

The Restitution of “Questioning” and Decolonization

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The invitation to write for this issue of the *Journal of School & Society* was itself in the form of a question: “What does decolonization look like in education and beyond?”

There was a reason why the invitation revolved around a question. The questioning format was not one option amongst many to choose from (e.g., a phrase, a sentence, *or* a question). It was so because I argue that “restitution of questioning” is ultimately a pressing decolonial struggle.

I must start with an important caveat about why I used the word restitution as it relates to questioning—even though I am aware that coupling the two (*restitution* and *questioning*) can be assumed as problematic: with people attenuated by traumatic pasts and with lands occupied and marred, *restitution of questioning* does not only sound non-urgent, but frivolous: a trivial task out of privilege, edging more to lacking in sense, and, perhaps, resulting in an understandable shaking of the head.

Restituting inquiry is therefore not immediately categorized as an urgent struggle because we are to allocate—rightly—every resource possible to cause awareness about the

very snatched lands and resources: we are not dealing with “metaphorical” struggles, so to speak. It is true that decolonial thinkers have assigned an important role to questioning.¹ However, and in comparison with the struggle for material and land restitution, the restitution of questioning seems to encompass that very metaphorical essence that scholars have cautioned us against.² Understandably, we are dealing with distinct urgencies that leave us no choice except to prioritize matter over mind, and put the restitution of material urgencies—rightly—on the top. (Later on, we will see why it is not valid to assume questioning as metaphorical.)

Bringing up this caveat is not an analytical formality to be mentioned so as to disarm potential objections. It can itself be the continuation of a colonial codification of the world. Head-shaking or assuming from the beginning that “restitution of questioning is a potentially figurative undertaking and therefore harmful to our struggle” can mean that in our formulating of the struggle, answers have priority over real questions or are preliminary to them (again, despite the understandable urgency of prioritizing struggles). Still, what if assuming questions or assuming their restitution as “not pivotal and urgent to decolonization” would be along the lines of colonial thinking?

The importance of restitution of questioning gets manifested if we start our discussion from the following premise: it was the answers that, amongst other things,³ bulldozed, set in motion, or steamrolled colonialism and its exploitations.

To put it more specifically, colonialism was preliminarily premised on answers that preceded

¹ Nelson Maldonado-Torres, “On the Coloniality of Human Rights,” *Revista Crítica De Ciências Sociais* 114, (2017), 117–136. Frantz Fanon, Frantz, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London, UK: Pluto Press, 1967).

² Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang “Decolonization is not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012).

³ Nassim Noroozi, “Decolonial Philosophy and Education,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, ed. George Noblit (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016).

their questions in one way or another, or premised on answers that were camouflaged as questions. Once this is illustrated, then we might get a glimpse as to why the restitution of questioning becomes an ultimate and pressing struggle for decolonization. Answers being the preliminary modes through which colonialism proliferated—or according to which colonial inquiries were created and expanded upon in debate—sounds like a grand claim. Especially since, as we will see, it is the questions that have become classical debate points.⁴

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For this context, we define “preliminary” as foundational, initiating, determining, and that which identifies the threshold and scope of the questions that were created by the encounters of the European conquerors with the rest of the world. Now that we have defined “preliminary,” we can move on to the problem of “answers being preliminary to colonialism” in the following way, and with the help of Derrida’s concern about “questions”: when and if X determines and is articulated in the syntax of a question in an encounter with the new. X can be one particular definition of a concept which is presented as *the* ideal and all-encompassing definition of that concept, and therefore presumed as an ideal answer. Therefore, whatever does not correspond to X would be assumed problematic.

⁴ In the following discussion, I draw upon Lewis Hanke, *All Mankind is One: A Study of the Disputation between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 on the Intellectual and Religious Capacity of the American Indians* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1994).

To demonstrate how this problem contributed to colonialism, we will look at two cases of questions that were fundamental in shaping colonial legacies and struggles. We will see how, in each case, X is articulated in the syntaxes of the questions and were preliminary to them.

First Case of Colonial Questions: “Are the Amerindians Human Beings?”

This first question was asked by an infamous conqueror, Fernandez de Oviedo. To see how an answer had been preliminary to it, we can start with Enrique Dussel’s commentary on the question: “The [European philosopher] asked, along with Fernández de Oviedo, “are the Amerindians human beings?” That is, “are they Europeans, and therefore rational animals?”⁵

Inquiries about whether or not Indigenous people have souls and are therefore human requires as one of the premises of the question to leave the Native American definition of humanity outside the [European] definitions of humanity: or, at the very least, it requires a certain suspicion of the opinions that consider them inside this concept. Here, X is present in the following form: the ultimate “civilized human” being the European one. X is thus preliminary to the question about the Amerindian human beings: it has initiated it, it has been formative in the structure of the question. Here, the European definition of the human seems to be “an answer that has already initiated itself beneath the mask of the question”⁶ about the encountered human beings.

⁵ The actual quote is much more layered and had to be adapted for my purposes. See Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, trans. Aquila Martinez and Christine Morkovsky (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1985), 2.

⁶ See Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

Dussel also astutely notes the destructive role of the answers. In Dussel's interpretation, however, the answer is assumed as having been created *in response to* the question, as he expands on the consequences of this very response:

The theoretical response was of little importance. We are still suffering from the practical response. The Amerindians were suited to forced labor; if not irrational, then at least they were brutish, wild, underdeveloped, uncultured because they did not have the culture of the center [Europe].⁷

Dussel identifies a linear scope while expanding on Oviedo's question and examining it accordingly: the Amerindians were forced to labour *because*—as a consequence—of them not being assumed as rational Europeans after the thinker-conquistadors asked the question.

However, this was a fraudulent question from the beginning—one whose answer initiated and formed its format. That the Amerindians were robbed of lands and forced to become enslaved has to do more with the “concept of the European human as ideal” and as preliminary to their questions upon the encounter. It was not the answer whose practical results we suffered from.

It was the fraudulent question whose legacy is haunting us to this date.

Second Case of Colonial Questions: “Should Indians be Educated?” “How Much Should They Be Educated?” “Are They Becoming Too Educated”?

The second set of questions that were formative in the solidification of colonialism was asked by those who implemented and imagined educational policies.

Hanke touches on one such question that was “hotly debated in Mexico” in the sixteenth century: “whether the Indian should be given higher education.”⁸ For example, when an Indian seminary opened by the Franciscans at Tlatelolco:

The Spaniards and the monks of other Orders who witnessed the founding of this institution laughed loudly and jeered at us, *thinking it beyond all doubt* that no one could be clever enough to teach grammar to *people of such small aptitude*. But, after we had worked with them for two or three years, they had attained such a thorough knowledge of grammar that they understood, spoke, and wrote Latin, and even composed heroic verses [in it]. The Spaniards, both laymen and priests, were astonished. When the laymen and the clergy were convinced that the Indians were making progress and were capable of progressing still more, they began to raise objections and oppose the enterprise. One of the Spaniards in Mexico who most vociferously opposed the friars in their work of higher education was Geronimo Lopez; he regarded teaching Indians to read and write as “*very dangerous*.”⁹

Jacque Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993).

⁷ Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, 2.

⁸ Hanke, *All Mankind is One*, 22.

⁹ Emphases added. Hanke, *All Mankind is One*, 62, 63.

This time the scope of X is a bit broader than the previous case, as it also assumes the European languages and religion as optimal ones for the concept of Language and Religion. Along the European concept of humanity, these are also preliminary to, and articulated in, the syntax of the questions about imagining the ideal education for the non-European.

Fraudulent questions that were preceded by “the hypocrisy of an answer” can be seen as having determined the legacy of colonialism in education.

The indigenous is not fully human according to the European definition of humanity, “the chances of them becoming Christians are therefore slight or non-existent.”¹⁰ For some of the thinker-conquerers, the indigenous are of small aptitude. They are not “thinking, rational beings” like the conquerers. Educating for autonomy or for furtherance of knowledge is therefore considered as too much education. A specific structure is thus formed for the question: *whether* they are receiving “too much education.” No wonder these debates resulted in answers that became policies such as the following: “the Indian cannot go out from school, making his own way and compete with the white man . . . He has not the physical, mental or moral get-up to enable him to compete.”¹¹

In the case of education, the idea of the externality of the Amerindian from the definition of humanity makes another spectre to be formed and to subsequently haunt the format of the

question: the idea of organicist mode of knowledge. Society as an organic structure has parts that are related to one another according to the same rules of the hierarchy between the organs in a (human) body. “Where there exists a part ruling the rest (the brain)—though it cannot expunge them in order to exist—the rest (in particular the extremities) cannot exist without being *subordinate*ly related to the ruling part of the organism.”¹²

Quijano thus sees an organicist spectre influencing the categorizing of world knowledges by the European:

in the Europe of the Enlightenment the categories of “humanity” and “society” did not extend to the non-Western peoples, or only in a formal way, in the sense that such recognition had no practical effects. In any case, in accord with the organic image of reality, the ruling part, the brain of the total organism, was Europe, and in every colonized part of the world, the Europeans.¹³

Quijano’s elaboration helps us see how this organicist view is precisely preliminary to the creation of specific questions about educating the colonized: “In 1917 an Indian Affairs official questioned whether the Fort Providence school in the North-West Territories was giving students too much education. How much time, he wondered, was needed to give children ‘sufficient education to fear God, honour the King, and respect the laws of the country.’”¹⁴

¹⁰ Hanke, *All Mankind is One*, 4.

¹¹ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools* (Winnipeg, MB: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012), 43.

¹² Emphasis added. Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2-3 (2007): 176.

¹³ Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” 30.

¹⁴ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *They Came for the Children*, 44.

European knowledge is the head and brains that is supposed to be considered as the optimal output of education. The non-Europeans (the other, non-head organs) are supposed to see it as ideal, yet they are never to be given full access to it because they are subordinate. The European knowledge is to be a “mystified image” of colonizers’ “own patterns of producing knowledge and meaning” for the colonized. The mystification entails, firstly, a placing of “these patterns far out of reach of the dominated” and then, later, teaching them partially and selectively.¹⁵

Quick conclusions and unethical answers were both necessary means to justify and sustain colonial violence.

It is the European definition of humanity that supplies and justifies an organicist mode of knowledge. The colonized, the non-European, and therefore the definition of the *thinking human* haunts the process of conceiving the questions and colonial educational policies: “Reed, a future deputy minister of Indian Affairs, wrote that residential school children should not be educated to “earn their bread by brain-work rather than by manual labour.”¹⁶

Fraudulent questions that were preceded by “the hypocrisy of an answer” can be seen as having determined the legacy of colonialism in education.

The Case of Colonial Questions

The European definition of human being, with its characteristic component of externality—leaving the non-European humans outside the definition of the ideal human—contributed to forming an amalgam of debatable questions. Wonders that disturbed¹⁷ the inquirers about the nature of the newly encountered humans did not stay at the level of epistemic agitation, nor did it merely determine the makeup of the questions about the nature of their being.

“What manner of beings were these Native Americans?” This question had the idea of externality (as X) overshadowing it and being preliminary to it. The Amerindian being outside the concept of the European idea of ideal human allowed for quick conclusions in favour of the conquerers, and allowed for composing questions in a way that unethical or hypocritical answers could exist amongst plausible answers. *Are we giving too much education? Should we keep knowledge away from the colonized?* The answer could either be yes or no. And in actuality, the often-affirmative answers both created colonial legacies in education and helped with maintaining a colonial world order.

Quick conclusions and unethical answers were both necessary means to justify and sustain colonial violence. Answers molding the syntax of the questions often had a particular trajectory for thinkers. The “resulting theoretical innovations played an important role in subsequent attempts to justify the conquest of the Americas.”¹⁸

The following paragraph about the “Petrine Mandate claim” can be categorized as one such justificatory attempt:

¹⁵ Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” 30.

¹⁶ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *They Came for the Children*, 42.

¹⁷ Hanke, *All Mankind is One*.

¹⁸ For the following discussion, I draw upon Margaret Kohn & Kavita Reddy, “Colonialism,” in *The Stanford*

Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. by Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2017 Edition),

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/colonialism>.

To care for the souls of Christ's human flock required Papal jurisdiction over temporal as well as spiritual matters, and this control extended to non-believers as well as believers . . . Nonbelievers had legitimate dominion over themselves and their property, but this dominion was abrogated if they proved incapable of governing themselves according to principles that every reasonable person would recognize. The Spanish quickly concluded that the habits of the native Americans, from nakedness to unwillingness to labor to alleged cannibalism, clearly demonstrated their inability to recognize natural law. This account of native customs was used to legitimize the enslavement of the Indians, which the Spanish colonists insisted was the only way to teach them civilization and introduce them to Christianity.¹⁹

If they did not live on earth the way the Christian Europeans did, then they were not worthy to own the land they lived on.

Propositions or answers were thus created in the interest of the conquerer. Through a theoretical innovation based on the question—"what manner of being are these native Americans?"—Amerindians were categorized as "unable to recognize natural law" and unreasonable because of their nakedness or unwillingness to labour. The idea of the European as the ideal form of existence determined the essence of justifying enslavement: through quick conclusions.

It is important to note that humanitarian interventions—due to the rise of the influence of humanism amongst scholars in the church—did affect the formation of inquiries among the conquerer-thinkers. Given the genocidal result of Spanish "civilization"—the reduction of the indigenous population of Hispaniola from 250,000 to 125,000 in two decades of the Spanish

rule—they began to question the very idea of a civilizing mission.²⁰

Restitution of questions other than the fraudulent types is urgent in these times.

The humanist interventions did modify the spectre of answers and the nature of questions: "Members of the Dominican order noted the undertones of hypocrisy of enslaving the Indians because of their alleged barbarity while practicing a form of conquest, warfare, and slavery."²¹ However, questioning the idea of a civilizing mission did not lead to a radical change in questioning, nor to moments when the question is not yet influenced by the hypocrisy of an answer. The spectre of "the European notion of human and reason as natural forms of humanity and rationality"²² determine the essence of justifications and do not lead to genuine questions that are essentially different from those who initiated the conquest.

In fact, they further justify conquest and domination after the humanist interventions.

Praying for Questions

The cases of colonial questions reveal two problematic characteristics of the common type of questioning that Derrida outlines: an answer having been initiated beneath the mask of the question, and the subsequent fraudulence of the "question."

Answers guised as questions gave us colonialism and the current colonial world—or at least set it in motion and sustained its injustice:

It may even be that these questions are not *philosophical*, are not *philosophy's* questions. Nevertheless, these should be the only

¹⁹ Kohn & Reddy, "Colonialism."

²⁰ Kohn & Reddy, "Colonialism."

²¹ Kohn & Reddy, "Colonialism."

²² Kohn & Reddy, "Colonialism."

questions today capable of founding the community, within the world, of those who are still called philosophers; and called such in remembrance, at very least, of the fact that these questions must be examined unrelentingly, despite the diaspora of institutes and languages, despite the publications and techniques that follow on each other, procreating and accumulating by themselves, like capital or poverty. A community of the question, therefore, within that fragile moment when the question is not yet determined enough for the hypocrisy of an answer to have already initiated itself beneath the mask of the question, and not yet determined enough for its voice to have been already and fraudulently articulated within the very syntax of the question. A community of decision, of initiative, of absolute initiality, but also a threatened community, in which the question has not yet found the language it has decided to seek, is not yet sure of its own possibility within the community. A community of the question about the possibility of the question.²³

Derrida confronts us with the possibility that we are partaking in colonial codifications and thus continuing colonial trajectories of thinking if we abide by fraudulent questions.

In this light, and after the lengthy justification, it becomes clear why the invitation to write for this issue of *School & Society* employed a questioning format: it was a commitment to counter colonialism in the sphere of thinking. In this way, the “restitution of questioning” should be deemed as an urgent undertaking if we are to combat the sustenance of the unjust order of the world. In fact, Derrida’s desired community of

inquirers might precisely be created out of decolonial apprehensions. Perhaps restitution of questioning should be undertaken by thinkers whose lands have been stolen, whose people have been enslaved, whose resources are being or have been snatched—all through fraudulent questioning.²⁴

Restitution of questions other than the

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fraudulent types is urgent in these times. When land grabs, residential schools, and alternate modes of colonialism—like sanctions—have contributed to existential fatigue, or in times of a pandemic when withholding the lifting of US sanctions is contributing to a silent genocide in Iran.²⁵ Perhaps the primary task for us is to drag our tired thoughts and bodies—exhausted by constant exposure to financial instabilities or traumas caused by manifold losses—and wrench them away from fraudulent questions.

Derrida’s point can perhaps also help us demonstrate that metaphorization is along the lines of answers, not questions, and that affiliating questions with metaphorization is wrong. When non-indigenous people use

²³ Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, 98.

²⁴ This applies to current times as well: those who are the targets of constant plans to have their access to their own resources and lands diminished by sanctions or apartheid.

²⁵ See:

<https://www.humanrightspulse.com/mastercontentblog/sanctions-during-a-global-pandemic>.

decolonization in a metaphorical sense (e.g., decolonizing food, decolonizing technology), they seem to already come to the zone of decolonial thought with answers and solutions. Even worse, these solutions might often not address the core struggles of the colonized (e.g., occupied lands or snatched resources), or they might address issues that will not benefit those whose lands, resources, and livelihoods have been taken away.

Questions that do not have answers as preliminary to them might not have their grounds created yet. But that is not to deter us from undertaking genuine questioning. Perhaps it is time to ask awkward questions:

- a) whether abandoning a peace deal (like the JCPOA nuclear deal which lifted sanctions on Iran) was a continuation of the breaking of treaties that were signed between the colonizer and the colonized.
- b) whether binding means different things to different people.
- c) whether contracts are in fact perceived as “abnegatable entities,” “things-to-be-abnegated,” or “things-whose-abnegations-are-justified by the colonizer.”
- d) whether it is not a stretch to fathom that contracts are another form of colonial deceit because the colonizer assumes them as “things-to-be-abnegated” from the beginning, even though the word “binding” is included in them: whether treaties and deals and promises are to be assumed on part of the colonizer as things to be broken, perverted, rescinded, or dissolved.

e) whether “travesty” is incorporated in the colonizer’s idea of “the treaty.”

f) whether sanctions—as the practice of “prohibiting to trade what one has in exchange for what one needs”—are new restrictive forms of dominations, a continuation of a restrictive mode of colonialism.

g) whether the United States’ “imposing restrictions on the movement of Iranian Foreign Minister’s to just six city blocks when he attended a meeting at the United Nations headquarters in New York”²⁶ was precisely because he was asking genuine questions.

h) whether the US-sponsored overthrow of the democratic,²⁷ anti-colonial Iranian government was first and foremost because the government used legal frameworks from the colonizer to disqualify their claims to land²⁸ or to delegitimize their logic of settling and enjoying the resources.

Asking new questions can mean looking at coups and sanctions in new lights. Again, take the 1953 coup in Iran where the first democratically-elected prime minister—who nationalized the oil and kicked the British settlers out—was overthrown with the help of the British and the CIA: one should wonder whether sanctions and coups—sometimes claimed that they are carried out in the name of democracy and human rights—are in fact penalties for standing up against the colonizer and obstructing their greed for unhinged access to one’s resources.²⁹

²⁶ See: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-restricts-iranian-fm-zarif-movement-just-six-blocks-new-york>.

²⁷ See: <https://www.npr.org/2019/01/31/690363402/how-the-cia-overthrew-irans-democracy-in-four-days>.

²⁸ I am thankful to Dr. Barzin Jafartash, who provided extra information on how sanctions would mean losing

access to one’s resources, and how the JCPOA deal was translated as the end of certain hardships for the Iranian people.

²⁹ See: <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/mideast/041600iran-coup-timeline.html?mcubz=3>.

Perhaps one should wonder why is it that, even after the travesty of treaties and withdrawals from the deals, the “treaty-abnegator-conquerer” are still presumed as the civilized polite beings over the ones who have remained committed to contracts that oblige them to share a land that was theirs prior to the settlers arrival, or why a peculiar smiling politeness can always dupe us into assuming that the colonizer is still the more civilized one, even though he was the one who broke the treaties in an uncivilized manner:

American “Justice”

At times

They were kind

They were polite in their sophistication smiling but never too loudly acting in a civilized manner

an illusion of gentleness

always fighting to get their way ... At times they were kind they were polite but never honest.³⁰

Perhaps this is what Fanon was trying to tell us when he finished his book with an odd prayer: “My final prayer: O my body, make of me always a man who questions!”³¹

The restitution of questioning: one should not bow down to colonial codifications that gave us the current world: answers disguised as questions.

In This Issue

In this edition of the journal, efforts were put to ensure more than half of the essays reflect these fragile moments of questioning.

B. B. North’s thought-provoking piece argues that Indigenous Education can and

should serve as a standard case in educational ethics, and that philosophy should be explicitly endorsed as an educational aim. North’s piece is a calling upon the ethical responsibilities of all who work in the field of education—and a summons to other practitioners in the field of philosophy and education.

How hard is it to ask these difficult questions whose syntaxes are not already articulated by answers? Why do they contribute to somatic pains when one tries to write them?

We should read North’s paper, read the logic of his thesis on educational ethics, yet also trace the absent inquiries in his text. Questions were exchanged between him and I at a late-night discussion at a bar at a conference, and plans were made to write about them—but, again, these questions were too close to us, and we were prevented us from doing so. Perhaps we should read North’s thought-provoking piece as one written to hide other pains—those directly related to the colonized. Colonial traumas that are perhaps too close to home to be touched and expanded upon. Be on the watch to read his future works—works in which we might ask, together, whether it is our job to forget colonialism and its dark legacies so to be able to survive as non-colonizers?

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One favourite question for me is asked by Tharonhianén:te Barnes: whether it is already too

³⁰ This poem is by John Trudell and can be found in Ward Churchill, *Struggle for the Land: Native North American*

Resistance to Genocide, Ecocide, and Colonization (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 2002), 403.

³¹ Fanon, *Black Skins White Masks*, 181.

late to decolonize, even when the academy and progressive discourses are trying to outpace one another to sound ethical and up to date by constantly trying to engage in the act of suggesting ways to indigenize or decolonize the academy or the world. It is not a coincidence that Barnes' piece provides us with an incredibly dismal question—though one that is far from fraudulent. Barnes' question has always been, for me, that very threatened question within the community. Like North and myself, Barnes also sees how pivotal it is to shed the chains of answers from the questions about decolonization: I read his piece, imagine the empowering force of this question, and compare it with the metaphorical answers, and secretly pride myself in thinking that this question was a result of difficult class discussions in autumn afternoons.

J. Edward Hackett's question—does decolonizing philosophy entail looking at philosophy as world literature?—has, by far, been one of the most authentic questions that has been asked by a non-indigenous person in this volume. Hackett writes that we should teach philosophy as a type of world literature—with as much width and breadth as we find in our literary brothers and sisters in the other humanities. He argues that philosophers should consider that philosophy is truly the appreciation of wisdom—just as our colleagues in literature would strive to cultivate appreciation for diverse works of literature. Hackett's piece makes us think about how the world would have been different had this question been the question of conquerer-thinkers.

These contributions and the many others of this volume could not have been fathomed without the editor of the *Journal of School & Society* and his commitment to addressing the struggle of decolonization. Kyle's mindfulness about this cause being a particular one allowed me to take over even when he would not agree with some directions were to me signs of authentic *alliance*.

Beyond this alliance, Kyle's heartwarming support when he—alongside myself—was targeted online by pro-sanctions groups because of my public engagement on the issue is a sign of him being an accomplice and no longer just an ally, as he shared the burdens and hassles of decolonial struggles. I am thankful beyond words.

I don't know what to write about our other wonderful editor, B. B. (Buddy) North, except my utter gratitude for the time and insights he provided throughout this project. There are many more thinking projects, many more late-night conversations, and many difficult yet pressing questions that are impatiently awaiting us.

Without Charles Mills' piercing observations about the eurocentrism of Western political philosophy, the edition would be lacking in foundation. Without Charles Mills, decolonial thought would have been missing a fundamental pillar. I am forever indebted to his mentorship and his presence in this world.

Lastly, in the student contributions, we see the results of our often-grueling attempts to restate questions in classes of philosophy of education. I am thankful to all those who persevered through the discomfort of "ridding ourselves of answers." Not only have they contributed to this, they made me think more in depth. I am indebted to them all.