JAPANESE INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES AND IMPACTS OF VIBRATING
ENERGY: PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION IN EDUCATION

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to engage in a discussion that is currently marginalized in academic spaces, about the notions of energy and impacts of it on students' learning process and accomplishment in the educational space. While teachers' low expectations and negation on racialized students, and hostilities from other peers has been studied, not much attention has been paid to how those teachers' and peers' energy such as hostility has impacted on students' learning process and accomplishment. In this thesis, I employ Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing to explore this theme. However, my discussion about the impact of energy on student learning process is not limited to the Japanese context only; I have expanded the discussion to the Eurocentric educational system as well. My thesis aims to contribute to the instructional and pedagogical implication for classroom teachers.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family, in particular, my parents, Mr. Hachiro Kawano, and Mrs. Keiko Kawano; my sister, Yukari Sakai, and my nephew, Shoma Sakai. Your love, hope, support and guidance made my journey to Canada possible. Thank you so much.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

In Japanese Indigenous knowledge, it is believed that energy is present in all matter. The energy is often understood as life force that is moving in oneself and through matter that is called in different names, in Japanese for example, "Ki". This life force is vibrating. To be vibrating may imply to be active and alive. However, it does not mean being "inactive" in eyes of human beings to be "inactive" or "not-alive"; for example, it is believed that a stone is alive. The notion, "energy that is vibrating" or "vibrating energy", that all matter whether animated or un-animated beings are in the state of vibration or being active implies that the holistic understanding of the ancestors in Japan about human relationship with others and other creatures in their social and natural environment. In particular, the Japanese Indigenous belief that the energy that human beings produce through speaking, writing, feeling, thinking, and intension has actual impact on our daily lives. This idea is important when considering about "responsibility" in the bigger picture of the relationship with oneself, others, and natural environment. For example, not only what one does has actual impact on reality, but one's thoughts, intension, and words do. I connect this perspective to critical pedagogy in an educational space at schools; in particular, I focus on actual impact of "energy" on students' learning process and accomplishments. While Indigenous worldviews hold such a belief, the spaces where we can engage in the discussion about it or where we can be conscious about it are limited in Eurocentric educational institutions. It is partly because of the prominence of Eurocentric ideology that has resulted in an ongoing colonization of the world's educational systems and that has forced students to consider that approach as the only "valid"/ "rational" or "superior" approach to learning. This colonial process in

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education subjugates Indigenous ways of knowing and knowledges to the point of invisibility, and silences agencies of resistance. In other words, Eurocentric ways of knowing also negate the bodies that do not fit into its norms. In this thesis, I first explore how the vibrating energy that we are always producing has impact on student learning process. The energy can be transformed into both being harmful, damaging, or destructive to, and curing or healable to a body, mind and soul. It is problematic to define what are "positive" and what are "negative" thoughts or words, in that human mind and the use of the words is very complex. Though, in the context of this thesis, I might consider the energy that is inclusive, curing and healable as "positive" and the energy that is negating, rejecting, and destructive physically and emotionally as "negative" energy. The process of producing, sending, receiving, and utilizing energy is complex. It might be possible that not only those who send the energy but also those who receive the energy could transform the energy. Thus, it is not my aim to define what "positive" and "negative" words, thought, and energies are. Rather, I bring the discussion to the ways in which we could reflect on our energy sent and received through thoughts and use of words in everyday lives. I argue that the transformation of the outside should start within oneself. Then, I move the discussion to how these notions of vibrating energy can be taken up in the classroom and used in the decolonization of educational spaces. Mayuzumi (in press) refers to Bai and Scott (2009) in order to discuss that Western philosophy is priviledged over other non-Western philosophies in the academy. I hope this thesis contributes to challenge Eurocentric dominant knowledge production, and open up the space to centre Indigenous ways knowing in the academy.

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to give a background to this study, the

significance of the study, my location, and the key points of each chapter.

Indignity in the context of Japan

Before I further describe the characteristics of Asian and Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing, first of all, I explain the context out of which I use the term "Indigenous" knowledges or ways of knowing. I should recognize the complexities within the term "Japanese Indigenous knowledges". When the word "Indigenous" is used with "Japanese", the colonial relationship of the Japanese with other Indigenous groups, the Ainu and Okinawan, should be considered. While there are many politicians in Japan claiming that Japan is a culturally homogenous nation, it has never been homogeneous. Indigenous ways of knowing and knowledges are not homogeneous. There are diversities among local cultures, including local ways of knowing, beliefs, foods, and dialects. Different natural, social and cultural environmental factors influence local diversities. Although the Ainu, who have inhabited the northern island called Hokkaido today, and the Ryukyuans/Okinawan people, who have lived in southern islands, are also considered by the state of Japan as "Japanese", they have a history of invasion and colonialism by the Japanese government. On the mainland, there are the Yamato people who have been the majority and dominant group. While the Yamato are also considered as homogeneous, there are enormous cultural diversities within this dominant group. The word "Japanese" complicates the words "Indigenous" in that some of the people who came to have power engaged in oppressions, and internal and external colonialism. Aikenhead and Ogawa (2007) see "Japanese Indigenous" here as "neo-indigenous", which they distinguish from Indigenous. They state:

Our distinction between Indigenous and neo-indigenous is not a stipulative

definition; rather it simply serves as a way to distinguish between two highly

heterogeneous groups whose ways of knowing nature are both non-Eurocentric

and often place-based, but whose political standing in terms of privilege and

colonization are quite different (p. 556).

According to their definition, the Ainu and Ryukyu groups are Indigenous groups in

Japan and the Yamato groups are neo-indigenous. Having acknowledged the privileged

position and power relationship between these groups in Japan expressed in the term,

"neo-indigenous" I would like to also acknowledge that there are ancestors in the

Yamato's diverse communities who have maintained and developed Indigenous ways of

knowing through interactions with others, other creatures, and nature for thousands of

years. Dei (in press) argues the politics of space without examining power that all voices,

ideas and standpoints need to be heard. These spaces "can only be seductive and end up

actually affirming the dominance of particular forms of knowledge" (Dei, in press). Re-

claiming Indigenous knowledge in the educational space in Japan and diaspora context

that Yamato groups have developed should not be implicated to re-centre and re-dominate

educational space in Japan. Dei (in press) notes "[T]he claiming of Indigenous

knowledge is not about denying others their cultural knowledge……Historically, all

groups can claim an Indigenous past and history in so far as it is outside the realm of a

colonial domination and the colonizing experience". He further describes recognition of

Indigenous knowledge as a key to create non-hierarchical spaces of knowing in the

academy. "Indigenous knowledges" rather than "neo-Indigenous" knowledge make it

possible to see bigger picture of colonial relationship not only in a Japanese context but also in a global context. Therefore, I use the term "Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing" or "Japanese Indigenous knowledges" as a way of encompassing the marginalization of Indigenous claims and knowledges (whether from the Ainu, Ryukyu, Yamato or other groups) within the power relationship with Eurocentric knowledges. It is important to keep working with the complexities that the word "Japanese Indigenous" carries within it the connotations of the relationships arising from their colonial oppression towards other groups, and the imposition by the Eurocentric and White ideology since the Meiji period.

Indigenous ways of knowing in Asia

Considering "Asian" Indigenous ways of knowing, first it is important to ask: what is "Asia", and what is the political project of claiming Asian and Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing? Claiming Indigenous knowledges in the academy is a political action. Reclaiming Indigenous ways of knowing is to acknowledge local people as "knowledge carriers" (Mayuzumi, 2009). Mayuzumi (2009) points out that concept of Indigenous knowledge helps to brings up lived experiences, subject location, and community in the academy. It is important to emphasize her point because in the colonial history, voices and claims from a local community, subject location, and lived experiences have been located in the periphery. Claiming Indigenous knowledge in the academy is also counter knowledge production to that of Eurocentric in the academy. As Dei (2002a) questions, however, how it is possible when Indigenous ways of knowing are still marginalized in the academy?

McGee (1995) refers to Asia as the geographical region stretching from North

Africa, through the Middle East, to the Asian continents, and Southeast Asia. In the colonial naming and labeling, "Asia" was created for the purpose of Western control. The Eurocentric creation of "Asia" and distinction between East and West was a way for Europeans to manipulate time and space (Said, 1978; McGee, 1995). The term, "Asia" (or "the Orient"), is recognized as essentially Western. According to Chaudhuri (1990), "[t]here is not an equivalent word in any Asian language, no such concept in the domain of geographical knowledge" (as cited in McGee, 1995, p. 196). McGee continues "[t]hus the geographical space of Asia is given a particular cartographic identity, essentially distinguished by its non-Europeanness, so that a distinctly Western image of Asia as a distinct unit of space is developed" (p. 196). Furthermore, "Asian" should not be taken as a homogeneous group in that different languages, belief systems, ways of knowing, and eating habits are comprised within this categorization. As such, I would like to note that the term "Asian Indigenous knowledge" in this context should not be read as emphasizing homogeneity of "Asian" Indigenous knowledge. "Asia" has climate and cultural diversities. It is not my purpose here to essentialize "Asian" communities and reinforce the "Asia" defined by the colonial lens. When I argue the Eurocentric interpretation of "Asian" countries, I treat the term Asia here as a resistance to Eurocentric colonial labels on Asian communities as "others".

Among Asian communities, cultural exchanges have taken place for a long time. For instance, continental Asian cultures, especially China, were enormously influenced by Japanese people. Aikenhead and Ogawa (2007) state that '[t]hese influences occurred through acculturation and not assimilation. Japanese appropriation of Chinese characters, Kampo medicine (Japanese herbal medicine originated from traditional Chinese

medicine), are examples of such acculturation. These communities developed political, social, and cultural relationships. It is also important to recognize that commonalities of Indigenous knowledges can be found among communities in Asia. Such commonalities would include reciprocal, sustainable and holistic relationships with nature and creatures. Balance is the most important concept for the cosmologies in Asian communities. Maintaining or restoring balance in oneself and with one's environment is important for one's health and relationship with their social and natural environment. People have learned about the cycles of natural environment such as seasons, and characteristics of the natural environment in a particular place that they are surrounded. The lessons and teachings from the natural environment help them to develop their understanding of the relationship with nature and Indigenous ways of knowing. Indigenous ways of knowing about agriculture, ethnomedicine, and astronomy have been developed through their adapting with and learning from natural environment. Aikenhead (2006) takes Quinn's (1992) notions of *leavers* in their relationship with the natural environment. Aikenhead (2006) states for *leavers* "it is common sense for them to leave nature or give back to nature in a way that disturbs nature as little as possible; after all, harmony will sustain human life" (p.8). Humbleness before nature can be found in the perspective that emphasizes reciprocal relationship in their coexistence with nature. To be humble is to know the "place" of oneself in the universe (Bastien & Kremer, 2004). Humility in Indigenous ways of knowing may also be rooted in an idea that human beings are "learners" not "conquerors".

In addition, in order to maintain the balance in oneself, people utilize various concepts: for example Yin-Yang, Qi, and five elements in China, balance among three

humors called wind, bile, and phlegm in Tibetan system, and influence by Indian

Buddhist medicine (Bodeker, 2009; Donden, 1997). Maintaining a balance in oneself

also needs a holistic approach to learning. Not to ignore what we cannot feel with our

five senses (touch, smell, hear, see, and taste), might be a way to be conscious to a

guidance by the cosmic consciousness (or spirituality) of oneself which guides an

individual and a community in the journey of their life[1]. Its guidance may come in the

various ways; for example, dream, intuition, and learning from others or other creatures.

Community ties and mutual relationships are also of central importance. In relation to

knowledge related to forest, Parrotta et al (2009) describe:

> Traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK), most often tightly
>
> interwoven with traditional religious beliefs, customs, folklore, land-
>
> use practices and community-level decision-making, processes, has
>
> sustained the cultures, livelihoods, and agricultural resource
>
> management systems of local and indigenous communities throughout
>
> Asia for centuries. Traditional knowledge systems in Asia, as in the
>
> rest of the world, have historically been dynamic, responding and
>
> adapting to changing environmental, social, economic and political
>
> conditions to ensure that forests and associated agricultural lands
>
> continue to provide tangible (foods, medicines, wood and other non-
>
> timber forest products, water and fertile soils) and intangible (spiritual,
>
> social and psychological health) benefits for present and future

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[1] I note that the cosmic consciousness (spirituality) guides not only an individual but also a community. This is because I believe that Indigenous perspective on spirituality can expand the individualized notions of "spirituality" to the notions of "interconnectedness" in oneself and with others.

generations (p.1987).

Indigenous peoples in Asia see nature as alive and try to find a way to co-exist. This stands in contrast to the Eurocentric ideas that human-beings are superior to nature; that nature is an object without energy; and that therefore human begins can control nature as his/her individual right (Tarnas, 1991). In addition, the holistic approaches to one's well-being and others can also be found in healing arts in Asian countries. Along with this line, there are many cultures in Asia where energy flow/vibrating energy are believed to be within our bodies, in nature and in universe. For example, in Sanskrit, *parana, Qui* in Chinese, *mana* in Polynesian, are all known as invisible bio-energy that "keeps the body alive and maintains a state of good health" (Yeh et al, 2004, p. 414). Although the names are different, they are perceived very much in the same way. While it is important to acknowledge the differences among the Indigenous ways of knowing in Asian community, it is also valuable to acknowledge that they have developed Indigenous knowledges through their interaction with other communities.

Indigenous ways of knowing in Japan

As people in Asia see nature as being alive, nature is important for Japanese people. The Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing emphasize that everything is alive which means everything is in a state of vibration. They also emphasize living with oneself, others, other creatures, nature and the universe in harmony. This indigenous worldview is embedded in our daily life as ecology. The knowledges that we have developed and gained have accumulated within a particular space for a long time, and have been passed down from the ancestors to the next generations in interactions with

each other. People also gain these knowledges not only from interactions with other human-beings but also through observation or "communication" with animals and plants, and dreams. Moreover, these knowledges might be exchanged through interactions with people who lived in different physical, social, cultural spaces. In fact, Japanese culture has been influenced by neighbor countries in Asia, such as China, Korea and India. Ogawa (1998) states that Japan, "through its long history has been able to adopt various components of foreign cultures without losing its own identity" (p. 142-143). In relation to the understanding that everything is in a state of vibration, Japanese ancestors believed that words and our thoughts are also in a state of vibration which produces energy. This is expressed in the words "Kototama". It is believed that the energy we are always producing through speaking, writing, feeling and thinking has an impact on oneself, others, other creatures, nature, and the universe. This understanding has also been used for the wellbeing of human-beings and other creatures. In fact, vibrating energy is vital in the healing practices of everyday life.

Purpose of this thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to engage in a conversation that is currently marginalized in academic spaces, about the notions of energy and impacts of it on student's learning process and accomplishment in the educational space. In education systems racialized bodies and their embodied knowledges are ignored and marginalized. We know that racism, seen in teachers' low expectations of children, or hostility from teachers or other students, exist at schools (Dei et al, 1997). For instance, in the Canadian school system, racialized students, in particular Black students have been "pushed out" (Dei et al, 1997) because of negation, denial, and low expectation from teachers and

peers. On the other hand, not much attention has been paid to how those teachers' and peers' energy such as hostility has impacted on students' learning process and accomplishment. In this thesis, I borrow some of the Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing in order to explain vibrating energy. Although I focus on the literatures and experiences mainly related to Japanese knowledge, I believe the notion of vibrating energy and its impact on learners' and learning space are widely applicable to current educational spaces not only in Japan but also other areas as well.

I acknowledge that the impact of the energy should be studied along with the development of curriculum and resources which are not Eurocentric but are culturally relevant to students from various backgrounds. However, because of the limitation of space in this thesis, I would like to explore the implications on curriculum and resources together in my future studies.

Significance of the work

We are always producing energy in our thoughts, spoken/unspoken and written/unwritten language. This energy has an impact on human-beings and other creatures. It is important to apply this understanding of energy into learning spaces because I believe that the energy that we are always producing affects the learning process, outcomes and accomplishments of students. This thesis contributes Indigenous perspectives to students, scholars and teachers who devote themselves to transforming the learning space into inclusive space in educational institutions. While there may be limitations to this work, exploring the possibilities inherent within it is important.

In order to accomplish creating inclusive space we should transform ourselves from the inside. When we talk about equity, transformation of learning space, and

inclusive space, we also need to reflect on ourselves and the many ways we impact those around us. I suggest that transformation is produced not only as an end, but rather it is produced through the process. Thus I believe that this study contributes as a doorway to reflect on our thoughts and the use of words in everyday lives.

I hope this thesis will be read as a possibility and an opportunity for self-reflection for educators, scholars, and adults in our interactions with students in educational spaces. I believe that reconsidering and discussing the impacts of the vibrating energy from our speaking, writing, and thoughts can contribute to a positive outcome in the long run. We need holistic approaches to creating inclusive educational spaces. The notions of vibrating energy can be found in other cultures all over the worlds. Thus exploring the notions of vibrating energy and its impacts on our realities from different Indigenous cultural perspectives could strengthen the arguments that I make in this thesis. It further could contribute to the destabilizing of Eurocentric ways of knowing in the academy.

Questions

My main questions explored in this thesis are:

1) From Indigenous perspectives, how does the energy produced and moved through mediums have actual impact on student's learning process and accomplishment?

2) What are the implications of indigenous notions of energy for decolonizing the current colonial educational system? What are the possibilities and limitations of using this knowledge in the decolonizing process?

Personal location

My claiming Indigenity as a Yamato (now called Japanese) should include

looking at the bigger picture of historical responsibility as a Japanese person. I would like to acknowledge my complicated subject location as a Japanese woman whose government participated in an imperialist colonial project. This project was directed at other Indigenous people in Japan, such as the Ainu and the Okinawan, as well as people in other Asian countries. Furthermore, the inconvenient truth of this colonialism has been swept under the carpet in the curriculum of Japanese school education, and this denied me and my peers the possibility of acknowledging our historical responsibility. Yet I am also a Japanese woman whose parents passed down Indigenous knowledges that have been silenced throughout my school life.

I was born in Miyazaki, in the southern regions of Japan, where the climate is milder compared to the northern part of Japan. The name of the place, Miyazaki, has been changed throughout its history. It was Himuka/Hyuga (日向) before the Meiji period. People in Miyazaki have a unique dialect and accent. People from other areas often could not understand our dialect and accent. We are surrounded by mountains and ocean. Our ancestors have developed hunting, gathering and fishing as important activities for their survival. When I was little, my home was surrounded by mountains where many creatures co-existed. It was also close to the ocean where my father sometimes went to fish for food that my mom would then cook. When I was little, the place that I was playing was in nature. I never imagined how privileged I was to live in that environment. Since then, the creek was re-constructed; the mountain was destroyed to build new houses in some 'development' plan by the city.

From the time of my childhood, my parents have shared with me their Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing and knowledges, and encouraged me to explore them.

However, contrary to their intensions, their encouragement has sometimes caused difficulties for me in my school life. When I came to Canada as an international student, I was very interested in exploring the Indigenous knowledges of other groups because I found that their worldviews have commonalities with the lessons that my parents passed down to me. Paradoxically, I hesitated to look back to my own history and explore my embodied Indigenous knowledge because of my past negative school experiences; moreover, my hesitation came from "fear" to be marginalized in some spaces. In addition to the experiences of my childhood, the racism that I experienced in Canadian educational institutions made it much harder to keep positive about my culture. It further made me unwilling to share my embodied Indigenous knowledges with others. In addition, I became very uncomfortable with the fact that I am "Japanese" in the process of unpacking the unknown and hidden history relating to Japanese colonial practices. Re-exploring Indigenous ways of knowing, which emphasizes holistic beings, is based on what I have learned from my parents and others; however, I acknowledge that no Indigenous knowledge is immune to criticism, as stated by Dei (2002a). In Japan, there is a long history of various types of oppressions based on class, social status, age, sex, gender, and belief systems. Learning the long history of oppression in Japan also made me feel uneasy and uncertain about contradictions. It is a constant struggle for me to deal with both claiming Indigenity and taking accountability as a member of the dominant, Yamato, without reproducing the colonial relationship.

On the other hand, it is a valuable experience for me to explore these tensions in that I have never been conscious about my both privileged and racialized body, embodied knowledges, and the struggles of other racialized groups.

Through my school years in Japan, and the study in two Canadian secondary educational institutions, I had never imagined that I would write my Master thesis on this theme before I came to Sociology and Equity Studies in Education. The notions of vibrating energy, importance of intention, thoughts, and words, are always in the teaching from my parents. However, I have silenced them outside of home in order to survive and protect myself from being "others" in my school life. When I was in the exchange program at University of British Columbia, I encountered Dr. George Dei's work on Indigenous knowledges and decolonization. This made me decide to stay and study in Canada after my exchange program was finished. His work gives me a sense of hope that Indigenous knowledges can be a key plank of decolonization. On my journey in the graduate studies at the department, Dr. Njoki Wane encouraged me to centre the Indigenous knowledges that I have learned from my parents. I still hesitated talking about them outside of home. However, I realized through conversations with other students that many Indigenous cultures talk about the notion of "energy" and the power of intention, words, and thoughts. I also came to realize that it is not only me who feels that my embodied knowledges are silenced in the academy. Through my experiences at several conferences, I realized that this way of knowing is still negated in favor of Eurocentric "rationality". In addition, the more I see and hear about racism, negation and hatred to the racialized students from teachers and their peers, the more I have become concerned about the ways in which the energy from these intentions and thoughts from negation and hatred affect students' learning process in "invisible ways". Works and encouragements from in particular, Dr. Dei, Dr. Wane and students have kept my passion alive. This is how I have decided to write this thesis. To begin with and locate my subject location in

this thesis is to raise individual consciousness about the process of decolonization, and the process of bridging it to the collective consciousness in anti-colonial practice.

Description of Chapters

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one, the introduction, gives an overview of my thesis, including summaries of Asian and Japanese Indigenous worldviews. It is also important for me to describe my personal location. My data comes from secondary sources and my experiences. Writing my experience into my analysis is important as a way of claiming that lived experiences are a way of knowing and part of the knowledge production. By doing this, I also may render a challenge to the Eurocentric way of doing research where researchers attempt to talk for "others", and purport, that certain ways of knowing in the academy are valid while others are considered as not.

In Chapter two, I provide highlights from Japanese history. The end of the Edo period, when Westerners demanded re-open trade, led to the Meiji period that is known as the period of "Bunmeikaika" (文明開化). The colonial ideology was introduced at this point in time, which has had political, social, economical, cultural, and educational impacts. Moreover, it has also had enormous impact on people's minds; that is, there has developed a colonial mentality. Along this internalizing colonial mentality in particular, schooling has played a crucial role in disseminating new forms of ideology throughout Japan. It should be noted that although European ideologies brought enormous impact on people's minds during the Meiji period, it does not mean there was no oppression and discrimination within Japan and among other Indigenous groups previously. Moreover, while the imposition of an education system that was influenced by Eurocentric ideas continued, it does not mean that there has been no resistance to it. For instance, in 1930s

school teachers attempted to bring local Indigenous knowledges into the school system out of the concern that there were gaps between what was being taught within communities, and what was being taught in schools. However, those teachers' attempts have been since framed by themselves and scholars as "folklore" studies. This is discussed further in chapter two.

Chapter three is the theoretical framework and methodology. I will employ an anti-colonial discursive framework to situate my arguments of marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing in the educational spaces. This framework also helps to explain why there have been gaps that I find in the literature reviews.

In Chapter four, I focus on the Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing in relation to "Kototama" and healing practices. Moreover, I talk about spirituality intertwined with the ways of knowing. Regarding "Kototama", I refer to a study by a Japanese researcher, Emoto Masaru, in order to explore the impact of vibrating energy on oneself, others, and other creatures. .His work is also related to healing practices. In the healing practices, notions of energy are important. These two constitute my discussions about how our energy, produced through words, intension, and thoughts, has an impact on others. My discussion will be about how what I have learned from these studies can be applied in the learning spaces, such as classrooms. In Chapter five, I conclude my thesis with a summary of the previous chapters, and move this discussion about the impact of vibrating energy on students' learning process and accomplishment further. I explore it in relation to the validation and legitimatization of Indigenous ways of knowing and the destabilization of Eurocentric ways of knowing in the academy.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Japanese History with the Encounter of Western countries: Overview

Japan today is often described as a world-leading, modernized, and/or developed society in terms of medical technologies, economy, and science. Despite these developments, there are increasingly serious internal challenges. Sense of community, interconnectedness, and relationships with nature and among human-beings are less emphasized than material developments. In fact, environmental destruction, disrespect of the elderly people, even youth murdering relatives occur. Moreover, in the context of education, the curriculum ignores marginalized people and conceals the "inconvenient" truth of the oppression of certain groups such as Ainu and Ryukyuans, while maintaining a high dependence on technological and economic development (see Okuno, 2005; Karan, 2005).

It is often said that the Meiji period was a turning point in Japan in terms of "modernized progress" and "westernization", both internally and in terms of foreign relationships. The contact around the 18th century was not the first contact with European countries however. In fact, in the 16th century, European missionaries such as those from Portugal came mainly to the Kyushu area (in the southern area of Japan) to introduce Christianity. The introduction of Catholic Christianity caused Japanese local peasants to organize a rebellion against the famine and over-taxation caused in 1637. It is said that it caused Tokugawa shogun, Japan's leader in the period, to enact an isolation policy to foreign trade relationships since then. The isolation policy does not mean all trade with European countries was prohibited, but it was very strictly watched and limited. Japanese people were introduced to Western colonial ideology around the 1840s with the

intensification and re-opening of the trade relationships with Western colonizers.[2]

With the idea of social Darwinism, Europeans labeled the Japanese as the 'half-civilized' yellow race for their economic exploitation (Kowner, 2000). In his examination of African colonialism, Fanon (2007) describes the dominant notions of inferiority and superiority as being demonstrated in perceptions of skin colour, racial characteristics, bodies, and culture. Such theorization is applicable in the Japanese context in that the Japanese tried to "improve the race" in order to overcome the sense of racial inferiority. They did so by mimicking the colonial masters' political, economical, cultural and educational systems. Japanese elites internalized and got caught up in the notion of Japanese inferiority and of Western superiority. Fanon (2004) describes these native/colonized elites as follows:

> It is with this elite that the famous dialogue on values is established. When the colonialist bourgeoisie realizes it is impossible to maintain its domination over the colonies it decides to wage a rearguard campaign in the fields of culture, values, and technology, etc. What we should never forget is that the immense majority of colonized peoples are impervious to such issues (p. 9).

In addition to the "improvement" of the race, the Japanese elites pursued European international norms "in the hope that they would be accepted as an equal member of the civilized international community" (Anand, 2003, p. 70).

It might be said that the imposition of European ideology since the Meiji period

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2   In this section, I do not focus why and how Japan succeeded in closing the door policy because of the limited space in this thesis. Rather, I focus on the impact the introduction of Western ideology in Meiji period had on Japanese society, politically, socially and culturally.

on social, political, economical, and educational aspects of Japanese life/society is imperialism rather than colonialism. Young (2001) describes imperialism as an ideology and colonialism as a practice, or as Loomba (2005) mentions "imperialism can function without formal colonies (as in the United States imperialism today) but colonialism cannot" (p. 12). Loomba (2005) also states the distinction between imperialism and colonialism is "defined differently depending on their historical mutations" (p. 11). Japan is one of the few Asian non-countries which have never been a part of a European colony (Fieldhouse, 1989). However, the contact in Meiji period with Westerners' colonial intention had different impacts on social, political, economic and cultural aspects from the limited contact in Edo period which was before Meiji period. Moreover, the contact also might have had enormous impact on people's minds as I have stated above.

The Meiji period is expressed as Bunmei Kaika (Civilization and Enlightenment). That is the slogan created out of the intention of political and social structural change in the Meiji period. During the Meiji period, modernization was equated with westernization. While impressed by European colonialism in other parts of the world, the Japanese government's fears of subjugation to European colonialism were nurtured by unequal treaties. Coulmas (1990) notes:

> [T]he political elites realized that submission to the West could only be avoided if they familiarized themselves with the cultural achievements of the West so that they could fight back with equal weapons (p. 70).

For the Japanese elites, there was no choice but to mimic and consume Western cultures

under the slogan "Enrich the country, strengthen the military". Under this slogan, the

improvement of the Japanese race was discussed by academic elites. For example,

Takahashi and Fukuzawa emphasized the need for changing eating habits and even

marriage with Europeans was encouraged for physical strength. The minds of Japanese

political and academic elites were caught and attracted by the Western ideologies.

Moreover, the inhumanity of the colonial endeavors to which the Japanese were subjected

by European colonialists has been redirected by the Japanese elite to the other Asian

people and Ainu people in Japan. This redirection of oppression followed the direction of

the Indian policy created by American mediators, with the faith that only United States'

policy would be effective (Yaguchi, 2000; Knapp & Hauptman, 1980). Even when Japan

began to develop and implemented its own policies, the American view on treating and

understanding Indigenous people remained. If policy makers believed that an American

approach was appropriate in a Japanese context, they would not hesitate to bring that

ideology into practice.

　　　Those elites in Japan had transformed themselves from "ruled peoples" into

"ruling peoples". Ching (1998) has commented that the successful adaptation of the

Japanese to Western ideology was more successful than that of people in other Asian

countries, and that this adaptation therefore "justified" their imperialism in those

countries. In fact, the Japanese elites and intellectuals started labeling other Asians as

"un-civilized" while the Japanese as a group were labeled by Europeans as "half-

civilized". According to Ching (1998), it was when the "yellow" Japanese made their

"anomalous imperialistic entry" into the world of colonizers that they were positioned in

between the margins of "white" and "black", and the "colonizer" and the "colonized". At

this point, for the Japanese elites, "protecting" other Asian countries from Western imperialism and other perceived threats was the mission as the "superior" race. Ching (1998) describes how, "caught between the contradictory positionality of non-white, not quite, and yet-alike, Japan's domineering gaze towards its colonial subjects in the East had to always invariably redirect itself, somewhat ambivalently, to the imperialist glare of the West" (p.66).

While there were elites who advocated for so-called "Westernization" as a way of surviving the world capitalist system, there were those who reconsidered traditional Japanese values. For example, Nishida claims:

> Up to now Westerners thought that their culture was superior to all others, and that human culture advances toward their own form. Other peoples, such as Easterners, are said to be behind and if they advance, they too will acquire the same form. There are even some Japanese who think like this. However…I believe there is something fundamentally different about the East. They [East and West] must complement each other and…..achieve the eventual realization of a complete humanity. It is the task of Japanese culture to find such a principle. (Nishida, 1995, p. 404-405, as cited in Arisaka, 1999, p. 3)

However, their attempt to establish traditional Japanese values led to ultra-nationalism, which was exclusive in that the diversities of other cultures were not considered and the "superiority" of Japanese culture within and outside of Japan was emphasized. It can be argued whether the notions of "saving others" and self-

appointed leadership in Asia was justified by this ultra-nationalism (Arisaka, 1999). Therefore, as I state elsewhere (Kawano, 2010), both groups of elites, who were either caught by Western ideologies or who advocated a nationalist Japanese traditional culture, were still caught in the dominant notions of "superiority" and "inferiority". In this context, whiteness is a key to transform the notions of Japanese "ethnicity" in to Japanese "race" and knowledge production in the academy today. Power in whiteness and socially constructed "differences" in terms of ideas, or physical appearance justify the exploitation of oppressed.

Education Controlled by the Government

Since the Meiji period, educational institutions have been one of the main sites where Eurocentric ways of knowing have been introduced, and reproduced, and where Indigenous ways of knowing have been devalued and marginalized. The introduction of Western ideology into schooling was led by the Japanese political and academic elites. Ainnori Mori, who was the Minister of Education in Meiji Period, advocated Western ideology through the new compulsory education system. Although the new system would open the door to education for the wider population, it furthered the government's hidden agenda of creating and nurturing a sense of Japanese national identity. This national identity was intended to allow Japan to compete economically and politically in a global capitalist system. Adick (1992) claims "European-Style" educational institution was adapted in Japan by their own choice, and he says "we must look for reasons to explain the adoption of modern education other than "colonialism" or pure "European export" (Adick, 1992, p. 248). This analysis of voluntary adaptation of European-Style educational institution does not include concern for people's mentality behind the

adaptation.

While imposition of Eurocentric education has continued, it does not mean there has been no resistance to it. Scholars and school teachers in Japan have attempted to bring local Indigenous ways of knowing into the school system in order to address the gaps between "education" from communities and education from schooling. These concerns had already arisen in the 1930's (early Showa period) (see Kokuni, 2001).

 In Japan, Indigenous knowledges or ways of knowing have been studied within the framework of "folklore studies" since the 1910s. Here, I conceptualize folklores that have been studied within the folklore studies framework as Indigenous knowledges. According to Robert (1998), "[i]ndigenous knowledges are accumulated by groups of people, not necessarily indigenous, who by centuries of unbroken residence develop an in-depth understanding of their particular place in their particular world" (p. 59). In this context, folklores can be conceptualized as Indigenous knowledges in that folklores have been developed within a local community.

In the context of Japanese folklore studies, the recording of Japanese folklores by Japanese folklorists or "folklore lovers" started in the 1910s (Danandjaja, 1995, p. 484), and it became a recognized discipline by the 1930s (Morse, 1990). There would be diverse definitions of folklore studies and aims. While these have been changed throughout history (Japanese folklore association, 2010), in 1930s the aim of folklore studies in Japan was to "rediscover the traditional national identity and distinctiveness that had been lost due to the acculturation to mainland Asia" (Danandjaja, 1995, p. 486). Although it was mainly influenced by British, French and German folklore studies, "research by insiders" was emphasized because folklore studies were considered to be a

tool by which people re-searched or learnt about themselves and their history. The studies focused on material folklore, oral folklore and customary folklore/mental phenomena of the emotions. Material folklore encompassed housing, clothing, fishing, and hunting. Oral folklore included words, riddles, proverbs, folksongs, folktales and legends. Customary folklore focused on spirits, songs, chants, taboos, fetishes, and folk medicine.

KunioYanagita（柳田国男） was known as the founding father of Japanese folklore studies. He took a critical position in his later years towards the modern schooling system where both the Western ideology and Japanese nationalism ideology were disseminated. Yanagita critiqued the principle of the modern schooling system that only schooling should be responsible for education (Fukui, 2007). In pre-modern (i.e. before the Meiji period) education, Yanagita asserted, "Elders in communities" "peers" and "family" bore education to children in various ways (Fukui, 2007). Children attended Terakoya in order to learn how to read and write, and this institution was widely recognized as schooling in the pre-modern era. However, Yanagita claimed that "education" in the early childhood in that period was gained through listening and talking with family and community members, rather than the "systematic" learning at Terakoya. In other words, he focused on the more "informal"[3] aspects of "education". Through the experiences with people in their community, children could gain the knowledges, techniques, and learn the humanity that is needed for the journeys of life. Yanagita emphasized that the modern educational system weakened the learning system in

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[3] I use the term 'informal' here but I mean it to include critiques of Eurocentric notions of "formal" education. I acknowledge and emphasize that lived experiences in each communities are valid ways of knowing and it is part of formal education.

communities. Even the government realized these gaps, which were outcomes of Eurocentric education. The Ministry of Education tried to advocate for a local education movement in a top-down manner. However, there were differences between the government and Yanagita's position towards local education. While the former targeted "communities" as an object of study, the latter understood "communities" as phenomena that should be studied to be compared with other communities. The aim was not to recognize the village, but through the recognition of the rural villages/communities, to find "new" Japaneseness.

Kokuni (2001) examines the local/folkloric educational movement by school teachers who were influenced by Yanagita's folklore study. He/she studied teacher movements in the 1930s, (1933-1940; the pre-war, Showa period) and in the 1940s to the 1960s (1947-1962; the post war period). Those who were influenced by Yanagita's folklore studies were the members of the "folklore studies association," established in order to share findings among members. Kokuni (2001) found gaps between the approaches and consciousness in 1930s and other periods.

In 1930s, it was teachers who supported the idea of educational reform in favour of local knowledges. They saw a disconnect between the students' cultures at home and their communities, and the Eurocentric education that they were receiving in school. As such, modern education implied that students come to school without culture and without education at all. The teachers involved with the movement for educational reform in the 1930's were devoted to bridging the gaps between education from the community and education from the school. Among those teachers were Toshimi Takeuch（竹内利美）, Tuneichi Miyamoto (宮本常一), and Saitaro Mikami （三上斎太郎）. They examined

how gaps between education from rural communities and from schools could be bridged through exploring Indigenous local knowledges. In referring to these three teachers, I mainly cite them from Kokuni's (2001) *The Folklore Studies Movement and School Education: The Discovery of Folk Customs and Their Nationalization (民俗学運動と学校教育: 民俗の発見とその国民化*) because resources about these teachers' struggles and resistances as described in this book are limited and not easily available.

Toshimi Takeuchi, an elementary school teacher in the rural area of Nagano, was concerned with the schooling which excluded and weakened the educational force grounded in communities. He was also concerned with the disconnection between teachers and community members. The disconnection occurred for example when teachers were often paid a certain amount of money regardless of economically difficult situations in the community, which often caused complications from community members. In these situations, Takeuchi explored the ways in which learning at schooling contributed to the community in their daily lives. He developed a style of research that focused on local ways of knowing and knowledges. In this research, students were the "researchers." He encouraged students to do "research" in their communities by going out to the community and asking people questions. He attempted to help students develop dynamic relationships in the community. Within these relationships, he believed that students could become conscious about collective norms (transferring knowledges about ways of living) which community members gradually had built in the community.

Tuneichi Miyamoto, another teacher who took part in the movement for educational reform, claimed that in schooling individual rights were highly emphasized after Meiji restoration. Before that time, he comments "in the communities, neither good

nor bad belongs to individual" (Kokuni, 2001, p. 3). According to Kokuni (2001),

happiness also became individualized through modern education in that while those who

were perceived to be above other individuals possessed the feelings of "happiness", the

others who could not gain the currency of happiness felt "inferior". In other words, a

dichotomy was created between those who fit into the norm created for promoting a

certain ideology of happiness and individuality and those who did not. Moreover, in that

context of individualism, schooling is hardly a community of learning. Miyamoto also

adopted the methods that Takeuchi used. He asked students to collect the data, such as

information about their community's storytelling, beliefs and events from the community

members. Through these activities, he tried to help students become conscious again

about collective norms that local people had created throughout the history. He believed

that these activities could reactivate traditions that would have otherwise disappeared,

and tried to make people re-remember humanity and history that had been shared

amongst community members.

Seitaro Mikami was also involved with the educational reform movement. He was

aware of "inter-colonization"[4] from the perspective of language education. Inter-

colonization referred to the state's effort to erase dialect "differences" as an important

step for assimilation and homogenization into "Japanese" culture. Mikami argued that

this caused the enforcement of dominant notions of "superiority" and "inferiority", where

Standard Japanese was deemed "superior" and other dialects as "inferior." According to

Kokuni (2001), it was thought that the student felt "inferior" as a result of inadequate

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4   Kokuni mentions Tohoku areas, areas where the Ainu people live, Okinawa areas as areas that Inter-colonization (内地植民地主義) in the context of standardization of the national languages were mainly focused. However, it is also important to look at how other areas were influenced and their resistance to the national language policy through schooling.

accomplishment to master the standard Japanese. It led teachers to further make an effort to teach standard Japanese, resulting in a vicious cycle. Those teachers who realized this problem, tried to use dialect in poetry. For example, Mikami was concerned that standard Japanese was/is exclusive, discriminatory, and an imposition of "auto/inner-colonization". He tried to create space where students could use their dialect in their learning at school. For example, he encouraged students to write a poem in their dialect.

Teachers in the 1930s tried to deconstruct the imposed image of "Japanese" by the government, and reconstruct it based on what they "found" through exploring local Indigenous knowledge. Paradoxically, they believed that through exploring or seeking something "essential" in Japanese Indigenous knowledge, students could internalize an image of the "Japanese". Kokuni (2001) points out that exploring Indigenous knowledges in Japan did not help to unlearn notions of "Japaneseness". He emphasized that their approaches did not go beyond re-enforcing and re-creating Japanese national identity. Rather, they contributed to it through using local knowledges. In other words, diversities in Japanese Indigenous knowledges were reduced to "generalized Japaneseness".

Most of the teachers in post-war period (1940s onwards) categorized the various folklores that had been already collected into separate subjects, and students learned them as knowledge. In this approach, Kokuni (2001) points out there was a strong tendency towards making children internalize the oneness of folkloric culture in Japan. The folklore studies drew more attention again in the 1970s. There was discussion regarding how results of the folklore studies could be brought into the curriculum, and in particular, into history or social studies. There were 26 instances where a curriculum that included

folklore studies were implemented (Kokuni, 2001). However, in the approach, the local diversities were introduced as an example of national images of Japanese culture. Primary emphasis was placed on Japanese images, and then on the local diversities. Kokuni (2001) points out that these approaches were very different from the approaches of the 1930s when teachers and scholars still interrogated whether or not the homogeneous image of Japaneseness existed in their investigations of the diverse local knowledges.

Today, under the political project of constructing and keeping a generalized homogeneous Japanese identity, silencing cultural diversity continues. At the same time, the cultural diversities of groups such as the Ainu, Ryukyu, Korean and the Chinese Diaspora have been marginalized. Okuno (2005) examines the ways in which modern education in Japan has overlooked those groups' cultural essence and values through the contents of social studies textbooks. She states that "[t]he failure to include the cultural diversity of Indigenous peoples in social studies' textbooks and national guidelines has created limitation on students' knowledge and their concepts of social equity" (p. 97). The marginalization of these groups in the textbooks causes students to be less conscious about the historical process of marginalization and the realities of these groups.

In relation to marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing nature, Aikenhead and Ogawa (2007) examine the similarities and differences between Indigenous and Eurocentric ways of knowing nature. This examination is conducted from postcolonial and anti-hegemonic perspectives. They believe that it helps to bridge the gaps between the false dichotomy separating science and Indigenous ways of knowing. They state:

[A]n increasing number of science educators want to understand the cultural

influence on school science achievement by students whose culture and

language differ from the predominant Eurocentric culture and language of

science. These students may live in a non-Western country (e.g., Japan, Nigeria,

or Saudi Arabia) or they may live in a western country (e.g., USA, Australia, or

UK), but in any case, they do not feel comfortable with the culture of

Eurocentric science embedded in their school science classes (Aikenhead &

Ogawa, 2007, p. 541).

Moreover, in the context of science education, Eurocentric science focuses on *knowledge*

(chisiki) rather than *coming to know (*siru*)*. In the Eurocentric perspective, knowledge can

be considered as an object that is accumulated and stored by paper and pencil

examination. Aikenhead and Ogawa (2007) claim that *coming to know* in Indigenous

perspectives is different from the Eurocentric process to know (to discover) in that "[a]n

Indigenous coming to know is a journey towards wisdom or journey in wisdom-in-action,

not a destination of discovering knowledge" (p.553). However, the use of "knowledge"

became dominant in Japan overtime (Aikenhead & Ogawa, 2007). They state: "Today

the traditional meanings of *chishiki* are rarely used among Japanese people….The old

meanings of *chisiki* may have been lost, but they continue to reside subtly within

Japanese culture, for example, the verb to know (*shiru*) (p. 567). They also compare

shizen and *nature. Shizen* is generally translated into *nature* since the Meiji period;

however, *shizen* is not equal to *nature.* While *shizen* involves the interrelationship

between nature and human activity, nature excludes those interrelationships. Further, in

relation to education, Aikenhead and Ogawa (2007) describe:

An education in shizen implies loving natural things in a totality with human

experiences (verb oriented), while an education in nature (i.e., in Eurocentric

sciences) implies the acquisition of knowledge of nature conventionally isolated

from human experiences (noun oriented) (p. 573).

Their analysis on differences between "*siru*" and "*knowledge*", or "*shizen*" and "*nature*"

which is often translated as same meaning today further questions whether educators are

conscious about the differences. Within the history of modern education in Japan, it is

important to re-think about the ways in which the emphasis on "come to know" has been

replaced with "knowledge". It implies the importance of unpacking Eurocentric lens that

the Japanese people have internalized over time in various ways; for example, through

education, language, eating habits, and clothing. Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing

has been enormously replaced with that of Eurocentric in the learning at schooling.

However, I believe that emphasis on Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing, for example,

"*coming to know*" and "*shizen*" have not been entirely lost in the learning from

community and family members[5]. In the next section, I focus on the way in which the

notions of energy have been taken up outside of school.

Resistance and Notions of Energy

Different names can be applied to describe the vibrating energy. For example, Ki

（気）, Hadou （波動）or in relation to one's thoughts/idea/emotions, the energy can

be also called Sounen (想念). It has been a long held belief that Sounen have the power

to make an image that one has, happen in reality. Their words might not be mentioned

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[5] As a further study, it is important to explore the ways in which local community members have developed the education on their own at the community or at home.

directly when people describe the ways in which they perceive and utilize the energy in everyday lives. The fact that our ancestors believed that everything is alive might imply they would recognize the energy from all beings. In relation to the energy from words/thoughts, the term, Kototama, first appeared in the ancient collection of the Japanese poetry, the Man'yoshu. It is said that the time that the verses were made was from around 4th century to 8th century, and these were sung/written by various social classes. In one of the verses, it says that Japan as "言霊の幸う国". This phrase is often translated into "Japan is a blessed country where kototama is offered" (Ueshiba, 2004, p. 74) or "the land where the mysterious workings of language bring bliss". There are limitations in these translations in that the notions of land and country at the point that the term was written would be different from that of today. However, the point is that from the earliest time, the Japanese ancestors paid attention to the energy from their un/spoken words. According to Sasaki (2007), the Japanese people put value on a verse in their daily life. They thought a verse which is sung/written with a certain rhythm/pattern is a tool to make use of the power of the words.

Although marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing in certain spaces such as schools has continued, it does not mean the entire Japanese people stopped believing and developing the Indigenous ways of knowing. In addition to the resistance at schools, people also continued to develop the Indigenous ways of knowing, and have passed it down to next generations outside of the education at school. In relation to the notions of vibrating energy, some religious/spiritual leaders, Aikido (often translated as "the ways of unifying life energy") practitioners, Ki-experts have continued to utilize it in their practices and teachings in different ways. Their teaching and ideas about the vibrating

energy and how they utilize the "invisible" energy would be different from each other in various ways. The founding father of Aikido, Japanese martial art, Moriei Ueshiba, paid also close attention to the power of words (Kototama) in his practice. According to Ueshiba:

> "Morihei's interest in the study of kototama was based on his personal research into the nature of breath-power and the generation of ki and his varied practical experiences of the breath-power/generation of ki continuum. His enlightenment in regard to that continuum led to the creation of Aikido principles and techniques" (Ueshiba, 2004).

His interest in Kototama was also influenced by Master Deguchi Onisaburo, the leader of the Omoto religious sect (Ueshiba, 2004). Kototama was a major aspect of Omoto religious sect and his spiritualist practices (Stalker, 2008). Deguchi developed his ideas of Kototama based on the text, Kojiki, "the oldest extant text written in the Japanese language, claiming to be the literary record of what had been the oral tradition in Japan up until the eighth century" (Ames, Dissanayake, Kasulis, 1994, p.101). According to Stalker (2008), Deguchi believed that:

> [t]he text contained "a myriad of truths" that required esoteric decoding to understand their significance for a given age. Using the power of Kotodama[6], one could reinterpret the classics for contemporary perspectives on "history or philosophy, religion, politics, literature, medicine, economics, astronomy,

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[6] 言霊 is sometimes called Kotodama. In Kototama study it is called Kototama. Mechanism of Kototama is quite complex. (see chapter four) I call it Kototama in this thesis; although it is not my aim to explore which word has which impact, it is also important for me to acknowledge the differences. In quote that I use, I do not change the words (Kotodama./Kototama).

cylindrical studies, anthropology, metallurgy and mineralogy, geography, physics,

and science (p.53).

According to Stalker (2008), it is difficult to trace the development of esoteric Kototama studies. She states:

They failed to achieve much of an academic following in part because of the

influx of Western scientific thought in the late nineteenth century. In addition,

proponents differed on many points, such as the number of root sounds in the

Japanese language and meanings of individual sounds. Central figures in

nineteenth-century Kotodama studies, like Yamaguch Shido and Nakamura Kodo,

Onisaburo's great-grandfather, published widely circulated texts, but the

transmission of their esoteric knowledge was reportedly often oral and haphazard

(p.55).

While it is important to explore the studies by academic scholars or spiritual leaders

about Kototama and how they utilized them in their practices or teaching, it is also

important to explore the ways in which local people have utilized and developed the

notions of vibrating energy in their everyday lives.

Ohnishi and Ohnishi (2006) examine the impacts of vibrating energy through the

Nishino breathing method. Nishino is known as a Ki practitioner. In their study, they ask

questions such as "Can the mind of one person directly affect the mind of others without

using the five senses?" "Can the mind of one person affect the physical condition of

others?" (p.192). They state:

In Asia, the use of life-energy (Qi in Chinese or Ki in Japanese) in enhancing

one's vitality and improving health is employed even today. For example, Qigong therapies are popular in China as Ki-therapies are in Japan. Unfortunately, these techniques are not well accepted as a branch of today's main-stream sciences, especially in the Western hemisphere. Many people consider them as folk medicine. Some people believe that they are 'supernatural' and 'para-psychological' phenomena. Only limited number of investigators have been studying them as the object of scientific, medical investigation for the past 30 years (Ohnishi & Ohnishi, 2006, p. 197).

The ways in which they evaluate the impact of Ki on bodies are measured by changes on the bodies using scientific machines. While the "changes" are evaluated in scientific measurements, it makes us re-think about the impact of energy on our bodies. According to Ohnishi and Ohnishi (2006), "Ki" itself does not convey information, but human being emitted information (as cited in Shinagawa, 1990). Ohnishi and Ohnishi (2006) state that: "[o]f course living beings require energy for their growth, activity and reproduction. However, without information, they do not know how to grow, how to act and how to reproduce" (p. 198). While I assert that vibrating energy cannot be separated from the information that we produce, their study indicate the power of the "information" that we produce.

Therefore, notions of energy have not been lost in people's mind completely. People in Japan develop their understanding of the vibrating energy that they produce outside of school.

Conclusion

Scholars and teachers have recognized the imposition of Eurocentric

governmental policy on education since it was first introduced. Considering the political, historic and economic pressures of the Meiji period, when it was determined necessary to "unify" the people of Japan in order to compete against and resist Western powers, it was hoped that folklore studies in schools might be able to bridge the gaps that were created through adaptation of the modern Eurocentric educational system. In particular, in the 1930s, teachers made efforts to create a space for students to bring their local knowledges and beliefs into the classroom. They also encouraged the diversities in local belief and practices, which led them to question themselves and wonder if the "common" image of "Japanese" existed. While they tried to deconstruct imposed national images of Japanese, they tried to search something essential to Japanese, which paradoxically resulted in the construction of new images of Japaneseness.

In relation to the notions of vibrating energy, spiritual leaders or energy practitioners have continued to develop their ideas. While their development of ideas and practices would influence some local people, it is important to consider how local people also collectively have developed the ideas of vibrating energy in relation to their human and natural environment. In folklore studies, which focus on locality, even when describing vibrating energy directly, the ways in which they interact with others, other creatures, nature and universe, in their ritual, festival, and ceremony in the daily life could imply that they acknowledge the vibrating energy in all matters.

Eurocentric education has continued for both marginalized Indigenous ways of knowing in Japan, as well as all Indigenous peoples. I hope my study brings about discussion about the pedagogic and instructional implications for education in Japanese and Asian contexts; and even further afield broader educational implications in global

contexts. In the next chapter, I will employ an anti-colonial discursive framework in order to explain these gaps leading to my discussion in chapter four.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework and methodology

Rational in theoretical framework

My questions that I stated in Chapter one are informed by anti-colonial perspectives. From Indigenous perspectives, I believe that the energy that we produce through thinking, speaking and writing has an actual impact on students' learning process and accomplishment. This belief has been challenged however, as it has not been widely accepted in the academy. When this way of knowing is introduced in academic conversations, it is targeted with criticism or laughter as it is thought to be a "primitive", "irrational" or "non-academic" way of knowing. The anti-colonial approach articulates the ways in which indigenous knowledge has been marginalized within the personal and systematic relationships of colonialism. "Transhistorical" approaches (see Kempf, 2010) in the anti-colonial discursive framework help me to see marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing as forms of on-going colonialism. This perspective also sees re-colonial relationship, resistance and decolonization together, not as distinctive stages. While re-colonial relationships occur in everyday interaction within individual and systematic levels, but also along with the re-colonial relationship, resistance and decolonization also occur spontaneously rather than as distinct stages. In addition, the anti-colonial approach is not only about subjugation, oppression and marginalization, but also about subjective agency, resistance, and hope. The anti-colonial approach enables me to deal with the impact of colonial mentality in the perpetuation of colonial system. This is important, in particular, in relation to my second research question. Recognition of the notion of energy comes with the appreciation of Indigenous ways of knowing. Consciousness to Indigenous ways of knowing is critical in decolonizing the mind. Thus, I employ anti-colonial discursive framework in this study.

Colonialism and Anti-colonial Approaches

I employ the anti-colonial discursive framework to situate my arguments of imposition of Eurocentric ways of knowing and marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing in educational and academic spaces (See Dei, 2002a; Wane, 2006; Kokuni, 2001). In this chapter, first I provide the rationale for using anti-colonial approaches and not other frameworks. In my study, discussions about the ongoing colonial relationships in educational spaces, colonizing minds, resistance, and decolonization and Indigenous knowledges from the anti-colonial perspectives are particularly important.

Various approaches, such as folklore studies, postcolonial studies, cultural studies and anthropology, have been employed to engage in critical dialogues on the impact and imposition of Eurocentrism and whiteness on Japanese political, economical, cultural and educational practices, and Japanese colonialism on other Asian regions. However, Chen (1998) describes the limitations in cultural and post-colonial studies that marginalized non-English writing and notions of continual colonialism globally. Chen (1998) states in dialogue with cultural studies, earlier anti-colonial or even 'anti-western centric' figures in the Japanese, Indian, Korean and Chinese speaking context seem to be forgotten while Euro-American writing tradition seems to count. He discusses:

> Publication in the studies of colonialism in Japan, for instance have been overwhelming in the post World War Two era (since 1945); it could be argued that the question of coloniality and postcoloniality has been the preoccupation of post-war Japanese intellectuals. And because of the hegemony of the English language and the controlled circulation of publication, none of these grounded historical-cultural works has been read in different parts of the world (Chen, 1998, p. 6).

He also claims that "a whole body of anti-colonial discourses of decolonization generated outside the imperial metropolis, from the nineteenth century onwards, somehow has to be re-articulated to re-build the 'counter-colonial' tradition" (Chen, 1998, p. 5). In addition, from a postcolonial perspective, Arisaka (1999) describes complexities of colonialism in relation to the Japanese context. She states:

> Postcolonialism opened a space in which to critique the hegemonic workings of the colonizing power. However, current postcolonial studies primarily focus on the Indian or African cases where the relation between the colonizer and the colonized more or less overlaps with the West/non-West. The case is much more complex in East Asia: All of the Asian nations were threatened by the imperialism of the West; within this solidarity vis-à-vis the West, however, Japan became a colonizer itself….. So "colonized consciousness" in East Asia is not at all a unified experience, and is much more conflicted than the colonized consciousness of India or Africa under Europe (Arisaka, 1999, p. 11).

"Anti-colonial" as opposed to "post-colonial" focuses on various ways of understanding the colonial relationship. While her analysis seems to be a generalization of Indian and African colonization, her points on complexities and gaps in the postcolonial studies need to be considered. In particular, her as well as Chen's (1998) analysis on the complexities of the Japanese becoming a colonizer from being labeled as "inferior" to Western countries is crucial. The process of Japanese becoming a colonizer needs to be examined in relation to the internalization of colonial mentality and desire to gain Whiteness in order to compete with other Western countries. The postcolonial perspectives have helped to develop anti-colonial approaches (Dei & Asghrzadeh, 2001). It is important to note

that the anti-colonial lens predates the post colonial but there are emerging ways of reconceptualizing the colonial that shared some ideas with postcoloniality. I acknowledge that postcolonial perspectives allow for an understanding of the ways in which Indigenous Knowledges are taken up as a resistance to colonial imposition and as a tool to empower Indigenous peoples. However, anti-colonialism states that colonialism is not over but colonialism has operated in different forms, and this understanding is necessary for the examination of power relationship in the process of knowledge production in the academy today. The understanding of colonialism continues to be important. Dei (2006) argues against the problematic periodization of the colonial experience. The term, "post-colonialism", he says, gives the assumption that colonialism is over, thus ignoring the ongoing struggles of oppressed people. In addition, post-colonial approaches make a clear distinction between past and present. The past and present are dichotomized. On the other hand, anti-colonial approaches focus on continuity. Colonialism is not over, but still is operational. Kempf (2010) states:

> an anti-colonial approach challenges the implication of the "post" in post-colonialism and asserts that the colonial encounter is trans-historical rather than historical - arguing that it persists in colonized and colonizing nations (p. 14).

Thus the recognition of ongoing colonialism is important for the recognition of resistance to colonialism that I will focus on later in this chapter.

Cesaire (1972) states that in colonization, the colonized are objectified and dehumanized. He asks:

> has colonialism really placed civilizations in contact? ….I answer no….[n]o

human contact, but relations of domination and submission which turn the colonizing man into a class-room monitor, an army sergeant, a prison guard, a slave driver, and the indigenous man into an instrument of production" (p. 6).

His point of this power relationship among the colonizers and colonized indicates the ways in which colonialism does not consider Indigenous people's humanity. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) argues that "[c]olonized peoples have been forced to define what it means to be fully human because there is a deep understanding of what it has meant to be not fully human" (p. 26). In relation to the Japanese context, on one hand, Western colonizers labeled the Japanese as Inferior and treated them as the "half –civilized", and the "yellow" inferior race. On the other hand, the Japanese elites who once experienced denial of their humanity, ignored the humanity of other Indigenous groups such as the Ainu and Ryukyu people in their own colonial projects. In addition to Cesaire's claim, in relation to culture, Dirks (2006) argues that, colonialism itself is "a cultural project of control" (p.58). He states:

> Colonial knowledge both enabled colonial conquest and was produced by it; in certain important ways, culture was what colonialism was all about. Cultural forms in newly classified 'traditional' societies were reconstructed and transformed by and through colonial technologies of conquest and rule, which created new categories and oppositions between colonizers and colonized, European and Asian, modern and traditional, West and East, even male and female (p. 58).

Along the same line, Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001) maintain that colonialism does not

only mean as foreign or alien, but also imposed and dominating. This perspective enables

me to understand current colonial relationship in the academy and educational institutions

in a bigger picture; not only in Japan but also in other areas. It might be said that the

imposition of European ideology since the Meiji period on social, political, economical,

and educational aspects of Japanese life/society is imperialism rather than colonialism in

that Japan is one of the few Asian non-countries which have never been a part of a

European colony (Fieldhouse, 1989). Young (2001) describes imperialism as a concept

and colonialism as a practice, or as Loomba (2005) mentions "imperialism can function

without formal colonies (as in the United States' imperialism today) but colonialism

cannot" (p.12). Loomba (2005) also states the distinction between imperialism and

colonialism is "defined differently depending on their historical mutations" (p. 11).

However, in the Japanese context, contact in Meiji period with Westerners' colonial

intention had different impact on social, political, economic and cultural aspects from the

limited contact in Edo period which was before Meiji period. Moreover, the contact also

might have enormous impact on people's minds. Thus, in my study, it is important to look

at issues from the anti-colonial perspectives.

> Regarding the anti-colonial approach, Dei (2006) states:
>
> [A]nti-colonial is defined as an approach to theorizing colonial and re-colonial
>
> relations and the implications of imperial structures on the processes of
>
> knowledge production and validation, the understanding of indigeneity, and the
>
> pursuit of agency, resistance and subjective politics (p. 2).

Anti-colonial approach focuses on diverse internal colonial processes, history, and

experiences. Subjectivity, voices from local people, lived experiences, should be centred in order to articulate the colonial. This approach is also important to understand the process and colonial relationship in the knowledge production in the educational spaces. Critical interrogation about the process and the relationship are required in this approach.

Complexities and Consciousness of Colonizers and the Colonized

Colonizers and colonized relationships are much more complicated today. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) argues that false binary of colonizers/colonized does not take into account the "different layerings which have occurred within each group and across the two groups" (p.27). Memmi (2006) also recognizes the situations where those who were once colonized become colonizers. Anti-colonial approaches challenge the complexities of the colonizer/colonized relationships. For example, Memmi (1991) analyzes the colonizers who perpetuate the colonial system intentionally, as well as those who recognize colonialism as unjust but stay in the colony, thus participating in perpetuating the colonial system. He insists that an individual "goodwill" does not help rupturing the colonial relationship as it is systematic. He describes even the colonizers who were opposed to it saying, "colonial relations do not stem from individual good will or actions; they exist before his arrival or his birth, and whether he accepts or rejects them matters little" (p. 38). He also says that "[t]he most favored colonized will never be anything but colonized people, in other words...certain rights will forever be refused them and certain advantages are reserved for the colonizer"(p. 9). He claims that "to refuse means either withdrawing physically from those conditions or remaining to fight and change them" (p. 19). His critique of these relationships within the colonial system informs the need for action to

oppose the colonial system. It further reminds oppressors to be conscious about their privileged positions and responsibility. For instance, it is important to think about creating inclusive spaces in a classroom, and the emphasis he places on consciousness and responsibility is recollected in my discussion of energy in chapter four. The consciousness about a responsibility and taking action should not only come with a visible action, but also an "invisible action", that is observation of one's thoughts, intension, and reaction to others.

The oppressors often deny being conscious about the privileged position and responsibility. Dion (2009), for example, describes those who claim the position of stranger in their relationship with Aboriginal people in Canada. She states:

One way or another, teachers, like many Canadians, claim the position of "perfect stranger" to Aboriginal people. There is an ease with which they claim this position. But what does it offer them? Where does it come from? What is its appeal? In what ways is it problematic? And perhaps most critical, how can it be disrupted? I argue that it is not an uncomplicated position. It is informed simultaneously by what teachers know, what they do not know, and what they refuse to know (p. 9).

Taking position of "perfect strangers" is a way to withdraw the responsibility. Dion (2009) continues, the attitude of "perfect strangers" also is attributed to the fear. She notes "[t]he fear of offending, of introducing controversial topics, and of introducing content that challenges student understanding of the dominant version of Canadian

history all support the claim for the position of perfect stranger" (p.9). Her point is connected to the notion of "their problem, not us". Failure to recognize that their privileged position is implicated in the expense of the oppressed people perpetuates and maintains the power imbalance in the colonial system.

In addition to the consciousness of oppressors, Freire (2006) claims that oppressed people need to be conscious about the oppression that they are facing before a social transformation can happen. Centering oppressed experiences is the process of liberation and social transformation. There is also a need to acknowledge the differences in experiences of the oppressed. Wane (2003) talks about the importance of acknowledging differences in relation to anti-racist praxis. She states:

> A marginalized group, for example, may have a common history of enslavement, holocaust, genocide, colonialism; however, that oppression has been experienced differently based on social locations, such as class, gender, sex, colour, etc. These differences indicate that our approaches to theorizing marginality should be complicated by such salient variables, which impact on how the individuals experience their lives (p.4).

While acknowledging the differences in experiences of oppressed, collective consciousness is also important. Dei (2009) states:

> Anti-colonial thought and practice calls for developing a collective consciousness of our interconnected realities and social existence as racialized and oppressed

groups contest the future and set their own agenda forward (p.256).

Thus both individual and collective awareness towards the ways in which oppression operates play a crucial role for anti-colonial practices. There is also question about the ways in which we create the space for developing the consciousness about colonial oppression and responsibility in the current school systems, and transform the consciousness into practices.

Colonial Mentality

The colonial mentality and colonial ideologies, which are internalized by both the colonized and colonizer instill the dominant notions of "legitimate/illegitimate" ways of knowing. The anti-colonial perspectives interrogate the processes of knowledge production, validation or legitimatization. Moreover, the anti-colonial perspectives not only focus on the marginality of the oppressed, but also the agency of oppressed, such as resistance and decolonization. Dei (2006) notes that anti-colonial thought call for the transformation of both the dominant public discourse and the Eurocentric academic discourse so that voice and history of the oppressed can be evoked. Transformation of discourses in public and academy requires deconstructing the Eurocentric notions of us/them and "differences" and "similarities".

In a process of unpacking the dichotomized notions of us/them, questions about differences in bodies and cultures and similarities within anti-colonial approaches help to move my discussion about marginalization of Indigenous knowledges beyond the imposed socially constructed differences in colonial discourse. In that approach, similarities also could be a source of creating space for allies to oppose colonial discourse

in knowledge production. Under colonialism, both differences and similarities have been

used for the justification of the domination by colonizers. Differences are particularly

marked to measure distance from "us" (Memmi, 2000). Moreover, for example, cultural

similarities among Indigenous peoples as a marker are used to measure closeness to the

"imagined" others. For example, among Aboriginal groups in North America, seen as

essential to "Aboriginal" contribute to erase diversities among groups; moreover, it

reinforced stereotypical images of them. As one of the challenges, Kincheloe and

Steinberg (2008) state that essentialism in the study of Indigenous knowledges is

" caught in the prehistoric, stationary, and unchanging web that is ever separate from

non- Indigenous information" (p.142). This reinforces binary between

indigenity/colonialism, and academic knowledge/ local knowledges. However, Lattas

(1993) articulates how essentialism can be used and operated as a strategy of resistance.

The context is crucial in terms of how, what for, by whom, and to whom essentialism is

used. According to him, Mudrooroo takes an essentialist position and attempts to use past

in a poetic and metaphorical way to extend the identity structures and values of the "past"

into the present. Laettas (1993) states:

> Does one reject it as dangerous or as a false fixing and stabilizing of
>
> Aboriginal identity, or does one regard it as the creation of a mythic space
>
> and a primordial identity capable of providing a community with a sense of
>
> continuity and a sense of groundedness? (p.254)

In the Japanese context, searching essential to Japanese culture by exploring diverse local

culture has reinforced nationalism by generalized or homogenized image of Japaneseness.

It has not helped decolonizing their minds; rather it has been used to unify "the Japanese"

to compete with others globally. However, within these limitations, it is also important to explore the possibility of "strategic essentialism" in anti-colonial work.

Conversely, there has been the social, material, and emotional currency in educational spaces that one can gain through getting close to the Eurocentric "norm" in terms of language, names, ways of knowing, and dresses. In the colonial educational system Indigenous ways of knowing and knowledges do not have the same currency and acknowledgement. It is not only about the marginalization of the Indigenous knowledges but also negation of the bodies that embody the knowledges. Moreover, the marking of differences in the Eurocentric way causes the colonized to internalize dominant notions about inferiority and superiority, which have reinforced the desire of the colonized for mimicry. Fanon (1988) describes the legitimatizing exploitation. He states:

> [I]t is not possible to enslave men without logically making
>
> them inferior through and through. And racism is only the
>
> emotional, affective, sometimes intellectual explanation of this
>
> inferiorization. The racist in a culture with racism is therefore
>
> normal. He has achieved a perfect harmony of economic
>
> relations and ideology (p.40).

Colonization does not succeed without controlling the people's mind. The fears also are important factor in controlling people's mind. Nandy (1998) describes internalization of "West" in the Asian context. She states:

> When the West was partly internalized during the colonial period, its cultural
>
> stratarchy and arrogance, too, was internalized by important sections of the

colonized societies and by societies not colonized but, like Korea, Japan and

Thailand, living with deep, through often unacknowledged, fears of being

colonized. Like Africa and South America, Asia too learnt to live with this

internalized West- the feared intimate enemy, simultaneously a target of love and

hate….(Nandy , 1998, p.144).

This quote shows the ways in which the feeling of "fear" of both colonizers and

colonized has been controlled within the project of colonialism. Fanon (2007) talks about

how colonial oppressions and negations towards colonized makes themselves desire to

obtain Whiteness in order to regain the humanity that they have been denied in

colonialism. Gandhi (1996) considered the "mental attitude" as everything. In the context

of British colonialism in India he states "[w]e are [according to Tolstoy] our own slaves,

not of the British. This should be engraved in our mind. The whites cannot remain if we

do not want them" (p. 38). wa Thiong'o (1986) writes about the critical roles languages

play as colonial tools. He argues that language plays a significant role not only in forming

one's identity, but also in containing a history and a relationship with one's

environment. In addition to communicating culture, language also helps to reinforce

notions of otherness, leading to the inferiority of the colonized, and it is the means by

which people experience spiritual subjugation, and the communication and carrying of

culture. In other words, language helps people understand themselves in relation to their

social, cultural, and natural environment. According to wa Thiong'o (1986), for the

colonizer, having power over language is crucial in order to dominate "the mental

universe of the colonized" and control the tools of self-definition. Colonialism leads to

the destruction or devaluing of the Indigenous culture and to the conscious elevation of the language of the colonizer. Fanon (2007) also talks about the psychological impacts on people. In relation to language and colonialism, Fanon (2007) states that "a man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language" (p. 18). Therefore, in colonial practices, the colonizers used various ways to instill the notion of Eurocentric superiority.

Resistance

The recognition of continual colonialism is also important for the recognition of resistance to colonialism. Since the arrival of colonialism, people have resisted it in various ways. For instance, in relation to imposition of Eurocentric education in Japanese context, as I describe in Chapter Two, teachers tried to bring Indigenous ways of knowing from the community into the school. Dei (2002a) considers academy as one of the most important starting place of resistance. Dei (2002a) states:

> Resistance is a spatial practice. Homes, families, communities, workplaces and schools are differentially implicated in an exercise to integrate different knowledge systems. It is within the academy that Indigenous knowledges may lodge a sustained critique of the dominance of Eurocentricity (p.10).

Dei's point of Indigenous ways of knowing as a resistance to dominance of Eurocentric knowledge in the educational system where Eurocentric ways of knowing are seen as if that are the only valid and legitimatized ways of knowing challenges the process of knowledge production and reproduction in the academy. Resistance needs a critical

consciousness. Being conscious about colonial oppression also ties to the ability to ask critical questions. Dei (2010) states "[w]e must ask new questions in order to contribute to knowledge of how to resist the poisonous viruses of colonialism, racism, exploitation and alienation" (p.1). In addition to the consciousness, regaining the creativity would play an important role. In the process of internalizing this dominant notion, creativity embedded in Indigenous ways of knowing is also undermined. Asante (2006) states:

> Colonialism does not engender creativity; it stifles it, suppresses it under the cloak of assistance when in fact it is creating conditions that make it impossible for humans to effectively resist (p. ix).

Using creativity is linked to the development of critical questions in the Eurocentric academy. Eurocentric norms expect student to get a "right" answer. In this situation, regaining creativity in Indigenous knowledges would be the site of resistance to dominance of Eurocentric norms.

The way in which we understand the resistance is important in the anti-colonial approaches. It is also the interrogation about the "norms" that impose the Eurocentric ideology. It compels people to fit into the system and excludes those who cannot fit into it. Kempf (2010) states that while for the colonized anti-colonialism is a tool to invoke resistance, for the colonizer it is used to invoke accountability. He (2010) notes "[i]n both cases, it serves to reveal and challenge the assumptions, silences, and common sense of dominant relations" (Kempf, 2010, p.14).

Resistance is not necessarily visible but also invisible. Fanon (1994) describes

how invisibility can be understood as resistance. He states that "the colonized exert a considerable effort to keep away from the colonial world, not to expose himself to any action of the conqueror (Fanon, 1994, p. 130). Along this line, Goldberg (1996) also mentions "[t]he colonized effectively are in a position to delimit the power of the colonizer over their lives; from site of invisibility, they are thus able to ignore or resist colonial control" (p.181). Thus, people take various forms in order to take a position of resistance to the colonial control. Resistance is not always apparent, but it is taken in invisible ways. The notions of invisible resistance ties into my question in Chapter Four about the ways in which the resistance in vibrating energy may work without reproducing "violence" over others.

Decolonization and Indigenous Knowledges

Wane states (2006) "[d]ecolonizing self is the most difficult process due to the fact that most indigenous people have become a commodity of Western ideology" (p.98). Japan is not an exception. Wane (2009) notes, there may be different definitions and ideas about a decolonizing project. In her perspective, however, "it is important to note that to decolonize, one must first start from within oneself in a reflective process" (p.171). In the reflective process, one may need to interrogate history of one's education, process of knowledge production, legitimatization and negation of Indigenous ways of knowing in the knowledge production, and power relationship. Wane (2009) argues:

> [A] decolonization project involves being aware of how we live our lives and how
> our thoughts, beliefs, and interactions with others are shaped by systems that
> create universal norms, by erasing, delegitimizing, or marginalizing other

knowledges and forms of knowing. This awareness is the first step to

transforming educational systems in ways that create an education that speaks to

all (p.172).

Similarly, Cree scholar Wilnona Wheeler also claims that decolonization needs a

development of critical consciousness. He states: A large part of decolonization entails

developing a critical consciousness about the cause(s) of our oppression, the distortion of

history, our own collaboration, and the degrees to which we have internalized colonialist

ideas and practices (as cited in, Wilson, 2004, p. 71). In the colonial education,

indigenous knowledges have been marked and internalized into people's mind as

"primitive" and "inferior" to Western ways of knowing. In the process of decolonizing

one's mind, it is necessarily to move beyond the social construction of "superiority" and

"inferiority"; it means one needs to unlearn or deconstruct these internalized dominant

notions. We might not be able to decolonize our mind if we continue to focus on what is

"superior" or "inferior," in particular, negation of Indigenous cultural heritage as

"primitive" or "less evolved.

Indigenous knowledges are important tools in the process of decolonization.

Dei (2010) notes that "claiming Indigenous knowledge in the Western academy is part of

an anti-colonial struggle for independence from exploitative relations of schooling and

knowledge production" (p.103). Dei (2006) also maintains that "power of anti-colonial

prism lies in its offering of new philosophical insights to challenge Eurocentric

discourses, in order to pave the way for Southern/Indigenous intellectual and policies

emancipation" (p. 2). In anti-colonial approach, marginalized voices of colonized subjects

are centred. In that context, although my study seems to have limitations in the Eurocentric academy, the anti-colonial discursive framework enables me to work with possibilities within the limitations. In the process of exploring Indigenous knowledges and decolonization, the acts of reclaiming and revisiting the past are crucial in order to gather the fragmented pieces of the self   (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Wane, 2006). Reclaiming Indigenous knowledges in the academy and making them visible are political projects of resistance to colonialism and imperialism without essentializing them, as Dei (2010) and Wane (2006) maintain.

Methodology

In order to explore the research questions that I identified in Chapter one about the energy from Indigenous perspectives, and marginalization of the ways of knowing, as my method, I will employ secondary sources and my own experiences into my analysis. In using secondary sources as my analysis, I focus on the texts that relate to the power of words, the notions of energy from Indigenous perspectives, and notions of healings with the energy. The sources also include newspaper articles that relate to the response to the study of power of words done by students. Analyzing a source from media helps me to examine the ways in which devaluation and negation of Indigenous ways of knowing occur not only within a classroom space but also how the devaluation and negations are strengthened by the response from outside a classroom. In addition to the analysis of using secondary source, I also use the knowledges that I have listened to and learned from my parents. My ways of thinking and ideas about energy are enormously influenced by the teaching of my parents. Vine Deloria states "we may misunderstand, but we do not misexperience" (as cited in Gookin, 2003 p.43). What I have listened to and learned in

the interactions with them are at least real for me. Thus I hope that taking into

consideration these experiences and knowledges in the academy can lead to the

discussion about knowledge production in the academy.

<center>**Chapter Four: Vibrating Energy and Schooling**</center>

Introduction

      While Indigenous ways of knowing have been gradually devalued in Japan since modern education was introduced as indicated in Chapter Two, the knowledge of our ancestors has continued to be passed down in various ways, such as through family members, community members and community members from other areas. Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing emphasize holistic and balanced or harmonious relationship with other people, other creatures, nature, and the universe. These are also intertwined with cosmic consciousness or spirituality. In this chapter, I explore how the vibrating energy that we produce through thinking, speaking and writing has actual impact on students' learning process. First, I explore the extent to which our ancestors had a profound understanding of the mechanism of our mind and its link to cosmic consciousness in their ways of knowing. As Mayuzumi (2009) claims exploring the holistic understanding of their relationship with others and nature in my analysis is also a way to articulate the subjugated knowledge that is closely linked to each experience. In order to explore their understanding, I refer to "Kototama," and Indigenous healing in Japan. By exploring Kototama, I believe that we can reconsider individual and collective responsibility to others, nature, and even the universe. Moreover, the sense of responsibility and understanding can be the doorway through which the process of decolonization in the school system can begin.

Japanese Indigenous Knowledge and Spirituality

      The Japanese Indigenous worldview is based on the idea that everything, including animated and inanimate beings, have a soul or spirit, and emphasizes living

<center>58</center>

with oneself, others, other creatures, nature, and the universe in harmony. Japanese ancestors understood that human beings are all part of and nurtured by nature. Those ancestors knew that they could not control nature; rather they found expressions of the creator in nature. The understanding that we are all part of and nurtured by nature and that collective works by community members sustain our lives are evoked in various practices in daily lives. For example, in Japanese culture, before we start eating every meal, we say "Itadakimasu", (いただきます) by which we give thanks for all the food," and when we finish, we say "Gochisousama", (ごちそうさま） which in addition to the food we give thanks for all the processes, and the work that we have done in the preparation for food, with our hands in the prayer position. These gestures express the understanding that what we eat is provided by nature and will be part of our bodies. We never forget to give thanks for the connections among human beings and among nature. The energy produced through each thanksgiving from the hearts to each other and towards nature might be important components to sustain a community in harmony.

The worldview that is grounded in the idea that everything is alive is often called "animism". E.B. Tylor originally coined the term (as cited in Clammer, 2001). Tylor suggests that animism contains the essence of spiritualistic philosophy and that this is the primitive form of religion. However, his naming, categorizing, and defining of the belief is arguably problematic. His perspective ignores the complexities and diversity within the worldview. It is not a primitive form of "religion". This Indigenous worldview has been embedded in our daily lives for thousands of years as part of our understanding of ecology. In relation to Japanese Indigenous worldview, "Shinto" (the way to the Creator) as a belief system is often seen as a "religion" by many scholars today. Although "Shinto"

is generally categorized as a religion of Japanese origin, the word Shinto (神道) itself means "the way to the Creator" in Japanese. Tou (michi) (道) is translated as "a way" in English. While "Christianity"（キリスト教）"Islam"（イスラム教）"Buddhism" （仏教）are expressed as "doctrines" or "teachings" (教), Shinto (神道) is not considered as a "teaching" or a "doctrine," but as a "way of life". It is within this understanding that the ways of the creator are manifested in the ways that everyone is creating through their lives. It is both the collective and the individual journey. It should be noted that those are Japanese interpretations of each of those religions at the particular time when they were named and categorized "religions" rather than "the ways"; an important point is that it might reflect the 'Japanese' perception and interpretation of those religions with certain reasons and certain time when these religions were introduced.

Systematized and bureaucratized "States Shinto" was strategically brought in during the Meiji period (since 1986). In the late nineteenth century as the Meiji restoration started, the Japanese government imposed it upon the localized and diversified forms of Shinto known as "Ko-shinto" (old Shinto or folk Shinto) and Shrine Shinto, expressed and seen, for example, in the various local festivals, arts, forms of healings. According to Clammer (2001), the Japanese government sought to unify people's consciousness in order to aid their fight towards global competitiveness, socially, politically and economically. Thus, a belief system was used to create a national collective identity based on a common belief system and everyday practices, and thereby colonize the minds of Japanese people, rather than enrich their understanding of their lives (Clammer, 2001). It is important to keep in mind that while the belief system has been used to construct the organized religion, the belief systems with local diversities

within it can be still found in communities.

The Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing are intertwined with cosmic consciousness/ spirituality. The ability to acknowledge, understand and feel wholeness and connection within oneself, as well as interconnectedness with other creatures, nature and the universe, might be one of the abilities that we have forgotten over colonial history, throughout which we have been compelled to focus enormously on our body and mind. The human mind registers alike and dislike based on the information that we receive from seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasting. I do not deny this characteristic of the mind. In fact, through this process our minds can enjoy various pictures, drawings, music and food, which can cause us to experience happiness and relaxation. However, it is also the mind, an unbalanced mind, which labels alike or dislikes based only on what it can perceive. For example, when we see a beautiful flower (by own perception) that has an unpleasant smell (for us individuals), how many of us understand that the object is a manifestation of the Creator before judging whether we like or dislike it? Can we understand or even try to understand the manifestation beyond what we can sense? This unbalanced mind also may create the spaces which make discrimination justifiable based on race, ability, sex, sexuality, and age. How many hours in a day do we usually focus on what we cannot see, hear, smell, or taste? Have we even learned how to focus on something that we cannot perceive? Ancestors in Japan maintained their balanced mind with "cosmic consciousness" which came through their understanding of the principle of "Kototama" (Shimada, 1993, 1995). In fact, I argue that Emoto's experiments with water crystal, which I will refer to later in this chapter, open up a possibility of making the Indigenous knowledge of Kototama appealing to a wider audience, despite the fact that it has been

easily taken as illegitimate knowledge, as can be seen in the many criticisms about it.

Before I go into further discussion about Kototama, I would like to define my understanding of the concept of spirituality, as the mechanisms of Kototama and spirituality are intertwined. Defining spirituality is a complicated matter, with many complexities and contradictions. Tisdell and Tolliver (2003) maintain that "it is related to a connection to what may refer to as the life force, God, creator, a higher self or purpose" (p. 374). Various definitions of spirituality have been proposed by scholars, but defining it is tricky due to the fact that many definitions may exclude the profound spiritual knowledge of marginalized local peoples rather than including it. In fact, what should be questioned and challenged is to what extent are we referring to the same reality when use the word "spirituality". Dei (2002b) states:

> Spirituality encourages the sharing of personal and collective experiences of understanding and dealing with the self. Olson (2000) notes that the issues of spirituality in learning and pedagogical situations are critical for transformative teaching given that much of what is "universal" in spirituality exists in its manifestations in the particulars of knowing and asserting who we are, what our cultures are, and where we come from (p. 10).

In other words, the definition of spirituality is implied within the personal and collective experiences. Should we even use the word itself to explain our own understanding? What happens if or when one uses different words to explain the same understanding? Is it acceptable in an academy where certain words are legitimized, favored or even required in order to take part in certain formal and informal conversations. In my background, I

have not used the word "spirituality", but rather "cosmic consciousness", or "the creator's will", words which have always sounded more natural to me. It is expressed like a thoughtful heart of caregivers that raise their children with their love and support, considering a human being as a creator's creature, and the universe as the beginning of life.

In relation to the concepts of spirituality and the Creator, the rituals within shrines associated with "Shinto" and Japanese words are explored here. For example, there is a mirror set in every shrine in Japan. The reflection of the individual looking into the mirror is believed to represent the creator. In other words, the creator is you. A creator is not something to be apart from you, but it is indeed yourself. The mirror in Japanese is called a "ka-ga-mi". When "ga" (translated as "ego" in English) is taken away from the rest of the letters, "ka-mi" is left. "Kami" translated into English means the "creator".

A re-realization of our cosmic consciousness or spirituality is necessary to regain a "balanced mind". "Realization" in Japanese is "Sa-to-ru (悟る). This means that he/she becomes conscious of things of which he/she has not previously realized. It also means removing one's ego and realizing the "truth". When it is considered that "Sa" means 'distance', and "to-ru" means 'to remove', in this context I think that in the realization of our cosmic consciousness, we remove the distance between our spirituality and our sensing mind by ceasing to rely only on the information that we can get from our senses. It suggests regaining a balanced mind that listens to the voice of our spirituality. I believe from the teaching from my family, this voice is always with us but it has been ignored as we have focused too much on our mind and the senses. Thus, spirituality, as I understand it from my own background, is a life-force,

or the feeling of the creator which guides us, within which no superiority and inferiority exists. This spirituality requires the consciousness and realization of "our selves". Only then can the creator in us be heard in our own reflection in the mirror. With our understanding of spirituality's strength as a life-force, I believe that the decolonization of the mind in the school system is a possibility.

Kototama

The Japanese ancestors considered words as the Creator that produces life. In fact, a bell in a Japanese shrine is often said to be the instrument that is used to call for or get the attention of the Creator and any divine heroes. The other role of a bell and the other reasons why the bell exists in shrines, however, are not often explored in the academy. Shimada (1993) explains that the role of the bell is related to Kototama. The shape of a bell is the shape people create when they open their mouths. When a bell is shaken, the sound comes out of the "mouth" of the bell. When people open their mouths and say something, they are like bells in the sense that they produce a vibrating energy that in turn produces life. The ancestors in Japan had a profound understanding of the power of words, which can be expressed in the form of spoken/unspoken, written/unwritten, emotion, and thoughts - "Kototama," - which is often understood as the spirit of words or power of words. However, this knowledge is not just about the spirit of words: it is also a cosmology. The belief is that Kototama, with its 50 rhythms (the vowels and their combinations with consonants), produces life (Shimada, 1993, 1995). According to a study of Kototama, the vibration of each rhythm produces a different energy which affects reality. In other words, each word has meanings and an actual impact on reality. Japanese ancestors applied this knowledge to their everyday lives. The mechanisms of

Kototama are also intertwined with "cosmic consciousness" or so-called "spirituality."

However, it is not my aim to explain which sounds have particular impact in detail

following the study of Kototama. Rather, I would apply the understanding that our words,

our thoughts, our intention, and emotions have an actual impact on ourselves, others, and

natures, and universe through the vibrations they produce so that I could contribute to the

creation of space in which to discuss and explore inner transformation.

Here, I would like to explore one of the experiments that show the impacts of

heard and unheard vibration, called Hado. As previously referred to, the experiments

were done by a Japanese man, named Masaru Emoto. He published his first book in 1999

on the effect of words on the molecules in water. In his experiments, water crystals were

shown to change depending on what one said towards the water. If the water received a

thoughtful spoken and/or typed word such as "beautiful", its shape and color were well

shaped. On the contrary, when the water received a destructive word, its shape and color

were unfavorable and deformed. In another experiment, rice was put in three bottles. The

rice in one bottle was exposed to the kind words, such as "you are beautiful", while the

rice in another bottle was exposed to disrespectful words," you are fool", and the rice in

the final bottle was just ignored. After one month, the rice that was exposed to the

thoughtful words started ferment, with a mellow smell. Interestingly, although the rice

that was exposed to destructive words or ignored rotted, the rice that was ignored rotted

before the rice that was exposed to the negative words. He explains that "giving positive

or energy attention to something is a way of giving energy, and the most damaging form

of behavior is withholding your attention" (Emoto, 2004b, p. 65). Moreover, Emoto's

experiments show how powerful our thoughts are, even without words; in another

experiment, water crystals with an unfavorable color and shape from a lake in Japan changed when people prayed for the lake using curing and respectful thoughts.

I would like to first provide a more in depth description of Kototama. According to Emoto (2004b), "Kototama" is the sound and the energy we are always producing, when we are speaking and thinking. As a consequence, the material world is the manifestation of vibrating energies. Vibration is also called "Shindo" in Japanese. Emoto (2004a) asserts that the original meaning of the word "Shindo"（振動） is "Shinto"(神道), the ways of a Creator; "Tou"(道) can be also called "do"（動）depending on its combination with other words. The Japanese ancestors believed that everything begins with vibration; vibration is life itself. These vibrations include both the heard and unheard sounds and energy we produce by speaking and thinking. The ancestors knew the power of written and spoken words with the dynamic relationship with our thoughts, intention and emotion.

Emoto (2004b) suggests that every creature is in a state of vibration, and as a result every creature produces "sound"/energy. I believe, as part of my embodied knowledges, that not only are human beings and other animate beings given a life force, but also that all inanimate things are endowed with a life force, even materials such as stone, sand, and metal. In fact, Emoto (2004a) notes that the sound is not necessarily something that people can hear, although there are some people who apparently hear the "voices" of trees and who can communicate with plants. Those people, I would assert, can feel the vibration that comes from these living things, and can "hear their energy" in human language or can communicate in their own individual ways. Moreover, some people might "see" and "feel" these energies.

Emoto's experiments indicate some of the characteristics of "Kototama," and interconnectedness between human-beings and the natural world. Moreover, his experiments show the differences among languages. For example, "Arigatou" in Japanese can be translated into "thank you" in English. Each word creates differently shaped crystals, however, the shapes might show that concept of "Arigatou" or "thank you" is slightly different because of the diversities behind the cultures. In my experience, some of the members of my generation call their parents "Mama" (Mom) and "Papa" (Dad). Because of the impact of Western culture on Japanese society, this usage has been considered "fashionable," but my parents never allowed me to refer to them in that way. I was taught to call them "Okaasan" (mother), and "Otousan" (father) in Japanese because they knew that the language and words could make a difference in terms of my relationship with them. Adherence to this usage also might be seen as one form of my parents' resistance to the imposition of European languages on the Japanese culture and ways of knowing. Battiste and Henderson (2000) emphasize the importance of language to Indigenous knowledge. The authors state that understanding a language enables comprehension of a people's worldview and consciousness regarding their relationship with the ecosystem. In addition, the Eurocentric worldview includes the assumption that any language can be translated to the dominant language. According to the authors, however, this notion is a problematic illusion. The question is not only whether a language is translatable, but also whether it is translatable without damage or loss.

When it is considered that 55% to 70% of the human body is composed of water, one can assume that the vibration of a spoken or typed word, thoughts and intentions can influence an individual's body, feelings, and ways of thinking, mind, and soul. The

connection between the importance of language and overall the well-being of people also becomes apparent. This influence was seen in an experiment that shows how much a word's vibration changes water. Moreover, the notion of vibrating energy is not limited to a human body or to water, but also can be applicable to all animated or inanimate matters. How can this understanding transform a classroom into a more inclusive space? What kind of internal and external impact would this notion bring to the school system? More importantly, how can one understand the impact of vibrating energy on marginalized students in school? I will focus more on these in a later section.

Healing and Schooling: Implications of Indigenous Healing Knowledges for Students' Well-being in a Schooling Space

Similar to Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing, Japanese Indigenous healing knowledge has been gradually devalued. I realize almost all younger generations today go to see a doctor trained with European medical knowledge for medication because we believe it is the more effective or better treatment. This idea is the process of internalizing and reproducing the dominant notions of inferiority and superiority. When one can deal with illness using Indigenous knowledge, he/she might go to see a doctor due to his/her "anxiety" or "uncertainty" about the symptoms. I have experienced that when I had a serious cold or infections, if western medicine could heal easier and faster than traditional medicine, I was willing to use it. Through internalizing the dominant notions of "faster" is "better", which put higher value on "efficacy" or "certainty," we reproduce these notions on an everyday basis. Then, traditional ways of healing often come to be considered "not reliable" and are only used for less serious illnesses or injuries. However, the Indigenous ways of healing are not completely gone; they are still alive and have

been passed down through generations by family members or others. I was raised by parents who taught me the importance of understanding illnesses holistically. I was taught to not only perceive the symptom but also its context, and to place an emphasis on non-western medication, the healing power of nature in oneself, and the traditional ways of healing. My parents believed that there is a reason why one gets ill, and that one should pay attention to the roots of illness holistically. As much as possible, they kept me from using western medicine which many doctors recommend today. For example, I have been struggling with eczema since I was a child. As a child, I did not know why my parents did not allow me to use western medicine, which could release me from itchiness immediately. They knew that it had a quick effect but it would also cause harmful side effects in the long run. Instead of using western medicine, we preferred using techniques such as a visit to the hot spring, Japanese vegetables, fruits, Japanese herbs, Chinese herbs, water, Kikou (Qigong), acupuncture, and energy healing. These techniques are also ways of respecting my inner ability, and of appreciating power of nature. Such techniques were part of their resistance to Western medication and a way for them to maintain their Indigenous ways of knowing about health.

One example of an Indigenous healing knowledge that my parents passed down to me, was a traditional healing method for eyes. I remember that when I had an eye infection my parents made my eyes better with a comb of boxwood. It was rubbed on a tatami (straw mat), and placed on my eyes. This is a traditional healing method that my father learned from my grandmother. When I asked my father why it was effective, he replied that he did not know where the combination of a comb of boxwood and straw mat came from. He also replied that people could and still can "communicate" with the

natural resources, and also gained that knowledge from their "communication" and experiences. This is not a surprising concept if one acknowledges other comparable beliefs and practices. For example, in Indigenous healing practices all over the world, there is a very rich knowledge of herbs that has been passed down by traditional herbalists over the course of generations. I would argue that some Indigenous healers may be very aware of this notion of vibrating energy that I explained above. Therefore, when I see evidence of their enormously rich herbal knowledge, I think that they have not only received herbal knowledge and observations of animals from their ancestors, but that they also have the ability to "communicate" with herbs. Besides the human interaction among families and communities, I assert the importance of interactions within the ecosystem.

Regarding the vibrating energy, that we produce, spoken words with touching have been used as a healing. While growing up, it was not an unusual ritual for my parents and grandmothers to touch and pat the place where I felt pain and say: "pain, pain, go away!"(痛いの痛いの飛んでいけ) Words sometimes make the feelings of worry ease. Not only would the energy come through spoken words, but also touching is considered as an important part. There is a Japanese word "Teate"（手当て）which is a synonym to treatment or curing. The literal meaning of this is touching. In my family, touching is always used in healing or in making someone in my family get better when they feel sick. Within the process, we also create and nurture our relationship and trust of each other. The ancestors in Japan were not the only ones who realized the power of words and thoughts, or of impact on water, and considered their impact on human beings, other creatures and the universe. Other Indigenous communities share these ideas. For

example, many Indigenous communities around the world use words or sounds - in the form of songs, stories, mantras, proverbs, chants and drumming - as everyday practices in the process of healing. Moreover, the power of words spoken shown through the use of water has been recognized globally. The Indigenous knowledge of the Ainu, who originally lived in Hokkaido and experienced Japanese colonialism (Siddle, 1997), has elements in common with Japanese Indigenous knowledges in terms of the perceived power of words. The Ainu people have indicated the high value they place on their language by saying that "[w]e teach our children that human language is mightier than the sharpest sword or poison arrow" (Kayano, as cited in Anderson & Iwasaki-Goodman, 2001). Moreover, there is a proverb passed within Okinawa (Ryukyu) that says when you use words, use them respectfully as you use money (Kutobajinjike) (Yaka, 1974). In Amami, part of Ryukyu, people say that when you say words with sincerity, you do not need money. In other words, it describes how using words with sincerity is important (kutu-ba jenka- ne- iran) (Okamura, 2007).

An example from another context: the Aboriginal people in the Canadian context, the Dene Tha people in Northwest Alberta say that "…like if you were sick, I could sing you a song and give you a glass of water. That song is the owl song and the owl power in the water might make you better" (Jean-guy Goulet, 1998, p. 91). In another example from storytelling, Dion Buffelo (1990) notes healing through stories. She provides this definition:

> …healing through stories is but one aspect of synthesizing our relationship with
> ourselves and with the entire universe….The storyteller is a healer or synergizer
> within an Indian community whose function is to produce sound-words for the

listeners so that constricted energy can be released. The synergizer uses picture words to awaken in the listeners the awareness that they have within themselves all the elements necessary for their own healing (p.120).

This indicates the power of sounds and words, which can be used as a healing. In the Hawaiian context, King (2001) describes the use of water by healers called *kahunas*:

Another commonly used form of "medicine" favored by kahunas is plain water, infused by the kahuna's mana and accompanying thought forms. Typically, a kahuna does this by focusing mana out of his hands or breath into the water while concentrating on a healing image. Naturally this is most effective when the patient is told what the water will do for him, but the effect is greater when the water is "changed" than when is it not, regardless of whether the patient witnesses the changing. This is definitely outside the realm of western orthodoxy, which would probably claim that the water would act more as a placebo than anything (p.115).

Mana, that King (2001) refers to as a "form of force" (p. 62), has impact on water. The water can transform into a medicine. Water is alive, and listens to what one says and "speaks" in its own "language". In the Ghanaian context, Konadu (2008) talks about aspects of the power of proverbs when they are spoken. "As the spoken word, a proverb has the power to transform or alter reality; it is also the "embodiment of acoustic energy" (Yankah, as cited in Konadu, p. 125).

Therefore, the notions of energy utilized for healing practices can be found in various cultures. Those notions, however, are hardly heard in school systems today, not only in Japan but also in the other communities as well. I believe these notions can help to think about the ways in which the notions of energy and healings can be applied to transformative learning spaces. When we are conscious about how our energy can both harm and heal oneself and others in the learning process, we can transform learning spaces from being hostile and damaging into being more inclusive, and meaningful.

Energy through Marginalization at School

Schools help to maintain the generalized image of "Japaneseness", for Japanese nationhood in what Anderson (1991) refers to as an "imagined community". In these terms, schooling has not developed as an inclusive space that accepts cultural diversity, but instead as a space in which "obstacles" to the status quo are excluded. In fact, truths that are inconvenient for the dominant group are still omitted from the curriculum. Moreover, student excellence has been defined as conforming to a particular ideology. Similarly, in the Canadian context, Sears (2003) identifies the heavy weight of Eurocentric perspectives on the curriculum. He states that it is clear that there is a colonial curriculum centred on European geography and history (Sears, 2003). He goes on to argue that "colonial education taught students to aspire to become someone else" (p. 135). In this Eurocentric perspective consider how local knowledges and local people's experiences do not have value (Wane, 2009). Sears also asserts teachers' low expectations and stereotypes towards racialized students. Dei (1997) emphasizes that the low expectations are attributed to the idea that racialized students are considered outsiders, without access to (real) knowledge.

In such a situation, students who are racialized and do not fit into the Eurocentric norms, often are subjugated to hostile, negative energy, by themselves, their classmates and teachers. Here, I do not limit the discussion to the Japanese context, but would like to expand it broadly. As I highlighted above, negative energy or neglect affects water and rice. How can the study of Emoto on neglected rice be relevant to students and teachers interested in those who are silenced in a classroom? How can it speak to teachers who blame family members for the students' perceived academic deficiency rather than acknowledging the impact of their thoughts, intention, or neglect on these students? The learning process of students could be affected by that destructive and disrespectful energy. It would be a limitation that one could not evaluate or measure how much the energy from thought and intensions affects students' learning process and classroom environment. However, it does not mean that we can devalue and ignore our responsibility in producing energy that affects others. The impact of our producing energy on others' behavior should not be devalued because it cannot be measured or perceived. The Indigenous understanding of vibrating energy that moves through matter could transform learning space, whether it be inner transformation based on awareness and reflection, or outer transformation such as changing a classroom environment. In order to make inner and outer transformation happen, educators, should be critically conscious about the ways in which oppression among students in the classroom has been perpetuated. Moreover, the consciousness should be linked to their practice.

Impacts of Energy on Student's Learning Process and Accomplishment

As Emoto's study implies, ignoring and treating racialized bodies and their

embodied knowledge as if they are invisible, is a form of violence. In this context, there is not only perceivable physical violence, but also, violence as manifested in the form of neglect, dismissal, and the emission of destructive and harmful energy among students by instructors. Although directing violent thoughts has not been seen as violence due to its unperceivability, such a form of violence has an impact on students' bodies just as physical violence does. In the current educational system, teachers often lack familiarity with students' cultural backgrounds. This causes them to rely on stereotypical, homogenizing understandings of racial and cultural groups (Wane, 2003). Wane (2003) writes:

> Assumptions that Aboriginals are alcoholics, for example, or that Blacks are criminals, which are justified by the rhetoric that "they have chosen to live that way." Such uninformed thinking demonstrates a lack of appreciation for structural issues, which affect the way in which society operates. More specifically, these belief systems fail to acknowledge that society does not provide equal opportunities for all of its members. Ignoring these realities, students from middle class backgrounds feel justified in asserting that "these people need to work harder- I have always struggled to better myself." And hence the myth of a meritocratic society is perpetuated (p. 6).

Considering the situation, in creating an inclusive space in a classroom of teacher education program, Wane (2003) notes she, as an instructor, "challenges students to examine their own biases and stereotypes that influence the ways in which they interact

with others" (p. 6). I would like to add to her strategy by asserting that in our efforts to create inclusive space in schooling, we should also consider the effects of energy on students. We should go beyond perceivable and empirical conception of violence, and at the same time interrogate why this kind of Indigenous way of knowing is seen as "irrational", "invalid" or "primitive".

We should continue to ask ourselves and educators how much violence is perpetuated through words, thoughts, and neglect within the school system, and how often children who have received damaging energy, are affected by it. Racialized and minority students, who are facing intersecting oppression in terms of race, class, gender, language, and religion, are often aware of the teacher's discouraging and hostile attitudes, and low expectation of them (Dei, 1997; Zine, 2001). While culturally relevant curriculums and anti-racism education are recognized as being needed in such situations, we hardly talk about the impact of destructive, hostile and disrespectful energy on those students by instructors and peers. When it is considered from an Indigenous perspective, one can begin to think about the impact of one's attitudes and energy towards students, rather than blaming those who are seen as "unsuccessful students". I believe that the conscious reflection on one's energy could contribute to making an even small difference in educational spaces.

What then does "positive" energy mean? How can we utilize these energies throughout thinking, speaking and writing? I would like these questions to lead teachers to reflect on their own thoughts, intension, and use of words towards students in everyday practices in a classroom. I would assert that "positive" energy could be expressed not only as being "respectful", "thoughtful", "kind", "hopeful", "loving", or inexpressible

words, but also words or feelings which express reciprocal relationship. In this context, the notion of community is important. I acknowledge that there are always conflicts in the learning spaces and students often can learn valuable lessons from these conflicts. My assertion about the impact of "positive" energy does not negate conflict. I do not believe that conflicts always manifest hostile and destructive energy. There are certain issues that dominant bodies do not want to engage in, such as issues of white privileges, white supremacy, racism, and colonialism. Rather I argue that conflicts should not reproduce or reinforce feeling of negation and hatred towards each other within a space.

I argue this reproduction of hatred in relation to the resistance against oppression. Oppressed students would send hostile intension or energy from hatred as a resistance back to the students who are oppressing them. It can be a resistance and survival strategy to protect themselves from further emotional and physical violence. However, I would like to address it by linking to Dei's (2008) argument about teaching method concerning oppression. He states:

It is also destructive to fight against one form of oppression while using patterns of another to do so. An example would be a White male adult using the strap on a White child to teach the child not to be racist against a Black child. This tactic may punish racist behaviour, but it leaves physical violence as a method of controlling others and adult authority over children solidly in place (Dei, 2008, p. 32).

He argues it is not effective to educate a dominant body not to oppress through

punishment. Linking this notion to the vibrating energy, the question is how can one resist and create the space to give oppressed students voices and sense of belonging without reproducing and reinforcing hatred towards teachers, or among students. It is a challenging question.

In addition, the marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing, understood here as a form of violence, occurs by excluding such ways of knowing from the curriculum or by relegating them to a "special class" offered on a limited basis, outside the regular curriculum. These ways of knowing should not be legitimatized in this way for only a few days in the year. But, how have these limited choices for students, in terms of having the space and time to learn about and from their cultural ways of knowing to get their own destination, affected students' academic achievement? Moreover, regarding the ignored embodied knowledges, a form of withdrawing from engaging in development of knowledge production, the question is: how do the differences in students, in terms of physical characteristics, gender, age, ability, language and popularity at school, play a role in the way others silence them and those of their knowledges that are considered "different" at that particular time and within particular spaces? Furthermore, how does this exclusion throughout the younger years of students impact their identity?

Analysis: Challenges of Decolonizing the Minds

The challenge to the implementation of a way of knowing that centres energy in schooling is the strength and pervasiveness of Eurocentric ways of knowing. Even the study about vibrating energy and an impact on water by Emoto that I mentioned requires an appeal to Eurocentric knowledge sources in order to be taken seriously by many. And,

although Emoto's book could create the possibility of talking about elements of Indigenous knowledge in schools, its use of visual proof implies that is it unacceptable for one to believe what they cannot perceive until it can actually be affirmed with at least one of the senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, or tasting). Science, which is basically inclusive only of Western ways of knowing information, requires us to "see" the evidence with data from experiments. I argue that this limitation is problematic in terms of attempting to decolonize our minds. I do not dispute the scientific method itself, but instead the ways in which perception and knowing are defined in specific and exclusive ways.

I have been brought up with Indigenous knowledge being deemed illegitimate in public spaces since I was a child. Yet I have seen how, since Emoto's book was published and the idea of Kototama came out in public in Japan and other countries, many people express amazement and interest in these ideas. I have wondered why people became so excited about this "new" knowledge, and why it is only now being more broadly disseminated and legitimated. Furthermore, I question why it has been ignored in the educational system for so long. While the Indigenous knowledge that I was familiar with was excluded within the school system, I also thought I should be silent regarding my beliefs with even my friends so that I could avoid being bullied due to my "old-fashioned beliefs" or "weirdness". However, once the "experts", defined by their privileged access to power and "real knowledge", transformed "illegitimate knowledge" into "legitimate knowledge", people came to more readily open themselves up to ideas that were new to them. It has not been the people who live by their handed-down ancestral wisdom, but the "experts", those who have been granted "permission" by the "experts" who have had the

power to claim and transform illegitimate knowledge into legitimate knowledge – as if they themselves have just discovered that knowledge. However, is it really impossible for us to become conscious about and re-connect to an unseen mechanism without perceivable "scientific" evidence?

There are many ways in which science assumes things that can't be proven using 'perception'. Similarly, there are plenty of claims that Kototama is "real", but people might chose not to notice them. The other question is which or whose beliefs get noticed and legitimated in public. As stated above, this need for certain types of "evidence" may come from the unbalanced mind which is divided from spirituality, by giving priority to our senses over our cosmic consciousness. As Chevez (2001) states, there is a great risk for an educator who openly encourages students to utilize their intuition in the academy.

In the current school system globally, emphasis has been placed on competition, development, and progress since the early stages of the students' school life. These emphases benefit national economic and political development and increase a nation's competitiveness in the global capitalist system. Emphasis has not been placed on the development of a sense of interconnectedness by which students and teachers create transformation through strong, local communities within the school system.

Analysis: Rejection and Resistance in the Classroom

Irony and contradiction may be found in the reality. On one hand, many learners in Japanese schools are regaining a sense of need to live with others and nature in balance, particularly since they have experienced wars, natural disasters, environmental destruction, increased individualism, loss of respect for elders, and a weakened sense of belonging to the wider community. On the other hand, these learners are still caught up in

a competition about knowledge. They are trying to establish whose knowledge is "right" and "wrong" or "superior" and "inferior" rather than questioning the process of knowledge production in a colonial system. In fact, some schools in Japan currently are trying to use Emoto's text in class so that students can discuss the power of words and thoughts, and also reflect on their use of language in everyday experience.

However, while some educators recognize the need for Indigenous knowledges in the public sphere and in the academy, there are also critics who maintain that those knowledges are not appropriate in the educational system due to the "validity" of "scientific" ways of knowing.

Some Japanese scholars emphasize that the process of creating a crystal is a merely physical phenomena (Samaki, 2007). Moreover, they critique the introduction of "animistic thoughts" in the school system, such as the notions that water can react to people's words and thoughts. Their argument is that there is no possibility that "words", "one's thoughts", one's intention" can change the shape of water crystallization at all. These critics insist that "water" cannot read people's words and minds; the relationship and possible "communication" among peoples and natural environment are denied. Recently, students in Miyazaki studied the power of words by using oranges where they sent thoughtful intension and words to one orange and sent destructive intension and words to the other. They found differences in outcomes but, the science scholars in newspaper commented that "there is no way that oranges could react to human's words" (Ishida, 2010, P. 24). The newspaper concludes that there is a danger to believing these things in that young people would be scammed, should someone try to sell products such as cosmetics with "positive words". These scholars' claim was that students should be

critical of "occult". This comment implies the rejection of this beyond our understanding of "mystery".

The eradication of mystery is the goal of Eurocentric education. Aikenhead and Ogawa (2007) state:

> A fundamental presupposition in Eurocentric sciences points that nature is knowable. This knowledge usually comprises generalized descriptions and mechanistic explanation. Mechanistic explanations are models or series of cause-effect events that operate like a well-ordered clock…..Mystery in nature creates the need to know nature, which leads to investigations aimed at eradicating that mystery by generating scientific description and explanations. Eradication of mystery is a key intellectual goal in Eurocentric sciences (p. 547).

This perspective misses the big picture by focusing only on scientific rationality. These comments and negations should also be examined within the notions of power. Those who emphasize the "validation" only from the Eurocentric perspectives occupy the space of claim-making public. What is the impact on those students whose studies are negated in public spaces by those who have power of claiming with the name of academic researchers? It is also not only about those who negate Indigenous ways of knowing, but the system that strengthens the claim of validation from Eurocentric perspectives and allows those scholars to negate others. I do not oppose their disagreement and Eurocentric perspective. What I disagree with, however, was the situation where "differences" are the target of negation rather than being seen as "diversity."

The ancestors of those alive today knew and passed down their knowledges that

words (spoken and unspoken, written and unwritten, heard and unheard, including thoughts, intension and emotion) produce energy and that words themselves are energy. They did so without any Eurocentric, "scientific" ways of affirming. Scientists, who consider the Eurocentric way of knowing to be the only legitimate way to operate, seem to reinforce the binary notion of us/them, legitimate/illegitimate and valid/invalid. In this system, Indigenous knowledges are treated as "primitive" and "illegitimate," and Eurocentric knowledge is considered "advanced" and "valid". I think that the creation of a space for discussion among practitioners of the different ways of knowing is crucially important. However, even in that space, as long as Eurocentric ways of knowing are considered the most "reliable" and endowed with the power to silence other ways of knowing, the discussion that occurs in the space will not be rooted in the decolonization project. It would instead lead to change on only the surface. In settings where decolonization and Indigenous knowledge is the stated focus, it is important to consider the ways in which decolonization practices are applied in these spaces. If the focus does not bring the practice whether directly or indirectly, how can we hope for change in the space beyond?

Regarding the argument that "thoughtful" or "harmful" intension, thoughts, and words have impact on reality, I recognize the complexities of our feelings and emotions, and the various ways humans express themselves with spoken words. In reality, many people, especially children, sometimes use negative words as a way of showing our sincerity, shyness, or even closeness with others. I definitely avoid the simplistic conclusion that has been drawn by teachers in some schools and that has been subjected to criticism, that types of words are parallel to types of impacts. For example, according

to this view, the use of "positive" words leads automatically to preferable outcomes, and the use of "negative" words leads automatically to destructive outcomes.

Human behavior, including the use of words, is very dynamic and complex. Particularly in schools, where there are students with different backgrounds, instructors cannot simply teach students what a positive word or what a negative word is, and cannot dismiss complexities in our use of language and in our overall behavior. However, the point also needs to be made that a word embodies the long history, knowledge, and memories of the ancestors. Each word carries this history, along with everyone's collective thoughts associated with the word. Each word thus would a carry particular energy. This has been emphasized by various scholars such as Fanon, who states that "every dialect is a way of thinking" (Fanon, 2007, p. 25; wa Thiongo, 1986). In addition, intension behind the words cannot be dismissed. Emoto (2007) argues that "everything in the energy realm begins with intention" (p, 259).

A judgment about whether an instructor makes good use of his experiments or not depends on how he/she has a dialogue with this way of knowing and does not just show pictures and "teach" students. The fact that the classroom is a political space can be verified by an examination of some of the comments by parents who "favour" the Eurocentric way of knowing without critically interrogating it. Such comments constitute an example of how the power of Eurocentric ways of knowing is reproduced in the school system. It is not so much that Emoto's study was criticized but that the space for dialogue about the power of energy through intention, thinking, speaking and writing from the Indigenous perspectives is taken away, with impunity.

It is also important to explore what constitutes those parents and scholars

"concern" about "animistic thought" being brought into classroom. What are the fears behind their "concerns"? The concerns that scientists have are, for example, it blocks "logical" thinking, and scientific ways of thinking. The statement implies that Indigenous ways of knowing are not logical or scientific. The notion of logic and science from the Eurocentric perspectives is important in determining what the students' "success," "excellence," and "accomplishment" are. These are determined in a particular and exclusive way.

"Success" is individualized. As I quoted Miyamoto in Chapter Two, that happiness was not "individualized" in a community before the introduction of modern schooling, and "success" might not have been individualized in a community. According to the perspective, "success" is the accumulation of relationships with others. Thus while "success" can be seen within being relational, "failure" is also relational. In relation to "inclusive education", Dei (2010) emphasizes "holistic success" which is academic, social, and spiritual. Individualized notions of "success" make it harder to accomplish the "holistic success". In relation to Dei's notions of "holistic success", I also assert that the notion of reciprocal relationships in energy flow is also important. Energy is not possession to individuals. It flows in balance and can allow beings to help them to have "thoughtful" and "helpful" energy when one does not feel well or feel depressed so that we could take care of each other in the process of our journey.

Again, I avoid a simplistic approach with "good intention", and "positive" words or thoughts automatically and immediately produce favored outcomes for individuals. I believe that our energy is produced within a dynamic relational process. However, my learnings about "Kototama" and healing practices are real to me. What I hope is that my

experiences, which according to Vine Deloria as I mentioned in Chapter Three is undeniably real, can contribute to students, learners and teachers in their learning and teaching process.

Simply being conscious about the energy that each person produces and gives to others has actual impact. However, although the challenges are great, I believe that differences can and will begin to occur for individuals when they are aware of the impact of the vibration of their words and thoughts as compared to when they are not aware of the phenomenon. Even the suggestion that there exists other forms of violence, such as those exhibited by the experiments with water crystals, can create the awareness and reflection needed for a transformation. Educators should also be aware and conscious of these notions. Along these lines, Emoto himself gave seminars to students in some Japanese elementary schools in order to inform the children of the power of their words and thoughts. He noted that after children have actual experiences with the power of words and thoughts, they started reflecting on their use of language and negative thoughts. His success in this regard shows that it is adults who keep young students from being aware of this knowledge and thereby ensure the continued advancement of the projects of the colonial educational system.

In conclusion, exploring the notions of energy from Indigenous perspectives could have implication for transforming learning spaces. We, as educators, should be aware of the ways in which our energy impacts on students' learning process, as well as their self-esteem and academic accomplishment. At the same time, it is also important to explore this notion with students. Transformative spaces could not only be created by teachers, but also with students. Colonial education has been reproduced in the current

school system which offers limited options to students in getting to their own destination in the learning process. As the experiment on rice and water above shows, we also should consider that denying, dismissing or ignoring, in particular, racialized students, is a form of violence in that these actions constitute denying their humanity. From the study, it is also clear that disrespectful and violent thoughts and words can affect not only ourselves, but also others. Therefore, we should go beyond the rational and empirical concepts of violence in any evaluation of potential problems. Evidence from the experiments by Emoto and his study of Kototama demonstrates the importance of exploring and reconnecting to Indigenous knowledge. Through this approach we can regain the sense and understanding of something considered illegitimate in the contemporary world. Without it, the imposition of cultural colonialism will continue to affect children in school systems based on "rational" and empirical ideology.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Japanese Indigenous knowledge systems predate introduction of Eurocentric ways of knowing. There are many lessons in the ancestors' understanding of their relationships with others and nature that we have to "re-member" today. In this thesis, I focused on the vibrating energy that we produce through thinking, speaking, intension, and writing. The idea behind my focus is that not only perceivable action but also unperceivable "action" such as thinking and intension can have an impact on others in reality. In Japanese Indigenous knowledge, it is believed that everything is "alive" whether animated or "inanimate". Thoughts, intension, writing, or spoken words of human beings also become "alive". Energy that flows which we are always producing might not be perceivable. Indigenous people, not only in Japan but also in other communities, however, are aware of the energy and utilize it in their everyday practices. However, through the history of colonialism and re-colonial relationships today, the notions of vibrating energy and its impact in reality have been marginalized and even negated by some scholars who claim the validity of Eurocentric ways of knowing exclusively.

In Japan, in particular, this happened after the Meiji period when Eurocentric ideology enormously had power politically, economically, and culturally. As I stated in chapter two, schooling, compulsory education, that was mainly introduced in Meiji period, is a crucial space for nurturing and internalizing the notions of superiority of Eurocentric ideologies. At the same time, Indigenous ways of knowing became marginalized. However, it does not mean there was no resistance to it. At local level, teachers realized that there was a distance between learning at school and learning from the communities that children belonged. They tried to connect the "education" at school and community in various ways. Folklore studies in particular have been employed to

 examine the imposition of Eurocentric education in Japan. In my study I have employed

anti-colonial perspectives in order to articulate marginalization of Indigenous ways of

knowing and colonial and re-colonial relationships in the knowledge production in the

academy.

 Reconnecting and Reclaiming Japanese Indigenous ways of knowing in my study

is a way to challenge, deconstruct and unlearn Eurocentric validity that is continuously

internalized through education. Furthermore, reclaiming Indigenous knowledge in the

academy is a political action. It is also a way to proclaim local people as knowledge

carriers and producers. This perspective has not been valued in the Eurocentric

knowledge production in the statement of "not academic enough" or "irrational".

Decolonization is not an end product, but a process. While colonization still continues,

the process of decolonization may have started that could be seen as resistance to colonial

oppressions, reclaiming and reconnecting to our own roots.

In the Japanese Indigenous knowledge that everything is "alive", holistic

understanding of the relationship with others, other creatures and nature is needed. While

I have focused on one of the Japanese Indigenous knowledge about impact of energy,

other Indigenous communities utilized the notions of energy into their everyday practices,

such as healing. The more I explored this pillar of Japanese Indigenous knowledge, the

more I found that there are commonalities in their understanding with other Indigenous

cultures. As a study in the future, it is important to explore how these commonalities can

be "allies" to challenge the domination of Eurocentric knowledge in the academy, and

how all Indigenous knowledge can be centred in the academy.

The commonalities among Indigenous communities globally have helped me to

expand my discussion about impact of energy and pedagogical implications to other contexts. In the North American context, racialized students are often described and blamed as "unsuccessful" in their school works and accomplishment. The teachers' negative thoughts and attitudes attributed to racism, sexism, classism, and other isms, have actual impact on students' learning process and accomplishment, considering the study about the vibrating energy and water that I mentioned in previous chapter and the fact that almost 75 percent of our bodies is water. In considering transformation of the learning space, and inclusive space in education, we should create the space for discussion about the energy that we produce. What would happen to student's learning process and outcome if teachers come to the class with thoughtful energy? In order to transform the space, one should reflect on their own use of energy. Because it is not perceivable, does not mean it does not affect and have impact on others. Consciousness about the oppressions from various perspectives, and the ways in which these oppressions are perpetuated in the educational space, such as a classroom, is important. More importantly, I explored how the development of consciousness can be transferred into anti-colonial practices.

This study was not about describing what is the "positive/negative" energy; rather, what I would like to get paid attention to is the need for an observation of our words, thoughts, and emotion to others, and its impact on students' learning process. It is about consciousness and responsibility. In terms of the notion of energy, various Indigenous communities talk about it. In this thesis, because of my subjective location, I applied Japanese Indigenous knowledges that my parents passed down to me in the discussion. It is important to acknowledge that other Indigenous communities acknowledge the notions

of energy in various ways. I believe that we can create the space where we can discuss these notions of energy and reflect upon our thoughts to make changes in educational systems.

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