry[y] on some [form of] intellectual activity: [s/]he is a philosopher, [s/]he shares a conception of the world”, has a conscious line of moral conduct, “and therefore contributes to sustain [a particular conception of the world] or to modify it, that is, to create new conceptions” to bring into being new modes of thought (Gramsci, 1992-1996, Vol. 2, pp. 214-215).

Therefore, the organic power of peoples to re-conceptualize the world—multiple understandings of it, its alternative histories and one’s place(s) in it—cannot be underestimated. In this re-conceptualization, naming terms and re-naming ways language is used to talk about and ‘read’ the world is critical.

I believe naming and re-naming the world is one element of a decolonizing process to re-conceptualize the world, but a critical one in order to move away from hegemonic conceptions. This re-conceptualization and re-acting on the world through modes of consciousness—‘critical’, ‘oppositional’, ‘politicized resistance’, ‘coalitional’, shifting-like ‘differential’—are critical devices for emancipation and decolonization from mental processes that reinforce social oppression and domination!

Paulo Freire (1970) spoke of this re-naming as one aspect of forming a “critical consciousness - a conscientização”. Chela Sandoval (2000) also refers to this as one technology of “oppositional consciousness” or “conscience in opposition”. Both speak of developing a consciousness that is understood to have the power to transform dominating realities; only through the development of this conscientização or oppositional consciousness can one learn to question the taken-for-granted ‘truths’ of her/his historical and social situations, hence the expression ‘reading the world.’

In my introduction, I explained the underpinnings of why I locate my research in China on gender and education-related issues involving UNESCO as a development institution. I also touched upon childhood stories, personal experiences and research findings to share some background on my choice of using a critical feminist, decolonizing framework. It is in this chapter I further expand on this framework. I wish to emphasize that this framework is broad and touches upon several themes. While I apply it to the questions I pose in this research, I also deeply hunger for it to be a framework, an ethic, a methodology which I can trust to use honestly and fairly in my daily readings, interactions with and understandings of the world and with the peoples and communities living in it.

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22 In Chela Sandoval’s work, Methodology of the Oppressed, I understand ‘technology’ to be any tool or strategy—mental, linguistic, analytical—that allows a person, a community, to decolonize, ultimately towards using an “ethics of love” (hooks, 2002) or “love as social movement” (Sandoval, 2000).
Thus, this framework is a reflection of my own decolonizing process of re-conceptualizing the world that moves away from ideological hegemony and dominant paradigms of development to find places of dynamic negotiation, resistance, solidarity, transformative struggle. As such, this framework and even the naming of it is very dynamic, constantly forming, re-forming and shifting as I learn, de-learn and re-learn concepts, ideas and knowledge.

This decolonizing methodology seeks to contribute to the increasing resistance and agitation among a diverse array of thinkers in order to transform development’s dominant paradigm. To identify and specify this methodology, this framework primarily moves through and with the writings of Chela Sandoval, Arturo Escobar, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Linda Tulewai Smith, Naila Kabeer, Aihwa Ong, Cornel West, Trinh Minh-ha, Patricia Monture-Angus, Nancy Naples, among others. It also draws from the theories of Iris Marion Young, Roland Barthes, Antonio Gramsci and Jacques Derrida.

The goal here is to extend on Chela Sandoval’s (2000) Methodology of the Oppressed to identify and specify a methodology of decolonizing. This approach is profoundly shaped by Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) work and aims to continue a theme she speaks to in Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. Through examining a multilateral inter-governmental agency’s Gender and Development (GAD) conceptual framework in education and its implementation in education at the field office level, this study proposes this methodology to decolonize the apparatus of dominant development.

**Love as the Blueprint of Decolonizing**

I see a methodology of decolonizing as critical to apply to the dominant development paradigm to recentre ‘love’ in development work that “reinvent[s] love as a political technology, as a body of knowledges, arts, practices, and procedures for re-forming the self and the world” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 3). But in this methodology of decolonizing, I believe love must be the core, the blueprint, or there is nothing to maintain wholeness, to hold all the fragmented pieces together. I am not referring to romantic ‘love’ as it is most commonly used and understood in North American media and cinema as short-term and impulsive sexual-based feelings and emotions existing between lovers. Nor am I using an understanding of love that is based in measuring a person’s ability to give materially to others (through philanthropic practices for example). So how is a concept of love used here?

As with M. Scott Peck and bell hooks, I see and experience love as “an act of will—namely, both an intention and an action. Will also implies choice. We do not have to love. We choose to love” (M. Scott Peck in hooks, 2000a, p. 4). Believing and practising love as an action calls for it to be expressed as “an attempt toward compassion and reconciliation, and a promise to be present with the pain of others without losing to it” (Anzaldua & Keating, 2002, p. 4).

But here, to be present with others’ pain and not lose oneself to it or lose oneself in it, I see love as necessary to grow from within oneself. It does not ask oneself what to do, but how to be. One fully appreciates, accepts and knows oneself as one is. Bell hooks speaks of this as “self-love” necessary for “the wounded heart…by first overcoming low self-esteem.” (hooks, 2000a, 23)

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23 Helen Tiffin also describes this as a “process, not arrival.” See “Post-colonial literature and counter-discourse”, *Kunapipi*, 9 (1987): 17-34.
p. 55). She draws on Nathaniel Branden’s *Six Pillars of Self-Esteem* to formulate her notion of self-love—“the practice of living consciously, self-acceptance, self-responsibility, self-assertiveness, living purposefully and the practice of personal integrity” (Nathaniel Branden in *hooks*, 2000a, p. 55). This self-love is not self-absorption or egotism, which I do not advocate. It is the capacity to love oneself such that one is comfortable enough in her/his ‘own skin’ to just.... ...be.

Living this way gives rise to a kind of genuineness and gentleness because one is “settled into being who one is” and does not need to perform for, compete with, prove or compare oneself to others. Therefore, one does not need “to pretend to be more than one is” because “[s]imply being oneself brings about a power often lost in the rush to be something else” (Tzu, 2002, p. 86).

From knowing oneself and simply being oneself in whatever familiar or uncomfortable situations those require, I envision this love extending beyond oneself to others. This follows by “honouring people’s otherness in ways that allow us to be changed by embracing that otherness rather than punishing others for having a different view, belief system, skin colour, or spiritual practice” (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002, p. 4). I envision that where there is love, there is no time to hate and no room for ridicule, let alone violence, that harms or dominates over the spirits of others.

Expanding on this concept and ability to honour people’s otherness, I understand love reflected in the way the highest praise for a person is called, as described by Desmond Tutu (2004) as “Ubuntu” in his South African Zulu language.

This person has what it means, has what it takes to be a human being. This is a person who recognizes that they are because all of these others exist so in this praise, a person is a person through other persons... We mean you are gentle, you are compassionate, you are hospitable, and you want to share. And you care about the welfare of that Other because your humility is bound up in the humility of that Other. And so when you dehumanize that Other, whether you like it or not, inexorably, you dehumanize yourself, for you can only be human, you can only be free together. And so, we pray... to have hearts that are broad, hearts that know that I will be a great deal less than who I am if you do not become all you have it in you to be. (Roundtable Dialogue, UBC, April 2004)

Gloria Anzaldúa (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002) writes something similar expressing it as a “bridge”. In her metaphorical, figurative, and I imagine even literal understanding of “building bridges”, she writes, “a bridge... is not just about one set of people crossing to the other side; it’s also about those on the other side crossing to this side.” While not explicitly said by Anzaldúa, although I believe understood, this bridge is made out of love because, as she says, this bridge “is about doing away with demarcations like ‘ours’ and ‘theirs’” (p. 4), thus making the humility of one person bound up in the humility of another.

In loving relationships, aside from love being action-based and compassionate, I experience love itself as permanent, as everlasting, patient and unconditional, while not being restricted or restricting others to a permanent paradigm, a permanent way of being, living and knowing. In this way love is consistent but is not limited to ‘first impressions’ that permanently catalogue and cage individuals’ and communities’ identities. As Cornel West says: “If we are serious
about acknowledging other people’s humanity then we are committed to trusting and believing that they[we] are forever in process. Growth, development, maturation happens in stages....Disenabling critique and contemptuous feedback [and practices] hinders.” (hooks, 1990, p. 208). Understanding and believing that we are “forever in process” then, I believe love also does not demand change in others, but rather gives people the opportunity to change, or at least my perception of them to change. This love offers people opportunities to grow of their own will and on their own time while tries to understand without judgment where they are in the present and what circumstances have led them there. Simultaneously this love values what people bring to the relationship, organization, group or community. And it involves taking risks—risks of loving when it is uncertain whether that love, that appreciation, that acknowledgement or respect will be reciprocated, and risks of loving and practicing integrity that may put an individual’s job or life on the line. Why go to this extent of taking risks? Because life and loving is about relatedness, about relationships and I believe we all have a stake in these. We are not meant to live to “oil the economy” by our “culture of consumption...that puts a premium on bottled commodified stimulation” like it’s an addiction, just so the market economy can “reproduce itself” (Cornel West with bell hooks, 1990, p. 205). Loving and living is about our ability to live with others in “qualitatively rich relationships” (p. 205).

This “ethics of love” (hooks, 2002) is reflected in knowing enough of another paradigm someone lives in that one is aware of how to respect another’s beliefs and spiritual practices so as not to lead him/her to do wrong as viewed from within the paradigm s/he lives in. This practice necessitates honouring another person’s differences from oneself, whether understood or not, while not restricting him/her to that paradigm and yet also not demanding change.

There is a gentleness about love that Desmond Tutu, bell hooks, Gloria Anzalduá, Cornel West and many other like-minded individuals speak of. Yet this gentleness does not mean one is weak or cannot stand firm in one’s own convictions. I see this gentleness as one necessary approach to “grapple with the recognition of commonality within [today’s] context of difference[s]”—whether cultural, religious, social, political, economic (Anzalduá & Keating, 2002, p. 2). It is a compassionate approach that is able to listen to others, while able to speak one’s own mind and maintain one’s groundedness. It is neither vengeful nor malicious, yet sees one remain firm in stance and convictions. In Chinese and traditional martial arts philosophy, this is known to many as 外柔内干 (wai rou nei gan), which literally reads ‘outside gentle, inside hard or firm’.

To fulfill love in these ways and use it actively as the driving force for social movement requires a mix of several “ingredients” (hooks, 2000a, p. 5), namely—care, affection, recognition, respect, responsibility, knowledge, committed action, trust and honest and open communication in which one is able to truly listen with a heart centred on decolonizing.²⁴

Social transformations based in love are not permanent, but always forming, taking shape, shifting to places of greater love. To catalyze these transformations, love then is also not fixated on any particular shape, shift or result. I believe it is this apparatus of understanding

²⁴ The notion of ‘listening with the heart’ is one that I have come to understand in the language recesses of my mind through countless conversations and sharing of articles and notes on the “art of listening” with my dear friend, Nazlin Rafiq.
‘love’ that gives love its potential and its holders the agency to use it as a “political technology for social transformation” (Sandoval, 2000). It is this love I understand bell hooks describes as an “ethics of love” and what Sandoval writes “… as a body of [flexible] knowledges, arts, practices and procedures for re-forming the self and the world” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 4). It is this love that is the foundation for the decolonizing model presented here which aims to promote dialogue and further processes of transforming hegemonic development paradigms.25

Influenced by Chela Sandoval’s work, there are four features I see as important to this love apparatus when used as social movement: (1) deconstruction of terms and power structures; (2) intersectionality across nodes of difference; (3) decolonizing of the mind and the heart; and (4) “differential” or shifting movement. Utilized together, these aspects constitute an apparatus for re-conceptualizing the world that is necessary to be effective within “first world neocolonizing global conditions during the twenty-first century”. Applying such an apparatus of understanding love is crucial in order to move towards a greater collective consciousness and collective agency. This is the “love as social movement” I refer to and apply to dominant development paradigms.

Sandoval analyzes these “first world neocolonizing global conditions” through Fredric Jameson’s (1984) work on the theme ‘postmodernism’. These are conditions that make ripe for what Sandoval calls “first world cultural expansion” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 18). This expansion, under postmodernism is like, if unaware of, an undeniable force that operates specifically to co-opt, assimilate, devour, commodify and appropriate because the “nature of this very expansion functions to take in any thought about it” (p. 18). Where modernism saw the proliferation of the market throughout the world as “the triumph of reason”, postmodernism rejects that claim, “allowing in the realm of theory the same proliferation of distinctions that modernity had begun” (Appiah, 1991, p. 346).

Still tied to market expansionism of modernity, this rapid proliferation of distinctions in theoretical domains allows for, as I understand from Mohanty (2003), “a world that appropriates and assimilates “multiculturalism and “difference” through commodification and consumption” (p. 226). The “neocolonial cultural machine” that operates in this first world cultural expansion manifests itself through “replication”, thereby fragmenting individuals’ identities to become “anchorless”, “disoriented” and “schizophrenic” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 19, 27). For example, when forced to identify or describe myself as either Chinese or white, or measure their comparative ‘weight’ and ‘value’ in my person, without being able to name and understand this ludicrous demand as a form of neocolonization, the fragmenting effect it left me with at times in the past were these schizophrenic, disoriented identities. Notwithstanding, I remain whole. Moreover, I simultaneously hold multiple locations in ways that may seem contradictory for others attempting to ‘look in’. In this way Sandoval sees that for Jameson, “there are only ‘faceless masters’ to imagine, masters who are themselves the slaves of postmodern neocolonial globalization” (p. 23).

25 I am not attempting to give a totalized, complete formulation of an ethics of love to be used as social movement. As with this methodology of decolonizing in general, I acknowledge that this ethics of love is never-ending in its formulation because social justice movement and hegemonic movement are always changing thereby shifting the dynamics and needs of this ethic. Thus, what I draw on and propose here as a love apparatus has both its limitations and its areas open for further change.
That being said, while postmodernism may be a "particularly North American space" (Jameson, 1984), of which I grew up in, the disorientation and anchorlessness it can cause in individuals is not limited to postmodernism. I take heed of and reflect on Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (2002) words: “Fragmentation is not a phenomenon of postmodernism as many might claim. For indigenous peoples, fragmentation has been the consequence of imperialism.” (p. 28). For many, not all “masters” are “faceless”.

I suggest that it is in these colonizing and “neocolonizing global conditions” that individuals and communities exist. As Sandoval (2000) draws from Jameson, “The first world subject can experience profound pain and anxiety,... or exhilaration in being disconnected from history...” (p. 21). The foremost difference I see however, between first world and Majority World developers, is in choices made and the degree of critical awareness that is inspired and driven by oppositional, or critical or coalitional consciousness. A first world developer, regardless of geographically and spatially defined categories, makes conscious and/or unconscious choices to be disconnected from history and from his/her roles, locations in, and perceptions of domination and oppression.

The strong magnetic pull I felt to join this “first world cultural expansion” by ab/using my brief experience with the World Bank, my bi-cultural heritage and language, and years living in China to simply further a ‘career’ in development work that fits its dominant framework, has been enormously alluring I can shamefully admit now. I was also influenced by powerful forces of socialization. The society I grew up in is one where individual interest rules supreme; conception of individuality is in terms where “the individual or self can be conceived without necessarily conceiving the other” (Louw, 2002, Ubuntu and Dialogue section, para. 3). As such, in this conception, the “individual exists prior to, or separately and independently from the rest of the community or society” (Louw, 2002, Ubuntu and Dialogue section, para. 3). This pits the individual against the collective, as if the two can be essentialized into polar extremes. A person’s worth is then measured using this notion of individuality through assessing her/his ‘level’ of education or type of assets to his/her name.

Although family values taught me otherwise, the institutional facets of schooling, news, cinema and media were powerful. They convinced me in my younger years to just consume and think only of my own needs, not those of others. In this drive for self-serving consumption is also a

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26 I acknowledge that oppression is often understood as the “exercise of tyranny by a ruling group” and that it “carries a strong connotation of conquest and colonial domination” (Young, 1990, p. 41). I agree with Iris Marion Young though that in dominant political discourse and its associative linking with dominant development discourse, while oppression occurs, it is not considered valid to use this term to describe Western society from within Western nation states “because oppression is the evil perpetrated by the Others.” Drawing further from Young, I refer to oppression as structural, as those “systemic constraints on groups that are not necessarily the result of the intentions of a tyrant”. These constraints are “embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules [including bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms] and the collective consequences of following those rules.” Its resulting oppressive practices that leave deep scars of injustice on some groups may even be a “consequence of unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in everyday interactions, media and cultural stereotypes...” which stem overall from the hegemonic ideology that this “extended structural sense of oppression” is based on (Young, 1990, p. 41). Also drawing from Young, I employ “group” as a social entity, a “collective of persons differentiated from at least one other group by cultural forms, practices, or way of life... [where its]...Members... have a specific affinity with one another because of their similar experience [, history, beliefs] or way of life, which prompts them to associate with one another”. As individuals’ identities are socially relational in the context with other individuals, so too are groups an expression of social relations—“a group exists only in relation to at least one other group” (Young, 1997, p. 43).
heavy undercurrent of competition for the same higher status, prestige, material wealth and public attention, which are passed off as ‘rewards’. At the same time, this competition or greed-based consumption that occurs in the process of aiming to attain these ‘rewards’ is not only harmful to oneself, but also to others because society or others are regarded merely as pathways to individual benefits. The process often begins with convincing one to first ignore, and then to participate in reproducing neocolonizing global conditions.

As such, had I not paid heed to and come to hard terms with the sub-conscious disturbing questions I had during my interactions with relatives and project teams, I would have disconnected myself from colonizing forces of history and my roles and locations in oppression. I would have further and more actively engaged in perpetuating dominating forms of development. Such a first world developer who makes these disconnections “perceives aesthetic representations as just continuing examples of a plethora of differences available for consumption under advanced capitalist social formations” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 18).

Framework

To look at various elements that compose love as a decolonizing apparatus for social transformation of Gender and Development’s dominant model, this framework is grouped into three sections: (I) Deconstructing Dominant Development as (Neo)Colonialism; (II) Gender and Development’s Hegemonic Model; and (III) Decolonizing Mind and Heart in Development. My hope is to extend on Sandoval’s methodology of the oppressed to particularly apply the above-mentioned love ethic to a methodology of decolonizing

Section I, “Deconstructing Dominant Development as (Neo)Colonialism”, sets the foundation upon which gender and development’s dominant model is based. This section explores and analyzes the relationship between dominant ideology and the power of naming—who names, who gets named and under what conditions. This is one strategy dominant ideology uses to maintain its hegemony (Mohanty, 2003; Smith, 1999). Naming subsequently has implied meanings and signs behind the terms chosen, which Roland Barthes’ extensive writings in this area of semiology demonstrate. Using Barthes’ theoretical underpinning in semiotics, and Chela Sandoval’s interpretation of Barthes work as a ‘decolonial’ theorist, I then draw on Jacques Derrida’s technique of deconstruction to demonstrate that deconstructing words and terms in dominant development discourse show multiple layers of meaning at work in language (Phillips, n.d.). In particular, deconstruction shows that language is constantly shifting depending on who names, who names whom, and the locations and contextual conditions from which this naming occurs (Krapp, 1994-2003; Smith, 1999).

27 Drawing from Mohanty (1991), I employ dominant development discourse as “a certain mode of appropriation and codification of scholarship and knowledge” about girls, women, rural populations, working poor, people of colour and migrant populations in the Majority World (i.e. those written about and defined by dominants). This mode is then reflected “through the use of particular analytic strategies” that take as their referent first world developers’ interests and standards as the norm (p. 51). I liken dominant development discourse to colonial discourse in which a “rhetoric of supremacy” (Sandoval, 2000) underlies its scholarship. I use Mohanty’s (1991) understanding of “scholarship” throughout as the “production, publication, distribution and consumption of information and ideas” (p. 55). Part of the supremacist rhetoric then is that dominant development discourse is used in a taken-for-granted manner that presents itself as everyday language, speech, interaction and understanding of the world.
As with third world feminist scholars Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Chela Sandoval, Aihwa Ong and Trinh Minh-ha, indigenous feminists Patricia Monture-Angus and Oyeronke Oyewumi, development critics Naila Kabeer, Arturo Escobar, Cynthia Wood, Marianne Marchand and Jane Parpart, and decolonial theorist Linda Tuhiwai Smith, I use Derrida’s technique of deconstruction not simply to undo and take apart the construction and consolidation of systems of thought represented through language. More importantly I believe, I use deconstruction to understand the terms used in dominant development discourse and the conditions through which terms have come to be used, their “rhetoric of supremacy” (Sandoval, 2000), and seek to join together with these scholars, among others, who re-name those conditions based on a socially just, critically feminist, decolonizing ethic.

I also recognize that the words used in this discourse hold no meaning on their own (Phillips, n.d.). Rather, meaning emerges according to the connections between, and arrangement of, particular readings and texts. Therefore, naming and re-naming of terms and concepts are a critical aspect of this framework. I seek to clarify and justify my use of terms and concepts such as ‘dominant development’, ‘Majority World’, ‘colonization’ and ‘Western-based development institutions’, as well as discuss the extents and limits of the names I choose. Explicit links between colonization and dominant development paradigms are also interwoven throughout this section.

However, power in the field of development is not only derived from control over ideas. Recognizing that ideological hegemony operates in a mutually reinforcing way with control over resources, this section briefly looks at how these resources are controlled in a liberal neo-classical economics model and its relationship in buttressing dominant development paradigms (Kabeer, 1994). However, because the methodology of decolonizing proposed here uses psychological and ideological tools and technologies, this framework places more emphasis on ideological tools and processes that can shape the influence and power of dominant development. As such, more detailed examination of the connection between ideological hegemony and resource control through capitalist political economy is beyond the scope of this study.²⁸

Section II, “Gender and Development’s Hegemonic Model”, then examines and establishes that a mutually reinforcing relationship exists between GAD and dominant development to formulate a hegemonic model of gender and development discourse and practice.

I take gender as the focus here for three inter-related reasons. First, a very large body of scholarship, theory and practice has been emerging over the past 30 years in development regarding both women and gender. Second, through connecting Sandoval’s analysis of “feminism’s great hegemonic model” to dominant feminist analysis in development, I suggest that a similar feminist analysis exists in GAD discourse. This is one that views gender oppression based in binarily opposed male/female as the overriding dimension and basis of subordination above, and disconnected from any other form of oppression (hooks, 2000b).

²⁸ See Kabeer (1994) for an analysis of the relationship between political economy (control of resources) and ideological hegemony (control of ideas) in development as well as Ouellette (2002) for a closer analysis of this in terms of colonialism.
Third, as many women of colour, Aboriginal and indigenous women and third world women have already spoken and written about their experiences as women, I argue that gender identities are not unitary but rather are cut across by race, culture, class, language, colonial histories, sexuality and other social divisions such that racism, classism, colonialism or other forms of inequity may supersede that of gender oppression (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002; hooks, 2000b; Lorde, 1984; Monture-Angus, 1995; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1981; Ouellette, 2002; Oyewumi, 2002; Sandoval, 2003; Sen & Brown, 1987; Sunseri, 2000). Although gender oppression may not be the overriding dimension in all contexts, it remains that groups of women are marginalized all over the world and continue to be discriminated against. This manifests in trafficking, non-literacy and unpaid, unrecognized labour, and subjection to many forms of violence.

I emphasize here, as Uma Narayan (2000) writes:

>This sort of generalization does not entail, and should not be taken to entail, the absence of variations within and across national contexts... The claim that virtually every community is structured by relationships of gender that comprise specific forms of social, sexual and economic subjection of women seems a generalization that is politically useful; it also leaves room for attention to differences and particularities of context with respect to the predicaments of different groups of women. (p. 97)

Also, as these activists and researchers critically point out, this greater marginalization of groups of women is not necessarily entirely due to patriarchy, as white middle-class academic feminism adamantly insists is true of all women’s subordination. Rather, foundations of women’s oppression can be found in racism, colonialism, classism, ableism, homophobia, ageism, or other forms of domination that often cut across, or are held up by systems of patriarchy. Thus, gender analysis can be used to understand women’s oppression much as class and critical race theories are used to understand class and race/ethnicity-based forms of domination. Also, and very important, addressing women’s oppression (as opposed to gender oppression) necessitates addressing these multiple forms of intersecting oppressions. In this way, while recognizing gender inequality is not always the prevailing dimension, understanding how it pervades all other forms of inequality and understanding the ideas and practices through which it persists “contributes to the broader project of development built on respect for humanity and nature” (Kabeer, 1994, pp. 79-80).

Section III, “Decolonizing Mind and Heart in Development”, responds to the first two sections in a way that contributes to the envisioning and realization of a development paradigm that is built on respect, commitment and responsibility for humanity and nature. It draws from a variety of places—conversations with friends, family and UNESCO colleagues during my internship, as well as readings and personal experience and reflection—to intimately engage

29 I differentiate this from any confusion with gender oppression because gender, according to dominant western understanding is taken to be “inherent in nature (of bodies) [that] operate on a dichotomous, binarily opposed male/female, man/woman duality in which the male is assumed to be superior and therefore the defining category” (Oyewumi, 2002). I understand and use gender and gender relations as a socio-cultural construct that shapes relations not only of those between women and men, but just as importantly those of women among women and men among men. Thus, I see gender oppression as also a form of analysis to examine how some women oppress other groups of women, which is cut across by other identities shaped by race, class, culture, marital status, to name a few. Thus, some groups of women experience multiple forms of oppression.
with processes, procedures and technologies that together propose a ‘methodology of decolonizing’. While not limited to, this methodology is intended to be analytically and strategically applied to/by Western-based development institutions, their practitioners, and dominant development discourses and practices.

Why the focus on mind and heart? Speaking on the role of education in sustainable development at the World Summit for Sustainable Development held in 2002 in Johannesburg, Education Minister of South Africa Kader Asmal said, “Many national education systems that are presently deemed effective tend to produce individuals geared to individual enhancement and pecuniary wealth maximization”. He then made a plea for concerted action not only of the ‘head and hand’, but in order to face global challenges in the present age, he called for “the unity of heart, head and hand” (UNESCO, 2002c). At a roundtable dialogue among five distinguished illuminaries discussing Balancing Educating the Mind with Educating the Heart, Zalman Schachter-Shalomi (2004) tells a story about how his daughter addressed him asking, “When you’re asleep, you can wake up yes? And when you’re awake, can you wake up even more?” (Roundtable Dialogue, UBC, April 2004).

Hence, in this notion of ‘decolonizing’, I am not referring to a concept of decolonization that is viewed as the final endpoint of a journey marked by the physical departure of the colonizer and the subsequent establishment of sovereign independent States (United Nations, 2002-2004, The United Nations and Decolonization). While this physical departure is no doubt one crucial aspect, this narrow formulation sidelines a form of colonization that forcefully takes over the mind and the heart to the point that epistemologies of colonialism and other forms of domination pervade public consciousness.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) talks about this as part of the project of European imperialism of indigenous peoples. She describes an urgent need to understand this form of colonialism because the “impact [of the imperial system] is still being felt, despite the apparent independence gained by former colonial territories”. And these impacts are still being felt because of “the reach of imperialism into ‘our heads’” (Smith, 1999, p. 23) in which a hegemonic system of beliefs, values and knowledge has taken deep root. Addressing her writing “more specifically to those researchers who work with, alongside and for communities who have chosen to identify themselves as indigenous” (p. 5), Smith states that this psychological form of imperialism “challenges those who belong to colonized communities to understand how this occurred, partly because we perceive a need to decolonize our minds, to recover ourselves, to claim a space in which to develop a sense of authentic humanity” (p. 23).

If there is a need to “decolonize our minds”, it might be said then, that colonization, (in all its complexities, histories, and problems as an explanatory construct), has underpinnings of domination in the very thought of imposing an epistemology (the ways one comes to know what and how one knows) onto another person, group or community. It is critical I clarify how

30 I acknowledge Chela Sandoval and her work *Methodology of the Oppressed* for inspiring the naming of this term. Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s work, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, has been particularly pivotal in my mental and analytical processes leading up to this naming. I would also like to note that I use ‘decolonizing’ here, rather than ‘decolonization’ to denote an ongoing process and set of changing practices and strategies as opposed to a journey with a final, fixed endpoint. See footnote #13 in the Introduction.

31 See Harding (1987) for distinctions between epistemology as a “theory of knowledge” and method and methodology.
I use “our” here and in the rest of this writing when referring to subjects of decolonizing. I do not use “our” to suggest that non-indigenous peoples experience the same entry point and journey of decolonizing mind and heart with indigenous peoples. Rather, this “our” is used to suggest that despite various histories and experiences between colonized and colonizers, there is a specific need and place for colonizers to decolonize too. Acknowledging my own location and family history in this, this “our” then speaks specifically to colonizers—whether newly immigrated to this land or long time descendants of immigrants, or first world developers—to suggest that there is a need for colonizers to accept and enter processes of ‘decolonizing’.

In this process of imposing alien epistemologies, the person, group or community invariably gets constructed as ‘Other’—deemed inferior due to a determined ‘lack’ of some biological, intellectual, linguistic, cultural (Ogbu, 1994), economic, political or religious aspect of life. This colonizing occurs across nodes perceived by dominants as ‘different’ in some inferior way; and these nodes often translate into those of race, class, gender, culture, sexuality, language, nationality, dis/ability, age, religion, marital status and others nodes of social differentiation. What results is that this social construction of the Other allows those in dominant groups to perceive the Other as ‘deserving’ of marginalization by the dominant social order.

Rephrased another way, I suggest this form of colonization arises even in the mere psychological assumption that one’s way of knowing and coming to know (at the individual, group and institutional levels) is more suitable and superior for another than what is already held. This colonizing form manifests when voiced and acted on with no understanding of the “patterned motion of consciousness” (Sandoval, 2000) directing its underlying assumptions and when there is little to no knowledge or consideration of a community’s reality. I have experienced this with my relatives in Fujian as well as through witnessing and interacting with provincial project teams through my research experience with the World Bank.

In sidelining this crucial aspect of colonization, school textbooks (like mine as a child and then as a teacher), media, organizations, governments and international institutions like the United Nations then hold narrow views of de-colonization (United Nations, 2002-2004, The United Nations and Decolonization). As section I and II illustrate, this is reflected in development’s dominant paradigms. There is far from enough inquiry within these paradigms to understand the complex ways imperialism has brought peoples within its realm of control and power or the role(s) that Western-based development agencies (have) play(ed) in perpetuating neo- forms of imperialism. What results is a prevailing way of thinking, acting and speaking in development that imposes ideological beliefs and practices.

This ideology’s accompanying assumptions, even if well-intentioned, stem from already socially constructing the Other as inferior and ‘lacking’ in some area thus needing some form of ‘capacity building’ which the development act-or can provide. If held without any methods of keeping oneself in check, these assumptions can too easily be voiced using patronizing words that have colonizing ways. These then translate into colonizing actions and dehumanizing of peoples through project implementation methods and scholarship production. This, combined with the degree of power of one’s position and influence in social structures of development work, feeds back into the dominant development ideology and (neo)colonial machine. The perpetuation and reproduction of hegemonic systems of beliefs, attitudes, habits, values and practices thus continues.
But colonization of one’s mind and heart cannot be reduced to a simple binary of colonizer/colonized. In today’s first world cultural expansion colonization is neither limited in geographical region nor military means. It is a forceful colonization of the mind, and of the heart, which again, is not only a phenomenon of 20th or 21st century dominant development. It has always been a violent factor in the imperialism and domination of indigenous peoples. Perhaps now however, it has simply become more difficult to perceive and name because of its insidious penetration into daily events in society that makes everyday life look like ‘the only way of running society’. The “neocolonial cultural machine” subsumes and consumes the individual, spitting one out in fragments such that, as Sandoval (2000) writes, makes individuals “incapable of mapping their relative positions inside multinational capitalism, lost in the reverberating endings of colonial expansionism” (p. 26). Thus, the proliferation of a neo-liberal based market model is no innocent actor in this colonizing process.

It can be said then that colonization affects both those who are dominated and those who dominate (Sandoval, 2000; Smith, 1999) but obviously in very distinct and different ways. Being colonized of mind/heart and using colonialist frames to implement projects or speak and write for / about / to others may occur within the same individual on herself and/or in relationship with others. Or, as Nancy Fraser (1997) writes, “people who are subordinated along one axis of social division may well be dominant along another” (p. 32). When a rhetoric of supremacism becomes taken for granted as ‘common sense’ in a colonizing state, the psyche is innocuated by an “everyday craving for supremacy” (Sandoval, p. 127) whether it is termed “white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy” (hooks, 1994, 1997, 2000b, 2000c) or otherwise.

Sun Tzu’s philosophy also speaks to me on this. It may seem absolutely ludicrous and a far tangent to draw on martial arts philosophies, but these philosophies are a way of life for many peoples in many cultures and I believe have much to offer this discussion. I kindly ask my readers to patiently bear with me to see where this goes here and throughout this study.

Sun Tzu (2002) states that “taking a state whole is superior” and “destroying it is inferior to this”. And, “One hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the most skillful. Subduing the other’s military without battle is the most skillful” (p. 9). Here, while “military” is conventionally understood as armed forces of the nation-state, I take up “military” as an entity that “acts as a container within which the society or individual can reestablish its integrity in the face of monumental threat” (Tzu, p. 84). This conceptualization of ‘military’ is most often studied and applied with the purpose of violently and aggressively dominating. However, I apply this to decolonizing mind and heart in dominant development, which I perceive as having become ruthless in its colonial agendas and forms of thinking. When one’s mind is overwhelmed with confusion, fragmentation, uncertainty, domination, oppression, the whole person’s being is threatened, thereby also affecting surrounding persons. Assuming that “conflict arises naturally and is unavoidable [in oneself] and that protection is a normal function the military serves” (often manifested through domination over others), I understand “taking whole” to be moves that are “beyond a habitual aggressive response toward conflict” (p. 84). Rather, the “military that takes whole preserves life” (p. 84). In all of this, it is dealing with this conflict at the level within the individual that is the focus of decolonizing mind and heart discussed here.

Another way of explaining this sees Sandoval (2000) draw from Frantz Fanon’s (1967) analysis. She writes that under neocolonizing global conditions, the colonizer “has become
‘enslaved’ by [her]/his own expressions of ‘superiority’... [and thus this rhetoric] damages and enslaves the colonizer as well as the colonized” (pp. 127-128). Hence, whether one is conscious of this rhetoric of the dominant order and one’s location(s) in it, people internalize a set of supremacist behaviours and use them, acting on this dominant ideology.

It is exactly this rhetoric of supremacy that underscores the highly tempting desire I faced to gain greater status, power and prestige among those in development work through participating in dominating practices. It is such a poignant memory for me I can point out exactly when this desire surfaced and how many times. Yet, at the same time, racialized Othering and patriarchal, racist-based exoticization has pushed me to other spaces. Spaces in which I have found my mental and emotional spaces colonized by those wishing to satisfy their own perceptions of the world by presuming knowledge of, and over my reality, using this to (re)affirm their assumed ‘knowledge’. This interaction cannot ignore those nodes of intersecting differences—gender, race, class, age, language, sexuality, ethnicity, dis/ability, religion, marital status—that play roles in shaping how individuals dominate and are dominated by others.

However, I acknowledge a danger of using ‘colonization’ and ‘colonize’ in primarily mental, psychological and emotional ways of understanding. As Mohanty (1991) points out, using ‘colonized’ and ‘colonization’ in only rhetorical and metaphorical terms can overlook specific historical realities of the way colonialism has impacted indigenous peoples. It can also falsely imply that complete knowledge can be held about all there is to know about these realities, particularly that all colonization was the same with the same damaging, wounding effects. When applied to women and girls in the Majority World, this terminology misleadingly implies that all Majority World women and girls, had/have the same experience and that it has to be judged by the standards and experiences of dominant Euroamerican feminist assumptions and values.

Thus, I use these terms with the understanding that psychological and ideological forms of colonization are but one aspect among specific historical realities of colonialism. Just as there is no singular colonizing condition or history for any group of people, community, or individual

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32 I use Sandoval’s interpretation of Roland Barthes’ seven principle poses of Western consciousness.

Inoculation—the “immunizing” of both individual and collective consciousness to difference/disparity; Privation of history—distancing of all peoples and things in culture “from the material history of what has made them what they are” leading to a ‘numbness’ of Western consciousness that feels no connection or responsibility. The example Sandoval gives is a “tour book designed to guide the first world consumer through third world countries” by depicting peoples, places and cultural objects for “Western consumption and entertainment”. Identification—views differences as unimportant or can be assimilated, based on their degree of assessed deviation from oneself (e.g. exoticized Other). Tautology—uses quick answers such as, “History is history”, “Boys will be boys”, “That’s just the way life is” to answer anyone who questions this authority and thereby to wield authority and power over knowledge. Neither-norism—presents “objectivity” or “neutrality” in decision-making where “the ‘rational’ performer... no longer has to choose between contending power-laden realities”. In fact this position solidifies the dominant power order (e.g. reflected in anti-affirmative action policies that state “We want neither white people nor people of colour, we only want the ‘best’”). Quantification of quality—reduces differences to quantity where they are “counted, added up, catalogued and hierarchically displayed in order to demonstrate the depth and quality of existence as it already is.” Statement of fact—formed by and supports all previous poses that buttress the structure of the dominant social order. Its confidence and knowledge are spoken, heard, experienced and described as “common sense”. I think it is critical that Sandoval does not limit these seven poses to only appearing in the West, but says they are “easily recognizable” in any population. They are used to generate ‘reality’ through erasing difference, but really these poses are the engine behind ideological hegemony that I critique. See Chela Sandoval’s Methodology of the Oppressed (2000), Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, pp. 117 – 124.
(Smith, 1999), there is also no singular de-colonizing path or journey either. Bearing this in mind, I should emphasize that the tools and strategies suggested in this methodology of decolonizing are not fixed, complete or final. Nor do I believe that it is possible or should even be a task in which it is desirable to complete a set of prescribed methods and tools.

What follows in this methodology is stirred by personal experiences of ‘awakening’ that have been inspired by personal experiences and conversations with friends, family, comrades-in-struggle and UNESCO Beijing colleagues, and guided primarily by the works of Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Chela Sandoval, Naila Kabeer, James Fadiman and Robert Frager, bell hooks, Desmond Tutu, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Patricia Monture-Angus, Aihwa Ong, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Cornel West. Using the first two sections as a basis of understanding manifestations and realities of oppressive practices resulting from a hegemonic development ideology, this section shifts this project of deconstructing development onto another path.

This path is one that aims to look at possible psychological and ideological aspects of decolonizing mind and heart. It necessarily entails resisting cravings for supremacy and the reduction of complex concepts and realities into hierarchical binaries. Decolonizing also necessitates using a flexible, ‘shifting’ intersecting analysis of multiple oppressions to understand specific forms of social, sexual and economic inequalities within social relations. Combining this with using love collectively as social movement, this methodology of decolonizing seeks to offer possibilities to transform dominant development.

Section I: Deconstructing Dominant Development as (Neo)Colonialism

Transforming gender and development’s hegemonic model necessitates a discussion of dominant development paradigms. As Kabeer (1994) writes, “development processes have generated many different kinds of social inequalities, but gender is present in some form in all of them” (p.79). It is those dominant “development processes”, including their relationship with the power of naming in hegemonic ideology that are expanded on here. To further discuss a “methodology of decolonizing”, colonization and its associative links to dominant development are interwoven throughout this analysis.

(Neo)Colonial Development

What is the concept of dominant development I refer to? I began looking at dominant development paradigms in the previous chapter pointing to works by Elizabeth Crewe and Emily Harrison, Lynn Kwiatkowski and Satish Kumar to start. Much critical scholarship exists on development calling attention to the fact that development processes and discourses shape a world order which in many locations is closely articulated with legacies of colonialism. Arturo Escobar (1995) argues that this development paradigm is governed by and operates according to similar principles as that of colonial discourse.

He describes contemporary ‘development’ as a construction rising out of the ashes of World War II in which Euroamerican industrialized nations of the West “discovered” the poverty of the ‘Third World’ former colonies and in this “discovery” then sought to “transform the poor into the assisted”. I hold that this perspective and insistence to “transform the poor into the assisted” in development work is an obstinacy linked to an objectification of poor people into
'the needy' who require rescue by the Western 'saviour'.

Escobar continues, describing development as the linkage of philanthropy with higher degrees of morality, and poverty as degeneracy; the invention of development as a response to and panacea for this 'Third World' object; the explicit and implicit assumption of linear evolution along a Western trajectory; the theorization of technology as a sort of moral force; and the proliferation, professionalization and institutionalization of 'expertise' about the 'Third World'.

Escobar's (1995) thinking peaks in resonance with my own when he continues critiquing dominant development as "conceived not as a cultural process (culture [being] a residual variable, [assumed] to disappear with the advance of modernization), but instead as a system of more or less universally applicable technical interventions intended to deliver some ‘badly needed’ goods to a ‘target’ population" (p. 44, my italics).

Examining history from the position of a colonized Maori and choosing to privilege this location, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) also describes this not as 'development', but as "colonialism". This colonialism "is but one expression of [European] imperialism... [in which it] became imperialism's outpost, the fort and the port of imperial outreach" (p. 21, 23). Smith states that colonialism facilitated the economic expansion of European imperialism and political practice, which necessarily entailed subjugation of 'others', namely indigenous populations.

Smith also sees beyond imperialism as a set of economic, political and military events. Speaking of it as a "spirit which characterized Europe’s global activities", she connects the power structures of imperialism with its hegemony as a complex ideological force.

33 Being brought up in Christian faith and embracing it for myself (despite all its past and present-day complexities to hold such an identity), I have found it particularly troublesome and disturbing to understand, witness, be a descendant of, and personally experience the association of Christianity and its history with colonization of peoples worldwide. I think concepts of Christianity got heavily distorted and twisted with the advent of the whole imperialist project of Britain and France (otherwise known as the Age of Enlightenment). Related to dominant paradigms of development is the element of 'saving' the destitute, the poor, the needy, the poverty-stricken (Escobar, 1995; Parpart, 1995; Wood, 2001) and even the 'unsaved' (Smith, 1999), or 'rescuing' indigenous and third world women constructed as powerless victims from their 'sexually repressive' cultures (Mohanty, 1991; Narayan, 2000; Wood, 2001) and 'violent' men (Mohanty, 1991). This notion of the Western 'saviour' comes out of the colonial relationship Christianity has with imperialism. As imperialism was/is about only looking outside of oneself to explore, know, conquer, claim, settle—and in so doing, then judge, oppress, Other, appropriate and suppress—Christianity, in its associative linking with Western European culture and imperialism, also faces a long, long legacy of only looking outside of oneself that does the same thing—judge, Other, oppress, appropriate and suppress. Looking deeply inward to make inner changes before enforcing or calling for change in others has been lost in today's mainstream Christian teaching and living. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) speaks to this connection between imperialism and Christianity in her book Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. At the same time, while recognizing its very deep relationship with imperialism, I do not believe Christianity is homogeneous in creed, doctrine, set of practices, or believers—although it may have spread across lands and peoples via colonialism and colonizing missionary activities, it has also been transformed for use in resistance to those very colonial structures that supplanted it. While acknowledging its sites of patriarchal oppression and history of colonial activity, Walker (1999) sites multiple examples of Christianity in Africa, Latin America and Asia as offering safe places of being, resistance and liberation, particularly for women. Kumar (2003) points to the "long tradition of Christian and other religious missionaries running schools and hospitals in poverty-stricken areas" that assume and expect "bartering" to occur of "native, tribal and indigenous religions, ...considered inferior", for the economic benefits of these "goods and services". However, Kumar then points to a resistance movement within this imperialist Christianity itself that has led to Liberation Theology in which it is believed, "a religion is no religion if it perpetuates oppression and ignores the subjegation of the weak." Rather, "in Liberation Theology solidarity with the oppressed becomes a religious practice" (p. 19).
It [imperialism] is a complex ideology which [has] had widespread cultural, technical and intellectual expressions. This view of imperialism locates it within the Enlightenment spirit which signalled the transformation of economic, political and cultural life in Europe. In this wider Enlightenment context, imperialism becomes an integral part of the development of the modern state, of science, of ideas and of the ‘modern’ human person. (p. 22)

Where Smith speaks of a colonization that facilitated a European-based system of colonies through imperialist activities, ideologies, rules and practices, Anne McClintock (1992) speaks of colonization in more recent context as the United States’ “imperialism-without-colonies”. This mode of imperialism has also used military, cultural, economic and political means since the 1940s to the present-day to dominate over lands, markets and peoples from Latin America to Africa to Asia. The crucial difference with ‘imperialism-with-colonies’ is the internationalization and control of the market. As McClintock asserts, the “power of U.S. finance capital and huge multi-nationals to direct the flows of capital, commodities, armaments and media information around the world can have an impact as massive as any colonial regime.” (p. 89). Even though these are much more subtle, innovative and various in colonial form, they too are driven by imperialist culture, understood and termed by many as neo-colonialism.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1991, 2003) also links dominant development discourse to colonization in her analysis of some Western feminist texts that produce a particular conception of the “Third World woman” as a singular, monolithic subject. In this analysis, Mohanty explicitly links this homogenizing re-presentation of women in the Majority World with colonization. While recognizing the complexity and problems of its use as an explanatory construct, Mohanty views colonization as “a relation of structural domination and a suppression—often violent—of the heterogeneity of the subject(s) in question” (2003, p. 18). Using a primarily discursive definition of colonization, she examines the use of “particular analytic categories...that take as their referent [dominant] feminist interests as they have been articulated in the United States and western Europe” to re-present and codify “scholarship and knowledge about women in the Third World” (2003, p. 17).

In resistance to dominant development, other scholars also connect the violence that occurs in development processes and discourses to Smith’s, McClintock’s and Mohanty’s understanding of colonization. Nandy (2004) speaks of the “violence of development” through “the drive for homogenization [that is] written in the birth certificate of development” (p. 10). The violence of this dominant development then is in the “presumption that, in the long run, you will have

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34 For more on this, see also Marchand & Parpart (1995).
35 One broad understanding of this term is “in its traditional sense to represent the policies through which a powerful force maintains or extends its control over foreign dependencies” (Sandoval, 2000). To maintain or extend this control, imperialist culture employs neocolonialism in ways whereby “a new cultural dominant overtake[s] the rationality of the old” (Sandoval, 2000, p.8). As noted by Sandoval, various names for first world societies in the present—“consumer”, “high-tech”, “post-industrial”, “post-colonial”, “transnational”, “multinational”, “post-modern”, etc.—represent some aspect of a new cultural dominant intended to replace ways of thinking and doing in the past. Regardless of a new cultural dominant order however, a rhetoric of supremacy remains, albeit a mutated strand, and continues to underlie the new rationality. Thus, (neo)colonialism in this new cultural dominant order is further perpetuated and reproduced.
only one particular kind of society all over the world” in which “economies of scale, and expansion of consumption are key concepts” (p. 10). This ties to Sandoval’s concept of “first world cultural expansion” that feeds and sustains “neocolonizing global conditions”. For Nandy, dominant development practice “brings homogenized, standardized solutions to pluralistic societies committed to pluralistic ways of knowing and being and living and doing” (p. 11).

Escobar (2004) names the violence of dominant development through the “massive displacement observed today worldwide (whether relatively voluntary or forced...”). This displacement, according to Escobar, is a result of “imperial globality” in which “[t]he new empire...operates not so much through conquest, but through the imposition of norms (free-markets, U.S.-style democracy and cultural notions of consumption, and so forth)” (pp. 17-18). In Chinese, the phrase 和平演变 (he ping yan bian) was coined by China’s leaders in the 1980s to reflect the silent, yet violent invasion in which hegemonic ideologies operate transnationally. These can again also be understood through “first world cultural expansion”.

**Exposing Hidden Tenets Shoring Up Dominant Development**

Related to these objectifying, colonizing, homogenizing, violent processes in development are several hidden tenets used to shore up development’s hegemonic system of beliefs. This section examines two of them in detail here:

- Truth is objective and can only be described and understood in simplistic, hierarchical binaries that repress diversity
- Material gain (say instead of social relations and cultural politics), is the prime motivating factor for individuals, households or communities to engage in development projects

In the first, dominant development discourse names and categorizes peoples and their situations into simplistic hierarchical dichotomies that reveal underlying imbalances in power structures. Audre Lorde (1984) writes: “Much of Western European history conditions us to see human differences in simplistic opposition to each other: dominant/subordinate, good/bad, up/down, superior/inferior. In a society where the good is defined in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, there must always be some group of people who through systematized oppression, can be made to feel surplus, to occupy the place of the dehumanized inferior. Within this society, that group is made up of Black, Third World people, working-class people, older people, and women.” (p. 114).

Overall, this colonizing approach to naming using static binaries that dehumanize through hierarchizing one entity over the other is related to the Western European imperialist project; a project in which Europeans developed their sense of Europeanness by imagining and defining what and who they were—or were not—according to the perceived Other (Smith, 1999; Said, 1978).

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36 In Chinese, 和平 (he ping) refers to ‘peaceful’, ‘harmonious’ and 演变 (yan bian) as ‘incremental change’. It is very much a play on words. I am grateful for these shared insights that arose from several conversations with one of my colleagues from the Education Sector.
When I look back now, I can see that these colonizing approaches—dehumanizing binaries and homogenizing of peoples into a single category of analysis—also persisted throughout the school textbooks I grew up with in regards to naming what colonization is, and what counted and what did not count as part of ‘Canadian’ history. Colonization was/is presented as the ‘discovery’ and ‘settling’ of Europeans to an ‘empty’, ‘wilderness’ land as the ‘grand narrative’ of Canadian history. Little did I realize in my teenage youth that this ‘presentation’ of history is, in fact, a re-presentation through the eyes of powerful dominating colonizers.

Written history is the story of the powerful (Smith, 1999). In my teaching practicum at the elementary level in 1997, unfortunately this simplistic dichotomous view still prevailed in textbooks and teaching pedagogy and style. In this experience, I found colonized histories of indigenous peoples to be insidiously mis-represented in dehumanizing binaristic ways that presented all Aboriginal peoples' cultures as the same. I witnessed and very awkwardly engaged in ‘teaching’ indigenous culture to (non-indigenous) students through making miniature models of their way of life; the curriculum and its resources were/are designed to speak of Aboriginal peoples as Other, as if their lives, their stories, are long-forgotten folktales and artifacts of the distant past. This pedagogy was rife with unspoken value judgments (passed off as ‘objective’ historical facts) that Othered, placing Aboriginal ways of knowing and living further back on the imaginary social evolutionary timeline.

Furthermore, during this teaching practicum, discussions of all present-day First Nations peoples and realities were in the context that they are being ‘taught’ how to ‘assimilate’ into these ‘new (better)’ ways of living, doing and being. There was no class discussion that problematized this view or the domination that (continues to) write over and write out the stories of Aboriginal peoples from the course of history in Canada, as this land has been named by its Western European colonizers. This was extremely disturbing to me and I began to inwardly question this presentation as the history. But outwardly, until this piece of writing, I always only got as far as having dialogue with my mother about it.

In regards to international development work today, it is heavily influenced by, and in some agencies, even founded on the ideological legacies of such a colonialist paradigm. The goals, strategies and analyses of Western-based development institutions reflect a conditioning to this paradigm that is demonstrated through the use of colonialist frames to underlie development work and resulting documents. I have mentioned several of these colonialist frames above as well as in my introduction. Whether the construction is of third world/Majority World women, girls, rural populations, ethnic minorities, migrant workers, herder families, indigenous peoples and communities, or working poor, in all of these colonialist frames, the locus of the perceived problem is placed on the individual, the family, the community or the culture, seen as Other (Smith, 1999), as defined by first world developers in dominant development discourse. This may not be done intentionally, but intention, and implications that have oppressive policy or development impacts, are not the same issue. Dominant discourse rarely questions how the
development agency itself contributes to, and many times, is the largest factor involved in marginalizing peoples, particularly third world women and girls. It speaks of disadvantaged groups but what of disadvantaging structures?

A second unspoken tenet in hegemonic development is the assumption that material gain and consumption are the prime motivating factors for all communities and peoples in all places to engage in development agency projects. Material gain is presumed over other motivating factors based in social relations differentiated across culture, nationality, language, ethnicity, gender, race, class. This value can be traced to European/North American conceptions of the market and its relationship to development as ‘modernization’. Increasing material gain and consumption that occurs under the “economization of the world” is viewed in modernism “as the triumph of reason” (Appiah, 1991); underscored since modernist European Enlightenment thought, Reason is taken as the ultimate peak of human being’s development (Smith, 1999), not humanity and formation of “qualitatively rich relationships” (Cornel West with bell hooks, 1990, p. 205).

Thus, for first world developers, it seems most reasonable that material gain would be the prime motivating factor for individuals and communities to engage in Western-based development agencies’ projects. This may be the case for many, and I do not dispute its relevance and place in development work but these conditions of engagement are also much more complex than simple material or monetary gain. As Crewe & Harrison (1998) document through their own experience, the cultural politics of relationships and adverse affects to these relationships as a result of development interventions, are also key motivating factors. In these places, people may value each other’s trust, respect, honour, reciprocity and larger benefits to the community more so than the material or monetary benefits which development interventions from a dominant paradigm often brings. These social relations and cultural politics cut across social distinctions related to gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, marital status, caste, religion, knowledge. Those who feel their participation in a development project only serves to unequally disadvantage them—because of any number of these reasons or others—differentially express interest or outright resistance to such a project. This voicing and being heard is of course also shaped by social context and networks of power.

To illustrate this point more clearly, during my research work on the gender impact study of a World Bank agricultural project in northeastern China, one rural woman told her reasons for choosing involvement indicated by accepting the Bank’s loan. While her husband was keen on receiving the loan from the start, she only permitted their household to accept it on the condition that the loan would also be written under her name, not just her husband’s. To ensure this, she went to the township where the loans were allocated and signed her name herself alongside her spouse. She stated that her husband ‘is often out of the village as a migrant.

39 Many scholars attempt to change or shift this dominant development discourse by questioning contributions to marginalized groups that bi- and multi-lateral agencies’, particularly those of the World Bank and the IMF, claim their projects and programmes benefit. In particular, gender bias in structural adjustment policies (SAPs) that negatively impact women and girls have drawn massive amounts of attention, criticism and mounting resistance. Although this area of critique is much too extensive to provide a comprehensive bibliography in this context, here is a brief collection on the negative and marginalizing impacts of SAPs on oppressed groups: Afshar & Dennis (1992); Agarwal (1992); Aydin (2002); Barriteau (1996); Beneria (1992, 1995); Beneria & Feldman (1992); Cagatay, Elson & Grown (1995); Elson (1992, 1995a, 1995b); Fonchingong (1999); Hays-Mitchell (2002); Kabeer (1994); Kawiwe & Dibie (2000); Moser (1993); Obasi (1997); Peréz-Alemán (1992); Safa & Antrobus (1992); Sparr (1994); Tripp (1992).
worker in other towns and cities, so why should the loan simply be in his name if he’s always away?’ She would be the ‘one doing all the work to pay the loan back.’ ‘What if he ran off with the money and didn’t come back?’ ‘Project staff would chase her to pay back the funds.’ With her name to the loan, she ‘can ensure how much of the loan is used for what and the percentage of payback.’ These were all questions and thoughts she shared with our three-member research team that also took place in the presence of her husband. With a silent husband on the matter and one not particularly willing to comment, the cultural and gender politics affecting this couple’s involvement in the project cannot easily be described and understood.

This example not only illustrates that material gain is not the sole factor determining people’s engagement in development projects, but also that contexts of social inequalities, local histories of conflict, politics and trust play an important role in shaping whether and how engagement in development occurs. It is this complexity of development processes that I argue are often not understood by first world developers, nor do they take the time and effort to understand beyond superficial levels (Guruani, 2002).

Kumar (2003) refers to development devoid of these considerations as “secular development”. Its agents are “missionaries of materialism [who] suffer from arrogance and prejudice ... Prejudice that tribal, rural, agrarian societies... need secular schooling and modern medicine, computers and cameras, tractors and televisions” because “[w]ithout these mod cons ... without cars and concrete buildings, their lives are primitive and poor” (p. 16). This is not to say that these material items cannot serve to benefit women, men and children in Majority World communities. The problem I believe Kumar refers to as “secular development” is the arrogant presumption that these items are taken to be end-all symbols of so-called modern-ness, and this process of modern-ness is mistaken for ‘development’ which is viewed as ‘the civilizing of the poor’. Thus, not having these things is then construed as living a life of primitive, abject poverty, which then gets judged as ‘backward’ in the linear conception of modernity.

But not only is dominant development assumed to evolve along a linear trajectory towards greater and greater ‘modern-ness’. Also, naming, judgment and pity takes place by dominants in disparaging ways about what ‘suffering’ is and means for whom and whether/how to ‘alleviate’ it. This draws that line that leads to an Us/Them mentality. Rather, citing Mahatma Gandhi as examplar, Kumar speaks of development as “service”, as “sharing”, as “friendship”, and as “homage to and reverence for the Earth”. In this light, development is a “cultural process” (Escobar, 1995, p. 44) not determined solely by, or primarily by economic growth as dictated by liberal economic thought.

**Impacts of Growth Economics**

Ideological hegemony does not work alone in dominant development. It operates in a mutually reinforcing way along with control over resources to shape dominant development. Those with control over resources have the power “to determine the parameters within which debates and controversies in development can be conducted, which problems are to count within the development agenda, and which subset of solutions will be considered” (Kabeer, 1994, p. 70).

Naila Kabeer very succintly ties problems in development, particularly gender-based
inequities, to the liberal neo-classical model of economics. Her analysis is related to the two hidden tenets of dominant development discussed above. Under growth economics, a country's level of development is measured by its per capita gross national product (GNP) wherein means and ends are separated allowing for more attention paid to the rate of economic growth than to its pattern (Kabeer, 1994). This, in turn has formed the basis on which the World Bank, IMF, United Nations and powerful national, multilateral and bilateral agencies formulate policies and monitor performance. But GNP is itself inherently fraught with problems because it is assumed to be an objective, value-free indicator of market activity.

Recognizing the nexus of knowledge and power in discourse, Kabeer associates this view of economics as objective and value-free with a "reductive approach to the production of knowledge." Such an approach "implies that the complexities of nature and society can be broken down into their constituent components, and the separate parts [objectively] studied in isolation from each other" (p. 72). Used as a form of knowledge about society, this has led to the separation of politics, culture, economy and carved up subjects of study into academic 'disciplines'. Basically, used as a way of knowing about both nature and society, this thinking serves and promotes dominant interests (p. 73). Because of the "neglect" and "suppression" of complex interactions between these spheres, reductionism "has promoted a narrow focus on piecemeal inequities, led to a separation between 'means' and 'ends' in policy analysis, and blocked out consideration of the exploitative nature of the social system itself" (p. 73). Left with no other alternative, it is this reductive approach to knowledge production that has then resulted in simplistic hierarchical dichotomous thinking and repression of diversity.

Returning to growth-based economics, as Kabeer writes, "...the GNP is rarely a value-free measure because the market itself is a highly partial mechanism for assigning value". Rather than measuring "the value of a nation's productive activities and resources, what it actually measures are those activities and resources that are exchanged in the market. In other words, the GNP equates the value of goods and services in an economy with the prices they command or could command in the marketplace" (p. 76). This explains why trust, respect, honour, reciprocity and responsibility for and between community members are not taken into account by dominants as factors in the development process—the market is unable to measure them. As such, only material gain and consumption, which can be measured and included in the country's GNP, are used as the prime motivating factors for individuals, households and communities to engage in development projects.

Furthermore, in a market-defining arena, the forces of supply and demand reveal hidden gender bias. Supply refers "...only to goods and services which are offered for sale in response to market signals, ... not...[those] that satisfy human needs within a society". In the same way, "demand refers ...only to 'effective' demand, or demand backed by purchasing power,... not the full range of goods and services that may be needed or wanted by people". The direct effect of the market's "selective definitions is that a major section of the working women of the world disappear into a 'black hole' in economic theory". Although women play a large role in sustaining the economy through informal economic and political spheres, the "market is not capable of assigning a value to...a significant proportion of women's activities, produced as a part of their familial obligations". So, according to the market, this work "does not enter the
marketplace, does not earn an income, and is therefore excluded from GNP estimates” because GNP only records formal sector activities (Kabeer, pp. 77, original italics).

It is precisely because dominant development is led primarily by neo-liberal economic thinking and mass consumer capitalism that dominant development is then not so much conceived as a cultural process of social transformation with human life and human well-being at the fore as it is concerned with development as a planned, purposive project that separates means (assumed to be economic growth) from ends (assumed to be improvements in human well-being).

In sum, ‘development’ in dominant development paradigms is a set of relations that objectifies and structures marginality; coupled with the pursuit of economic goals that have little to do with equity, this form of development arguably reproduces networks of power and gross inequalities.

It is this conception of dominant development that I deconstruct and yearn to transform with others through a methodology of decolonizing. I want to decolonize the language of terms and the hegemonic ideology upon which dominant development paradigms operate. I propose this methodology of decolonizing through examining the application of UNESCO’s gender and development conceptual framework to education and implementation of this framework at the field office level.

Shifting back to ideological hegemony, related to the ability of dominant interests to persist in development is the aspect of naming. Whether it is naming of terms, of individuals, or of whole societies’ identities—it remains an element of linguistic and discursive power. As with any other discourse, development discourses and practices are clearly not “singular or homogeneous in goals, interests or analyses” (Mohanty, 1991, p. 51). But, as Mohanty (1991, 2003) argues in her analysis of the implications of particular Western feminist texts on Third World women, “it is possible to trace a coherence of effects resulting from the implicit assumption of “the West” (in all its complexities and contradictions) as the primary referent in theory and praxis” (2003, p. 18). I contend that the same can be said in the process of the production of Western development scholarship and resulting discourse; it “sets up its own authorial subjects as the implicit referent, that is, the yardstick by which to encode and represent cultural others.” Thus, “[i]t is in this move that power is exercised in discourse” (p. 21).

‘Naming’—Sites of Power

Friere’s (1970) concept of ‘naming’ and ‘reading the world’ and Said’s (1978) formulation of the notion of ‘orientalism’ as a form of ‘Othering’ are two key works that form part of this

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41 For a look at ways that re-examine what should get counted as valued in economic systems so women’s unpaid labour is counted in GNP, see Marilyn Waring (1988, 1998, 2003).

42 Understanding that gender identities are not isolated units, but rather cut across race, class, dis/ability, sexual orientation, language, nationality, ethnicity, I take up Kabeer’s (1994) formulation of “gender equity” to be applicable to equity across these nodes of differences that get used as social divisions. She states that such equity “goes beyond equal opportunity; it requires the transformation of the basic rules, hierarchies and practices of public institutions.” (p. 87). I understand this as different from “equality” initiatives which do not acknowledge the structure of public institutions as disadvantaging. Rather the view is that individuals or communities are disadvantaged in particular ways, and it is through activities such as training and capacity-building that individuals and communities can become ‘empowered’ and social justice achieved.
study's basic foundation developed to critique dominant development's colonial agenda, which I posit occurs through naming processes. Weedon (1997) also suggests that language is a site of unconscious, repressed meanings as Audre Lorde demonstrates in her words cited earlier. I look at several terms here in development language. A simple yet taken-for-granted example is the naming and prolific use of 'developing' and 'developed'. In dominant development paradigms, it is viewed as common practice to speak and formally document and publish reports that use 'developed' and 'developing' to describe countries and regions beyond purely economic terms to include social dimensions of cultures and peoples as well. This is problematic and done without any analysis of these implications or deeper complexities beyond this simplistic binary. Some maintain that people in 'developing' countries even use this term for themselves, so it must be acceptable. But I ask, "Have these peoples chosen to use this term or have they been named by dominants in dominant development discourse?" When English language is often not the first language of peoples or nations being named by English-speaking dominant power groups, how much more difficult it is to re-name oneself and the relationship with the dominant global social order! Again, without any acknowledgement in development discourse connecting the English language to histories of colonialism, the colonial legacy of the English language continues to insidiously operate in haunting ways.

Moreover, without any analysis or deconstruction of the naming process itself—resulting political implications of these terms, and their relationship to structural domination at global levels—is this change in language really a shift away from dominant development discourse? Or does a "rhetoric of supremacy" continue to underpin its naming, suppressing heterogeneity and Othering peoples through construction as powerless, preconstituted subjects of the discourse? As I continue to point out throughout my framework, scholars and activists around the world react to or resist this naming by dominant development institutions.

My reference to Western-based development agencies or institutions, and their resulting scholarship in the field of development, is not meant to imply they are monolithic nor that they are limited to geographic and spatial understandings. Rather, I want to draw attention to the ideological hegemony this prevailing concept of development has in development work overall. It holds a tight grip on meanings of development and while it is not limited to, is propagated to varying degrees by, multilateral and bilateral agencies—the World Bank, the Bank's closest ally, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the United Nations Organization and its affiliated agencies.

In this term—Western-based development agencies—I do not limit 'Western' to its geographical usage—with transnational markets and systems of communication along with increasing migration of individuals and whole communities, the present era is far beyond placing border limitations on ideology. Moreover, first world developers, whether driven by greed, envy, pride or impulses of desire to consume and subsume everything "under advanced capitalist social formations" that serve one's own interests, or driven by a rhetoric of supremacy, exist in any society. These are forces of destruction any unbridled, unwilling person is capable of using to rob others of their humanity. S/he engages in disillusion and domination at varying levels from ideologically-held beliefs, to neocolonizing development practices and

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43 From conversations with several development practitioners working in diverse sectors.
44 Just as an example, the representative from Thailand at a workshop discussing globalization in higher education held in Beijing and initiated by UNESCO spoke of "so-called developing countries".
interventions, to forceful military imposition of those beliefs. These may be used in order to
gratify oneself in particular ways that allow disconnection from colonizing forces of history.
As such, the ideological hegemony of development as described above does not discriminate
between borders or cultures. I use these terms with conceptual and metaphorical
understandings.

Majority World

There are several other terms I wish to clarify my use or non-use of. One is the notion of
Majority World. Defined by ‘profit’, ‘material wealth’, ‘technology’, and ‘mass consumption’, Western states use capitalist language in neocolonizing ways to centre themselves in the world. This is evident in the push for economic, political and ideological globalization spearheaded by and for the benefit of Western states towards (Western) notions of ‘gender equality’, ‘democracy’, ‘freedom’, ‘justice’, and ‘human dignity’, and liberalized free trade, including those of educational services across national borders.

If the conditions for this centering are re-examined and re-named, one can see the Majority
World at the centre. Rather than using an economic model based on the power of capital as
developed/developing uses, Majority World is based on a model that centres the social
dimensions of culture and peoples. The Majority World—in terms of human need, population,
geographical area, diversity of culture and language, and extent of marginalization as well as
oppositional activity—is in fact the majority of the world and Western countries are the
minority. Conceptually, the way of life in the Minority World is the exception and the way of
life in the Majority World is the rule. This ‘way of life in the Minority World’ that I refer to is
that rat-race, self-serving, consumerist drive for material wealth, status, and social and cultural
capital that feeds and is sustained by the dominant paradigm of linear development and notions
of modernity. This hyper-consumerist, neocolonizing mentality is in part driven by pressures to
perform in society—in dress, material possessions, status, occupation, etc.

The ‘way of life in the Majority World’ is not preoccupied with performance. Rather, focus is
on a quality of life defined less by how much one possesses or has done for oneself or one’s

45 After initially hearing ‘Majority World’ through Marilou Carrillo during class seminars on “Feminist
Approaches to Social Justice in Education”, I began hearing and reading this term in the online magazine New
Internationalist. My conception of this term during my thesis writing is shaped by our many conversations and
sharing of ideas that has followed since this class finished in April 2003.

46 I differentiate this usage of the word from Sandoval’s, which is for emancipatory purposes. In this context I
refer to ‘technology’ as a tool to further global capitalism and the reach of Western knowledge and power across
transnational and translanguage boundaries. Thus, in this sense it feigns innocence of neutrality while actually
riding the coattails of domination.

47 These concepts and values are obviously not limited to Western philosophy or North American/Western
European society. What I suggest here though is that dominant development, through individuals whom Uma
Narayan (2000) calls “Western cultural supremacists”, presents these values as only acceptable through the lenses
and understanding of Western-oriented feminists, development practitioners and Western state governments.
Questions such as how people in a Majority World country already have gender equality, democracy or freedom or
justice or human dignity, or are working towards them, (whether at government or grassroots levels), are never
asked by dominants. Narayan (2000) also speaks of “Third World fundamentalists who share the views of
Western cultural supremacists that all such notions [of “equality” and “rights”] are “Western ideas.” Third World
fundamentalists “deploy these views to justify the claim that such ideas are “irrelevant foreign notions” used only
by “Westernized and inauthentic Third World subjects”, in order “to cloak their violations of rights and
suppression of democratic processes in the mantle of cultural preservation” (pp. 91-92).
closeknit circle, and more by the quality of relationships in communities. It may be that the realities of close and frequent encounters with violence, illness, death and oppression and exploitation in the Majority World are part of shaping this focus through a respect for daily survival and knowledge of strength through community. Sharing among many what is already in short supply—whether it is food, water, money, medicine—is frequent practice and this giving is done without a second thought. Agnivesh (2003), Kumar (2003), Tyndale (2003), and ver Beek (2000) look at connections of religion and spirituality as guiding both relationships and development processes. This focus on quality of life in Majority World communities builds and maintains a network of community support, caring and love, regardless of the level of access to land, food, water, clothing and shelter needs, and health, education and employment services that are determined as needed for an ‘average standard of living’ by Western-based development agencies and societies. Esteva and Prakash (1998) speak of peoples living in these ways of life as “social minorities” (way of life in the West/Minority World) and “social majorities” (way of life in the Majority World) (pp. 16-17). As the third world is in the first world and the first world is in the third world, then the Majority World is also in the Minority World/West and the Minority World/West is in the Majority World.

Moreover, under the democratic principle of ‘majority rules’, I find the word ‘majority’ empowering. It signifies a great wielding of power, influence and decision-making through a kind of consensus by the masses. Whether the decision-making process of the ‘majority rules’ principle is actually a consensus is debatable, I argue that even the illusion of such bestows collectively held power or rights on the word ‘Majority’. It is this collective power that I see can be applied from a place of politicized resistance in the term ‘Majority World’.

Then, what if the Majority World, conceptually and geographically speaking, held its democratic share of global political, economic and social power? The world would indeed look and operate much differently. I use ‘majority’ then within the context of the ‘majority rules’ democratic principle to subvert the notion that the ‘developing’ world, because it is only ‘developing’, it is powerless and inferior (as defined by first world developers in the West and implying that Western countries have already ‘reached’ a higher stage of ‘development’ as prescribed by the dominant paradigm). I use Majority World to re-conceptualize centering the world from the perspectives and experiences of Majority World peoples, not those in the West/Minority World.

This analysis of dominant structures that perpetuates and reproduces ‘common sense’ values and ‘truths’ must be conceptually located from “standing in the circle with” Majority World peoples (Archibald, Roundtable Dialogue, UBC, 2004). Whether one is geographically or spatially located in the Majority World or geographically/spatially located in the Minority World/West, both can have Majority World consciousness. Hence, in this understanding, I do not mean a simple inversion of power by this re-centering. Rather, both a re-cognition and re-distribution of global political, economic and social power that sees transformation of dominating structures so there is no dehumanizing of any peoples (Fraser, 1997; Fraser & Naples, 2004; Sandoval, 2000).

To illustrate how this is (conceptually) possible, let us look at a few admirable activists and scholars’ works. To emphasize her point that the categories “Western” and “Third World” feminist “are not embodied, geographically or spatially defined categories”, Mohanty (2003) states that “a woman from the geographical Third World can be a Western feminist in
orientation" and a “European feminist can use a Third World analytic perspective” (p. 270).

Sandoval (2000) also demonstrates the limitations of using the adjectives “Third World” and “First World” when she explains her use of lower case letters for “third world” and “first world”. She states “these terms are so frayed around the edges that they can no longer “mean” in the geographic and economic ways they were used in previous academic thinking” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 192) which Kabeer (1994) states were based on “first ‘capitalist’ path”, “second ‘socialist’ path” and Third World then “connoting a ‘third way’ to development for the economies of Africa, Asia and Latin America” (p. xix). Anzaldúa (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002) also questions the limits of categories of race in her preface to this bridge we call home: radical visions for transformation. She writes this book “questions the terms white and women of color by showing that whiteness may not be applied to all whites, as some possess women of colour consciousness, just as some women of colour bear white consciousness” (p. 2, original italics). It is from these complex web-like connections that I draw this extension to Majority World consciousness—it is not defined by geographical or spatial categories, but rather “refer[s] to political and analytic sites and methodologies used” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 270).

However, there is a major limitation to this term. If Majority World is explained in juxtaposition to the Minority World/West, which I have found hard to avoid when explaining my concept of it to those who have never heard it spoken, it can reinscribe the same old binary of West/Majority World that maintains the paradigm of Western countries as the primary referent. Although this is frustrating and difficult to avoid reference to Western framework modules, I maintain that the term is much more empowering and able to bring recognition of power and resource imbalances to the fore than terms such as ‘developing’. The latter can too easily be taken up in colonizing, dehumanizing ways that takes for granted the hidden description that societies are also in need of ‘developing’ socially and culturally along a Western trajectory.

Two-Thirds World/South... One-Third World/North

In her work published in 1991, Mohanty uses the terms “Third World” and “Western”. She then explains in her 2003 publication that these terms “retain a political and explanatory value” in light of neocolonizing, first world cultural expansion. While she continues to use these terms throughout her writing, Mohanty also acknowledges three limits to their use: (1) nodes of capitalist power in this century are held by the United States, the European Community and Japan which do not necessarily fit, conceptually or geographically, within either “Third World” or “Western”; (2) “increasing proliferation of Third and Fourth Worlds within the national borders of these very countries”; and (3) mounting resistance and visibility for sovereignty by First Nations/indigenous peoples around the world (p. 226).

Rather, she looks at other terms that “move away from misleading geographical and ideological binarisms” such as North/South and One-Third/Two-Thirds Worlds (Mohanty, 2003, p. 227).

While not bound to, in this term, I include indigenous peoples. My logic for this is that describing indigenous peoples’ location as from the ‘third world’ denotes that they share all too similar histories with peoples of colour when in many cases the latter operate as colonizing powers (Chua, 2003; Kriesler, 2004). Rather, ‘fourth world’ has been used to describe the situations of indigenous groups (Ouellette, 2002). I use “Majority World” throughout to draw these groups together, not to deny their differences or make them the same, but to speak of a collective power of politicized resistance, albeit from different socio-historical and political locations of oppression, against first world capitalist expansion and all forms of supremacist thinking.
To avoid simple geographical distinctions that categorize the affluent northern hemisphere and marginal southern hemisphere, Mohanty draws on Arif Dirlik’s (1997) concept of North/South. Dirlik sees North/South “as a metaphorical rather than geographical distinction, where ‘North’ refers to the pathways of transnational capital and ‘South’ to the marginalized poor of the world regardless of geographical distinction” (Mohanty, 2003, pp. 226-227, my italics). Mohanty combines this language with the understanding of “One-Third World” and “Two-Thirds World” as expanded by Esteva & Prakash (1998) that refer to the quality of life led by social minorities and social majorities.

While on the surface, all these terms may seem to propagate dichotomies, I find them to be a language of fresh terms and reclaimed meanings that can be used to substantiate and layer meaning or explicate it. Their combination challenges and collapses the repression of diversity propped up by simple binaries of Western/developed/rich and ‘non’-Western/developing/underdeveloped/poor countries. They allow for a “fray[ing] around the edges” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 192) that does not allow them to be taken in purely economic, geographical or ideological ways. They are more fluid—conceptually and metaphorically—invoking possible intersection and layering of all these ways. Most importantly, I think the variety of terms allows for much more flexibility in textual strategies and conceptual terms available that marginalized development discourse(s) operating from a critical consciousness or one of opposition (can) use. In the end, however, I must remember again it is not the terms themselves that reinforce more binaries or old colonizing paradigms, or conversely, provide emancipation to mental forms of social oppression. It is the naming—who names, from what locations and positions, and who gets named—that reveals implied meanings and underpinning conceptualizations of the world.

Thus, regarding naming in my own writing, I shall be quite frank here. I am particularly cautious in how I engage these terms, especially “Third World”. Not only because of the limitations that Mohanty clearly states, but also because of my own insufficient experience and praxis acting and living in solidarity with peoples in third and fourth worlds, whether in Canada or elsewhere throughout the Majority World. As Marilou Carrillo (PhD work in progress, 2004) writes, “no one observes the struggle of a community, but is located in it in different ways. To continue to only observe those in the margins, whether these observers are outside these marginalized communities or within them, is to loosen engagement with these alternative realities and signal a return to the familiarity of dominance” (p. 3). As someone only more recently aware of how she understands the world and her locations in domination and oppression, I have yet to work more fully to locate myself in struggles with communities not only in theory but more importantly in praxis.

Section II: Gender and Development’s (GAD) Hegemonic Model

Discussions of women and gender as they relate to development have been primarily shaped by feminist discourses. Gender and development (GAD) is the most recent in the narrative of feminist discourse in development. I spend the first part here tracing this narrative.
GAD’s official beginnings in Western-based development agencies can be traced back to a liberal feminist approach started in the 1970s that argued for the integration of women into development. This has come to be characterized as the Women in Development (WID) approach. The influential work of Ester Boserup (1970), *Women’s Role in Economic Development*, subsequently served to open this up as a major subfield in development. Through critiquing women’s exclusion from dominant development, Boserup demonstrated the adverse economic, social and political impacts of development on women. Her message, along with WID advocates, argued that women are “rational economic agents” but constrained by discriminatory development planning processes (Boserup, 1970; Kabeer, 1994).

This led to efficiency-based arguments in WID⁴⁹ that emphasized women as productive agents whose neglected potential was a costly mistake professional development planners⁵⁰ and governments could no longer afford (Kabeer, 1994). It was this efficiency-led argument that persuaded Western-based development agencies to take Majority World women seriously. Goetz (1997), Kabeer (1994) and Koczberski (1998) give examples of changes in policy documents and practices of multilateral and bilateral agencies that reflected this shift in policy discourse.

However, while WID brought the attention of Western-based development institutions to women, WID did not question the supposed gender neutrality of institutions themselves or the patriarchal bias in liberal neo-classical economics upon which dominant development is based. For instance, the rules of financial markets and credit schemes favouring male property owners/ producers is an example of this deeply-rooted gendered exclusion in development institutional structures and practices (Goetz, 1997). Thus, ‘integration’ meant women’s involvement in existing development practices under prevailing notions of development (Koczberski, 1998). As Kabeer (1994) aptly states, the WID perspective “left intact the dominant hierarchy of development priorities which consistently privileged the domain of production, in which men were concentrated, over the domain of reproduction where women were assigned primary responsibility.” (p. 29).

Another approach, Women and Development (WAD), followed WID thinking differing in that it offered a Marxist analysis of class relations and divisions among women (Marchand & Parpart, 1995; Saunders, 2002). Apart from this slight discursive shift, the WAD approach also remained wedded to the existing dominant development framework, considering women as add-ons to ‘larger’ development processes (McIlwaine & Datta, 2003). In seeking to ‘integrate’ women into existing development projects, both WID and WAD failed to recognize women’s already pervasive and visible work in development, which both approaches were purportedly fighting for. This further perpetuated the concealment and devaluation of women’s existing

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⁴⁹ ‘Efficiency’ is one of a five-point classification that Caroline Moser (1993) sees as most common in WID policy. The five points reflect changes in economic and social policy approaches to development and state policy towards women, namely from ‘welfare’ to ‘equity’ to ‘anti-poverty’ to ‘efficiency’ to ‘empowerment’. Thus, according to Moser and also Kabeer (1994), before this ‘efficiency’ approach in WID policy came the previous three. Kabeer however differentiates between “welfare” and “welfarism”. See Chowdhry (1995) for more on WID and the ‘empowerment’ approach.

⁵⁰ I use this term to refer to those employed by Western-based development agencies.
roles in informal economic and political activities and household production (Kabeer, 1994; Koczberski, 1998).

Critics of WID/WAD have questioned and continue to question the premises on which development institutions seek to ‘integrate women into development’. Not only do they reject the idea of sex-based inequity as the fundamental problem facing all women which WAD argued against, but they attempt to critique dominant development itself. In so doing, they shift policy focus from a women-centred paradigm to that of both gender and class. This paradigm of thought is referred to as Gender and Development (GAD). Where WAD charged WID with not including class analysis, GAD proponents then charged “WAD with non-recognition—inattention to gender relations, cross-gender alliances, and divisions within classes” (Saunders, 2002, p. 8). Also, where WID and WAD questioned male bias, GAD attempts to move beyond to examine the institutionalized basis of male power and privilege at both the level of household and the gendered constitution of (Western-based) development agencies (Goetz, 1997; Kabeer, 1994). GAD is concerned with uncovering and addressing bases of gender inequalities by grasping “construction and reproduction of gender identities, and the role of gender ideologies in the reproduction of unequal power relations between [and among] men and women” (Saunders, 2002, p. 11).

Each of these approaches—WID/WAD/GAD—has been shaped by different understandings of both feminism and development. As with liberal feminists in the West that aimed to prove women are as “fully human” (read: rational) as men (Jaggar, 1983), the WID objective aimed to demonstrate that ‘women in the marketplace are as good as men’ (Kabeer, 1994). WAD, with its subordination of gender to class differences that result from unequal capitalist ‘modes of production’, was influenced by Marxist feminism (Mcllwaine & Datta, 2003). Both WID and WAD are based upon a politics of access. It was the “sluggish rates of change in women’s material condition [that] led to the conclusion that women’s lesser power in social relations...[and] inhibit[s] women’s capacity to profit from improved access to social and economic resources” (Goetz, 1997, p. 3). As Aihwa Ong (1988) also insightfully exposes, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, during which policies under WID and WAD formally took place, first world feminist developers emphasized Majority World women’s roles in capitalist development by explaining “their statuses...in terms of their labour and reproductive powers” (Feminist Discursive section, para. 3). The GAD approach proposes dealing with this by not only calling for equal access. It directly challenges male privilege and prejudices so that women are equally enabled in social, economic and political spheres.

I understand this GAD approach to be most similar in principle with radical feminism because it involves changing the institutional rules through its call for systemic transformation of institutions to recognize and act on the importance of redistributing power in social relations (Goetz, 1997; Jaggar, 1983). As described of radical feminism, it is in this move that men’s interests are seen to conflict with those of women’s, creating not only another totalizing binary, but one in which maleness, not femaleness is “the difference” that matters. Thus, reversing the colonialist patriarchal paradigm, it becomes men, not women, who become ‘the Other’ (Eisenstein & Jardine, 1980).

On the ground however, dominant GAD has done very little to actualize change or transform social, economic and political structures (McIlwaine & Datta, 2003; Marchand & Parpart, 1995). Although it aims to look beyond market-led development planning to institutional transformation which cuts across gender alliances and class divisions, it remains driven by a liberal, woman-centred view that only positions women’s conditions vis-à-vis men (Kabeer, 1994; Saunders, 2002). This has done little to improve many Majority World women’s situations. Moreover, despite some places, particularly within development agencies and governments, having undergone “political restructuring” by ‘adding’ women’s units/divisions/departments to manage WID projects, (Goetz, 1997) this occurred “without social transformation” (Underhill-Sem, 2000) that should have moved WID “beyond the assumptions of modernization” (Chowdhry, 1995, p. 38). On top of that, for many development planners the “move from women to gender constitutes nothing more than a strategic retreat from the conservative backlash of feminism” (McIlwaine & Datta, 2003). As Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) activists and researchers write, “We cannot add gender or women to frameworks that have led to the exclusion of women in the first place and to marginalization of the majority of poor people”.

**Mutually Reinforcing Hegemonic Powers**

I look at this brief narrative of feminist discourse in development to illustrate a juncture where feminist developmental discourses and practices have far from escaped influence of an underlying hegemonic feminist model that has dominated feminism for decades. As with hegemonic feminism, there is no flexibility, institutional support or sometimes even willingness to analyze how gender oppression is cut across by other forms of oppression based on contextually specific social distinctions such as race, class, culture and age, to name a few. Hegemonic feminism purposefully separates out a dichotomous male/female conception of gender as a unit of analysis, disconnecting it from any other possible sources of oppression and hierarchy. As hooks (2000b) and Oyewumi (2001, 2002) aptly demonstrate, this is because hegemonic feminism stems from white feminist concepts that are rooted in a Euroamerican patriarchal family unit operating within a capitalist system, or what hooks (1997, 2000b) refers to as “imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy” (2000b, p. xiv, p. 118).

But there is more to this hegemonic paradigm. Dominant feminist thinking shares with dominant development, “common roots in the Enlightenment” (Ong, 1988). Euroamerican “standards and goals—rationality and individualism—are used to evaluate the cultures and histories of non-Western societies” under the rhetoric of “enlightened reason” as the “critical force of social emancipation” (Ong, 1988, Who Is section, para. 2). As Aihwa Ong states, Euroamerican-orientated feminists “unconsciously echo this masculinist will to power in its relation to non-Western societies” through portrayal of Majority World women as “non-Western” (1988, para. 2). I will return to this shortly.

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52 See Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) website at http://www.dawn.org.fj/
53 This is not to suggest that the changes from WID to WAD to GAD are evolutionary, nor by any means that GAD has replaced the former two approaches.
54 For a more thorough examination of WID theoretical underpinnings, pitfalls and critiques as well as a view on alternatives, see Chowdhry (1995), Kabeer (1994), Koczberski (1998) and McIlwaine & Datta (2003). Also see Datta (2004) and Saunders (2003) for an analysis of GAD.
I use the term ‘Euroamerican-orientated feminists’ to refer to those feminists who use Euroamerican notions of patriarchy as their reference point for assessing and conceptualizing gender inequality and thereby gender equality and equity in Majority World countries. As with the term ‘Majority World consciousness’, its usage in this study is not defined by geographical or spatial categories. Rather, it refers to the “political and analytic sites and methodologies used” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 270). Thus, drawing from Mohanty (2003), a woman from the geographical Majority World can be a Euroamerican feminist “in orientation” and a European or American feminist can use a Majority World “analytic perspective” (p. 270).

Therefore, for many activists, women of colour and indigenous and third world feminists worldwide, this flawed ‘gender’ analysis is hugely superficial. In fact, the feminist ideology underpinning hegemonic feminist and gender analyses “remains colonial” (Monture-Angus, 1995, p. 171). It simply equates gender with women (Greig, Kimmel & Lang, 2000; McIlwaine & Datta, 2003), dichotomizes economic production from social reproduction as well as the household from the economy (Antrobus, 2001) and places the burden of transformation (through ‘education’) onto women as the necessary focal point of change (Parpart, 1995). The rhetoric of ‘gender justice’ in this paradigm is indeed empty.

Whether GAD, WAD or WID, gender analysis in dominant development also remains colonial because it is rooted in, and enforces upon other societies the same Euroamericentric concepts of feminist theory. It inappropriately assumes that the path of social emancipation needed for all cultures and societies is founded in Euroamerican notions of rationality and individualism. Being consumed with supremacist rhetoric of ‘knowing all’, it universalizes the logic of the patriarchal nuclear family operating in free market capitalist economies. This logic is one whereby “gender categories are presented as inherent in nature (of bodies) [that] operate on a dichotomous, binarily opposed male/female, man/woman duality in which the male is assumed to be superior and therefore the defining category” (Oyewumi, 2002, The Challenge section, para. 1).

Using this limited scope of ‘rationale’, the Euroamerican household model of ‘male breadwinner/independent housewife and children’ formed and was assumed to be the model of families in every society and culture. Because the “unit of analysis is the nuclear family household, which theoretically then reduces woman to wife”, subsuming motherhood under wifehood, a male/female opposing binary understanding of gender becomes the basic organizing principle of the family (Oyewumi, 2002, Gender and the Politics section, para. 9). Thus, gender differences defined as between husband and wife become the primary source of hierarchy and oppression within this nuclear family, not race or class or any other category.

Whether imposed directly, or acting in resistance to it, as Kabeer (1994) suggests WID policy challenged, this model of the household remains the central focus of most development interventions. Monture-Angus (1995) both experiences and views this colonialist logic as entrenched in state-driven patriarchal, oppressive Canadian laws which, not Aboriginal men, are the source of a physical, psychological and emotional violence-based colonialism against Aboriginal women.

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56 I use the term “Euroamerican” throughout to also include Canada because of its historical ties to and cultural, economic and political influences intricately associated with both Europe and the United States of America.
Refusing to use this colonizing form of analysis and by questioning the very category of ‘women’, Oyewumi (2002) seems to reject gender analysis completely. She illustrates how seniority according to chronological age, not gender, is the organizing principle in Yoruba society of southwestern Nigeria. I do not reject gender analysis because I think where appropriately applied and contextually relevant, it can be a useful political and analytical tool to understand female oppression all over the world. To not directly address women’s issues through feminist or gender analyses is hegemonic and a product of the colonial agenda. But I do strongly hold the belief that the colonizing Western paradigms used to examine gender as some form of ‘measurable’ category must be clearly recognized by first world developers and undergo processes of decolonizing.

Mohanty’s (1991, 2003) analysis also demonstrates the way dominant development’s presentation of ‘otherness in the name of sameness’ is tied to its counterpart, reinforcing hegemonic feminist thought. Taking up the thread begun earlier with Aihwa Ong, Mohanty states that the depiction of “Third World” women in many Western feminist texts are codified and presented as dehumanized Other that re-present women as a singular homogenenous “powerless” group. This approach is based in the Euroamerican colonial project in which development is ‘done’ on the Other, particularly women. Colonial developmentalist discourse, buttressed by strategies of analysis, description and understanding produced out of the transnational network of European and American power relations then “portray[s] women in non-Western societies as identical and interchangeable” (Ong, 1988, B. section, para. 3).

But dominant feminist and development scholarship not only portrays one identical and interchangeable conception of “the Third World Woman”. It also (mis)represents Her as uniformly powerless, uneducated, irrational, poor, tradition-bound and victimized (Mohanty, 1991, 2003). This robs Majority World women of self-representation and assumes and imposes a binary based in supremacist rhetoric. This is one that simultaneously contrasts the construction of “Third World Woman” with that of Western women as modern, educated and sexually liberated (Mohanty, 1991, 2003; Ong, 1988).

Saunders (2002) suggests this portrayal of homogeneous “Third World Woman” stems from a dominant Western feminist anxiety “that this new figure has the potential to displace the gynocentric figure of Woman (white, middle-class) with whom Western feminists identify” (p. 13). With fears of being displaced, it is then through this dichotomous construction and (mis)representation that Western women have authorized themselves to organize planned ‘liberation’ of women in the Majority World (Mohanty, 1991; Parpart, 1995).

Responding to this critique of speaking about / for / to women in the Two-Thirds World/South, feminists and professional development planners have suggested that speaking with and listening “to the previously silenced and ignored voices” (Chowdhry, 1995, p. 35) and through “truly listening to each other” (Parpart, 1995, p. 239), development can be transformed. However, in order to fully overcome—no—in order to transform and decolonize from hierarchical binary and patriarchal thinking and structures, Wolf (1997) remarks this approach is “well-meaning, but somewhat simplistic even as a partial solution to such a deeply embedded problem” (p. 49). As Wood (2001) says, “[g]ood intentions” to listen to third world women and

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57 I am grateful to my former classmate and now comrade-in-struggle Marilou Carrillo for so articulately pointing this out to me.
enable conversation of some sort “do not relieve us of our privilege” (p. 437). Yet in saying this, I also understand ‘privilege’ as not only sites of personal benefit, (which I find is its more prevalent meaning given the very empty commercialistic, individualistic, wealth-maximizing society North American society squanders in), but also as sites of responsibility. I believe individuals, groups and nation-states who have much conferred privilege on them (in terms economically, academically, accessibility to services, level of effortlessness and structurally enabled ability to assert power) also have much greater responsibility to act responsibly in collective ways. And there are those who use their conferred site(s) of privilege in collectively responsible ways whether those sites pivot on knowledge, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status, ability, language, gender, nationality. But there needs to be many more—a ‘critical mass’—of such individuals, groups and nation-states.

Wood (2001) goes further to point out equally problematic implications from simply listening, especially when this act remains complicit with the operation of development’s (neo)colonial apparatus. She insightfully says the result “in this context is to replace the vision of third-world-woman-as-victim with the no less essentialist vision of third-world-woman-as-authentic-heroine, a woman who is close to the earth, self-aware, self-critical, nurturing of culture, community and family” (p. 433). Writing on the construction of third world women’s knowledge in biodiversity conservation and development discourse, Guruani (2002) links this to the desire in GAD to “preserve the idea of the indigenous” (p. 314). This idea, much like how the knowledge of rural women is conceived, “is considered to be local and traditional, subsistence oriented, contextual, communal, uncorrupted by the influence of the market, and passed on informally” (p. 314).

She argues that Majority World women and rural women are being “indigenized” in dominant development discourse because “indigenous knowledge... is now being mapped on to [their] images and bodies” (p. 314). Treating women’s knowledge as a ‘discovery’ of pure indigenous knowledge separate from the influence of men’s presence and knowledge “overlooks the complex cultural politics that mutually shape social relations and knowledge....[W]hether men’s or women’s,...knowledge... is not a neatly packaged information box but is shaped in contexts of social inequalities, local histories of conflict, development projects, and in the case of India, critically influenced by colonial and scientific interventions in resource management” (Guruani, 2002, p. 315).

Wood (2001) goes on to provide a perspective of why this notion of authentic, indigenous third world woman-as-bearer of pure, local knowledge has replaced the former view of third-world-woman-as-victim in GAD discourse. It is not the focus here to examine this shift in policy discourse. In this study, I am more concerned that both notions essentialize and homogenize Majority World women based on deep-rooted dichotomous Euroamericentric assumptions and values about notions regarding knowledge, indigenous, modernity, gender equality and social relations. As Wood (2001) points out, being ‘traditional’, ‘passive’, ‘uneducated’, ‘irrational’ should not be automatically taken to be “deficient characteristics”. First world developers must re-conceptualize and transform their hierarchical dichotomous thinking to allow Majority World women to simultaneously be ‘traditional’, ‘active’, ‘irrational’, ‘knowledgeable’, ‘passive’, ‘modern’. So in fact, what needs questioning and transformation are the very paradigms used by first world feminists/developers to ‘judge’ what falls under these headings implicitly labeled as ‘deficient’ in the first place.
Forces of Resistance

It is in these ways dominant development and feminist hegemony both within and outside GAD discourse are colonizing forms of domination that reinforce the other. Calls have ensued from women of colour, indigenous women and third world women writing from locations in North America and the conceptual-metaphorical Two-Thirds World/South, decrying this hegemony of feminism and dominant GAD that uses a worldview defined by Euroamerican standards, assumptions and hierarchical binaries, and centres sex equality, separating gender oppression from other forms of domination.\(^{58}\)

Along with many other activists, researchers and analysts, women of colour, indigenous feminists and third world feminists emphasize other forms of social differentiation that may override a dichotomous male/female understanding of gender distinctions. But this is not a set course and constantly shifts. The feminist commitments of these individuals mean the intersections of these social dimensions structuring social life occur “without privileging one dimension or adopting an additive formulation” (Naples, 2003, p. 52). Whether they are differences based on race, class, culture, disability, sexual orientation, age, nationality, religion, ethnicity or HIV/AIDS health, all argue for relevant and contextually appropriate analysis of the specific forms of social, cultural, sexual and economic subjection of women (Abu Habib, 1995; Connell, 1998, 2000; Datta, 2004; Hashim, 1999; Kaufman, 2001; Monture-Angus, 1995; Msimang, 2003; Oyewumi, 2002; Sen, 1999; Sunseri, 2000; van der Hoogte & Kingma, 2004; White, 2002; Wood, 2001).

In all of these forms of analysis, ‘difference’ does not stand for “conflict” which is the “apartheid type of difference” taken up by dominants (Minh-ha, 1989). As Minh-ha suggests, “there are differences as well as similarities within the concept of difference.” This notion of difference is a “tool of creativity to question multiple forms of repression and dominance”, not a “tool of segregation, to exert power on the basis of racial and sexual essences” (para. 5).

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) articulates this refreshing paradigm well, rejecting a static, monolithic viewpoint and upholding heterogeneity and diverse feminisms, while recognizing the common resistance to gender oppression:

For many women, problems of nationality, class and race are inextricably linked to their specific oppression as women. Defining feminism to include the struggle against all forms of oppression is both legitimate and necessary. In many instances gender equity must be accompanied by changes on these other fronts. But at the same time, the struggle against gender subordination cannot be compromised during the struggle against other forms of oppression or relegated to a future when they may be wiped out. (Sen & Grown, 1987, p. 18)

Not only do these women and men join transnationally and trans-disciplinarily to demand recognition of difference; they also challenge all forms of violence against women, Othing of women of colour, indigenous women and third world women and the reproduction of colonialist scholarship embedded in dominant feminist and development methodologies (McIlwaine & Datta, 2003).

\(^{58}\) See section in References called Gender Impacts of Structural Adjustment Programs.
Miller & Razavi (1998) see these paradigm differences between One-Third World/North and Two-Thirds World/South as “tensions [that] are fuelled by identity politics” (p. 14). At the same time that they make this observation, they also overlook using “difference” (Minh-ha, 1988) to examine deeper layers of inequality and domination that underlie this ‘identity’ politics. The standpoint and location from which Euroamerican-orientated feminists and Majority World feminists argue their case regarding gender in development are grossly out of balance. Much as institutional structures, publishing houses, spaces and laws in Canada and the U.S. favour white, middle-class women over Aboriginal women, and perceived racialized, ‘poor, immigrant, non-English speaking’ women (hooks, 1989, 1990; Monture-Angus, 1995; Razack, 2002), the institutional structures, scholarship production and practices within dominant development privilege Euroamerican-orientated academic middle-class feminists over their Majority World counterparts based on race, class, language, culture, nationality (Lewis, 1980-2002; White, 2002).

However, despite much resistance, dominant GAD remains welded to the original conception from WID to integrate women into development (Koczberski, 1998). This is the irony of the dominant GAD approach. When it attempts to present itself as able to address and solve gender and class-centred inequalities, in fact, it remains very much a woman-centred paradigm (Saunders, 2002) that actually reinscribes patriarchy by reinforcing men’s tendency to not think of themselves as ‘gendered’ beings (Greig et al, 2000). But that is not the crux of the problem; focusing on the needs and interests of the most disenfranchised women, in certain contexts and places, is what gives groups of women the agency and avenue they need to ensure a conceptual and political space that enables resistance to domination (see Datta, 2004 for examples).

As illustrated by Mohanty (1991), Ong (1988), Saunders (2002) and Wood (2001), the problem with hegemonic GAD lies in the way this discourse is set within a (neo)colonial agenda. This agenda is one that universalizes the Euroamerican household model of ‘male breadwinner/dependent housewife and children’ to be the model of families in every society and culture. As a result of using this narrow analysis, women are positioned vis-à-vis men and any subsequent gender ‘differences’ are then viewed as areas of tension that become sources of hierarchy and oppression. It is out of this context that Majority World women and particular ‘Other’ cultures get constructed and analyzed as ‘traditional’, ‘irrational’, ‘uneducated’, ‘sexually constrained’. Rather than joining their ranks to work towards greater gender justice, this fundamental flaw in Euroamerican-orientated feminism actually does a disservice by marking such Majority World women as the sites and loci of gender inequality, calling for change in these women to fit the dominant social global order. It is the basic epistemic approach used to analyze oppression, exploitation and marginalization that needs to transform.

Again, this is reminiscent of the dominant feminist model permitted only under the reins of white middle-class academic women that perpetuates imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy. Dominant GAD serves to essentialize Majority World women and their cultures according to Euroamerican feminist assumptions, and homogenize Majority World women and men into singular categories. Combined with rigid planning processes, I suggest it is this hegemonic feminism posing as universalism, executed through colonizing sites of analyses,

59 Through both informal conversations and a formal interview with colleagues in project decision-making and project or programme assistant positions of UNESCO during my 10 month internship (January – October 2004).
description and scholarship production, which fashions Gender and Development’s hegemonic model.

This study analyzes GAD’s hegemonic model through examining the conceptual framework of GAD according to policies, reports and major position papers published by UNESCO Headquarters. How does UNESCO’s conception of GAD as it is understood out of Paris headquarters compare to the hegemonic model described above? How does it talk about women and men in Majority World spaces? What is the analysis of gender inequality with other forms of inequalities? How is this framework applied to an education perspective?

Moving from a global level of UNESCO where conceptual-based decisions are made, to a sub-regional level where implementation of these concepts is expected, this study then looks at what happens to the organization’s Gender and Development framework at the field office level within the education sector of the Beijing sub-regional cluster office. Within this sub-regional office, are there other understandings of gender equality? How do these actualize in practice? What indigenous meanings are there of gender and gender relations that may be considered subversive to a dominant ideology of GAD?

The last area of this study involves the people in decision-making roles affecting the direction and framework of development projects. Grasping how GAD is understood and implemented at the field office level in Beijing entails understanding how project decision-makers in UNESCO Beijing negotiate, interpret and construct discourses of Gender and Development in education.

Section III: Decolonizing Mind and Heart in Development

In chapter one, the Introduction, I suggested some humanizing meanings of development to counter the dominating meanings that have taken hold through colonizing practices of development. Keeping these in mind as the basis and direction of decolonizing discussed here, this section now looks at possible tools and technologies that might be employed in a methodology of decolonizing.

Psychological and Ideological Aspects of Decolonizing

When speaking of decolonizing mind and heart in development, I am referring to psychological and ideological aspects of decolonizing that in turn impact taken-for-granted thought processes and ethics of loving. As looked at earlier, these aspects form a strong basis upon which people un/consciously speak and act.

Understanding that our humanness is inescapably tied to each other I believe decolonizing then requires being alertly conscious of the ideological and psychological foundations, or embedded ways of thinking, that guide one’s words and actions in relationships with others. There are several tools and technologies I believe are necessary to form this methodology of decolonizing. Broadly speaking, and in no particular order of priority, they are related to notions and practices of ‘consciousness’, ‘difference’, ‘desire’ and ‘judgment’. 
"Patterned Motion(s) of Consciousness"

Although Sandoval does not entirely frame her work from a perspective of "decolonizing", when she writes about resisting fragmentation of one's identities, she speaks of developing a finely tuned awareness of our "patterned motion of consciousness" by "learn[ing] to study our own consumption of perceptual and intellectual [and emotional] gratification" (p. 96). More specifically and simply put, this study requires checking one's deep roots of motivations, impulses and driving forces. As it is out of such kind of roots that stem one's thinking, actions and words, it follows that it would be prudent to consider these motivations before they potentially lead to harmful, colonizing actions and words.

In ethnographic studies this might be referred to as "self-reflective practice" or "reflexivity" by the researcher in her/his ongoing relationship with informants throughout the research process (Naples, 2003). With regards to dominant development, a commitment to reflective practice is needed at minimum, to carefully monitor one's own subjectivity, awareness of how one constructs knowledge, and what influences one's beliefs, feelings, and experiences during development processes (Naples, 2003). Moreover, this practice of self-reflexivity must be done in relation with those who can keep one accountable to her/his dominating ways—in person as well as through the medium of text and media. Thus, reflecting in relation with dominants who only see or know dominant paradigms of living and knowing may not be healthy for a reflective practice aiming to decolonize mind and heart in development. This study of our "patterned motion of consciousness" aims to uncover those invisible structures shaping cultural and social relations which influence daily interactions in the field that in turn shape first world developers' interpretations (Naples, 2003). Uncovering these invisible structures is key to understanding multiple forms of oppression because there are interlocking relationships between race, gender, class, culture, language, etc. "which makes oppression a complex sociological and psychological condition" (Smith, 1999, p. 167). Thus, "[u]nlocking one set of relations most often requires unlocking and unsettling the different constituent parts of other relations" (Smith, 1999, p. 27).

One possible beginning to studying one's own consciousness is through identifying from all angles and social locations those oppressions that operate within one's being—white supremacy, male supremacy, homophobia, ageism, ableism, classism. As Cornel West (1996) spoke in an interview with Harvard Educational Review on Heterosexism and Transformation: "To think [and work] through the notion of difference in such a way that it becomes a source of strength, rather than a set of obstacles and impediments that reinforce our own paranoid disposition, is rare." (p. 360). But it does not have to be.

In my mind, this is a large part of what a process of decolonizing entails and works towards. Too often differences are used to build walls, to fire discriminatory remarks and cutting criticism that all serve to segregate one group from another. This is the "apartheid type of difference" that Minh-ha (1988) speaks of as creating conflict. This thinking is reflected in dominant development where differences in culture, race, religion and material realities including wealth, power and health are used by first world developers to construct the situations people face in Majority World communities as particular 'problems', whether it be related to women and girls' education, HIV/AIDS health, violence, high population, poverty, etc. This construction sets the stage for conflict because of its hierarchical binary approach and dishonouring of people's otherness in ways that punish others for having a different view, belief
system, skin colour, or spiritual practice (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002). This punishment manifests in the subordination of Majority World peoples and communities named and treated as ‘poor’, ‘lazy’, ‘uneducated’, ‘irrational’ objects ‘deserving’ of pity and aid at the whim of ‘donors’. In other words, rather than allowing one “to be changed by embracing that otherness” (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002, p. 4), first world developers enforce change using the faulty universal victim/universal saviour binary mentality.

It takes much risk to actively work through differences and use difference itself as a source of coalition building. Even while struggling to resist oppression, it is not uncommon to see supremacist thinking slyly operate by setting up a hierarchy of oppressions—'my oppression is worse than your oppression'. Or, where advocacy occurs in one area to rid oppressive practices such as racial profiling for example, it also often simultaneously gets used to oppress another group. This gets in the way of coalition building not only because there is no foundation of trust on which to build an ethics of love. But also, there are fears and insecurities operating on a “psychocultural level” associated with the ‘Other’ that prevailing systems of domination perpetuate and reinforce (West, 1996, p. 362). But is this fear of the ‘Other’ symptomatic also of that rhetoric of supremacy that haunts us?

**Struggling with Supremacy**

In working through difference, West (1996) states not only must individuals be “willing to violate the prevailing lines of demarcation that are in place”...but to do so, “those persons have to struggle deeply within themselves to wrestle honestly with their own insecurities and the anxiety that they associate with other people” (p. 362). Referring to Audre Lorde as an inspiring individual in working through difference, West summarizes her view by saying, “look inside and then name the forms of oppression working therein, and, at the same time, never be paralyzed by them, never be debilitated by them” (West, 1996, p. 361). The political courage to examine those fears, insecurities and desires for power and control within our ‘inner self’ is what I see as foundational to a decolonizing of the heart. It is an important aspect of one’s “patterned motion of consciousness” as the state of one’s “lower self” is an influential factor shaping one’s deeply embedded motivations and therefore one’s way of thinking, talking and acting.

In a keynote address linking gender justice with economic justice through democracy, Underhill-Sem (2000) talks about the “private face of gender analysis”. The “public face” being one in which gender analysis is a tool used by governments and international, national and non-governmental organizations to highlight inequalities, and not just those pertaining to

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60 I am greatly indebted to my dear soulsister-friend, Nazlin Rafiq for introducing me to and sharing with me concepts of ‘decolonizing’ through a “cleansing” of what is referred to as the “lower self” (Fadiman & Frager, 1997). Or, the lower self is also known as one’s “nafs”, both referring in Islam to the lowest level of the self that is dominated by pride, greed, aggression, envy, jealousy and impulses to satisfy individual desires. I see a connection with what I am calling “decolonizing” here in the sense that if led by one’s “nafs” or “lower self”—one’s impulses to satisfy desires—without regard to possible negative impacts on others, a person can be a dominating individual reproducing dominating ways of being, living and knowing. Bell hooks (1990) also speaks of “envy” and “jealousy” as “destructive forces” which “undermine our efforts to work for a collective good” (p. 208). Awareness and transformation of the “lower self” to instead be motivated and driven by compassion, responsibility, commitment, gentleness, and all those characteristics of love mentioned earlier can be understood then as important aspects of decolonizing.
gender; “inevitably race, economic power and location, for instance, become key issues in explaining the inequities” (p. 2).

But Underhill-Sem (2000) also suggests the need for the “private face of gender analysis” that operates at the “level of personal interaction”. She affirms the idea of West (1996) and Lorde (1984) on the importance of making transformations at the personal level in one’s relationships. In this process, she acknowledges that this gender analysis of our locations in perpetuating domination—no matter what social differentiations the relationship is shaped by—is often an unpleasant and unnerving one to make about our own lives. As she very frankly asks her audience, “to what extent are we prepared to go to equalize the power in our own personal relations?” Her words say it well when she speaks that “the challenge is to live our own lives in ways where the power that we all have is not used to the detriment of other individuals or groups” (p. 3). Political courage to examine our own roles in domination must be based on a deeply genuine, politicized commitment.

Particularly given the mobility of first world developers to work in Majority World communities, it seems to me decolonizing also entails being able to live in a paradigm different from one’s own without resorting to judging it in relation to those ways of thinking, living and doing that one is most familiar with. While not over, this has been a journey of learning for me in my four years living in different regions of China. This summer my mother came to visit me. Her visit marked her first trip to China (although not to Asia) and meeting all our relatives in Fujian province from city to village became another important historic bridge-building occasion for our family. Through many enlightening conversations with her, for the first time I could articulate that while I may be in this paradigm here, I do not have to wholly accept this way of living, being and knowing as my way. It is enough if I accept parts of it and do not judge the rest. Understanding another paradigm, how it shapes people and is shaped by people in it while at the same time not judge it, is completely different from accepting it, or parts of it, for oneself.

Moreover, making permanent conclusive judgments of individuals and communities is blinding to the potential justice work that can get done through collaborative efforts that use difference as a source of strength. I clearly recall in my initial judgments of relatives’ situation in China I could only see ‘differences’ because I was looking through an Us/Them lens: “I was born with privilege—multiple opportunities to study, have the luxury to even think, have time for hobbies, live in a spacious house with whatever variety of food and commodities I desired, while they were ‘unfortunate’ to be born in conditions of hardship that made daily subsistence living difficult offering no stable health, living space, work, income or guaranteed schooling let alone one of quality.”

\[61\] It is difficult to not ‘judge’ others and the situations they live in. Nevertheless, I believe its use should not escape application of concepts of decolonizing. Influenced likely from how I understand its legal concepts and my religious background (with the notion of a day of judgment), I understand ‘judge’ (its verb tense) and ‘judgment’ as mental processes that are very final, fixed and permanent. When a judgment is passed, a final conclusion has been made about a person, a community, or any group. It may occur at the personal level or be generalized to apply to what the person acting as ‘judge’ takes as a homogeneous group of individuals. Such a judgment offers little to no opportunity for change to occur. And when this judgment is passed based on one person’s or the dominant group’s way of thinking and knowing, it often does so through characterizing that being judged as inferior Other. It is this judgment, this act of judging, which I am calling for decolonizing of.
This mentality did not contribute to anything. It just made for tough slogging to try and build and cross bridges of difference to find spaces of common vision within my large (paternal) family both in and outside China. In fact, in attempting to be compassionate and “present with the pain of others” (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2002, p. 4), I had lost myself to it, still placing my own self-absorbed issues at the centre. Although I tried to rationalize this as wanting to ‘understand our differences’, my entire analysis was flawed because it proceeded by reversal: my relatives in China are what I am not. This can be seen as parallel with Ong’s (1988) remark about the tendency of Euroamerican-orientated feminists to use a similar logic: “non-Western women are what we are not.” As with these scholars in their well-intentioned efforts to expose the subjugation of Majority World women, this reversal situates Majority World women and peoples “in a subordinate position within feminist [and development] theoretical and textual productions” (C. section, para. 3.). It is a thought process which only acts as part of “self-validating exercises” that affirms “our feminist subjectivity”/my subjectivity while denying those of “non-Western women”/my relatives in China (Ong, 1988). In other words, denying others’ subjectivity while affirming one’s own uses one’s own standard of what it means to just be, to just exist in the world. And this site of analysis makes naming and its processes a dangerous activity—one all too reminiscent of a colonial agenda/mind.

After several visits I became aware that my thinking reeked of supremacist ideology and had a warped conditioning to using hierarchical lenses to view differences as binary entities. At this point I literally went into mental paralysis not knowing what to do or how to turn these differences into a source of strength. Although it has been tough coming to terms with this supremacist rhetoric within myself, since then, I have moved through that particular paralysis. Now I join with relatives to search for and understand our similar, yet different past through story-telling/sharing, and writing towards an eventual family history book. As well, I join with relatives to shape our family’s future through family reunions and the educational opportunities and financial support provided through the Family Trust Fund. But I do find I must constantly keep myself, and my motivations, ‘in check’.

In this I have come to believe that while decolonizing is not necessarily about accepting and adopting others’ ways of living for oneself, it is about being open to live in different paradigms and understand their complexities and historical contexts. It requires understanding perspectives and ways of life of the people who are shaped by and shape the paradigm they live in without making fixed, final judgments of it. This decolonizing necessitates consciously putting judgment aside and using whatever perceived and real differences exist as the groundwork of strength through solidarity.

But at the same time, using difference as a source of strength to build agency in coalitional struggles does not mean people have the same entry points to engage in these struggles. Acknowledgement of where we are not the same must not be forgotten. Speaking about feminist re-presentations of women in non-Western societies, perhaps another way to frame this idea is through Ong’s (1988) suggestion of “our need to maintain a respectful distance”. This distancing is “not in order to see ourselves more clearly... but to leave open the possibilities for an understanding not overly constructed with our own preoccupations.” It is an attempt, albeit

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62 I recognize that the opportunity to live in and experience another paradigm, particularly when it involves long distance travelling to another country and culture, (although not limited to a need to travel outside of Canada), is in itself a luxury that many people simply do not have as an option in their life.
a privileged one, to respectfully acknowledge that "cultural struggles" in the Majority World "may be for social and sexual destinies" different from Euroamerican-orientated feminist and first world developers' visions and values (C. section, para. 3).

"Reciprocal Relations", "Adab", << 礼 (li)>>

Before leaving this quote, I would like to draw closer attention to the word 'respect', keeping in mind both the way it is used by Aihwa Ong, and also for this project of decolonizing our hearts and minds. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes it is "through respect the place of everyone and everything in the universe is kept in balance and harmony. Respect is a reciprocal, shared, constantly interchanging principle which is expressed through all aspects of social conduct." (p. 120). In Islam, I am also learning that 'respect' is understood as encompassed within the concept “adab”—"courtesy, respect, appropriateness ... [that] helps to create the context in which we develop our humanness” (Helminski, 2004). Speaking of respect as reciprocal relations, Haig-Brown and Archibald (1996) write that "to be in harmony with oneself, other members of the animal kingdom, and other elements of nature requires that First Nations people respect the gift of each entity and establish and maintain respectful, reciprocal relations with each” (p. 253, original italics).

Confucius spoke of respect in the concept 礼 (pronounced ‘li’), having three meanings: courtesy, etiquette, manners; rite; and gift. Its meaning is also in relationship to 仁 ('ren': humaneness) which is the inner, substantial goodness of a human being and 礼 (li) is the carrying out of that 仁 ('ren': humaneness) in the manifest world. While I feel the English language lacks a proper equivalent for 礼(li), it has been translated as “propriety”. Or perhaps I feel that way because ‘propriety’ often gets construed in the West as negative meanings of filial piety that constructs behaviour in 礼(li) not as respect, but one symbolic of patriarchal Chinese culture. If I may address this briefly here, for one, there is no monolithic ‘Chinese culture’; and two, European patriarchs from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment have had no less an impact on leaving legacies of oppressive ideologies and systems of domination such as patriarchy. I acknowledge that Confucian culture has sexist oppressive thinking towards women and its huge impacts are represented in the institutionalization into patriarchal structures and processes in many Asian and East Asian cultures. However, there are multiple manifestations of hegemony and various degrees to their extent; while Confucius’ thought has been adopted to be used in dominating ways, there is a much more widespread, pervasive, global imperialist hegemony that is based in assumptions of modern-ness, modernization and English language as the internationally accepted medium of knowledge, information, business, communication and trade. Moreover, denying complete wisdom coming from Confucius is only another way power is exercised over the Other.

Confucius has passed on many well-known proverbial sayings (of which many ironically get taken up as 'Western' sayings63). On this quality of 礼 (li), Confucius says: "Courtesy without 礼 is wasted energy. Caution without 礼 is timidity. Boldness without 礼 is recklessness. Straightforwardness without 礼 is rudeness" (Cheung, 2003, Book 8.2). Paraphrasing a question posed by Confucius in Book 12.1, he asked, ‘What is it like for a full day to subdue oneself and be completely guided by 礼? This is the meaning of humaneness.’ Traditional

63 See Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) for more on this, especially p. 56.
martial arts is a way of life always aiming to follow proper ḩu. It is deeply connected to each of these understandings of respect where every situation and every relationship has a proper ḩu or “adab” or “reciprocal relations” that are not based in formality nor pretence—they are all genuine, sincere, without alterior motive, and from the heart.

So then I must ask, where does this respect in ‘closeness’ and in “respectful distance” display itself in all the technical interventions and consuming, exploratory, ‘fix-it’, ab/using supremacist agenda of dominant development? Smith’s (1999) words go a long way here and show just how much decolonizing needs to occur: “The denial by the West of humanity to indigenous peoples, the denial of citizenship and human rights, the denial of the right to self-determination—all these demonstrate palpably the enormous lack of respect which has marked the relations of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples.” (p. 120).

Ethical Codes of Conduct

These concepts of respect then lend themselves to thinking about possible codes of conduct to apply in development processes. While not set in stone, they might be approached as flexible practices guided by culturally specific sensitivities. Linda Tuhìwai Smith (1999) lists a few for Maori researchers in cultural terms which “reflect just some of the values that are placed on the way we behave.” I believe they can also be considered by development planners for decolonizing mind and heart in dominant development.

1. Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people).
2. Kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to face)
3. Titiro, whakarongo ... korero (look, listen ... speak).
4. Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous).
5. Kia tupato (be cautious).
6. Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the mana of people—“our standing in our own eyes” [p. 173]).
7. Kaua e mahaki (don’t flaunt your knowledge). (p. 120)

Confucius too offers guidelines for interacting with people that first world developers can remember to keep in mind during development processes. One of my favourites is from Book 16 where he speaks of avoiding three errors in the presence of others:

- To speak when there is nothing to be said. This is rashness.
- To be silent when there is something to be said. This is deception.
- To speak with no attention to the expression of another. This is blindness.

(Cheung, 2003, Book 16.6)

In dominant development paradigms there is very little consideration and attention, if any at all, paid to ideological and psychological concepts of decolonizing let alone how this process can and does impact development thought and practices. Of course this decolonizing process no doubt looks different for each engaged individual, group and development planner due to each person’s social locations, identities, specific realities, and knowledge histories. Histories and our knowledge of what the story is of our past are crucial to this project of decolonizing... because history is about power.
A Critical Pedagogy of Decolonizing

History is “the story of the powerful and how they became powerful, and then how they use their power to keep them in positions in which they can continue to dominate others” (Smith, 1999, p. 34). Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes that for indigenous peoples, “history is important for understanding the present and that reclaiming history is a critical and essential aspect of decolonization” (pp. 29-30). She very succinctly outlines at least 10 interconnected ideas of how Western European history is “a modernist project which has developed alongside imperial beliefs about the Other” (p. 30). They are the following:

The idea that history...
1. is a totalizing discourse
2. is a universal history
3. is one large chronology
4. is about development
5. is about a self-actualizing human subject (“story of people who were regarded as fully human” p. 32)
6. can be told in one coherent narrative
7. as a discipline is innocent
8. is constructed around binary categories
9. is patriarchal
10. Other key ideas—“places such as India, China and Japan, however, which were very literate cultures prior to their ‘discovery’ by the West, were invoked through other categories which defined them as uncivilized. Their literacy, in other words, did not count as a record of legitimate knowledge.” (p. 30-32)

When I first read Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s work, I could not clearly see how this was relevant to decolonizing hearts and minds for first world developers. I didn’t see the connection it had with me. In fact, I thought it did not apply to me, because I took literally when she writes that her book “is addressed more specifically to those researchers who work with, alongside and for communities who have chosen to identify themselves as indigenous” (p. 5). Am I researching with indigenous people for this study? Being wary of naming other people’s identity, despite being in a country that is also my heritage and culture, it is not my place to name. Reading other material where the term ‘indigenous’ gets used without any context or historical location has also been confusing. But when I went back to that sentence months later, I missed the first time that it follows a warning: “If... this book is simply another contribution to the ways in which social science researchers in general think about methodologies and approaches to research—in this case among people and communities who hold research in high disdain—it has not been written with that intention” (p. 5).

Now, I am crystal clear on its relevance to this project. There is no justice in history because of the very fact it is the story of how those in power got there and are able to maintain their dominating post through continued injustice. Injustice perpetuated by keeping this story alive in public consciousness through institutions of government, media, school, book publishing/authorship. As Gramsci (1992-1996) writes, the failure to appreciate the importance and complexity of history is an approach that “reduc[es] a conception of the world to a mechanical set of formulas which gives one the impression of holding the entirety of history in one’s pocket. This has been the major incentive for the facile journalistic improvisations of
harebrained 'geniuses'' (Vol. 1, p. 58). His emphasis on history—"in the sense of difference, multiplicity, the specificity of the particular ...[and] infinite variety", is an "active resistance" to hegemonic ideologies (Vol. 1, p. 61).

Wherever one's location is or wherever one believes s/he is in her/his degree of domination and oppression, each individual has the responsibility to revisit that history learned, to de-learn the colonizers' story "site by site" and re-learn through listening (with the heart) to the stories of oppressed peoples, indigenous peoples, Aboriginal Peoples. And not to listen in order to appropriate it as one's own pain or one's own story. Nor to re-tell, like one was given unspoken authorization to re-tell the story or use it to finish up a research or project report, make a quick buck in story-writing, or exoticize what one has done because of re-presenting it as Other. That is not listening. That is stealing, appropriating, commodifying, and colonizing over.

Thus, I take seriously Smith's wise words "Coming to know the past" is about holding "alternative histories". And to "hold alternative histories is to hold alternative knowledges" which can "form the basis of alternative ways of doing things" (p. 34, original italics). Language is not lost as a critical site in coming to hold alternative knowledges of the past. In regards to teaching language, particularly teaching English whether at 'home' or 'abroad', Willinsky (1998) comments on the need to address "this history of language, nation, and world" because "language marks the flow of power through history" (p. 211). This process of relearning alternative knowledges requires at its basic foundation, a willingness and commitment to decolonize one's heart and mind in spite of and along with confronting the pain associated with bearing responsibility for one's roles in domination, exploitation and oppression.

**Staying the Course**

It is tough to stay the course of decolonizing heart and mind when the process causes pain through situating and implicating us in our oppressive ways of being. But as Cornel West says, remaining "uncritical ... [is a]... refus[al] to acknowledge other people's humanity" (hooks, 1990, p. 208). Decolonizing heart and mind entails one critically re-conceptualize the world. That includes recognizing and accepting responsibility of one's roles in domination, exploitation and oppression. Committed action to transform that role calls for re-engaging our hearts, heads and hands to act in the world. Thus, although each person has different entry points of engagement and a particular journey unique to her/his own social locations and socio-cultural history, I see a study of one's "patterned motion of consciousness"; naming of and working through oppressions operating within; respectfulness and maintaining a respectful distance; following culturally sensitive codes of conduct; and learning alternative knowledges, as relevant mental and analytical tools in a methodology of decolonizing necessary for changing ways of doing.

I believe several questions need to be asked in checking one's motivations for carrying out development work that can help one not only be aware, but also attuned to ways we are responsible to re-balancing networks of power for greater social equality. These are also questions I frequently pose to myself in personal interactions and relationships. They became especially critical while an intern with UNESCO having the responsibility to write, edit and review project documents, publications and the office website for the Education sector. "How
do I perceive and represent this group of people, these women/girls, this community, in
development scholarship?—'Backward', 'needy', 'uneducated', 'irrational', 'lazy', 'traditional',
as the locus of the 'problem'? Rich in culture, relationship, knowledge and respect for
survival?” “Does representing people here in this way bring hidden benefits of authority or
superiority to me (or UNESCO)?” “How do I construct their social, economic and cultural
life?—As problems that women bear and are responsible to change, as problems obstructed by
cultural practices, as a result of neocolonizing growth-based economics, as systemic to
disadvantaging structures?” “How can I honour and respect their otherness without Othering?”
“What do I really think I can offer, if anything?” “What/how can I learn from this community
of people?” “How might I join and be useful, if possible, in the community’s social movements
so I am not just an observer from the margins?” “Where is my heart and what are my deep-
rooted motivations in this?”

Decolonizing is a continuous process, not an end destination. With constantly changing
(neo)colonizing forces in today’s world, I do not believe decolonizing can be permanent or
fixed. It is always shifting, moving and configuring to specific contexts and realities of diverse
individuals, groups and communities. This then makes this methodology of decolonizing mind
and heart a dynamic one, unfinished and perhaps even, incomplete-able. The “challenge
always is to demystify, to decolonize” (Smith, 1999, p. 16).

In this process however, I do believe there is one important constant. That is, a decolonizing
process encompasses and necessitates an ethics of love, for oneself in relationship with others,
and for others in relationship with oneself and between groups. Without a love ethic, what
would this methodology of decolonizing be based in, even through all its changes?

A Love Ethic for Keeping the Collective Vision

It is very painful to deal with naming and working through our own oppressions that operate
within. In fact it is shameful because it is an admission that exposes those supremacist,
dominating ways we have been socialized to have. If there is no ethics of love to hold one up
and share with others, this pain is nearly unbearable because human beings continue to want to
feel accepted and included within the human circle. Admitting domination and oppression has
fears of rejection associated with it.

And what’s more, a love ethic with a focus on coalition building through differences both
facilitates greater collective support as well as holds us accountable to each another.

You overcome [anxiety, insecurity and fears associated with others] by not just wrestling
with [these], but also by fusing with others in a context that will keep you accountable in
such a way that you will remain vulnerable and, hence, open for growth and development,
rather than simply debilitated, paralyzed, and therefore frozen. I think this is true in a
variety of the different contexts that we’ve talked about: the patriarchy inside of us, the
class arrogance inside of us, and the homophobia inside of us.
(West, 1996, p. 362)

Building critical and coalitional consciousness across groups and communities necessitates a
love ethic that allows people to change, to grow, to transform from paradigms of domination to
those of critical and coalitional, oppositional consciousness. And when old blueprints of
domination return one to places of familiarity, it is through a love ethic that we can organize and mobilize to keep each other accountable to recognize and deal with those oppressions operating within, as well as accept being held responsible. When we are socialized in systems of domination—white supremacy, patriarchy, heterosexism, cultural imperialism—these “residues” remain in our historical consciousness and continually haunt us with their return. Uncertain that we are able to “fully eliminate them”, West (1996) calls this a “perennial struggle”, making it absolutely critical “why there has to be a collectivity”, to maintain the collective vision of a greater humanity (p. 360-361).

Summary

Chapter two began with suggesting a conception of how hegemony and love are understood to this project. It then offered a framework that proposes two paths necessary to this decolonizing project. The first deconstructs dominant development, making a case that international development and Gender and Development paradigms are shot through with hegemonic feminist and dominant development thought which operate to mutually reinforce each other. It challenges “first world developers” and Euroamerican-orientated feminists to examine carefully the thinking and actions reflected in a colonial mind. It also challenges professional developers in GAD to take up an agenda that is simultaneously particular and diverse all the while without imposing Euroamerican (feminist) values and assumptions as universal.

Through examining psychological and ideological aspects of decolonizing mind and heart in development that is based in ethics of loving, the second path seeks to offer a methodology of decolonizing that developers and feminists can apply to transform from hegemonic paradigms of knowing and doing to critically conscious paradigms of politicized resistance. Recognizing that each person has different entry points of engagement and a particular journey unique to her/his own social locations and socio-cultural history, this path suggests five specific mental and analytical tools necessary for changing one’s ways of thinking and doing: (1) awareness of one’s “patterned motion of consciousness”; (2) naming of and working through oppressions operating within; (3) respectfulness and maintaining a respectful distance; (4) following culturally sensitive codes of conduct; and (5) learning alternative knowledges and histories. It is through interweaving connections of these mental, linguistic and analytical decolonizing tools and technologies with an ethics of love that I suggest contribute to a methodology of decolonizing. And it is based in an ethics of love because it is a process which, above all, believes that a greater love exists between all human beings and creation. Such a love-based methodology of decolonizing I believe has unfound potential to further actualize “love as social movement”.

Chapter Three: Decolonizing the (my?) Research Approach

Making Epistemological Connections

Drawing primarily from Sandra Harding (1997), Nancy Naples (2003) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), this chapter sets out to differentiate and clarify the feminist decolonizing methodology of this research process from the methodology of decolonizing used with ethics of loving. In this explanation, I attempt to clearly outline how critically feminist epistemologies has shaped the methods, tools and practices of the methodology of decolonizing presented in this study and how the latter has specifically informed the epistemology of my feminist decolonizing methodology in order to conduct this research. I also aim to justify why this methodology is both feminist and decolonizing, not such that one dimension exists within the other, or where one is privileged over the other in hierarchical fashion. Rather, in order to dismantle colonizing forms of development and hegemonic feminist paradigms in feminist discourses of development, both counter-hegemonic feminist methodologies and decolonizing methodologies are crucial to this project. I see both as complementary and necessary to each other. This chapter examines this relationship with regards to this study.

Throughout this work, I employ Harding’s (1987) meaning of methodology as “a theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed” and of method as a “technique for... gathering evidence” (p. 2-3). Following Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), I then frame my research within the foundation as follows: “Research methodology is based on the skill of matching the problem with an ‘appropriate’ set of investigative strategies. It is concerned with ensuring that information is accessed in such a way as to guarantee validity and reliability.” (p. 173). Naples (2003) phrases this similarly saying “the specific methods we choose and how we employ those methods are profoundly shaped by our epistemological stance” which is a theory of knowledge, how one comes to ‘know’ (p. 3). By explaining my choice to weave together feminist and decolonizing methodologies, this chapter then aims to make known my epistemological assumptions that have guided my choice of methodologies and implementation of particular methods. Throughout, drawing from Smith’s (1999) theories of decolonizing and my experiences writing, editing and reviewing print material for UNESCO Office Beijing, I examine what influences and how I define my role as researcher/researched, and how I have considered and struggled with ethical research practices.

Ideally I see these methodologies as inextricably connected. But as I strive to formulate and envision them and theorize my experience attempting to practice these methodologies, I find it is somewhat easier for me to first explain one at a time, or how and where they have each influenced me. Then I take them up as a multidimensional, interwoven type of methodology.

Perhaps I can start with feminist methodology drawing from Dorothy Smith, who, in her 1987 work, *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*, understands there are “relations of ruling” embedded in institutions and that their “organizational and political processes” shape women’s daily activities. She posits that these processes are “an ideologically structured mode of action—images, vocabularies, concepts, abstract terms of knowledge [that] are integral to the practice of power, to getting things done” and occur to the exclusion of women or distortion of women’s realities (p. 17). I see development processes as no less innocent of this operation as another ideological apparatus and dominant knowledge producer in society. So in this study I take up Dorothy Smith’s work using the understanding and belief
that Western-based development agencies also contour the daily lives of those who are the object of its discourses and practices—i.e. peoples in the Majority World, in particular Majority World women. While I am far from assuming Majority World women and peoples are powerless agents, I do argue that dominant development institutions use texts\textsuperscript{64} and scholarship production as the primary medium to objectify these groups and communities, thereby "construct[ing] in ways that distort or render invisible their experiences and their everyday activities" and material lived realities (Naples, 2003, p. 52). As Harding (1997) sums it, those "social relations organized by domination, exploitation and oppression, the 'conceptual practices of power' (D. Smith [1990]), will construct institutions" that make these forces seem natural, like 'the only way of running society'. This is not unlike Antonio Gramsci and Roland Barthes’ theorizing on ideological hegemony, albeit theirs is a non-feminist one.

In a 1997 response essay to Susan Hekman’s essay, “Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited”, Dorothy Smith (1997) reaffirms for me a broader framework necessary to use beyond women in the gender subtext and capitalist ruling relations:

> From the standpoint of experience in and of the everyday/everynight actualities of our lives, it is the oppressively routine organization, the persistence, the repetition, of capitalist forms of exploitation, of patriarchy, of racial subordination, of the forms of dominance Foucault (1980) has characterized as “power/knowledge”, as the local contouring of people’s lives that create a sociological problematic. (p. 397)

Before reading this later work of D. Smith’s, I came to understand this framework of ruling relations through the feminist theories of Chela Sandoval, bell hooks, Patricia Monture-Angus, Gloria Anzaldúa. Among many others, they have given me the ability to understand and articulate how “Distinctive gender, class, race, or cultural positions in social orders provide different opportunities and limitations for ‘seeing’ how the social order works” (Harding, 1997, p. 384).

**Transforming Agency of Intersectionality Feminist Politics to Dominant GAD**

In this, these admirable activists have then provided the inspiration for me to highlight not only gender and class in GAD but also these further intersecting, deeper layers of ruling relations. These layers intersect across geo-political region, language, race, ethnicity, culture, age, religion, marital status, sexuality, dis/ability where any or all of these can cut across the others making a very complex multi-dimensional fabric to resist ruling relations “conceptual practices of power”. When there is a hegemonic Gender and Development model mutually supported by at least two ruling dimensions—one in development driven by colonial agendas and cultural imperialist powers operating transnationally with power over capital and resources, and the other in feminism, driven by women informed by a white, middle-class, educated, heterosexual cultural ideal—women, especially Majority World women, are particularly disadvantaged by such “cultural constructions of morality” (Naples, 2003, p. 28).

The solution does not lie in more development projects for Majority World women, or even Majority World men as if it were an add-and-stir approach to men in GAD (Datta, 2004). I fear

\textsuperscript{64} I take up D. Smith’s (1987) usage of “text” as “words, numbers, and images on paper, in computers, or on TV and movie screens” (p. 17).
that is the path the present dominant GAD paradigm is in danger of following. The solution I believe lies in de-colonizing those ruling dimensions, both the people operating in them who, whether non-intentional or otherwise, perpetuate or distort this invisibility of inequalities, and then the structure and processes of development itself. There is a great need to not just entertain the idea of, but actually redistribute resources before, or simultaneously with, or in the name of recognizing cultural differences and social factors of differentiation (Fraser, 1997; Fraser & Naples, 2004). A new paradigm of multidimensional intersectionality has the potential to focus on economic redistribution while not forgetting recognition of cultural differences.

I see this agency of intersectionality feminist politics that, when applied to hegemonic GAD, has powerful transformative capacities. As Patricia Hill Collins (1990) names relations of ruling a “matrix of domination” (p. 236), it might be thought of that the agency offered by intersectionality feminist politics to transform dominant development is also a “matrix”, but one of agency and resistance. I choose to use the word ‘intersectionality’ perhaps because of how I imagine it as a constantly shape-shifting ball of changing sizes made of yarn, matted hair, coloured cloth, crumbs, water, wax, and rocks. If any of those elements are pushed, pulled, tugged, added to, burned, or exposed to extreme heat/cold, the shape, size, and/or the chemical make-up of this ‘ball’ changes, just as social relations would be. I see it as a feminist politics because the very foundation of how this theory broadly aims to question and think is political. I also use this term to remember the example of third world feminists, women of colour, Aboriginal feminists, and indigenous feminists that this feminism requires courageous activist politics at local, national and global levels.

There are many ways first world developers and Western-based development agencies can further this paradigm revolution. For one, finance and support the building of development studies’ schools and courses in the Two-Thirds World/South using indigenous paradigms of knowing rather than teach bureaucrats, planners and practitioners from the Majority World how to use Western paradigms to ‘fix’ their countries’ ‘problems’ as if simple ‘technical’ problems of materiality can be solved by ‘technical’ interventions (White, 2002). As White states, this is “a classic way in which colonial racism imagined black-white relations”, which is something that “clearly needs reflecting on”, and I assert, transformation of (p. 410).

Second, if there are no analysis frameworks with which to appropriately assess all these social aspects of social relations as part of the development process (beyond gender that is), then conceptualize and build new matrices, not of domination (Collins, 1990), but of multidimensional intersectionality. Changing the practical tools and indicators used on the ground to “measure” all economic and social aspects of life (since we have not yet been able to get there yet in transforming that ever-colonizing drive to measure every qualitative social aspect of life in quantitative ways using a “quantification of quality” [Sandoval, (2000)] system of measurement), demands change in the framework of analysis used to gather data by Western-based development agencies. Change the indicators, formulate new ones, and ensure

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65 I am not certain if this has already been named this particular way. If not, I am taking a liberty here, but with all modesty and respect.
66 The analysis frameworks I am referring to are those used by multilaterals, bilaterals, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that aim to specifically and primarily examine gender and gender in/equality, such as the Moser Framework, Harvard Analytical Framework, Gender Analysis Matrix, etc. See A Guide to Gender-Analysis Frameworks by March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay (1999).
they can be assessed multidimensionally across any aspect of social differentiation. Impossible? No. But this is charged with political and conceptual obstacles because the bigger question is really about how to derive indicators for development agencies that can measure social equality taking into account an “understanding of the shifting, tactical, and mobile character of subjectivities” (Katie King in Naples, 2003, p. 20; see also Sandoval, 2000). This understanding is fundamental to grasp because cultures and relationships are fluid, “constantly being negotiated and renegotiated [on a daily basis] in particular, everyday interactions”, including those involving development planners and their agencies (Naples, 2003, p. 49).

I have digressed slightly. What I am getting at is that it is absolutely crucial to move away from getting sucked into a politics of domination over which ‘systems of domination’ should be at the centre of analysis. My point being, as Harding (1997) clearly states, in order for that to happen, it took indigenous feminists, “feminists of colour, multicultural and global feminisms, to develop the powerful resources of ‘intersectionality’ necessary to analyze social relations from the standpoint of their daily lives, which were shaped by the mutually supportive, or sometimes competitive relations between androcentrism, Eurocentrism, [cultural imperialism,] and bourgeois projects” (p. 385).

As Naples (Fraser & Naples, 2004) says, which I strongly agree with, the arguments that women of colour, and Aboriginal, indigenous and third world feminists have been making about the “limits of the feminist agenda are reflected in [an] extraordinarily diverse agenda... [that] tends to be simultaneously particular and diverse. It is rarely exclusively as women” (p. 1121). This is why dominant GAD, in its present hegemonic form, is failing women... and men all over the world to bring greater justice. It is limited most of the time to focusing on women, assuming women’s realities can be taken out of socio-cultural, historical and political-economic contexts. So current gender analysis used in dominant GAD is not led by this kind of diverse agenda that looks at issues resulting from intersecting social locations and identities, let alone how all those also cut across material lived realities like HIV/AIDS, non-literacy, lack of road, irrigation, and power generation (wind/solar/hydroelectric power sources, etc.) infrastructure, and health and education services. If analysts and planners or Euroamerican-orientated feminists in hegemonic GAD do attempt to make that kind of analysis, it is often patronizing, posing Euroamerican (feminist) values and assumptions as universal and applying age-old colonial practices of ‘Othering’ through hierarchical binary lenses, as Ong (1988), Mohanty (1991), Smith (1999), Said (1978) and many others have so pointedly made.

Moreover, this intersectionality which, I reiterate again is not an add-and-stir formula, but rather allows another form of difference to emerge that does not arise out of conflicting politics of domination. It allows for taking into account those “cultural differences that shape different knowledge projects even when there are no oppressive social relations between different cultures” (Harding, 1997, p. 385). To use an intersectionality feminist politics approach also necessitates using a flexible, ‘shiftinig’ intersecting analysis of multiple oppressions to understand specific forms of social, sexual and economic inequalities within social relations. Sandoval (2000) refers to this as “differential consciousness” which works “like the clutch of an automobile”, allowing the driver to engage and change gears in a “system for the transmission of power” (p. 58).

Regarding the metaphor of “driver” and “automobile” I think this needs some critical analysis itself. When a trainer from another UN agency came to the UNESCO Beijing office to give a
workshop on recent reforms in the UN, he used the phrase to describe the government as in control by being in “the driver’s seat”.\(^67\) It was then immediately pointed out by the office’s Director/Representative that in Majority World countries where there are huge discrepancies between the economically rich and poor, drivers are servants hired by rich elite employers.

I understand Sandoval’s notion of “differential” through martial arts philosophies and practices. Each stance in martial arts, or each ‘positioning’ has specific strengths (i.e. in balance, agility, distance, physiology, ease of shifting to other stances and ease of applying techniques, etc.) to deal with different strategies of attack coming from (an) opponent(s). Each positioning is in relation to the type of incoming attack. They also have specific weaknesses in each of these same areas, so each stance must be carefully and quickly decided upon (instinctively as there is no time to ponder in a seesaw way) in order to defend, ward off and diffuse the attack effectively. But even in an attack, multiple strategies, techniques and directions are employed in attempts to weaken, dominate and subordinate. Thus, multiple strategies, techniques and stances to ward off, diffuse and defend from the attack must also be used. And quickly. There is no time to lose—one’s life is on the line!

In academic and conceptual terms and in very real terms, this ‘attack’ can be thought of as colonizing, dominant agendas and practices. Each stance, or positioning could be viewed through a lens of either strength or weakness. However, this pits the stances against one another and in martial arts philosophy and in real life this only leads to one’s demise. To me, this sounds very similar to what has occurred in feminist discourses where a politics of domination occurs that argues over which system of domination (racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc.) and which meaning of development should be at the centre of analysis. This has led to a particular hegemonic feminism and understanding of development that dominates over all the other ‘positionings’. Yet, dominant GAD in development is failing women and men around the world to bring greater equality not just between men and women, but also in many other aspects of social life and relationships.

The notion of “differential” however allows for that shifting movement—theoretically, intellectually, practically and physically—to employ a combination of stances or positionings simultaneously because they offer greater agency and resistance when taken up together. So in certain circumstances at particular times, more liberal forms of feminism in development that advocate for women in development may be more relevant and politically useful than say, taking up radical understandings of feminism that call for change in the gender-biased way institutions, governments, and social structures are set up. In both of these approaches, analysis may need to go beyond gender oppression to examine how race, culture, class, marital status, sexuality, age, geopolitical region, nationality, ethnicity and/or language intersect with gender. Yet, this intersectional analysis does not necessarily need labeling as if it occurs like a separate kind of feminism, Marxist or socialist. Thus, these forms of feminist discourse in development and their practices do not need to occur in succession, as if one must linearly come before the other—they can occur simultaneously because together, they may offer greater agency to bring about greater gender and social equality in a society. I believe it is this critical space, this notion of “differential” that intersectionality feminist politics and theorizing has opened up in what I would say, unparalleled and unforeseen ways than ever before. I personally am deeply encouraged by this.

\(^67\) October 2004.
Differential Consciousness in Intersectionality Feminist Politics—Conflicting Modes?

In Sandoval’s (2000) words, this “differential mode of social movement and consciousness depends on the practitioner’s ability to read the current situation of power, and self-consciously choosing and adopting the ideological stand best suited to push against its configurations, a survival skill well known by the oppressed peoples” (p. 60). However, as Jorge A. Aquino (2002) notes, this ‘ability’ “resembles the way oppressive agencies and structures operate” too. (p. 22). According to him, Sandoval “largely sidesteps” the “theme of violence as a cost of bringing about social change” (p. 36). He speaks of this as “revolutionary ambivalence” between two extremes—one that uses violence for radical social change and the other that uses revolutionary love that Sandoval speaks of also intended for social transformation but one based on an “ethical commitment to egalitarian social relations” (Sandoval, 2000, p. 62). He asks the question of whether love can “persuade the oppressor”.

In fact, Aquino posits that the very same strategies of revolutionary love Sandoval speaks of can be manipulated in such a way that inflicts violence back onto the oppressor. He points out this “striking resemblance” between Sandoval’s methodology of the oppressed and methodologies used by oppressors: “The methodologies of the oppressor, to the extent they might be inferred from the pages of her work, use many of the same strategic tools that she brackets under the category of ‘differential consciousness’, but as a means of dominating the majorities of the world and reaping wealth and advantage from the sweat of their backs and the abjected onus of their poverty.” (p. 16). In drawing out this apparent contradiction in Sandoval’s work, Aquino’s (2002) purpose “is not to discover some pure standpoint in which revolutionary politics might be cleansed of ambivalence, but rather, to interrogate revolutionary discourse as a means of considering an instability at its heart that is seldom considered” (p. 14).

It is most interesting to me to think of this analysis of “ambivalence” through martial arts philosophies. Ultimately, in martial arts, the aim is to diffuse any potential attacks before they actually occur, keeping 仁 (‘ren’; humaneness) at the core of conflicting relationships (see also Sun Tzu’s The Art of War, pp. 9, 84). This includes ethics of loving. Yet, in defending oneself, in diffusing an attack, the defense can very quickly be turned into an offense that inflicts violence back on the attacker—the oppressor if you will—that may be greater and more harmful than what the attacker began with. One tool I have learned to avoid this is to develop the ability to assess what degree, amount and type of self-defense is sufficient to diffuse or ward off an attack and no further.

But this can often get interpreted as needing to rely almost too heavily on the capacities of individuals to maintain their sense of rational, ethical commitment in the name of humanity. Here, I find Sun Tzu’s philosophy contributes to this path that is not set within this dichotomy of revolutionary love/revolutionary violence, both of which aim for radical social transformation. For Sun Tzu, “kindness is not based on the logic of ethics”, yet neither should thoughts and actions conform to dominant, conventional behaviour and ways of thinking (p. 87). Rather, actions and words are based on an understanding that “any fixed quality is an impediment”, that even “[g]ood habits can be as limiting as bad” (p. 77, original italics). In regards to an ethics of loving in which loving is held as a “good habit”, held “to an extreme, [it] become[s] self-destructive”. Referring to this, Sun Tzu states, “Loving the people, one can be aggravated” (pp. 32, 77).
In speaking on this concept as 势 (shi), Sun Tzu writes:

As for the nature of trees and rocks—
   When still, they are at rest.
   When agitated, they move.
   When square, they stop.
   When round, they go.

Thus the 势 (shi) of one skilled at setting people to battle is like rolling round rocks from a mountain one thousand jen high. (pp. 18-19).

Although I am naming an ethics of love in this project—perhaps for no better or more powerful concept to use—Sun Tzu’s philosophy that any fixed quality, whether viewed as ‘good’ or ‘bad’, is an “impediment”—does not necessarily base loving in ethics. For Sun Tzu, the genuineness (mentioned in chapter two) that arises from being who one is in which there is no gap between one’s words and actions “allow[s] things to be as they are rather than forcing them to be a certain way” (p. 87). It is here that “[s]imply being oneself brings about a power often lost in the rush to be something else” (p. 86). I think deeper examination of Sun Tzu’s philosophy to greater humanity that is not necessarily based in a logic of ethics deserves greater attention than what I can offer here.

Meanwhile I do not suggest Sun Tzu’s approach to be a solution, ‘fixed’ or fleeting, to the “revolutionary ambivalence” Aquino suggests occurs in revolutionary discourse and practice. But I am cautious to get caught in mere dichotomies of defender/attacker, colonized/colonizer, love/violence. I think both Sandoval and Aquino could further untangle the complexity of oppressor and oppressed beyond a simple binary. It is an easy trap to fall into in describing this relationship in complete and permanent terms as if both cannot occur within the same individual at different levels, depending on multiple social relationships, contexts and realities. This does not at all mean to say that all people are similarly both oppressed and oppressors, both colonized and colonizers. Rather, it is to point out that there are multiple sites of engagement not only between individuals, but within the same person!

But to see these sites within oneself requires challenging one’s own objectivity. It requires examining our own “projections” that are motivated by “fixations” in which “[w]e hold to a diminished view, a small part within the larger movement, rather than moving fluidly through it” (Tzu, p. 77-78). It requires “being the water cascading through the ravine” rather than “our own enemy impeding its flow” (p. 77). In this context, I understand this “enemy” within to be our own confusion, lack of knowledge of self (and therefore any other) and dominating ways of being.

Multiple sites of engagement also complicate who/where/when someone is objectified/subjugated/oppressed/dominated/constructed. Thus, given these multiple sites of engagement as colonized/oppressed and colonizers/oppressors, there are multiples sites of engaging in decolonizing processes that look different for each individual, community, and group. Returning back to this concept of ‘difference’, I also see this intersectionality as a way to better conceptualize and envision “difference” through Minh-ha’s (1988) formulation. I refer to it here again:
Difference does not necessarily give rise to separatism. There are differences as well as similarities within the concept of difference. One can further say that difference is not what makes conflict. It is beyond and alongside conflict. This is where confusion often arises and where the challenge can be issued. Many of us still hold on to the concept of difference not as a tool of creativity to question multiple forms of repression and dominance, but as a tool of segregation, to exert power on the basis of racial and sexual essences. The apartheid type of difference. (para. 5)

As one important strategy to get out of this colonizer/colonized dichotomy, I believe it is this notion of difference as creative tool to question multiple forms of repression and dominance, combined with intersectionality from these feminist theories that opens the door very wide for decolonizing methodologies to also occur across various social structural aspects of social relations. It is to these methodologies that I now turn.

*Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s “Decolonizing Methodologies”*

From being direct descendants of sky and earth parents, Christianity positioned some of us as higher-order savages who deserved salvation in order that we could become children of God. (p. 33)

Although eighteenth- and nineteenth-century forms of colonization brought Christian beliefs about the soul and human morality to indigenous peoples, these concepts were discussed in Western traditions prior to Christianity. Christianity, when organized into a system of power, brought to bear on these basic concepts a focus of systematic study and debate which could then be used to regulate all aspects of social and spiritual life. (p. 49)

Concepts of spirituality which Christianity attempted to destroy, then to appropriate, and then to claim, are critical sites of resistance for indigenous peoples. (p. 74)

Different historical ideas about men and women were enacted through social institutions such as marriage, family life, the class system and ecclesiastic orders. These institutions were underpinned by economic systems, notions of property and wealth, and were increasingly legitimated in the West through Judaeo-Christian beliefs. (p. 46)

When I first read these passages and for many weeks following, I must admit that I was angry—angry that as a Christian, I was being implicated in the colonizing history of Christianity’s relationship to imperialism; angry that I did not already know this history. Footnote #33 in chapter two hints at this, but still hides the deep troubles and convulsing pain I underwent. I felt responsible, in a sense, not only for my own actions, thoughts and assumptions about meanings of spirituality, but also for the colonizing history of Christianity, just by being a descendant of this thought. But then it is also not as simple as that. It is when missionaries who came to China in the late 1800s, that my nai nai and now her children and my generation on my father’s side became Christian. Where and how is the difference drawn between forceful colonization of the mind and heart, and willful ‘acceptance’ of cultural change?
My coming to hard terms with Christianity’s role in imperialism is not unlike being white and/or being male and coming to recognize the oversight of one’s conferred privilege because of previously being ‘colour blind’ and/or ‘gender blind’. For anyone dealing with these sites of consciousness, I do not believe we are expected to, or that it is possible to accept and be responsible for all of the history of racism and sexism or whatever forms of domination we face inside us. That is too much. But we must acknowledge that domination, exploitation and oppression has occurred, perpetrated by whom against whom, and because they are still occurring, we must unlearn old dominating ways and relearn alternative knowledges and histories. Then we must make a political commitment to make concerted responsible effort on a daily basis to change the spaces around us and in our relationships so we bring many more along to places of greater critical consciousness. I believe this process is crucial to marking social transformation for greater humanity.

While these readings paralyzed me for a period of time, it has been this project of decolonizing that moved me through to acknowledge Christianity’s colonizing history in its association with European imperialism, to be open to learn alternative histories and knowledges, and to accept responsibility for my actions and my beliefs in the present and for the future. At the same time, this personal decolonizing I engaged with was both challenged, and later affirmed, by Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) writing:

Decolonization is a process which engages with imperialism and colonialism at multiple levels. For researchers, one of those levels is concerned with having a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices. (p. 20)

... the methodologies and methods of research, the theories that inform them, the questions which they generate and the writing styles they employ, all become significant acts which need to be considered carefully and critically before being applied. In other words, they need to be ‘decolonized’. (p. 39)

This returns me to making the connection Naples (2003) mentions of how one’s epistemological ‘stance(s)’ shapes choice of methods and how they are used in research. As Hartsock (1997) states, “criteria for privileging some knowledges over others are ethical and political rather than purely ‘epistemological’... Ethical and political concepts such as power involv[e] epistemological claims... and [conversely,] ideas of what is to count as knowledge involv[e] profoundly important political and ethical stakes” (Hartsock, 1997, p. 373). Before discussing these methods, let me explain the research context, selection of participants and research design.

*UNESCO Office Beijing—the Research Context*

UNESCO Office Beijing is a cluster sub-regional field office set up in 1984 and represents five countries: Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), Japan, Mongolia, People’s Republic of China and Republic of Korea (ROK). Here, Japan and ROK are donor countries through their respective governments and consultancy services to several projects implemented from the office’s five sectors: Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Communication and Information (new sector to this field office since August 2004) and Culture. My internship/research period was a ten-month duration period on signed contract from 12
January 2004 to 31 October 2004. I took a six-week break from 22 June – 2 August when my mother, cousin-niece and friend came to visit me. During this ten-month period several people came and left the whole office (thus, the minimum/maximum denotations below). The average number of staff from January to November was about thirty. The nationalities according to birthplace and citizenship of the staff are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Gender Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>(17 female, 3 male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>minimum 3, maximum 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1-3 female, 2 male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>minimum 1, maximum 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>(female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>minimum 1, maximum 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1-2 female, 1 male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>minimum 1, maximum 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>(female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>1 (based in Mongolia, not Beijing)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1 (August arrival)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>1 (September arrival)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1 (myself)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(female)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the focus of the research context occurs in the Education section, this is where I turn my attention now. During my ten-month period, two people left and two people joined the Education section. The highest number of staff in Education at one point was nine persons, and the lowest number was seven, but for the majority of time the number of people (including myself) has consistently been eight individuals.

Except for myself, and another intern from Italy (male), who came the beginning of October, one month before my departure, all staff are residents and citizens of Asian countries, either China or Japan (maximum two persons). Chinese was the primary language used to communicate orally among Education staff, unless non-Chinese speaking staff came to the section. Of eight staff, six were women and two were men until April 2004 after which there are seven women and one man. The most number of interns the section hosted was two at a time, although I was the single intern for two months of the ten-month period.

One staff member, the Chief of Section for the unit, has been with the office for over four years while all the rest have been with the office anywhere from one month to one and a half years. Taking into account staff movement during these ten months, for six of the staff (including all three interns), this was our first experience working in the office of a development institution (government, non-governmental and inter-governmental). Two colleagues previously worked in ministries within the government of China for six and twenty years, respectively. Another two colleagues previously worked with inter-governmental multilateral organizations for two and ten years, respectively.

**Selection of Study Participants**

While I had intended to formally interview 4-5 staff in the office and 2-3 from the office’s national government partner, I ended up carrying out one. I sought this consent by the Chief of Education Section before arriving at the Beijing office. Although reasons for a single interview are explained later in this chapter, in brief it was because of the need on my part to undergo transformation, which entailed making oneself not only the researcher, but also the researched. Were I to have carried out further interviews it would have been at the recommendation and agreement of the Chief of Education Section.
Research Design

This study was carried out simultaneously in my role as intern in UNESCO Beijing Education Section. The research design was thus influenced by the daily activities, demands, responsibilities and current projects occurring in the Section. Overall, the following methods were used throughout the 10 month research period:

- Participant observation
- Daily/weekly log-writing in the format of emails to family and friends, letters to myself and notes
- One open to semi-structured interview
- Document analysis of gender, education UNESCO published material since 1995
- Document writing for the Education Section
  - Including writing, reviewing, editing the pages for the office website, mostly the Education Section
  - Writing speeches for the office Director/Representative or his stand-in
  - Writing the Foreword (in English) for the Chinese translation of the UNESCO English language publication, "Open File on Inclusive Education—Support Materials for Managers and Administrators"
  - Writing, editing and designing the text and photos for an exhibit booth on education in China to be displayed for UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan during his visit to China in October, 2004
- Spontaneous conversations with colleagues that turned out to be weekly, if not daily at times, on topics and ideas as they specifically came up from my thesis and also related to UNESCO’s work, frameworks, approaches in education, practices (this was completely unforeseen, although hoped for from the beginning)
- Self-reflective practice

Methods—Towards a Decolonizing Approach

The methods used during this study, while not ‘planned’, are multidimensional, interweaving feminist and decolonizing epistemologies. My aim in interweaving these together is to draw on feminist ways of knowing that address hegemonies which setup disadvantaging power structures that Other Majority World women, and exclude men in processes towards greater gender equality. In other words, to address dominant development’s colonial paradigm requires addressing gender oppression. This thereby brings a feminist epistemology to exist within a decolonizing methodology.

Simultaneously, decolonizing epistemologies and methodologies are necessary to ensure dominating ways of thinking and addressing social inequalities do not return and reinvent new ways of perpetuating domination and colonial agendas. Decolonizing is crucial to evoke ethical and political challenges in research and dominant development processes to keep mindful of resisting returning to those blueprints of domination, exploitation and oppression. As Mohanty states, feminists are not excused from “assumptions of privilege and ethnocentric universality, on the one hand, and inadequate self-consciousness about the effect of Western scholarship on the ‘third world’ in the context of a world system dominated by the West, on the other” (Mohanty 1991, p. 53). Thus, to work towards more “careful, politically focused, local analyses” (p. 53) to counter hegemonic feminist and dominant development scholarship to
avoid distancing oneself from and misrepresenting Majority World women’s concerns, there is
a need to interweave feminist epistemologies with decolonizing methodologies and vice versa.

“Differential consciousness” and differential strategies in decolonizing processes are also
critical to the feminist decolonizing epistemological and methodological approach used in this
study. For instance, one can be a woman of colour or a Majority World woman “who is
subjected/constructed/positioned/compromised by multiple considerations” in multiple
contexts. These elements may shift in both visibility and importance according to the situation
or context one occupies at the time because life, among many things, is constituted by social
relationships, whether at a distance, or in person. Borrowing Friere’s (1970) concepts again,
what is most important here I believe is the need to have the ‘critical literacies’ to enable one to
‘read’ the current world for this time and these particular circumstances—all those personal,
local, national and global ‘relationships’. I believe intersectionality feminist politics allows for
both the development and application of these critical literacies. Just as multiple positionings
are necessary in martial arts to defend against the multiple strategies used in the physical attack
by opponents, so are multiple positionings necessary to resist hegemonic development and
dominant feminism(s). As Graham Hingangaroa Smith so well articulated it to me, I believe
the multiple positionings offered by intersectionality feminist politics facilitates greater agency
in decolonizing and in resistance to colonial agendas because of allowing what may be taken as
“‘political contradictions’ (positions of closure) to simultaneously be read as ‘political
compromises’ (positions of potential)”.

When I first approached this research study, I was very uncertain what forms and methods of
research were appropriate. I thought I would focus on ‘interviews’ and document analysis. But
deep in my subconscious, I questioned something about the foundational purpose and meaning
of ‘research’. Before I shifted the purpose and research question of this study, I came in to
the UNESCO Beijing office with the mindset that everything about UNESCO was
dominating—that not only its structure and processes, but all its staff operate from a colonial
agenda just by nature of working in a dominant institution. This is a really poisonous thought
and I had to really discipline my mind in order to allow the possibility of seeing and hearing
ways that worked against the dominant grain of the Organization. I found myself asking
questions like: ‘What is the purpose for me to be here? To do this research?’ ‘What can my
research really offer? To whom?’ ‘Who really needs to change here?’ ‘Am I so certain that
UNESCO staff in Education need to change?’ ‘What do I need to change about myself first?’

Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) words helped to raise my own consciousness and maintain a
critical voice in my head, particularly remembering these following questions:

- Whose research is it?
- Who owns it?
- Whose interests does it serve?
- Who will benefit from it?

68 Finding no further articulate way to demonstrate my meaning here, I use Graham Hingangaroa Smith’s concise
wording. Many thanks to him for this sharing. October 2004.
69 I am again very grateful to Graham Hingangaroa Smith for making all these points so clear to me. It has
crystallized into a nugget: my understanding of “differential consciousness” in the way I understand it through
martial arts philosophy and practice.
70 See chapter four, An Interview with Mee Lain Ling by Margaret Inglis, September 2004.
Who has designed its questions and framed its scope?
Who will carry it out?
Who will write it up?
How will its results be disseminated? (p. 10)

I was also challenged by some of these questions that Smith also poses:

• Is her spirit clear?
• Does he have a good heart?
• What other baggage are they carrying?
• Are they useful to us?
• Can they fix up our generator?
• Can they actually do anything? (p. 10)

Basically, as Smith (1999) writes, I was compelled to question the fundamental belief that Western Euroamericentric society and academy socializes us to have: “that individual researchers have an inherent right to knowledge and truth” (p. 173).

‘Interviewing’ and Ethical Issues

For a long time I was torn about how to ‘interview’ and whether it was even my place to use it as a method. Deciding to try anyway, while working at keeping these warnings and voices with me, I invited two female colleagues to participate in this research. Both agreed, although only one was willing to formally sign the ethics permission form and audio record our conversation. The second informant was not keen on recording our conversation, so I did not push signature of the ethics permission form. I had only known the second informant two months before inviting her participation whereas I knew the first informant six months. I think this played a role as a trust factor, or I may not have given her enough warning, or more properly made the spoken invitation and asked permission to audiotape. As such, the conversational dialogue we did have was much more informal and involved dinner together first at her home. Our conversation also included a third party male who enjoyed talking. Thus, I did not really hear much of my intended informant’s opinion and although it might have been welcome, I did not ask for another time for the two of us to talk.

This does not detract from her impact on this study however. In fact, when I made the shift in my research questions, and therefore approach, our brainstorming together in the car on the way back from a meeting opened up the idea of examining UNESCO’s GAD conceptual framework as applied in education and how this is applied through the Beijing office. She expressed interest in understanding why there is resistance from government counterparts at various levels, and local developers to development projects.

In terms of interviews, the feedback and comments shared with me through this method are more informed by the first informant. She is native to China, has a graduate degree in English literature from Beijing University and worked in the China Ministry of Education for six years before being hired through open competition by UNESCO Beijing international staff. Because there is no International Programme Officer for Education, she directs and leads the activities of the unit as Chief of Section.
At least having the sense to know I needed help to be held accountable, I first gave what I had written so far to my informant (the second woman participant as well) before our conversational dialogue. As well, I shared my writing with other colleagues who had shown interest from the informal conversations that arose during work when we spontaneously took snack breaks. However, English is not the first language for any of my colleagues in the Education unit, so the academic terminology made my writing less accessible. That has been a lesson for me as I aim to make my writing accessible in style and language while remaining effective in conveying my thoughts and ideas.

The style and attitude with which to approach the interviews troubled me. I did not want to prepare a script of questions, assuming therefore what answers I will get after each question. Nor did I want it to be based in a feeling of ‘extraction’—extracting opinion, and knowledge. I continuously questioned my motives behind each question, each thought, each desire to ‘know’ so I could avoid misappropriation and manipulation of the opinions and knowledge shared with me. So, rather than take the approach as ‘interviews’, I found it helpful to stay the course of decolonizing by approaching them as ‘conversational dialogues’. I wanted to be open to critique and suggestions of my writing in a kind of reciprocity for answering some specific questions I was interested in. Having said that, I must acknowledge that this approach did not erase the historical context of how research “through imperial eyes” was implicitly understood by both of us (Smith, 1999, p. 56). Over the 2-hour period, mostly using English with some Chinese, although it took a turn at times of ‘feeling’ like a conversation, the concept of ‘dialogue’ did not completely change the role I was in of being the one asking questions, and she answering.

I opened up our conversational dialogue with an invitation to hear comments on my writing so far. One of the first comments brought to my attention right from the beginning of our conversational dialogue was this one:

I think you need to think about who your audience is.

At first I thought my audience is everybody! Sure, why not? My colleague’s next comment though was:

I really got a clear idea of where you’re coming from in your introduction. You tie in your experiences to make it clear to the reader. But in the next chapter, I don’t know…and it’s hard for me to understand it’s so academic! Maybe your professors require it, but for me, I don’t find it…(unfinished sentence)

This comment then followed a few days later after our conversational dialogue:

I think it would be really helpful to your readers if you continue telling about your experiences throughout your writing.

Reading the Chinese cultural nuances whereby thoughts are often communicated directly in indirect ways, I read between the lines here. I needed to put myself more visibly in my writing as I journeyed through this process of decolonizing. This was encouraging to me because that was my intuition of how this project needed to occur. But I was wary of the all-too-often demand from the academy to produce ‘purely academic’ work, as if the personal can be deleted
and ideas can be both written and read ‘objectively’ by separating ‘knower’ from ‘known’. As D. Smith (1990) articulates, “[k]nowing is always a relation between knower and known” (p. 33).

**Participant Observation**

Participant observation, as a method of research, was used in different ways according to different situations. During the office monthly staff meetings I listened and learned unless I had undertaken a mission and needed to brief the rest of the staff on this news (but then usually my colleagues on that same mission with me did this debriefing). Where I joined colleagues to attend meetings with national government counterparts, I was primarily a listener and note-taker for the office writing the follow-up meeting minutes for distribution and comments among the meeting participants. At these meetings, education projects within the responsibility of UNESCO Beijing were discussed. Sometimes I posed questions for clarification of information. But most of the time I listened, learned and observed the dynamics of the interaction between meeting participants, understanding it through the framework of dominant development and decolonizing methodologies.

**Self-reflective Practice**

One important aspect of feminist and decolonizing methodologies is ‘reflexivity’ or ‘self-reflective practice’ —a process of critical awareness. It is reflection about power and one’s roles with and connections to networks of power in order to highlight dilemmas in fieldwork (Naples, 2003). This aspect is a cornerstone to this methodology of decolonizing mind and heart.

Naples (2003) talks about two “readings of” reflexivity—“weak” and “strong”. The weak reading, I mentioned in Chapter two as careful monitoring of one’s own subjectivity, and maintaining awareness of how one constructs knowledge and what influences one’s beliefs, feelings, and experiences during development processes (Naples, 2003). ‘Strong’ self-reflective practice then challenges “the authority of the author and/or of the power difference[s] in the field” (Rachel R. Wasserfall in Naples, 2003, p. 42). I see this as having particular significance to dominant development discourse and practices because it asks first world developers to examine their power differences with those who are the objects of their development projects. Whether working in the field or in an office, this strong reflexivity challenges the first world developer to think of her/his locations of power. And this necessarily entails examining and making visible those multiple forms of oppression that cut across interlocking relationships and social structures.

**‘Going Public’—Self-disclosure**

Self-disclosure as another feminist, decolonizing method has been very central to this project. It is one that I engaged more fully with after being encouraged by several of my colleagues in UNESCO Beijing office to continue with. Many times I was told it was easier to understand the theoretical domain and sites of analyses from reading the practical stories shared during my own decolonizing process of change. This was very encouraging to me as I wanted to avoid turning this study into an ‘autobiography’. As Behar (1995) notes: “No one objects to autobiography, as such, as a genre in its own right. What bothers critics is the insertion of
personal stories into what we have been taught to think of as the analysis of impersonal social facts” (pp. 12-13).

Writing on the topic of self-disclosure in ethnographic research, Naples (2003) says:

Activist researchers have been ambivalent about writing themselves into the narrative record. On the one hand, this strategy can lead to a more honest account of the social movement activities or activist organization in which they participated. Incorporating one's activist experiences and positionality into the analysis can result in a deeper understanding of the political strategies chosen and the process of socialization. On the other hand, such a strategy may be viewed as an attempt to create a more “true” or “authentic” depiction of the field encounter, thus once again privileging the researcher's voice over others whose lives were the subject of the inquiry. (p. 31)

However, I do not consider this study to be an ethnography in which other people's lives are the subject of the inquiry. The subject of the inquiry has been the process of decolonizing itself. Whether it has occurred in me and/or my colleagues, I have chosen to discuss this process through sharing the journey I undertook, which involves my relationships with colleagues. Reasons for this, as I began earlier in this chapter, are because of a need I intuitively felt in myself to transform my ways of being before assuming my colleagues needed to do so. Thus, as much as I am ‘researcher’, I am also ‘researched’. Putting myself into the research and thesis-writing process is to implicate myself because of the views, experiences and lenses I bring to this study, therefore I am challenging my own ‘objectivity’. I theorize my personal experiences and journey in global ways, so the insight as to the theories, ideas and experiences that have influenced my thinking might be used and applied by many others in culturally diverse, specific, rich contexts.

**Voicing**

At the same time however, this raises the question of ‘voicing’. It might be asked “Where are the voices of my colleagues?” or “How do colleagues’ voice resistance to dominant development paradigms used within the office?” and “What would this resistance look/sound like?” My decision to not conduct further ‘interviews’ is a result of a kind of paralysis that kept me from wanting to reproduce colonizing ways of doing and thinking in the way I conducted research. Where I was aware that making any move could be colonizing, this stillness itself is another decolonizing strategy. Instead, I found myself facing questions that had me really thinking whether my research design, approach and epistemologies were based in this feeling of just ‘extracting’ from informants, or using thoughts and opinions of colleagues for my own purposes. I was very uncomfortable with the ethics of that kind of research and decided it was least colonizing if I did not attempt to speak for colleagues, but rather make changes in my own epistemologies and methodologies before expecting it in other places and bodies.

Also, I found speaking for or nearby my colleagues’ voices to be extremely complicated and full of twists and turns. It requires knowing when and when not to know what can be said, in what way, and how to be extra cautious and respect whether it causes more political

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71 I wish to acknowledge and thank Graham Hingangaroa Smith again for sharing his insight on the usefulness and importance of writing a rationale for my use of personal stories and anecdotes throughout this thesis.
disadvantages if it can be found out who's voice or story it is. This necessitates a very trusting relationship between researcher and informant. For example, one staff member, even given his high position, specifically did not want his words/thoughts quoted when he shared with me about the problems of UNESCO's 2003/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report. So there is a need to respect some people not wanting their voice made known in this study, particularly when it entails a voice of resistance that may jeopardize their position or make their work more difficult.

Moreover, writing the voices of colleagues leads to three more issues to contend with: (a) distinctions between 'my' voice, 'her' voice and 'our' voice and who gets to make those distinctions or how they do or do not get made in a shared way, and particularly, who are those that these distinctions 'need' to be made for in the first place and why; (b) putting into writing those forms/thinking/ways of resistance that have not necessarily been expressed in written or spoken language (to me) but expressed in body language, facial expressions, posture, silence (of the tongue); and (c) how to theorize resistance.

In terms of the third issue raised here, I raise it because I think it dangerous to assume what resistance is or how it is conceptualized by those who live it everyday. For me, the notion of 'resistance' has associations with the natural law of physics that says every action has a reaction, every force has a counterforce. So then is resistance this reaction, this counterforce? If so, then resistance, just as the notion of the 'anti-' prefix\textsuperscript{72}, actually reinscribes to a certain degree the dominant framework because it sets up the very terms of the dominant framework to be the standard upon which one acts against, therefore requiring the \textit{re}-action, the counterforce.

Can resistance also be theorized as just doing and living a totally different paradigm which is part of the broader struggle for transformation? How can this resistance be understood without necessarily reverting to the one just mentioned? I do not know of a name or even want to name this form of struggle. But I do want to make clear that I am not valuing one more than the other because I believe resisting from within a dominant framework and conceptually working and struggling outside of it for social transformation are both simultaneously necessary to make radical social change. Thus, writing the voices of my colleagues would have entailed figuring out how I was to deal with these issues and for this study at this time this was too much for me.

\textit{Validity}

I understand validity in a research context to be a particular relationship and connection among epistemologies, methodologies and methods that make the research question, purpose, methodology, methods, analysis and findings acceptable, legitimate and justifiable. Of course the perception of what is 'acceptable', 'legitimate' and 'justifiable' for this study or many other studies I think depends on who is doing the 'assessing' and under what conditions. This is very similar to questions of who is doing the naming, of whom and what, and under what conditions. So the question of 'validity' itself is not immune from questions of objectivity.

Thus, I have sought a diversity of opinions, thoughts, comments and feedback from many individuals, as perhaps greater numbers of people thinking in like-minded ways can increase validity. But this then raises two questions: does 'agreement' of an idea, a conclusion on some research question necessarily give a study greater validity, greater legitimacy and justification?

\textsuperscript{72} See footnote #13.
I would have to say that it is not fixed yes or no because greater numbers of agreement on an idea or practice or paradigm of thought can also merely feed hegemonic ways of thinking and being. Look at what happened in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the notion now understood as scientific racism. It was (and still is for many) commonplace to ascribe hierarchical lenses to differences between cultural groups based on a notion of racial and/or sexual essence that 'justifies' their hierarchical distinctions as founded in biological differences. Another example might be the method of invasion into a nation-state using war and weapons to bring about 'democracy', 'freedom', 'peace' and 'human rights' (for the non-Western woman and Other), but on whose terms and whose analysis of what is a 'valid' method for bringing about peace?

Also, this notion that by greater numbers of individuals agreeing on some idea or some paradigm, the validity of a project, study or research question is increased raises another question: do we even want or need to have full agreement on an idea, a set of conclusions in order to make a claim that some research analysis and findings are valid? Again, how do we use difference here as a source of strength, as a point of engagement for further discussion so as to avoid reproducing domination, oppression, exploitation and silencing?

I believe there is value to understanding validity as a particular relationship among all aspects and steps of a research process involving the epistemologies and methodologies used and that this can make research acceptable, legitimate and justifiable. In understanding validity this way, I think the following questions Smith (1999) poses, particularly keeping in mind cross-cultural contexts, are important to examining the limitations of validity just mentioned:

- Who defined the research problem?
- For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so?
- What knowledge will the community gain from this study?
- What knowledge will the researcher gain from this study?
- What are some likely positive outcomes from this study?
- What are some possible negative outcomes?
- How can the negative outcomes be eliminated?
- To whom is the researcher accountable?
- What processes are in place to support the research, the researched and the researcher? (p. 173)

These questions are important to be very well aware of those boundaries of validity in a research study, again so as not to return to any familiarity with domination and oppression. I see these limitations of validity as necessary to prevent further hegemony.

Bearing all of this in mind, I posit that there is a certain validity in this study through ensuring transparency of my research writing by sharing written thesis work with my informant and all interested colleagues—Chinese national staff, international staff and other interns. I was open and invited feedback, questions and comments and certainly heard points of differences. I think transparency is one tool to ensure there are no hidden (colonial) agendas in attempts to present one's research as valid.

Also, I think the nature of my role in writing and designing documents and webpages for the Office offers a degree of validity. I chose to write these documents in ways that specifically
challenged colonizing and Othering ways of thinking by producing critically aware scholarship. Scholarship that is not unlike what many more individuals and communities are also saying about the kinds of domination, oppression, exploitation and manipulation that is occurring throughout the world and ways to deal with it. Colleagues were very well aware of my resistance to the colonial agenda in dominant development and knew it was through scholarship writing I politicized this resistance. While negotiation occurred over how to write these documents, on the whole, the main ideas, approach and tone were kept. Knowing my resistance and how I framed UNESCO as part of dominant development discourse and practices through its bureaucracy, and given approval of these documents by respective persons in authority (Director/Representative, Chiefs of Sections), I claim this makes valid both this study’s research purpose and the decolonizing methodological approach used to examine the questions posed.

Limitations of the Study

The limitation of this study is that it does not involve more participants in direct one-to-one person interviews. I think had I been in a decolonizing phase and knew more solidly my own decolonizing journey and epistemology of approach, I would have been more prepared and more able to have those interviews and been able to understand and deal with the issues of ‘voicing’. However, having said that, were I already aware of my own patterns of consciousness and how to stay the course of decolonizing before coming to and engaging in this project, the very purpose of this study would have changed to examine other questions that also need posing and analyzing of dominant development paradigms.

Summary

This chapter has examined the research process as it occurred through my multiple lenses. Critical feminist and decolonizing ways of knowing and researching are interwoven together to discuss the transformational potential of intersectionality feminist politics to Gender and Development. I posited that feminist methodologies need decolonizing to avoid perpetuating neo- forms of domination and that decolonizing methodologies must also be critically feminist in order to address any form of gender oppression. In particular this chapter has emphasized that these epistemologies and methodologies are not separate from, or hierarchical in their relationship, but rather exist within the other; they keep each accountable and responsible to a focus on analyses that use multidimensional intersectionality across social locations and identities, material lived realities and sectors (education, agriculture, science, culture, etc.), while ensuring analyses remain ever-constantly vigilant of maintaining a critical, decolonizing approach. The research methods used in this study aim to weave these epistemologies and methodologies together through discussion on ethical issues around interviewing and how other methods of participant observation, self-reflective practice and self-disclosure were important to this study. I close this chapter by raising issues of voicing and validity and their related issues that came up in this study that return to challenging our objectivity, and questions who is doing the naming, of whom and what, and under what conditions.
Chapter Four: Making Connections at Deeper Levels

Findings and analysis from this study are presented primarily in response to chapter two’s Section II “Gender and Development’s Hegemonic Model”. This chapter is organized into two parts: (I) Dominant Development and Hegemonic GAD in Education; and (II) GAD in Education through UNESCO Office Beijing. Following these sections, this chapter then concludes with an interview piece that I pose with myself as a tool to analyze where major transformations occurred that assisted the (re)conceptualizations necessary to write this study.

Stated again, the questions examined in this study are the following:

1. What is UNESCO Headquarters’ Gender and Development conceptual framework?
2. How is this Gender and Development framework applied to an education perspective in UNESCO discourse?
3. How do project decision-makers in UNESCO Beijing negotiate, interpret and construct discourses of Gender and Development in education?

Section I, “Dominant Development and Hegemonic GAD in Education”, looks at the findings to examine the pervasiveness of hegemonic thought in GAD and dominant development scholarship. These findings draw from UNESCO documents, spontaneous informal conversations and planned discussions/meetings with UNESCO Office Beijing staff, participant observation in meetings with the office’s national government counterpart and my experience in my role as intern. The findings and analysis revisit the ability of ideological hegemony to persist through naming as a linguistic and discursive power in the field of development.

Analysis of the GAD conceptual framework in UNESCO and more specifically from within its education sector is examined against the backdrop of a hegemonic GAD. This section first looks at GAD as it is written about very broadly in UNESCO using its Agenda for Gender Equality, approved in 2000 as a summary review of UNESCO’s work in the field since the 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women. Then I analyze GAD as it is taken up in UNESCO discourse on education using the most important document UNESCO publishes on education for all (EFA)—the 2003/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report.

Section II, “GAD in Education through UNESCO Office Beijing” then follows by taking a look at how this framework operates from within the Beijing office of UNESCO. This analysis is through my experience both researching and interning in the Education Sector of UNESCO Office Beijing. This section examines how GAD in education gets taken up by project decision makers in this sub-regional office through scholarship in project proposals, progress reports, monitoring and evaluation reports and exhibit-making involving photos and written text. Throughout, this section demonstrates various forms of negotiation that occurred in the Education sector to come to common understandings of counter-hegemonic, critically aware meanings of ‘development’.

Section I: Dominant Development and Hegemonic GAD in Education

The first part of this section aims to re-emphasize sites of power that exist in dominant development in the discursive ‘naming’ that occurs in dominant development processes.
Revisiting the Power of ‘Naming’

The power of naming, who names, who names whom, and from what spaces under what conditions, particularly revealed itself to me when I used the term “Majority World” once in a very brief conversation on cross-border higher education. A few of us from the Beijing office had been attending a workshop on “Exporters and Importers of Cross-border Higher Education” that UNESCO Division of Higher Education from Paris headquarters had organized with local organizers in Beijing. A colleague and I had together composed the opening speech for the Senior Programme Specialist representing UNESCO and at the end of the conference needed to have ready her closing speech as well. So this task as well as the controversial nature of this topic and personal interest had us fully engaged in listening to and observing the workshop’s events and goings-on.

In the context of concerns raised by several representatives from Majority World countries, I mentioned in a conversation to a participant one of my concerns at the end of the workshop. This is that I think it a problematic imbalance that post-secondary students from Majority World countries flock in millions to Western countries to study each year, while the movement of students in the other direction to also earn post-secondary degrees is extremely rare. On my mention of “Majority World”, this older American man who is in charge of university programs for a school in Chicago mocked me laughing, “Is this term really used or is it just something you made up?!”

At this comment, I had wished I had not just previously told him I was an intern at UNESCO. My colleague, also an intern in Education with whom I prepared the speech, agreed. We discussed and analyzed whether he would have said the same thing to another white male, or a woman or man more his age, or to someone he deemed with higher status than a mere ‘intern’ who has no ‘position of influence’. We concluded that all those factors—age, gender, race, status—played a role in the manner, tone, pitch and outward physical behaviour of his response, albeit how much of a role is another matter. That is what our senses told us. As the events of the moment cut off my conversation with him right at that point and no further time (or any further desire on my part) allowed for further discussion, it left a sharp ring in my conscience on the difficulties of transforming the linguistic and discursive power base of dominant development.

Later, on reflecting further on this, there is an aspect of it that seems to me more positive and hopeful. In a sense, this man’s reaction is an illustration that there is less room for this term to be used in dehumanizing ways; it challenges the notion that hegemony and its power base and network are constructed and therefore can be re-constructed such that dominant development is disciplined in diminishing ways. For those who are habitually used to operating and exercising their power from their position and role in hegemonic paradigms, this is very threatening. ‘Majority World’, both in language and concept, compels those at the centre of dominant development discourse to re-cognize and re-conceptualize another view of the world that centres the margin (hooks, 2000b). This example also points to an important difference between resistance to change and resistance to domination. How do we distinguish the

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73 I take up Carrillo’s notion of “margins” as “that space situated on the periphery where [a] community resists dominant beliefs, from social constructions to public policy. They do so because of the continued devastating social and economic impact these have on the community and women in particular.” (PhD work in progress, 2004).
difference? George J.S. Dei recommends bearing in mind very clearly “what’s being resisted” and “who’s doing the resisting”. One resisting acknowledgement of white supremacist thinking (i.e. change) and one resisting racial subordination (i.e. domination) are clearly very different forms of resistance with their own distinct embedded set of ruling relations.

*UNESCO Headquarters’ GAD Framework*

Naming and the defining of conceptual frames and borders are not uncommon in dominant development. This section now more specifically turns to look at how this naming occurs in UNESCO’s major documents on its gender and development (GAD) conceptual framework and how this framework is applied through education.

UNESCO’s commitment to the improvement of the status of women and the promotion of equality between women and men has concentrated on providing literacy and education programmes for women and girls (UNESCO, 2002a). In preparation for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, an *Agenda for Gender Equality* was developed, outlining UNESCO’s vision and priorities for promoting gender equality issues. In addition, UNESCO’s Member States identified women as one of the priority groups for Medium-Term Strategy 1996-2001, together with Africa, youth and economically disadvantaged countries and continues its focus on women for the 2002-2007 Medium-Term Strategy (UNESCO, 2003a).

Borrowing from the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) definitions, UNESCO defines gender equality and gender equity in its *Agenda for Gender Equality* as the following:

> Gender equality, equality between men and women, entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

> Gender equity means fairness of treatment of women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. (2000, p. 5).

In speaking about gender as dynamic, learned social differences and relations between men and women, learned behaviour of gender roles are acknowledged as “affected by age, class, race, ethnicity and religion, and by the geographical, economic and political environment. (2000, p. 6).

The Agenda outlines UNESCO’s four principles of its GAD approach:

i) Women and men have different and special needs

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74 This was posed as a question to George Dei during a presentation he gave community members of the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia, Canada, November 2004.
ii) Women do not constitute a homogeneous group because, while being of female sex, each woman is also marked by her race/ethnicity, class, age, sexual preference and other factors.

iii) Women tend to be disadvantaged compared to men in terms of their access to and control of the means of production, and of their welfare in general.

iv) Gender differences can, however, also result in men being disadvantaged in certain societies, although presently, in most parts of the world, it is above all women that are victims of discrimination.

Thus, according to ii), racial, class, age, sexuality and other social dimensions of gender discrimination are analyzed in UNESCO’s Gender and Development approach.²⁵

UNESCO employs a “three-pronged strategy to women's empowerment and gender equality” which consists of:

1) **Mainstreaming a gender perspective** in all policy-planning, programming, implementation and evaluation activities.

2) **Promoting the participation of women at all levels and fields** of activity, giving particular attention to women’s own priorities and perspectives in redefining both the goals and means of development.

3) **Developing specific programmes and activities** for the benefit of girls and women, particularly those that promote equality, endogenous capacity-building and full citizenship.

(UNESCO, 2000)

Briefly summarizing, the *UNESCO Agenda for Gender Equality* is as follows:

- Promote education for women's self-empowerment at all levels and in all fields.
- Encourage the equal access to knowledge in all fields, notably within science and technology.
- Support to women's human rights by implementing the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) and other normative instruments, and through “legal literacy” for girls and women.
- Promote the attainment of gender parity, women's full citizenship and equal participation in policy-making, and the elimination of stereotyped roles and expectations.
- Foster partnership and dialogue, and develop a new gender contract, underlining the long-term gains from the social transformation towards gender-sensitive societies (e.g., in fighting poverty and exclusion).
- Mainstream a gender perspective in the conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of policies relating to development, peace and security.
- Collect and analyze gender-specific statistical data and develop appropriate indicators and guidelines to assist Member States in monitoring progress made towards more gender sensitive societies.

²⁵ For a well-articulated framework that examines intersections of gender with race, see the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) paper entitled *Gender Dimensions of Racial Discrimination*. This paper was prepared for the 2001 World Conference against “Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.”
• Encourage women's creativity and freedom of expression by supporting their cultural activities, research, training, capacity-building, networking, exchange of information and women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

• Support a pluralistic and editorially independent media by favouring the broad and active participation of women in decision-making and by encouraging more diversified and nondiscriminatory images of women

• Assist in building a culture of peace in the minds of women and men by recognizing women's capacity for leadership and non-violent conflict resolution

**Masculinities and Men's Roles in Development**

Although women throughout the world disproportionately bear the brunt of gender inequalities (as they are narrowly defined as caused by unequal relations between men and women), there is no markedly obvious place in UNESCO's *Agenda* document in which there is a focus on efforts to incorporate "men" into development processes in ways which involve men specifically contributing to address gender inequalities towards women. As Greig et al (2000) comment, this reflects that "men tend not to think of themselves as 'gendered' beings, and this is one reason why policy makers and development practitioners, both men and women, often misunderstand and dismiss 'gender' as a women's issue" (p. 1). As Greig et al (2000) liken this to issues of racism, "not having to think about race is one of the luxuries of being of a dominant race, just as not having to think about gender is one of the patriarchal dividends that men gain from their position in the gender order... [because] processes that confer privilege on one group and not another are often invisible to those upon whom that privilege is conferred" (p. 1).

Research has shown that deconstructing and transforming meanings and patterns of masculinity, as they take shape in different ways across different societies, plays a significant role in furthering movements towards gender equality (Cleaver, 2000; Connell, 1998, 2000; Greig et al, 2000). In North American society, a dominant pattern of masculinity persists that essentializes as biologically determined, qualities such as aggression, virulence, non-emotional, authoritative, able-bodied, physically brave, heterosexual (Connell, 1998). There is very little discussion offered to deal with such kind of notions of masculinity, let alone the *multiplicity* of its meanings across cultures, languages, ethnicities, age. By not recognizing masculinity as a concept with multiple meanings is one strategy hegemonic GAD uses to assert homogeneous meanings of gender (in)equality. This is dangerous and much too simplistic. Thus, it is surprising that UNESCO's GAD framework does not more *explicitly* offer programmes that re-educate or perhaps, *de*-educate (in decolonizing ways) men and their possible relationships to processes of transformative change for greater gender equality.

At the same time however, how can men be included without repositioning masculinity and the interests of men's groups at the centre? One of the most important areas of work where men are needed is for men to learn the nature and the extent of violence committed towards women by men. Yet it is not acceptable to use biological determinist arguments which say boys and men are 'naturally violent'. This is merely a strategy to excuse boys' and men's violence, just as the argument there are 'natural differences' between human groups have served to excuse racial/cultural inequality and colonial violence. Violence is learned, just as racism, sexism and other forms of domination and oppression are also learned. Media, toys, battle games, videogames and forms of organized violence such as the military primarily recruit or are aimed at boys and men. "Even where women can enter, men are the great majority of soldiers, police,
private security agents and prison officers [and] military technology and strategy are mainly designed by men” (Connell, 1998). This creates a masculinist culture that supports violence. One way men can be included in GAD to challenge gender oppression is to further campaigns which advocate men to work towards ending men’s violence, of all forms, towards women. One such campaign is the White Ribbon Campaign. Wearing a white ribbon is a personal pledge by men never to commit violence against women—physically, emotionally, psychologically or in any other way that condones the violence of other men. It is a personal pledge “not to remain silent, [but to] challenge [more] men to act to end violence”. It also commits men “not to make excuses for perpetrators of violence, and not to think that any woman ‘asks for it’” (United Nations, 1998, 4. section, paras. 2 and 3).

UNESCO Hegemonic GAD Discourse in Education

Other than this oversight, the conceptual framework of GAD in UNESCO appears to be without other biases and assumptions about its own epistemological paradigm. Who would say that achieving greater gender equality and equity through mainstreaming gender throughout institutional structures and processes is not a worthy and necessary effort? Who would deny that more relevant education programmes for girls and women around the world would greater benefit women and girls’ lives and realities? These are not the questions and issues I am contending with here. It is the deeper layers of meaning and ways this ‘gender equality’ and ‘gender equity’ are presented in the discourse of dominant development that I find highly problematic.

Looking closer at this framework from an education perspective, one can see several discursive strategies and methodological sites of analysis that perpetuate a colonial and hegemonic feminist agenda as the one Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Aihwa Ong, Uma Narayan, Oyeronke Oyewumi, Linda Tuhiwai Smith and many others have critiqued. This section focuses on four critiques. First, Euroamerican feminist assumptions and values subtly underscore what gets counted as gender equality and efforts towards women’s liberation and development (and thereby what does not). Second, ‘traditional’ values are rejected as entirely ‘bad’ and associated with the ‘non-Western Other’. This then implicitly represents Euroamerican, white feminists and states as modern, educated, rational and liberated, towards which all other societies and peoples inevitably ought to develop.

Third, in marked efforts to not essentialize gender based on biological distinctions, the Report comes close to turning from essentializing gender to essentializing cultures. Fourth, there are huge inconsistencies in analyzing the disparities, difficulties and obstacles that individuals, communities and whole nation-states face. I argue there is a politicized ‘arbitrariness’ that in fact is not so arbitrary at all—some groups and even whole nations are decidedly written as the locus of whatever problem being discussed, while for others, the problem is clearly written as embedded in the dominant social order and institutional structures.

Justifying the Document of Analysis

My document of analysis is UNESCO’s 2003/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality (2003b). It is the third annual monitoring report published by the Organization since the six goals of Education for All (EFA) were approved by
its Member States in 2000. Each yearly Report highlights a different theme with this year's focus on gender. Led by a team of individuals from UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, it obtains information gathered here through consultants contracted out by Paris headquarters as well as some UNESCO staff.

Unless UNESCO publications are specifically referred to as "UNESCO Document" or "UNESCO Position Paper", it is crucial to note here that UNESCO does not consider its publications to "reflect the views of UNESCO". To reflect the views of UNESCO is to negotiate approach, meaning, and conceptual framework and gain approval and agreement from its 190 plus Member States. Publications published in the name of UNESCO that do not follow these formal procedures, rightly so, do not reflect the views of the Organization because they have not been negotiated and agreed upon by all its Member States. From this Report the wording is as follows:

The analysis and policy recommendations of this Report do not necessarily reflect the views of UNESCO. The Report is an independent publication commissioned by UNESCO on behalf of the international community. It is the product of a joint effort involving members of the Report team and many other people, agencies, institutions and governments. Overall responsibility for the views and opinions expressed in the Report is taken by its Director. (Acknowledgements, 2003b)

One of the policies of UNESCO that does reflect the views of its Member States is to have a primary focus on gender equality through education programmes that directly benefit women and girls (2002b). Thus, despite this statement claiming non-responsibility for the views and voices UNESCO reinscribes through publications using its name, I understand this Report to reflect the application of UNESCO Headquarters Gender and Development conceptual framework in education. This Report also begins with a signed preface by the Director-General of UNESCO. At the same time, I argue that because UNESCO has commissioned these views from outside its Organization, an even larger, overarching dominating paradigm reveals itself. I will return to both of these points later in my analysis.

I also justify using this document to analyze this agency's GAD framework in education because UNESCO is recognized as one of the leading United Nations agencies in efforts

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76 The six EFA goals were determined at the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 as a follow-up to the first meeting held in Jomtien, Thailand that first declared education as a fundamental human right for all. The six goals are central to education efforts at all levels from international to national to local government levels and have been ratified by over 180 countries. They are as follows:

**Goal 1:** Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; **Goal 2:** Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality; **Goal 3:** Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes; **Goal 4:** Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults; **Goal 5:** Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality; **Goal 6:** Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

77 I will later address why I have specifically noted UNESCO Headquarters and not UNESCO to include all its field offices.
towards meeting the six goals of Education for All (EFA). This EFA Report is intended to be
the chief report policy makers, decision makers, government officials and development
planners turn to for information, conceptual frameworks, statistics on education and
justification for achieving gender equality in education.

Fundamental Assumptions Lead to Larger Inequalities

One of the primary fundamental problems I see with this Report lies in its hegemonic feminist
assumptions and values about the household as a category of analysis and subsequent meanings
of gender equality concluding from that analysis. This is more than evident in the Report. The
Report first makes the case that the “critically important locus for decision-making as regards
participation in schooling is the family” by asserting that it is in the family “that notions of
gender relations are transmitted from one generation to the next... implicitly via the gender roles
that members of the household themselves fulfill, and explicitly by consequence of the gender
frameworks within which children of each sex are brought up” (p. 118). Although not stated in
writing directly, there is the tendency to view “family” as male breadwinner/dependent
housewife and children in UNESCO scholarship. This is demonstrated not only through this
2003/4 EFA Report but also UNESCO’s training manual publication on Gender Sensitivity
for educational managers and related professionals (Aksornkool, 2002). Although I do not fully
analyze this document here, it is noticeable that all the stories chosen in this manual reflect this
type of family.

The section of the Report’s conceptual framework on gender inequality concludes by saying:

In short, do women or girls have a tougher time than men or boys, in part because their
influence over decision-making in the household is usually weaker? Recent theoretical
and empirical work shows that this is so. (p. 118)

The next part of Chapter 3 in the Report then specifically names what its use of gender equality
and inequality are.

Most societies observe some gender division of labour within the home, with women
taking primary responsibility for caring for the family, whereas men tend to be
associated with the work outside the home, often on a paid basis. (p. 119)

...societies differ considerably in the extent to which women also participate in paid
work outside the home: the most marked gender inequalities are generally found in
societies where women are confined to the home and denied the possibility of
participating in work outside it. (p. 119)

One sub-heading asks the question “Does the labour market reward girls?” The following
comments given under this title offer more insight on how ‘gender equality’ is envisaged in this
Report.

Despite genuine and soundly based concern about male underachievement, it is clear
that many societies have different expectations for males and females. The
underachievement of men in the educational arena has not yet resulted in their falling
behind in the economic and political spheres. (p. 152)
The Report then strongly alludes to a definition of patriarchy which views that “these restrictions tend to be associated with other values and practices that further inhibit women’s life chances.” It then follows with naming such values and practices as the following:

1. Patrilocal principles of inheritance and descent, where family line and property is transmitted through men;
2. Patriarchal structures of authority, where families are tightly knit and where most resources are under the control of the senior male;
3. Patri-local systems of marriage requiring women to be absorbed into their husbands’ families after marriage, distancing them from the support of their natal families. (p. 119).

The restrictions on women’s movements in the public domain in such societies reflect the importance attached to the biological paternity of children and the need to control women’s sexuality. Denied access to resources of their own and restricted in their ability to provide for themselves, women tend to be regarded as economic dependents in such societies.

Although other parts of the world are also characterized by a gender division of domestic labour, they do not exercise the same restrictions on women’s ability to participate in the wider economy—even though such participation may be onerous, given women’s other domestic responsibilities. (p 119)

These words and ideas reflect the base foundation of a hegemonic model in GAD that stems from white middle-class feminist concepts and theories—namely, the universalization of a Euroamerican patriarchal family unit in which the household model of ‘male breadwinner/dependent housewife and children’ is assumed to be the model of families in every society and culture. When the unit of analysis is this nuclear family unit, woman is theoretically reduced to wife, and motherhood is subsumed under wifehood. Gender differences, defined as between husband and wife become the primary source of hierarchy and oppression within this nuclear family, not race, class, age or any other category.

This hegemonic form of analysis is carried on further in the Report in Chapter 3 that examines “Why are girls still held back?” Numerous reasons are given for why girls are held back from “what happens outside the school”, to what happens inside the school to the supply of schooling. Albeit many areas are problematic and many reasons are named, I have found UNESCO’s analysis on this topic pertaining to religious education, ‘traditional’ values, cultural preference for sons and child labour to be particularly problematic. It is here I now focus attention.

**Hegemonic Feminist Assumptions, Traditional Values and the Non-Western ‘Other’**

Each of these ‘problematic’ areas extends out of the belief that the Euroamerican patriarchal family unit is the logic of all families, cultures and societies around the world. This taken-for-granted conception and analysis of the family unit reveals a multitude of other assumptions and degrading judgments of cultures and practices. For instance, in speaking about religious education as a reason for keeping girls from school, which is another problematic generalization in itself, there is a distinct bitterness that comes through in dominant discourse towards the roles of wife and mother:
Religious doctrine may explicitly sanction the gender division of labour and the subordination of women. Women are usually expected to be the bearers and markers of tradition and religious identity. Thus as agents of socialization within the family, their schooling in religious beliefs and tradition may be considered more important than promoting their own educational advancement. Gender inequalities follow from educational experiences designed to socialize girls into narrowly conceived roles of wives and mothers. (p. 142)

There is an obvious disapproval and judgment cast that women in roles of wives and mothers are not ‘liberated’ and that religion, whatever form or creed, only acts to keep women in this “narrow” role. Aside from its homogenization of religions as all equally essentially patriarchal, which I will deal with in a moment, there are many problems with this analysis.

Its assessment of women’s role as wives and mothers is very eerily similar to that of hegemonic feminism which bell hooks, Chela Sandoval, Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa, Patricia Monture-Angus and many I have already cited have all critiqued—namely, that middle and upper-class college-educated married heterosexual white women working in the home as housewives were “bored with leisure, with the home, with children, with buying products, [and so] wanted more out of life” (hooks, 2000b, p. 1). That “more” is defined as participating in the “wider economy” (UNESCO, 2003b) through having “careers”. In other words, the household gets hegemonically defined as outside the economy, thus separating economic production from social reproduction as well as the household from the economy (Antrobus, 2001).

The more preferred role to wife and mother is to be ‘outside the home’, made obvious in comments such as: “Women are working outside the home more than ever before” (p. 158) and “Increased female participation in the labour force can often be a trigger of change [for gender equality]” (p. 161). Or, a terribly disturbing comment such as this one:

Notwithstanding its many horrific outcomes, the general destruction caused by armed conflict may open up some avenues for women that challenge their traditional roles and responsibilities. Women may find themselves working outside the home for the first time, becoming the income-earners and living in a more public sphere. Male involvement in fighting often leaves women—and even young girls—heading households. (p. 130)

Much like how white middle-class Euroamerican-orientated feminists have gained their liberation off the backs of working class women, third world women, women of colour and indigenous women, this comment authorizes the ‘liberation’ of new middle-classes of ‘educated’, ‘professional’ women in the Majority World into the ‘world of work’ at the expense of lives (read: women and children) lost to and tragically affected by war. This is not unlike what is happening in our current climate with the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq since 2001—the scapegoat assumption being that the atrocities and deaths of war will lead to greater ‘liberation’ and ‘freedom’ for women in these societies. This is twisted and sickening logic.
The Report goes on to even cite ‘examples’ of women in societies who are seen to be more ‘liberated’ because of “working outside the home for the first time” and/or “living in a more public sphere”:

After the genocide in Rwanda, females for a time accounted for 70% of the population. In southern Sudan only one-third of the population is male (Obura, 2001). Thus, conflict tends to result in women taking on additional responsibilities (El-Bushra et al., 2002). In post-conflict Somalia, in the absence of men, women have become increasingly involved in income-generating activities and in household decision-making. This is also true in El Salvador (ICRC, 2001). The role of women in the 1979 Iranian revolution led to their recognition of their own power and rights. In spite of the influence of religious fundamentalism and the rule of religio-political leaders, Iranian women have had significant achievements in the realm of education (Mehran, 2003). (p. 130)

In all of these words, Majority World women, indigenous women and poor rural women already working outside the home are denied their very existence. This viewpoint grossly fails to acknowledge women who work as prostitutes, farmers, factory workers, cleaners, maids, domestic workers who already work outside their home and in fact already contribute more to the “labour force” than the ‘share’ of equality they ought to receive in return. It is no surefire guarantee to be able to offer women that entering the “labour force” will bring about greater gender equality for women. This is a hard fact that is more than obvious in the multitude of other occupations that employ women that are degrading to women, and are based in white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, especially when women are forced into labour markets by broader national and global social, economic and political factors (i.e. known as ‘globalization’).

As publication ‘author’, this UNESCO 2003/4 EFA Report acknowledges that “increased participation in global markets does not necessarily imply that women’s economic rights can be exercised nor that their entitlements can be accessed” (p. 159). However, the viewpoint of associating women’s greater gender equality with women’s need to work outside the home (and in particular labour markets), continues to prevail. A viewpoint, hegemonic feminist or otherwise, that fails to acknowledge Majority World women, indigenous women and rural women in their occupations working outside the home thereby defines the labour force as one that is career-driven and profession-based, which reflects the extent to which this perspective is shot through with race, culture and class biases. Again, this rings in similarity with Euroamerican-orientated feminist thought questioned and critiqued by feminists of colour and Majority World feminists.

Another point of contention related to religious education that was raised in the Report was that religious schooling reinforces submissiveness and dependence.

However, evidence suggests that religious schools boost the enrolment of girls partly because of the sex-stereotyped messages they generally provide, which reflect gender-differentiated community norms. Accordingly, most religious schools tend to reinforce stereotypes of women as submissive and dependent, rather than undermine them. (p. 141)

There is not only absolutely no further explanation of the meaning of “submissive” and “dependent” as a particularly gendered feminine quality, but they are assumed to be deficient
characteristics that must be uprooted. If these qualities were used to describe men, would they still be constructed as deficient qualities? Perhaps not. In fact, such men might be held up and honoured for supposedly not perpetuating patriarchy through being ‘active’, ‘aggressive’ and ‘independent’. By indirectly naming submission and dependence as qualities needing undermining in and by women, this message only serves to underscore the patriarchy and sexist thinking leading to this very comment. It undermines women’s capacities to act and mobilize, of having agency outside of being cast as “submissive” and “dependent” and ignores possible sites of subversiveness that get misconstrued as submissive and dependent.

Three other examples relating to religious education were raised that I find very troublesome. One is the hidden hegemonic assumption undergirding gender equality that says gender equality will be achieved when gender differences are ‘eradicated’.

Thus religious education can contribute strongly to boosting parity for girls, by offering them safe spaces to enter the public domain and receive an education. However, religious schools are essentially conservative institutions, established to preserve and protect traditions, many of which are likely to uphold gender differences between women and men rather than eradicate them. (p. 142)

Overlooking that there are many other domains in which conservative institutions operate, this view emphasizes the hegemony of feminist thought evident in GAD on at least two counts. One, because the nuclear family is confined to a definition of superior income-earning male/dependent housewife and children, gender differences as viewed between husband and wife are the primary source of hierarchy and oppression. The relationship between men and women is thus viewed as one based on conflict and oppression. So when there are no gender ‘differences’ between two such ‘homogeneous’ groups, there will be no further conflict or oppression—a mark that gender equality has been ‘achieved’. Second, preserving tradition gets equated with backwardness and non-modernity, both characteristics of the non-Western ‘Other’. The next two examples pertaining to religious schools look at how “traditional” values are construed in these ways.

The vocational training [religious schools] provide is often in the domestic arts. Examples include the Salesian Sisters in Honduras, who operate a Sunday school for poor girls who are trained in sewing, dressmaking, needlework and cooking. Training provided by the Roman Catholic organization Opus Dei, in Kenya, segregated men into training for technology and mechanical trades, and women into developing skills for catering and hospitality [cooking and cleaning] (Tietjen, 2000). These initiatives, although well intentioned and admirable in other ways, nevertheless reflect and strengthen traditional interpretations of gender roles. (p. 142)

Education shows people how to question received wisdom. There is evidence that educated women in Iran are delaying their age of marriage, and seeking changes in the traditional role of women in family and society (Mehran, 2003). (p. 142)

The last quote reveals hegemonic feminist assumptions and values that a later marriage age is always more favourable than early marriage for all women in all cultures. In all of these last three quotes from the Report, traditional roles are implicitly associated with wifehood and motherhood. As already demonstrated earlier, this role is considered to be one that constrains
Majority World women and places greater value as a force of social emancipation in all women’s productivity outside the home. Thus, as Mohanty (1991, 2003) and Ong (1988) demonstrate, Majority World women who work at home, who maintain “traditional roles” (because that is never clearly outlined in the Report, but is read between the lines as despised and unwanted) are a homogeneous category of women constructed as tradition-bound, irrational, uneducated and sexually constrained. And this construction implicitly self-represents Euroamerican women as modern, educated, liberated and rational, an identity towards which Majority World women ought to strive.

Returning to the issue of problematizing religious education as a reason for keeping girls from school, these five quotes regarding religious schooling reflect three very dangerous assumptions made about religions and religious education. First, by overlooking the relationship between colonial histories and different religions, the view behind these quotes presumes that all religions and all sects within religions are the same. This then leads to the assumption that there are similarly and equally patriarchal characteristics about every religion. And third, this view assumes that there are no religious feminists working to create and build relevant and contextually appropriate realities of gender equality within her religion.

Combined, these assumptions ignore the feminist elements within religions and sects that intersect with culture and race to deal not only with sexism, but also colonialism and racism which form very different paradigms of gender equality than the Euroamerican model based in white feminist theory. Given these heavily loaded assumptions about religious schooling, I have to ask—do these fears and anxieties about religion as a singular, homogeneous patriarchal institution stem from Christianity’s colonialist, Othering and patriarchal practices during the imperialist age? If so, these can by no means be extended to all religious sects, doctrines and creeds in similar ways.

**Cultural Essentialism and Politicized ‘Arbitrariness’**

There is more that needs to be said about how “tradition” is presented as a barrier to girls’ education. Another section of the Report in Chapter 3 is entitled “In the name of tradition”. Under this section, I contend that in attempting to avoid gender essentialism where sharp dichotomies about the qualities and abilities of ‘men’ and ‘women’ are constructed based in biological attributes, cultural essentialism is produced where distinct hierarchical binaries are set up between ‘Western culture’ and particular ‘Other cultures’ (Narayan, 2000).

The Report makes this claim regarding “son preference”:

Countries in which there is strong cultural preference for sons also tend to have the greatest levels of gender inequalities (UNIFEM, 2002, p. 13). These societies exhibit ‘extreme’ forms of patriarchy. They are to be found in countries of North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia (Pakistan, much of India and Bangladesh) and East Asia (China, Republic of Korea). Gender inequalities in education in such societies are simply one aspect of a generalized and systemic discrimination against women and girls. (p. 119)

Not only are the cultures within the specific countries named here treated as singular, solidly neat monolithic packages, so are the whole regions of North Africa and the Middle East! Such
sweeping generalizations call into question the empirical accuracy and political utility of these
claims. Although I am certainly no ‘expert’ on China, what I do know is that China in no way
can be defined as a singular, monolithic culture where son preference reflects “extreme”
patriarchy throughout the entire country. That is a very outlandish claim. Without any
empirical data here as well, its exaggeration is just as ridiculous as saying, ‘because my
neighbour next door (in Beijing) throughout her pregnancy kept saying how much she wanted a
girl’, and then just gave birth to a girl, ‘all Beijingers favour girls over boys’! Also, matrilineal
cultures exist in China among ethnic minority peoples in Yunnan province. However, there is
no obvious analysis given in the Report as to how patriarchal forms of domination get enforced
on minority ethnic groups by the dominant ethnic group within a country.

Moreover, patriarchal structures that are deeply embedded in cultural practices and socio-
cultural histories are obscured by both the limited way patriarchy is defined in this Report and
the resulting power move through this definition which serves to present a single understanding
and concept of patriarchy. I assert that this erasure of culturally and historically specific
patriarchal structures and processes in the Majority World is a move by hegemonic feminism in
collaboration with dominant development that has three political consequences:

1. Ignores the roles that European imperialism has had in importing and enforcing present-
day patriarchal structures and processes on indigenous cultures and peoples (Smith,
1999)
2. Negatively affects Majority World feminist movements striving to transform this
domination (Narayan, 2000). When patriarchy is monolithically defined through
narrow Euroamerican hegemonic assumptions, any resistance to culturally specific
forms of patriarchy by Majority World feminists lead to accusations by fundamentalists
that they are ‘too Western’ and have rather engaged in betrayal of their culture (Narayan,
2000).
3. Ignores the way state and market operate to reinforce patriarchal systems of domination
(Wu, 2002).

There are several factors involved in any patriarchal system. We have looked at colonialism
and racism. Wu Xiaoying (2002), a sociologist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,
examines this third point within the diverse socio-economic, historical and cultural context of
China. She asserts that because the capitalist market economy in China is “more interested in
making use of gender ideology in traditional culture for its commercial approach”, there is
“sometimes...an alliance in gender issues” between the state and the market that “sacrific[es]
women’s interests for modernization” (p. 5). Through this alliance, she asserts four major
issues different groups of Chinese women face: 1) Unemployment of urban women78; 2) Feminnization of agriculture and distress of female migrants; 3) Violence against women; and 4) Revival of cultural discrimination against women. Thus, patriarchy as it is presented in the
countries named in this quote, at least for China, must be much further delineated than merely
saying “these societies exhibit ‘extreme’ forms of patriarchy” because there is “a strong cultural
preference for sons”.

78 In conversations with Chinese colleagues at UNESCO Office Beijing, high rates of unemployment among urban
women, particularly those aged between 35-45 years, is connected to reforms from state-owned to privately owned
enterprises.
Also, while son preference does exist in specific places, contexts, cultures and realities in China, it cannot always be so quickly conflated to be directly equal to gender inequality. An example, which happens to involve my relatives, might be useful here. One of my cousin-brothers and his wife in rural Fujian had three girls (breaking the one-child policy and paying the fines) before having a fourth boy-child. Let me just state that with the support of our Family Trust Fund, their oldest daughter succeeded in passing the highly competitive high school entrance exams, reflecting the importance and attention her parents and my larger family give to her studies. She is now enrolled in the best high school in the county-city area.

In short, such a broad claim on cultural preference for sons that covers whole countries, cultures, languages, ethnicities, classes and even across regions obscures huge differences between rural-urban, ethnic minorities and socio-economic status. It also disregards the effects of structural adjustment programs enforced by Western-based development agencies on communities, thereby affecting, in China at least, issues of migration, and farming practices and reforms that have influenced a desire for more sons in rural farming households.

As Narayan (2000) explains, “While gender essentialism often equates the problems, interests and locations of some social dominant groups of men and women with those of ‘all men’ and ‘all women’, cultural essentialism often equates the values, worldviews, and practices of some socially dominant groups with those of ‘all members of the culture’” (p. 82). But in China, cultural preference for sons is not even practiced by all ethnic groups in society, yet it gets constructed as not only a cultural practice across the entire country, but a socially dominant practice as well. It is in this move, that power is exercised in discourse; essentializing an entire culture as a particular ‘Other’, or ‘non-Western’ culture creates this sharp hierarchical binary with ‘Western culture’, purposefully centring ‘Western culture’ as the superior referent (Narayan, 2000).

Yet another example this UNESCO 2003/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report cites to ‘demonstrate’ how traditional values in a culture hold girls back from schooling is the following about Romanian cultures:

In Romania, Roma girls’ access to education tends to be limited by their communities’ traditional attitudes to women’s status. These girls tend to drop out of school earlier than boys, because of their substantial household and family responsibilities. They may also be married early or bear children before the age of 15. (p. 134)

What’s more, I do not believe it is mere coincidence that this construction of tradition as an obstacle to girls’ education is also under the sub-heading “Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minorities”. Not only is this reminiscent of a colonial agenda that Others in the name of Sameness, but Euroamericentric (feminist) hegemony again poses here as universalism, projecting its imperialist culture of what gets counted as traditional, as part of family responsibilities, as women’s high status and as valuable education. As shown in the statements immediately prior to this one, colonialism and racism, as with capitalism discussed earlier, are also not analyzed as major factors of present-day patriarchy and gender inequalities among indigenous peoples and communities, including for Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
The following is the statement immediately preceding the one above about Roma girls’ access to education in Romania, both of which are immediately under the sub-heading “Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minorities”.

Indigenous peoples fare poorly in education relative to non-indigenous children. In Chile, indigenous children and young people perform less well than children of non-indigenous groups, especially at secondary and higher education levels, and with marked gender disparities. A high proportion of girls leave school early, as a consequence of ‘behaviour problems’ (Avalos, 2003). (p. 133)

Sure, I could say that ‘research’ (read: usage of colonizing epistemologies and methodologies) indeed has shown in many countries—Australia, Canada, Malaysia, Thailand, United States and Vietnam to name just a few—stark disparities in educational access, attainment and performance between indigenous and non-indigenous populations. But the very schooling education systems in these countries, and many others, are those from/for the dominant groups. So how fair is it to use a system of language, culture and ways of knowing, doing and learning to ‘assess’ the educational levels of indigenous groups for whom such an education system is actually a foreign colonizing institution? In talking about ‘education’ for indigenous populations, the assumption, as reflected above, is too often that indigenous children need to ‘catch up’ somehow with non-indigenous children in terms of educational attainment. Thus, they “fare poorly... relative to...” and “perform less well than...”. This is a strategy, a colonizing dominating way of thinking that blames and points to problems with/in indigenous Others.

Moreover, ‘education’ here is about indoctrinating indigenous children to abandon their traditions and their own ways of knowing, living, being and adopt the dominants’ ways of living, thinking and ruling. The Report again provides no apparent analysis on how “behaviour problems” among indigenous children might possibly be a tool, conscious or unconscious, that these children and their families use to resist the forceful culturally-based colonization that dominant groups use through institutionalized education. How often is it that Aboriginal peoples in Canada also get blamed as the locus of the multiple problems they/we face? When, if ever, do international bodies, national governments and the powers that be, see forceful psychocultural levels of colonialism perpetrated through education systems as the foundation of oppression, with patriarchy as one of many systems and institutions imposed on indigenous communities? (Monture-Angus, 1995; Ouellette, 2002). When will hegemonic feminists and first world developers open their eyes, unplug their ears and have clear hearts and spirits?

While indigenous cultures are (re)positioned as the locus of the problem for gender inequalities in their communities, it is interesting that inequalities that arise for girls with disabilities are spoken of as “a large and diverse group whose educational needs have gone largely unnoticed by those committed to promoting either gender equity or disability equity” (p. 131). This sets the tone and rationale for why “women and girls with disabilities fare less well in the educational arena than either their disabled male or non-disabled female counterparts” (p. 131).

79 I am one of many who find this binary troublesome (see Monture-Angus, 1995). I use this framing with all my understanding and critical consciousness that it is a simplified construction and in reality, these groups are not homogeneous, but are composed of several heterogeneous groups within them. As Monture-Angus (1995) writes, “This is just one example of how inadequate the English language is, especially for individuals who wish to bring a different cultural or gender perspective to the discourse” (p. 185).
Here, the locus of women and girls’ disabilities is in the fact that their plight has not been attended to in changing those institutional structures and processes affecting gender and disability equity.

I do not raise this discursive and epistemic discrepancy to compare one form of oppression as greater or lesser than the other. What I aim to do here is point to the obvious inconsistencies in analyzing the disparities, difficulties and obstacles that these groups and communities face in gender equalities in education. This inconsistency in logic leads me to believe that there is a politicized ‘arbitrariness’ that in fact is not so arbitrary at all, despite its hidden discursive attempts. Frankly put, hegemonic feminists cannot identify alongside the oppressive colonial histories that indigenous communities and peoples have endured, nor come to terms with their roles in perpetuating (neo)colonialism. But they can identify with disability amongst their ranks. This thick suspicious air of colonial discursiveness here is one which I contend maintains control over which social groups, perceived as ‘Other’, are written as the locus of the problem, while clearly defending others, writing the latter’s source of the problem as embedded in the dominant social order.

**Global Networks of Power Ignored**

The last hegemonic form of analysis this section deals with pertains to constructions of child labour in Majority World countries.

There are dramatic differences in the incidence of child labour by region. Africa has the highest incidence (41%) while Asia and Latin America have 21% and 17%, respectively. Asia, being more population-dense, has the largest number of child labourers. Of children in work, it is estimated that 61% are in Asia (128 million), 32% in Africa (68 million) and 7% (15 million) in Latin America. While the incidence of child labour in Asia and Latin America has witnessed a secular decline in the post-war era, this is not the case in sub-Saharan Africa. There, fertility remains high and per capita resources for education have often been in decline. Slow or negative economic growth, famine and disease, war and conflict and the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa have all contributed further to keeping the incidence of child labour high. (p. 121)

Here, there is no analysis of broader global power networks of trade and dominance of oil companies and multinational corporations in Western countries serving Western states’ interests and political-economic strategies that participate in perpetuating child labour. There is no acknowledgement that structural adjustment programmes enforced by the World Bank, the IMF, the UN and many other multi- and bilateral agencies affected agricultural, economic and social policies in Majority World countries that forced families to put their children to work. Where is the recognition of Western states’ roles and responsibilities in inciting and supporting war and conflict, or slowing economic growth through economic sanctions, or demanding return of national loans thereby extracting precious resources from Majority World countries that would otherwise be better used for education and health services?

The locus of the problem presented here is not at the individual or community level, but at the level of nation, which implicitly comes from a Western-statist first world developer orientation. Talking about gender inequality of child labour, just as talking about gender inequality in indigenous communities is incomplete and insufficient in its explanation when the analysis fails...
to examine how transnational, imperial networks of power structures and institutions operated from Western cities manipulate the global economic, social and political dominant order. The only question I am left with after reading how this analysis is presented as a barrier to children’s and girls’ education is: what is the status of child labour in the context of globalization and international trade agreements? From this perspective, context-sensitive instruments which enable both economically rich and poor countries to collaborate to eliminate child labour are a much more preferred and necessary option.80

**Multiple Positions within the Bureaucracy**

There is one other important thread to continue which I began earlier in this chapter. It is necessary to note that the 2003/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report, although signed off via a preface by the Director-General and published by UNESCO Headquarters, it does not represent the interests and views of all UNESCO field offices and Member State governments. In fact, in the process of gathering data for this Report, UNESCO Office Beijing along with several other UNESCO field offices, were not forewarned of any consultant coming to the countries the offices represent to gather information for the Report.81 Nor were the five governments represented by UNESCO Beijing officially informed of their visit and government approval sought to gather this data. Consultants hired to write the Report came on an ‘undercover’ basis and unofficially visited government statistics bureaus. Governments and field offices have since voiced much discontent with this deceptive practice.

But it does not end here. In the Report itself, tables are designed and labeled in such a way that groups certain countries as “likely to achieve”, or “at risk of not achieving”82 EFA Goal 5 which aims to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by 2015. Several Majority World countries are labeled according to past trends as “At risk of not achieving this goal by 2015” in primary and/or secondary education. China is under this category for secondary education and India is under the same category for both primary and secondary education. What use does this ‘prediction’ serve? Such “national prospects for goal achievement” are not only depressing, but also downright patronizing. It is a process of ‘Othering’ operating at an inter-governmental level that works as another oppressive strategy to further push and keep Majority World peoples down in the doldrums of poverty, inequality and mental and emotional despair. The governments of China, India and Thailand have openly criticized both UNESCO and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) for their unethical, deceptive data collection methods and misrepresentation of information in the Report. In fact, processes are still under way to repair the major damage this caused to the relationship between UNESCO and those Member State governments involved.

Overall, regarding analysis of this Report, I conclude that because these dominant views in the Report are both independent of UNESCO and come out of UNESCO, this reflects just how vast and all-consuming the hegemonic ideology undergirding its framework of practices really is. So when there is resistance among men, women, indigenous peoples and Majority World

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80 See Kabeer, Nambissan & Subrahmanian (2003) for a concise, balanced analysis of child labour issues in South Asia.
81 Conversations with UNESCO Office Beijing staff. This public information was widely discussed in the office when it first became known.
82 See the EFA 2003/4 Global Monitoring Report p. 109, Table 2.25.
communities because projects implemented by Western-based development agencies use this dominant framework of GAD, it is no wonder then, as Bibi (2004) says, that “gender is seen as a foreign agenda” (p. 7, my italics).

Section II: GAD in Education through UNESCO Office Beijing

Following this examination of GAD in the education discourse at the level of UNESCO Headquarters, it is critical to look at how this framework operates from within the field office level in education. The research and analysis that follows is through my experience interning in the Education Sector of UNESCO Office Beijing, the cluster sub-regional field office for northeast Asia. I am particularly interested in how GAD in education gets taken up by project decision makers in this sub-regional office through scholarship in project proposals, progress reports, monitoring and evaluation reports and exhibit-making involving text and photos. Although I did not focus in detail in this study, I also comment briefly, based on my experience, on the impact this GAD framework has on UNESCO’s major national government counterparts, the National Commissions for UNESCO.

Scholarship Production

Overall, there were not many projects during my internship that were specifically designed for women and girls, or addressed men and boys’ roles in the process of achieving greater gender equality. I speak to this in more detail later on. There is one project for middle-school ethnic minority girls in Guangxi that is ongoing since 2001 and consists of two phases: scholarship and vocational training for middle-school girls from ethnic minorities; and teacher and school administrator training and lab equipment procurement. After re-application of extra-budgetary funds from the Japanese government, another phase of the project is being planned. This phase involves action-research to review and analyze the programme from the perspectives of the girls and their families in order to look at further issues important for future sustainability. For each phase of the project, a Terms of Reference must be prepared before being contracted out to an organization or team of individuals.

One of my colleagues assisted with this project until completion of her internship. In preparation for action research within phase II, she prepared and drafted the Terms of Reference (TOR) which is constituted of a Background, Objectives, Activities, Expected Outputs and Duration. There is not always much room for creative writing, and given the already heavy load of documentation that occurs in any multilateral organization, there is an emphasis to keep words to a minimum.

Nevertheless, she approached me to discuss my thoughts on the TOR before submitting it to our Education Chief of Section.83 Prior to this for several weeks, we had already been having numerous weekly and sometimes daily conversations on the pitfalls, perils and dangers of development because of its colonialist frameworks and agendas. We agreed on many levels and much of my articulation in this thesis stems from having had the opportunity to discuss, share, listen, laugh, cry and vent our thoughts and feelings to one another. I am especially

83 March 2004.
grateful to her for this. So it was a particularly sensitive space to negotiate when she shared the original TOR with me that initially began with this Background:

Educational development in China has witnessed rapid progress over the last decade, particularly in basic education, which is compulsory and consists of the first nine years of formal education. Although the overall enrollment of primary education and secondary education in Guangxi province has also made rapid progress, the high drop-out rate and low enrollment rate still dominate in remote and rural areas of the province where the five project counties [names given here] are located. Especially, many minority girls cannot finish their middle school education even after they successfully finish primary schools because of their economic difficulties as well as the traditional views of the ethnic minority population which do not give high priority to education of girls.

It was the last phrase of the last sentence that caught my critical eye "...as well as the traditional views of the ethnic minority population which do not give high priority to education of girls." Although I had no idea how this idea was initially conceived, I shared that I thought this comment was too strong, placing the locus of these girls' educational issues on themselves and their traditions, thereby naming their culture ‘deficient’ because it does not fit into the Han majority cultural norm. She shared with me that this notion and exact phrasing she literally cut and pasted from previous TOR’s and the original project proposal designed by an international programme officer (who managed the project before her).

We discussed her experience of visiting the project sites and having a chance to talk to the girls and families themselves. Not having been there myself, I was interested to know if she felt these ethnic minority girls dropped out of school as a mode of resistance to being required to conform to the demands and culture of the Han majority system of institutions and structures. We discussed why families in the project and surrounding communities had shared with her their vocalizing and naming of themselves as also being too “traditional”, not valuing education for girls.

There were many questions about this we could not answer. Is it a reflection of internalized domination and subjugation? Is it a way to subvert dominant development in order to gain the necessary funds to put their children through school when they cannot afford to? How much did this self-deprecating form of naming have to do with who the listeners were? Is this told to UNESCO staff or the project’s Japanese donors in order to satisfy first world developers’ preconceptions and subconscious ‘Othering’ that people in the ethnic minority communities intuitively know occurs? What’s more, does this form of naming authorize those in positions of economic, political and social power—whether by way of the networks they operate in, or the position they hold—to then name the cultures of these ethnic minorities as “traditional” (read: backward) because individuals in, and families of ethnic minority communities say they themselves “do not give high priority to education of girls”? I hardly think so. This returns us to the power of naming—who names, who names whom, and how that naming process takes

84 This colleague, although having since left UNESCO Office Beijing to join other development-based organizations, we keep in touch and she has read all my writing and permitted me to share this story in this way.
85 There are 55 ethnic minorities officially recognized by the Chinese government and the majority ethnicity is Han (汉).
shape. Even if the exact same words are used, I posit that the location and positionality of first
world developers and feminists with a hegemonic orientation, shifts power relations, further
augmenting already invisible social inequalities.

Since none of these questions provided readily available answers, nor would be forthcoming
soon, and naming was a major issue, my colleague entirely dropped that phrase in the last
sentence of the TOR, "... as well as the traditional views of the ethnic minority population
which do not give high priority to education of girls."

Language Issues

In all of this, I must not forget to point out that my colleague and her predecessor in charge of
this project use English as another language, not as their mother tongue. This was a reason that
led her to have me look over the TOR in the first place. There are two issues here with this.
One, when English is not the first language of development planners, how responsible should
practitioners have to be for using the English language in ways that do not perpetuate colonial
discourses when they are forced to operate using this language in the first place? Or does this
form of questioning disempower these individuals of their agency? Dominant development
primarily demands English (and French) to be used as the medium of written format and
communication between people. When this itself is not acknowledged, English (and French,
particularly in the former French colonies in Africa) continue to operate as a colonial legacy.
But when these languages are pointed out as a legacy of colonialism that lives on, continuing to
have a wide-ranging impact on thought-formation, knowledge production and ideologies of
many cultures worldwide, then colonialism is named. And this naming comes closer to
impelling those privileged first language English and French-speaking peoples and groups to
acknowledge and take responsibility for this privilege conferred.

Having said that leads me to the second issue. My colleague initially gave me the TOR to look
over for grammar, spelling and sentence structure errors. This had become a pattern in the
office because English was the primary medium of written communication (albeit un-
acknowledged by the powers that be). On several occasions in the early weeks of my internship
I shared with colleagues (in the education sector) my frustration and disapproval with the
colonial legacy of English in dominant development and thus made concerted efforts to learn
the appropriate development terminology in Chinese so we could fluently communicate orally
in Chinese in this field. But this did not change the fact that dominant development persists in
using the English language to write all documents: project proposals, progress reports,
monitoring and evaluation reports, contracts, mission reports, travel orders/claims, final reports,
etc. However, acknowledging my conferred privilege of language allowed us to come to a
common understanding of how dominant development is perpetuated through the English
language as a medium.

National Level Government Counterparts

In terms of national government counterparts' reactions and responses to UNESCO Beijing
Education Sector's initiatives to start education projects with a gender focus, these varied
across national contexts. I am most familiar with the context regarding China and some for
Mongolia, but not for the three other countries (DPRK, Japan and ROK) the office represents.
Because my interest has been on gender in development and education since the beginning of my internship, I was frequently told by colleagues that UNESCO Beijing’s Chinese national government partner—the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO—refused to acknowledge that there were any “gender problems” in China. One day the Director of the Office was told very firmly and resolutely “gender is not an issue in China” by the partner’s deputy director. Since that day, this phrase continues to echo in many conversations getting repeated in many light-hearted ways or used as the punchline of many jokes. On a more serious note though that takes up a thread discussed earlier in this chapter in which this thinking also reflects a particular dominant ethnic group within China, not necessarily those of all ethnic groups. It also impacts the focus of projects and whether there are efforts to use a gender-aware approach.

Also, if one looks at the language differences between English and Chinese, there are basic conceptual and linguistic differences. In fact, gender as it is understood and used in multilateral agencies as socially constructed, learned relations between men and women, does not have the same translation of equivalent meaning in (Mandarin) Chinese. The translation that is currently used, 性别 (xing bie), when translated back into English, it can conceptually and linguistically mean ‘sex differences’. Or, it can be used to mean ‘gender’ as social relations between men and women. The distinctions and connotations in Mandarin Chinese between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ in the term 性别 (xing bie)86 reflect the understanding of the context in which it is used. ‘Gender’ in development discourses however is used specifically as a completely separate term from ‘sex’, which is understood in dominant development to refer exclusively to biological differences between women and men. So there is a fundamental difference in the understanding and use of the concept of ‘gender’. This is demonstrated for example in a research report conducted by a task force project team commissioned by the office’s national government counterpart entitled “Study Report of Gender Differences in Chinese Junior Secondary Schools”. The gender differences examined in this study report link learning characteristics and attitudes of girls and boys to differences between the sexes rooting differences to biological attributes of boys and girls. This necessarily affects how ‘gender equality’ is then perceived which returns us to the hegemony that occurs in hegemonic feminism of applying, to the point of enforcing, single meanings of ‘gender equality’ and ‘gender equity’ on all cultures, societies and regions. And the answer I believe does not lie in judging this as ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ assessments of ‘gender’. Rather, understandings of notions of ‘gender’ must be understood through language, culture, histories and interacting with the peoples for whom this term and discourse are being applied to/by.

Another situation revealed another insight about the Chinese national partner’s reaction to the topic of gender. I attended a meeting with (female) colleagues from the Beijing office to discuss with the deputy director and his education officer some other project matters.88 The topic of gender came up as a possible initiative for the E-9 Ministerial Meeting (High Nine Population Countries) to be held next year. The deputy director, although my colleagues said he was in a good mood at the meeting, he laughed the idea off saying there is nothing to say

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86 I note here that the official Chinese language is that of the Han ethnic majority, Mandarin. There are multiple dialects and vernaculars, some of which have their own script. Most of these dialects are undecipherable between each other. In my hometown dialect from Fujian there is also no direct translation of ‘gender’ as it is understood in the English language of dominant development.

87 Several conversations with colleagues in the Education sector came up spontaneously and through my asking about how ‘gender’ is understood in Chinese, linguistically, conceptually and culturally.

88 August 2004.
about gender, no improvements have been made for rural women. He kept referring later to the possibility of projects for women in different areas, continually disregarding men’s involvement. The gendered dimension of the power elements of the conversation kept my colleagues from finishing their comments and sharing their ideas as the deputy director kept interrupting rather loudly with his own ideas. His education officer sat beside him, smiling quite large. I had to wonder if she was smiling knowing that it was pointless for her to intervene on my colleagues’ behalf.

The discussion with my colleagues that followed this meeting revealed that this man does not see himself, or perhaps any other Chinese men as ‘gendered’ beings. So the focus on women-only projects by multilateral agencies, including UNESCO, does not do much to educate men about their male domination and thus efforts towards greater gender equality are hindered. Rather, they only serve to reinscribe the false conception that ‘gender equals women’ which in turn reinforces the tendency for men to not perceive themselves as ‘gendered’ beings.

Global Impacts are Felt through Localized Individual Actions

Despite all this emphasis on the power of discourse, my Chief of Section reminded me that this influence of an agency’s framework, like UNESCO’s, often comes down to individual levels. How individuals representing the Organization and presenting its conceptual frameworks, and how these individuals cooperate, communicate and carry out their activities all affect the attitudes, behaviours and experiences of government counterparts. For her and the staff of this field office, it is critical to keep in mind during this process that, as a multi-lateral inter-governmental agency, UNESCO’s role is to assist its Member States, not direct and instruct them what to do, but to ask how they need UNESCO’s assistance. In situations where field office staff feel the government is not making the changes to improve their societies they have either already committed to, or are reluctant to commit to in the first place, there is a very delicate balance to attend to.

On one hand, UNESCO must ‘assist’ its Member States according to what government leaders and policy makers see as necessary to their agenda. On the other hand, the Organization, primarily through the work of field offices, push governments to adopt, adhere and act on higher principles of humanity that have been ratified at international conventions that these same governments have signed to. This is a tricky balance and operates first at the level of personal interactions, yet having national and global impacts. In fact, the Chief of Education Section said that due to the very positive experiences and results of the Gobi Women Non-formal Distance Education Project for women farmers in Mongolia, the first such project relating to women in Mongolia executed by UNESCO, more ideas and projects relating to women and gender have since been taken quite positively by UNESCO Beijing’s national partner, the Mongolian National Commission.

Thus, where discourse and practice converge through the individual—in her/his scholarship production and interpersonal relationships with project partners, a mental frame aware of dominating practices that is able to resist participating in colonial discourse and practice is crucial. It is here that I see a methodology of decolonizing is necessary.

89 Interview, June 2004 and throughout my internship.
Exhibit-Making—Role of Pictures

This study has examined processes of naming and oppressive discursive strategies primarily as they relate to words and speech. Naming in dominant development also occurs through pictures and the way pictures and words are designed together to create particular images—ones that feed a colonial supremacist mind and ones that go against the grain of domination and oppression and negotiate meanings of development.

In preparation for the UN Secretary-General’s visit to China on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the United Nations in China, UNESCO Office Beijing was given the task of designing the booth for the UN Theme Group on Basic Education and Human Resource Development (UNTG BE&HRD). The Beijing office is a core group member of this UNTG along with several other UN agencies working in China. Eight UN Theme Groups work in China on various themes. This task involved deciding on sub-themes, writing descriptions for each sub-theme, collecting photos and print materials from each core member, writing captions for each photo and designing the layout of each sub-theme. My role was to edit the descriptions, select some photos from Education sector’s photo albums, and come up with captions for each photo.

The first draft of titles and descriptions were written by one colleague, an international staff. The description explaining the background to UNTG BE&HRD initially read this way:

Over the last five decades investment in education has provided a solid foundation for China’s rapid economic and social progress. Since the 1980s, the Government of China (GOC) has ranked education as one of its highest priorities for overall national, social, and economic development. Impressive achievements have been made regarding access to education. However, significant disparities still remain between the rich and the poor, between urban and rural areas, and between the sexes. The provision of education to China’s ethnic minorities, as well as special needs education, still requires expansion and improvement. Whilst access has improved, the quality of education has also become an increasing challenge. This is affected, among other things, by insufficient funding and administrative inefficiencies. The management of education has been decentralized and provinces are now responsible for generating their own resources for educational development. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for the UN family to cooperate to tackle these huge challenges.

Invited to make changes, I made some small modifications noted in bold. Then the Chief of Section made those changes marked in upper-case letters and struck out one sentence.

Over the last five decades investment in education has provided a solid foundation for China’s rapid economic and social progress. Since the 1980s, the Government of China (GOC) has ranked education as one of its highest priorities for overall national, social, and economic development. Impressive achievements have been made regarding access to education. However, significant disparities still remain between the rich and the poor, urban and rural, and between the sexes. The provision of education to China’s ethnic minorities, as well as special needs education, also requires greater attention. Although access has improved, quality of
education has become an increasing challenge. This is affected, among other things, by insufficient funding and administrative inefficiencies. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for the UN family to collectively tackle these huge challenges in collaboration with the GOC.

Within this explanation of the UNTG BE&HRD, five sub-themes were prepared. An example of a sub-theme began with the title “Education to Reach the Marginalized” with the following description:

Although education in China has expanded impressively in the last few decades, it still has a long way to go to reach all sectors of society. Education available to ethnic minorities and people with disabilities are in dire need in terms of access and quality, especially in rural areas. Moreover, the booming economy in the Eastern coastal provinces has created a new kind of disadvantaged group: migrants. Furthermore, women and girls tend to receive less education compared to their male counterparts within disadvantaged groups. The UN in China is committed to tackle these challenges of providing education to the marginalized, with special attention to women and girls.

I modified the passage to read as follows denoting changes in bold:

Education with a Focus on Marginalized Groups

Although education in China has expanded impressively in the last few decades, it still has a long way to go to reach all regions of society. Education available to ethnic minorities and people with disabilities are in dire and urgent need in terms of access and quality, particularly in rural areas. China’s more than 100 million ethnic minority peoples in rural areas have been marginalized in many aspects of society, especially in education.

Within these groups, it is women and girls who tend to benefit the least from education due to interlocking relationships between gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, rural-urban differences and dis/ability. Moreover, the booming economy in the eastern coastal provinces has resulted in new forms of disadvantaged groups: migrants. UN agencies in China are committed to tackling these challenges by providing education to marginalized peoples, with special attention to women and girls.

The following photo was initially going to accompany this sub-theme description and came from another core group member of the UNTG BE&HRD:
The caption that came with this photo was “School dropout girl”. Without needing much comment, but communicated through body language and facial expressions, it was obvious this caption was not acceptable by any of the Education staff involved in designing this UNTG booth. In fact, a new picture was discussed among us and chosen from UNESCO Beijing’s collection, shown below.

The proposed caption I suggested for this photo was “Children of migrant families focusing ahead...on the future, Shijingshan District, Beijing”. All these suggested changes were accepted by the Chief of Section. It was also noted by the Chief of Section that the change in picture also shifted the image from a girl to a boy. In the same breath, she immediately followed with a comment that this was needed, as many of the other photos in the exhibit were of women and girls.

The acceptance of all these changes, ever so subtle some of them yet enough to mark a shift to a non-dominant position, widened my eyes to the degree of counter-hegemonic awareness or critical and oppositional consciousness that can exist, and be so positively used from within a multilateral development agency. And what’s more, the first staff member who wrote the draft was very open to and appreciative of all these changes. The way respectfulness was maintained
and upheld in this exchange of ideas in person and via email also deepened my belief in the importance of an ethics of love in decolonizing, counter-hegemonic spaces. We kept one another accountable, not only in professional ways, but also in respectful, trusting and committed ways.

In all of this, despite the colonizing GAD framework coming from UNESCO Headquarters, implementation of the Organization’s GAD framework at the field office level and the way processes of negotiation occur in this area really is a multiplicity of meanings and ways that dominant GAD gets taken up and/or subverted at the field office level. In effect, it is a use of the very broad GAD conceptual framework approved by UNESCO’s Member States in ways that allow for and take up intersectionality feminist politics to subvert dominant agendas and scholarship practices. Thus, given the multiple differences within the Organization itself, one can see that UNESCO is by no means a monolithic agency acting in equally dominating ways throughout all levels of its operation. And this personally is encouraging to me and gives me hope that positive changes can occur not only from grassroots levels but also from within bureaucratic development agencies through the agency and politicized resistance of critically aware individuals.

An Interview with Mee Lain Ling by Margaret Inglis, September 2004

I initially started writing this ‘interview’ in the form of answering possible questions I anticipated might be asked during my thesis defense. But doing this work, conceptualizing, and re-conceptualizing, has been exactly another method, another strategy which, all along, has moved me through this decolonizing of my mind and heart.

Upon realizing this, and deeply inspired by Gloria Watkins’ similar approach with her pen name identity bell hooks (1990) in her work, Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics, I decided to incorporate it more fully into this thesis as a public, written aspect of my decolonizing journey up to this point. Writing this way has also been much easier for me to articulate my ideas more fluently here, and in other spaces of this thesis. Margaret Inglis is my maternal great aunt who I am named after, although since birth I have never been called, nor ever used this first given name.

MI: Initially, your research focus was on looking at UNESCO’s construction of girls’ education in rural China implemented through the Beijing Office. You made somewhat of a shift to one much larger, to instead look at UNESCO’s Gender and Development conceptual framework in education and then implementation of this framework at the field office level within the Education sector? What led you to make this shift in your approach?

ML: About 2-3 months into my research and writing during my internship at UNESCO Beijing office, I realized that my approach of looking only at girls’ education was also knotted with tricky issues—although I couldn’t quite articulate it then, I sensed it was reinscribing some sort of hegemonic model of GAD that equates gender with girls and women. By not engaging men in relationships to processes of transformation for greater gender justice when dominant GAD says it does gender analysis only reinforces men to not think of themselves as gendered beings. Also, I had been getting confused between feminist analyses that focus on women’s
experiences and realities as women, and theories of gender analyses which focus on analyzing
the shifting, changing social relations, roles and practices existing between women and men.
But then I also found gender analysis missing something which is where my confusion
stemmed from. Gender analysis in dominant development discourses pretends to not only
examine inequalities between women and men through examining and proposing changes to
structures and processes. In many ways, it also gives lip service to using intersectional analysis
to examine how other social dimensions and structures of social relations—namely, race,
language, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, age, class, culture, dis/ability—cut across gender.

I’ve been able to realize that now in a more articulated way because of more fully seeing,
through all the reading I’ve done in the areas of feminisms and gender and development, that
gender is and has not been the only category that has defined relations within my own family,
meaning my parents, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins while growing up in small
town northern B.C.

More specifically, with my mother working full-time in the home raising four kids, my father
could use male domination to ‘rule the roost’ as “head of the household” so to speak. When
one of my sisters was just a teenager, she even asked my mom one day why she went to
university to study and earn a degree in zoology if she never used it. Our mom—she’s so
witty—she said, “well, to raise you four monkeys!” You can see here how in one sense my
mother’s situation was the classic model of why white middle-class educated, married women
in the 1960s and 70s in North America rebelled against their gendered roles in the home. But
there are many twists and turns to this at deeper levels for me and my family. Because of
global hierarchies of race that operate to privilege white folks at the top of the hierarchy over
and above any other socially constructed racial group, including the few Chinese families
where we lived, my mother gained the ‘upper hand’ when it came to matters of race in the
community—whether it was through being paid greater attention to in conversation, willingness
to be listened to, given more eye contact, consideration, the talker in group dynamics, all those
things. And my mother was always aware of that, subverting racial slurs and behaviours. We
lived in a very multi-cultural town with First Nations people and people from every continent
even though it was a population of less than 12,000, so my mom wasn’t afraid to use her
conferred race privilege in the community to call other white people on there’s too. I remember
when she told the (white, male) manager of SuperValu it was totally racially inappropriate and
offensive to have a poster on their window saying “JAP ORANGES FOR SALE” at such-and-
such price. He immediately took the sign down.

So although my parents were both discriminated against, these manifested through very, very
different structures of inequality that operated across and through private and public spheres.
But this too was not static because of intersections with social class. With my father coming
from a working class poor family in a Majority World country which was held under British
colonial rule for decades and then moving up the social class ladder into educated middle-class
ranks to work and live in our small town as a doctor with my mother whom was born into an
upper middle-class Euro-Canadian family, all further complicates how race, gender, class,
nationality, language, culture and age intersect to create spaces of domination, disregard for the
Other and lack of acceptance all operating within my family. Some of these remain tender
areas, thus I expand no more.
And this still doesn’t even fully examine how these categories of analysis operated when they originated in other institutions—community, school, media—in ways to impact on my family from outside our kin-based social group! When school teachers, media and community events and gossip attempted to use the same forces of domination on my family to wedge deeper those structures of inequality and domination as were already occurring within my family, we resisted, forming our moments when we dismantled all of these in order to face those systems of domination. I mentioned an example of that in my introduction where the home chores and outdoor physical work my sisters and I did in our childhood and youth days were constructed as a ‘child labour’ issue. This criticism wasn’t publicized large-scale or anything, but the questions posed to my sisters of our family relations reflect exactly what I think Dorothy Smith means as “conceptual practices of power”. By our (white, female) teachers’ questioning this as my father’s and not my mother’s sphere of influence, they were laying a charge heavily laced with sexist, racist thinking. Very well knowing my father’s cultural/racial-ethnic background, the thinking behind their questions reinscribes stereotypes of child labour as existing only among ‘ethnic’ communities and Majority World places that essentialize child labour like it has qualities of racial ‘essence’. As well, it robbed my mother of her agency by assuming her invisible in this analysis and it raises questions of our teachers’ assumptions and stereotypes around both ‘femininity’ and ‘masculinity’. This perpetuates sexism on at least two counts!

But as my oldest sister gently insightfully pointed out to me, our experiences with inequality dealing with institutional structures and processes in this northern town were not the same either. We didn’t share the same network of friends and support outside our family. And when our parents were in public office during my high school years, the political backlash for my mother’s activism as school trustee and chair affected me, not my sisters. Those particular forces of domination were ones only I had to deal with because my sisters had all left after high school graduation for further education at universities only located in the major cities. This has left me with perhaps more bitter memories of my adolescent years there than my sisters.

What did we, as a family, do in those dominating spaces when they did arise? Although our spiritual-based values have come out of different geographic regions of the world, it has been our faith in God, Divine Creator, and common notions of spirituality that continue to provide the space to allow us to find similar ground where we can dismantle all structures of inequality among us and progress as a collective social group. Later I have learned primarily through reading bell hooks’ work that there is similarity in this with black communities where the family is viewed as a site of safety, love and resistance to those social forces of domination in society.

I think that’s why ethics of loving informs and is the foundation upon which this methodology of decolonizing is based. Yet I by no means restrict notions of love to Christianity, or religion in general. I believe it is a vibrant living force reverberating in every being. I believe and feel strongly in the potential for ethics of loving to build solidarity across axes of differences and offer its holders the agency to collectively move unequal social, economic and political spaces and structures in transformative, humanizing ways.

At the same time though, I always sensed in my being another wrong-doing that I felt somehow I was a part of, but couldn’t name during those teenage years. I was always aware of the First Nations community situated on the reserve near the ocean several kilometers outside the dominant institutional structures of the town, facing conditions of poverty, mental ill-health,
and drug addiction. Many of my father’s Native patients shared their fishing catch with us in appreciation of his genuine care. As the only doctor of colour in the town, my father attracted a large number of First Nations and people of colour as patients. But somehow, I always felt his genuine care and concern was far from enough and felt like I too, just by not doing anything, was part of the structures oppressing their lived realities. That feeling always reared up whenever I walked by the main hangout where Native students spent outside the secondary school. Now I understand that, sadly, it was an outcasts’ location, symbolizing a much larger, very politicized and deep-rooted socio-cultural history of oppression and colonialism. I am cognizant and fully understand now from the language-articulated conscience part of my being, of the racism, colonialism and marginalization the community had, and still has, to endure in the town. This awareness has also shaped me in significant ways.

So you can see why I’ve been so drawn to the feminist analyses of women-of-colour such as bell hooks, Gloria Anzaldúa, Audre Lorde and Chela Sandoval, and the theory originating from their brave activist work which Sandoval refers to as “U.S. third world feminism” or “third space feminism” as its called in its more contemporary phase. Emma Pérez refers to the latter term, but this notion of “third space” is in so many feminists’ work including those of Amy Ling, Maxine Hong Kingston and many others. I definitely consider my recent piece, a poem, to be in those ‘interstitial’ spaces so to speak. But also, the more I ‘wake up’, the more I am also drawn to the works of indigenous feminists and decolonial scholars such as Patricia Monture-Angus and Linda Tuhiiwai Smith. All these individuals and the theorizing that has come out of their activism has opened up a really major space for me in a way I’ve never experienced before. It’s given me the conceptual, linguistic and analytical tools to examine all these social dimensions across the category ‘gender’ within my own family and the spaces we grew up in. And it’s in a way that doesn’t assume a hierarchy of these social structures or adopt an add-and-stir approach either. Moreover, weaving my family stories throughout points to how, as bell hooks suggests, a feminist movement to end sexist oppression is a powerful movement to transform family relationships. As hooks writes in Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center, “Politically, the white supremacist, patriarchal state relies on the family to indoctrinate its members with values supportive of hierarchical control and coercive authority. Therefore the state has a vested interest in projecting the notion that feminist movement will destroy family life.”

So now, what I want to do is apply this new understanding I have of feminism to gender analysis as it gets taken up in international development. I think that’s because I continue to have family in Majority World spaces and communities that I love and care about. So that led me here, to wanting to examine UNESCO’s Gender and Development framework itself.

MI: In examining UNESCO’s GAD framework, you take a really broad sweeping look at Gender and Development and it seems like you present some sweeping solutions possible through first world developers’ decolonizing their minds and hearts. Why do you take this approach rather than focusing on an area much more specific?

ML: Really the main project for me in this writing is to completely transform the way I think and the way my actions stem out of my thoughts and ideas. I went into this willingly and knowing this, but had no idea how it would take shape, perhaps much like how life is! So I pretty much used this thesis-writing privilege as a chance and an inspiration to document this
kind of process for me, which I've just called decolonizing of (my) mind and heart. But now I see that these personal stories can be understood and used as a metaphor for other individuals and families as well as for broader understandings of social inequalities. The local (i.e. the person) really does exist in the global (i.e. the community, the nation-state, the world), and the global is certainly in the local.

Speaking specifically about dominant GAD though, the way GAD's hegemonic model presents itself in development, it makes huge generalizations about the situations between men and women in societies everywhere, but particularly in the Majority World. And because it assumes concepts of gender are the same everywhere, and the relations between women and men have some kind of universal qualities, it assumes then that gender equality looks the same in every context too. By thinking this way, it excludes other concepts and lived realities of gender and gender relations as well as the way other forms of social differentiation can very well be the overriding dimension governing social relations above gender. At the very least it doesn't acknowledge a kind of flexibility in which domination in social relations shifts across these dimensions. In other words, hegemonic GAD doesn't recognize at a basic level that social relations are fluid and constantly being negotiated.

So in this study I am not trying to then present a broad sweeping set of solutions, but to present a model of how gender and development discourse and practice is hegemonic. Seeing this model acting in a mutually reinforcing way with dominant development as a whole, I felt the need to then deconstruct dominant development itself. As for focusing on a specific area, I did in a way through looking at how hegemonic GAD manifests itself in UNESCO's perspectives and gender equality in education.

MI: You define your study as taking two paths. One of deconstruction—deconstructing development's dominant paradigms and the other path one of decolonizing that aims to contribute to and join with many other activists to transform this dominant development paradigm. Why didn't you stop after the first path?

ML: I couldn't stop! My whole being was directing me to change myself. So if I wanted to deconstruct and analyze development issues and sites of domination there, then I had to be willing to acknowledge how I had already participated in furthering colonial agendas and ideologies. But I got more and more entangled the more I recognized and acknowledged those places of perpetuating domination. By stopping at deconstructing dominant development, I felt something unethical about it. I could more recently articulate that if I left this project at that point, I'd still be in paralysis—mentally, emotionally, physically, and most of all, in my heart. I think that's because there is something about deconstructing conceptions of the world—ours and the hegemonic forms taken up in dominant society that is very wounding, particularly when one is implicated in that process. To leave oneself (or others for that matter) in that vulnerable, hurt place, is really dangerous; if there isn't an ethics of love to fill the void that I think results from deconstructing and critical forms of thinking, cynicism, blame, disconnection from the world, and even retaliatory violence can come in and take up that space instead. So I didn't want to be in that place, in that empty void either. And that's what I felt coming on. I saw the only path to deal with it was to find a way to decolonize, which has taken me on quite a roller coaster ride of emotions and new forms of thinking for me!
ML: Please share some of your experiences in this roller coaster ride. Where are the places of joy, of pain, of confusion, of places where you felt your limitations? And how have you managed with them?

ML: It's a whole mess of all of those and more for sure. There have been many times when I really, really seriously questioned my research approach and my ethics. Was I being deceptive? Was I being dishonest? I have always strived throughout to be as honest with myself and my colleagues about my research as possible, and who I am and want to be in my character as a human being, or as much as my colleagues are interested.

And then there have been times when I've been very, very confused, during my readings in particular and how they related or not to my experiences. What I've found especially difficult to navigate around, through and with, are all these 'post-' words in academic circles—post-modernism, post-colonialism, post-development, post-structuralism, post-socialism—these terms seem endless and more keep getting formed! I just read somewhere the other day the term “post-patriarchy”! And it’s been difficult not to just translate the meaning of ‘post-' in one to the same meaning as the ‘post-' in another term. Kwame Anthony Appiah speaks to that about post-modernism and post-colonialism—analyzing whether the post- in the former is the post- in the latter.

Reading Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Anne McClintock’s work helped a lot to both confirm my discomfort with them and clarify my confusion about their meaning. McClintock, in examining the pitfalls of the term “post-colonialism”, notes the “almost ritualistic ubiquity of ‘post-' words in current culture” mentioning those ones I mentioned above and many others. She believes the usage of post- words is symptomatic of “a global crisis in ideologies of the future, particularly the ideology of ‘progress’”, a progress that is historical, political and very linearly defined.

While I agree that post- words are used primarily around a singular, monolithic meaning and organization of “a binary axis of time rather than power”, I have come to disagree with McClintock that this “crisis in ideologies of the future” is “global”. Rather, I think it is current Western culture (in all its past and present complexities and contradictions) that reflects these limitations in Western thought and the English language.

I also find Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s assessment of post- words—particularly ‘post-colonialism’ and ‘post-modernism’—to be very eye-opening. Her assertion that the former “has become a strategy for reinscribing or reauthorizing the privileges of non-indigenous academics because the field of post-colonial discourse has been defined in ways which can still leave out indigenous peoples, our ways of knowing and our current concerns” has affected me tremendously. It has made me ever aware to not follow a similar vein as “Western intellectuals” that use post-colonialism as a “convenient invention” to “reinscribe their[/my] power to define the world”.

It has been reading these works, and many others, which has affirmed the path of decolonizing I am on as a valid, necessary one. Despite this intellectual affirmation of a sort though, there have still been a lot of times of doubt, pain and fear. I had turned away from conducting many interviews early on in the study because of so many doubts, ones that kept questioning my own location as a first world developer and my limitations, but also ones in which saw issues of
voicing my colleagues’ voices to be very disturbing and difficult to work through. I went through emotional and heartwrenching pain that manifested in physical pain many times because of having to acknowledge and accept responsibility for my roles in domination, particularly in my conception and construction of my own relatives in Fujian! There are countless tears that have gone into the writing of this piece—tears of deep shame and deep sorrow. And tears, just like laughter, anger, sadness—are an expression of our humanness. In many cultures, tears are embraced, even welcomed. So why are tears and pain so often pushed aside? Do they make us feel uncomfortable in the presence of others? Rejecting them, forcing them to the margins of our emotions I think is rejecting part of ourselves from more fully expressing our humanity, our individual and collective relationships with and among one another.

It has been especially hard to articulate all this in writing and imagine making it public—in an emotional sense, it’s like stripping off one’s clothes in public and living naked for all to see one’s marks and wounds. In my tears and doubts I have shared these with many friends and family: “Does what I have to say have any substance, or am I just simply making all this up, another mode of domination?!!?” “Am I simply superimposing an idea that I’d like to think is true so I can write about it, give the illusion that its substantiated by some sort of reality and then base my thesis on it so I can acquire more cultural capital?!! Yikes!! What a horrible feeling.” “I want to quit on decolonizing!! When does this process end, if ever?” “Why did I ever want to interweave my academic and personal journeys together in the first place? It’s getting too much, too personal in very political ways. I don’t want to do this anymore!”

But this decolonizing based in an ethics of loving is so amazingly powerful. Continued acceptance by colleagues, friends and family has moved me through to also experience another form of tears that is not sorrow and not shame. Its depth cannot even be fully understood through being described as ‘celebration’ although it has that element. They are tears from experiencing a grace, a profound sense of life and living that is much more brilliant and beautiful, sustaining our spirits and uplifting the downtrodden. But this grace is beyond human capacity although it is catalyzed by human inter-relationships. My tears are not just mine nor are they for me—they are tears for a greater humanity, one that longs for every woman, man and child in this world to also experience this sustaining grace and this deep sense of life and living.

Needing to maintain my sense of humour in all of this, several times I watched the silly, but hilarious movie called “Two Weeks’ Notice”. It’s about a social activist who tries to make change by joining one of the most dominating, oppressive firms in the construction industry within the city. I’d watch it just to remember and hear the phrase shared by the father to his activist daughter about to give up, “if people can change, the world can change”. With writing on notions of ‘decolonizing’ that has me experiencing that process throughout this thesis, albeit in vulnerable ways, there must also be some degree of hope I can have in that.

Colleagues at the UNESCO Beijing office in the education unit have also been especially supportive and wonderful throughout this process, making my decolonizing journey a truly amazing experience. We have shared countless frustrations, thoughts, ideas, ranting and raving about problems with dominant development, problems with UNESCO’s dominating, patronizing, tedious bureaucracy, and administrative procedures. Yet all the while living a love ethic. You might say that we constantly engaged in self-reflexivity through our relationship
with one another. If there has been any joy in this decolonizing journey so far, it has been in truly being part of creating and living a supportive work environment that is guided by an ethics of love that listens, shares and keeps us all accountable to our dominating ways. I am immensely grateful to my colleagues to have been able to share in this amazing, positive experience with them.

MI: If decolonizing has been such a difficult, painful experience for you, why do you reveal your personal experiences in the way that you do, implicating yourself in the very dominant development paradigm you critique?

ML: Because that is how they occurred and although they are personal I believe they are relevant to the way dominant development operates. Race, culture, gender, class, language, nationality, ethnicity, geo-political region—you name it—are all social dimensions that determine development processes discursively and on the ground. Whether first world developers (me included) want to hear it or not, they demand we question our social locations, motivations, “lower self” if you like. They demand us to make visible all those places of conferred privilege in order to humanize development through deeper analysis of how these structures shape social inequalities. Also, it is through these experiences that I understand what was dominating about my previous way of thinking and doing, as well as what is unjust about the way dominant development operates. But also I think it has to do with my location; as a person of mixed heritage/race/culture, I have occupied uncomfortable spaces all my life to the degree that, as I wrote in a poem, I have learned “to be comfortable with the uncomfortable” because if I’m not then I’ve not accepted who I am. Plus, I don’t believe this particular academic journey can be so neatly separated out from my personal journey—that is what the academy wants—to separate the body from the mind because only the mind is seen as the “rational” part of one’s being—by refusing to do this, I am resisting that form of ideological colonizing too.

MI: But by revealing your own continuing journey of decolonizing, how do you respond to the critique that this method of self-disclosure is just self-centred, centering your privilege even further in the production of knowledge by centering your own experiences as a basis for knowledge claims?

ML: Wow, that’s a really heavy question, an important one too. I’m not sure I can answer fully and completely now because, as you said, this journey of decolonizing is continuing for me and far from over. I don’t expect actually that I can ever fully come to a point in my life where I no longer need to ‘decolonize’ my mind and heart because the forces are always shifting and maneuvering to find spaces of leverage and power. But I can develop a set of flexible mental, linguistic and conceptual tools and practices to draw on, so let me say this. First, self-disclosure in a decolonizing process, particularly of our fears, anxieties, pains, is a necessary and crucial aspect of decolonizing. Why? As bell hooks puts it in her book *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*, there is something extremely terrifying about so many people writing about domination and oppression, as if they’re not located in it somehow—treating it like a subject, another “discourse”. There is a dehumanizing element to that that continues to implicitly objectify those people’s oppression of which is spoken of and written about. She says, “I say remember the pain because I believe true resistance begins with people
confronting pain, whether it's theirs or somebody else's, and wanting to do something to change it.” She says this pain, as well as the distancing from it, is felt and makes its mark everywhere in daily life. “It is a catalyst for change, for [wanting] and working to change”. At the same time though I am very aware to not appropriate others' pain for yet-again another colonizing agenda because, as Patricia Monture-Angus asserts, for Aboriginal peoples living under and with hundreds of years of colonization, the pain is all many people have. Do not take it away and use it to describe someone or some people whose pain I or you know nothing about. So then I must look deep inside myself at my own pain and deal with that. And that's tough.

Also, in self-disclosure and making my decolonizing process “public”, no matter how ‘painful’, I am also naming something that many, many friends, family, activists and development planners have shared with me needs naming. That “something” is that forceful colonizing “rhetoric of supremacy” that Sandoval names or what hooks calls “white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy”. It’s written all over dominant development and hegemonic Gender and Development paradigms, let alone hegemonic feminism. In this naming I am challenging others to do similarly, not in order to criticize and cause more pain, but rather so we can heal ourselves and support each other by keeping more of each other accountable to staying a decolonizing path of our hearts and minds and at the same time work towards something better. I see that as absolutely crucial to building the ‘numbers’—the critical mass—to deal with the multiple global and local crises we face in our world today. This is where and why an ethics of love is absolutely essential to any decolonizing process—to maintain a collectivity in times when that ever-so-tempting return to supremacy and forces of destruction loosen our engagement with decolonizing. Other than revolutionary modes that take a violent path, how else will this transformation take place? Rich, well-to-do middle and upper-classes, first world developers, Euroamerican-orientated feminists and even those with the best of intentions need to realize our actions, words, and deep-rooted ideologies perpetuate and reproduce dehumanizing of peoples in a multitude of forms—through international trade, teaching curricula production, scholarship production, imposition of development ideology and practices, control and formation of information, armaments, media and capital, English language. But, as many spiritual illuminaries have spoken to this, in using these forms to perpetuate dehumanization of others, we only serve to dehumanize ourselves. So self-disclosure in decolonizing processes is far from being a selfish mode of knowledge production. It is part of a re-conceptualization of, and re-engagement of acting in the world that calls us to re-humanize in a sense if you like, where we are in our locations, oppression and domination with those around us, no matter how near or far.

ML: Let me ask one more question related to this. How would you respond to those perhaps postmodern critics who say that your ‘going public’ and self-disclosure of your decolonizing journey is just another strategy to gain praise, fame or one-uppance in the academic realms of theory?

ML: Yes, I have thought about that many times and am constantly hyper-aware of that as a poisonous motivating factor for my writing it out publicly. And I’m dealing with that. I think that critique gets made all the time because we are exactly socialized that only through competition, at individual and collective levels, will we (individually), and our societies (in relation to other recognized social groups or countries outside our national borders) ‘improve’. In fact that mentality is a condition of minds colonized in capitalist ways because capitalism is
fundamentally rooted in unequal distribution of resources. So it's not surprising we find ourselves believing and living epistemologies of competition and conflict. I find Appiah's work he wrote on post-modernism and post-colonialism so insightful here. He makes an assessment of competition in capitalist free market societies in which every thing, including that which is intangible, such as this process of decolonizing, is commodified. He very articulately and concisely says commodification, by its very nature requiring one to sell (oneself and one's products, and thereby ideas, theories, etc.), involves a "space-clearing gesture" to distinguish oneself from other producers and products, researchers and theories. The move to create this space is done "by the construction and the marking of differences". And by the "logic of the space-clearing gesture", commodification requires "the manufacture of otherness". So, if I were to publicly tell it to the world my locations and roles in domination because of wanting praise or anything else to gratify my senses and feelings of supremacy that boost my "lower self", then I am participating in commodifying those very values of integrity and honesty, as well as perpetuating another mutated model of 'Othering'. That's pretty warped and twisted.

In response to that, I firmly argue that the values of integrity and honesty were never items "for sale" in the first place under the "economization of the world" described by Appiah as 'modernism'. Nor are they items to be appropriated and co-opted to proliferate distinctions in the realm of theory under 'post-modernism'. As soon as any move is made to commodify them, to market them or use them as a marketing tool, to gain reward, however you name it, the honesty and integrity that's presented needs to be questioned. And they rightly should be! In fact, I would go even further and say they would be lost under such moves to acquire greater power. That's where we must keep each other accountable!

Also, being true to myself and in my writing is another form of resistance to these colonizing models of thinking as well as this marketization of theories under post-modernism that aims to swallow all these ideas and spit them out as packaged products to be consumed by us in our addiction to stimulation.

MI: I wonder if you can share what was the most difficult of this whole project, meaning the thesis-writing in general.

ML: Well, I couldn't tell you that even three months ago, but I can now! It's been navigating through the very muddy, thick marsh of all these 'fields'—development, gender and development, and feminism in particular, including all the various theories within them—liberal, socialist, radical/cultural, intersectional/multidimensional, differential, WID, WAD, GAD—and 'posts-' like postmodern feminism, postcolonial feminism, postdevelopment. You see, this has all been totally new academic and psychic terrain for me, not having ever engaged in these theories before starting graduate school. Although you get your decolonizing postmodernism theories too, decolonizing theories have been most clear to me, perhaps in large part because I read Linda Tuhiwai Smith's work first when I first started reading on that specific topic. So they're all interwining in really complex ways. It was tough to figure out what direction I was moving in many times because I'd read one article one time with no background in that theory whatsoever, and often didn't know what to mentally and conceptually do with it or how it explained my own experiences. And then I'd read another article on another theory some other time and it confused me with what I had read previously up to that point! I think that's the
realm that academy puts us in though, which is another reason to have supportive networks and loving spaces and people to be surrounded by. Although I was geographically in another region and time zone during the writing of this project, I’ve really had a solid network of people to help hold me up during those tough times. And to all of them I am immensely grateful.

ML-MI: Anyhow, decolonizing-wise, I have much more to do and am eager to join with others and contribute where I can and where I am responsible, to building solidarity with many comrades/friends-in-struggles.

Summary

This chapter has provided an analysis of dominant development and hegemonic GAD in education using the critical feminist, decolonizing lenses shared in chapter two. The sources of information and knowledge for analysis are related UNESCO documents and my intern experience in the education sector of UNESCO Office Beijing. This chapter asserts there is a discursive colonial agenda in the Organization’s GAD conceptual framework reflected in major UNESCO published material regarding education. At the same time, this study finds that at the level of field offices, in particular for the sub-regional cluster office UNESCO Office Beijing, the hegemonic model of GAD is subverted and positively resisted in ways that also maintain qualitatively rich relationships between colleagues based in ethics of loving. This demonstrates what might be taken as an unforeseen and unfound potential in a methodology of decolonizing that uses love collectively as social movement for social transformation. The last section of this chapter is an interview with myself, which speaks for itself as well as speaks to several issues: connections and intersections among personal and academic realities with global issues; self-disclosure as a method of research and writing, and the challenges it presents; confusion over “post-” words and concepts; and navigating through the murky waters of academia, feminisms and development studies literature.
Chapter Five: My Experience at UNESCO Office Beijing

There is really too much to share, too many stories to tell, but I have selected a few keeping in mind to fill in a few gaps of this decolonizing journey so far unsaid in previous chapters with the aim of tying this study together through personal reflections. First, I want to share experiences that were really part of a 'searching' phase. This mostly refers to the first few months working in the Beijing office including the work climate and steep learning curve I underwent.

Then, after sharing a crucial turning point during my internship and its impacts on me, I look at how notions of 'space' have been important to this study. I then share two examples where self-reflective practice and negotiation with colleagues on written material for the office education sector’s website have particularly left their mark on me. Finally, discussions around space, self-reflective practice and negotiation lead me to examine the insider/outside debate through a decolonizing lens.

Searching

First Arrival

My first day as an intern began in Beijing’s windy, cold winter month of January. I had layered on so many warm clothes, I looked like a “snowwoman” as I was more recently told by one of my colleagues. I was introduced to all the staff in the office and shown where my work space and computer were. Feeling that any speaking at all would be rashness and come out too (hypo)critical, particularly when I neither knew my new colleagues nor the way UNESCO operated, I simply remained very quiet for the first few months of my internship. During these months I focused on my thesis research and writing and through mostly listening, and reading the office’s project documents, tried to figure out how much I might be able to engage colleagues in the dominant paradigms of development that were so much on my mind. This change occurred three months into my internship, which I will return to shortly.

Growth—Responsibilities, Challenges

My assigned responsibilities when I arrived at UNESCO Office Beijing were primarily two-fold according to my signed contract as an intern:

- prepare, compose, edit and review all the content pages for the Education Sector of the new office website that was just uploaded to the public in August 2004
- assist with the planning, preparation and organization of the International Conference on “Transforming the Digital Divide into Digital Opportunities for Rural Populations—Role of innovation and partnership building in rural education” held in conjunction with the 10th anniversary of the International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED) from 17-19 October 2004

As well, I had smaller, shorter-term tasks that involved writing speeches for the Director/Representative of the office, writing a foreword (in English) for a UNESCO publication that was translated from English into Chinese language, and overall assisting wherever my colleagues needed or whenever I offered to ease their workload.
During this period of time I found myself facing two main challenges. One was the uncertainty of where my role was in my relationships with colleagues. Unsure of where my colleagues placed themselves in understandings of dominant frameworks, and uncertain then how and where I was locating myself, I mostly practised listening and patience in my interactions with colleagues. My physical location in the office also did not contribute to facilitating ease of communication. Due to the nature of the architectural layout of the office, I was situated in another room just down the hall with a male colleague. While the two of us came to know each other well and shared in many stimulating discussions on HIV/AIDS, gender, family planning in China (his area of expertise), both of us were physically removed from the main activities of the sector’s visitors, conversations, events and lunchtime chats, unless we consciously made visits, or took our lunch over to eat together.

The other challenge was accepting that my initial expectation of ‘running’ the implementation of a ‘project’ on the ground would not be met. This was my misunderstanding as I had not clarified before finalizing my arrival into Beijing if there were any changes in responsibilities from the ones I was told one year earlier when I first inquired about the internship. SARS had delayed start of my internship by eight months. However, I am sure if I really wanted to work on a more practical project aside from developing the sector’s website and organizing an international conference, then all I needed to do was ask. It is more that my disappointment came out of a feeling like my work, particularly for the website, was simply not gratifying. It was frustrating only working with documents, papers and concepts on a computer everyday or emailing potential conference participants and arranging conference logistics. I also subconsciously knew though that to take on another major project as such, I would literally run myself into the ground and I needed the time and energy not only for the work I was already given, but even more so for this thesis. I walked the tightrope with patience, but the fruits have been well worth it.

**Work Climate**

The office is actually located in five (used to be four before October 2004) apartment residences in one of the diplomatic compounds near Beijing’s central business district. So the architectural design is intended for setting up one’s home, not an office. But this gives the office a rather warm, welcoming feeling because there is much open space—no wall barriers exist between desk spaces. In fact, the work climate is so warm, that those of us in the Education Sector often, if not daily, brought and shared our lunches, snacks and fruits with each other. Or whenever anyone went out on mission, some goodies to eat were always brought back to share along with stories over some hot tea/water. Colleagues in other sectors of the office frequently dropped by knowing that there was always food to eat in the Education Sector. My education colleagues have been especially supportive during this thesis-writing frequently inquiring where I am in the writing and being open and willing to bounce back ideas. I will also always appreciate and remember the many times my colleagues so thoughtfully brought enough rice and dishes to share with me especially during the crunch time of writing this study.

Then, a crucial turning point affirmed and deepened my resolve that the path I was on was a necessary one. On the return from a planning meeting for the conference mentioned above, I had an opportunity to talk with my Chief of Section about my research purpose and check with her on the suitability of the topic. By this time, I had decided it was more important to be as ethical and open as possible about my intent, motivations and goals with this study than to
assume it would not be well-received. Silence on this when it should be spoken would have been deceptive. So I took what felt like a plunge and openly shared that my purpose for interning at UNESCO Office Beijing was not to eventually work in UNESCO. Rather, I came with the full intent to apply my critical lenses to the way it works and its bureaucratic procedures in order to uncover possibilities of change and areas where subversive interpretation and application occurs. This was readily welcomed with much surprise which has in turn provided a great deal of unofficial moral support in the completion of this study.

This conversation and sharing of similar opinions about UNESCO affected the work climate for me. Feeling more at ease to raise differences of opinion about UNESCO operations and especially the Organization’s conceptual frameworks, particularly as I edited and wrote the webpages for the Education Sector, I often posed questions that clarified and/or challenged meaning in scholarship writing.

Space

Notions of ‘space’ have played an important background and grounding for this study. Physically and geographically I was not only in another country as an ‘alien’ citizen, but also culturally away from the postmodern (neo)colonizing North American space of consumption and commodification that has, in my perspective, too much of a focus on ‘performance’ through competition—performance across one’s social locations of gender, race, culture, class, etc. In Beijing and certainly at the Beijing office, I did not have to worry about constantly being pushed and pulled around to engage in that “clearing gesture” Appiah (2002) speaks of in order to “manufacture otherness” which occurs so much in North American spaces. I did not have to fend off those individualistic, capitalist dominating paradigms of thinking. Mentally emotionally and spiritually this has been extremely healthy and refreshing for me.

While social formations of gender, race, class, culture, language, etc., operate in China, they are visible and invisible in very different ways and vary according to specific contexts. There is not the political correctness around any of these issues, so in spaces outside the office, my neighbours, fellow bus travellers, waiters/waitresses, shopkeepers, directly express a number of things: surprise when I speak Chinese; even further surprise if I choose to share that my (laojia) or ‘hometown’ is in Fujian province; welcome me back to a country of my roots; ask whether I grew up speaking Mandarin Chinese; tell me I have an advantage to be able to speak both English and Chinese; tell me it is good I go back often to see my relatives in Fujian. In all of the body language, questions, tone, choice of words, it is made known to me quite upfront how and where my ‘positioning’ is perceived.

Although I will not give an example of how these social dimensions intersect for other colleagues in the office, I can for myself. For example, on two occasions, the Director/Representative of the office introduced me once at a planning workshop for the above International Conference and another time to a high level UNESCO staff from Headquarters as “half-Canadian and half-Chinese”. After the first occasion he mentioned it, I shared with him my surprise of using this description and he quickly and sensitively asked if he offended me. I did not know what to think of being presented this way in these contexts by this Asian man. Is

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90 I have my dear friend Nazlin Rafiq to thank for suggesting to me that I write on this point.
91 Many thanks to a special colleague in another sector of the UNESCO Beijing office for pointing this out to me.
it offensive, derogatory or a compliment? How does the term “half-Canadian” used here reflect dominant concepts that being “Canadian” somehow means being White? Where ‘Chinese’ as an identity for an individual can refer to one’s citizenship in China, it also has applications and understandings related to race/culture/ethnicity, depending on who is doing the ‘applying’. ‘Canadian’, on the other hand, outside of citizenship in Canada, does not, or should not have one singular conception of race, culture or ethnicity because of our very multi-racial, multi-cultural population composed of Aboriginal peoples and peoples from all over the world. So on one hand this depiction of “half-Canadian/half-Chinese” is a form of essentializing that narrows identity to something very short and descriptive. Coming from a man in the position he has, this exerts a particular kind of power.

While the first time it really caught me off guard and made me a little unsettled, I realized that, on the other hand, unlike how this construction/compromising often gets taken up in North American spaces in ways intended to fragment my identity and/or exoticize it, the Director/Representative of the office sincerely meant it as a form of recognition that I can simultaneously hold up these bi-cultural identities. When I have been exposed to beliefs and feelings by many Asians that I am not ‘Chinese’ because of my grandparents’ emigration out of China as well as my European heritage, this makes this recognition all that much more meaningful and genuine.

Another example relates to language. Of all these social formations, I would say language background and differences had the largest role in setting up systemic inequalities within the Education Sector with my colleagues. As a first language English user, I often questioned whether I was just perpetuating colonial practices by editing and correcting my colleagues’ work even though I was asked to. Or is this a systemic issue because English language is held up as the ‘standard’ international language in Western-based development agencies, leaving my colleagues no choice but to clarify with me English language grammar, meaning, spelling? Letters and faxes to heads of state, high level government officials and UNESCO Headquarters staff unofficially demanded ‘native’, ‘perfect’ English be used. Thus, although Mandarin Chinese is the official national language of China and the language spoken throughout the Education Sector and most of the office, English language unofficially takes precedence in terms of its demand for usage in all documents for programmes and administrative purposes.

Finally becoming well aware of this as systemic discrimination and seeing there was nothing I could do to change it at that level, I changed my approach. Like race and gender, I found I could use my conferred language privilege to write in ways that spoke similar thoughts and ideas my colleagues had. Our conscious and often-discussed knowledge of ruling relations occurring in the office along the axes of language and other dimensions brought us together in ways that saw us work together to resist and strategize how to deal with these dominating dynamics in the office.

In terms of my assigned work, although I included my own ideas in all the writing, whether for speeches, webpages, document foreword, these all went through channels of approval from one or more colleagues. In a sense, I became a conduit, for sharing conceptual frameworks that my colleagues have, but do not have the time nor want to spend the extra energy to express it in writing using English language, sentence structure and vocabulary. In addition, the usage of words and their various meanings, idioms and sayings, and thinking processes and structures used to organize one’s writing in each language are very different. When reports came from
local governments in Chinese language (although they are actually required in English for donor’s purposes), we found and discussed on several occasions that translating between these two languages is very difficult. Also, what are considered acceptable language usage and logic is not the same in either language culture.

Intellectual and emotional spaces have also considerably shaped this study. Were it not for the highly engaging, debating, stimulating, inspiring conversations with colleagues about dominant development paradigms, meanings of love and roles of oneself in the world, I simply would not have been able to write this study in the way that I have. I would even say that without this experience at the UNESCO Beijing office in the Education Sector, this study would likely not have been based in ethics of loving, and if it had, it would probably look much different. The level of trust, respect, commitment and caring we nurtured allowed for greater self-disclosure with my colleagues than I ever expected. And what’s more, this sharing has not only kept me accountable, but also raised levels of my colleagues’ awareness. While acknowledging that perhaps not all my education sector colleagues feel similarly, from my perspective and experiences I believe that this greater level of awareness among all of us in the office helped build what has become a very amazing ethic of love and caring between each other in our personal relationships and for the purpose of our work. It has been an amazing example to me of the potential that exists for love to be used collectively to make positive changes in the world towards greater humanity.

Although I view ethics of loving as very strong in the Education Sector of the office and the whole office in general, this does not mean to say there are no power dynamics that occur within the office across social dimensions of race, class, culture, language, gender, age, nationality, educational level. The office has its own politics and conflict issues between personalities. It is outside the scope of this study, however, to look at the micro-details of these office politics, although this study acknowledges that even at the field office level, UNESCO does not have a single face or voice. It continues to operate from very diverse interests, voices, individual staff experiences and social locations.

Self-reflective Practice and Negotiation

Here I wish to share two examples where self-reflective practice and negotiation with colleagues on written material for the office education sector’s website have particularly left their mark on me. The first write-up regarded a mobile training project in Mongolia and the second webpage write-up was on a UNESCO-supported project for education for visually impaired children in China.

JFIT Mobile Training Project in Mongolia

This project is officially titled UNESCO/JFIT Project “Provision of comprehensive mobile cultural and educational services for herders”. UNESCO obtains much of its funding through extrabudgetary sources outside of its regular budget that is financed by Member States’ membership fees and the Japanese government is one of the largest donors, denoted as Japanese Funds-in-Trust (JFIT).
The “Development Goals” for this project stated as follows as originally written by the Mongolian Ministry of Science, Technology, Education and Culture (MOSTEC) in a project proposal to the Beijing office:

1. To publicize, preserve and transmit traditional culture, art and customs
2. To eliminate a gap that has occurred in providing cultural services to rural population for the last 10 years
3. To develop home-based preschool education services

Justification for the project by MOSTEC was for cultural and educational reasons. Regarding justification for cultural reasons, the project proposal states: “Due to the financial constraints in the economy of the country, the equipment available to schools and cultural centres has not been updated or replaced since 1991. As a consequence, it has become difficult for the cultural centres to carry out their main duties.”

Regarding education, the proposal states:

*The majority of parents have a strong desire to enrol their children in kindergartens, however the capacity or a number of available vacancies (seats) in kindergartens is so low that many children in the settled areas do not attend kindergartens. Moreover, herdsmen who live in a remote distance from the settlements cannot send their children to soum kindergartens. Therefore, a large number of children enter schools without any prior preschool education, which results in poor academic records and grades and dropping out from schools. Considering this situation it is paramount to develop home based pre-school education training for those who are not able to get provided with pre-school education services and improve parents' method to work with their preschool age children at home. During the socialist period of time, the common tendency among parents was to rely largely on kindergartens and a tradition of home-based development of children was rather lost. Therefore it is critical to revitalize the inputs and broad participation of parents in the process of children's development.*

When proposals are first received from government bodies in one of the countries a UNESCO field office represents, proposals to economically richer government donors are then sent by UNESCO field offices on behalf of the soliciting ministry or government. UNESCO Office Beijing, under the direction of its former international programme officer then prepared this project’s proposal for submission to its current Japanese donors. Under project justification, one paragraph read as follows:

*Because of the unique nomad's lifestyle in the rural areas, not only pre-school children but also other family members (parents and grandparents) do not receive any kind of educational and cultural services. Thus, herdsmen and their family members stay out of reach of new information, knowledge, with a little possibility in improving their lifelong learning skills.*

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93 "Soum" is Mongolian for "county".
The “Development Goals” then read as follows:

1. To expand and improve educational and cultural services delivered to the herder households thereby improving their cultural and general knowledge levels
2. To improve parents’ methods in interacting with pre-school age children, and to introduce different approaches and modalities in preparing them for schooling

Knowing that the website material written under my hand would be read by a very wide audience after uploading of the office website, and feeling that this phrasing presents the Beijing office as participating in dominant development paradigms, I was not at all satisfied to just cut and copy from the project proposal that was sent to the donors in order to make up the content for this project’s webpages. More importantly, it read to me like it was based in an Us/Them mentality that ‘Others’ Mongolian herder families. From what I am told however, usually once a project proposal is formalized through UNESCO administrative and bureaucratic procedures, its contents, especially the goals, cannot be modified. I wrote my Chief of Section anyway, who happened to be away at the time, to discuss this question/concern with her, which I wrote as follows.

When writing/editing the webpages, one thing that always comes to mind is how the reader might perceive/understand UNESCO’s conceptions/framework etc., because everything on the website will naturally be assumed to be written/approved and believed by UNESCO staff. I found the two goals [above] to have a tone that could make it look like UNESCO looks down upon Mongolian herders and as such aims to ‘improve’ people’s cultural levels. Of course that’s not the case, but I wonder whether adjustments can be made to these goals in the office website and how these changes might look like. Your ideas and insights would be invaluable! So the 3 goals below are a rendition from the ones written above in the project proposal that all the girls in the office and I discussed today (Tuesday June) and then [another colleague mentioned here] and I came up with these.

The main goals of the project are to expand and improve educational and cultural services for herder households; to introduce caregivers to new approaches of interacting with pre-school children; and to introduce additional approaches and methods in preparing parents for their children’s schooling.

My Chief of Section responded in one line saying, “I would have no objection to the revision which looks reasonable.”

Regarding justification of the project, I reworded it and gained approval for it to read as follows for the website:

Conventional schooling is usually based on the idea that students’ families reside in one location. This type of schooling however is not suitable to the lifestyle of nomadic people in Mongolia, who often move with the animals they herd and these locations are situated far from urban conventional schools. As such, pre-school children of these families cannot be enrolled in conventional kindergartens.
My intent in writing this way was to place the locus of the perceived ‘problem’ as a systemic one, rather than one that Mongolian herder families bear simply because of the nomadic lifestyle they lead.

For full project details go to the project’s home page at http://www.unescobeijing.org/projects/view.do?channelId=003002001006001

Golden Key Project

The webpage for this project took me some time to write. In my first draft of it, I did not have a clear understanding of the background of the project or the Golden Key Research Centre through which its work ensures more visually impaired children in China can benefit from schooling. Thus, I framed the work and conception behind it as within UNESCO’s mandates, goals and conceptual frameworks. My Chief of Section had to hit it home with me that “it’s not that the work of Golden Key fits into UNESCO frameworks.” She emphasized that the work going on in this Centre started long before UNESCO came to support the Centre. “Rather”, she said, “it is that UNESCO fits into the Centre’s framework”.

After her suggestion to background this with an understanding of UNESCO’s framework on inclusive education, I then heavily reworked the background to this webpage to read as follows:

The right to education is universal and must extend to all children, youth, and adults regardless of dis/abilities or differently-abled capacities. This right is enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and addressed in several significant, internationally approved declarations, including the World Declaration for Education for All (1990) and the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), among others.

In UNESCO, this is framed and understood within the framework of inclusive education. Inclusive education starts from the belief that the right to education is a basic human right and an important aspect of the foundation for a more equitable society. It is concerned with all learners, with a focus on those who have traditionally been excluded from educational opportunities.

It is under this principle of inclusive education, along with the aim to raise awareness in society that those with special needs have a right to education that UNESCO came to support the Golden Key Research Centre of Education for the Visually Impaired. The Centre, a non-governmental organization in China, was founded by Mr. Xu Bailun in 1984. Mr. Xu worked as an architect before losing his sight in 1971. The Centre works to ensure blind children in China benefit from formal schooling and social interactions with their eye-seeing peers in a friendly classroom atmosphere.

With UNESCO’s support since 1998, many more blind children in China, particularly in Inner Mongolia, have been able to attend public school and gain life skills that enable them to have independent aspects to their life. The quality of teaching for low vision students already in school has also improved as teachers have received training in special needs education. Have a look at Golden Key Centre’s most recent June 2004 newsletter.

For full project details see http://www.unescobeijing.org/view.do?channelId=003002001002

These two examples of self-reflection and negotiation in the writing of the webpages for the Education Sector are just a small sample that occurred during the whole process of writing over
60 webpages. But these two have particularly left deep impacts on me when I posed those questions to myself that I asked earlier in chapter two which I repeat here once more:

“How do I perceive and represent this group of people, these women/girls, this community, in development scholarship? -- 'Backward', ‘needy’, ‘uneducated’, ‘irrational’, ‘lazy’, ‘traditional’, as the locus of the ‘problem’? Rich in culture, relationship, knowledge and respect for survival?” “Does representing people here in this way bring hidden benefits of authority or superiority to me (or UNESCO)?” “How do I construct their social, economic and cultural life? – As problems that women bear and are responsible to change, as problems obstructed by cultural practices, as a result of neocolonizing growth-based economics, as systemic to disadvantaging structures?” “How can I honour and respect their otherness without Othering?” “What do I really think I can offer, if anything?” “What/how can I learn from this community of people?” “How might I join and be useful, if possible, in the community’s social movements so I am not just an observer from the margins?” “Where is my heart and what are my deep-rooted motivations in this?”

*Insider/Outsider Debate through a Decolonizing Lens*

Notions of space, self-reflection and negotiation are all elements of what has come to be termed ‘the insider/outsider debate’. While I think insider/outsider debates can be useful, I also think staying in this binary is poisonous to developing qualitatively rich relationships built on solidarity with the main purpose of achieving greater humanness, equality and equity in the world. Yes, certainly ‘insiderness’ and ‘outsiderness’ are “interactive processes... not fixed or static positions” (Naples, 2003, p. 49). They are “ever-shifting and permeable social locations that are differentially experienced and expressed”, making the shifts occur multiple times a day, at the slightest comment, or inflection of the voice (Naples, 2003, p. 49). For example, I was told by colleagues that it was those from Western countries, implying ‘my part of the world’, that brought over cockroaches and certain insect pests to China. Or in discussions of thinking and lifestyle differences between North America or Canada and China, the language of ‘You/r’ and ‘Us’ led me to sometimes feel pushed out from ‘the inside’, albeit these feelings and types of conversations were rare.

But, at the end of the day, I believe insiderness/outsiderness needs analysis through decolonizing lenses itself. While recognizing and affirming where we are different, yet simultaneously using differences as strengths to apply greater collective vision, makes the insider/outsider debate much less the focus and main issues at hand, as I believe they should be eventually. There is a much greater purpose towards which colleagues and I all worked towards, and when an ethics of loving was established based in trust, respect, commitment, responsibility, genuineness and caring, difference became a source of amazing strength. A concrete example to grasp this is in the way colleagues and I dealt with the systemic inequality that exists regarding language use in the office. Without an established ethics of love that we nurtured based on all of the above characteristics and more, language would have remained a source of division rather than using it to speak collective voices and visions that resist domination in the office setting as well as reproducing domination and colonizing scholarship in development.

Also, I think when outsiders to Chinese cultures recognize that much of communication in Chinese cultures requires being sensitive enough to read between the lines or see through the
semi-opaque screens of communication, these insider/outsider positionings become less polarized. On a side note, I think it is this sensitivity required to understand Chinese cultures that also significantly shaped the way our ethics of loving evolved in the Education Sector of the office.

By the end of my internship I was no longer thinking every day about this insiderness/outsiderness, nor felt 'reminded'. Our relationships became very comfortable and easy and there was nothing I needed to 'prove' or gain trust with. More importantly, it no longer became a dichotomy because we all operated more or less from a similar political framework that resists dominating forms of development and refuses to engage in perpetuating its practices. It just so happens that I am working from academia while my colleagues are in a multilateral inter-governmental organization. To me this is a beautiful experience of collective power and is an amazing example of where an understanding of 'difference' can shift from one of conflict, to one of creative tool for questioning forms of domination.

**Summary**

Chapter five has shared some of my experiences both working as an intern at UNESCO Office Beijing and simultaneously and independently researching as part of my graduate studies program. Continuing to challenge my own objectivity in ways that draw insights from the epistemologies that have guided this project, this chapter has also shared further aspects of this decolonizing journey in more story-like form. I selected a few events keeping in mind to fill in a few gaps of this decolonizing journey so far unsaid in previous chapters with the aim of tying this study together through personal reflections. After sharing experiences that were part of a 'searching' phase, I looked at how notions of 'space' have been important to this study. I then shared two examples where self-reflective practice and negotiation with colleagues on written material for the office education sector's website have particularly left their mark on me. Finally, discussions around space, self-reflective practice and negotiation led me to examine the insider/outsider debate through a decolonizing lens.
Chapter Six: Conclusion... as a Pause

Research and analysis from this study is based in China and conducted while I was an intern in UNESCO Office Beijing. It takes two paths. The first path deconstructs dominant paradigms of development making a case that international development and Gender and Development paradigms are shot through with hegemonic feminist and dominant development thought which operate to mutually reinforce each other.

Not satisfied with staying in a framework that reinforces domination by focusing on it, or making it the heart of analysis, this study then shifts to another path. This is one that seeks to identify and specify a methodology of decolonizing which aims to look at possible psychological and ideological aspects of decolonizing mind and heart in development. Based in an ethics of love that uses love collectively as social movement, this study proposes that a methodology of decolonizing offers a powerful framework and set of tools, strategies and technologies to both resist hegemonic thinking in development, and bring about greater critical and/or oppositional consciousness to transform development’s dominant paradigm.

There are no doubt strengths and weaknesses to this methodology of decolonizing. I would like to offer a few thoughts on what some of those might be. In acknowledging that (neo)colonizing forces are constantly changing and shifting in their multiple strategies of ‘attack’ in order to dominate, exploit and oppress peoples in Majority World spaces, then decolonizing is also a continuous journey, a process, not an end destination. And counter-hegemonic, differentially conscious paradigms grounded in politicized resistance require a flexible set of practices, tools, technologies and ‘stances’ to also defend, ward off, subvert and diffuse such colonial agendas. Thus, this study offers another contribution to this increasing resistance and agitation with dominant paradigms. But further questions need posing and next steps need taking within decolonizing frameworks and methodologies. I suggest what some of these questions might be. The final pause of this study concludes in the spirit of reciprocal relations, of “adab” and of "礼 (li) ".

Limitations of a Methodology of Decolonizing

One limitation or fault critics might find with the methodology proposed here is that it seems to move away from a movement towards greater women’s equality. Also, given that love forms the base foundation of this methodology of decolonizing it is worthwhile to look at love’s limits, particularly in light of Aquino’s (2002) caution of “revolutionary ambivalence” between using the extremes of violence and love as axes of radical social change. I would like to address both of these.

Moving Away from Women’s Equality?

It might be argued by some feminists that by not focusing specifically on women, but rather ‘gender’, this methodology of feminist decolonizing is a move away from achieving greater equality and equity for women. It might be read as a “retreat from politics, power and struggle for women” (Staudt, 2002, p. 62). But this approach is one in the hegemonic habit of examining women’s issues in a rather narrow agenda that fits only particular dominant groups. While this approach is not denied, the strength of intersectionality feminist politics is not only
its flexibility to specifically focus on projects for women and girls, but also to reflect an "extraordinarily diverse agenda" that is both "simultaneously particular and diverse" (Fraser & Naples, 2004). Because of this kind of agenda, this kind of politics can focus on issues and needs specific to particular groups of women, while maintaining full understanding of the heterogeneity of women's realities, through politicized resistance and activism, that connect several forms of oppression across different social formations—gender, race, culture, class, language, religion, age, sexuality, dis/ability, ethnicity. Thus, social inequalities are examined multidimensionally in their various social, cultural, historical and economic contexts rather than analyzing groups of women's interests and issues outside of those contexts. Therefore, by addressing how social structures cut across gender oppression in GAD's dominant model, this methodology of decolonizing addresses both hegemonic feminist and dominant development thought and agendas. This not only addresses gender equality but also social equalities in their larger and multi-variably contexts.

Limits of Love?

Another limitation of the methodology proposed here is perhaps the limits of using "love as social movement" for social transformation. In critiquing Chela Sandoval's formulation of a methodology of the oppressed, Aquino (2002) raises the caution of a kind of "revolutionary ambivalence" that fluctuates between violence and love to lead to social transformation. This project acknowledges that ambivalence through emphasizing the constant need to apply psychological and ideological concepts of decolonizing.

Also, limitations of love are not so much limits of love in itself, but in human beings' inability to foster it, nourish it and use difference as a creative tool to question forms of domination and oppression. Love as a basis of collective agency only fails when human beings try to act alone (instead of in relation) or, because of viewing difference as a tool of segregation, fall into the trap of the dominants and pit one form of oppression against another, thus ripping apart any opportunity to analyze and act on social inequalities through matrices of multidimensional intersectionality. It is here that decolonizing methodologies and epistemologies offer an open door to a path other than revolutionary violence. This leads to the relevance of this study to already existing literature.

Significance of this Study

The importance of this study as I view it is that it examines how hegemonic Gender and Development in development processes of Western-based development agencies is mutually reinforced by (at least) two ruling dimensions—one in development driven by colonial agendas and cultural imperialist powers operating transnationally with power over capital and resources; and the other in feminism, driven by women informed by a white, middle-class, educated, heterosexual cultural ideal. By explicating how these two ruling relations mutually reinforce each other, the methodology of decolonizing proposed here implicates first world developers and Euroamerican-orientated feminists in hegemonic development and feminist discursive practices. It challenges those using gender analysis from within dominant GAD to be led by a diverse agenda that looks at issues resulting from intersecting social locations and identities, and how all those also cut across material lived realities like HIV/AIDS, non-literacy, lack of road, irrigation, health and education services, etc. It challenges analysts and planners or Euroamerican-orientated feminists in hegemonic GAD who do attempt to make that kind of
intersecting analysis to ‘check’ their embedded ways of knowing and own objectivity in order to avoid new forms of patronizing and colonizing that pose Euroamericentric (feminist) values and assumptions as universal and apply age-old colonial practices of ‘Othering’ through hierarchical binary lenses.

By employing decolonizing methodologies throughout this examination, this study then both calls on and offers a path for first world developers and Euroamerican-orientated feminists to examine our roles in perpetuating and reproducing systems of domination, at personal, local and global levels. Hence, this study is not only relevant to existing literature and those interested in or working in the field of development studies, particularly gender and development, and GAD in education. It is also relevant to those interested in multiple feminisms as well as intersections of feminism and development, broadly speaking in their multiple and diverse meanings. In drawing on an “ethics of love” as a critical foundation for moving society along humanizing paths, this study is also relevant to activists, scholars and researchers involved in social movements who believe in and use ethics of loving and/or non-violent means to enable social transformations.

Next Questions

Keeping our hearts in the present and a vision for the future, there is a need to think of the next questions this study evokes. One that I wish to address here is regarding the amazing learning and growth opportunity that can occur through real world experiences dealing with real issues as they occur outside the spaces of academic institutions—or ‘experiential-based learning’. These spaces can test academics’ knowledge base, ability to apply theories learned and adaptability to use practice and experience to inform theory. This project was facilitated through the opportunity to do an internship outside the domains of the academy and thus this experience has been pivotal to shaping this study. Recognizing this, how can the value, worth and practical significance of experiential-based learning be promoted so that it is advocated, supported, recognized and valued institutionally by the academy? And yet how can this be done without the academy appropriating decision-making powers?

There are many other questions this study evokes. I would like to suggest three areas in which questions also need asking through decolonizing lenses.

Beyond Gender Training and Analysis Frameworks

What are the implications then of this paradigm on research and practice for those working with/in a hegemonic model of gender and development? More specifically, how can/does this paradigm proposed here inform, engage and relate to those doing gender training in development, particularly in Western-based development agencies? Is it possible to formulate a ‘gender training’ curriculum of sorts whereby professional development planners (those employed by Western-based development agencies) experience the analytic and mental tools of decolonizing and use multidimensional intersectionality to approach development processes that involves questioning of their own epistemologies and social locations? What are the possibilities and impacts of having such a curriculum and what are the elements that would hinder its introduction into development institutions? What principles are important for such a curriculum based in this notion of decolonizing for professional development planners? All of
these questions are pertinent and need addressing to make a methodology of decolonizing applicable and practical for use in development institutions.

Also, practically speaking, Western-based development agencies want easy-to-use analysis frameworks to examine how and where societies reveal social inequalities. This is because we, in dominant society, have not been able to get away from the neo-forms of colonizing tendencies to measure and classify every qualitative social aspect of life in quantitative ways using a “quantification of quality” system of measurement (Sandoval, 2000). UN agencies, starting with UNDP represented through its 2004 UNDP Human Development Report (UNDP, 2004) and soon-to-be UNESCO, are working to preserve culture by ‘measuring’ essentially how much of it has died off consequently leading to the determination and setup of ‘cultural indicators’. I believe this is cause for concern and must, if it is to continue occurring, be grounded in a very strong ethic of decolonizing. I cannot emphasize this enough.

In order for gender to be mainstreamed into development several analysis frameworks have been designed to examine gender, albeit through unacknowledged lenses in which notions of gender are from GAD’s hegemonic model. One question to pose here would be how to decolonize the already existing gender analysis frameworks that instead uses an intersectionality feminist politics approach? Another option is to redesign new analysis frameworks—changing the indicators, formulating new ones—that re-conceptualize and build new matrices of multidimensional intersectionality. Somehow the constant daily (re)negotiation of interactions must take into account that relationships and cultures are heterogeneous fluid processes, not static, singular entities. Any which way they occur, modified or new analyses intersectional frameworks must acknowledge, also through ‘measurement’ somehow, of how the development planner influences the development process through his/her social relationships with the various parties, individuals and communities involved.

All are “Master’s Houses”—Linking (De)Colonial Agendas

UNESCO is not alone in using a hegemonic GAD framework to understand localized realities. Using Audre Lorde’s (1984) eloquent words of “the master’s house”, Staudt (2002) states that in international development the master’s houses are multilateral and bilateral agencies (including the World Bank, IMF, WTO, UNDP, CIDA, USAID, FAO, ILO) academies, NGOs, national governments, ministries and agencies within governments. Understanding that the GAD framework of UNESCO is not isolated from these organizations and particularly those of other multilaterals, such as the World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF, I think it would be crucial to examine in another study the nature of these relationships—influence, sharing, resistance, cooperation on (de)colonial agendas—between partner organizations when implementing their Gender and Development framework.

Why exactly do yet another study up/on/with dominants? Because there are development planners who refuse and resist to be pushed and pulled by the strings of the ‘master’s houses’ they operate from within. Such individuals, who often are not in major positions of decision-

making power, already realize that “[t]ransformations are not made from air-conditioned offices, behind word processors alone.” They realize that “they occur through [qualitatively rich] relationships with people, acting in alliances and coalitions that produce results with meaningful resource changes... [because of knowing that]... No matter where we live and work, academic-community activism is imperative in a global-local world” (Staudt, 2002, pp. 67-68). Therefore, as “engagement in the master’s house is one among many valid political strategies in contemporary development enterprises”, and, knowing there are individuals working this “politics from the inside” (Staudt, 2002, p. 58, original italics) to transform dominant development, it would be very politically useful to have a study with such individuals that more firmly grounds these connections to assist in building a foundation of internal politicized resistance from within Western-based development agencies.

At the same time however, it would provide another interesting and insightful study to examine links between decolonizing agendas of professional development planners and those involved in social movements. How might the ethics of love discussed here using a decolonizing approach applied to dominant development be able to engage those also using an ethics of love or non-violent approaches in social movements? Moreover, how do an ethics of love and an ethics of risk relate to each other in social movements that can be used to decolonize gender and international development agendas?

Changing the Sites of Naming

This study has intentionally focused on critiquing how dominants’ naming and reading of the world acts to assert control over knowledge, scholarship production, resources and information. In making this aspect the focus, this study’s purpose is not to centre dominant frameworks, but much rather, to decolonize them, and particularly to bring about further critical consciousness and politicized resistance and change that is growing among a very diverse array of thinkers, activists, analysts and researchers. To continue countering hegemonic discourses and to offer further positionings on methodologies of decolonizing, however, changing these sites of naming from those in dominant, hegemonic social locations to those in critically aware, or oppressed spaces is crucial. In the introduction to this thesis, I conceded that it is beyond the scope of this particular study to hear how women, men, girls and boys, individually and in their Majority World communities who are intended to benefit from development projects, name and read the world. I believe having this methodology of decolonizing can serve to equip first world developers already engaging in such studies with critically important tools for these approaches to development projects.

In the Spirit of << 3, (li)>>

Although I intended for personal transformation in my worldview, I did not know how or which path this would take. The writing of Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) in her work Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples has profoundly influenced and shaped my critical and oppositional awareness at deeper levels. I have then sought to continue a theme that she speaks to in her work which I understand as the huge need for re-educating hearts and minds in dominant development. The methodology of decolonizing mind and heart in development proposed in this study is one strategy through which this might occur. Re-education is to better equip those with analytical, linguistic and conceptual tools who are already working towards social transformation in their development agency and/or their
community. As well, re-education is to increase in numbers, networking and quality the base of politicized resistance by calling on many more to rethink and examine personal locations in domination, exploitation and oppression, and to accept responsibility and accountability for these locations. Grounded in ethics of loving that uses love as social movement, in collective and individual commitment to one another, and in viewing difference as creative tool to question forms of oppression, this methodology of decolonizing allows for what I believe is yet an unfound potential of agency to transform development’s dominant paradigm.

In the spirit of discursive “reciprocal relations”, “adab” and << 礼 (li)>>, I wish to express my deep gratefulness to Linda Tuhiwai Smith for propelling me on a path that has been an amazing, empowering journey for me and those who have been open and willing to share in this journey. And a special gratitude to my colleagues at UNESCO Office Beijing who have shown me, through our creating and building together, a truly beautiful ethics of love—one that has kept us all accountable to our embedded ways of thinking and nurtured each other’s political commitment, while developing a greater collective vision and agency for transformational change in international development.
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**Gender Impacts of Structural Adjustment Programs**


