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True Relations: Discursive Imaginaries of Identity and Place in Canadian Curriculum and Pedagogy

Summary: *This paper discusses the notion of 'true relations' in the context of contemporary Canadian curriculum studies and pedagogy. It focuses on the themes of identity and place, and their connections to multiliteracies in a culturally diverse society, the article points to a need for reimagining educational dialogues with attention to the truths and untruths that have shaped educational discourses in past and present precarious times. Drawing on the concept of *métissage*, and work by Canadian and transnational scholars in curriculum and pedagogy, this paper provokes and invokes the ethical importance of relational and truth-telling qualities in education.*

Keywords: *Relational curriculum; multiliteracies; life writing; truth telling, Canadian *métissage**

Резюме (Эрика Хазебе-Лудт: Истинные отношения: Дискурсивные размышления об идентичности и локальности в исследовании канадских образовательных программ и педагогики): Данная статья рассматривает понятие 'истинные отношения' в контексте исследования канадских образовательных программ и педагогики. Она концентрируется на теме идентичности и локального места проживания в связи с разнообразной грамотностью в поликультурном обществе. В статье указывается на необходимость нового и измененного диалога в педагогике и образовании по вопросам истин и лживых утверждений, которые наложили свой отпечаток на педагогические дискуссии в прошлом и настоящем неопределенном времени. Ссылаясь на концепцию смешения и исследования канадских и транснациональных исследователей по проблемам образовательных программ и педагогики, данная статья делает акцент на этическом значении качества отношений и истины в области воспитания.

Ключевые слова: *реляционная образовательная программа; разнообразная грамотность; истина; канадское смешение*

Zusammenfassung (Erika Hasebe-Ludt: Wahre Beziehungen: Diskursive Überlegungen zu Identität und Lokalität in der kanadischen Curriculum-Forschung und Pädagogik.): Dieser Beitrag diskutiert den Begriff der 'wahren Beziehungen' im Kontext der gegenwärtigen kanadischen Curriculum- und Pädagogik-Forschung. Er konzentriert sich auf die Themen Identität und örtlicher Lebensraum in Verbindung mit multipler Literalität in einer kulturell diversen Gesellschaft. Im Beitrag wird verwiesen auf die Notwendigkeit neuer und umgestalteter Pädagogik- und Bildungsdialoge über Wahrheiten und Unwahrheiten, die erziehungswissenschaftliche Diskurse in vergangenen und aktuellen unsicheren Zeiten geprägt haben. Unter Bezugnahme auf das Konzept von *Métissage* und Untersuchungen kanadischer und transnationaler Forscher in Curriculum und Pädagogik, problematisiert und betont dieser Beitrag die ethische Bedeutung von Beziehungs- und Wahrheits-Qualitäten im Bereich der Erziehung.

Schlüsselwörter: *relationales Curriculum; multiple Literalität; Wahrheit; kanadische *Métissage**



And now I am drawn into the fold of a discursive imaginary that can entertain “both this and that,”
“neither this nor that”—a space of paradox, ambiguity and ambivalence.
—Ted T. Aoki, *Imaginations of “East” and “West”: Slippery Curricular Signifiers in Education*

Unlike human nature, stories are something we can change.
—Naomi Klein: *This Changes Everything*

We are particularly inspired by the Blackfoot concept *aoksisowaato’p*, which refers to the ethical importance of visiting a place as an act of relational renewal that is life-giving and life-sustaining, both to the place and to ourselves.
—Narcisse Blood, Cynthia Chambers, Dwayne Donald, Erika Hasebe-Ludt, & Ramona Big Head:
Aoksisowaato’p: Place and Story as Organic Curriculum

A Conversation in Precarious Times

During a recent luncheon meeting with a colleague and friend, at a neighbourhood café on the east side of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, where we both live and have collaborated with teachers in local schools on life writing and literacy curriculum (Jordan & Hasebe-Ludt, 2012), our conversation turned to how the tensioned times we live in are affecting teachers and students, including ourselves and our own families, in each individual *Lebenswelt* or *life world* (van Manen, 2002). We spent time discussing recent world events—the Paris and Brussels attacks, the Syrian and global refugee crisis, the lack of progress toward gender equity worldwide, among other disturbing trends—and more local news close by: teachers struggling to maintain healthy and safe classroom conditions, pipelines threatening the health of vulnerable ecosystems, indigenous voices calling out against the abuse of aboriginal women and children and the abysmal living and schooling conditions in many of their communities. The words of the *Idle No More Movement* (www.idlenomore.ca) and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (www.trc.ca) are in everyone’s ears and on everyone’s tongue, in and outside of academia, calling attention to the troubling ways in which vulnerable populations continue to be compromised by poverty, infringements on human rights, destruction of sacred lands, and exploitation of resources across the globe (Klein & Lewis, 2015). What is most disturbing are the ways humans themselves continue to contribute to these violations and to a state of *Weltentfremdung* (Arendt, 1958) or *world alienation*, to the deep disconnection from the ecosystems around us, to a sense of apathy and lack of agency for the common good. Japanese-Canadian environmental scientist and elder David Suzuki fears that the world we leave behind for the next generations is filled with a legacy of greed and catastrophes caused by humans. At age 80, in *Letters to My Grandchildren*, he writes that he finds it difficult “to imagine what the world will be during the rest of your lives” (Suzuki, 2015, p. 218), and he fears that, in the delicate and precarious space between hope and despair, this and previous generations have failed as environmental stewards of the Earth.

Talking with my colleague (Nané Jordan, personal communication, February 25, 2016), who had spent time in Paris just prior to the attacks, as part of her arts-based life-writing research in Canada and France (<http://redthreadprojects.blogspot.ca>), brought home to me the responsibility we have as educators to attend to these urgent social-justice and ecological issues. It reminded me how close to home these violent global currents affect us every day in the places we live and work: schools, neighbourhoods, and communities in local urban and rural ecologies. This conversation also once again illuminated both of our passions for writing and living more *artfully* and *heartfully* with others as true relations and respectful, loving neighbours (Chambers & Blood, 2010; Chambers, Hasebe-Ludt, Leggo, & Sinner, 2012; Hasebe-Ludt & Jordan, 2012).

Similarly, in the spring of 2015, many sessions at the 7th Biennial Provoking Curriculum Studies Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, sponsored by the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies (CACS), were infused with the presenters' passions about how of this field and related transdisciplinary areas need to be provoked to reflect and act on the urgent challenges and needs of our times. The provoking conference program (www.csse-scee.ca/cacs/news_item/2015_provoking_curriculum_studies_conference_program) was an inspiring collection of themes that represented the coming together of genealogies of elders in the field and new generations of scholarship emerging from this place. The call for proposals for the conference invited presenters to engage in conversations about the challenges of learning how to live well and wisely in the world. Acknowledging that curriculum studies are always plural and polyphonic, the co-chairs of the conference invited educators to provoke the field by attending to the multiple denotations of *provoke*: to stimulate, arouse, elicit, induce, excite, kindle, generate, instigate, goad, prick, sting, prod, infuriate, madden, ruffle, stir, and inflame. Inspired by William E. Doll's question in his article "Complexity and the Culture of Curriculum": "I ask of those I am privileged to teach, 'Can you see another way to do/read/interpret what we have just done?'" (Doll, 2012, p. 27), this gathering encouraged creative, interactive, and imaginative performances and invited submissions for presentations and subsequent publications that engaged with the long tradition of provoking and invoking and evoking curriculum studies, embracing William F. Pinar's invitation in *The Character of Curriculum Studies*: "Perhaps we can allow ourselves to go into temporary exile, to undergo estrangement from what is familiar and everyday and enter a third space, neither home nor abroad, but in-between, a liminal or third space ..." (Pinar, 2011, p. 76; for the full text see: www.csse-scee.ca/cacs/news_item/call_for_proposals_provoking_curriculum_studies).

Along these lines, in an international context, under the theme of Mobilizing Canadian Curriculum Research as Counterpointed Breakthroughs, several Canadian curriculum scholars presented a paper entitled "Métissage/Memory Work/Denkbild/Trespass: The Worldliness of Canadian Curriculum in Between Indigenous and Trans/National Wisdom Traditions" in an invited symposium at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in April 2015 in Chicago (Hasebe-Ludt, Nellis, Ng-A-Fook, & Strong-Wilson, 2015). This session explored recent scholarship in Canadian curriculum studies by weaving together salient strands of historical and contemporary Canadian curriculum theorizing and praxis. Building on William F. Pinar's (2008) notions of *curre* as a "complicated conversation" in the context of a cosmopolitan education, the presenters discussed their own and other Canadian curriculum scholars' research—among them Ted T. Aoki, Cynthia M. Chambers, David G. Smith, and David W. Jardine—in the areas of literacy and life-writing inquiry, arts-based research, and ecological thinking. They highlighted the different epistemological traditions which have informed this theorizing and research, set against the background of current Canadian and transnational educational contexts.

Truth Telling in a Dissonant World

At this time of a worldwide crisis in education and increasing social, cultural, linguistic, and economic inequalities, a call “to get us a heart of wisdom” (Chambers, et al., 2012), to evoke a different kind of academic and daily life through a “methodology of the heart” (Pelias, 2004) seems more urgent than ever. In the educational and curricular topography of Canada, the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada (2015) points to this urgency to engage in conversations and actions about social justice and more equitable participation of diverse discourse communities, among the different players and participants in different parts of this country and all over the world. In Ottawa, the nation’s capital, where the TRC’s closing ceremonies were held in May/June 2015 on unceded Algonquin land, tensions continue to be unresolved surrounding Aboriginal land claims. In one among many critical cases, a prime real-estate condominium development is pitched to go forward on sacred Anishinabe land (Butler, Ng-A-Fook, Vaudrin-Charette, & McFadden, 2015).

Another event sponsored by the Government of Canada and the University of Manitoba’s National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, entitled *Imagine a Canada: Celebrating Youth—Visions for Reconciliation* (see the detailed description of this initiative in: <http://umanitoba.ca/nctr/>), honoured the young recipients of a national arts and essay contest on this theme. One Grade 6 student wrote: “Imagine if there were no on and off reserve differences” [twitter post, #ImagineaCanada]. At present, this new world is indeed hard to imagine in the face of continued poverty on reserves and discrimination against indigenous youth, women, and their families off reserves across the country, from the west coast Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, British Columbia (Blood, et al., 2012) to the northern rural town of La Loche, Saskatchewan (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2016a). First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) youth, in particular, are often unable to imagine a healthy and hopeful life in and outside of schools, resulting in an exorbitant rate of suicide (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2016b). In the literacy definitions of mainstream curricula, the literacies of FNMI communities did not count (Balanoff & Chambers, 2005), their stories were not part of the canon of literature taught in schools (Wiltse, Johnston, & Yang, 2014), their own knowledge and expressions of multiliteracies was not given the attention it deserved to succeed academically (Cazden, Cope, Fairclough, Gee, et al., 1996; Pirbhai-Illich, 2011). In contrast,

[w]ithin the framework of multiliteracies pedagogy, broadly defined, educators expand the opportunities for children to express themselves—their intelligence, imagination, and linguistic and artistic talents. When this kind of expression is enabled, children come to see themselves as intelligent, imaginative, and talented. (Cummins, 2009, pp. 243–244)

How did we get here, to this human crisis of sweeping proportions and educational challenges of local and global dimensions? What are the human qualities and values that need to reside in our curricular and pedagogical theories and literacy practices that will make it possible for us to live together well in schools and societies? How might schools be places where “wisdom sits in places” (Basso, as cited in Smith, 2014, p. 58)? As teachers and researchers, how can we engage in truthful dialogues with our colleagues and students, our own familial and ancestral genealogies, and the cultural and linguistic knowledge traditions of others with whom we share the common ground of this planet? What is the significance of truth telling and the meaning of true relations in these contexts?

True Relations for Restoring the World

Canadian curriculum theorist David G. Smith (2006) has articulated the hermeneutic task surrounding these questions as wisdom seeking in “a time of great untruth.” In her paper “A Topography for Canadian Curriculum Theory” Cynthia Chambers identified four unique challenges facing Canadian curriculum theorists. The first challenge is to name where we are and how it looks and feels to be in this place. The second challenge is to “hear the languages and the stories of the landscape, imagination, and vast otherness that is Canada” (Chambers, 1999, p. 9). The third challenge is to seek out or create tools that allow us to write and interpret who we are, what we know, and where we want to go. Finally, we must “find a place to begin the difficult work of reaching into and across the territories of difference” (p. 12). As Canadians, Chambers pondered, “we may not recognize our own literature, land, and history, our uniqueness—our own curriculum and its theory—even when we are living in the midst of it” (p. 4). Chambers wrote about these challenges almost two decades ago, but they are more current than ever in today’s educational landscape, at a time when as curriculum scholars we are called to participate in evermore complicated conversations through which we may become more “worldly” both collectively and individually, passionately and publicly (Pinar, 2009, 2011). Given “the horror of human history” (Pinar, 2009), in a world filled with increasing fear, hostility, and violence, it seems more urgent than ever for us to understand as much as is humanly possible about the species and places we inhabit locally and globally, to “find the common ground necessary to survive” (Chambers, 2008), to “reclaim the commons for the common good” (Menzies, 2014), to “get us a heart of wisdom” (Chambers, et al., 2012) with which we may live peacefully and empathetically in relation with one another.

My own *Denkbilder* (Benjamin, 1986; Richter, 2007)—my thoughts, images, and imagination about my own and others’ identities here and elsewhere—have been deeply shaped by my original *Bildung*, my enculturation on Western European soil, with all its philosophical, political, literary, and educational topography. When considering the curricular question: “What knowledge is most worth?” I cannot escape those epistemological and cultural roots in a German genealogy of people and places, and the destruction of my parents and grandparents’ livelihood in the wake of two world wars. During World War II, both my parents’ families were evacuated from their homes on the French-German border to other parts of Germany, right into the target zone of the Allied bombing attacks. When asking another quintessential question, Northrop Frye’s: “Where is here?” about Canada’s political and literary identity (Chambers, 2006), I am conscious of my coming *here* from *elsewhere*, from the south-western part of Germany and the former West Berlin, to study the language and literacy of this northern place. I am mindful of my affiliations and affections *here* through marriage to a Canadian-Japanese *sansei* (third-generation) whose parents’ and grandparents’ generations endured the hardships of World War II *here*, as declared “enemy aliens” of Canada (Adachi, 1976). Many of the *issei* (first-generation) and *nissei* (second-generation) immigrants had migrated to Canada to escape the harsh political and economic situation in Japan. Many of the ones who settled in British Columbia, as did my husband’s family on both his mother’s and his father’s side. They came from the Hiroshima prefecture (Ayukawa, 2008). Like many transmigrant “subjects” with a Canadian passport, I live a *métissage* between resonances and relationships on different continents and conflicting national narratives. My daughter Charlotte, a middle-school teacher *here*, once wrote in an essay for a high-school social-studies class:

When people ask me: “What are you?” I like to describe myself as “a mixture of the antagonists of World War II.” My mother is German and my father of Japanese ancestry. Sometimes it takes people a few minutes to think about this. (Hasebe, as cited in Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo, 2009, p. 226)

This métissage of memory and migration has woven its fibres into my pedagogy, literacy, and curriculum work as a visceral type of cosmopolitan education (Nava, 2007) that seeks to resist the new grand narratives of destruction of our times and act publicly, passionately, and empathetically, seeking common ground across those territories of difference. What I think and feel and how I act and write about what matters; how I “run my course,” my *currere*, through my curricular *Denkbilder*; what I teach my students about curriculum and literacy in these “liquid times” in the “glocalized” classrooms (Bauman, 1998, 2006) we come together: these are the narratives and artefacts that make up the *topos* and *humus*, the “*terroir* that we are” (Hurren & Hasebe-Ludt, 2011), the heart of wisdom on the old and the new antagonists’ soil.

Dwayne Donald, a Canadian curriculum scholar of Métis ancestry, has articulated this centuries-old crisis *here* as one of failed relationships between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian settlers (Donald, 2012). My own memory work and life writing has been informed by one of the true relations I have been fortunate to form over the past two decades while living here in Canada. Ted T. Aoki, eminent Canadian curriculum scholar of Japanese ancestry, embodied the qualities I strive to live by in my teaching and daily life. His humility, generosity, and attention to others by way of being attuned to a conversational, dialogical presence with another has been inspiring not only to me but to generations of teachers and curriculum scholars across the world (Hurren & Hasebe-Ludt, 2014; Pinar & Irwin, 2005). One of Aoki’s many significant contributions is that “the call of teaching” (Aoki & Shamsher, 1993) cannot be separated from the “lived curriculum” that teachers enact in their classrooms every day. In this sense, curriculum and pedagogy are in themselves “true relations” that shape the world of education as humanizing elements in the *topos* and *humus* of this complex field where teachers and students do the important work of identity formation. This hermeneutic dwelling is opposed to the instrumentalist and technologically driven trends that once again threaten to take over education (Smith, 2014; Taubmann, 2009).

With my ancestral roots deeply buried in the contested soil of the Saarland region of central Europe, growing up in a post-war Germany struggling with its contested identity as a nation, and in a region divided by an artificial and often-contested border, my notions of what constitutes “home” reside indeed in an Aokian “space of paradox, ambiguity and ambivalence” (Aoki, 1991/2005, p. 317). And in view of the multiple migration journeys of my Japanese-Canadian and my German families, I have often wondered, along with Canadian-Japanese poet Roy Miki, “are geographic/rifts compost/in family trees?” (Miki, 2001, p. 56). In my teaching and researching on Canadian soil, I am mindful of the words of aboriginal storyteller Thomas King, who wrote that “the truth about stories is that that’s all we are” (King, 2003, p. 2). I try to attend to J. Edward Chamberlin’s question from the title of his book entitled *If This Is Your Land, Where Are Your Stories?* (Chamberlin, 2004) by working with orally told and published narratives from this place in conjunction with eliciting the untold stories that reside with the culturally diverse students in my classroom (Hasebe-Ludt, 2012). In Laguna storyteller Leslie Marmon Silko’s words, “You don’t have anything if you don’t have the stories” (Silko, as cited in King, 2008, p. 14).

Imagining a Different Story

In a conversational circle, as part of a session entitled “A Métissage Made of Stories: Life Writing and the Topos of Curriculum” at the 5th Triennial International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies Conference (Chambers, Donald, Hasebe-Ludt, Jordan, et al., 2015), the presenters collectively and individually lingered with the questions that preoccupied them in their academic and daily lives. They created a *métissage* of stories, along with members of the audience, to reflect on the ways in which their work in different Canadian and international locations underscored the integral role of narrative in the formation of a relational, organic curriculum between people and land, and between people and spirit (Blood, et al., 2012). Exploring *métissage* as a curricular experience steeped in local contexts with cosmopolitan and transnational implications (Chambers, et al., 2012; Ng-A-Fook, 2014), they emphasized the ways in which personal storytelling engenders reflection and empathy. Through this multi-textured discourse, they emulated and embodied the character of *métissage* through the interweaving of their voices, offering participants (both panelists and audience members) an opportunity to step beyond conventional boundaries of disciplinary territories to linger in the space between them.

The concept of *métissage* comes from the Latin word *mixtus* meaning “mixed,” and Greek *metis*, a person of mixed parentage. *Metis* was the wife of Zeus, a figure of skill and craft, wisdom and intelligence, gifted with powers of transformation (Chambers & Hasebe-Ludt, 2008, p. 141). Through its properties of mixing and blurring texts and identities while keeping individual fibres or voices alive, *métissage* thus carries the ability to transform and also to oppose false and one-dimensional concepts of logic and clarity. It constitutes a strategy for precarious times, particularly in colonial contexts (Glissant, 2007; Lionnet, 1989). It is a pedagogical stance for living and teaching in this time of untruth (Smith, 2006), a call for action to disrupt the educational and political status quo in “a time of terror” (Borradori, 2003). This is the kind of curricular topos which acknowledges the idea of a cosmopolitan education (Appiah, 2006; Pinar, 2009; Todd, 2009) that is infused with diverse strands of focused, individual research in local environments, all contributing to the vibrant texture of the *métissage*.

By braiding and mixing strands of the “lived curriculum” in which teachers and students dwell every day with the fibres of the mandated “curriculum-as-plan” (Aoki, 1996/2005), their stories become vibrant expressions of *métissage* at work. This kind of research provides opportunities to open outward from the local to the global through the practice of reflecting deeply on one’s experience. Life writing and *métissage*, as arts-based approaches with integrative methods such as creative nonfiction, narratives, poetry, visual arts, and mixed media (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Irwin & O’Donoghue, 2012; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005), can contribute to critically advancing discourses that improve practices in different areas of education, including teacher education. This kind of inquiry brings a powerful dimension to traditional qualitative research in that it engages the arts as a means to enhance the experiences of learning and teaching, and in the process, redefines understandings of educational inquiry as arts-based or arts-informed (Knowles & Cole, 2008). By using authentic methods that examine both artistic practices and material objects, educators can confront the impoverished conditions surrounding human knowledge and human relationships, and the inhuman practices prevalent in our world. The material culture we are immersed in both constrains and empowers us to live and work well with each other and to improve learning conditions and life in schools and society. By engaging educators from diverse backgrounds with life writing as empathetic inquiry (Chambers, et al., 2012), we may be able to better understand and imagine what kind of critical and creative literacies and literatures are necessary in these

conflicted cosmopolitan time (Pahl & Rowsell, 2011; Seidel & Jardine, 2014). As the American writer and poet Ronald Pelias reminds us in his latest account on research and reflection on a long life lived in the academy, *If the Truth Be Told* (2016):

The literary, as writers and readers have long recognized, has the power to reveal insights into human nature that come to us as recognizable and sometimes as previously unacknowledged truths. These methods also trust the imaginative, in the possibility that individuals can deeply delve into their own and others' life experiences. In this sense, I might best characterize these methods as imaginative inquiry. They ask for empathy, immersion and embodiment. (p. xiv)

Through evocative, integrative methods and aesthetically vibrant resources, we may be able to assess how artful practices such as *métissage* and life writing inspire relational ways of thinking about education and curriculum, extending existing research in new directions that incorporate place and identity as significant tropes. This includes the kind of emotional literacy at work in the classroom portrayed in the award-winning Japanese documentary *Children Full of Life* (Kaetsu, 2003), where the teacher uses life writing in the form of "notebook letters" with his Grade 4 students to teach them that "empathy is the greatest thing," to encourage them to "let people live in your heart."

In a different yet related landscape, Canadian social-justice activist Heather Menzies, in her memoir and manifesto entitled *Reclaiming the Commons for the Common Good* (2014), narrates her journey to the Highlands of Scotland, the ancestral grounds of generations of her family that had been unfamiliar territory for her all her life. Through her powerful walking and life-writing work, she came to connect with the land, build a relationship with it and with the people who lived there, and in this process "welcome [her] ancestors back" (Menzies, 2014, p. 11) into her life. This kind of memory work is heart-full pedagogical and curricular work and needs to be more firmly integrated into our educational institutions at all levels, from early-childhood classrooms to post-secondary ones.

In yet another time and place, the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer wrote that the purpose of hermeneutic inquiry into any topic is to "keep [it] open for the future" (Gadamer, 1989/2004, p. 340). Similarly, the purpose of *métissage* as a curricular praxis is to weave strands of our lifeworlds into a *textured topos* that is opening the world to a new kind of *rapprochement* between contested discourses of identities, epistemologies, and wisdom traditions, a *rapprochement* that restores and repairs relationships between alienated cultural and linguistic subjectivities. The contemporary cosmopolitan narratives coming out of Canada advocate for a more inclusive and empathetic braiding of our human spirit into a more-than-human world. As I walk the *topos* of Canadian curriculum and teach the textured artifactual literacies and curricula of this land, I am reminded that this *wayfinding* work (Chambers, 2008; Davis, 2009) always involves the attention to particular place studies and their application to the universal values and ideas that guide our lives, while simultaneously seeking and mobilizing knowledge across disciplines and fields. This work demands of us that we remember the ancient wisdoms that still matter in the contemporary world (Davis, 2009), that we see and hear each storied *métissage* strand and weave our own mixed inter/national narratives from our specific geographic locations of difference into the text (Borradori, 2003). Hermeneutic work lingers in the breathing space "where something hits us and wakes us up out of our melancholia over the wearying sameness of things. It is where our living can become spacious and open and full of *possibility* again" (Jardine, 2014, p. 3). It is a call to transform together the common curricular topography we belong to.

Returning to the opening conversation with my friend and colleague Nané in the Calabria café on Commercial Drive, I linger in the power of truthful stories, the ones that I have known and the ones yet to be told from this place and its kindred spirits near and far. I am left with a passionate conviction that it is our obligation as educators to “inspirit the curriculum” (Aoki 1990/2005) with the visceral stories that reside in the “microterritories of the local” (Borradori, 2003)—the schools, classrooms, cafés, churches, and homes we live in—and to change those stories that need to be changed to make the curricular topography more inclusive and more representative of all its inhabitants. The philosopher Hannah Arendt reminds me that “it is the multiplicity of particularities that makes critical understanding possible” (Arendt, as cited in Disch, 1996, p. 160). The German-American poet and teacher Georgia Heard, reflecting on a lifelong engagement with writing, asserts:

Writing is made of voices. Our single voices may seem to be lost in the bitter wind. But if we listen hard enough we can hear hundreds of other voices trying to sing like us. Like threads weaving a cloth. Like the constellation patterns we draw to connect stars. Voices who have never dared to sing before. (Heard, 1995, p. xi)

It is time to listen and to tell a different, more truthful story, to enact it through a métissage of multiple literacies across places and genealogies. This kind of *restoried* curriculum may make it possible for all the kindred spirits that live on this common ground, from Canada to Germany, from one continent to another, to find the courage to let others live in their hearts, and to act more empathetically and ethically, as true relations. It is time to wake up to the truth about stories from your home and mine.

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The author gratefully acknowledges support of this research by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) through the Standard Research Grants "Rewriting Literacy Curriculum in Canadian Cosmopolitan Schools" and "Portrayals of Teachers' Lives: Investigating Teacher Education Through Popular Culture and Digital Media as Arts Education."

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