

DEMOCRATIZING AND DECOLONIZING EDUCATION:
A ROLE FOR THE ARTS AND CULTURAL PRAXIS:
LESSONS FROM PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MAASAILAND, SOUTHERN KENYA

by

Mary Anne Drinkwater

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

Under the impact of global neoliberal educational policies and the continuing influence of colonial-informed policies and pedagogical approaches, the arts, in schools around the world, are either being devalued or their conception is being narrowly focused towards market-based purposes. Researchers and critical theorists have argued that the arts are a vital educational tool for promoting the creative, critical and culturally responsive skills necessary for a robust democratic society. For centuries, the arts and cultural practices have been deeply embedded in the rich cultural heritage of many indigenous peoples as tools for giving voice, building community and sharing knowledge. For nation-states, like Kenya, which have struggled along a rocky road toward democracy, the arts and cultural practices could play a key role in supporting the development of critically engaged citizens for the broader purposes of democratic and transformative education.

This thesis uses a two-pronged lens informed by critical-democratic theory and decolonial theory to explore teachers' understanding of their use of the arts and cultural praxis in a purposely selected case study located in Maasailand, southern Kenya. The research design followed an international case study approach and drew from comparative international education theory and methods. In order to deepen the understanding of the multi-contextual factors influencing teachers' use of the arts and cultural praxis, the study also included data gathered from policy

documents and from other educational stakeholders including head-teachers, principals, supervisory officers, parents, curriculum coordinators, policy makers and community members.

The analysis and discussion of the findings provides a critique of the continuing impact of colonial and neoliberal educational policies on teachers' use of the arts and cultural praxis for transformative education, and highlights the need for a broader and more equitable conception of the arts and cultural practice as *symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging that all individuals in society do*. Drawing from the findings and the literature, I incorporate this broader conception into a new pedagogical model which I call a *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle*. The recommendations recognize that pedagogical changes which value and promote teachers' and schools' use of critical, creative, and culturally responsive approaches for democratic and transformative education must be incorporated into broader educational policy reforms which de-link from hegemonic colonial and neoliberal ideologies.

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Although for confidentiality reasons, I cannot name the many individuals in Kenya, particularly those in the communities I call Enkema and Olapa in my dissertation, I would like to recognize and thank them for the significant role they played in facilitating this research project. I thank the teachers, head-teachers, students, parents and community leaders in these two Maasai communities in which I lived and learned. It was truly a gift, privilege and blessing to have been able to immerse myself into these two schools and communities at a time in my life in which I was in many ways struggling to make sense of the world. You have all helped to deepen my own understanding of the power of music, rhythm, dance and social engagement to, as Mr. D expressed “touch our intimate senses”, lift our spirits and connect our humanity.

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Abbreviations

AEO	Area Education Officer
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
DEO	District Education Officer
DQASO	District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer
EFA	Education for All
FPE	Free Primary Education
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INSET	In-servicing of Teachers
JICA	Japanese International Corporation Agency
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KESSP	Kenya Education Sector Support Program
KIE	Kenya Institute of Education
KNEC	Kenya National Examination Council
KMF	Kenya Music Festival
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAC	Ontario Arts Council
ODC	Ontario Department of Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMTC	Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture
OMET	Ontario Ministry of Education and Training
OPC	Ontario Principals Council
PFE	People for Education
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SMC	School Management Committee
SFP	School Feeding Program
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
TSC	Teacher's Service Commission (Kenya)
TIVET	Technical, Industrial, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

Dedication

To Mabel, with love & admiration....your guiding spirit gives me great comfort and strength!

Chapter One

Introduction

Opening Words

In keeping with decolonial practices, I begin this thesis by acknowledging the indigenous peoples of southern Kenya, particularly the Maasai peoples who have contributed significantly to my learnings throughout this thesis process. It is from within the context of the indigenous peoples and lands of southern Kenya, in sub-Saharan Africa, that this thesis is drawn. As a critical and decolonial educational pedagogue and policy analyst, the opportunities provided throughout this doctoral thesis research have allowed me to learn from multiple perspectives and have raised as many questions as answers.

I believe it is important, from the outset to speak to the motivation for choosing the title of this thesis. Throughout my life, prior to any direct experiences with indigenous peoples, I had been deeply moved on a number of occasions by the power of the arts (for me, music, art and drama) to transmit messages and to connect to my own humanity through their ability to dig deeply into my soul and touch my human emotions. However, over the course of this four-year doctoral research experience, living and learning with the Maasai peoples in a rural and remote area of southern Kenya, my understandings of the power of the arts and cultural praxis have both broadened and deepened. Being isolated for long periods of time from the modern, Western world which had informed my prior knowledge allowed for deep reflection. The immersion into an indigenous culture, which continues to maintain and integrate many of its traditional cultural practices into the social, political, cultural and educational fabric of their communities, initiated a daily internal dialogue in which a multitude of questions both inspired and challenged reflexive journal writing as I constantly juxtapositioned my prior learnings with ongoing experiential learning and data collection. Additionally, through the continuous analytical inductive process that occurred over the course of the journeys back and forth between my home in Ontario, Canada and Kenya, the overarching themes which pointed toward possibilities and challenges for the arts and cultural praxis as pedagogical tools for *democratizing and decolonizing* education in both countries became apparent.

Purpose of the Thesis and Research Questions

Over the past 100 years, colonial and neoliberal policies have used educational systems around the world for the purpose of assimilation, standardization and ‘capitalization’ of youth. Critical and decolonial scholars argue that the use of these market-based policies and standardization in curriculum and assessment, based on dominant Eurocentric hegemonic ideologies, has led to increasing socioeconomic inequity (Hill & Boxley, 2009; Hill & Kumar, 2009). The increasing move towards standardization in countries which purport to be democratic states places limitations on opportunities for critical and creative thought and engagement. A *robust global democracy*¹ requires the free and full participation of its citizens through critical inquiry, dialogue, discussion and debate from multiple perspectives and active engagement for the purpose of challenging the status quo in the pursuit of a more just and inclusive society.

If the purpose of education is seen as having a socially transformative function, critical and decolonial scholars believe that teachers need to use pedagogical approaches which enable them to de-link from colonial and standardized ways of knowing and being and which re-ignite the spirit and imagination to envision new possibilities for society. Many youth whose ways of knowing, being and expressing do not fit within this dominant hegemonic structure have been marginalized in schools around the world. The current standardization in assessment further limits the potential for students to develop their unique gifts and talents in order to enable them to critically and creatively engage and contribute to the betterment of a just society (Battiste, 2010; Giroux, 2009b; Hursh, 2008). Policies and pedagogical approaches which recognize, celebrate and promote what Mignolo (2010a) calls *pluriverse* ways of knowing and being are needed (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Morrell, 2008; Parhar & Sensoy, 2011).

In many old world² and indigenous cultures, the arts and cultural practices were closely linked to language and cultural ways of knowing and being (Battiste, 2009b; Gacheru, Opiyo, &

¹ The conception of a robust global democracy is one which will be informing my work throughout this study. It has been built from the multidisciplinary social, critical, indigenous & decolonial work of Dewey (1916/2005), Arendt (1958), Mouffe (2002), Portelli & Solomon (2001), Louw (1999, 2001, 2006), Mangu (2006), Price (2007) and Grande (2004). For the development of this conception see Chapter 2 in this thesis.

² I have chosen to use the word ‘old world’, to recognize Wallerstein’s (1974) notion of ‘World Order’ and to speak with hope about the role of education in the creation of a ‘new world’ which looks not only to the future, but also to the past. I envision this ‘new world’ as one in which individuals recognize, respect and seek to learn from ‘others’ whose ontological and

Smutny, 1999; Layton, 2000; Nzewi, 2010; Plato, trans. n.d.). Critical and decolonial scholars continue to see an important role for the arts and cultural praxis to engage students and to open up possibilities for alternative ways to learn and to express knowledge for the purpose of social transformation. Despite efforts to standardize curriculum and pedagogy, teachers in schools in the global north and global south who still believe in an alternate purpose of education are using the arts and cultural practices in innovative and culturally responsive ways to support student learning and to increase student engagement (Bailey & Desai, 2005; Desai & Chalmers, 2007; Emdin, 2010). The purpose of this study was to explore the ways teachers in two primary schools in Maasailand, southern Kenya understand their use of the arts and to ask an overarching question: Why and how are teachers in two primary schools in indigenous communities in Maasailand, southern Kenya, a post-colonial, democratic nation-state, using the arts in and for education? Underlying this first question is an attention to the influence of local, national and global contexts and educational policies on teachers' perceptions of the purpose of education and on teacher practice. Three sub-questions include: What are the educational goals of these teachers? How do teachers understand their conception of the "arts"? and, What are the possibilities and constraints for teachers' use of the arts for socially transformative education?

Purposeful Use of the Term "the Arts" and "Cultural Praxis" in This Thesis

It is vital for the argument in this thesis that I clarify my use of and inclusion of the terms "the arts" and "cultural praxis".³ I have purposely chosen to use and make reference to the term "the arts" to recognize, challenge and confront the current narrow colonial-Eurocentric, and increasingly neoliberal notions of "the arts" that are dominating educational policy and pedagogical approaches at the local, national and global levels. Educational policy and curriculum development informed by colonial-Eurocentric notions of "the arts" view the arts as disciplinary-siloed categories, such as art, music, dance, drama. Further, educational policies and programs which hold colonial-Eurocentric notions of the arts tend to promote and privilege some types of arts, often referred to as "fine arts" and marginalize or subjugate other types of arts, such as popular or alternative culture, rap, hip-hop (Emdin, 2010; Paris, 2012). The increasing impact

epistemological beliefs and understandings may differ from dominant notions in order to create a more socially and economically just global society.

³ I will speak further to the issues of discourse within decolonizing research in the "Methodological Challenges and Lessons" section of Chapter four.

of neoliberal policies in national and global educational policy further narrow the conception of the arts to view it as market-based skills and knowledge to be developed to contribute to the economy (D'Andrea, 2012; Florida & Martin, 2009). The continued dominance of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal policies informing educational policy related to the arts in schools contributes to the social reproduction of a dominant hegemonic culture and a widening of the socioeconomic equity gap between the dominant culture and other cultures (Caldwell & Vaughan, 2012; Collins, 2011; Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011).

My decision to use the discourse of “the arts” in my research question, sub-questions and interview protocols had been made following the completion of a six-week informal research trip to Kenya, prior to developing my thesis research proposal. During this exploratory trip, I had the opportunity to meet and talk with teachers, head-teachers, and the area education officer. All of these individuals used the discourse of “the arts”, particularly when speaking about the subject-based discipline (Creative Arts) that was a core subject in the primary curriculum, and when they spoke about what they called the “arts-based” activities outside of school, such as the Kenya Music Festival. The decision was influenced by an assumption that the use of “the arts” would provide a common language, while at the same time creating an opportunity to explore whether and how my own colonial-Eurocentric-informed conception of the arts differed from that of the teachers in this Maasai region of Kenya where I would be conducting my research. In hindsight, I recognize that this narrowing of the discourse may have constrained both my own and the teachers’ ability to ‘think beyond the status quo’, particularly beyond the conceptions of the arts that have been influenced by colonial and neoliberal policies.

Throughout the data collection phase, I began to hear a variety of ‘other’ terms from participants to describe what some were calling “the arts”, such as *cultural practice*, *Maasai dance*, *Maasai folksong*, *sacred song*, *modelling*, *beadwork*, *face and body painting*, *ear-piercing and sculpting*, *fabric and hair dying*, and *carving*. I drew from the work of Gaztambide-Fernandez (2013) who uses what he calls the *rhetoric of cultural production*, to think about the arts as *something people do* (often called cultural practice), rather than thinking about what *the arts do (rhetoric of effects)*. The decision to include both “the arts” and “cultural praxis” throughout this thesis has a two-fold purpose. First, “the arts” is being used to illuminate the presence and influence of colonial and neoliberal ideologies on educational policy and pedagogical approaches in Kenya and globally; and secondly, “cultural praxis” is being used to

begin the process of re-imagining a conception of the arts which moves from a dominant notion informed by colonial-Eurocentric ideologies towards one which recognizes, values and promotes the notion that individuals from all cultures engage in diverse forms of *symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging* which can contribute to democratic and transformative education. A more detailed outline of my understanding of these two concepts will be given in Chapter three.

Background and Context

Art, Creativity and Spirit in Education of Old World⁴ Cultures

In the educational systems of many old world cultures, the arts and creativity played an important role in releasing the spirit or imagination (Bamford, 2006; Battiste, 2010; Gacheru et al., 1999; Hancock, 1987; Kiplang'at & Lagat, 2009, Nzewi, 2010). Vizina (2008) asserts that in many First Nations communities, the nurturing of the soul or spirit was seen as being important not only to the development of self, but to the development of the society as a whole. Elders from First Nations communities in Canada likened birth to an occurrence when the spirit joins with the physical body to become a holistic unity of body, mind, emotions, and spirit (Vizina, 2008). Battiste (2010) adds that Aboriginal peoples believe each individual is given unique gifts for fulfilling their purpose on earth and that their learning spirit offers guidance and inspiration.

Similarities between the indigenous cultures and that of ancient Greek culture exist in this recognition of the importance of the development of both the mind and the *soul or spirit*⁵. As a foundational principle within both ancient Greek and indigenous cultures, the soul or spirit needs to be cultivated through education for the growth of the individual and for the collective benefits to the culture or society (Battiste, 2010; Hancock, 1987). In *The Republic*, Plato sets out his description of the utopian society in which he describes a system of education which follows the concepts of *paideia* (Jaeger, 1967). The concept of *paideia* saw the city-state and the citizen existing in an educational relationship in which both the culture and the individual had reciprocal

⁵ Throughout this thesis, the terms *spirit*, *soul* and *imagination* will often be used synonymously to refer to what both Maxine Greene (1995a) and Marie Battiste (2010) refer to as a 'power or gift' which is distinctively 'human' and which they believe can be called upon to ignite creativity and to 'envision possibilities'.

obligations to improve one another. Through their writings and orations, Socrates and Plato extended the meaning of *paideia* to the importance of cultivating both the intellect and the individual garden of the soul (Hancock, 1987). Adding to the works of Socrates and Plato, by specifically addressing the role of the arts in education, Aristotle (trans. n.d.) argues, in *Politics*, that the arts (particularly music and poetry) play an important role in the education of youth for the development of the mind and the soul. Many modern day theorists have spoken and written about the power of the arts for reigniting this spirit through their ability to both touch the spirit, through experience, and release the spirit (or *imagination*) through action (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2009; Greene, 1995a; Mouffe, 2007). Perhaps the lessons from the ways of being of the indigenous peoples and of ancient Greece still ring true as Maxine Greene reminds us of the power that creativity and the imagination can play in engaging students to “open such spheres, such spaces, where a better state of things can be imagined; because it is only through the projection of a better social order that we can perceive the gaps in what exists and try to transform and repair” (Greene, 2009, p. 95).

Political Shifting in the Purposes of Education-Colonial Modernity, Classical Liberalism, Neoliberalism

In order to understand the context of democratic education and the arts within the current educational system, I will begin with a brief history of the development of our ‘modern’ educational system using Wallerstein’s (1974) world systems theory. As Wallerstein (1974) would argue, with each of these major shifts came the establishment of a new World Order. The ontological and epistemological underpinnings of our modern educational systems have evolved through the political and ideological shifts from feudalism to colonialism and neoliberalism.

During the mid-eighteenth century, the move from feudalism to Enlightenment was seen by many critical and decolonial theorists as a move towards what Mignolo (2011a) calls *colonial modernity*. Within this colonial modernity World Order, the governance structure was informed by the theorists of classical liberalism (Brown, 2003). The liberal ideology advocated for universal rights, including freedom and equality. A set of principles governing the limitations of state power would be enshrined within the 'Rule of Law' of the nation-state (Brown, 2003). The features of a truly liberal democracy included:

Civil liberties equally distributed and protected; a press and other journalistic media minimally free from corporate ownership on one side and state control on

the other; uncorrupted and unbought elections; quality public education oriented, inter alia, to producing the literacies relevant to informed and active citizenship; government openness, honesty and accountability; a judiciary modestly insulated from political and commercial influence; separation of church and state; and a foreign policy guided at least in part by the rationale of protecting these domestic values. (Brown, 2003, para. 30)

The legitimation of any government purporting to follow the principles of a liberal democracy, would require the consent of those whom it governed. As a means of increasing the efficiency of gathering the input of large numbers of citizens, many liberal democratic states adopted a system of *representative democracy*. As Wendy Brown (2006) argues, over the years, nation-states around the world who espouse to follow the model of a liberal democracy have faced challenges around issues of ensuring majority rule, while respecting minority rights; strengthening communities, while liberating individuals; and empowering government, while at the same time limiting that power.

Another major shift in the World Order came following the end of the World War II, as governments around the world began to search for ways to rebuild their economies. As Steven Klees (2008) asserts, fierce debates arose between liberal and conservative neoclassical economists, largely situated in the United States, around the role of government in the development of efficient and equitable economic systems. As the humanistic, social justice and human rights focus of the welfare state began to erode, the competitive, market-based technology-driven paradigms of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) signaled the emergence of the hegemony of Western capitalism (Zajda, 2009). In the 1970s, a conservative economic view became strengthened through the development of what Steven Klees (2008) refers to as the “public choice theory”. Public choice theory was based on a belief that even though the free market might fail to operate efficiently and equitably in the absence of government intervention, “government was so incapable of making successful interventions that it was better not to have it intervene in the first place” (p. 311). A significant shift began to occur in global public policy in the 1980s, to what has become known as the neoliberal approach to economic policy, as a result of the elections of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher and the predominance of conservative and public choice economists in positions of political and economic power. Market-based principles of efficiency, standardization, accountability, user fees and privatization began to increasingly inform public policy analysis and development. As Klees (2008) has argued, over

the past quarter-century, neoliberal ideology and economic principles have increasingly been influencing educational policy reform around the world.

Emergence and Spread of the Many Faces of Globalization

The impact of the forces of globalization have indeed influenced the spread of educational policies, however, it is important, as Kuehn (1997) reminds us not to essentialize globalization. What is important to observe and critique, as Andy Green (2003) argues, are the various processes of globalization and how they are managed: who and what benefits, and who and what is marginalized, eroded or destroyed. This complex nature of globalization is articulated by Niyozov and Dastambuev (2012) in their assertion that many of the issues and concerns arising from the highly interwoven processes of globalization arise from the “unprecedented intensification and extensification of cross-border interactions and flows between humans (individuals, communities, nations, interest groups, transnational agencies) and human products (goods, ideas, technologies and cultures)” (Introduction and method, para. 2). Niyozov & Dastambuev (2012) speak of the face of globalization. Indeed, this metaphor of the human face, speaks volumes to the analysis of the impacts of various processes of globalization on the human condition. In recognizing the importance of counter-narratives to the processes of what has been called neoliberal globalization, Niyozov and Dastambuev (2012) argue that “while globalization may be inevitable and even desirable, neoliberalism is not and should not be its only face and outcome” (Introduction and method, para. 2).

With respect to the multiple faces of globalization within education, Rivzi and Lingard (2000) argue that globalization has and will continue to be “a politically and theoretically contested concept with both positive and negative expressions and responses” (p. 425-426). On the positive side, Hickling-Hudson & Klees (2012) and Tomasevski (2006) argue that with respect to the role of mass education in creating citizens in nation-states, the discourse around the limited educability of certain groups has been replaced by discourses of ‘education as human right’. This global discourse on the ‘right to education’ has been pushed further by some comparative international education scholars as they critique and re-define the global discourse around ‘quality’ to move it from one based on neoliberal ideology to one based on a critical democratic ideology which sees ‘quality education’ linked to social justice and social

transformation.⁶ However, on the negative side, under the current dominant form of neoliberal globalization, Kuehn (1997) has identified three interrelated themes which are impacting global educational policies and pedagogy: unrestrained global competition; restrictions on democracy; and distortions of the social purposes of education toward a too-close relationship to the economy, “converting community values to values of the market” and making students “human capital to be prepared for global competition” (p. 71). Tickell and Peck (2003) argue that the phenomenon of global neoliberalism has become “a truly hegemonic ideology that infuse[s] mainstream discourses” (p. 16). Spring (2008) asserts that it is not only the discourse of neoliberalism but also the way in which this discourse has been taken up on a global scale through the theoretical perspectives concerning education and globalization, the institutions which are taking up and acting on these discourses, and the international assessments of education which are being informed by neoliberal ideology. It is the combination of these various factors which is impacting policy, pedagogy and practice at the local (school) levels.

Framing the Thesis

Like many other democratic nation-states, Kenya has included within its goals of education the development of citizenship or nationalism and the preparation of their youth to make a positive contribution to society (Republic of Kenya, 2002). Critical democratic education scholars would argue that in order to do so, it is important to build not only the skills, but also the values, dispositions and attitudes in our youth to be able to take this role seriously (Portelli & Solomon, 2001). Educational policies and pedagogies are needed which recognize, develop and value the pluriverse gifts and talents of our youth and which can help to re-engage their learning spirit, both for their own individual growth and as citizens in a global society. This research study explores the possibilities and constraints for teachers and schools who value the arts and cultural practices, in this rural and indigenous Maasai region of southern Kenya, to develop students’ knowledge, capabilities, and values for critical-democratic engagement and socially transformative education. From a decolonial perspective, the research study further seeks to explore the conception of the arts that teachers in this case study hold in order to compare and

⁶ See the work of Aikman (2011); Crossley (2008); Tickly & Barrett (2011); Tickly & Dachi (2009).

contrast it to the hegemonic colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal conception of the arts that is largely present in global educational policy.

Although Kenya espouses to be a model of a democratic state, it, like many countries around the world is being questioned by critical educators and members of civil society organizations for its true commitment to the ideals, principles and practices of truly robust democracies (Murunga & Nasong'o, 2007; Mwongera, 2012). Many of the major structural and pedagogical elements of the systems of education in Kenya have remained largely unchanged since it gained independence (Nasong'o & Murunga, 2007). Global educational policy reform under the impact of colonialism, modernity, neoliberalism, and globalization continues to yield a system in which student disengagement, inequity and social injustice continues to exist (Anyon, 2005; Hill & Kumar, 2009; McMahon & Portelli, 2012). In order to address these issues, this thesis will be framed around the issues of robust democracy, pluriversality, equity, inclusion and critical student engagement.

Theoretical Framework

This project utilizes a critical-democratic and decolonial theoretical framework which has been informed by the work of numerous scholars including Abdi (2010), Arendt (1958) Battiste (2009a, 2010), De Lissovoy (2010), Dei (2011), Freire (1998), Giroux (1991, 1997), Kincheloe (1999, 2006), Macedo (2009), Maldonado-Torres (2011), Mignolo (2007, 2009, 2011a, 2011c), Smith (1999/2006), wa Thiong'o (1998a), and Wane (2009). These theorists argue for the importance of linking individual lived experience to critical analysis, reflection and growth. They argue for the need to de-link and reopen ways of thinking that challenge and disrupt the status quo in areas of equity and social justice, in ways that illuminate power imbalances, particularly those of colonial and imperial power. Critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogies, which include the arts and cultural praxis, provide a medium which promotes: critical analysis and probing of diverse societal issues (such as respect for differences, equity, social justice); dialogue, debate and deliberation; and increased engagement for the purpose of social transformation (Dei, 1997; De Lissovoy, 2010; Desai & Chambers, 2007; Eisner, 2002; Emdin, 2010; Giroux, 1989; Greene, 1995; Mouffe, 2007; Portelli 2001; Smyth, Angus, Down & McInerney, 2008). In a truly robust democracy, students need to be encouraged, supported and provided with opportunities to express their opinions and challenge policies with which they

disagree, based on their lived experiences and take action towards social transformation (hooks, 2003; Kincheloe, 2008a; Kurth-Schai & Green, 2008; McLaren, 2007b).

Significance of this Thesis

Under the impact of colonial-Eurocentrism and neoliberalism, educational systems around the world have been used to push forward dominant hegemonic ideologies, while at the same time marginalizing and/or subjugating the knowledges and ways of being of other cultures. This case study focussed specifically on two primary school-communities located in a rural and remote Maasai region of southern Kenya which had largely resisted the impact of colonization until the 1970s. In traditional Maasai culture, the arts and cultural practices were embedded within the epistemological and ontological fabric of their society as symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging. Although most of the families in this region continue to follow a traditional Maasai pastoral nomadic lifestyle, formal schooling and teaching practices in the schools in the area have been largely influenced by colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal policies which promote core knowledge, deficit approaches, standardization and efficiency. However, the teachers and head-teachers in these schools continue to believe that the arts and cultural practices play an important role in learning, in skill development and in creating strong school-community relationships for socially transformative education.

Using a theoretical framework based on a narrative of a robust global democracy, the analysis of the findings contributes to the literature by critical scholars on the impact of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal policies on the democratic purposes of schooling, as well as on the conception of “quality education”. Further, this study contributes to the research and scholarship on critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches in education, with a specific focus on the use of the arts and cultural praxis as symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging for democratic and socially transformative education. The findings from this study can be used to challenge and disrupt dominant neoliberal and colonial-Eurocentric notions which are informing many national and international educational policies around notions of “the arts” and purposes for the arts in education within democratic nation-states. Using an international case study approach from a purposely selected Maasai region of a post-colonial, democratic nation-state in the global south, this study explores the possibilities and constraints for teachers’ and schools who wish to use the arts and cultural praxis in education.

In combining the analysis of the findings with the literature on critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy, I have posited a new pedagogical model for the arts and cultural praxis to support democratic and socially transformative education. There have been no comparative international education studies conducted (that I am aware of) which have undertaken what Kubow (2011) calls “cross-fertilization” using the analysis of case study data from a Maasai community in southern Kenya and the literature on critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy to posit a new pedagogical model for the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and socially transformative education. This model, which I call a *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle*⁷, can serve as a guide to teachers and schools, and I would argue, should be adapted within the context of diverse local communities in Kenya and within educational systems globally, through the participation of local and national educational policy actors. In discussing the policy and program implications of the findings within the broader educational policy environment in Kenya, policy recommendations have been made in the areas of: curriculum, teacher-education, accountability and assessment, critical school-community engagement, and transformative educational leadership development. Additionally, the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of the Kenya Music Festival (KMF) can be used to inform the development of other public-private partnerships within democratic nation-states to recognize, value and promote the diverse creative and cultural practices of their citizens and to promote multi-level and multi-sector engagement for social transformation.

Research Design and Context

During the early methodological planning for this research project, I was going to limit myself to a single secondary school case study situated in Ontario, Canada. I had a strong understanding of the Ontario secondary school context and through my doctoral level course work had begun to develop a qualitative research proposal which aimed to explore teachers’ use of the arts for democratic and socially transformative purposes in a purposely selected case. The

⁷ The *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle* (TACP Circle) builds on Souto-Manning’s (2010) model of the culture circle by embedding six aspects of the arts and cultural praxis arising from the analysis of the findings and the literature on critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches: experience, creativity/imagination, pluriversality (culture/communication), affect and humanity, criticality, and engaged performance. It will be discussed in detail in Chapter eight.

case location proposed was a secondary school in Ontario which offered four arts-based focus programs that drew students from around the county. However, towards the end of my course work, I began to have some conversations with a close friend who had been working with *Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières* in East Africa. One day, as I was beginning to discuss my research questions with him, he said to me “You should see what the Maasai are doing with their singing, music and drama in their schools to address emerging issues within the community”. This event prompted the beginning of a significant re-shifting in my methodological approach towards what I had hoped would become a cross-cultural comparative international case study focussing on teachers use of the arts in primary schools in Ontario and southern Kenya. Between the period of September 2009 and November 2011, I was able to complete the data collection for both the Ontario and Kenyan cases. However, as I was completing the data analysis, I realized that due to the size and complexity of the data sets, a thorough two-case comparative international education case study would require not be possible. In discussing my concerns with my supervisor and committee, they advised me to select and focus on only one of the cases for the dissertation and save the additional data analysis for post-doctoral work. I made a conscious decision, based on my two-pronged theoretical framework, to begin with a focus on the Kenyan context as I believe that the data analysis from this data set provides the strongest findings to support the need for decolonizing and democractizing approaches in education and could inform the development of policy and pedagogy at the national level in Kenya, as well as at the global level for more democratic and transformative approaches within education. The methodological approach is described in detail in Chapter four.

The research design was informed by comparative international education literature, case study methodology and literature on critical moral consciousness, indigenous and decolonial research methodology. (Battiste, 2008b; Brown, 2008; Cowen, 2009; Denzin, 2008b; Eldridge, 2008; Kubow, 2011; Kubow & Fossum, 2007; Lincoln & Denzin, 2000; Merriam, 1998; Smith, 1999/2006; Stake, 2005, 2008; Yin, 2003, 2006). I clearly acknowledge that although I locate my work within a critical-democratic/decolonial/indigenous paradigm, the overall research design followed an international case study approach. The case boundaries focused on two primary schools selected from a school district in Maasailand, southern Kenya. The use of a case study approach was selected based on the research question and sub-questions to gain a deeper

understanding of why and how teachers in two primary schools located in rural, remote Maasai communities in southern Kenya, a post-colonial, democratic nation-state in the global south, were using the arts. Further, the research aimed to study the influence of multi-contextual factors (educational, sociocultural, political, economic and environmental) from the local, national and global levels on teachers' and schools' use of the arts. It includes teacher interviews, teacher focus groups, classroom and performance observation, and educational policy document analysis. The schools were purposely selected based on their claim to have a strong commitment to the use of the arts for education. The selection of the schools in southern Kenya provides a unique opportunity for research within indigenous communities which continue to maintain many of their traditional cultural practices.

Situating the Researcher

The combination of my theoretical preparation for this research, my experiences over three decades as a teacher and administrator in the Ontario school system and an exploratory initial visit to the schools in the Maasai region of southern Kenya ignited a series of policy and pedagogical questions for me. I came to this study having witnessed the important role that I believed the arts could play in deepening learning and in increasing critical student engagement, yet felt an increasing set of tensions and contradictions in the policies and pedagogy which were being introduced in schools under increasing neoliberal educational reforms in both countries.

Prior to beginning my doctoral studies, I had been both a teacher and secondary school administrator in Ontario, Canada for almost thirty years. For four of those years, I was the vice-principal at a secondary school in which three district-wide arts-focus programs were being offered. These programs were available, with transportation provided, for any student in the school board who was interested in, and accepted into, the programs. It was through the vantage point of teacher and vice-principal, while watching the teachers and students in these arts-focus programs that I saw the possibilities for education through the arts, embedded across the curriculum, to engage youth creatively and critically in their lives and in their education.

The second vantage point that I bring to this research is as a white, Western, woman conducting research in a local context in the global south, which was almost entirely 'black'. Although I acknowledge my understanding of the rationale and desire, at times, to self-identify based on commonly accepted characteristics within a collective identity, at the same time, I wish

to acknowledge my deep critical concerns around the practice of labelling based on visible or invisible attributes. I believe that as soon as we place a label on a human being, society begins to attach value judgements to the label which tends to privilege or limit the future life choices of individuals. Also, for most people, we carry multiple and intersecting labels (or identities). Some of these identities are visible, some invisible. Throughout the research period I could feel the presence of different identities coming to the surface, in different situations, and would reflect on the tensions arising as I perceived my identity as say: woman, mother, wife/partner, teacher, administrator, and/or researcher.

For the purpose of situating myself as a researcher within this case study, I will limit myself to the three intersecting identities of white, Western and woman and will speak briefly to each. As part of the colonial-Eurocentric project, skin colour became one of the labels which was given value (often with associated political, social, cultural and economic powers) (Tyler, 2012). Many times as I walked through small towns south of Nairobi, I heard the shouts of 'mzungu'⁸ in my direction or I would have people (men and women) coming up to me and offering to sell their wares, also shouting 'mzungu'. At these times, I often felt that my white skin was being read and commodified as a signifier of *capital* and remember feeling, at times, a sense of fear or of being in danger. As I reflect back on this fear, I know that I have often felt fear anytime I stepped outside my *comfort zone*, and particularly into what I consider *the unknown*. Although, more than that, I realized that this fear was also based on my constructions of the situation in Kenya and of the Kenyan people, particularly in Nairobi and surrounding areas, that I had been seeing, hearing and reading about in the literature and in mainstream media. It had been almost a year and a half since the brutal post-election violence that had erupted in 2007/2008, yet there were still regular messages about the on-going corruption, thefts, ethnic tensions and violence in Nairobi and in the surrounding towns. I know that as I stepped off the plane and arrived in what seemed like a "sea of Black", my fear began to escalate with the awareness of being a very visible minority in this city in which I knew no one. However, while immersed in the communities of Olapa and Enkema in which I continued to be one of only a very few mzungus,

⁸ Mzungu is a Swahili word that is frequently used in reference to the 'white man' in Kenya, though is also used by the local people for 'white women'. It originally stems from the phrase, "those who wonder aimlessly", and linked to African experiences of early explorers, traders and missionaries.

my fears very quickly subsided as I began to learn more about my ‘unknowns’ (the people, their cultural ways of being and the environment) and continued to build relationships.

There were also times when my white skin felt like it was being read as a signifier of *knowledge* or *power*. I remember finding myself really wondering *why* the teachers and students in this remote Maasai region were giving Western knowledge (the reading and writing which was so disconnected from their daily lives) so much value. Instead, I would have greatly valued a stronger understanding of Maasai language, culture and basic environmental knowledge for survival and truly valued their ‘local’ knowledge more than my ‘academic’ or Western knowledge. I had also experienced what I perceived was a privileging of whiteness when we would have to travel in the area (where there are no ‘roads’ and few vehicles). I was often offered a seat in the front of the truck that was transporting us, while the rest of the passengers (Maasai men, women and children) would squeeze themselves into whatever space they could find in the back of the vehicle. I remember feeling confused about whether or not to accept these offers, as I believed they would only serve to reinforce colonial notions of difference and hierarchies between *mzungus* and Blacks. In my efforts to counter my complicity in perpetuating these notions, I would acknowledge these offers, but would explain that I would prefer to travel, live and learn in the same manner as the individuals in the communities where I was researching. I began to travel with the other members of the community in the back of or on top of the gear on the trucks, or on the back of motorcycles, as they made their way through the rock and the sand in the area. I believe that these decisions and actions helped to open a space in which both the participants and I were challenged to “read beyond skin colour” to allow us to gain a deeper understanding of each other.

It was in my identity as a woman, particularly as a Western woman that I felt the most significant tensions arising while living in the traditional patriarchal Maasai society. As long as I carried the hybridity of the ‘Western’ woman, I seemed to gain access to power and privileges that Maasai women did not have. For instance, during public events, such as Parents Days, or School-Management committee meetings, I was able to join the men during meals and take part in some dialogue (with my limited competency in Maa). However, the Maasai women, including educated women, were not able to join the men, and ate together in another area. In numerous other instances, I became more deeply aware of the significant difference between the gendered relationships in traditional Maasai culture and those from the Western culture in which I had

been raised. It was when I was confronted with issues of patriarchy, polygamy, arranged marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM), rape, and domestic violence that I began to feel that I was walking a moral and ethical tightrope. On one end, I did not want to impart or privilege my Western-informed cultural mores, or put myself at risk for speaking out against issues which I perceived as oppressive, unjust or inequitable, yet, on the other end, I felt pulled by what Lincoln and Denzin (2000) call a critical moral consciousness to challenge my considerations of what to say/not say and what to do/not do within a research approach which aims to promote social justice, community, diversity and critically engaged learning. Throughout this research study, I continued to see it as inherently both a moral and political project.

Dissertation Organization

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters.

1. *Introduction* - This chapter outlines the purpose and research questions, sets out the context of the research, introduces the theoretical framework, outlines the significance and situates the researcher.
2. *Theoretical Framework: Democratic Societies, Critical Theory & Decolonizing Education* - Chapter 2 undertakes a review of literature which supports the theoretical framework and argument of my thesis. It begins with an overview of foundational aspects of critical theory and decolonial theory, including the importance of “unearthing indigenous knowledges”. It then develops a new narrative which I call a *robust global democracy*.
3. *Literature Review: Democratizing and decolonization education: a role for the arts and cultural praxis* - Chapter 3 presents a review of literature related to the impacts of colonial modernity and neoliberal globalization on society, on education and on the arts. It continues with reviewing the literature on the roles of public education and the arts in challenging and disrupting neoliberal hegemony. Finally, it outlines key pedagogical principles based on critical-democratic and decolonial theorists and practitioners which could support teachers’ use of the arts to contribute to the achievement of the goals of education in a robust global democracy.
4. *Research Methodology* - Chapter 4 outlines the research design, methodological approach, ethical considerations, data collection and analysis process. I describe the

field research process that involved structured, semi-structured and informal interviews, focus groups, classroom and performance observations, policy analysis and secondary data collection methods.

5. *Kenya context* - In this chapter, I describe the multi-contextual factors influencing teachers' use of the arts in Maasailand, southern Kenya (historical, cultural, geographical/environmental, economic, political, educational).
6. *Kenya case study findings* - In this chapter, the Kenyan findings are highlighted. I describe key themes within the context of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks
7. *Analysis and discussion* - In this chapter, I analyze and discuss the findings presented in the case study linking back to the literature, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks and the multi-contextual sites in which the case was situated.
8. *Conclusions* - In the final chapter, I review the research questions and summarize the key themes emerging from the findings. I put forward a new pedagogical model for the arts which I call a *Transformative Arts and Cultural Praxis Circle*. Further, I engage in a reflexive discussion on the implications of the findings for local, national and global educational policy. Finally, I present recommendations for future research.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, my aim was to introduce the study, establish the relevant context for my research questions, explain the study's significance, the research problem and define key concepts, in an attempt to make the discussion meaningful for a pluriverse readership. I provided an overview of the impact of colonial and neoliberal policies on issues of equity and pluriversality in educational reform. I discussed the need for a new global narrative for education to challenge these ideologies and introduced the conception of a *robust global democracy* which is grounded in an ethic of a *globality of humanity*. Finally, I have introduced the important role that the arts have played historically and could play in the future to contribute to the achievement of the goals of education in a robust global democracy.

In the following chapter I will lay out a two-pronged theoretical framework developed from a combination of critical theory and decolonial theory. I will then use these theories and supporting literature to develop a new narrative which I call a *robust global democracy* which informs this thesis.

Chapter Two

Democratic Societies, Critical Theory & Decolonizing Education

The decolonial turn is the opening and the freedom from the thinking and the forms of living (economies-other, political theories-other), the cleansing of the coloniality of being and of knowledge; the de-linking from the spell of the rhetoric of modernity, from its imperial imaginary articulated in the rhetoric of democracy (Mignolo, 2011c, p. 48).

Resistance isn't just direct action and protest, sometimes just surviving is resistance. Sometimes having the will to live is resistance. Building a cultural and political resurgence based on Indigenous values, philosophies and traditions is resistance. Giving birth to and raising our children to know their responsibilities as Indigenous peoples, to have a connection to their homelands, to speak their languages and to tell their stories is resistance. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Francoso, 2012, p. 1)

Organization of the Chapter

This chapter will be divided into three major sections. The first section will introduce a two-pronged theoretical framework, consisting of critical theory and decolonial theory, which will be used to analyze the data within this research study. It will begin with a literature review on critical theory as a theoretical approach to identify current inequities in education and to offer a *discourse of possibility* for an emancipatory role for education. Secondly, it builds on the work of critical theorists by bringing in the literature from decolonial theorists who narrow their focus specifically towards colonialism/imperialism which they see as the root cause of current inequities and injustice in the world. Finally, it presents some key principles of indigenous knowledges which have often been subjugated or marginalized through the colonial-modernity process. The second section of this chapter reviews the literature which argues that colonial-Eurocentric modernity and neoliberalism are contributing to an erosion or *thinning* of the concept and principles of democracy in society and in schools. Next, it utilizes the work of critical and decolonial scholars from the global north and global south to begin to create a new narrative, or *thicker* conception of democracy, which I call a *robust global democracy*. Finally, the third section presents the analytical framework which will be used to analyze and discuss the findings.

Critical Theory, Decolonial Theory and Indigenous Knowledges

Critical Theory

The rise of critical theory grew from aspects of the social theory work of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. Foundational intellectuals of the Frankfurt School in the 1920s, including Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse began to challenge the impacts of the hegemony of the ideology of capitalism. Horkheimer (1982) described a theory as critical in so far as it seeks "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them." (p. 244). Antonio Gramsci (1971) argued for the need to develop what he termed *organic individuals*. For Gramsci (1971), who had been imprisoned under the Fascist regime of Mussolini, an organic individual must have both the freedom and the skills to be able to think clearly and take action. For this purpose, they need to develop the tools necessary to engage in educational, social and cultural action, which for Gramsci included incorporating the exercise of critical (dialectical) consciousness aimed at social transformation.

Critical theorists of the 80s and 90s, such as Paulo Freire, (1985, 1998, 1999, 2000), Henry Giroux (1983, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1997), Maxine Greene (1988) and (Joe Kincheloe (1999, 2008a, 2011) assert that critical scholars have a role in continuing to explore and illuminate the issues raised by Bowles and Gintis (1976) who argued that schools were largely responsible, as capitalist agencies of the state, for the reproduction of the dominant neoliberal ideology. Using a *discourse of possibility*, they argued instead that teachers and education could play a liberatory role in confronting and challenging the hegemony of neoliberalism and in helping schools to become venues for hope, resistance and democratic possibility. Critical theorists argue that this shift towards a more emancipatory role for education would require a new conception of human agency which places increased responsibility on students, teachers, educational leaders and communities to become critically engaged in the social transformation process (Allman, 2007; Anyon, 2008; Apple, 2011; Darder, 2011; Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2009; Darder & Miron, 2007; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Greene, 2009; Kress, 2011; Portelli & McMahon, 2004; Smyth, 2010; Solomon, Singer, Campbell & Allen, 2011; Zeichner & Flessner, 2009).

Decolonial Theory

Decolonial theory, like critical theory, recognizes that education is not politically neutral and also aims to disrupt hegemony for social transformation towards a more just and inclusive society. However, decolonial scholars narrow their focus specifically toward colonialism/imperialism which they see as the root cause of current inequities and injustice in the world. This theoretical sense requires imagining what Noah De Lissovoy (2010) calls an *ethics of the global* which is set in a context which recognizes the “relations of power that have shaped history, and in particular the political, cultural, economic, and epistemological processes of domination that have characterized colonialism and Eurocentrism” (p. 279).

Decolonial theory emerged as an extension of the work of foundational post-colonial scholars such as Said (1978, 1993), Bhabha (1994) & Spivak (1990) whose scholarship contributed significantly to a deeper understanding and critique of power, cultural policy and educational policy. However, in critiquing post-colonialism, Moore-Gilbert, Stanton & Maley (1997) ask the questions: “when did colonialism end?” or “after whose colonialism?”⁹ Although the dismantling of colonial structures began to take place during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as many colonized countries began to gain independence, new forms of colonialism or imperialism continue to create power imbalances and inequities for people and nations around the world. A deeper critique of these global social inequities has led scholars from multidisciplinary fields of feminist theory, critical theory and critical race theory to argue more strongly for a push in policy and pedagogy towards decolonialism (Mohanty, 2003; De Lissovoy, 2010; Mignolo, 2007; Smith, 1999/2006; wa Thiong’o, 1986; Wane, 2008).

It is important to note that the seeds of what Mignolo (2007) refers to as the ‘decolonial epistemic shift’ actually began in the mid-1600s and early 1700s in the Americas, in Indigenous and in Afro-Caribbean writings and then continued in waves with de-colonization movements in Asia and Africa. Mignolo (2007) speaks of two early manifestations of the decolonial shift

⁹ It is important to remember that European colonization was only one form of colonization and subjugation. Falola and Ngom (2009) remind us of the Arab colonization of North and sub-Saharan Africa prior to the Europeans and the continuation of racism towards Black Africans in Arab literature. Falola & Ngom (2009) remind us that racism against Black Africans exists not only in European literature, but also in Arab literature and although this racism has been “continually subjected to serious discussion” in Western societies, it is “yet to be seriously confronted” in the Arab world and the Maghreb (p. xix).

through the writings of Waman Puma de Ayala, viceroyalty of Peru (*New chronicle and Good Governance*) sent to Phillip III in 1616; and those of Quobna Otabbah Cugoano, an emancipated slave (*Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery*) which were published in London in 1787. Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, key American & European scholars, including Nicollò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Adam Smith began to publish their seminal works espousing the logic of modernity. It was not surprising, given the ‘coloniality of knowledge’ that counter-discourses of the colonized peoples failed to be shared in international policy discussions. As Ali Abdi (2006, 2007, 2010) and Marie Battiste (2008a, 2009a) have argued, through the process of colonialism and imperialism, the voices and knowledge of indigenous peoples around the world have been largely marginalized or silenced. However, as Mignolo (2007) argues, the voices of Waman Puma and Quobna Ottobah did open the door to another way of thinking: a way of thinking which came from the “space and experiences of the colonial wound” (p. 8). Decolonial theory necessitates a thinking which de-links and opens the doors to ‘other truths’ which challenge the colonial or imperial truth.

Maldonado-Torres (2011) argues that this decolonial turn in theory and philosophy has distinct features and has been in existence through a variety of different forms of expression of opposition to what could be called “the colonizing turn in Western thought” (p. 1). Maldonado-Torres (2011) further argues that in addition to being at home in spaces such as ethnic studies, gender and women’s studies in universities, it has also found a home in the work of “decolonial activists, independent scholars, and artists across the entire spectrum of the Global South, including the south in the north” (p. 1). The links between critical theory, decolonial theory and decolonial pedagogy become clear in Mignolo’s (2009) paper *Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and decolonial freedom* where he argues the need for political and epistemic de-linking, as well as decolonializing and decolonial knowledges as “necessary steps for imagining and building democratic, just, and nonimperial/colonial societies” (p. 159).

Mignolo’s (2010) conception of a *decolonial cosmopolitanism* interrogates and disrupts the hegemonic notions of neo-liberal globalization and of liberal (Kantian) cosmopolitanism. He argues that Kant’s view of cosmopolitanism privileges a Eurocentric (Christianizing) notion of what a cosmo-polis should be and that the neo-liberal conception of globalization privileges a Western capitalist economic notion of globalization. Mignolo (2010a) sees instead a conception of a decolonial cosmopolitanism with “multiple trajectories aiming at a trans-modern world

based on pluriversality rather than on a new and good universal for all” (p. 111). In *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, Mignolo (2011a) puts forward a radical argument for the need to de-link from colonial thinking and processes as he looks towards the possibilities that political and epistemic resistance, disobedience and transformative practices can offer for the purpose of imagining and building new and different societies.

In imagining a new World Order, decolonial theory can also serve as an important educational tool for deconstructing the neoliberal notion of *development*, analyzing global inequities and highlighting the need for democratic education and action to challenge the hegemony of this ideology. In her description of development, Cindi Katz (2004) sees it as an the iterative flux of capital moving across space in time, making and unmaking particular places; structuring and restructuring social relations of production and reproduction; and being met, engaged, and countered by social actors whose own histories and geographies enable and call forth broad and differentiated material social practices. These practices and the social relations associated with them may embrace, rework, and be disrupted by the encounter (p. ix).

For decolonial scholars, development, under the neoliberal globalization process, has been viewed as an uneven and exploitive flow of capital between the global north and the global south or between the First and Fourth worlds (Bhattacharyya, 2005; Stewart-Harawira, 2005). Stewart-Harawira (2005) recounts the promises espoused by economists of a new world order based on free-market principles and neoliberal policies such as global trade liberalization and structural adjustment programs. Such an unfettered system would enable money and capital to flow freely and open opportunities to wealth for all nations and individuals. However, as critical, feminist and indigenous scholars have argued globalization under the current world order has failed to meet its promises of global fair trade, peace through prosperity, fair and equal distribution of wealth, protection of the environment and global justice (Battacharyya, 2005; Stewart-Harawira, 2005).

The formation of the current world order from Western accounts is based on Western philosophical political thought and looks at the move towards modernity as being a positive one. As Stewart-Harawira (2005) points out, in these analyses indigenous people are either invisible or sometimes referred to in terms of their marginalization or oppression as a result of imperialism. Indigenous scholars present a very different view of the evolution of world order through their accounts of the impact of colonialism and imperialism in the forms of “genocide

and dispossession, of violence and loss” (p. 15). In an effort to enable European access to lands and resources, Smith (1999/2006) recounts the sustained and deliberate attacks on the collective nature of indigenous social and political structures.

Resistance to the current world order, through the form of social movements had a major beginning during the Seattle protests of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1999. This global resistance against power and neoliberal ideologies has continued through the global democracy struggles in Egypt, Libya and most recently throughout the ‘Occupy’ movements around the world. These global social movements may be pointing towards what Wallerstein (1998) sees as a transition from one world system to the next. He refers to these movements as ‘transformational timespace’ in which we have the opportunity to determine for ourselves the kind of world system that we want and the means by which we may be most likely to get there. Wallerstein (1998) sees the type of engagement necessary for this type of transformational work as being ‘utopic’ in which one critically explores ‘historical alternatives’ to envision not just the future, but a ‘historically possible future’.

Indigenous Knowledges-Unearthing Historical Alternatives

The work of decolonial scholars and the global support of indigenous social movements have been vital to the unearthing of these historical alternatives mentioned above. Contrary to work that the colonial modernity project has done in ignoring, subjugating or refuting African and other indigenous knowledge(s), Denise Martin (2008) asserts that many indigenous cultures had strong and well developed knowledge systems. As South African scholar, Meki Nzewi (2009) notes “African intellectual practice was grounded in a research culture that informed the invention and advancement of knowledge fields before colonial contact disrupted original intellectual disposition (p. 2). Joe Kincheloe (2006) has argued that the impact of the combination of industrialization, Cartesian rationality and massive technological growth and development have contributed to an emerging ontological view which has “consistently excluded subjugated/indigenous knowledges from valid data bases” (p. 184). Using a ‘machine metaphor’, Kincheloe (2006) warns of the “reductionism of viewing the universe as a well-oiled machine and the human mind as a computer” (p. 182). This mechanistic view of human beings sees them existing in a highly industrialized, high-digitalized and lifeless universe in which they are becoming separated from nature, the cosmos and other human beings. Instead, he argues, that we need to interrogate this mechanistic view using a critical ontological approach. Kincheloe (2006)

further asserts that indigenous knowledges are central to the work of what he has described as the 'bricolage' (the practice of making new meaning out of pre-existing knowledges) as they are "brimming with cosmological, epistemological, and ontological insight missing from Western perspectives" (p. 184).

Over the past two decades, institutions of higher education in countries around the world have instituted programs or centres specializing in the study of Indigenous Knowledges, including indigenous ontology, epistemology and cosmology. A significant motivation for the resurgence in the study of Indigenous Knowledges has been the concern expressed by indigenous and decolonial scholars that many indigenous languages and cultures are rapidly becoming extinct (Abdi, 2010; Battiste, 2009b, 2010; Dei, 2011; McPherson, 2003; MacPherson, 2003; Smith, 2009; Task Force on Aboriginal Language and Culture, 2005). Indigenous and decolonial scholars argue that these alternative ontological, epistemological and cosmological views are needed in local, national and international policy dialogue for the purpose of confronting and challenging those of the dominant Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Battiste, 2008a; Kapoor & Shizha, 2010; Wane, 2008). In *Vital Signs*, Worldwatch Institute (2005) reminds us that, indigenous people are "keepers of a vital part of our human heritage, a knowledge essential for the survival of our shared home in the face of the developed world's obsession with growth in production and consumption, and the consequent deterioration of our environment" (p. 63).

In acknowledging the multiple meanings of 'indigenous knowledge(s)' in different historical, social, cultural, and political contexts, my evocation of indigenous knowledge(s) is part of a political and resistance project grounded in critical and decolonial theory. It is used in an effort to illuminate the knowledge, values and identities of indigenous peoples which have been marginalized and subjugated through the colonial modernity and neoliberal projects in order to eliminate any source of opposition or resistance to their dominant ideologies (Dei, 2011)¹⁰. I draw five aspects of indigenous ontology and epistemology from the literature which could be used to challenge and confront the individualistic, neoliberal, efficiency-oriented

¹⁰ Yatta Kanu (2011) pushes further to argue that in addition to illuminating indigenous knowledge(s), there must also be attention given to the application of these indigenous ontological and epistemological views within educational policy and practice. A literature review on critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches, including the application of indigenous knowledges, is included later in this chapter.

approaches to being and learning. These five include: collective/communal ethos; individuality within collective/specialization and inclusion; living with difference/mutuality; holistic approaches (integration of mind/body/spirit); balance/sustainability.

Within the African indigenous philosophy of Ubuntu¹¹, one of the central concepts refers to the important role that *consensus* plays in collective decision-making (Louw, 1999). Busia (1967) noted that the democratic process in many indigenous African cultures often involved lengthy dialogue and discussions and Broodryk (1997) adds that decisions were delayed until all members of the community who wished to express an opinion were given an equal opportunity to contribute until a consensus or group cohesion was reached. Common phrases arising from the ethic of Ubuntu include *simunye* ("we are one", i.e. "unity is strength") and slogans like "an injury to one is an injury to all" (Broodryk, 1997). Some critics caution that although the philosophy of Ubuntu promotes the values of respect, human dignity and compassion, there exists a potential for exploitation or abuse of Ubuntu democracy due to the pressures for conformity and loyalty to the group (Louw, 1999). However, as Sindane (1994) argues an adherence to the core principles of Ubuntu demands both an authentic respect for human/individual rights and an honest appreciation of difference.

This recognition and valuing of individual differences within the collective is elaborated further by other indigenous scholars. In speaking about the *individual* within the collective, it is important to highlight here the differences between the traditional indigenous conception of the individual and that of the Western liberal notion of the individual. According to Shutte (1993), the concept of *seriti* in African philosophy is understood as an "energy, power or force which is claimed to both make us ourselves and unite us in personal interaction with others" (p. 55). The concerns that arise from the possible loss of the individual in this African collective consciousness are addressed by Ndaba (1994) as he point out that as a part of the collective, the "African subjectivity develops and thrives in a relational setting provided by the ongoing contact and interaction with others (p. 14) Using the example of African indigenous musical arts, Meki Nzewi (2010) asserts that dance and dramatic arts were collective, communal activities which were seen to boost physical and mental health. However, it was quite common and even expected that anyone at the gathering who possessed a 'unique attribute' in singing, dancing or

¹¹ The central concept of *ubuntu*, means 'humanity,' 'humanness,' or even 'humaneness', and articulates a basic respect and compassion for others (Louw, 2006)

drama would exercise their “individual interpretation of the norm [as this] enriches its performance and experienc[e], and is cherished” (p. 3). Nzewi (2010) further asserts that “rigid control or robotizing of the human person to rigidly conform to rules contrived by the elite is, therefore, not an original African ideology” (p. 3) In her writings about Aboriginal worldviews, Marie Battiste (2010) echoes these sentiments about valuing the development of unique gifts and talents as she passes on the wisdom of Aboriginal Elders who assert that individuals at birth are “provided with a purpose and gifts for the spirit from Creator, the spirit journey is directed toward the discovery of these gifts and the fulfillment of that purpose” (p. 14).

A third concept within indigenous knowledge links to Mignolo’s (2007) argument for the importance of pluriversality. African traditional epistemological practices differ from Western/modern epistemologies in that there was a deep belief that sharing information and learning from others, which Nzewi (2010) terms *inter-borrowing* and *enriching*, are important for the development of the virtue of *mutuality*. Within African traditional cultures it was believed that this virtue was important in order to foster and sustain diplomatic relationships (Nzewi, 2010). Louw (1999) describes the purpose of *mutual exposure* as seen through the philosophy of Ubuntu as inspiring us “to expose ourselves to others, to encounter the difference of their humanness so as to inform and enrich our own” (Sindane, 1994, p. 8-9). This respect for what Louw (1999) refers to as *particularity, individuality and historicity* underscores the contributions of Ubuntu in helping to acknowledge an acceptance of the global pluriversality of languages, histories, values and traditions. In addition to the differences noted above, there is also a substantive difference between the concept of knowledge in Western thinking (based on positivistic beliefs, where truth is determined only by a certain kind of empirical data) and that of indigenous knowledge(s) which goes beyond positivistic beliefs and assumptions.

In contrast to the partitioning and privileging of certain disciplines, knowledges and epistemological approaches resulting from the colonial modernity project and which continues within neoliberal policy approaches in education, a fourth concept within indigenous knowledge(s) values a more holistic approach. This holistic approach sees the importance of bringing together not only the disciplinary silos, but also the integration of mind and spirit. Within indigenous knowledge systems, the interconnected relationships between humans and spirits (both past and future human spirits and the spirits of the Natural World) are viewed as being vital to the wholeness and balance of life (Mucina, 2011). Denise Martin (2008) describes

the concept of *maat* which existed throughout ancient Egyptian civilization as a 'comprehensive construct' which informed cosmological, religious, philosophical and epistemological views. Martin (2008) argues that within this construct exist ten guiding principles or dimensions: sacred, symbolic, visual, functional, moral, oral, communal, rhythmic, multidimensional, and holistic. In deeming the epistemological systems of the indigenous peoples backwards or 'fantasy', the colonists also de-linked the important cosmological and spiritual beliefs that had guided much of indigenous epistemology (Morris, 2000; Mucina, 2011). The spiritual connections guided much of the ways of knowing and ways of being of the indigenous peoples (Battiste, 2010). Under the modernity process, with the unfailing beliefs in the truths and knowledge that could be gained (and transmitted) through empirical data and scientific inquiry, there has been a shift away from an understanding or acceptance of a 'spiritual component' that was a vital element in indigenous epistemologies. Many indigenous scholars have written about the importance of this spiritual connection and the 'learning spirit' that is so deeply embedded their ontological and epistemological belief systems (Battiste, 2010; Mucina, 2011).

The final concept of indigenous knowledge(s) that will be reviewed is that of balance and sustainability. Under the current colonial modernity and neoliberal market-based ideology, critical and indigenous scholars have argued that the 'empirical truths' of modernity and human needs, rights and profits (particularly of those in the privileged global north) are often put ahead of the spiritual beliefs of indigenous peoples. The spiritual beliefs within indigenous knowledge(s) guide their relationships with other humans and with the natural world; speak to the importance of balance; and instill a responsibility for the sustainability of the Natural World and future generations (Battiste, 2010; Dragone, 2011; Vizina, 2008; Wane, 2009). Nicholle Dragone (2011) recalls the 'basic call to consciousness' that Oren Lyons, a representative of the Haudenosaunee nation and Indigenous peoples collectively, received while attending the 1977 United Nations NGO Conference on Discrimination of the Indigenous Populations of the Americas. Lyons noted that the focus in the 'rights' discourse was solely on humans and that the 'rights' of the Natural World were not being spoken for. As Dragone (2011) reminds us, within the Indigenous Knowledge system, a common belief exists about the interconnected relationships between human, spirit and nature. A key aspect of Indigenous Knowledge is the responsibility as members of this global interconnected earth that we share from the ancestral knowledge (of past

generations) for the sustainability of the human and natural life on earth for current and future generations. In recounting his experience, Lyons wrote

We went to Geneva [. . .] as representatives of the Indigenous People[s] of the Western Hemisphere. We went to Geneva, and we spoke in the forum of the United Nations. For a short time we stood equal among the people and the nations of the world. And what was the message that we gave? There is a hue and cry for human rights – human rights, they said, for all people. And the Indigenous People[s] said: What of the rights of the Natural World? Where is the seat for the buffalo or the eagle? Who is representing them here in this forum? Who is speaking for the waters of the earth? Who is speaking for the trees and the forests? Who is speaking for the fish – for the whales – for the beavers – for our children? We said: Given this opportunity to speak in this international forum, then it is our duty to say that we must stand for these people, and the Natural World and its rights; and also for the generations to come. We would not fulfill our duty if we did not say that. It becomes important because without the water, without the trees, there is no life. [Oren Lyons] (in Dragone, 2011, p. 113)

Dragone (2011) argues that it is vital that these pluriverse ontological perspectives and voices, which differ from those within the dominant hegemony, are able to find their place within the global policy agenda for the sake of the sustainability of our shared earth and global society. However, while decolonial and indigenous scholars are continuing to uncover and document a diversity of ‘historical alternatives’, indigenous policy actors, at the local, national and global levels, are expressing frustrations as they face constraints or roadblocks within policy processes which they feel continue to privilege the dominant hegemony (Battiste, 2008a; Engle, 2010; Hodgson, 2011). Although many of these nation-states purport to have democratic principles which are grounded on the principles of dialogue, debate and public participation, many people around the world have continued to be marginalized from these debates. The colonial systems of governance and education which privilege Eurocentric knowledge and practices, are still in existence in most countries around the world, and fail to acknowledge the diversity of ways of knowing, ways of communicating and ways of participating both in education and in the political process which do not follow the hegemonic Western, Eurocentric norm. In the following section, we begin to look more specifically at the educational system and its role in aiding or constraining the development of these democratic principles and practices.

Erosion of Thick Democracy and the Need for a New Conception: Toward a *Robust Global Democracy*

Democracy in Schools: Impact of Colonial Modernity and Neoliberalism

Many nation-states around the world continue to call themselves ‘democratic’, however as has been outlined in Chapter one, the increasing ideological shift towards neoliberalism is continuing to erode the principles and practices espoused under liberal democracy. Critical and decolonial scholars would argue further that the conception of a liberal democracy may not be ‘thick’ or ‘robust’ enough to be able to re-engage the public to challenge hegemonic ideologies which threaten the future of environmental sustainability and of a socially just and inclusive global society (Portelli & Solomon, 2001; Thayer-Bacon, 2008). Critical and decolonial scholars argue that educational reforms are needed within the public education system in order to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to confront the current World Order dominated by global neoliberalism and to begin the work of social transformation to create a new World Order based on the goals of environmental sustainability and the creation of a more socially just and inclusive global community (Ojaide, 2007; Stewart-Harawira, 2005; Wallerstein, 1998).

The current conception of democracy in many schools in nation-states around the world, which purport to be democratic, often conflate citizenship with democracy. Although the rhetoric of democratic citizenship is used, Lawy & Biesta (2006) argue that “current educational policies and approaches to citizenship education are commonly founded on the assumptions of *citizenship-as-achievement*, a conceptualization with the emphasis on social engineering, upon the ‘manufacture’ of compliant yet ‘active’ citizens” (p. 42). Lawy & Biesta (2006) further argue that to view young people as moving into citizenship status represents an impoverished view of what it means to be a citizen that necessarily marginalizes and excludes them from mainstream life. Although citizenship education remains within the discourse and curricular policy documents in provinces across Canada, Westheimer (2008) found that “the kinds of goals and practices commonly represented in curricula that hope to foster democratic citizenship usually have more to do with voluntarism, charity, and obedience than with democracy” (p. 8)

In a study conducted with Ontario secondary school principals, I found that teachers and educational leaders spoke of the need to develop *cultures of active citizenship* in their schools (Drinkwater, 2008). However, the cultures that the administrators described mirrored a very *thin* conception of democracy. The contradictions between the principles inherent in a robust

democracy, the discourse of citizenship participation, and the actual manner in which schools operate have been identified by numerous scholars (Davies & Evans, 2002; Edgeworth, 2008; Sears & Hughes, 2006). Although the rhetoric of diversity is often included in citizenship education curriculum, Banks (2006) notes that schools in nation-states around the world have often avoided efforts for *cultural democracy* in favour of models which foster *cultural assimilation* and the “eradication of the cultures and languages of students from diverse racial, ethnic, language, and religious groups” (p. 141).

In drawing from her own experiences with educational methods of other cultures and as well as the work of educational philosophers such as John Dewey, Benjamin Barber, Iris Marion Young, Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, Barbara Thayer-Bacon (2008) argues that many of the educational policies and pedagogical approaches that are being used in schools in 'democratic' nation-states are being informed by a liberal democratic ideology which privileges a "rationalist and individualist understanding of democracy" (p. ix). Further, she asserts that the "individualist legacy of liberal democracy, as conceived by Locke and Rousseau, ignores and excludes the needs of American students raised in cultures with strong communal traditions" (Thayer-Bacon, 2008, back cover).

Thayer-Bacon's (2008) experiences with diverse school populations in the United States, including Native Americans, African Americans, Mexican Americans, and other culturally marginalized populations have helped to inform her theory of democracy which combines relational, pluralistic and social political theory for the purpose of contributing to the "ongoing construction of knowing" (p. 3). The impetus for the research from which Thayer-Bacon's (2008) theory emerged came from her reflections on the data showing that "the students who were struggling the most in U.S. schools--the ones with the highest drop-out rates and the lowest proficiency exam scores--were also the students whose cultural backgrounds had a more collective focus in which the family, not the individual, was the heart of the community, abiding by the notions that 'it takes a village to raise a child'" (p. 4) Further, Thayer-Bacon (2008) argues that the "collective, communitarian values of cooperation, sharing, and fraternity, based on a belief in the interconnectedness of the self to others and to nature, are in direct contrast to the individualistic values that shaped America's government as well as its schools" (p. 5)

One of the most marginalizing of the policy approaches under the colonial system of educational reforms was the promotion of teaching and learning approaches which were based

on a conception of a *deficit mentality* (Bartolomé, 2008; Lee, 2011; Paris, 2012; Portelli, Shields & Vibert, 2007). These deficit approaches viewed the languages, literacies, and cultural ways of being of students who did not belong to the dominant, hegemonic (White, Eurocentric) culture as deficiencies to be overcome in learning the legitimized, dominant, standardized, core curriculum on which they would be assessed. The ultimate goal of these deficit approaches was the eradication of the language and cultural practices that these students brought from their homes and communities and the replacement with those viewed as ‘superior practices’ (Paris, 2012).

Critical scholars argue that the *thin* conception of democracy that is currently informing educational policy and pedagogy is insufficient if the goal of public education is to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values needed to engage robustly in challenging colonial/imperialism and global neoliberalism in the pursuit of an ecologically sustainable and socially just global community. As Thayer-Bacon (2008) argues even in educational systems in nations which call themselves democratic, the spaces and opportunities in schools for students to critically question and engage in robust dialogue around the larger historical, political and social forces which have contributed to marginalization and increasing inequities is becoming increasingly constricted. In a study on the democratic purposes of schools across Canada, Joel Westheimer (2008) noted an erosion in the “very foundations of democratic engagement” in schools as a result of the effects of neoliberal educational reforms based on market-based principles such as competition, individual success, and accountability as measured by results on standardized, high-stakes assessments” (p. 6). The findings of this study indicated that the “goals of K-12 education have been shifting steadily away from preparing active and engaged public citizens and towards more narrow goals of career preparation and individual economic gain” (Westheimer, 2008, p. 6-7). Westheimer (2008) argues that these findings are indicative of increasing parental pressure and a “broad cultural shift in educational priorities” which see schools serving the role of “conduits for individual success” (p. 7). An even more disturbing trend for Westheimer (2008) and for the future of democratic engagement is the increasing use of curricular approaches that “spoonfeed” students and signal to students that “broader critical thinking is optional” (p. 7).

In educational systems around the world, critical decolonial scholars have argued that similar constraints to both the democratic processes and principles and to student engagement exist as a result of the privileging of colonial and Euro-centric structures, policies and

epistemologies which have marginalized youth who come from other cultures or whose learning styles do not fit the dominant hegemonic mold (Battiste, 2009a, 2010; Dei, Asgharzadeh, Bahador & Shahjahan, 2006). For the future of our global society, critical and decolonial scholars argue that educational policy reforms are needed to re-engage pluriverse youth around the world, critically and creatively in order to reimagine and to take an active role in the democratic process of social transformation.

Towards a Robust Global Democracy: Conception of Democracy; Purpose of Education in a Democratic Society

In order to prepare youth to participate as active and engaged global citizens for social transformation, educational systems across the world must be informed by a much more robust and global conception of democracy. In response to rising social inequities and environmental destruction, diverse social movements around the world are engaging individually and collectively through various forms of democratic action as they challenge, confront and resist the impact of global neoliberalism. As critical scholars Anyon (2005), Escobar and Alvarez (1992), Morrow and Torres (2003) and Stewart-Harawira (2005) have argued, many of the successful socio-historical transformations of the past have resulted from the democratic actions of social movements. Our schools and communities do not sit in isolation from these social movements. On the contrary, the combined effects of the globalization process and the evolution of global information technology have increasingly enabled pluriverse schools, communities and societies to begin to engage, mobilize and take action around social and political issues, in what Dewey (1954) calls *the Great Community* at the local, national and global scale. The challenge exists to revisit, reflect and re-conceptualize the notion of democracy which is informing our educational systems in order to thicken, deepen and globalize the purpose of education for social transformation. I take my inspiration from these social movements and draw from the concepts and writing of theorists and scholars from the global north, global south and indigenous communities that I build this new narrative of democracy which I call a *robust global democracy*.

Debates around the purpose of education in democratic societies have been hotly contested throughout history as scholars, politicians, leaders and citizens offer differing views about the characteristics and qualities of a democratic person. Most post-industrial democratic

nations follow a more *liberal democratic notion* of democracy (Brown, 2003)¹². As Gert Biesta (2007) has argued, the conception of democracy that is adopted by a nation-state is largely based on the ideas about the ‘kind of subjectivity’ that is considered desirable or even necessary for a democratic society. The democratic subjectivities which exist under the current models of liberal representative democracy reflect a subject who is more interested in the defense of their individual rights and freedoms and less in the interests of the common or public good. The impact of representative democracy around the world has seen the consistent erosion of the socially, politically and actively engaged notion of democracy for the purpose of the *common good* of the society¹³ (Portelli & Solomon, 2001). Perhaps it is time to push toward a more *robust, inclusive and global* conception of democracy.

It is important to clearly articulate the conception of democracy that is informing both the conceptual framework and the argument presented in this thesis. The conception that I envision will be referred to as a *robust global democracy* which embraces an ethic of a *globality of humanity*. The notion of a *robust global democracy* emerges from a variety of work including the work of Dewey (1916/2005), Mignolo (2009, 2011c), Louw (1999, 2006), Mucina (2011), Price (2007), Grande (2004), Arendt (1958), Mouffe (2002), and Portelli & Solomon (2001). The multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary aspects of the work of these authors contributes to a broader understanding of what it means to be a democratic person. The aspects identified also have important implications for how we understanding democratic learning and the goals of education within a democratic society. Each aspect adds a component to a new narrative of democracy which I will be referring to as a *robust global democracy*. The conception of democracy put forward by Dewey (1916/2005) illuminates a *social* aspect; notions of democracy from the fifth and fourth century B.C.in Greece add what may be termed a *reciprocal* aspect; notions arising from within the African ethic of *ubuntu* (Louw, 1999, 2006; Mucina, 2011), combined with the work of indigenous scholars Price (2007) and Grande (2004) illuminate a *collective* or *communal* aspect; conceptions espoused by Arendt (1958) can be described as adding *human* and *action-*

¹² An overview of the key components of a *liberal democracy* can be found in Chapter One.

¹³ The work of Will Kymlicka (2001) argues that given an acceptance of the realities of the globalization process, in terms of the possibilities and capabilities for humans to connect much faster and easier than before and the increasing awareness of our shared global environment that this concept of the *common good* must be expanded to include the *global common*.

oriented aspects; and, those of Chantal Mouffe (2002) and Portelli & Solomon (2001) add *plural, critical and political* aspects.

Deweyan contributions

Dewey (1916/2005) speaks to the importance of education in societies which espouse to follow democratic principles and renounce external authority. He argues that the goal of education in democratic societies must be to develop individuals who have the knowledge, skills, interests and dispositions to take up this ‘way of living’ (Dewey, 1900/1971). In this form of understanding democracy, education becomes a question of thought as much as governance. It is tied to ethical responsibility as much as a question of society and socialization. He argues that “a democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience” (Dewey, 1916/2005, p. 53).

For Dewey (1916/2005), the democratic subjectivity of an individual must include what he refers to as a ‘social intelligence’. Dewey held that the mind is not “an original datum” and that development of this type of democratic subjectivity is dependent on a life of “association, intercourse, transmission, and accumulation” (Dewey, 1917/1980, p. 60). It is through the interactions with others that individuals have the opportunity to think, reflect and make-meaning of their environment. Biesta (2007) extends Dewey’s work to suggest that it is during the process of *communication* through discussion, dialogue and interaction with others that patterns of thought and action can be either formed or transformed. Dewey argues that democratic education for the development of *intelligence* must include opportunities for students to experience a multiplicity of social interactions and perspectives in order to develop both critical and creative thinking skills. The purpose of education within a democratic society, in which many interests are shared and in which there is a primary interest in the common good, must promote the ‘free and full interplay of associations’ in order to secure a ‘liberation of powers’ (Dewey, 1916/2005). For Dewey (1916/2005), the transformative purpose of education rests on the social awareness of individuals so that each individual “has to refer his own action to that of others and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own” (p. 53).

Dewey (1938) further stressed the importance of ‘experience’ within the schooling environment, particularly that which had a link to the lived experiences of the student. He introduces the notion of *plasticity* to the idea of education as growth. In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey (1916/2005) notes “the specific adaptability of an immature creature for

growth constitutes his plasticity” (p. 29). For Dewey (1916/2005), this notion of plasticity referred to the ability to retain lessons from one experience that could help when facing future difficulties. It is not simply in the learning from one experience, but as Dewey saw it, it is through the process of open-ended reflective thinking through multiple experiences, particularly *social experiences*, that one is able to “modify actions” and “develop dispositions” (p. 29). For Dewey, genuine education could not come from what Freire (1970/2000) referred to as a *banking education* in which formal education is separated from experience. Dewey saw education as being a life-long pursuit in which the development of these democratic dispositions (eg.) illuminated what John Baldacchino (2008b) describes as a view of society which has a “ground of continuous possibilities” (p. 151).

In order to open up the possibilities for students to use and grow from their own local experiences, educational systems must recognize and value the pluriversity of local languages and cultures. In *School and Society*, Dewey (1900/1971) spoke of the importance of recognizing that children naturally and eagerly speak about things that they experience and are interested in. He further noted that when vital interests and experiences were disconnected from the classroom, students lost interest in being engaged in their learning. Dewey (1917/1980) made reference to the disengagement that students experienced when the ‘language’ of instruction used in the classroom was different from their mother tongue, stating:

It is not surprising that one of the chief difficulties of school work has come to be instruction in the mother tongue. Since the language taught is unnatural, not growing out of the real desire to communicate vital impressions and convictions, the freedom of children in its use gradually disappears (p. 55-56).¹⁴

In addition to opening itself up to pluriverse ways of knowing and being, Baldacchino (2008b) sees in Dewey’s writings a key element which links to my conception of a *robust global democracy* grounded in an ethic of a *globality of humanity*. Baldacchino (2008b) views Dewey’s idea of communication and communicated experiences being built around a “consensus for difference” which should inform our thinking “as a way of acting and defining our case as human beings, as the rational co-inhabitants of one world” (p. 153). Within this narrative of a

¹⁴ It is not surprising that the push towards monolingualism and literacy in the dominant hegemonic languages is still being challenged today by critical and decolonial scholars and UNESCO (Amin & Kubota, 2004; Battiste, 2009b; Bunyi, 2008; New London Group, 1996; UNESCO 2000, 2001a, 2004; United Nations, 2002).

robust global democracy, this consensus of difference requires an understanding and acceptance of the need for pluriverse voices and perspectives, while at the same time acknowledging that the tensions created while experiencing and engaging with difference are necessary in order for us to learn and grow. In the creation of this new narrative of democracy, which acknowledges and respects both the plurality of the members of the global polis and the commonality of our humanity, Dewey's belief in a *consensus for difference* is an important principle. This is considered a *social* aspect.

Ancient Greek contributions

Centuries ago, in ancient Greece, as Plato began to build the model for his utopian society, he saw an important role for education in a democratic state to be much broader than that which existed only in a formal setting. In *The Republic*, Plato describes a system of education which follows the concepts of *paideia* (Jaegar, 1967). As Hancock (1987) notes, the concept of *paideia* saw “the city-state and the citizen existing in an educational relationship in which both the society and the individual had reciprocal obligations to improve one another” (para. 2). Hancock (1987) further notes that fifth and fourth century B.C. Athenians, believed that “what was good for each individual must first be measured by its goodness for the community” and that “the purpose of education was largely to aid the individual and the larger society in their movement toward their *telos*, or purpose” (para. 2).

Within the model of democracy envisioned in ancient Greece, Aristotle (350 BCE) saw an important role for education in the development of the character of future citizens. He argued that the “legislator should direct his attention above all to the education of youth; for the neglect of education does harm to the constitution” (Part I, para. 1). Aristotle believed that education should fall under the control of the state to develop citizens prepared to contribute to society within a democracy. In *Politics-Book VIII*, Aristotle (350 BCE) writes “the character of democracy creates democracy, and the character of oligarchy creates oligarchy; and always the better the character, the better the government” (Part I, para. 1). Although Aristotle (350 BCE) admits there is a lack of agreement as to what should be included within education in order to develop the character of this public education, whether it be *virtue* or the *best life*, he leaves even further questions about whether the emphasis should focus more on *intellectual* or *moral* virtue. He does, however, put forward some strong statements arguing that the pursuit of “any occupation, art or science, which makes the body or soul or mind of the freeman less fit for the

practice or exercise of virtue, is vulgar....for they absorb and degrade the mind” (Part II). Aristotle (350 BCE) draws a distinction between actions or occupations which he terms *liberal* (for the purpose of self-growth, pursuit of excellence or helping others) and those which are *illiberal* (done for the sake of others, menial, servile). He argued further that it is the inclusion of opportunities to engage in *liberal* action within education which help to develop the character necessary for future citizens in a democracy.

The system of democracy as espoused for ancient Greece by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, while advocating a reciprocal responsibility for individual citizens with the state and the state, contains some aspects which need to be challenged as we build this new conception of a robust global democracy. Throughout Aristotle’s writings about the role of education for the development of democratic character, the discourse used includes references to the freeman, freemen, boys and men. Through a critical lens, this model calls into question issues of the marginalization of women, freedom, power, inequality and social reproduction. In describing the daily life in ancient Greece, Garland (2009) describes a system of formal education which focussed on the development of boys and an informal system in which girls received training from their mothers in their homes aimed at the development of domestic skills such as housekeeping and caring for the family. Further inequities in this model were also evidenced by the marginalization of women, and of other groups, such as slaves and the disabled, from active participation as citizens within the espoused democratic system of governance (Garland, 2009). This critical concern speaks to the importance of building a model which is inclusive, both within a local community, but also within our global society. In constructing the new narrative of a robust global democracy, the lessons arising from an examination of the model developed in ancient Greece speaks to the importance of *equity* and *inclusivity* and also to the notion of a *reciprocal* relationship between the society and the individual.

African and indigenous contributions

In expanding this notion of a robust democracy to become what I am calling a robust global democracy, it is vital to bring in the voices and theories of decolonial scholars who remind us that the knowledge and voices of those societies who became marginalized under imperialism/colonialism/Eurocentrism must be reignited, promoted and valued (Battiste, 2008a, 2009a; Dei & Simmons, 2011; Maldonado-Torres, 2011; Mignolo, 2007, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; wa Thiong’o, 1986, 1993; Wane, 2009). In addition to the Eurocentric theories of democracy, it

is important to bring in the wisdom of *others*, whose pluriverse knowledges must be valued in any robust global processes which purports to be democratic. As Mignolo (2009) argues “the need for political and epistemic de-linking...as well as decolonizing and decolonial knowledges, [are] necessary steps for imagining and building democratic, just, and nonimperial/colonial societies” (p. 7).

For centuries prior to Dewey, and prior to the colonial encounter, many indigenous societies had established their own forms of governance based on their philosophical, ontological and cosmological understanding of the relationship between individuals, their society, and their environment. Within many of the traditional African societies, there was strong notion of the importance of a *collective* responsibility or social ethic for individuals as members of a society. In Zulu, the phrase *Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, means "a person is a person through other persons" (Louw, 2006, p. 161). The central concept of *ubuntu*, means 'humanity,' 'humanness,' or even 'humaneness', and articulates a basic respect and compassion for others. It reflects a social ethic which not only describes human being as 'being-with-others', but also prescribes how we should relate to others. The ethic of *ubuntu*, as officially recognized in the 1997 South African Governmental White Paper for Social Welfare, bears many similarities to the concept which I am putting forward in this thesis of a robust global democracy grounded in an 'globality of humanity':

The principle of caring for each other's well-being ... and a spirit of mutual support ... Each individual's humanity is ideally expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs in turn through a recognition of the individual's humanity. *Ubuntu* means that people are people through other people. It also acknowledges both the rights and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being (Republic of South Africa, 1997, Article 24).

In order to both recognize the forces of globalization and to decolonize the 'post-industrial' notion of democracy which has dominated nation-states in the North and West for over a century, it will be necessary to create an alternative radical narrative of democracy. Within this more inclusive and global conception, Price (2007) draws from the work of Mignolo (2002) in arguing the need for “stories from below [that are] an empowered counter narrative to globalisation from above” (Price, 2007, p. 10). For centuries prior to the post-industrial Western model of democracy, many Fourth World or indigenous cultures had their own models of governance and decision-making. Beliefs drawn from indigenous ontology and cosmology could

contribute further to the conception of a global democracy based on a belief in a spirituality which places the responsibility for decision-making for the sustainability of the earth and the peaceful co-existence of humans and their environment in the hands of humans (De Lissovoy, 2010).

Many indigenous scholars have written about the continuing and historic contributions of Fourth World or indigenous peoples to the conceptualization, approach, principles and content of a range of democratic ideals (Battiste, 2008a; Bobiwash, 2001; Grande, 2004; Louw, 2006; Price, 2007). Dewey's description of democracy as being more of a *way of life* than a form of governmentality blends well with the conception of an indigenous Confederacy or *way of being and governing* (Price, 2007). Price (2007) describes the democratic ideal of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquoian) peoples as one which saw the equitable distribution of power and "an inclusive social, economic, political, and environmental democracy, with an ideal trinity of protection, provision, and participation for its entire people" (p. 17). Further, it models what Arendt (1958) stressed as critical to the development of democratic subjectivities, the freedom to speak, think and act. Price (2007) identifies a number of core distinguishing content qualities of these democratic communities including: generalized and empowered dialogue, respect for diversity, equity, ecological justice and peace.

Price (2007) builds his notion of a critical red democracy from the work of Sandy Grande (2004) who had seen the links between the Haudenosaunee democratic tradition, critical pedagogy and transformative praxis. For the Haudenosaunee peoples, the values which acted as guiding principles included: participation by all members, collective thinking and decision-making by consensus. The spiritual beliefs of these people included the need to recognize and seek the wisdom of all members of the society, those living, those whose spirits have passed on and those still to come (Layton, 2000). As Price (2007) recounts "all people and points of view must be heard and respected including the interests of the coming seven generations and maintaining the respect for the past seven generations" (p. 17). The deep spiritual respect for and connection with the land and its natural elements guided decision-making in this conception of democracy. As in other indigenous philosophies (Wangoola, 2000) the connection between humans, nature and the spiritual world guided everything that happened "in the realm of development and politics" and placed the responsibility for the sustainability of the Earth on humans (p. 265). In this new narrative of democracy which I have conceptualized, the principles

inherent in a robust democracy must be extended to all peoples across the world in order to open a much broader, deeper, critical and decolonial dialogue and participation in the interests of re-creating and sustaining a global consciousness in our shared environment for social and ecological justice.

Arendtian contributions

Hannah Arendt (1958) pushes Dewey's *social* conception of democracy further in her argument that in order for an individual to develop a 'democratic subjectivity' he or she must be able to *act*. In her historical-philosophical analysis of the link between politics and the human condition, Arendt argues that the Western philosophical and political traditions have devalued the role of human action, the *vita activa*. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt (1958) classifies human activities into the three categories of labour, work and action. According to Arendt (1958), under the current conditions of modernity, the primary purposes of labour and work have been to both *produce* and *consume* driven by the forces of industrialization and capitalism. According to Arendt (1958), the fruits of many of these efforts are "impermanent, perishable and sometimes exhausted as they are consumed or destroyed" (Yar, 2005, ii. Work, para 2). Increasingly, these aspects of labour and consumption of the human condition do not possess the qualities necessary for a sustained existence in a shared global environment.

Throughout her writings, Arendt attempts to reinstate the important role of public and political action for the purpose of the common or public good. In writing about the *vita activa*, Arendt (1958) describes *action* as being one in which "an individual takes initiative, begins something new or brings something new into the world" (p. 15). As human beings, we each have the ability to create something uniquely different. Both Arendt (1958) and Dewey (1916/2005) believe that in order to develop an individual's democratic subjectivity, this creative action must be taken in a situation in which others can be subjects as well. Hence, it necessitates that an individual is able to *take action* in a social situation where others present are able to respond to or take up this action further without being controlled or restricted. In Gert Biesta's (2007) explanation of Arendt's notion of *democratic subjectivity*, he contends that the actions of the individual must be related "to the life of the polis, the public sphere in which we live - and have to live - with others who are not like us" (p. 14). It is in this sense of social interaction that Arendt's work begins to coalesce with many of the critical theorists who see democratic education existing for the purpose of transforming society and for continually creating new

possibilities based on interactions between others *in the polis*. Arendt's contribution to the conception of a *robust global democracy* is her argument for the need to overturn the current hierarchy of human activity to put *action* at the top of the pyramid (above labour and work) in order to regain the public and political *freedom* and *creative agency* necessary to assume the responsibilities inherent in a democratic subjectivity. For Arendt, this freedom does not rest simply at the level of the *individual*, as an inner, private or contemplative phenomenon, but entails a much more active, worldly and public freedom.

Arendt's (1958) understanding of action excludes acting in isolation. As Biesta (2007) writes "in order to act, in order, therefore, to be someone, to be a subject, we need others who respond to our beginnings" (p. 13). As we integrate this understanding of social action into the work of Freire (1970/2000) and other critical pedagogues, it is the rich dialogue, debate and discussions that arise from the multiple perspectives that they bring to the table that deepens the understanding and informs a plan of action for social transformation. Arendt (1958) argues further that it is the 'otherness' in others that informs their response to our actions and if we deny or limit the action of others then we deprive ourselves of the possibility to develop our subjectivity. She concludes that "plurality is the condition of human action" (Arendt, 1958, p. 188).

Plurality, politics and criticality in democracy

Chantal Mouffe (2002) takes Arendt's (1958) notion of plurality and offers a model of *agonistic pluralism* which she believes provides the ideal to strive for in any discussion, dialogue or debate which purports to be democratic. This notion of agonistic pluralism reflects Dewey's (1916/2005) democratic principle of a *consensus for difference*. Mouffe (2002) begins by reminding us that all political identities entail the creation of an *Us* that can only exist by distinguishing itself from a *Them*. This relationship has the potential to become *antagonistic* anytime that the *Other* begins to be perceived as questioning our identity and threatening our existence. Mouffe (2002) argues that once we acknowledge the dimension of *the political* we begin to realize that one of the main challenges facing democratic politics is how to "domesticate hostility and to defuse the potential antagonism in human relations" (p. 8). She further asserts that the goal is to not allow conflict to "take the form of *antagonism* (struggle between enemies) but of *agonism* (struggle between adversaries)" (Mouffe, 2002, p. 9). As part of the *agonistic*

struggle, Mouffe (2002) argues that conflict cannot and should not be eradicated as it is the very condition of a vibrant democracy.

In their notion of what they call *participatory democracy*, Portelli & Solomon (2001) also build on the importance of plurality as they link the individual, school and community as part of an ongoing reconstructive process “associated with equity, community, creativity, and taking difference seriously” (p. 17). A significant component of this conception of participatory democracy is that of *critical inquiry* in which students and teachers develop knowledge, skills, values, dispositions and actions that are called for by a reconstructive conception of democracy. In the current transnational and global contexts, comparative international education scholars, Popkewitz (2000) and Rizvi (2000), believe it is even more pressing for democratic practices to consider alternatives that are informed by how people come to know, understand, and experience themselves both as members of a community and citizens of a nation state¹⁵.

In summarizing this new narrative for a *thicker* and more *global* narrative of democracy, the key elements would include: experience and social interaction; action for freedom and social transformation; an acceptance of the non-neutrality of the political and an understanding of the need for *agonistic struggle*; an ethic of the *globality of humanity*; a collective focus on the ‘global common good’; and an acceptance of the value of pluriversality and coexistence.

Analytical framework

The analytical framework which will be used to discuss the findings is represented visually in Figure 1.

¹⁵ See also Arnove, 2007, 2009; Bartlett & Vavrus, 2009; Crossley, 2007; Davies, 2009; Dei, 2008a; Hargreaves, 2009; Hickling-Hudson, 2006; Madjidi & Restoule, 2008.

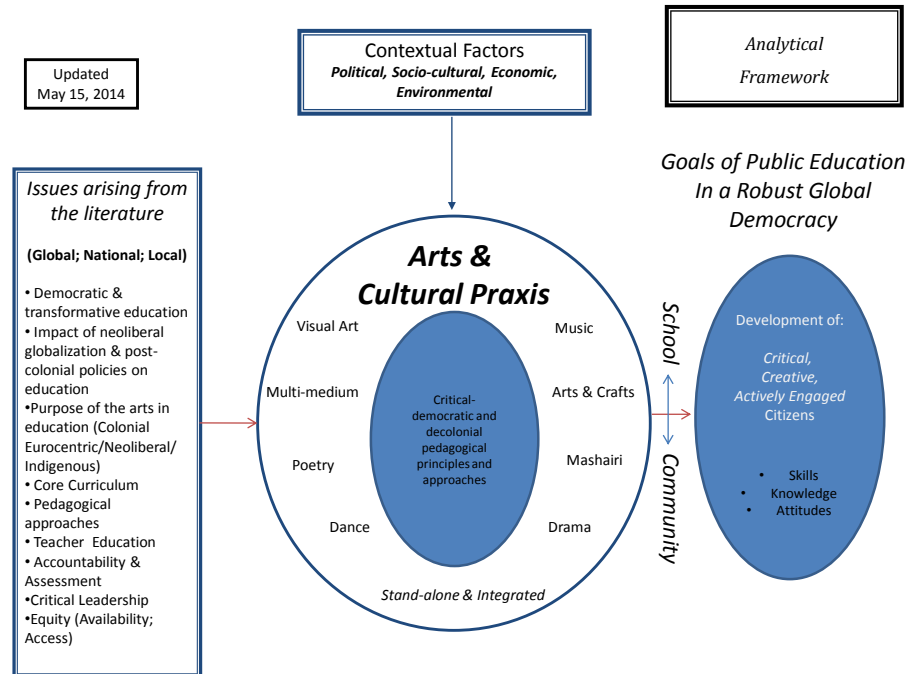


Figure 1. Graphic description of analytical framework.

It sees a broad notion of the arts and cultural praxis being used within a pedagogical approach which incorporates critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogical principles to support the achievement of the goals of education within a robust global democracy. It recognizes the influence of multi-contextual factors (political, socio-cultural, economic and environmental) and of other local, national and global influences. Policy and pedagogical issues arising from the literature which are influencing teachers' use of the arts and cultural praxis include: purpose of the arts and cultural praxis in education (colonial-Eurocentric; neoliberal; Maasai-Kenyan); impact of neoliberal globalization and post-colonial policies on education; teacher education; accountability and assessment; critical leadership; and equity (availability and access). Finally, drawing from the literature on critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy, it is vital that the learning is a continual and dynamic process which moves back and forth across the 'boundaries' of classroom, school and community.

In drawing from the key elements of the narrative of a robust global democracy, grounded in an ethic of a globality of humanity, the primary goal of education should be: to develop the democratic subjectivities (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) of its citizens to enable them to become actively engaged in contributing to the global common good (Dewey,

1916/2005; Arendt, 1958; Mouffe, 2002; Portelli & Solomon; 2001; Mignolo, 2009, 2011c; Louw 1999, 2006; Mucina, 2011; Price, 2007 and Grande, 2004). In operationalizing this major goal based on the literature from critical and decolonial theory, three aspects of this goal have been identified: critical, creative, and active engagement in social transformation.

- a) *Critical* - to develop in students the skills, attitudes and values needed to undertake critical inquiry, reflection and dialogue based on issues arising from life issues in which power has created oppression or inequity ((Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2009; Darder & Miron, 2007; Denzin, 2009; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Fischman & McLaren, 2005; Freire, 2001; Giroux, 1988, 1989; Giroux & Giroux, 2006; Greene, 2009b; Kincheloe, 2008a, 2008b; Kurth-Schai & Green, 2008; Macedo, 2009; Macrine, 2009a; McInerney, Smyth & Down, 2011; McLaren, 2007a, 2007b, 2010).
- b) *Creative* - to encourage, support and promote the release of the imagination for solution-finding and active engagement for a just and democratic society (Arendt, 1977; Bailey & Desai, 2005; Desai, 2000; Desai & Chalmers, 2007; Dewey, 1934; Drinkwater, 2011; Freire, 1998; Greene, 1995a; Kurth-Schai, 2008; Lundy, 2006; Nasong'o & Risley, 2009)
- c) *Active engagement in social transformation* - to move students to become critically and creatively engaged in relevant and meaningful issues for the purpose of transforming themselves and their local and global communities. For the purpose of my thesis argument, engagement for social transformation can occur individually or collectively at the classroom or school level, but is deepened when it extends to include school-community engagement. (Drinkwater, 2013; Fielding, 2012; Longo, Drury & Battistoni, 2006; McMahon & Portelli, 2012; McMahon, 2012; Mitra & Kirshner, 2012; Portelli & McMahon, 2004; Smyth, 2012; Smyth et al., 2008).

Chapter Summary

This chapter began by presenting the two-pronged theoretical framework to support this thesis, built from a combination of critical theory and decolonial theory. Using a *discourse of possibility*, critical theorists have argued that education can play a role in challenging and disrupting dominant ideologies and that teachers and schools can become venues for hope, resistance and democratic possibility. Decolonial theory narrows its focus to the dismantling of colonial structures and policies which it sees as the root cause of current inequities and injustice

in the world. Next, the chapter explores the importance of “unearthing historical alternatives” with a focus on Indigenous Knowledges, to provide ontological, epistemological and cosmological alternative perspectives which could be used to challenge and disrupt the dominant hegemony of colonial modernity and neoliberalism. Thirdly, the chapter argues that under the impact of the colonial modernity and neoliberalism, the notion of democracy in schools is being seriously eroded. It continues the argument that if schools are going to be able to assume the role that critical and decolonial scholars have put forward, there is a need for a new thicker and robust notion of democracy. The fourth section of the chapter brings together the work of scholars and literature from multiple cultures and perspectives to begin to develop a new narrative of democracy which I have called a *robust global democracy*. Using this new narrative of a robust, global democracy, the final section of the chapter presents the analytical framework which will be used to analyze and discuss the findings.

The following chapter will present the review of literature.

Chapter Three

Literature Review

Democratizing and Decolonization Education: A Role for the Arts and Cultural Praxis

The white western patriarchal ordering of things requires that we believe there is an inherent conflict between what we feel and what we think—between poetry [the arts] and theory. We are easier to control when one part of our selves is split from another, fragmented, off balance. There are other configurations, however, other ways of experiencing the world, though they are often difficult to name. We can sense them and seek their articulation (Lorde, 1984, p. 7).

Rather than making a case that something called “the arts” should be applied like a magic salve onto the lives of youth, the argument should hinge on the understanding that the lives of *all* students are always-already imbued with creativity and symbolic work, whether it involves something called “the arts” or not (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 227)

Organization of the Chapter

This chapter will be divided into three major sections. The first section reviews the literature which illuminates the impact of colonial-Eurocentric modernity and neoliberal globalization on society, on education. The second section reviews the literature which speaks to a role and possibilities for the education, with a specific focus on the arts and cultural praxis, for challenging and disrupting continued hegemonic ideologies of colonial-Eurocentric modernity and neoliberalism, within this model of a robust global democracy. This section begins by exploring the complexities inherent in the question “what are the arts and cultural praxis?” The final component of the chapter combines the work of critical and decolonial theorists with the research and practice of critical and decolonial pedagogues to review the literature which identifies pedagogical principles and practices needed to enable teachers and schools to use the arts and cultural praxis to become socially transformative agents within a robust global democracy.

Impact of Colonial-Eurocentric Modernity and Neoliberal Globalization on Society and on Education.

Garrison (2009) points to the changing conceptions of legitimate political order that accompanied the transition from a feudal to a capitalist social order. With this change came a shift in the political or governance issues related to individual, collective and civic 'rights' from a hereditary-based approach to a merit-based approach. A significant aspect of the colonial-Eurocentric modernity project was in the de-valuing or de-humanizing of many of those whom it colonized (Quijano, 2000; Richardson, 2012). Through the history of colonization, indigenous peoples in many countries were perceived as the 'others' (Okuno, 2005) and through the modernity project, they were often seen or referred to as ignorant, backward, savage or pagan (Bogonko, 1992). Abdi (2010) challenges this notion by arguing that prior to the colonial modernity project, Kenya, like most pre-colonial nation-states was inhabited by indigenous peoples rich in their own languages, cultures, ontological and epistemological beliefs.

Many critical and decolonial theorists argue that colonial modernity and neoliberal ontological and epistemological approaches are contributing to increasing inequities, student disengagement, and a reproduction of the status quo which privileges Eurocentric knowledge and neoliberal ideology. (Dei, 2008; Majhanovich, 2008; Portelli, Shields & Vibert, 2007; Zajda, 2008). Part of the logic of colonial-Eurocentric modernity was the domination of the educational systems, particularly through language policies and cultural practices (Abdi, 2012). The implementation of colonial pedagogical practices included an acceptance of a hierarchical power differential between teacher and pupil, and the use of a transmission form of pedagogy to transmit the 'core knowledge, values and cultural practices' of colonial Euro-centrism (Freire, 1970/2000). Language policies in formal schooling in the colonies privileged the English language for reading and writing in an effort to control communication, to inculcate colonial knowledge and values and to marginalize or subjugate the knowledge, values and cultural practices of the indigenous peoples in their colonies (Abdi, 2012). Hence, the logic of colonialism served to constrain the passing on of cultural knowledge, skills and traditions, particularly those which might be in opposition to the ideology of colonial-Eurocentric modernity. As Abdi (2010) asserts, many indigenous African societies used and continue to use artistic expression and orality as a major mode of communication and cultural expression. Orality and rich cultural practices such as elocution, singing, and dramatization were used as

both creative and critical forms of expression both in education and in the social and cultural gatherings. Many of these cultural practices and forms of expression involved not only individuals, but often individuals as part of a 'collective'. Further, as Dei (2011) asserts these creative and critical cultural practices were seen as being embedded in a more holistic form of education which viewed learning as educating the whole child (mind, body, spirit and emotions).

The impacts of globalization have seen the rise of immigration, migration and increasing diversity in schools and school systems around the world. In the wake of the globalization of capitalism and neoliberal policies, Naomi Klein (2001, 2008) argues there is a "war being waged on diversity" in which the hegemonic and oligarchic power structures created by one percent of the world's population are slowly extinguishing the rich and diverse ways of knowing and being of the other ninety-nine percent (Klein, 2001, p. 5). For new immigrants, as well as for indigenous populations marginalized by the impacts of colonial educational policies, standardization based on largely Eurocentric languages, knowledge and culture continue to constrain their learning opportunities (Zajda, 2008). Marie Battiste (2010) argues that the impact of a Eurocentric curriculum, with limited relevance or connection to the lived experiences of indigenous youth, has the combined effects of de-valuing their cultural identity and ways of knowing and increasing student disengagement. In reference to the long-term injury caused by the 'othering of students' and the separation from community and culture, Duran and Duran (1995) speak of the creation of *soul wounds*, and Frank Margonis (2011) speaks of *relational wounds*. Battiste (2010) argues that for both indigenous and non-indigenous youth, whose cultural and ontological beliefs promote the development of their learning spirit, this standardized Eurocentric approach fails to recognize the importance of cultivating what she refers to as their *learning spirit* (Battiste, 2010).

The introduction of neoliberal policies, in the 1980s by Western governments further controlled knowledge and privileged the dominant hegemonic notions around a market-based "knowledge economy" and principles of efficiency, standardization and privatization (Hill & Kumar, 2009; Hursh & Henderson, 2011). In education, neoliberal policy initiatives have frequently been sold based on their potential to address economic issues, prepare students to be competitive in a global work environment, and reduce inequities (Hill & Kumar, 2009). Inequities still exist. In fact, many critical researchers would argue that these reforms are actually causing an increase in student disengagement and an increase in the achievement gap and

opportunity gap between the rich and the poor, particularly with respect to youth who have already been marginalized due to race, class, gender, or ethnicity (Apple, 2004b; Dei, 1997; Giroux, 2002; Nathan, 2009). Disengagement in school has been identified as one of the key contributing factors to early school leaving (Ferguson, Tilleczeck, Boydell, Rummens & Roth Edney, 2005). Additionally, standardization both in curriculum and in assessment has also been linked to increasing student disengagement, both in marginalized youth, as well as in youth who have been identified as *gifted* (Dei, 1997; Ferguson et al., 2005).

Under the narrow neoliberal notion of accountability, educational policies in both Western and non-Western post-colonial nation-states reflected an increasing use of large-scale, externally developed, standardized examinations. Critical scholars have argued that these high-stakes, large-scale standardized assessments privilege the dominant hegemonic Euro-centric languages, knowledge and culture and widen the equity gaps between those of the dominant culture and many previously marginalized cultures (Hursh, 2008). Further, Portelli & McMahon, (2012) found that the impact of neoliberal educational policies, including high-stakes standardized testing, is contributing to a de-valuing of critical and creative inquiry and increased student disengagement. Additionally, research focusing on the impact of the increasing globalization of educational policies based on neoliberal ideologies can be grouped into three interrelated foci: confluences of *educational quality* and *test scores*; teacher professionalism; and globalization of pedagogical approaches, aid and dependency relationships.

First, critical scholars of the neoliberal policy of high-stakes testing critique the narrow notion of accountability that is used for and conflated with *educational quality* (Aikman, 2011; Tikly & Barrett, 2011). Neoliberal notions of *quality education* as measured on many large-scale standardized assessments focus on a narrow set of (Eurocentric) knowledges and market-related skills (Hursh, 2008). As an example, two of the major large-scale international educational assessments, PISA and PIRLS focus solely on literacy, mathematics and science. As Berry (2004) warns, the continued privileging of Eurocentric knowledge in the labelling and assesment of *intelligence(s)*"acts as an economic, social, political and cultural passport for some and for others, a cage...." (p. 237). An understanding of this context is important to understand how standardized tests function to institutionalize principles of legitimate political and social practice. The continued embedded nature of the high-stakes testing environment within global educational policy is concerning given the significant divergences in opinion about

their validity and objectivity. Jeffrey Sacks (2000), cited in Garrison (2009), paints the picture of two quite different views about standardized testing with one side “claiming for them the mantle of objectivity & fairness, the other disparaging them as crooked yardsticks whose only consistent hallmark is bias”. (p. vii) In taking a sociohistorical perspective, Garrison (2009) illuminates the link between power, politics and education as he argues that “standardized testing has been used to serve the interests of the governing class by attaching a performance-based-value to people and upholding inequality in American society” (back cover).

Secondly, in order to increase the *efficiency* of schools, neoliberal educational reform policies advocate the use *evidence-based* or *results-based* planning based on the achievements of students on these large-scale standardized tests. Hursh (2008) has found that school systems also use student achievement results to reward or punish teachers, to rank schools and to justify future funding and policy development. The pressure to prepare students to achieve good results on these high-stakes assessments is also having an impact on both new and experienced teachers. As Ravitch (2012) argues, the practice of rewarding or punishing teachers based on student results is contributing to de-motivating and de-professionalizing of teachers, including ‘teaching to the test’. Crocco and Costigan (2007) found that new teachers working under the “high-stakes testing” regime have found their “creativity and autonomy undermined, and ability to forge relationships with students diminished” (p. 512). Hursh (2008) has found that in an effort to raise test scores many schools are “developing or adopting standardized, often scripted, curricula to prepare students for the exam” (p. 5). Hursh (2008) found a growing tension in schools between the desire to create curriculum and pedagogical approaches which are responsive to the interests and needs of teachers and students and the pressures to teach to the test.

A final critique of the increasing globalization of neoliberal ideologies in education have focused on the promotion and marketing of ‘pedagogical approaches’, such as “child-centered or learner-centered pedagogy”, particularly by international aid agencies in the global south, which Tabulawa (2003) argues were often based more on political and ideological goals than on “pedagogical efficacy”. Most arose with the increasing globalization of educational reforms, which carried with them the undercurrents of neoliberalism. Increasingly, the arguments were being made under the Eurocentric “modernisation theory of development” that in order for Third World countries to modernise, they needed to adopt political models of liberal democracy. With the economic crisis of the 1970s (and the implied failure of Keynesian economic policies),

Tabulawa (2003) argues that powerful neo-conservative Western governments (Thatcher, Reagan and Kohl) began to embrace Friedman’s call for “economic deregulation and the privatisation of state owned enterprises” (p. 16). During the 1980s, many post-colonial nations recognized the important link between education, democratization and modernization, however, they lacked the political and economic infrastructure to begin this ‘modernization process’ on their own. Many, like Kenya, turned to foreign governments and international aid agencies to help develop and fund their educational systems. Through his own research in international development aid with education in Botswana, Tabulawa (2003) argues that these situations often create what he terms a *marriage* between agencies promoting “democratic pedagogy and political structures associated with democratic practice” (p. 12). As will be argued under the theoretical framework for this thesis, the danger lies in the widespread notions of *democracy*, and the significant differences between the goals of education under *a liberal democratic* ideology and the goals of education under what I am calling a *robust global democracy*.

As Mignolo (2007, 2011a) and Kapoor & Shizha (2010) have argued, for many countries in the global south, the introduction of neoliberal educational reforms under these *aid relationships* have not only failed to achieve the goals of equality and freedom that were espoused under classical liberalism, they have contributed to a dependency relationship with the global north for various degrees of social, political, economic and educational support. Poorly developed aid programs, such as the structural adjustment programs of the World Bank in the 1970s, only served to widen economic inequalities globally and held many developing nations captive to international aid organizations for support in the development of their educational programs, even after they had gained their independence (Nyang’oro, 2000).

Challenging Colonial-Eurocentrism and Global Neoliberalism-a Role for the Public, Public Education, the Arts and Cultural Praxis

Resistance to this current World Order of neoliberal globalization is beginning to occur around the world, spurred on by the tools of global information communications technology and the rise of global social movements. As Michael Apple (2013) and Jean Anyon (2005) have argued few of the major changes in education or in society have occurred without the formation of the *social movements* that demand them (indigenous, disabilities, feminism, racism, environmental). Over recent years, the process of globalization has helped to mobilize both pro-

democracy movements and indigenous resistance movements as they challenge dominant hegemonic structures in political, economic and educational arenas for the purposes of social and ecological justice (Engle, 2010; Rao & Robinson-Pant, 2006; Stewart-Harawira, 2005). Through the support of global declarations such as the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2008), many indigenous nations are challenging the colonial educational systems and are re-gaining the rights to their traditional cultural languages and ways of knowing and being recognized through educational policies (Stewart-Harawira (2005). In the wake of decolonization, a struggle for Indigenous people's rights is taking place across both the developed and the developing worlds. Although Indigenous groups are diverse, their shared ecocentric identities (Wenzel, 1991) and worldview concerning their relationship to the natural and spiritual world (Friesen & Friesen, 2005) draws them together on the international stage in opposition to the dominant voice of economic and social exploitation (Rao & Robinson-Pant, 2006).

Education systems can have a role in either maintaining the status quo or in challenging and transforming for the purpose of re-building a more just and humane global society. In order for educational systems to respond to these globalization themes, while at the same time respecting pluriversality, educational theorists have argued that, particularly in the current transnational contexts, it is becoming even more pressing to consider pedagogical practices that are informed by how people come to know, understand and experience themselves both as members of a community and citizens of a nation state (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Paris, 2012; Popkewitz, 2000; Rizvi, 2000). As Jean Anyon (2005) argues, public education must play a role in helping youth to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become critically engaged for the purpose of joining in these efforts to resist hegemony and to take action for social transformation. In confronting hegemony, Kenyan scholar Nguji wa Thiong'o (1998a) argues we must 'de-colonize our minds' and re-think other possibilities for ways of knowing and ways of being. Critical and decolonial scholars have argued that social transformation of this magnitude will require an educational system which incorporates robust and critical democratic and decolonial principles, practices and pedagogies (Battiste, 2010; De Lissovoy, 2010; Freire, 2001; Giroux & Searls Giroux, 2006; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008; Mignolo, 2007; Mohanty, 2003).

If the purpose of education is seen as a transformative one, Desai & Chalmers (2007), McMahon & Portelli (2012) and Smyth et al. (2008) argue that our youth will need to be critically and creatively engaged with the issues that are directly affecting their lives and the lives of those around them (which I would argue in this globalized world now includes all people). Further, they must envision themselves as part of a global community in which they must play an active role as the ‘articulate public’ (Dewey, 1954, p. 184). As Dewey (1954) and Freire (1998) so passionately have argued, the future of a vibrant and robust democracy depends on the ability of our key social institutions to restore and retain that which is most humane and social in the human discipline of education. In offering advice to critical pedagogues, Freire (1998) urges teachers to develop a *universal human ethic* and argues that “teacher preparation should go beyond the technical preparation of teachers and be rooted in the ethical formation both of selves and of history” (p. 23). Freire (1998) believed that teachers need to embed this universal human ethic into both their *conscientization* (being critically aware of one’s thinking and doing to bring about change), and into the grounding of their pedagogical approaches based on an understanding of the broader historical, social, and economic conditions that characterize both their local community and the wider society.

Democratizing and Decolonizing a Conception of the Arts and Cultural Praxis

Before engaging deeper into the argument in this thesis with respect to the relevance of the arts and cultural praxis to democratic and transformative education, it is important to acknowledge the complex and shifting nature of “the arts” and the variable ways in which they can be seen. Definitions or conceptions of “the arts” have been influenced by cultural, political and socioeconomic ideologies. Gatzambide-Fernandez (2013) would argue that the discourse of “the arts” was not present in indigenous cultures and that discourses of the arts arising under colonial-Eurocentrism have been used to reflect and promote colonial-Eurocentric ideologies and to marginalize or subjugate others. Increasingly, under the influence of global neoliberal ideologies, conceptions of the arts have been constructed for market-based purposes. Paul Willis (1990) critiques these dominant conceptions of the arts which have been used to privilege, control or restrict public access. Willis (1990) argues that colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies start from conceptions of “art” which see it more as an object than as “forms of symbolic creativity in everyday ‘ordinary’ culture” (p. 5).

Understandings and notions of *culture*, like *democracy*, have frequently been the basis for hotly contested debates. For the purpose of this thesis, I adopt a notion of culture put forward by Jandt (2013) which sees culture referring to:

- A community or population sufficiently large enough to be self-sustaining; that is, large enough to produce new generations of members without relying on outside people.
- The totality of that group's thought, experiences, and patterns of behavior and its concepts, values, and assumptions about life that guide behavior and how those evolve with contact with other cultures (p. 6).

Individuals who consciously identify with a specific culture adhere to or adopt *cultural practices* which can be used to pass on cultural knowledge and values. Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) sees “a broader landscape of cultural practices, processes, and products that may or may not be included under the discursive banner of the arts, as practices of *symbolic creativity* or *cultural production*” (p. 215). Using the discourse of cultural production, Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) argues that rather than only thinking about the arts as *doing something to people* (such as passing on knowledge or values), another way of thinking could see artistic forms and cultural practices as *something people do*. Willis' (1990) notion of “common culture”, as something everyone possesses, helps to inform my own conception of the arts and cultural praxis within the narrative of a robust global democracy which sees them as a *symbolically creative way of knowing, expressing and engaging within and across cultures*.

However, it is important to remember, as Abaza (1993) reminds us, culture is not static. Under the multiple influences of globalization, through migration, information-communications technology and global media, fluidity, multiplicity, complexity and morphing in cultural identity continues to increase. This morphing of cultures, is not seen as a concern within the concept of a robust global democracy, since some ‘cultural morphing’ would be seen as an expected outcome, if individuals from different cultural/ethnic backgrounds came together to share experiences and perspectives. Within the Ubuntu philosophy, Sindane (1994) asserts there is a deep understanding of the importance of learning from the differences of others to “inform and enrich” ourselves. What is concerning, however, for critical and decolonial scholars is the impact of dominant hegemonic cultures or ideologies, such as Euro-centrism and global neoliberalism, which aim to subjugate, oppress, convert or assimilate ‘others’ who are different. In this thesis, I use the notion of *cultural praxis* as a form of critical engagement using culturally relevant and responsive approaches, both to resist these hegemonic ideologies and for social transformation.

Freire (1970/2000) often spoke of the need to be able to understand the world by engaging in *praxis*, “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (p. 51).

A caution must be noted that although it is a goal of education within a robust global democracy to recognize, value and promote pluriverse perspectives from different cultures, at the same time, it is important not to *essentialize* cultures. Increasingly, as the field of cultural and eco-tourism begins to expand in Kenya and globally, traditional cultural practices have often been used to reify, *essentialize* and increasingly *commodify* cultures. It is vital to also engage in cultural praxis which enables communities and societies to look inward and to critically inquire about their own beliefs and practices to illuminate issues of power and inequity, particularly for those within the culture who have been marginalized or oppressed (often women and children) for the purpose of transformative education toward more socially and economically just societies at the local and global scale.

As I reflected back to the conception of the arts that I had prior to beginning my doctoral studies, I became aware that it had been primarily constructed based on personal and educational experiences both inside and outside of the formal school system, in Ontario, Canada, within a global north and colonial-Eurocentric cultural context. However, I also saw *the arts* as a broad collection of creative practices which were found not only in the formal and informal curriculum of the education systems but also as practices arising from the traditional and popular cultural contexts in which the schools existed. As a teacher and an administrator, what struck me most about the arts were two things: the way they *opened up* modes of creativity and communication for many students and illuminated their diverse skills, knowledge and talents; and, a *quality* within the ‘performative arts’ which was able to touch the minds and emotions of students, teachers and community members, particularly when students were presenting pieces they had created which spoke to issues of equity, humanity and social justice.

As I began my research work in southern Kenya, living and learning in Kenya with the teachers, students and community members, immersed in the rich visual, sonic, collective and spiritual energy field of the arts and cultural practice within Kenyan and Maasai societies, I learned that my Western-based academic and scholarly understanding of the arts needed to be significantly broadened and deepened. In searching for a theoretical grounding which could help me make sense of these diverse experiences with the arts and cultural practice, I drew on the work of Misson and Morgan (2006) who describe a notion which they call an *aesthetic way of*

knowing. Misson and Morgan (2006) argue that the aesthetic way of knowing is grounded in two assumptions. First, “the intellectual is not (necessarily) privileged over the emotional/sensory/affective”; and second, “the movement is not to abstraction, but to particularization, knowledge coming from a more intense focus on the particular rather than by abstracting from particulars to general rules.” (p. 26). They are very clear to point out the important interplay between the mind (intellect) and the emotions (affect) and believe that the power of the arts often comes from the tensions that exist between the two. Misson and Morgan (2006) assert that “by involving us affectively, [the aesthetic] creates attitudes and orients us into reacting positively or negatively towards the actions, ideas, or attitudes represented in the [piece or presentation]...The aesthetic can create intense experiences that...encompass both the emotional and the intellectual/rational: it is apprehended rather than comprehended” (p. 45). They caution, however, that these tensions are sometimes seen as “binary oppositions” (p. 27). Yolanda Medina (2012) asserts that it is this continuous interplay between the mind and emotion within an aesthetic experience that underscores its value in critical aesthetic pedagogy.

In the early 1970s, in North America, the notion of aesthetic education and aesthetic pedagogy began to receive increased attention, primarily due to the work of writers and theorists such as Phillip Phenix (1964), Harry Broudy (1972) and Elliot Eisner (2002). Critical scholars, such as Landon Beyer (1979) noted that although the notion being put forward focused on aesthetic knowledge and pedagogy, it lacked a critical pedagogical component. Beyer (1979) argued that, in identifying the key factors influencing the lack of aesthetic education in schools, dominant scholars in aesthetic education saw two components: first, that teachers lacked the training in aesthetic education; and secondly, that appropriate assessment measures had not been developed. As Beyer (1979) argued, “implied in this dominant perspective on the field is the view that educators need to first uncover the proper or most efficacious techniques of instruction to fit whatever set of appreciative skills and abilities we may approve of in regard to increasing aesthetic sensitivity and, following this, to devise appropriate evaluation measures of those instructional outcomes” (p. 13). In the absence of a critical or decolonial pedagogical approach, Beyer (1979)¹⁶ argued that this notion of the arts and aesthetics in education could continue to

¹⁶ In her book, *Critical Aesthetic Pedagogy*, Yolanda Medina (2012) continues the argument for the need to combine critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches with aesthetic experiences to

legitimate and further the reproductive function of the educational system “by some of the very ideas in aesthetic theory that have influenced our notions of aesthetic education” (p. 14).

Decolonial scholars, such as Mignolo (2007, 2010b, 2010c) and Tlostanova (2010) have critiqued the colonial-Eurocentric notion of aesthetics and have also reimagined it through a decolonial lens. Mignolo (2010c) argues that

Although feeling and sensing is a phenomenon common to all living organisms, the hegemonic concept of ‘aesthetics’ was conceptualized and exploited from the European Renaissance to the European Enlightenment. Aesthetics became a crucial component of the colonial matrix of power in the control of subjectivities. There is a long history of imperial looting of ‘aesthetic’ objects from the colonized world, as well as Western artists ‘borrowing’ from the colonial world (e.g. Picasso, Gauguin, etc.) (p. 7).

Mignolo (2010b) argues that within decolonial studies there needs to be a continual questioning of the “geopolitics of knowledge, understanding, and sensing in the differential relations of power established in the mutually constitutive imperial/colonial domains” (p. 47). He also reminds us to reflect that “after all, aren’t we seeing, sensing, and understanding what we have been taught to see, sense, and understand?” (p. 47). From a decolonial perspective, Mignolo (2010c) argues that for writers and artists who maintain a double-consciousness, living and thinking as a modern/colonial subject, a new type of aesthetic emerges which he calls a *transcultural aesthetic* which “connects people through the worlds that have suffered, one way or another, the colonial wound” (p. 7).

Madina Tlostanova (2010) argues that a concept called *chronotopes*, or ways of thinking about and acting in time, play a central function in the work of transcultural writers and artists whose work speak to the imperial/colonial difference. In connecting the concepts of transcultural aesthetics and chronotopes, Mignolo (2010c) asserts

Transcultural aesthetics and ontology is grounded in and simultaneously generates itself the imperial/colonial chronotope, within which there are more local chronotopes of imperial and colonial city/town, exodus, home and unhomelessness, etc. It is marked with a protean and unfinished nature, with constant transit, with falling out of space and time, with de-territorialization and de-historization, with existential restlessness, with both the ex-masters and the ex-subalterns share (p. 279).

engage students in socially-transformative education. She draws from her experiences working with students in a teacher education program at a community college in New York.

Possibilities for the Arts and Cultural Praxis for Democratic and Transformative Education

Critical scholars have argued that the arts and cultural praxis in combination with critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy could provide a powerful educational policy tool to increase critical engagement, equity, diversity and inclusion by promoting and valuing pluriverse ways of knowing, being and communicating to rekindle what Maxine Greene (1995b) called the ‘power of possibility’ (Banks, 2010; Desai & Chalmers, 2007; Emdin, 2010; Mouffe, 2007). Pedagogies which include the arts and cultural praxis increase opportunities for students, whose learning style and learning spirits are engaged by the arts, to build self-confidence, pride in culturally relevant practices and to develop their skills and talents (Battiste, 2009a; Davis, 2008; Nathan, 2009). For centuries, the arts and cultural practices have been deeply embedded in the sociocultural, economic, political, environmental and spiritual fabric of many old world and indigenous cultures around the world as tools for giving voice, building community and sharing knowledge (Kiplang’at, & Lagat, 2009; Madjidi & Restoule, 2008; Nzewi, 2013). The arts and cultural praxis can provide a medium to promote: critical analysis and probing of diverse societal issues (such as respect for differences, equity and social justice); dialogue, debate, deliberation; and increased engagement (Bartz, 2012; Francoso, 2012; Medina, 2012). As Darts (2006), Greene (1995a), and Davis (2008) have argued, the arts, embedded across the curriculum, can play an important role in recreating a culture in classrooms and schools in which students feel this ‘power of possibility’.

Over the past quarter-century, many arts policy advocates have been using discourses which posit a conception of the arts that sees those possessing qualities that enable them to “do” something or have some “effect” in contributing to the goals of education. Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) refers to this discourse as a “rhetoric of effects”.¹⁷ He critiques the discourse of effects as failing to recognize both the “complexities and the possibilities that lurk within experiences with the arts in education” (p. 214). He argues further that the rhetoric of effects “ignores the larger social and cultural context within which the practices and processes traditionally associated with the concept of the arts take place” (p. 214). Gaztambide-Fernández

¹⁷ Many of the statements within the first paragraph of this section reflect the “rhetoric of effects”. For other examples of “rhetoric of effects” in policy documents by arts in education advocacy groups, see: Americans for the Arts (2013); Arts Education Partnership (<http://www.aep-arts.org>) and Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (<http://www.oaae.net>)

(2013) puts forward what he calls an alternative discourse, the “rhetoric of cultural production” which he argues opens the possibilities for students and schools to engage in practices, processes, and products involving “symbolic creativity” arising from their cultural context which may, or may not, mesh neatly with dominant notions of or purposes for the arts.

I agree with the cautions that Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) adds around the use of the rhetoric of effects by policy advocates. However, I also believe it may be possible to utilize both the rhetoric of effects and the rhetoric of cultural production within democratic and transformative education to support the use of the conception of the arts and cultural praxis that I am putting forward in this thesis. Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) argues that advocacy statements about the arts which are based on when a *rhetoric of effects* require that the “the arts” can be defined as having certain characteristics or qualities which could be measured or studied in order to develop more effective policy approaches. The danger of *quantifying* or *qualifying* and measuring the arts occurs when the measurement process begins to control and/or restrict the symbolic creativity of the individual in order to fit into an *externally-developed* goal or purpose. If however, the purpose or goals are developed collaboratively through critical democratic pedagogical approaches, in classrooms, schools or school-community partnerships, for the purpose of creating action plans for transformative education, then the creative process itself could be given over to the individuals or groups to utilize their own culturally responsive and relevant approaches to work toward the goal. Within the conception of a robust global democracy, it is vital to provide ‘equitable opportunities’ for all students to bring their diverse and culturally-informed perspectives and to be able to use culturally-responsive, relevant and symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging as part of a democratic and transformative purpose for education. As a pedagogical approach, particularly for youth who have experienced marginalization and oppression due to race or ethnicity, Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) argues that “the project of democratizing culture must be about opening spaces of cultural production for democratic engagement as a process in which the very boundaries and limitations of every context are open to debate” (p. 228).

Identifying Constraints on the Arts and Cultural Praxis for Democratic and Transformative Education

In order to begin to open up possibilities for the arts to be able to contribute within a policy framework and pedagogical approach for the purpose of transformative education, it is important to identify some of the constraints in educational policy and programming which are being informed by colonial-Eurocentric or neoliberal ideologies. I will focus on five of these major constraints: narrow notion of literacy and communication; disciplinary siloing of the arts; impact of neoliberal ideologies on the purpose, value and support for the arts; privileging of dominant hegemonic arts practices over other arts or cultural practices; and, freedom and control for critical and creative expression.

In a previous paper on *global visual literacies*, I began a deconstruction of the narrow neoliberal notion of literacy and communication (Drinkwater, 2010). This deconstruction of and re-conceptualization of the arts as a form of viewing, imagining, creating, and communicating (critically engaged performance) is needed in order to support the argument in this thesis for the role of the arts within a pedagogical approach aimed at democratizing and decolonizing education. I challenged the notion of *reading* which is currently being used within the narrow conception of literacy in most Eurocentric education and large-scale, standardized assessments. When referring to the process of *reading*, I argue that reading could also be seen as the act of *viewing and interpreting a piece* (which could be in a written form or in an artistic form). In Kenya, provincial or state examinations of literacy include only what is *read off the 'printed page'*, and most commonly this reading is of a dominant, hegemonic language (English, French or Kiswahili). By using decolonizing theory to broaden the narrow (textual) notion of literacy, the work of Freire and Macedo (1987) in 'reading the word and the world' could be stretched to mean 'reading the *image* or *performance* and the world'. I will be arguing throughout this thesis that this conception of literacy needs to be broadened to include the reading of a much wider variety of learning material, including artistic pieces such as: dance, drama, visual art, song and poetry. In learning to *read* artistic pieces for transformative education, it is vital that students and teachers develop and use critical literacy skills¹⁸

¹⁸ Additional support for the development of skills in critical media literacy and critical arts and aesthetics can be found in the work of scholars such as: Cummins (2009), Desai & Chalmers (2007), Medina (2012), Shor (1999), Silvers, Shorey & Crafton (2010), Steinberg (2007).

Much like the concept of *reading*, I would argue that the current conception of *writing*, within the Eurocentric curriculum and on large-scale, standardized assessment, is a narrow and restrictive form of communication and needs to be expanded¹⁹. As Garrison (2009) and Hursh (2008) argue, much of the writing that is demanded of students in schools on large-scale, standardized tests is based on responses to standardized or core knowledge (Garrison, 2009; Hursh, 2008). Knowledge and understanding on most provincial, state or international educational assessments are rarely measured in any form other than the *written word*. For *efficiency* and *standardization* in assessment, particularly on large-scale assessments, very limited opportunity is given for *creativity* (Hursh, 2008). There is strong support from the literature reviewed, for the role that the arts can play in democratizing and decolonizing education, if the medium for creating and communicating is expanded from one which privileges the written form to one which encourages and values pluriverse forms of *creativity*, *criticality* and *communication*.

Secondly, one of the structural elements that was introduced into educational systems by European colonists included the *disciplinary siloing* of subjects. Ali Abdi (2012) asserts that the imposition of colonial education was the primary tool in achieving “psychological and cultural” dominance over Africans. By controlling the structure and content of the curriculum and the implicit learning that occurs in school, the colonial project worked to systematically change the social, economic and cultural norms of peoples. Under these disciplinary divisions, the privileging of some disciplines over others has been used to rationalize further categorization of subjects into ‘core’ and ‘other’ subjects. The impact of global large-scale high-stakes testing has seen a major focus in many countries being directed at the ‘core’ subjects of English (literacy), Mathematics (numeracy) and Science (Zoss, 2009). In their assessment of the factors which were acting as barriers to the inclusion of the arts in schools in Australia, Caldwell and Vaughan (2012) believe the “sidelining of the arts reflects the divisions in the disciplines of learning that has existed since at least the nineteenth century” and has been further exacerbated by the “narrowing effects of high-stakes testing” (p. 7).

¹⁹ In addition to my own writing (Drinkwater, 2010), significant work has been done in this area by scholars in *multiliteracies* including: Cope & Kalantzis, (2000), Cummins (2004, 2009), Cumming-Potvin, (2010), Giampapa, F. (2010), and The New London Group (2000).

Thirdly, over the past three decades, under the impact of neoliberal educational policies there has been a shift away from the democratic purpose of the arts and on critical and creative thinking, to a more instrumental or market-based approach in countries around the world (D'Andrea, 2012; Florida, 2002, 2007; Florida & Martin, 2009). The recent voicing of support in U.S. President Obama's "State of the Union" address in January, 2014, for educational reform policies which support the increasing global neoliberal focus on STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) raises further concerns around the impact of this disciplinary privileging on the inclusion of arts education in many schools. At the same time, arts policy advocates have been raising a case for the inclusion of the arts in policy reforms which move the focus from STEM to STEAM. In the advocacy work of the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), Amy Puffenberger's (2010) discourse presents a strong neoliberal bias in her argument for the need to move from STEM to STEAM. Puffenberger's argument sees the arts contributing to education through the development of "21st century workplace skills", such as "creativity" and "innovation" to bolster the "economic and political power of the United States" (para. 3). Although their arguments speak to the value of the arts, there is a continued need for critical and decolonial analysis of STEAM policies to explore whether the purpose of the arts under these reforms continues to be informed by hegemonic colonial and neoliberal ideologies or whether the inclusion of the arts can truly be seen as a tool for democratizing and decolonizing education. Under the pressures of neoliberal reforms linked to the efficiencies of the market, if the arts are not seen as contributing to some form of 'capital' creation (human, knowledge, cultural), they are de-valued and often seen as an *extra* (Edgeworth, 2007). As educational decisions related to curriculum, budget and programming are made, schools around the world are reporting cuts to funding and support for the arts (Apple, 2004; Hill & Kumar, 2009; Parsad, Spiegelman & Coopersmith, 2012; People for Education, 2008).

A fourth challenge and concern which has been voiced by advocates of the arts, particularly in schools and communities which experience socio-economic or cultural marginalization is that even if arts education and arts programming are offered at their school or in their district, it often privileges dominant forms of the arts and cultural practices over others. David Trend (2012) asserts that "within arts circles, questions about the class dimensions of 'high culture' and 'fine art' had been long-standing concerns, given the aristocratic legacies of

connoisseurship, art collecting, and patronage" (p. 617). Under the hierarchical logic of Eurocentric coloniality, Giroux (1992) understood why educational systems were being directed to develop and reward the knowledge and skills of the fine arts, since high culture was seen to represent the "‘best’ examples of thought and artistic expression" (p. 2). In the interests of social cohesion and the continuing the social reproduction of the dominant class, the introduction of different notions of class-based popular culture or diverse traditional cultural practices in schools, continues to be marginalized or subjugated in many areas (Paris, 2012; DeLorenzo, 2012).

Finally, throughout history, hegemony and power have often been used to either limit or censor freedom of thought and expression (Dugger, 2011). As Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1998b) has written, in Kenya, this fear of reprise from political leaders led many of the regions critical and creative thinkers and artists to flee the country. Gacheru et al., (1999) lament the loss of "many of the region’s finest poets, playwrights, and performing artists [who] have knowledge the immense debt they owe to their elders for having given them such a glorious tutelage" (p. 346). Trend (2012) further asserts that censorship of the arts has also been linked to neoliberal ideologies under what have been called the "culture wars" when "the materialist consequences for bodies of artists were felt in the systematic defunding of arts organizations and the censorship battles over the contents of arts" (p. 617). It is this creativity and freedom of mind and agency which Greene (1995) and Arendt (1958) argue are so essential to open the possibilities for re-imagining the way the world could be and for taking action for transformative purposes towards social justice.

Critical scholars argue that the current dominant political and economic neoliberal ideology that exists both nationally and globally is the key overarching factor influencing both aids and constraints for teachers’ and schools wishing to use the arts within an educational system (DiMaggio and Mukhtar, 2004; Heilig, Cole & Aguilar, 2010; Rabkin, & Hedgerg, 2011). Determining what is 'valued' in society is political, since it is connected to how a socio-political system sorts out contending claims of its members. If the value of the arts is seen as solely in the form of an instrumental, economic tool to be further used as a means of classifying or sorting individuals based on their *economic worth* in the field of creativity and innovation (D’Andrea, 2012; Shiu, 2013; Florida, 2002, 2007), then it will only serve to contribute to the social reproduction of the neoliberal ideology. Critical and decolonial scholars would argue that

the educational system can, and indeed must, play a role in challenging and disrupting hegemony and oppression. The final section of this chapter explores the literature which explores pedagogical approaches through which the arts could play a role in both democratizing and decolonizing education.

Democratization, Decolonization and Transformative Education – A Role for the Arts, Cultural Praxis, Critical-Democratic Pedagogy and Decolonial Pedagogy

Any movement towards what Dewey (1954) called the *great community* will require an educational system willing to accept the moral and political obligation to ask the critical questions about the types of ontological and epistemological approaches which could prepare youth to become active and engaged citizens in a more just and equitable world order. Given the past harms of the colonial modernity system, educational systems will need to adopt *democratizing pedagogies and practices* to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for the development of democratic subjectivities, and *decolonizing pedagogies and practices* to de-link from colonial hegemony, mend relationships, promote and value pluriversality. The following sub-sections highlight the important link between theory and practice as they identify pedagogical principles and approaches to support teachers and schools in becoming socially transformative agents within a robust global democracy. The six sub-sections include: critical-democratic pedagogy; decolonial pedagogy; relational pedagogy; border pedagogy and border thinking; place-based, culturally responsive and culturally sustaining approaches; and, pluriverse ways of knowing, communicating and engaging in transformative education: a role for the arts. These pedagogical principles and approaches will be used in the analysis and discussion of the findings and in the implications of the findings for educational policy and pedagogy.

Critical-Democratic Pedagogy: Principles and Practices

Many critical democratic theorists and researchers have promulgated the values of democracy and democratic practice in education as part of a commitment to the future of a more socially just world (Freire, 1998; Giroux, 1989; and Portelli, 2001). Giroux (2009c) describes this future world as one in which “the discourses of critique and possibility in conjunction with the values of reason, freedom, and equality function to alter, as part of a broader democratic project, the grounds upon which life is lived” (p. x). These theorists argue for the importance of

linking lived experience to critical analysis, reflection and growth. The individual is seen as a social actor, who both creates and is created by the social universe of which he/she is a part.

The development of the democratic subjectivities described by Dewey (1916/2005) and Arendt (1958) within this narrative of a *robust global democracy* will require a *framework* of pedagogical principles and approaches drawn from critical democratic and decolonial scholars which: includes a belief in the need to create an environment in classrooms and schools which is grounded on an ethic of a globality of humanity (Arendt, 1958; De Lissovoy, 2010; hooks, 2003; Nzewi, 2010); sees the need to problematize ‘difficult knowledge’²⁰ (Britzman, 1998; Solomon et al., 2011); includes and values pluriverse perspectives in robust dialogue, discussion and debate (Granger & Morse, 2011; Greene, 1993; Kincheloe, 2006; Thayer-Bacon, 2008); welcomes and accepts the tensions which accompany these different views (McLaren & Torres, 1998; Mouffe, 2002) ; sees the need for critical and creative inquiry to interrogate and re-imagine a ‘community in the making’ (Apple, 2006; Eisner, 2002; Freire, 1998; Greene, 1995a; Kincheloe, 2011) ; and engages students in the development of action plans on behalf of both the ‘local and global commons’ (Apple, 2008; Giroux, 2009a; McMahon & Portelli, 2012; Smyth et al., 2008). This framework of principles and approaches, based on the narrative of a *robust global democracy* can serve as an ideal to strive towards while at the same time recognizing the pragmatic challenges and “contradictions between an espoused theory of democracy and a lived experience of inequality” (Darder, 1991, p. 63). It can also be used as an analytic toolkit for examining pedagogical practices for the purpose of inquiring: to what extent they are consistent with critical-democratic and decolonial principles and values; whose interest is being served; who’s voices are being included or silenced; and how are these approaches contributing to transformative education for a more just, inclusive and sustainable global society?.

Critical democratic theory sees education or learning as an on-going, two-way, dialectic process that is built around the experiences of the student and allows for critical thinking and action to help students *grow*. In a truly democratic school, students are given the opportunity to

²⁰ The concept of 'difficult knowledge' is drawn from the work of Deborah Britzman (1998). It refers to "a general sense of knowledge that incites the ego to defend and/or revise its contents. In other words, knowledge that fundamentally challenges our identity--who we believe we are, what we think we believe in, and, by implication, how we understand and value 'Others' at both a conscious and unconscious level of recognition" (Solomon et al., 2011, p. 67)

have their voices heard and to build on their previous experiences and interests to plan for their continuing growth (Dewey, 1938). Paulo Freire (1998) believed that in order to open the spaces for students to critically engage in a classroom “traditional hierarchies must be broken down and teachers must also be learners (particularly learning from their students) and being critically reflective about their practice to bring about *conscientization*” (p. 55). Teachers become facilitators to help students as they: share experiences and learn from each other; undertake critical inquiry and create their own plans of action. The importance of robust dialogue (between students, teachers, administration, parents and community) must be stressed. Tension between opposing conditions (subject and object, the individual and world, the word and the world) is seen as impetus for growth. The necessity of engaging with pluriverse views has been supported by the work of Chantal Mouffe (2002) as she argues that her conception of *agonistic pluralism*, a struggle between adversaries, is vital to a robust democracy. Freire (1970/2000) believed that it was through robust dialogues about oppressive or contradictory conditions in the community or world that “the subjectivity and objectivity thus join in a dialectical unity producing knowledge in solidarity with action, and vice versa” (p.22).

It is important to acknowledge that critical-democratic pedagogy has been critiqued, not only by conservative scholars, but also by some from the radical right. Feminist scholar, Elizabeth Ellsworth (1992) accuses critical theory and critical pedagogy of continuing to continue to engage in *repressive myths*. In her critique of the notion of ‘empowerment’, Ellsworth argues that paternalistic practices in formal schooling, continue to support and reproduce relations of domination between teachers and students. Following this same argument, Dave Hill (2003) cautions that “efforts to empower people in certain contexts can simultaneously strengthen the privileged position of those dispensing it” (p. 26). Hill (2003) continues in his caution to teachers and cultural workers that pedagogical approaches which aim to empower students based on “representation, organization, and collective struggle may not necessarily build understanding or political efficacy among groups of people, but merely essentialize or exoticize the other” (p. 26). In heeding these critiques, critical-democratic pedagogical approaches must seek to build the skills and knowledge which enable students and teachers to work together to

critique both their own and other cultures and ideologies, based on *emerging experiences* in their lives, as they take action towards social transformation²¹.

The colonial system of education has been based on a *deficit approach*, which views anyone who has not been educated according to the dominant hegemonic system as ‘lacking’ and in need of ‘educating’. The principles which Freire put forward are based on a philosophy that believes that individuals need to de-link from this notion of a *deficit-mentality* and need to see themselves as the ‘makers of a culture’ (Macedo & Freire, 2005). Paulo Freire (1970/2000) referred to this system of education as the ‘banking approach’ in which the dominant hegemonic language, knowledge, skills and culture are deposited into the ‘uneducated’. For students who have been marginalized under an educational system which promotes dominant hegemonic cultural ways of knowing and being, critical democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches provide the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the socio-historical and political influences which had shaped both their own and the dominant culture in which their school and communities exist. In this way we create the conditions “in which the learners, in their interaction with one another and with their teachers, engage in the experience of assuming themselves as historical, social, thinking, communicating, transformative, creative persons” (Freire, 1998, p. 45).

As Portelli, Shields and Vibert (2007) argue, a democratic education promotes and values “the full inclusion and representation of voices and perspectives historically silenced and/or marginalized. A democratic education does not observe the usual polite silences on controversial or ‘sensitive’ matters; does not shy away from publicly naming and taking up injustices; welcomes disagreement and conflict as critical to a dialectic of justice” (p. 56). Freire (1970/2000) saw this approach as following a cyclic process beginning with the generation of problems identified through the lived experiences of the students and teachers, progressing through to an action phase aimed at addressing these problems, and then evaluating and reflecting through *conscientization*. As Jordan Singer (2011) asserts, “thinking about knowledge as a process, rather than a product, can also assist educators in re-conceptualizing the importance of including issues of difference and diversity in classrooms and schools, not as external

²¹ Gallagher and Wessels (2011) put forward a notion which they call emergent pedagogy which they argue allows it to “emerge sensitively and moment to moment, driven in large part by the interests and dynamics of the youth in the classroom” (p. 240).

considerations which disrupt learning, but as ever-present dynamics, the inclusion of which is a necessary and beneficial aspect of learning” (in Solomon et al., 2011, p. 187).

The critical-pedagogical approach that was put forward by Freire has been adopted in countries around the world. Macedo and Freire (1998/2005) reminded others, after Freire’s death that he had been passionate throughout his life in his pronouncement that his approach should not be seen as a 'prescribed method'. Freire had told Macedo, Nita Freire and others “I don't want to be imported or exported....Ask them to re-create and rewrite my ideas.” (Macedo & Freire, 1998/2005, p. x). Marianna Souto-Manning (2010) describes the use of the Freirian approach in her work in Brazilian schools in what she referred to as *Freirean culture circles* (Figure 2).

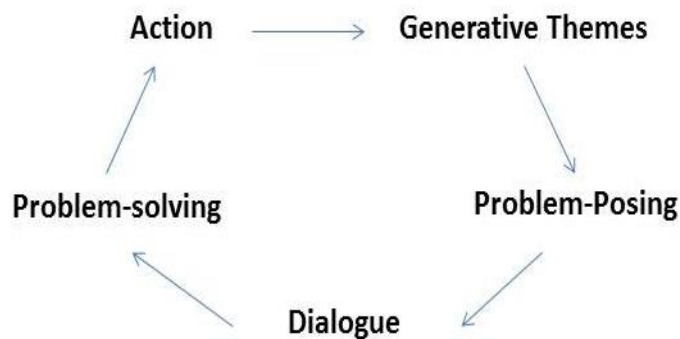


Figure 2. Freirean culture circle created by Souto-Manning (2010).

Souto-Manning (2010) saw the critical cycle within these culture circles consisting of five phases: generative themes; problem posing; dialogue; problem solving; and action. She echoes the importance of the process in stating that “the process is as important as the topic being approached” (p. 32). The process is seen as generative and transformative because it starts with a generation of themes, using critical inquiry and the ‘lived experiences’ of the student and teachers and aims to promote ‘transformative action’. Souto-Manning (2010) describes these generative themes as “codifications of complex experiences in the lives of the participants. They have political significance and are likely to generate considerable dialogue geared towards action” (p. 36). Throughout his work, Freire (1970/2000) often spoke of the need to be able to understand the “word and the world” in order to engage in *praxis*, “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (p. 51). Through the critical-pedagogical process (Freire, 1970/2000) of the culture circle, participants collect and share narratives based on their lived experiences, collectively engage in the deconstruction of the multiple discourses shaping these

narratives, and begin to develop a critical meta-awareness as they critically interrogate these discourses. Culture circles recognize and promote the unique agency of both the individuals and the collective and in doing so Souto-Manning (2010) argues, they “bring praxis to life by creating a process in which individuals engage simultaneously with the word and the world” (p. 41).

As Souto-Manning (2010) describes the lengthy and engaged critical dialogic process that occurs with the culture circle, it holds some similarities to the lengthy indigenous democratic process of consensus building described by Broodryk (1997). Frequently, the critical cycle for a given topic could extend over several sessions or days. The choice to use the model of a ‘circle’ as the dialogic arrangement for participants was purposeful. A circular seating arrangement “breaks hierarchies set in traditional classrooms in which the teacher is the holder of knowledge and stands in front of the classroom while students face the teacher, from whom they are to learn” (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 34). In order to facilitate robust dialogue within the circle, it is vital that participants share a collective understanding of the notion of dialogue. JoBeth Allen (2007) distinguishes between discussion and dialogue noting that in *genuine dialogue* we share stories and experiences, listen to and try to understand others’ perspectives, and do not seek to indoctrinate other with our own perceptions and biases. Allen (2007) adds that “dialogue is the encounter between people, mediated by the world in which they live...in order to name the world” (p. 68). The Freirian culture circle approach has been imported, exported and re-created in countries around the world and as Souto-Manning (2010) describes, has been used in formal and informal educational setting, across cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic borders to promote democratic practices, critical engagement and transformative action.

Critical researchers have noted that the incorporation of pedagogical approaches which are relevant, meaningful and critically engaging is helping to address the increasing student disengagement which has been associated with neoliberal educational reform initiatives (McMahon & Portelli, 2012; Portelli, Shields & Vibert, 2007; Smyth et al., 2008). At the same time they are clear in their belief in the need for a much more robust form of engagement than that which is being promoted through neoliberal policies. McMahon and Portelli (2012) draw from the work of Shirley Steinberg (1996) in describing neoliberal engagement as “technical or performative conceptions of student engagement which are consistent with standardization and envision student engagement as measurable with an emphasis on aspects of schooling such as

student performance and time on task” (p. 3). In arguing for a more robust form of critical engagement, Portelli & McMahon (2004) see engagement as “generated through the interactions of students and teachers, in a shared space, for the purpose of democratic reconstruction, through which personal transformation takes place” (p. 41).

In contrast to the notion of engagement as something that is either the responsibility of students, or something teachers do to students, bell hooks (2003) envisions engagement as a method of empowerment for students and teachers alike. Joanne Dillabough (2002) extends and challenges this notion of engagement further, drawing from the work of Hannah Arendt (1954) on *recognition* and Chandra Mohanty’s (1991) work on *political engagement* to argue the need for an educational *process* of political engagement which encourages the “broader development of a political and ethical consciousness” in its study and critique of social culture (p. 212). This approach to learning supports the empowerment of student voice, and the resulting learning happens on two levels: meaningful student learning, and enhanced understanding by adults about how young people experience schooling and education (Fine & Weis, 2003; Gallagher, 2007). The importance of the inclusion of diverse forms of student voice to promote critical-democratic student engagement has been echoed by other scholars, as well (Fielding, 2012; McMahon, 2012; Mitra & Kirshner, 2012). Michael Fielding (2012) provides a philosophical argument in support of opportunities for youth voice within an alternative, participatory model of democracy to turn schools into public spaces for creativity, identity development and democratic renewal. Brenda McMahon (2012) reminds the reader that promotion and support for student voice in schools which claim to be preparing students *for* liberal democracy differs from that in schools which are working to some extent *in* or *as* critical robust democracy.

Henry Giroux (1983) pushes the notion of critical engagement further in arguing that through the political acts of engagement, both teaching and learning can be understood as forms of resistance. According to Giroux (1983), resistance can be understood as oppositional behaviours that draw attention to inequities and injustices in an effort to dismantle the social and institutional structures of schools and communities. For critical pedagogues, Solomon (1992) believes that resistant acts could be viewed as “attempts to replace the objectionable structures of schooling with new structures that will better serve the needs of those who are presently underserved, underrepresented, misunderstood and whose experiences and histories are made invisible by the new curriculum” (p. 42). Understood in this way, those who continue to do

critical and transformative work, despite systemic obstacles, resist the status quo imposition of power that is transmitted through a hegemonic and standardized curriculum which lacks cultural relevance and which fails to recognize the diverse ways of knowing and being of many students.

Decolonial Pedagogical Principles: De-linking and Curriculum Against Domination

In recognizing Freire's (2000) call for resistance to confront and challenge the hegemony of colonial and neoliberal ideologies, decolonial scholars argue that there is a need to de-link from these narrow and privileged views of epistemology and ontology. Mignolo (2011b) argues that the decolonial project must be two-fold: first, it must develop a deep understanding of the complexity and "disguises" of the past and the continuing processes of colonial/modernity which are responsible for creating the *coloniality of being*, the colonial wound; secondly, it must de-link from the logic of coloniality which Mignolo (2011b, 2011c) calls *border thinking*²². Border thinking requires individuals to look from the vantage point of those who have been marginalized and wounded by the colonial project.

Critical decolonial scholars would argue that we need to dig deeper to the roots of colonialism, to understand what Bartz (2012) calls the *h8story* of colonialism and the impacts of the hegemony of colonialism²³. Tuck and Yang (2012) identify two distinct but overlapping tasks within the decolonial project, "the first concerned with how the invisibilized dynamics of settler colonialism mark the organization, governance, curricula, and assessment of compulsory learning, the other concerned with how settler perspectives and worldviews get to count as knowledge and research and how these perspectives - repackaged as data and findings - are activated in order to rationalize and maintain unfair social structures" (p. 2). Decolonial scholars such as De Lissovoy (2010), Mignolo (2009, 2011c) and wa Thiong'o (1986) have argued, educational principles and pedagogical approaches need to *de-link* from the currently embedded colonial model and need to adopt what De Lissovoy (2010) calls a *curriculum against*

²² The connection between Mignolo's (2007, 2011b, 2011c) *border thinking* and *border pedagogy* is elaborated further on page of this Chapter.

²³ Bartz (2012) uses the term *h8stories* to denote the importance of recognizing that most of the HIStory that has been written into the curriculum documents and textbooks across the world has largely been the construction of white, Euro-centric male stories. Many of the lived experiences of students in this study, both from Ontario and Kenya do not fit neatly into fixed hetero-patriarchal categories. Thus, Bartz's (2012) use of the sideways infinity sign "reclaims h8story to be a dynamic and complex telling of various narratives throughout time" (p. 1).

domination. This de-linking process can be interpreted as a de-linking which “leads to decolonial epistemic shifts and brings to the foreground other epistemologies, other principles of knowledge and understanding and, consequently, other economy, other politics, other ethics (Mignolo, 2007, p 453). Decolonization of the mind should begin by challenging the forced imposition of one society over those that differ, and to change the terms and content of knowledge which has been dominated by Western thought (Mignolo, 2007). In adding a decolonial lens to Mouffe’s (2002) notion of *agonistic pluralism* or Biesta’s (2011) notion of *dissensus*, decolonial scholars argue that a sensitivity to difference within an ethical globality must be cognizant of the cultural differences that have been created by the historical process of colonization (Fanon, 1963; Mignolo, 2005).

The vision of a globality of humanity, under the Western colonial project, was seen as the indoctrination and assimilation of the colonized according to hegemonic Eurocentric, Christianizing beliefs. A decolonial view of an *ethic of the globality of humanity* would hold quite a different vision: one which would confront and disrupt this colonial notion of a globality of humanity, and one which is built on an acceptance of pluriversality (Mignolo, 2011b). The ethical component of this globality of humanity would be framed within what De Lissovoy (2010) calls a context of a "sensitivity to difference, and in particular to the cultural differences which mark the experiences on either side of the historical passage of colonialism" (p. 280). De Lissovoy (2010) continues by arguing that pedagogical approaches which recognize this condition of an ethic of a globality of humanity can serve to reveal the "interdependence of peoples, and the fundamental social and historical linkages that have always existed between societies, even if they have often been unacknowledged, [and] can potentially provoke a more authentic, liberatory, and just vision of human community" (p. 280).

The adoption of an ethical pedagogical stance grounded in the conception of a globality of humanity could serve to awaken us to "a new sense of the *smallness* of the totality...the finitude of the environment...against the idea of the world as a merely abstract and limitless Cartesian space of extension" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p. 281); and push us to reflect on the complexities of difference which "challenge any sense of ethics within which difference is sidelined, and in which the other is returned to a space within the self" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p. 281). The second portion of De Lissovoy's argument for the need for an ethical stance, in which the other is returned to a space within the self, holds close ties to the Ubuntu philosophy of

indigenous Africans. Further, as we bring back Kymlicka's (2001) notion of the *global common*, this ethic of a globality of humanity informs a pedagogical approach which De Lissovoy (2010) argues must "start from the complexities of global multiculturalism to *create* community, and the common, within a framework of egalitarianism" (p. 281-282). As Greene (1993) states "we have to remain aware of the distinctive members of the plurality, appearing before one another with their own perspectives on the common, their own stories entering the culture's story, altering it as it moves through time" (p. 18). Greene's argument underscores her belief in the importance of pluriversality within the democratic and decolonizing process as we continue towards a 'community in the making'.

A decolonial pedagogical approach strives to de-link from the *othering* which is often hidden within a curriculum of Eurocentric domination (Dei, 1997). Under the hegemonic practices of colonial schooling, the *other* was largely kept either *unknown*, or a *cultural narrative* was created to describe them to the masses, as sweeping educational policies and programs were put in place to educate all students with the knowledge and skills that were deemed as valuable (Greene, 1993). As Greene (1993) asserts "indeed, the tension with regard to multiculturalism may be partially due to the suspicion that we have often defined ourselves against some unknown, some darkness, some *otherness* we chose to thrust away, to master, not to understand" (p. 15). In de-linking, decolonial pedagogical approaches which bring to the surface the narratives of *others* who have historically been marginalized can help to open the dialogue around difference. In her work with the use of narratives in the classroom, Mary Jane Zander (2007) argues that the use of student and teacher narratives drawn from themes which touch on the human condition can promote student reflection about their own living conditions and those of others and can be used to create new, counter and transformative narratives. De-linking further opens the democratic possibilities of imagining a new global community. However, Mignolo (2005) cautions teachers to remain critically conscious of the vantage point of those who are doing the imagining. Mignolo (2005) reminds us that the vision of a new global community that is created by students who have come from Eurocentric or privileged backgrounds may be quite different from the vision of students whose historocultural memories still feel the pain of the *colonial wound*.

In adopting critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches which promote a curriculum against domination and creating opportunities for students, teachers and communities to de-link

from failed approaches, schools can take on a transformative role. John Smyth (2012) argues that radical possibilities exist when students who have been marginalized under existing neoliberal school structures and policies are able to reclaim their voice and power. Smyth (2012) uses a language of “students speaking back” to reflect approaches, possibilities and effects of a shift in school and systemic understanding that welcomes and supports this form of resistance in education for social justice. In drawing examples from across 25 critical ethnographies of disadvantaged schools in Australia, Smyth (2012) highlights school-community approaches which challenge (and de-link from) the colonial and neoliberal approaches to education, as students and communities begin to critically engage in “speaking the unpleasant” about issues of poverty, education, and class. Among the enabling factors that emerge from these varied approaches, Smyth (2012) identifies a number of key themes which support the need for the embedding of critical democratic and decolonial principles throughout the process including: student voice; a relational school; pedagogically engaged; community organizing for activist reform; dismantling social hierarchies; pursuing connectionist pedagogies; creating spaces for dialogue, reflection and innovation; and ‘doing education’ democratically.

Relational Pedagogy

As the move towards globalization continues, geographic, economic and political boundaries begin to shift or erode and migration increases. As a result of the pluriverse influx of students into many schools around the world, teachers are increasingly challenged to teach in classrooms in which students’ home language, cultural background, religious views or lived experiences differ from their own and/or from other students in the class. Both critical theorists and decolonial theorists would agree that pedagogical approaches designed to address these challenges and possibilities for living together in pluriverse communities must be 'relationship-focussed' and have an aim to: heal colonial/relational/soul wounds; promote a sensitivity to difference; encourage and value pluriversality; and increase school-community critical democratic engagement.

Prior to outlining the key principles of a relational pedagogical approach aimed at democratizing and decolonizing education, I will begin with a brief review of the literature which critiques some aspects of the relational pedagogy put forward by Nel Noddings, John Dewey and Paulo Freire, in order to highlight those aspects which could constrain the democratic purposes of each of their approaches. Nel Noddings (1992, 1995, 2005) became an influential

scholar with respect to relational pedagogy with her notions of an ‘ethic of care’ and ‘caring relations’. However, Deborah Seltzer-Kelly (2012) argues that Noddings’ notion assumes a hierarchical relationship between teachers and students and promotes a unidirectional flow of caring from teacher to student (Seltzer-Kelly, 2012). In describing why the ‘ethic of care’ is important to learning, Noddings (1995) says “we want to do our very best for the *objects* [my emphasis added] of our care” (p. 116). Noddings (2005) continues with another comment which reflects a hierarchical notion of ‘caring relations’ in asserting that “as we listen to our students, we gain their trust and, in an on-going relation of care and trust, it is more likely that students will accept what we try to teach” (Caring relations, para. 1). A critical democratic approach would see students and teachers learning together, relating together and learning to trust each other. Seltzer-Kelly (2012) further critiques Noddings’ conception on two fronts. First, Seltzer-Kelly (2012) asserts that “the articulation of the student as the *object* of the teachers’ care”....“reifies the objectification of the student”....and continues to support the notion of “the teacher as the dispenser and the child as the recipient for a range of transactions that occur in the classroom” (p. 158). Secondly, she argues that Noddings’ unidirectional “one-caring” notion fails to promote the democratic principles of social interaction and reciprocity that Dewey (1938) stressed was necessary for the development of democratic dispositions.

The second set of critiques urges a critical interrogation of the use of ‘humanistic language’ within notions of relational pedagogy. Although it is vital to critique the de-humanizing effects of the colonial modernity project, some decolonial scholars would caution us of the need to critically interrogate some of the discourses which have or continue to rely on ‘humanistic language’. Although Frank Margonis (2011) credits Dewey and Freire for taking major steps away from the traditional forms of teacher-centered pedagogy, he puts forth a critique of both scholars as a result of what he terms their “reliance on humanistic language” (p. 436). Margonis (2011) argues that Dewey’s universalistic portrait of the problem solver, was created based on his early 20th century, American cultural background in which the schools Dewey envisioned were “largely populated by European-descendant students and the forms of cooperation Dewey envisioned were forged in these homogeneous contexts” (p. 436). Margonis (2011) further asserts that Dewey’s model lacks a contextual understanding of the racializing communication and relational contexts that continue to exist in schools. As Lisa Delpit (1995) has argued, student-centered pedagogies which fail to recognize the continued presence of

colonial relational injury often end up having exclusionary consequences. Margonis' (2011) critique of Freire's theories arise from his concern around what he believes is Freire's *essentializing* view of the 'oppressed'. To paint one group of students with the same brush stroke or label of oppression, Margonis (2011) argues takes on a deficit approach could "characterize students in wholesale fashion without coming to terms with their specific abilities" (p. 436).

A critical, decolonial relational pedagogy: critical ontological awareness

A relational pedagogical approach which is grounded in critical and decolonial theory will begin by acknowledging the impact that the colonial modernity and neoliberal projects have had on individuals and their communities, and will then work towards healing these soul/relational/colonial wounds (Duran & Duran, 1995; Margonis, 2011; Mignolo, 2009); rebuilding relationships; and developing more inclusive and respectful ways of living and learning together for the purpose of social transformation. Margonis (2011) argues that the process of developing a relational pedagogical approach must begin with the development of an *ontological attitude* which seeks to disrupt the notion of a *coloniality of being* (Mignolo, 2011c). The work of Joe Kincheloe (2006) on the development of a *critical ontological awareness* supports Margonis' argument. The impact of colonialism, with its emphasis on rationalism and what Kincheloe (2006) and Steinberg (2011b) refer to as the 'machine metaphors of Cartesianism' has resulted in a reductionist view of the universe and of the human mind. Both Kincheloe (2006) and Steinberg (2011b) argue that the machine metaphor of the universe, in its failure to recognize the presence and importance of the human soul and condition, has contributed to an erosion of humanity, to a loosening of the social and relational bonds within cultures and communities and to a restlessness and loss of belonging that is so essential in healthy and robust democratic communities. Adopting a critical ontological awareness enables a deeper understanding of the importance of social relationships in human life as we confront and "transcend the Enlightenment category of *abstract* individualism and move towards a more textured concept of the *relational* individual" (Kincheloe, 2006, p. 192).

In addition to its impacts on relationships *between* humans, the Cartesian project contributed to the subjugation of the spiritual connections between humans and the natural world and spiritual world. As Steinberg (2011b) writes, "this Western Cartesianism has separated individuals from their inanimate surroundings, undermining any organic interconnection of the person to the cosmos. The life-giving complexity of the inseparability of human and world has

been lost and social/cultural/pedagogical/ psychological/ philosophical studies of people abstracted--removed from context" (p. 7). Steinberg (2011b) asserts that the development of a critical ontological awareness can help teachers and students understand "how and why their political opinions, religious beliefs, gender role, racial positions, and sexual orientation have been shaped by dominant cultural perspectives" (p. 6). In this quest for a deeper critical ontological vision, Steinberg (2011b) argues that pedagogical approaches must include asking questions about "ethics, morality, politics, emotion and gut feelings" in order to get back to the philosophical soul of teaching and humanity (p. 6). The development of this critical ontological awareness can also challenge students and teachers to reflect on other ontological views of relationships, such as the indigenous ethic of collectivity and mutuality within the Ubuntu philosophy (Louw, 2006; Mucina, 2011). Additionally, a critical ontological approach can be used to confront the continuing presence of the notion of a coloniality of being that continues to frame relational pedagogical approaches in many schools (Margonis, 2011).

Pedagogy of lovingness: Armed love, kindredness and coexistence

Conceptions of love within a relational pedagogy can take on different forms for different purposes. In *Teachers as Cultural Workers*, Paulo Freire (2005) offered a number of, what he termed, 'indispensable qualities' of progressive teachers. The qualities he highlights reflect his belief that transformative education is both a human and an ethical act: humility, lovingness, courage, tolerance, decisiveness, security, the tension between patience and impatience and a joy of living. As Freire (2005) describes the quality of *lovingness*, there is a passion underscoring the importance of these human and ethical acts. Freire (2005) wrote that in addition to the quality of *humility* which progressive teachers must acquire gradually through practice, another quality without which their work would lose its meaning is *lovingness*. For Freire (2005) this quality of *lovingness* extends beyond their interaction with their students, to an embeddedness in the very process of teaching. Freire (2005) calls this form of love "armed love" and describes it as "the fighting love of those convinced of the right and the duty to fight, to denounce, and to announce" (p. 74)

De Lissovoy (2010) argues that although the decolonial project aims to confront the 'humanizing project' within Eurocentrism and colonialism whose purpose was to indoctrinate and assimilate, its intent is not to abandon a *common global ethic of humanity*. As Deloria (1999) argues, the decolonial conception of this ethic of humanity is grounded in a sensitivity to

difference and argues for a knowledge based on a notion of interconnectedness. In acknowledging the partitions (geographic and human) that have been created through the colonial project, a key focus of the decolonial project is to confront these divisions and borders "from the standpoint of a global common, without covertly reinscribing the epistemological centrality of Eurocentric reason" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p. 283). In recognizing the need to develop these notions of interconnectedness and sensitivity to difference in our youth, De Lissovoy (2010) puts forward a relational pedagogical approach, a *pedagogy of lovingness*, which includes two principles: *kindredness* and *coexistence*.

In positing a non-dominative relational pedagogical approach for living and learning together, De Lissovoy (2010) argues for the inclusion of a principle based on the notion of interconnectedness, which he terms *kindredness*. In adopting an ethic of a globality of humanity, De Lissovoy (2010) argues that the notion of *kindredness*, which is drawn from an acknowledgement of the fundamental social interdependence of people that has existed between societies (Wolf, 1982) throughout history, "even if they have often been unacknowledged, can potentially provoke a more authentic, liberatory, and just vision of human community" (p. 280). The relational principle of *kindredness*, shares aspects of critical pedagogy in seeing relationship of kinship or equals between students and between students and the teacher as they live and learn together and counters the dominant notion of individualism within neoliberal educational policy. As an example of the application of the notion of *kindredness* for relational pedagogy, Marie Battiste (2009a) uses the symbolism of the Medicine Wheel to describe the Indigenous ontological understanding of the importance of the interconnectedness of individuals throughout the dialogic process. In her writings she refers to the "four directions of the Sacred Circle Wheel (the winds of the West, North, East, and South) to characterize the divisions of this interrelated dialogue" (p. xxii). The metaphor of the Medicine Wheel helps to remind learners to listen to the different perspectives of others and to consider how they can inform each other.

In reviewing the literature from indigenous scholars, this understanding and acceptance of the important relationship between humans and between humans and the natural environment was deeply embedded in the epistemological and ontological beliefs (interconnectedness, relational responsibility, communalism, collectivity, mutuality) of indigenous peoples, long before colonial times (Battiste, 2009a, 2010; Dei, 2011; Dragone, 2011; Iseke, 2013). De Lissovoy (2010) uses the concept of *kindredness* within a decolonial approach as a way of

"imagining an ethical, political, and spiritual foundation for a genuine opening to the other...which depends on a radical receptivity of being...[and] a commitment against violence" (p. 284). In taking a critical ontological approach in acknowledging a radical decolonial approach to the possibilities of indigenous and spiritual interconnectedness, Dragone (2011) reminds us of the deep spiritually based beliefs held in many indigenous cultures which establish relational responsibilities not only among the living, but also to those spirits who have passed and those yet to come²⁴. This ontological perspective has served as a strong epistemological and advocacy platform for indigenous resistance and environmental sustainability.

In this global context in which social conflict and environmental devastation is escalating around the world, perhaps we can learn some lessons from indigenous ontologies, such as Ubuntu²⁵, about how to live in peaceful coexistence in a global society in which the individual and society have a reciprocal responsibility to act for the goal of achieving a sustainable and more socially just world. The second principle put forward by De Lissovoy (2010), that of *coexistence*, helps to provide a framework for imagining a new global common which holds a respect for the dignity of all human beings, particularly those who have historically been oppressed and exploited. De Lissovoy (2010) draws from the work of Deloria (1999) and Grande (2000) in presenting a decolonial perspective on the principle of coexistence which holds that "the radical differences between hegemonic and indigenous standpoints are not suppressed....difference is understood as bound to histories of resistance and survival" and there is an understanding that "the sovereign right of cultures" can never be surrendered to another's political, cultural or epistemological autonomy (p. 282). Further, as a pedagogical approach for critically deepening the inquiry and dialogic process within the classroom, an acceptance of the

²⁴ The "coming faces," or the "faces under the ground," or "faces coming up from the ground" are Haudenosaunee terms for the future, or unborn generations. These terms further define Haudenosaunee peoples relationship with their lands and territories and elaborate on the importance of taking care of these lands (Jocks, 1994, p.79; Beaver, 1995, p. 10) This knowledge, way of life, the language are tied together, as a part of a continuum that has been transmitted through all the generations of human beings who know, call themselves onkwe'hon:we [. . .] A continuous transmission of knowledge from the realm of the spirits, our ancestors, to our Elders, to us, and then onto our children, to our grandchildren, and the Coming Faces, we are all part of this great continuum of life. (Longboat, 2008, p.20, p. 58).

²⁵ Ubuntu is a traditional African philosophy that offers us an understanding of ourselves in relation with the world. Its central concept means 'humanity,' 'humanness,' or even 'humaneness', and articulates a basic respect and compassion for others (Louw, 2006; Mucina, 2011).

principle of coexistence allows for different paths and different truths as teachers and students work together to "learn not only different histories, but are introduced as well to different epistemologies which ground the search for knowledge and educational relationships in the first place" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p. 290). The adoption of the pedagogical principle of coexistence could help confront conventional assumptions about culture and history and would challenge students and teachers to engage in dialogue about previously held assumptions about 'others who are different' and about the possibilities of living with difference.

Relational pedagogy in neoliberal times

Transformative education scholars speak to the benefits and challenges for a critical and decolonial approach to relational pedagogy under the pressures of neoliberal educational reform. Students and teachers working within a neoliberal system regularly face a neoliberal discourse of engagement which speaks more to the notion of 'engagement with the official curriculum' rather a relational notion of 'engagement with each other' or the type of social engagement necessary for the development of democratic subjectivities (Seltzer-Kelly, 2012). As Carolyn Shields (2013) argues

Too often, as educators focus on a mandated form of assessment, a prescribed intervention, or on a scripted sequence of strategies and questions, we emphasize the technical, and in so doing, both deskill teachers and lose the heart of education—the relationships—between and among people and between students and the amazing content they have the opportunity to explore. Thus, to develop the capacity of individual students, transformative leaders must recognize the complexity and the variety of interests and personalities in each school and classroom and focus on developing people, rather than attaining test scores. To that end, relationships, and not programs, become key to successful teaching and learning and to the promotion of private, and ultimately also, public good. (p. 74)

Border Pedagogy; Border Thinking

The creation of borders (geographic, social or epistemological, real or imaginary) through the ideologies of colonial modernity and neoliberalism have served to partition, separate, privilege and marginalize (Giroux, 1991; Mignolo, 2007, 2011b; Mohanty, 2003). Both critical scholars and decolonial scholars speak about the need for *border thinking* and *border pedagogy* to cross these borders, open opportunities to learn from and to challenge knowledge(s) on each side of these borders and to re-imagine a more holistic transformative approach, grounded in an ethic of a globality of humanity (Giroux, 1991, Mignolo, 2007, 2011b; Thayer-Bacon, 2008).

The conceptions of border-crossing for the purposes of critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy have a number of different interpretations related to the crossing of: disciplinary borders, school-community borders, relational/identity borders, historocultural borders, national borders, and mind-spirit borders.

Henry Giroux (1989, 1991, 1997, 2009b) has long argued that in order to develop these democratic subjectivities, schools and classrooms must become sites where pedagogical approaches which allow students and teachers to cross borders, to push back and to challenge the status quo are valued and promoted. In order to undertake these challenges, Giroux (2004) and Winton (2008) argue that there must be a recognition that schools are not value neutral and that teachers and schools have a moral and political role to “provide students with the skills, knowledge and authority they need to inquire and act upon what it means to live in a substantive democracy, to recognize anti-democratic forms of power, and to fight deeply rooted injustices” (Giroux, 2004, p. 35). In describing what he has termed *border pedagogy*, Giroux (1991) argues that students and teachers must be given the freedom to cross disciplinary boundaries, historocultural boundaries and school-community boundaries.

In continuing the argument for the need to cross disciplinary boundaries, Deborah Britzman (1991) argues that Cartesian rationality, colonial disciplinary siloing, and the privileging of certain disciplines above others has resulted in a *fragmentation of knowledge*. Britzman (1991) gave a strong critique of the modernist structures of educational reform which initiated a division between ‘general education’ (academic subjects which incorporated scientific knowledge) and ‘subject-based education’ (disciplined knowledge). Britzman (1991) further argued that the resulting knowledge fragmentation restricted the development of education toward connecting lived experiences with integrated learning. A wave of multi-disciplinary scholars, through the 1990s, began to put forward arguments to support a move towards more curriculum integration and ‘border-crossing’ to enhance the possibilities for “personal and social integration through the organization of curriculum around significant problems and issues, collaboratively identified by educators and young people, without regard for subject-area boundaries” (Beane, 1997, p. x).²⁶ Through their work on curriculum integration within the

²⁶ For additional arguments supporting curriculum integration practices see Britzman, 1991; hooks, 1990; Irwin, Rogers & Wan, 1998; Jacobs, 1989; Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000; Nzewi, 2010 and Wilson, 1997.

Urban Diversity Project in Toronto, Canada, Solomon et al. (2011) further encourage teachers to ‘stretch’ and ‘cluster’ the curriculum within a framework of *diversity integration* in order to move it beyond a tokenistic *culture of celebration*.

Crossing the border can also help to understand *otherness* and *identity*. As Rosaldo (1989) argues, the use of border pedagogy provides both teachers and students the opportunity to re-think “how the relations between dominant and subordinate groups are organized, how they are implicated and often structured in dominance, and how such relationships might be transformed in order to promote a democratic and just society” (quoted in Giroux, 1991, p. 509). In writing about the use of border pedagogy in *The dramatic arts and cultural studies: Acting against the grain*, Kathleen Berry (2000) encourages students to read, write, sing and act against the grain to challenge dominant conceptions. Giroux (1991) argues that this use of border pedagogy can help to create new spaces to imagine and produce “new forms of knowledge, subjectivity, and identity” (Giroux, 1991, p. 512).

In extending this notion of *border thinking* to include stepping outside of colonially defined borders, Mignolo (2007) urges decolonial pedagogy to explore the commonalities within diverse local experiences and histories as they have dealt with the impacts of colonialism. As he argues

The ‘space of experience’ and the ‘horizon of expectations’ are di-verse, or rather, pluri-verse -- what each diverse local history has in common with others is the fact that they all have to deal with the unavoidable presence of the modern/colonial world and its power differentials, which start with racial classification and end up ranking the planet (e.g., First, Second and Third World was a racialization of politics, economy, cultures and knowledge). Thus, the pluriversality of each local history and its narrative of decolonization can connect through that common experience and use it as the basis for a new common logic of knowing: *border thinking*. (Mignolo, 2007, p. 497)

On a global scale, for decolonial scholars, this notion of border pedagogy extends to an understanding of the artificiality of ‘borders’ in nation-states in the context of globalization and of the contradictions between the promises of nationalism and the various limits or failures of many of the postcolonial policies in nation-states around the world (Ninnes & Burnett, 2004; Tikly, 1999). As Mohanty (2003) argues “there is no one sense of a border, that the lines between and through nations, races, classes, sexualities, religions, and disabilities, are real” (p. 2). She argues further that decolonial pedagogy and practice must focus on change and social transformation “across these lines of demarcation and division” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 2). Given the

conception of a robust global democracy, global dialogue around these issues of social justice which cross international borders becomes the responsibility of all members of a global society.

The final conception of border crossing aims to address the colonial subjugation of the mind-spirit connection. In addition to the disciplinary borders that were established under Cartesian rationality, indigenous scholars argue that the colonial project has also promoted a bordering between mind, spirit and emotion in the acquisition of knowledge (Battiste, 2010; Dei, 2011). Decolonial pedagogical approaches which de-link from the Eurocentric epistemological approaches that fragmented the acquisition of knowledge (Britzman, 1991) could serve to open up possibilities to consider more holistic approaches. As decolonial scholars Battiste (2009a, 2010), Dei (2011), Mucina (2011) and Smith (1999/2006) remind us, Indigenous ontological, cosmological and epistemological views included a holistic approach which not only included, but valued the spiritual knowledge gained through connections made to ancestral spirits and the natural world.

Place-Based, Culturally Responsive and, Culturally Sustaining Approaches for Equity

Critical decolonial scholars have put forward strong arguments for the inclusion of place-based, culturally responsive and culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches which recognize, respect and value the importance of pluriverse ways of knowing and being in order to confront the hegemony of colonial and neoliberal approaches (McInerney et al., 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2012). Within a robust global democracy, critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches which increase opportunities to bring different knowledge(s) and experiences together for the purpose of social transformation, cultural and environmental sustainability would not only be valued, but would be seen as essential. The seminal work by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) on *culturally responsive pedagogy* critiqued the privileging of dominant Eurocentric policies and pedagogies which continue to marginalize or de-value the cultural ways of knowing and being of students from other cultural backgrounds. Ladson-Billings' work has inspired critical and decolonial researchers and practitioners to continue to explore ways to make teaching and learning more relevant and responsive to the languages, literacies and cultural practices of students marginalized by systemic inequalities. Decolonial and critical theorists have begun to study how communities are developing local educational approaches to globalization which are strongly anchored in a sense of locality. These rich, diverse, cultural ways of knowing

and being could enrich, engage and inform educational systems which are being driven by the global neoliberal agenda. Through a process called place-based learning (PBE), some communities have developed educational systems which value, respect and integrate traditional practices, including the arts and cultural beliefs with some of the ideological and technological aspects of globalization (Jungck & Kajornsin, 2003; Kubow, 2007; McInerney et al., 2011). Although scholars observe that terms such as place-based learning and culturally relevant pedagogy are at times used interchangeably, Mbugua (2010) argues that the overarching purpose is to “maximize learning for racially and ethnically diverse students with the recognition that all students, regardless of race or ethnicity, bring their culturally influenced cognition, behavior and dispositions with them to school” (p. 88-89).

Researchers, practitioners and staff at the Centre for Urban Schooling (CUS) in Toronto have been engaged in work which focuses on the issues impacting racially and historically marginalized youth in Toronto schools. However, the work of the CUS has implications for schools and school systems in and outside of urban centers in any regions in which youth have been racially and historically marginalized. Their work explores issues of equity, inclusion, outcomes of schooling under current educational policies and pedagogical approaches which are aimed to improve the outcomes and engagement of youth in schools, particularly “those for whom the current system has not and does not work” (West-Burns & Garcia, 2013, p. 5). Murray and West-Burns (2012) in their work at the CUS created a framework for *Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP)* which can be used to inform and analyze the pedagogical approaches in schools. The framework consists of seven areas of equitable practice: i) classroom climate and instruction, ii) school climate, iii) student voice and space, iv) family/caregiver-school relations, v) school leadership, vi) community connections, and vii) culture of professional development.

Murray and West-Burns (2012) see these seven tenets as part of an assessment tool (Equity Continuum) which could be used by teachers and schools to analyze their practices and to help “move equity agendas forward in schools” (Introduction, para. 5). Gorski and Pothini (2014) also argue that the notion of cultural praxis must be seen as part of a larger project aimed at naming and speaking directly to the issue of *equity*. Katy Swalwell (2011) puts forward the term *equity literacy*. Gorski and Pothini (2014) assert that

Part of what sets equity literacy apart from cultural competence, intercultural relations, and many of the other popular frameworks for thinking about equity and diversity in school is that it encourages us to understand dynamics related to, say, race or gender identity, not just in terms of interpersonal or cultural conflict, but also as part of bigger, broader social and cultural conditions (p. 11).

Although there has been an adoption, in some school districts, of more culturally responsive pedagogical approaches, Paris (2012) questions whether these approaches are going far enough “to support the value of our multiethnic and multilingual present and future” (p. 93). If the goal of a robust global democracy is to recognize the pluriversal cultural approaches to knowing and being, it is important to adopt pedagogies which are not only relevant, but seek to sustain “linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling” (p. 93). Increasingly, around the world, Aboriginal and indigenous movements are resisting the neoliberal and colonial hegemonic projects of education and are proposing strategies to preserve, revitalize and promote their cultures. In 2005, the Task Force on Aboriginal Cultures and Languages, in Canada, re-stated the importance of their ontological beliefs, culture and language to their collective sense of identity and nationhood (TFACLC, 2005). In its report, *Towards a New Beginning*, they state: “it is the oral histories, the songs and the dances that speak of the First Nation, Inuit and Métis connection with this land....They give the fabric of Canada the texture and coloration that make it unlike any other fabric in the world” (TFACLC, 2005, p. viii, p. ix). In the face of the current global neoliberal and neoconservative educational reforms which are pushing for standardization and the creation of a ‘monocultural and monolingual’ global society, as Paris (2012) argues “research and practice need equally explicit resistances that embrace cultural pluralism and cultural equality” (p. 93).

Pluriverse Ways of Knowing, Communicating and Engaging in Transformative Education: A Role for the Arts and Cultural Praxis.

The move towards standardization has resulted in a narrowing of the conceptions of both literacy and communication. Given the conception of a robust global democracy and the role that education holds in preparing students to be able to bring their knowledge, skills and values into both debates and action around social transformation, these conceptions of literacy and communication need to be interrogated and expanded to include both textual, non-textual forms of literacy, discursive (narrative) forms, and other culturally responsive forms of communication to reflect the pluriverse nature of our global society. The promotion and valuing of pluriverse

forms of literacy and communication will provide students with increased opportunities to critically and creatively engage in a robust democratic process.

Underlying most of the large-scale standardized assessments that are being used in countries around the world is a psychometric monolithic definition of intelligence which privileges Western knowledge and ways of being (Kincheloe, 2004a). Although there have been attempts to broaden this definition using theories, such as Gardner's 'Multiple Intelligences Theory' (MI) (1983), it is important to remain vigilant and critical to determine whether acknowledgment and value is being given to the various cultural and linguistic backgrounds that students bring into the 'formal educational systems'. Kincheloe (2004a) challenges Gardner's theoretical expansion of intelligence for its lack of cultural critique or power analysis in the MI curriculum. Berry (2004) noted that MI theory continues to privilege and reproduce the thought and knowledge of Western modernity and routinely excludes "the knowledge and values of women, non-white races, non-Christians, and local and pre-modern ways of knowing" (Berry, 2004, p. 237).

Prior to the arrival of the colonists, in most indigenous cultures the social, cultural and historical modes of communication were tied to orality and artistic modes, including music and visual arts (Abdi, 2007, 2010; Chamberlin, 2009; Falola & Ngom, 2009; Finnegan, 2007, Kiplang'at & Lagat, 2009; Layton, 2000). The bias against orality and the privileging of the written or dominant languages of the colonists has been illuminated by critical and decolonial scholars (Abdi, 2007, 2009; Falola & Ngom, 2009; Ong, 1985; wa Thiong'o, 1998a; 1998b). Falola and Ngom (2009) argue that the political purposes of literacy were seen in the justification of schooling as a means to address the functional or formal inadequacy of the indigenous (local, diverse, oral) languages (Falola & Ngom, 2009). Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) argue that "language has always been a companion of empire" and that "the colonial linguistic descriptions, dictionaries, grammars and language guides demonstrate that what was conceived as a neutral scientific endeavor was much a political one" (cited in Falola & Ngom, 2009, p. xvii).

Centuries before written textual language became common-place, indigenous cultures communicated between themselves and exchanged knowledge(s) using a variety of modes that were largely oral or symbolic (signs) (Abdi, 2007, 2010; Rukwaro & Maina, 2006; Turle, 1992). When information was presented orally, it was often presented through a combination of oration, song or poetry and generally in a collective, family or community setting (Kiplang'at, & Lagat,

2009; Ojaide, 2007; Omolewa, 2007). This oral and visual means of communication possessed a vibrational energy which spoke to the human soul or spirit (Nzewi, 2010). Many indigenous scholars speak about the key role that these collective oral, musical and dramatic forms of communication played within indigenous cultures for the transmission of knowledge (Battiste, 2010; Kiplang'at, & Lagat, 2009; Omolewa, 2007).

The critique of the privileging of a narrow notion of literacy and the importance of pluriverse ways of knowing and communicating has come from both indigenous and non-indigenous scholars and from policy actors in the Western world. In the 1970s, the National Association for Education and the Arts wrote a sharp critique of the narrow focus of schools and society in the United States. In their report (which could still be reiterated today in an increasingly global context) they wrote:

In the culture of the United States, and in particular the culture that pervades American schools, the overriding conception of knowledge and the dominant forms of conception and expression are linguistic. To know in America, particularly in American schools, is to be able to put something into words. This belief has skewed the curriculum in such a way that important forms of understanding are omitted, or neglected entirely, biasing the criteria through which human competency are appraised (Dorn, 1977, p. 12).

In 2002, as it continued to look for strategies to help achieve the Millenium Development Goals, the United Nations General Assembly recognized the important role that literate environments and societies can play in helping to achieve the goals of "eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy" (United Nations, 2002, Article 7). As they entered what they called the Literacy Decade, UNESCO further recognized the importance of language and culture through the creation and adoption of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001). Within this Declaration came evidence of the acknowledgment of the multiple forms that literacy could take, including that of the arts, and the importance of promoting and sustaining this cultural plurality. However, they expressed caution stating that "while ensuring the free flow of ideas *by word and image* care should be exercised so that all cultures can express themselves and make themselves known" (UNESCO, 2001, Article 6, my italics). In the UNESCO position paper, *The Plurality of Literacy: Implications for Policies and Programmes*, it further argues for the need to recognize and support the sustainability of local ways of knowing and communicating in stating "it is not simply a matter of giving space to local

content, knowledge and languages, but of generating and sustaining local ownership of expression, communication and transactions with the wider world (UNESCO, 2004, p. 18).

For students coming from cultures in which English is not their first language and for students whose dominant learning style is not through the written mode, the narrow conception of literacy which dominates the neoliberal high-stakes, externally developed and standardized *assessment regime* is problematic (Garrison, 2009; Hursh, 2008). Knowledge and understanding on most provincial, state or international educational assessments is rarely measured in any form other than by the 'written word'. Granted, in some regions, accommodations have been made for some students with special needs to be able to give their responses 'orally' (Education Quality and Accountability Office, 2012). For efficiency and standardization in evaluation, particularly on large-scale assessment, very limited opportunity is available to demonstrate knowledge or understanding in any form other than in *writing*. Further, acceptable 'literate communication' is generally limited to the language of the dominant culture²⁷. This combination of the move towards high-stakes standardized assessments and a narrow conception of literacy which privileges the written form of communication, in one of the dominant hegemonic languages, are extremely problematic within the conception of a robust global democracy.

Critical-democratic and decolonial scholars and pedagogues continue to believe that there is an opportunity for teachers and school systems to play a role in confronting and challenging continued colonial and neoliberal hegemony and the attack on the democratic purpose of education. This portion of the chapter has reviewed the literature which speaks to the possibilities and challenges of the use of critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogical principles and approaches in classrooms and schools for socially transformative role of education. However, the battle against neoliberal hegemonic approaches cannot remain within the school system alone. In holding up Maxine Greene's (1993) vision of a [democratic] 'community in the making', this battle will require strong linkages between schools and their communities.

²⁷ In Kenya, within the KCPE (national assessment) only the use of English or Kiswahili are used.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a review of the literature which discusses the impact of colonial modernity and global neoliberal ideologies on society, and more specifically on education. Secondly, it reviewed literature which speaks to the role of the public, of public education and of the arts in education in confronting and challenging colonial and neoliberal hegemony. Thirdly, it moved into the literature from scholars in the arts to engage in deepening our understanding of the some of the social, cultural, historical and political complexities involved in answering the questions “what are the arts” and “why have the arts been used in education”. Fourthly, it examined the literature which points to a possible role for the arts in education to challenge and disrupt the hegemony of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies through the use of critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches. Finally, it draws from the literature which identifies pedagogical principles and practices needed to enable schools to become socially transformative agents within a robust global democracy including: critical-democratic pedagogy; decolonial pedagogy; relational pedagogy; border pedagogy and border thinking; local, place-based, culturally responsive and culturally sustaining approaches; pluriverse ways of knowing, communicating and engaging in transformative education: a role for the arts. In combining these pedagogical principles and approaches, new possibilities exist for the opportunity to use critical, creative and culturally responsive and relevant approaches to give students and teachers the support and freedom to both *imagine the world differently* and to *create action plans individually and collectively* for transformation towards a more socially and economically just world grounded in an ethic of a globality of humanity....a role for the arts and cultural praxis.

The following chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted for this study.

Chapter Four

Methodology

Sunal and Mutua (2008) point to the importance of research at both the nation-state and local levels in order to gather data that "are rooted in the voices of individuals and communities" (p. 2)

Research will generate knowledge...to the degree that it addresses the full complexity of education...as a meaning-driven, socially situated, interpretive practice (Riehl, 2007, p. 155).

Relationality is the major characteristic of research that is neighborly, that is, it is rooted in the emerging conceptions of community, shared governance and decision making, and equity (Lincoln, 1995, p. 287).

Organization of the Chapter

This chapter will outline the methodological approach adopted for this study. It will be divided into seven major sections. The first section describes the benefits and critiques of comparative international education research. The second section outlines the two major elements of the research design: case study methodology; and, critical moral consciousness. . In the third section, I identify the five criteria used for the case selection. In the fourth section, the data collection process is outlined including: data sources, phases of the research study and the data collection methods (interviews, focus groups, classroom and performance observations, educational policy documents, field notes, audio-video recording and conscientization). The fifth section describes the complexity and messiness of the process of meaning-making (data analysis). The sixth section highlights ethical considerations. The final section of the chapter discusses some of the methodological challenges and lessons learned throughout the research study.

Comparative International Education Research

The research question and sub-questions outlined in Chapter one seek to gain a deeper understanding of why and how teachers, in schools located in a rural, remote and indigenous community in the global south, are using the arts. Further, the research aims to study the influence of multi-contextual factors (educational, sociocultural, political, economic and environmental) at the local, provincial/national and global levels on teachers' and schools' use of

the arts in this case study. Finally, in the discussion chapters, the findings from this Kenyan case study and the literature from Western and non-Western scholars, who are studying the arts in education will be used, as Kubow (2011) argues, to “cross-fertilize” each other to posit new policy and pedagogical approaches for the use of the arts for democratic and transformative education.

The comparative international approach in educational research gained its early beginning through what have been described by Tretheway (1976) and Crossley and Watson (2003) as “travellers’ tales”.²⁸ Since its inception, Bereday (1964) argues the comparative international method in education has undergone three distinct phases in its history: (1) a “period of borrowing”, beginning in the 19th century; (2) a “period of prediction”, during the first half of the 20th century; and (3) a “period of analysis”, the current phase. Within this current analytical framing of the comparative method, Cowen (2009) argues that “critical comparativists” need to look at the field in the plural and then explore and critique the “politically sanctified or politically correct dichotomized binaries (traditional/modern; developed/developing; capitalist/socialist; East/West; North/South)” (p. 1285).

Many comparativists assert that the use of a critical comparative international approach can help us gain a deeper understanding of our own societies and educational systems and can be used to inform both policy and pedagogy (Klees, 2008; Masemann, 1990; Spring, 2008; Stambach & Ngwane, 2011; Steiner-Khamsi, 2010). Critical comparative international education research provides a lens through which to view the impact of a global issue on schools and communities in diversely different contexts. As Kubow & Fossum (2007) assert, the use of a cross-cultural, issues-oriented approach can help to deepen the understanding of the complexities involved in localized responses to a global issue. In her review of this approach, Suzanne Majhanovich (2008) asserts that this cross-cultural issues-based approach enables an examination of glocalised approaches to the issues faced and “both problematizes and deepens awareness of various dilemmas countries face today regarding education” (p. 292).

²⁸ Comparative education scholars such as Tretheway (1976), and Crossley and Watson (2003) have called the early foundations of comparative education ‘travellers tales’ because they consisted primarily of observations and narratives about the differences that these early scholars noted in the social, cultural and education aspects within the new colonies in which they were travelling.

While there are benefits to the use of a comparative international research approach, there have also been concerns and cautions voiced. David Phillips and Michele Schweisfurth (2008) have noted that “the most obvious consequence of learning from and understanding what is happening *elsewhere* in education is that we may be persuaded of the advantages to be gained from *copying* or *emulating* successful practice as it is manifest in other countries—what has become generally known as *borrowing* (p. 17). This process of *borrowing* or *transferring* educational policies and programs brings with it a multitude of ethical and implementation issues to which policy makers must give careful consideration (Bray, 2003; Steiner-Khamsi, 2000, 2006, Williams, 2009). Kubow (2011) argues that rather than looking for policies and programs which could be borrowed or transferred, critical comparative researchers should adopt approaches which “might foster cross-pollination and cross-fertilization of ideas to aid a systematic international study” (p. 475). Kubow argues further that “such an approach would also facilitate greater insight on the intersection of tensions (e.g., globalization-indigenization, social cohesion–autonomy, religion-secularization, and traditionalism-modernization)” that influence educational policy within and between nations (p. 475-476). In studying glocalized approaches to a global issue, Kubow urges comparativists to also consider “the unique circumstances that make local conditions impermeable to a regional vision for education or resistant to a more global or homogenized approach” to the issue (p. 476). In discussing the implications of the findings from this case study, particularly the positing of a ‘new pedagogical model’ for the arts in and for education, issues around ‘intersecting tensions’, ‘cross-fertilizing’ and ‘local contexts’ will be addressed.

Research Design

Case Study Methodology

The decision to adopt a case study approach was made following a detailed review of case study literature and subsequent reflection on the value of this methodology in helping to answer the research questions, its connection to my theoretical framework and to my own research paradigm. One of the advantages of case study methodology is that it allows the researcher to probe deeply and widely in order to gain a better understanding of the multi-contextual variables that are influencing the case (Acedo, 2010; 2012; Bennett & Elman, 2006; Brown, 2008). This section will begin by outlining the rationale for case study as my research

methodology. Next, a review of literature from foundational writers in the area of case study research including Merriam (1998, 2001), Stake (1995, 2005, 2008), Stenhouse (2007) and Yin (2003, 2006). Finally, some of the critiques about case study research will be identified and discussed.

As a researcher, I locate my work within a critical democratic/decolonial/indigenous paradigm. My worldview is based on an understanding that reality is ‘socially constructed’ and that ‘multiple realities’ exist. Within the conception of a robust global democracy, this understanding of multiple realities values and promotes opportunities to imagine ‘other realities’, learn about ‘different realities’ and challenge realities based on their contributions to a more socially and economically just global society. I construct my own sense of reality by constantly comparing and critiquing my theoretical knowledge and my lived experiences. It was important in the choice of a research methodology that there would be opportunity to inquire deeply, open myself to learn from multiple perspectives and to engage in a form of research that promoted and valued pluriverse ways of knowing and communicating. As Brown (2008) notes “the experience of the inquiry is a process of interpretation and of making sense of the phenomenon under study” (p. 2). After reviewing the literature on case study methodology, I believe that this approach fits well with my worldview and with the goals of the research.

Case study research has been used to contribute to researchers’ and practitioners’ knowledge in the fields of both educational policy and comparative international education (Dei, 2005; Griffiths & Knezevic, 2010; Little, Aboud & Lenachuru, 2009; Stack, 2007; Wane, 2005). Case study methodology can provide a rich and thick descriptive account of the particular, including an analysis of the complex interactions of the multi-contextual factors influencing the phenomenon of study. Although policy makers and educational reformers are often looking for *objective* or *generalizable* findings “to guide, with some assurance, possible outcomes of the measures they propose” (Stenhouse, 2007, p. 46), decisions about programs and policies based on general principles often fail to take into account the multi-contextual factors which influence local communities and schools²⁹. The decision to adopt a case study approach was made to enable research on “bounded systems” (Creswell, 1998) or cases, while at the same time recognizing the multi-contextual environment in which these cases exist. As Michael Crossley

²⁹ For notes on the importance on context in comparative international educational studies, see also Crossley, 2010; and McGinn & Schiefelbein, 2010.

(2010) argues, it is the inclusion of these multi-contextual factors within the analysis and interpretation of the findings in case study research which illuminates the complexity of the data and helps to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

In developing the case study methodology for this thesis, the work of three writers provided significant guidance: Merriam (1998), Yin (2003, 2006), and Stake (2008). Coming from three different perspectives, these researchers offer both methodological considerations and pitfalls to be mindful of. Merriam (1998) speaks of the value of the case study approach as a way to gain an understanding of a phenomenon, where the process of inquiry rather than the outcome of the research are of interest to the researcher. According to Merriam (1998), the case study does not claim any specific data collection methods, but “focuses on holistic description and explanation” (p. 29). Within this focus, the case study can be further described as particularistic, heuristic, or descriptive. The approach that was used in this study can be described as being both *heuristic* and *descriptive* (Merriam, 1998). A heuristic case study is exploratory, investigative and is able to shed light on the phenomenon, allowing the researcher to extend their experience, discover new meaning, or confirm what is known. A descriptive case study uses “thick descriptions” (Merriam, 1998) to illustrate the complexity of the situation. Stake (2005) sees the role of the case study researcher as being one of an *interpreter* who is “ever-reflective”. Yin (1984) further described the benefits of case study methodology as “the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (p. 1).

One of the common critiques of case-study methodology noted by Yin (1984) is that at times it appears to lack the precision, objectivity and rigor, which are often associated with the quantitative approach to research. Patricia Brown (2008) argues that it is important within case study research to gather thick descriptions from a wide variety of sources and viewpoints in a variety of ways. A clear acknowledgement of the fluidity and complexity of the social world within qualitative research demands a broad, deep, diverse and flexible approach to data collection, as well as to the analysis of the data within and between each of the cases. A second critique of case study research is its lack of generalizability (Bennett & Elman, 2006). However, proponents of case study research, often argue that the move from generalization to particularity is one of its strengths (Stenhouse, 2007). In early assertions about the significance of case study research, Stake (1995) argued that the purpose is “not to represent the world, but to represent the

case” (p. 245). To this end Brown (2008) notes that “the use of multiple sources of data enables the researcher to cover a broader range of issues and to develop converging lines of inquiry by the process of triangulation” (p. 4). One of the greatest challenges of this method, particularly when researching in rural and remote areas is that it also requires the input of considerable time and resources to adequately represent the area to be studied. A significant effort was made to gather data from a wide and diverse variety of individuals and sources in order to illuminate the complexity of the findings within these multi-contextual sites.

Critical Moral Consciousness

Early into the first phase of the data collection for this thesis, a series of events began to create an unsettling and anxious feeling within me that I did not truly understand until I had returned to Canada and was reading through a piece by Yvonna Lincoln and Norm Denzin (2000) entitled *The seventh moment: Out of the past*. Although I didn’t have the vocabulary to describe the methodological element which began to embed itself within my soul and which continued to inform and direct much of my research approach, I have since heard Lincoln and Denzin (2000) describe this view of inquiry as “a moral act, ethics, and critical consciousness”, (p. 1048). I concur with Lincoln (1995) as she describes this approach as being driven by “a vision of research that enables and promotes social justice, community, diversity, civic discourse and caring” (pp. 277-278). As a researcher employing this approach within qualitative research, I continually felt the presence of this *critical moral consciousness* which necessitated an ongoing process between praxis and reflection.

Between the fall of 2009 and December, 2011, I spent eight months, in total, living in the rural and remote Maasai regions of southern Kenya. Throughout this research period, travelling back and forth between Kenya and my home in Ontario, Canada, I engaged in a process of constant self-reflexivity, using either my BlackBerry for voice notes or my field notebook for written notes. The theoretical groundings of my research paradigm continued to push me to try to create a critical democratic learning environment which I believed could level the hierarchies of power and enable open, trusting, robust dialogue. As I began to live in the area and learn more about Maasai culture and ways of knowing and being, I became increasingly aware of the gaps or contradictions in my prior knowledge which had come primarily from my Western social and

education upbringing³⁰. However, even though I often expressed what I felt was a combination of ignorance of and respect for these new cultural learning experiences, I also became consciously aware of the layers of power and knowledge that the Maasai teachers, parents and community leaders intimated (felt) I possessed.

In an effort to resolve some of these moral and ethical dilemmas, I reflected on the work of Lincoln (1995) as she describes a notion of *relational research*, which is “grounded in the recognition and valuing of *connectedness* between the researcher and the researched” (p. 287). Further, Lincoln (1995) describes the characteristic of *relationality* in research as being “neighborly, that is, it is rooted in the emerging conceptions of community, shared governance and decision making, and equity” (p. 287). As Christians (2002) argues, this relational notion of qualitative research carries with it an ethical grounding towards *human mutuality*, with an overarching expectation of *moral agency*.

Over the eight months that I lived in the area, a deep level of trust and respect developed between so many of the teachers, head-teachers, community leaders, community partners and myself that we were able to dialogue, discuss and occasionally debate issues that deepened the learning opportunities for all of us. Developing deep and trusting relationships is not only a function of 'time', but of the quality of engagement, the attitudes of sincere interest, the breaking down of hierarchical power relationships and the openness to be willing to listen, to dialogue and to learn from each other. I lived within the living quarters of the deputy head-teacher and her family at Olapa and with the nurse and his wife (Luya and Kaampa) in the dispensary (local health center) while in Enkema.³¹ In both locations, I assisted with the daily living chores and joined teachers, parents and community members in many socio-cultural experiences. I travelled

³⁰ I learned very quickly that my Western knowledge construction had not prepared me to be able to live and survive in this rural and remote area of sub-Saharan Africa and that I depended on the social, cultural and environmental knowledge of the Maasai to live and to conduct my research in the area. I also learned and continue to write about what I believe is a notion of development which represents the global north as ‘developed’ and many areas of the global south, including sub-Saharan Africa as being ‘underdeveloped’. I would argue based on my living and research experiences in this region that in many respects, the Maasai are far more developed in terms of their understanding and relationship with the natural environment and in their social relationships and it is the West that is becoming increasingly ‘de-developed’ with environmental devastation and rising social inequities.

³¹ The nurse and his wife, at the dispensary in Enkema, were not Maasai. They identified as members of two of the other ethnicities in Kenya, Luya and Kaampa.

with the teachers and students as they competed in each of the stages of the KMF around the country.

Over the course of the research period I made a sincere effort to learn the language (Maa), and to learn about the needs and constraints that existed for students, parents and teachers in these two school-communities. The respected and trusting relationship that the community leaders bestowed on me was signalled through a Maasai cultural practice in which I was given a Maasai name. As I learned, from the head-teacher at Olapa PS, this 'naming' practice is highly significant in Maasai society. Mr H told me that the giving of a Maasai name to a non-Maasai individual signals that they are “respected and welcomed into the community”. Although it was never said directly, I also felt that this naming and welcoming into the community, brought with it an understanding of Maasai values, particularly collective responsibility to other members of the community.

It is important to state clearly that although many of the principles and practices which I adopted to help guide me through the research process in Kenya are influenced by a moral, ethical and culturally responsive approach to research which has been termed *indigenous research methodologies*, I am not claiming to have adopted a full-fledged indigenous methodological approach (Battiste, 2008b; Castellano, 2004; Dei, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Eldridge, 2008; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Smith, 1999/2006; Swadener & Mutua, 2008; Wane, 2000, 2010). Marie Battiste (2008b) offers two guiding principles which I incorporated into the methodological approach used throughout the study. First, Battiste (2008b) asserts that “it is vital that Indigenous peoples have direct input into developing and defining research practices and projects related to them” (p. 503). Although I had a research plan in place, based on the institutional ethical and procedural requirements of the Western academy, prior to beginning my research in Kenya, I believed it was vitally important to get to know the two communities in which I would be working, build relationships and involve the head-teacher, teachers and school management committee (SMC) in discussions about the purpose of the research and to seek their input into the research design. Both head-teachers suggested that in addition to the teachers, I should also speak with the assistant-chief in the area (tribal governance leader) and with Maasai youth and

parents to get a broader cultural understanding of the arts in the community³². Secondly, “ethical research systems and practices should enable Indigenous nations, peoples, and communities to exercise control over information relating to their knowledge and heritage and to themselves” (p. 503). During both the data collection phase and during member checking, efforts were made to review transcripts, clarify information and interpretations and do a “member checking” (Stake, 1995) of findings and emerging themes.

The data collection process was also influenced by indigenous research methods in the considerations around structure, flexibility and cultural understanding. Prior to beginning any formal interviews with participants, I spent over six weeks in September and October 2009, living, learning and deepening my cultural understanding within the two communities of Olapa and Enkema and around other parts of Kenya. Early into the data collection process, the impact of multi-contextual factors (socio-cultural, geographic, environmental, bureaucratic) illuminated the complexity of the context in which the teachers in these two schools were working and necessitated a re-structuring of my research plan to reflect the socio-cultural context. One example which stood out in my field notes was a term which I heard quite often from various participants about “African time”. This contextual realization challenged me to reflect on the research agenda and on my role and position in this context where I was in *their community* and was working *with them* on *their time*. “Time”, in this area, as I was told by Ms A, one of the teachers, is a relative term which is heavily linked to a social context. During one of our interviews, Ms A explained that “things happen, people arrive when they can!” In reading through my field notes, I reflected often that my research needs and priorities paled significantly in relation to the hourly or daily needs and priorities of the people and communities in which I was conducting my research.

There have been critiques voiced by some in the academic world that non-indigenous researchers have no place in indigenous research (Marshall, et al., 2002). However, others including, Eldridge (2008), Lomawaima & McCarty (2002) and Weber-Pillwax (1999) argue that there is value in research methodology which includes non-Native and Native researchers and participants working together in respectful collaboration for the benefit of the communities in which the research is taking place. Throughout the research process, I collaborated with the

³² See Appendix A for a list of formal and informal interviews conducted.

teachers, head-teachers and community leaders to seek their advice on other sources of data that could help to deepen my understanding of the role of the arts in formal education and also in the community. I informed them that I would be presenting a copy of my research to the Ministry of Education in Kenya hoped that I could represent their goals, issues and concerns within the thesis. While conducting research on arts education in a number of Navaho communities in the southern United States, Eldridge (2008) drew from the work of other indigenous researchers and scholars to develop a set of key principles which include “inclusive decision-making, mutual respect, the participation of indigenous people, equal sharing of input and control, acknowledging and respecting indigenous knowledge systems, and ensuring that all parties benefit from the research” (p. 43). These six principles fit well within my theoretical framework of critical and decolonial theory.

Case Selection

The two primary schools in which the research was conducted for this dissertation were purposely selected from one school district: located in a rural, remote and indigenous (Maasai) area of southern Kenya. These school sites were chosen as primary units of analysis based on criteria drawn from both the literature and the conceptual framework to enable me to explore the multi-contextual factors influencing the research question and sub-questions (Bray & Thomas, 1995). Within the selection process, five criteria were used to help identify an information-rich case which could contribute to a deeper understanding of teacher’s use of the arts in a remote indigenous region of a post-colonial country in the global south which claims to be a democratic nation-state.

Each of the five selection criteria are further explained below.

1. Democratic nation-state. Kenya gained its independence from the colonial government of Britain in 1961 and claims to be democratic nation-state. However, both in current times and throughout its post-independence history, the country has been critiqued over the robustness of the democratic principles and processes in both governance systems and in the public sector, including schools. (Kramon & Posner, 2011; Nasong’o & Murunga, 2007; Nasong’o & Risley, 2009).

2. Colonial and post-colonial history³³. Prior to colonization, Kenya had and continues to have, large indigenous and multi-ethnic populations with their own cultural ways of knowing and being. Yet, since gaining their independence, the country continues to use policies and governance approaches created during the colonial era, particularly in schooling (Hornsby, 2012; Murunga, 2007; Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, 2013a). The continued existence of colonial policy approaches to education in Kenya (including an externally developed, standardized curriculum; pedagogical approaches; and a privileging of the colonial ‘written’ languages) privileges some and marginalizes or oppresses Others (often the same populations who were marginalized under colonial rule). During this post-colonial period, as Bartz (2012) argues, this marginalization and oppression continues to exist in different forms. Bartz asserts that the focus must no longer remain primarily on the colonial impact of Anglo-males. In Kenya, issues of power and corruption in modern histories have been cited as promoting inter-ethnic tension and violence, often towards tragic ends, as was experienced during the 2007-2008 post-election violence (Mwongera, 2012).

3. Global south. The decision to select a case from the global south was made to enable a deeper exploration of the impact of factors which have been associated with colonial modernity and neoliberal globalization (such as industrialization, information communication technology, market-based principles: efficiency, specialization, privatization) on teachers’ use of the arts in education. The case in Kenya was purposely selected from within a rural and remote indigenous area of the global south which had long been resisting the impact of colonial modernity. Yet, the introduction of formal schooling to the region in the 1970s has begun to introduce educational policies which reflect the influence of both colonial and neoliberal ideologies.

4. Indigenous culture. The fourth criteria used was that one case would be drawn from a rural, remote indigenous community which continued to maintain many of its traditional cultural traditions and lifestyle. Despite almost two centuries of colonial domination in Kenya, the

³³ I choose to use Virginia Bartz (2012) term “histories” to recognize that what has been called History has been a construction of Anglo-male stories. However, as Bartz argues in her thesis work around art activism by Undocumented youth, “the past is patterned with all types of stories that do not fit neatly into fixed hetero-patriarchal categories. Thus, the use of a sideways infinity sign reclaims history to be a dynamic and complex telling of various narratives throughout time. (p. 1)

Maasai region of southern Kenya has in many respects been able to sustain the traditional pastoral nomadic livelihood and culture that was described in the traveller's tales of early colonial writers such as Hollis (1905), Thomson (1885), and Hinde and Hinde (1901). Within their homesteads (manyattas) and in their communities, most Maasai in this area continue to follow their traditional socio-cultural practices and beliefs. The arts continue to be deeply embedded in the ontological, epistemological and cosmological beliefs and ceremonies within Maasai culture. Data obtained from the head-teachers and area education officer confirms that over ninety-five percent of the students attending the two schools included in the Kenyan case study identify as Maasai.

5. Teachers' and Schools' commitment to the use of the arts. Within the educational curriculum policy documents in Kenya, the Arts are identified as a core component of their current primary educational system. In the case selection, the specific school sites were selected based on feedback from school and district leaders in each of the two school districts that the schools and teachers within the schools had a demonstrated commitment to the use of the arts in education. Both of these schools had also competed in the Kenya Music Festival for the past four years, and had won categories in traditional Maasai dance, folk song and sacred song. They were also using these traditional cultural practices in school-community events and divisional health fairs for the purpose of educating other Maasai youth, parents and community members.

One of the major distinguishing characteristics of case study research is its focus on a bounded system or case. Merriam (1998) maintains that "the case is a unit, entity, or phenomenon with defined boundaries that the research can demarcate of 'fence in'" (p. 27), and therefore, can also determine what will not be studied. One of the challenges of the case study approach is in defining the 'boundaries' of the case...at which levels do we stop? It is important to recognize the limitations of time and resources in a doctoral research project in the pursuit of a deeper understanding of why and how teachers were using the arts in these two cases. Given my own limitations of time and resources, the initial 'boundaries' of each case were to include one primary school in each of the two school districts. In an effort to gather a wider and more diverse set of data, extensions were made to include individuals and resources at the district, provincial or national level which could provide data specifically related to teachers' use of the arts in these

schools. As a result of a situation which occurred in the Kenya case³⁴ about one month into the data collection, the decision was made to extend the boundary of that case to include one other school within the same district.

Data Collection

Data Sources

The majority of the data collection was done through formal and informal interviews with teachers and head-teachers, narrative inquiry, focus groups, observation (both in and outside the classrooms at the schools), and through the collection of publically available educational policy documents. Throughout the data collection period, I worked collaboratively with the teachers and head-teachers in order to develop a process which was sensitive to their contexts and to assist in identifying additional data sources (personnel and documents) which could deepen the understanding of the issues that arose and the contexts in which they were teaching. In order to be able to interpret this data within the multi-contextual environment in which these schools were situated, I felt it was important to extend the data collection, as Merriam (1998) and Brown (2008) assert, to dig deeply to gain a more robust understanding of the complexity of the data. One of the advantages of having teachers, head-teachers, supervisory officers, community members policy and curriculum developers, and other educational stakeholders as participants in the research is that during the exploration and reflection on the broad areas included in the research question, it enables what Atwood (2002) describes as the “vantage point” of another person. In my role as researcher, I saw myself as a member of a discursive community in which each member shares responsibility for critical reflection and discussion.

Over the course of the data collection period in Kenya, I completed 24 formal interviews, 23 classroom or performance observations, 40 informal interviews and two focus groups. Participants interviewed included teachers, head-teachers, supervisory officers (SO), district education officers (DEO), area education officers (AEO), district quality assurance & standards officers (DQASO), arts consultants, curriculum and policy developers, parents, school council members and local community members. In the Maasai community, 7 of the students in the

³⁴ This situation which arose and necessitated the extension of the boundary to include an additional primary school site within the Kenyan case will be described in more detail in the ‘methodological challenges’ section later in this chapter.

music program were also interviewed, with the aid of a translator, in order to deepen my understanding of the socioeconomic and cultural factors that were influencing teachers' use of the arts. Classroom and performance observations were conducted both in and outside of the schools. In Kenya, I accompanied the students and teachers from Olapa PS and Enkema PS as they took part in the local, regional, provincial and national levels of the Kenya Music Festival³⁵. While in Nairobi, I was also able to spend three days at the Kenya National Archives gathering data on Kenyan/Maasai history and Maasai traditional culture and artforms. Key policy documents related to the research questions that were analyzed are:

1. Kenya

Kenya National Examination Council (2010). *Strategic Plan 2009-2010*. Nairobi: Kenya National Examination Council.

Republic of Kenya (2002). *Primary Education Syllabus: Volume One (English, Kiswahili, Mother Tongue, Physical Education & Creative Arts)*. Nairobi: Kenya Institute of Education.

Republic of Kenya (2005a). *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005: A policy framework for education, training and research*. Nairobi: Ministry of Education.

Republic of Kenya (2005b). *Kenya Education Sector Support Programme 2005-2010*. Nairobi: Ministry of Education.

Republic of Kenya (2007). *Kenya Vision 2030: The popular version*. Nairobi: Ministry of Planning and National Development.

Republic of Kenya (2009a). *Primary Education Social Studies Syllabus*. Nairobi: Kenya Institute of Education.

Republic of Kenya (2009b). *Ministry of Education Strategic Plan: 2008-2012*.

Republic of Kenya (2010a). *Kenya Music Festival Syllabus*.

Republic of Kenya (2010b). *The Constitution of Kenya*.

Republic of Kenya (2012a). *The Basic Education Bill, 2012* [MPs' Retreat Draft 28/6/12].

Republic of Kenya (2012b). *A policy framework for education: Aligning education and training to the constitution of Kenya (2010) and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond (DRAFT 11th May, 2012)*.

2. Global policy documents

³⁵ See Appendix A for full listing of the formal and informal interviews and performance observations conducted.

United Nations (2000). *United Nations Millennium Declaration*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>

United Nations (2002). A/RES/56/116. *United Nations Literacy Decade: Education for All*. Retrieved from <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/481/39/PDF/N0148139.pdf?OpenElement>

United Nations (2008). *United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

United Nations (2013). *A new global partnership: Eradicate poverty and transform economics through sustainable development*. The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Retrieved from <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf>

UNESCO (1994). *Culture and development: A symbiotic relationship*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO (2001). *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO (2004). *The Plurality of Literacy and its implications for Policies and Programs: Position Paper*. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001362/136246e.pdf>

UNESCO (2010). *Seoul Agenda: Goals for the development of arts education*. UNESCO Second World Conference on Arts. Held in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, on 25-28, May 2010. Retrieved from http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/41117/12798106085Seoul_Agenda_Goals_for_the_Development_of_Arts_Education.pdf/Seoul%2BAgenda_Goals%2Bfor%2Bthe%2BDevelopment%2Bof%2BArts%2BEducation.pdf

Phases of the Research

Data collection for this research study occurred in three phases. Phase one began with an exploratory six-week trip to southern Kenya in the fall of 2009. The purpose of this initial phase was to explore possibilities for conducting the research in this area and to begin to gather contextual data. The second phase, between May 2010 and August 2010, included the initial data collection in Kenya. In August, 2010, I returned to Ontario, Canada and began to work on interview transcriptions and data analysis. Following completion of the initial data analysis and the identification of emerging themes, I conducted what Stake (1995) terms “member checking” to ask some follow-up questions from the data, to validate the initial findings and to gather additional data to deepen the understanding. This third phase, member checking, occurred during October and November, 2011.

The first phase of data collection began with an informal process of travelling to, living with, learning about and building relationships and trust with the head-teacher, teachers, community leaders, elders and community members in the area of southern Kenya where I had hoped to conduct one of my case studies. During the spring of 2009, I had begun to learn about the ways some of the schools in this Maasai region of southern Kenya were using the arts through a colleague who had worked for Physicians without Borders in East Africa. Even though this region is geographically remote and has minimal network connectivity, I had been able to make an initial email connection with the head-teacher of Olapa PS, Mr H. After gaining the support of Mr H for phase one of the research design, I began five months of extensive planning to prepare myself to travel to Kenya in September 2009 to spend six weeks in the Enkolong area.

My home base for phase one of the research became Olapa PS. Over the six week period, I travelled by foot, motorbike or vegetable truck to connect with other primary schools in this region to explore possibilities for conducting the Kenyan portion of the research in this school division. During this exploratory visit, I learned about a school in the area which had qualified for and participated in the Kenya Music Festival for Maasai folk song and Maasai traditional dance each year for the past four years. I arranged to meet with the head-teacher, Mr J, to discuss the research proposal and to learn about the process that would need to be followed to proceed with research in his school, if he was interested in being involved in the study. Throughout this six week period, I also began to gather some of the multi-contextual data through informal discussions with teachers, head-teachers, and community leaders. This initial phase of the data collection process served three important purposes: building relationships and trust (Eldridge, 2008; Weber-Pillwax, 1999); gaining what Troman and Jeffrey (2007) term “cultural and contextual sensitivity”, and guiding the development of the research design and future data collection methods.

In May 2010, I began phase two, returning to Kenya to begin data collection. I remained in the region for a period of four months, spending time back and forth between the two school communities of Olapa PS and Enkema PS, and travelling with the teachers and students to the different areas of the country as they took part in the progressive levels of the Kenya Music Festival. Sunal and Mutua (2008) stress that it is vital for researchers working in indigenous and/or non-Western, formerly colonized regions to analyze and interpret research data "within the context of the complex human and natural environments from which they are derived" (p. 2).

In order to broaden and deepen my knowledge of the multicontextual factors that were influencing teachers in schools in this case study, I realized that I needed to extend my data collection to include data from a wider variety of sources and perspectives to deepen the understanding of both the *context* and the *local/state* influences. The plan for the collection of these additional interviews, observations, literature and policy document collection was *ongoing* throughout my time in Kenya. Frequently, while I was in the process of one of these data collection opportunities, a suggestion or link to another individual or potential data source was given by a participant. As Fine and Vanderslice (1991) assert “an indigenous research approach is itself ‘evolving’ while in the field, rather than ‘moving from one predetermined step to another” (p. 208). New interview protocols were developed for each of the additional individuals who were interviewed in order to link their background and experiences to the research questions (Appendices I, J, K, L, M, N). In the fall of 2010, I returned to Canada and completed the transcriptions from the Kenyan portion of the data collection. The transcriptions of the first set of interview audio recordings and field notes did not occur until I returned to Canada in September, 2010, due to the limitations of electricity during the data collection period in Kenya.

Phase three of the data collection process moves back and forth between both data collection and data analysis. In keeping with principles of indigenous research methodology from Smith (1999/2006) and Weber-Pillwax (1999) to consider, validate and legitimate indigenous ways of knowing, it was important for me to return to Kenya following the initial data analysis to involve the research participants in a collaborative review of the findings and within a process of *external validation* (Stake, 1995). This return visit to the two schools and communities was important. As a *mzungu*, it was important to follow through with the commitment I had made to the study participants, to return once I had completed the initial analysis of the data. I wanted to be able to present my initial findings to them and to be able to get their thoughts, answer any questions and ensure that I had represented them and the data that I had collected while there. In a sense, I was seeking an *external validation* (Gay, Mills and Airasian, 2006) or *member checking* (Stake, 1995) of the findings, while at the same time remaining open to new or different interpretations of them.

Data Collection Methods

Throughout the three phases of the data collection process a number of different data collection methods were used including: interviews (formal and informal-narrative inquiry); focus groups; performance observations; educational policy document and field notes.

Interviews

Throughout this study, I used a combination of three types of interview approaches identified by Patton (1980, p. 197): the standardized open-ended approach; the general interview guide approach; and the informal conversational interview approach. The advantage of using a standardized open-ended approach ensures that the questions are worded the same and arranged in the same order. Asking each participant the same series of questions also helped to reduce the possibility of bias that could come from having different interviews for different people (Patton, 1980, p. 198). Due to the nature of this study in which numerous interviews would be conducted with teachers and head-teachers, having a standardized set of interview questions helped to maintain a focus on the key issues of this particular study. However, it was equally important to allow some expansion or divergence from the ‘interview protocol’ to allow the emergence of other data (issues or topics) that could contribute to a deeper understanding of the multi-contextual factors influencing the research question (Merriam, 1998, p. 75). Within the first few weeks of living in the ASAL and Maasai area of southern Kenya, I began to reflect that I needed to adapt the research methodology to adopt a wider, more informal and more culturally relevant approach to data collection and meaning-making.

The first few formal interviews that I conducted with teachers at Olapa PS had served as learning opportunities on a variety to different fronts. I quickly became aware of the challenges of language and of the lack of cultural knowledge that I possessed. As I continued to work on expanding opportunities for the participants to provide data, I was influenced the by the work of qualitative methodologists who use forms of narrative inquiry, since this approach fits well within the indigenous epistemological paradigm of story-telling (Barone, 2009; Christians, 2002; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006; Denzin, 2008b; Gallagher, 2008; Jankie, 2004; Zander, 2007). In order to increase the opportunities for the participants to share more of their own cultural backgrounds, stories and experiences, I wanted to shift the paradigm for a portion of the formal interview from one of *interviewer* and *interviewee* to one in which the interviewee could become

an *imaginator* and a *narrator* (Christians, 2002; Zander, 2007). Further, the use of a narrative approach as a way to share experiences and learn from each other honours both the indigenous notion of interconnectedness (Eldridge, 2008) and the ethic being put forward in this thesis of a globality of humanity.

As indigenous scholar, Gregory Cajete (1999) writes, in traditional indigenous cultures “story is the primary mechanism within the larger matrix of teaching and learning” (p. 55). As a decolonizing research approach, Jill Carter (2010) further argues that the story “is a container for knowledge, a vehicle of its transmission, and indeed a site of its production” (p. 2). Jerome Bruner (1986) has argued that *narratives* are the most basic way in which people give meaning to their experiences and organize their knowledge about the world. The narrative approach to research privileges an “agentive Self” (Bruner, 1990, p. 41) who actively experiences and makes sense of the world. Riel (2007) further argued that narratives “challenge oft-held notions of the status hierarchy of knowledge” (p. 149). Christians' (2002) notion of *critical moral consciousness* challenges researchers to move back and forth between theory, praxis and reflection in the development of research methods which will allow participants to gain and use their own voices to enable themselves and others to "move beyond dependence to live collaboratively" (p. 410).

I added two open-ended questions at the end of the formal interview protocol to create the opportunity for a more narrative form of inquiry in which the participants could create and share their own visions of the future. The final question on the teacher and principal/head-teacher interview protocols (Appendices E and G) placed the participants into an imaginary position of power and responsibility and allowed them to *dream* and give their own *rationale* for the importance of the arts in education: If you were the Minister of Education in Kenya.....and felt the pressure of the public to create the *best possible schools for children in your province/country....*what arguments would you give about the place of/value of the arts in public schools? The data that participants gave were expressed through both their verbal and non-verbal/emotional responses.

In order to deepen my understanding of the socio-cultural links between the schools and the Maasai community in which they were situated, I also conducted several informal interviews with Maasai parents and community leaders at their homesteads (manyattas) or in their villages (See Appendix A). All of these individuals spoke Maasai and most of them had little to no

understanding of English. In their work in cross-cultural educational research, Troman and Jeffrey (2005) speak of the importance of adopting contextually and culturally sensitive and flexible approaches to research that can facilitate data collection in the native language. They further assert that data gathered from participants in their local language should be “interpreted in the native culture and represented in the national and local policy and educational context in which the research took place” (p. 517). For these interviews, I hired a Maasai man, Stephen, whom I had been introduced to by Mr H, the head-teacher at Olapa PS. Stephen lived in the Olapa/Enkema region, spoke English, Kiswahili and Maasai, had taught informally in one of the primary schools in the area, had worked as a guide and translator in this region and had experience working as a research assistant. Throughout the duration of this thesis research project, Stephen also taught me a great deal about Maasai language, culture and traditional ways of being.

To gain a deeper understanding of the educational policy and program factors which might be influencing teachers’ use of the arts, additional interviews were conducted with arts consultants, district supervisory officers and educational policy developers. Specific program or policy interviews were conducted in Kenya with two individuals: a senior official at the Ministry of Education involved in coordinating the Kenya Music Festival; and a senior official within the Kenya National Examination Council. A complete list of interviews conducted is included in Appendix A. The protocols for these contextual, program and policy interviews are included as Appendices I, J, K, L, M, and O).

Focus groups

The decision to incorporate *teacher focus groups* into the research design at each of the school sites follows the calls by qualitative researchers such as Lincoln and Denzin (2000) and Christians (2002) to develop methods which illuminate and support a research paradigm of human mutuality and moral agency. Focus groups were held at both Olapa PS and at Enkema PS. Each of the focus groups had three teachers and took approximately 45 minutes. The group was given a copy of the Focus Group protocol (Appendix H) and I read it orally to them, as well. After reviewing the tasks that I had hoped the group could work on together, I became a passive observer, taking field notes and audio-recording. I remained available to clarify tasks and answer any questions. The first task assigned to each of the focus groups was to give examples of some emerging issues or concerns in their school or community. Secondly, they were asked to

select ONE of these issues which they would like to address using arts-based pedagogy. Finally, the group was given a task: Using the arts and arts-based pedagogy, create a plan to address this issue, with the goal of deepening the learning opportunity for students, teachers, parents and community members. The plan could include individual/group or classroom/school/community activities. Focus group participants were encouraged to make use of the ideas and contributions of all teachers. The open-ended focus group activity provided an opportunity for teachers to: reflect individually; work together; imagine possibilities for the arts in education, both within their own cultural epistemological traditions and in the current schooling systems; identify challenges; and to create a plan for future use of the arts, in culturally responsive and culturally sustaining ways for socially transformative purposes within their school community.

As Christians (2002) argues when speaking about both the potential and the moral commitment of qualitative research:

Human beings are capable of explaining what merits their obligations, and they typically do so in terms of their beliefs about the nature of humanness. In fact, moral commitments cannot be personal intuitions but must be nurtured through discourse derived from and shared by the community. Agreements and disputes about values can be articulated and sifted. In these terms, qualitative researchers act morally when their accounts enable those studied to specify the character and identity of their moral instincts and work them out in community formation. (p. 410)

During the Focus Groups, data was collected using a combination of video and audio recording and also through field notes. Following the introduction of the tasks within each of the Focus Groups, I remained as an observer and timer. Following the Focus Group, participants were asked to do some individual reflections in journals I had given them, on their own time and submit point-form or summary notes based on four ‘guiding questions’: How effective do you think the plan that was created during the focus group is? Why?; What are the key ‘learning opportunities’? For who? How? Why?; What aids would be available in your classroom/school/community to assist you in implementing the plan?; and What constraints could limit the success of the plan? The Olapa PS teachers found this journal-writing portion of this task difficult. The plan was revised to enable their feedback to be gathered orally and individually following the Focus Group.

Classroom/studio observation and performance observation

In addition to formal and informal interviews, I was able to conduct twenty-four classroom and/or performance observations to gather data about the pedagogical practices used in both the creation and the performance of various artistic pieces by the classes (Appendix A). Unless otherwise requested by the teacher, I remained as a passive observer in the classroom. While in attendance at any of the outside class or outside school performances, I assumed the position of audience member observing the performance. Observational data was recorded using field notes and sketches and through the use of audio-recording and video recording, if appropriate.

I was also able to attend and observe a number of performances that were done by the students at events outside of the formal curricular/instructional classroom time, at the school and in their communities (See Appendix A). In Kenya, this included the opportunity to follow the progression of a performance event from the local level through to the national level, in the context of the Kenya Music Festival. At these events, I was a member of the audience observing the performance and any interaction between the students and their audience, related to the performance, which occurred either during or following the performance.

Educational policy documents

In order to examine the influence of some of the additional factors which could influence teacher's use of the arts in schools, I also examined a number of key publically available Kenyan educational curriculum and policy documents. In particular, I was looking for data which linked to the factors which had been identified in the literature as potential aids or constraints for the teachers' use of critical-democratic and/or decolonial pedagogy and teachers' use of the arts such as: curriculum, assessment, teacher education, diversity, equity, indigenous or cultural knowledge, school-community engagement, and the role of education leaders. Additionally, I reviewed a number of global educational policy documents which recognize, value and promote the arts in education.

Field notes, audio-video recording and conscientization

In addition to formal data collection, I continued to reflect on and record my own conscientization (reflections on the links between theory and praxis) in my field notebook and on my BlackBerry. This piece of 'privileged technology' was incredibly important as I had

extremely limited access to electrical or solar power and I was able to keep voice and textual notes and reflections and was able to use it to audio-record interviews with participants to supplement my interview field notes. There was no electricity in either of the two communities where I was living, but I had purchased a portable solar panel which could tap enough solar energy through the day to enable me to re-charge both my camera and my BlackBerry. Again, these aspects of the research process that were challenging to me also served as period of deep reflection on the significant and metaphorical differences between Western, developed nations and this area in terms of access to ‘power’(electrical, solar, economic or political).

Data Analysis: The Process of Meaning-Making

Prior to outlining the operational account of the data analysis process, it is important to outline some of the theoretical, moral, ethical and ontological thoughts which were continually informing and challenging my attempts throughout this process at meaning-making. In acknowledging a conception of *data*, put forward by Betty St. Pierre (2009) which sees it as being something “vibrant, fluid and becoming”, Alecia Youngblood Jackson and Lisa Mazzei (2012) remind us of the potential harm that can be caused by research when the processes of data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting remain untroubled. The critical democratic and decolonial research paradigm for meaning-making, which I have adopted, creates an overarching lens through which I can interrogate my own research approach. Throughout the analytical process, I continued to reflect on some of the questions put forward by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) by asking: Do I see the data as being agentive? How does the data feel? Do any of my findings move through me or wound me or others? How am I representing the subjects in the data analysis? and, do I continue the colonial wounds or do I begin the healing?

Analytic Induction: NVivo

I began the initial process of data analysis in the Fall of 2010, after returning from the phase two data collection in Kenya, using a traditional qualitative analytic approach called *analytic induction* (Merriam, 1998). I began by transcribing all of the audio-recordings from the interviews and focus group sessions and combining them with data collected through field notes of classroom and performance observations and my own field notes of ongoing reflections. As I was unable to do any of the transcription work while in Kenya, all of the transcription work was done upon return to Canada during the fall of 2010 and spring of 2011. The initial process of

coding began over the summer of 2011. Again, I had started with a traditional approach of doing the pen and paper coding of the transcriptions and field notes and then using a process of constant comparison and analytic induction (Charmaz, 2005; Merriam, 1998) to identify some emergent themes. Being a visual learner, I began by posting large sheets of chart paper on the wall for each the major research questions and sub-questions. I used a variety of different coloured post-its to reflect the different roles (teachers, head-teachers, parents, supervisory officers, curriculum and policy developers) to enable me to begin to view themes arising. As new data was collected and analyzed, it was rigorously checked and compared with these themes, relationships were noted and modification or reformulations were made (Merriam, 1998). Given the size and complexity of the data set, a decision was made, in the spring of 2011, to utilize a qualitative analytical software called NVivo 9. This software tool became a significant aid for the organization of, not only the written transcriptions and coding, but also the filing, organizing, coding, synthesizing of emergent themes, memo-writing and further analysis of a wide variety of data sources including policy documents, photos and videos. During the summer of 2011, I continued to transcribe interviews and field notes and code the interviews using NVivo 9. After the analysis of each individual interview, I spent time reflecting on the overarching themes that had been previously developed, noted additions, discrepancies or further discussion items. I also made note of any relationships that seemed to be developing between different themes, both under the same research questions and also linkages between themes under different research questions. These notes were used to revise the themes and to contribute to the discussion portion of the thesis.

Complexity: Revisiting the Data Through Two Theoretical Lenses (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012)

My plan, on returning to Kenya for phase three of the research process, was to return to both school sites, meet with each of the teachers, head-teachers and other participants in the study to review their transcripts and the initial findings and to seek clarification and/or validation. I had only been able to complete the coding and data analysis for six of the Kenyan interviews prior to returning to Kenya in October, 2011 and had to continue to work on this when I arrived in Olapa, prior to meeting with the teachers. This process created another deep reflective opportunity as I was back out in the ASAL area of Enkolong with no electricity (other than the limited amount of power I could trap using my portable solar panel). All of the data

analysis had to be done with paper, pencil and eraser. Sitting out in the backyard of the deputy head-teacher's home, deeply embedded in the Kenyan/Maasai context served as a key element for both de-linking from a Western modernity context and for critical analytical reflection. I believe that the manual, written organizational process served to focus, deepen and contextualize my analysis. As I worked through each of the seven additional teacher/head-teacher interview transcripts, I continued to compare the data to the major themes which had arisen and made revisions. Throughout this analytical process, I also developed a series of additional questions to use during the external validation process with the Kenyan participants to help with clarifying and deepening my understanding of the data and contextual factors. Even though computers and qualitative software in some ways could speed up the process of analyzing large amounts and diverse forms of data, I believe that the experience of returning to the rural, remote environment, isolated from these modern, digital modes of analysis, and immersed back into the culture with pencil, paper and eraser as my tools for analysis contributed to disrupting and challenging the meaning-making process of the traditional process of analytic induction and coding. As Jackson and Mazzei (2012) have argued, there is a "messiness" to data analysis which must be understood and tolerated in order to open the meaning-making process to the complexity of the multi-contextual environment in which the data exists.

The analytic process continued into the fall of 2012, as I read and reflected on the work of Jackson and Mazzei (2012) in *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research: Viewing Data Across Multiple Perspectives*. Their approach to data analysis fit well with my research paradigm as it acknowledges the complexity and messiness of the process of meaning-making. Jackson and Mazzei's (2012) approach, which they call "plugging in" data, challenges the conventional coding approach to data analysis in arguing that data can be viewed through multiple theoretical lenses to deepen, disrupt and further open knowledge. In following their approach of moving from theory to data and back to theory, I decided to return to my data and to the emergent themes to re-think them again through my two theoretical lenses: critical democratic theory and decolonial theory. From October to December of 2012, I returned to the literature which had grounded chapters two and three and reviewed the data and the themes which had been developed from the original coding process through these two theoretical lenses. I then met with my supervisor to present and discuss some alternative themes which had become apparent while employing the Jackson and Mazzei (2012) approach. Prior to writing the *findings* chapters for

each of the case studies, I purposely made the decision to write the *context* chapters. In addition to aiding the reader's understanding of the situatedness of the data, this understanding of the multi-contextual contexts helps to connect the theory with the data. I believe that this re-visiting of the data has helped to produce findings (presented in Chapter six) which offer hope and critique around the possibilities for the use of the arts in education in schools in both the global north and global south.

Ethical Considerations

In conducting this study I followed the procedures required by the Ethical Review Board at the University of Toronto and the Ministry of Education in Kenya. Efforts were made to mitigate any potential vulnerability for participants who chose to take part in this study. Prior to beginning the research, I met with the Area Education Officer in Enkolong to explain my research study and to answer any questions. I provided each participant with a copy of the informed consent form, required by the University of Toronto. I reviewed the consent form and the purpose of the research with each participant, stressing that participation in this study was voluntary and that even those who chose to participate could withdraw from the study at any time. Interviews were conducted after participants signed both copies. I received one copy and the participants kept a copy. In order to maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms have been used for all individuals, school names and locations.

Methodological Challenges and Lessons:

As a result of the cultural, geographic and environmental characteristics of the location where I was conducting the research in southern Kenya, I was faced with a number of methodological challenges. The lessons learned from these experiences help to illuminate methodological considerations for future research. The first challenge arose in the area of language and communication. Although the official language of instruction in all of the schools in the region was English, many teachers and head-teachers had strong accents in their oral English. A combination of repeating responses, use of field notes and audio-taping during interviews and observations was helpful in clarifying the data and researcher interpretations. Additionally, for a couple of the interviews with Maasai parents or community leaders, research assistance from a local and experienced guide and translator helped to facilitate in areas of

language, communication and in culturally contextual research methods. A second challenge when working in this particular region in southern Kenya is transportation. There are no roads or directional signage in much of the remote ASAL region. Depending on the time of year, transportation between locations can be limited by extreme drought and sandy conditions or by extreme rain and mud. Frequently, during the rainy season, existing dirt roads and travel routes are washed out. Although I commonly relied on local forms of transportation, it is often unreliable during extreme weather conditions. Flexibility and adaptability in research design are needed. It seemed that almost everyone that I interviewed while in Kenya understood the concept of 'African time' and the lack of control that any individuals who had to rely on public transportation would face. The most common mode of transportation that I was able to arrange to travel between the two schools where I was conducting my research was called 'border-border'³⁶ by the locals. There were only three men in the area where I lived who owned a motorcycle and who might be available to drive me between the villages for a fee which often varied depending on the weather or the condition of the motorcycle. A third challenge related to water. In this arid to semi-arid environment, the presence or absence of water can have a significant impact on schooling. In times of severe drought, some schools have been forced to close due to the lack of available water for students and teachers both for drinking and for cooking. In the heavy raining season, which over the last four to five years has become highly unpredictable, possibly due to the impact of global climate change, travel can be significantly restricted, often forcing school closures. A fourth challenge was associated with health issues. The region in which the schools are located has a high incidence of malaria, particularly during the rainy seasons. Again, as a result of my positionality, I was able to receive vaccinations and medication that greatly reduced the incidence of contracting malaria and/or other health conditions common to this area. The final significant challenge was related to 'electronic/digital communication'. At times there was limited or no access via the communication vehicles that we come to take for granted in the Western world. There are no landlines in the region where I was working, and both cell phones and internet access have limited connectivity. In some instances, this reduced connectivity provided challenges for the arrangement of interviews or other meetings with individuals.

³⁶ A form of 'arranged' motorcycle transport in the ASAL region.

In addition to the methodological challenges listed above, I also learned a significant lesson in methodological design for research which aims to contribute to decolonization. It was not until I began the data analysis that I truly became aware of and clearly acknowledge my own complicity through the use of my discourse in the privileging of a Western (colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal) notion of the arts. Although none of my committee members had challenged my on my discourse of “the arts” within the interview protocols developed prior to beginning the research, in reflecting on the methodological approach, in many ways this discourse limited the teachers’ and my own ways of decolonizing our thinking about the arts.

The Experience of Being an ‘Other’ as Researcher

Getting around Kenya and Nairobi for me was always quite challenging (expensive, very slow/unreliable, dangerous). I wanted to try to use *public means* as much as possible. It was significantly cheaper and helped to facilitate a deeper understanding of the culture and context of the area where I was conducting my research. The fear and uncertainty throughout many portions of this experience gave me frequent opportunities to reflect on my ‘positionality’ as an *outsider*...or as one of the *Others*. It was not only that I was *White*, in a sea of *Blacks*, but also that I was a *Westerner*, in sub-Saharan Africa...and that I was a *Woman*, in the traditional patriarchal culture of the Maasai. As the only white person (*mzungu*) at the school, and in the area, I frequently found myself in situations where I could not understand anything that was being said around me and was unable to take part in any of the dialogue in those situations. At various times, I also felt and understood on some levels my ongoing processing of elements of fear, anxiety, ignorance and dependency.

As I read through and reflected back on my field notes, it is important to contextualize this notion of fear that I felt as I began the early stages of the research. For me, this *fear of the unknown* or fear of heading into a rural and remote region of southern Kenya had been based on *my previously constructed knowledge* arising from a combination of my Western education and an increasingly globalized media representation of Africa. The continued representation of many African countries, including Kenya, by Western corporate/capitalist media oligarchs as *deficit* (uneducated and uncivilized) and *conflict-ridden* (violent) has been used to critique, condemn, discriminate and create fear about the ‘others’ in order to rationalize, support and promote international aid or development agendas. As I was planning for my first research trip to Kenya in 2009, significant attention in national and international media was still being directed to issues

of corruption, ethnic tensions and post-election violence. However, as I learned throughout the course of this research project, this deficit representation of Africa and of indigenous African cultures, like the Maasai, fails to recognize the rich and diverse social and cultural traditions that exist. The experience of living and learning together in these Maasai communities over four years challenged me to critically interrogate and reflect on these prior assumptions and knowledge. Increasingly, over the course of the four research trips to Kenya, I looked forward to returning to the rich, loving and supportive community who expressed what Nzewi (2010) terms *humanity-consciousness* as they assisted me and made me feel ‘at home’. Each time I had to leave my Maasai community to return to my Western world, I felt a sadness which I noted in my field notes as being linked to “leaving this rich social, collective and environmentally-conscious way of life” and “returning to what I felt was a high-paced, technocratic, commodified and individualistic way of life” (excerpt from Field Notebook-Bck5-August 11, 2010). I grew to gain a deep respect for the knowledge and skills (ranging from those of basic survival to a broad range of other skills necessary to sustain their traditional pastoral nomadic culture and livelihood) that many of my Maasai colleagues and friends possessed.

These cumulative experiences acted as strong and poignant reminders for me to reflect often on the work of Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999/2006) and other researchers who have done research in decolonial or indigenous settings.³⁷ I was aware, and was frequently reminded, by my Maasai friends and colleagues, that I was seen as a *mzungu* (White person) and frequently heard this *term* directed at me as I travelled by public transit or through villages on my way between Nairobi and the ASAL area in southern Kenya. As I learned from them, the term, *mzungu*, is assigned to one who has *white* skin, and is generally thought to have any one or combination of money, power or privilege. This increasingly globalized notion and commodification of skin colour (whiteness) needs to be challenged and interrogated as it continues to contribute to narrow and superficial understandings of identity, supports the global capitalist agenda, and could serve as a barrier to the development of deeper social understanding and relationships within the research environment. For a researcher working in a culture or social environment, where social

³⁷ See also Abdi, 2006; Battiste, 2009a, 2009b; Bartolomé, 2008; Caracciolo & Staikidis, 2009; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2006); Eldridge, 2008; Hickling-Hudson, 2006; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Wane, 2010

and economic inequities are often glaring, the process of being *othered*, as a *mzungu*, creates methodological opportunities and challenges.

Throughout the research periods in Kenya, I frequently reflected on the work of Mutua & Swadener (2004) around methodological opportunities and challenges linked to fixed notions of identity in research. In their earlier research work, Mutua and Swadener (2004) had adopted rather fixed and polarized perspectives as either emic or etic based on their perceptions of themselves as being an insider (native) or an outsider (foreign) to the culture they were working in. However, over time, they realized that these fixed binaries did not speak to the complexity and the hybridity of their multiple and overlapping identities. Hybridity theory (Adler, 2004) argues that we all have multiple and intersecting identities. I would argue that throughout my research work in Kenya, I was both an insider and an outsider and that an understanding of hybridity theory helps to explain how and why it was possible to move back and forth between these binary notions. Further, it helps me to make sense of the challenges I often felt throughout the research process with what Mutua & Swadener (2004) describe as the "struggles and attempts to deal with the im/possibilities engendered by and inherent in carrying out decolonizing work" (p. 1).

This notion of the binaries of insider and outsider became apparent during the preparation for data collection in Kenya. Although I had previously worked as a teacher and administrator in schools in Ontario, Canada, I became aware, as I completed the External Research Protocol for the Kenyan Ministry of Education and met with an official at the Ethics Office in Nairobi, that I was being perceived as an outsider, in my role as researcher. However, as I began to work with the teachers in the schools in the Enklong division, I developed a relationship with the teachers and head-teachers at both Olapa PS and Enkema PS in which it felt like they viewed me as an *educator*, like them, rather than a *researcher*, or outsider. Over the course of the research, while at the schools, I also volunteered to assist with teaching classes (using the teachers' guidebooks and engaging with the students in dialogue about the content being taught) and also with the marking of tests.

It is as a result of these privileged learning experiences and the relationships that have been built with the participants and the communities in which this research study took place that I feel a tremendous sense of challenge, fear and responsibility to try to present the findings in a way that they: portray the complexities and challenges that exist in the dynamic, fluid and

changing culture of the Maasai; and contribute, not only to the decolonizing project in Kenya, but also to the larger global decolonizing project for the purpose of challenging and confronting the colonial and neoliberal policies and practices which continue to privilege some and marginalize or oppress others. The words of González y González & Lincoln (2006) ring so clear in my mind as they argue that one of the premises of a decolonizing research methodology asserts “that from her or him to whom much has been given, much will be asked” (para. 41). Following the completion of the formal defense process of this thesis, I will be returning to Kenya to meet with participants, present the thesis and discuss with them strategies for moving forward with the findings and recommendations.

Chapter Summary

The chapter begins by framing the research study within the broader comparative international education research in terms of its cross-cultural, issues-oriented approach to the study of a glocalized response to a global issues, specifically, the glocalized response of teachers’ and schools’ within a rural Maasai community in their use of the arts, given the impact of large-scale, standardized assessments and a narrow notion of the arts within the formal curriculum. Secondly, it describes the methodological approach used, which draws from both case study methodology and critical moral consciousness. Thirdly, it outlines the five criteria used in the case selection: democratic nation-state; colonial and post-colonial history; global south; indigenous culture; and teachers’ and schools commitment to the use of the arts. Fourth, it presents the data collection methods which included: formal and informal interviews; focus groups, classroom and performance observation, and policy document analysis. The data was collected in three phases between September, 2009 and December, 2011. The fifth section describes the data analysis which began with a combination of analytic induction and coding to identify emerging themes. It later moved into an approach which Jackson and Mazzei (2012) call “plugging in” data to connect theory to data and then back to theory, using my two theoretical lenses: critical democratic theory and decolonial theory. Sixth, the ethical considerations and procedures are outlined. Finally, methodological challenges and lessons are highlight issues such as language; transportation; water; health; communication and the experiences of being an ‘other’ as a researcher.

Before presenting the findings for the case study, it is important to heed the arguments by Crossley (2010) and Acedo (2010) around the importance of context. Chapter five will present a brief overview of the multi-contextual (political-historical, socio-cultural (Maasai), educational, and arts-cultural) factors influencing teachers and schools in Maasailand, southern Kenya. Chapter six will then present the findings from the Kenyan case study.

Chapter Five

The Massai/Kenyan Educational Context

Concern for context, it is maintained, ‘penetrates to the heart of comparative education’ (Crossley, 2009, p. 1173), and this field can make a major contribution to educational research and future international development by demonstrating why this must be remembered in our complex, ever-changing and rapidly globalizing world (Crossley, 2010, p. 421).

This chapter will highlight four of the multi-contextual areas in which the Kenyan case study is situated: political-historical, socio-cultural (Maasai), educational, and Kenya’s traditional and popular arts and culture. None of these contexts stand alone, as Crossley (2010) has argued, an understanding of the regional, national and local contexts in which schools are situated can help educational policy makers to “more effectively learn from, apply or, where appropriate, challenge externally inspired agendas where they do not fit regional, national or local needs and aspirations” (p. 428). Arguing further, Crossley (2010) adds, contextually sensitive research studies can play a more creative and innovative role in helping to decolonize educational policy by “contributing to the generation of new knowledge, perspectives and understandings—and in doing so, help to shape future international agendas for the benefit of all” (p. 428).

The experience of living in Kenya throughout the data collection period of September 2009 to November 2011 placed me a unique position to observe what Eric Kramon and Daniel Posner (2011) have described as a “defining moment in Kenya’s democratic development” (p. 90). On August 4, 2010, over 70 percent of Kenya’s twelve-million registered voters participated in a referendum to adopt a new constitution which hailed the beginning of the transition to a new constitutional order. Since gaining its independence in 1963, Kenya has undergone what Nasong’o and Murunga (2007) have called a “struggle to democracy”. There had been a noticeable sense of heightened anxiety in Kenya throughout the summer of 2010, leading up to the referendum. This was the first major political initiative since the 2007-2008 violent ethnic conflict that arose following the disputed 2007 election in Kenya in which over a thousand people died (Kramon & Posner (2011). The educational context for this thesis is situated in the midst of this transitional process that Kenya is now undergoing as a result of the adoption of the 2010 constitution. This transitional period opens up both opportunities and challenges for the

role of education to contribute to the development of a stronger democracy and to the recognition and promotion of the diverse traditional cultural values of the people of Kenya³⁸ (Republic of Kenya, 2010b).

Political-Historical Context

On the eve of Kenya's Independence Day, the Duke of Edinburgh said the following to a people that were about to become free citizens of a new African nation:

Tomorrow a new volume will be opened and an independent Kenya will start to write a new story. The pages of this volume are still blank and empty; the story that is to be written on them is still in the hands and minds of all the people of Kenya. (Daily Nation, 13 December, 1963)

As has been recounted in the report issued by the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) (2013a), for the people of Kenya, the citizens of a new free nation,

Independence meant the return to lands from which they had been forcibly evicted and of which they had been dispossessed in order to pave the way for British settlers. It was supposed to be the beginning of political and economic emancipation; the start of respect for the rule of law, human rights and dignity and the laying down of the foundations and tenets of democracy. Many envisioned a newly invigorated, united nation. (p. ix)

This research study was conducted during a significantly important period in the political and democratic historical context of Kenya. I will begin with an excerpt from my field notes:

During the four month period (May to August, 2010) in which I was conducting the first phase of data collection in Kenya, the nation was preparing itself to participate in a democratic voting process which asked the question: Should we adopt a new Constitution? This constitutional reform process which had begun almost a decade earlier. Significant fear and tension surrounded the lead up to the referendum. Memories of a devastating and brutal period of post-election ethnic tension and violence which killed over 1000 people were still brought up in discussions in the media and in the schools and communities in which I was working. The cases of some of the individuals, including national political leaders, who had been charged with inciting the 2007-2008 post-election violence had been referred to the criminal court in The Hague and were still awaiting trial. The Ministry of Education was asked to end school terms early (at the end of July) in order to allow students and teachers to travel safely and return to their homes prior to the referendum. The Kenya Music Festival, which was scheduled

³⁸ Within the 2010 Constitution of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010b), both the Preamble and specific articles speak directly to the importance of education in the development of a strong democracy (Preamble, Article 7(3), Article 10(2), Article 11 (1,2,3) and Article (19)).

to be held during the week of the referendum, was postponed a week. Heightened security existed across the country, during the week preceding and throughout the day of the referendum, including the rural and remote Maasai area in which I was conducting my research. By the end of the day, on August 4th, 2010, many Kenyans breathed a sigh of relief when for the first time since Kenya's independence; a peaceful referendum had resulted in the adoption of a new constitution with the support of 67% of Kenyan voters. (Field notebook, G5, August 5, 2010).

In order to gain a better understanding of the current democratic transitional period in which this thesis is situated, it is important to begin with a brief political-historical overview of the colonial and post-colonial context in Kenya. For over sixty years, prior to gaining their independence, the people of Kenya fell under the rule of the British government. The recently released findings of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission³⁹ (2013) illuminate a brutal period of colonial control in Kenya between 1895 and 1963, in which the British administration "employed violence on the local population on an unprecedented scale" and was responsible for "unspeakable and horrific gross violations of human rights" including "massacres, torture and ill-treatment and various forms of sexual violence" in their attempts to establish their authority over its colony in Kenya. (TJRC, 2013a, p. vii). Upon gaining its independence from Britain in 1963, Kenya became a democratic state with the adoption of its first constitution, establishing a multi-party parliamentary system, and installing Jomo Kenyatta as its first Prime Minister. The multi-party form of democratic governance quickly began to erode under the leadership of Kenyatta, who proposed a national motto of *harambee*, which in Swahili means "pulling together". Citing the interests of national unity, both Kenyatta and his successor, Daniel arap Moi, used the notion of *harambee* to support their push for a single-minded, monolithic governance model (Hornsby, 2012). Over the years since independence,

³⁹ In response to the 2007-2008 post-election violence, the international community challenged Kenya to establish a Commission to investigate not only the issues associated with this national tragedy, but also to extend their investigations to include other human rights violations and historical injustices committed by state and non-state actors on the citizens of Kenya. On August 2, 2009, nine commissioners for the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission were sworn in. The daunting task of the TJRC Commission (TJRC, 2013a) was to compile "a complete and accurate history of historical injustices and gross violations of human rights (including violations of not just the traditional bodily integrity rights, but all of the aforementioned plus socioeconomic rights, corruption, land, and economic marginalization) over a forty-five year period" (p. iv). The forty-five year period that was the mandate of the TJRC spanned from the time of Kenyan independence (1963) to the time of the post-election violence (2007-2008).

Kenya has experienced a tumultuous political roller-coaster and a continual erosion of the system of liberal democratic governance espoused within its *independence constitution*, under allegations of widespread corruption and tribal nepotism (Hornsby, 2012). The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (2013a) stated in their key findings that the government of both Kenyatta and Moi continued to use and enhance the “repressive laws, policies and practices initially employed by the colonial governments” (p. ix) and that “when movements arose to advocate for opening up of the democratic space and respect for human rights, President Moi’s government unleashed a reign of terror” (p. x). As the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d) reported, between 1986 and 1997, hundreds of individuals, including academics and political opponents to the Moi administration, were detained and tortured because they were suspected to be members of illegal organizations. Although Moi was finally removed from office in 2002, the pattern of gross human rights violations continued under the subsequent president, Mwai Kibake (TJRC, 2013a).

The bolstering of the autocratic and anti-democratic style of leadership that Moi, and some other African leaders, have adopted may also have been aided by the international community. As Nasong'o and Murunga (2007) argue, there still exist 'anti-democratic forces' both internal and those external to the state, "especially the multilateral and bilateral lenders [who] have, while supporting democracy, also worked to bolster authoritarian tendencies" (p. 10). During the 1980s and 90s as a result of the global financial crisis, continued imperialism and the globalization of neoliberal economic policies, many countries in Africa experienced declining economic conditions. For many of these countries, including Kenya, who struggled under weak or corrupt governance models, the debt load continued or escalated (Murunga, 2007). In an effort to deal with these high debt loads and high global rates of inflation many of these governments looked to the international community, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for aid. As Murunga (2007) notes, the resulting dependency on what were termed 'structural adjustment programs' (SAPs) led to a compromising of state sovereignty. These global neoliberal policies were designed to "stabilize the African economies in the short term" and "re-engineer and ensure sustained economic development" (Murunga, 2007, p. 263). In Kenya, as in many countries around the world, as critical scholars of neo-liberalism have asserted, these goals have not been met (Pieterse, 2007; Zajda, 2009).

In elucidating additional obstacles which still exist on the road to democratization for Kenya, Nasong'o and Murunga (2007) note the need to continue to work on establishing a true multi-party system, restructuring the institutions of governance and devolving power from the presidency, "a process that all governments in Kenya, including the Kibaki one, have been reluctant to shepherd" (p. 3). Nasong'o (2007) argues that the role of civil society and a critically engaged public are vital to the democratization process in Kenya to help negotiate the "new rules of the game" (p. 19). In an effort to restore public confidence, following the allegations of corruption and violent conflict that erupted after the 2008 election, an independent civil service organization (CSO), the Interim Independent Electoral Commission (IIEC), was set up to oversee the development of a new constitution. The successful ratification of this 'draft constitution' in the summer of 2010 was another step in the democratizing process and as Nasong'o and Murunga (2007) assert has inspired a "new sense of confidence in ordinary people to make a difference" (p. 15).

Maintaining the engagement of the public, particularly the youth of Kenya, is vital to the continued movement towards democracy. One of the constraints in Kenyan history has been what Nasong'o and Murunga (2007) have termed the "gerontocratic grip" in both politics and scholarship. As Ali Abdi (2011) noted, African scholars such as Achebe (2000), Nyerere (1968) and wa Thiong'o (1986) blamed 'the postcolonial African elite' for their major role in "the continuation of colonial philosophies and epistemologies as the definers of education and development in the continent (p. 80). Throughout findings of the TJRC (2013a) report the gerontocratic grip and the continuation of the colonial policies of discrimination, marginalization and oppression of Kenyan peoples is clearly illuminated. The stories and narratives that fill this report highlight, in particular, three specific groups of individuals in Kenya, who became the focus of much of this state sanctioned systematic discrimination, abuse and oppression during the post-independence period: women, children and indigenous peoples. For these groups, additional forms of marginalization and discrimination have been identified by the Commission (TJRC, 2013b) included barriers to political participation and access to national identity cards, collective punishment, violation of land rights and the right to development (TJRC, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d). In each of these cases, the democratic values of freedom and equality were systematically denied. The key findings of the TJRC Commission are of particular significance to this thesis in that during the 45 years following Kenya's independence and its claims to be a democratic

nation-state, the "repressive laws, policies and practices" employed by colonists were not dismantled. In fact, the Commission (TJRC, 2013a) found that policies aimed at repressing political dissent and increasing the powers of the President continued under the leadership of all four of the subsequent leaders in post-colonial Kenya and have not only contributed to an erosion of Kenyan democracy, but have supported a system of "dividing and ruling" that "remain the cause and driver of conflict and ethnic tension in Kenya today" (p. ix).

Many of the key themes that emerge from the findings of the TJRC (2013) report impacted Maasai communities during both colonial and post-colonial history in Kenya, including: land and conflict; economic marginalization and violation of socio-economic rights; indigenous peoples right to identity and right to culture; and ethnic tension. For the Maasai, land is the basic economic resource from which they carry out their pastoral nomadic livelihood, provide for their families and maintain their socio-economic and political standing in society. Since independence, continuous tensions and structural conflicts related to land have affected many Maasai communities and in recent years, "many land related problems have degenerated into social unrest and violence" (TJRC, 2013a, p. xiv). For Maasai communities, and other indigenous peoples, living in the arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) region of Kenya, the marginalization resulting from colonial and post-colonial policies is often increased as a result of the increasingly harsh and unpredictable environmental factors such as extreme drought and torrential rains which make road access, travel and the provision of infrastructure difficult (Republic of Kenya, 2005b). This became particularly illuminating while I was undertaking the six-weeks of exploratory research in 2009, when extreme drought conditions affected the region. During that six-week period, two of the primary schools in the division were forced to close as it became impossible for the truck, which had been providing water to the students and teachers, to access the school. Students at many of the schools in this ASAL area had been asked to bring their own water from home, due to a lack of water at school. For many Maasai parents, the task of getting enough water to provide for their families was a challenge in itself. As a result, many parents began to keep their children home from school. For Enkema PS, one of the most remote primary schools in the Enkolong division, food supplies from an NGO sponsored 'School Feeding Program' were not delivered throughout the entire six-week period that I was present. Although the communities living in ASAL regions have learned to survive and adapt to many of these harsh environmental conditions, systemic acts of omission or commission by the state

which contribute to socio-economic marginalization further oppress certain groups of citizens. As the TJRC (2013) stated in their report, post-independence "successive governments in Kenya have maintained the same closed area policies as the colonialists preventing interaction with the rest of the country effectively marginalising the region" (p. xvi).

In addition to socio-economic marginalization, the TJRC (2013d) found that basic human rights, including the *right to identity* and *right to culture* had been systematically and repeatedly denied to indigenous peoples in Kenya since independence. Under British colonial rule, a discriminatory process of *othering* was deeply embedded in their system of governance known as "divide and rule" which was used "in order to consolidate their hold on the country, and to lessen the possibility that the African population would resist colonial rule. To that end, they magnified the differences between the various communities and regions, and stereotyped each community in a manner that would sow suspicion, hatred and create a sense of 'otherness'" (TJRC, 2013a, p. xviii). The continuation of these othering policies by the elite in post-independence Kenya has been cited as one of the causes of "the worsening of ethnic relations, such that, by 2007, long standing grievances erupted into an unprecedented scale of violence" (TJRC, 2013a, p. xix). Statements collected during the TJRC (2013a) inquiry showed that "indigenous peoples routinely had their collective identity marginalised" and that "national data classified them as 'others' creating deep-seated feelings of exclusion" (p. xviii). The predominantly one-party governance model which was promoted under the guise of national unity and harambee, has continued to repress a robust notion of democracy⁴⁰. For groups of citizens who had been previously marginalized and discriminated against by the colonial powers, the form of ethnically privileged and hierarchical governance structure that has existed in post-independence Kenya, continues to contribute to the oppression and subjugation of these groups (TJRC, 2013c).

With the ousting of President Moi, in 2002, a new era in the slow and tenuous move towards the rebuilding of a democratic state began. As was noted in the report from the TJRC (2013a), "at least from 2003, the state has more often than not respected citizens' freedom of expression, assembly and the right to association" (p. xii). These small steps toward the

⁴⁰ See the work of Chantal Mouffe (2000) in which she discusses the notion of *agonistic pluralism* within a model of democracy designed to contribute to mobilize passions towards democratic designs.

principles of democratic freedom and equality have been attributed to the "many years of activism and struggle against dictatorship and state repression or violence" (TJRC, 2013a p. xii). During this period of time, work began on the drafting of a new constitution which has further paved the way back towards the liberal democratic values and principles included in the independence constitution. Although the 2010 constitution has made some significant steps in the move towards democratization in Kenya through its added provisions aimed at limiting the powers of the President, devolving powers to the newly established country-system, and "securing an efficient legal framework for the protection and promotion of the rights of minorities and indigenous people", it will require "statutory and institutional mechanisms for the realisation of these objectives" (TJRC, 2013a, p. xviii).

In the Forward to the TJRC (2013a) report, the commissioners acknowledge that they believe, based on the statements and personal narratives they have gathered and read over the four year span of the TJRC that "there is a hunger, a desire, even a demand for the injustices of the past to be addressed so that those individuals who have borne the brunt of those injustices, and the nation as a whole, may move on" (p. iii). There is an ever-pressing need for a more transparent, accountable and democratic system of governance in Kenya. At the same time, there are both rights and responsibilities for citizens within a robust democracy to become active and engaged in the process of democracy. The vision of a new, free and united Kenya that was promoted during the speech by the Duke of Edinburgh on the eve of Independence, in 1963, has continued to remain a distant dream for many Kenyans. Since that day, deeply rooted ethnic and regional divisions continue to exist fueled over the years by feelings of distrust and anger at the policies and practices adopted by successive political leaders and governance institutions. The findings of the TJRC (2013a) paint a picture of a long and slow process of reconciliation in order to begin to heal the "painful memories" of violations and historical injustices which many feel have neither been fully acknowledged nor sufficiently addressed. As Kenya continues to move forward in its steps towards both reconciliation and democratization, following the successful adoption of a new constitution (August, 2010) and the peaceful election of a new President (March, 2013), perhaps some of the emerging findings from the report of the TJRC (2013a) can be incorporated into policy and program initiatives within the Kenyan Ministry of Education to continue to heal and to promote the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary for a robust

democracy which values and promotes inclusion, pluriversality and critical and creative engagement for the purpose of political, economic and social transformation.

Socio-Cultural (Maasai) Context

For centuries, prior to the arrival of the colonists, the Maasai, like many of the other 42 traditional ethnic/indigenous tribes in Kenya had developed their own unique cultural identity with a social, economic and educational structure (Kiplang'at & Lagat, 2009). The Maasai have traditionally been, and many continue to be semi-nomadic pastoralists living in scattered settlements in the Rift Valley of Kenya (Figure 3).

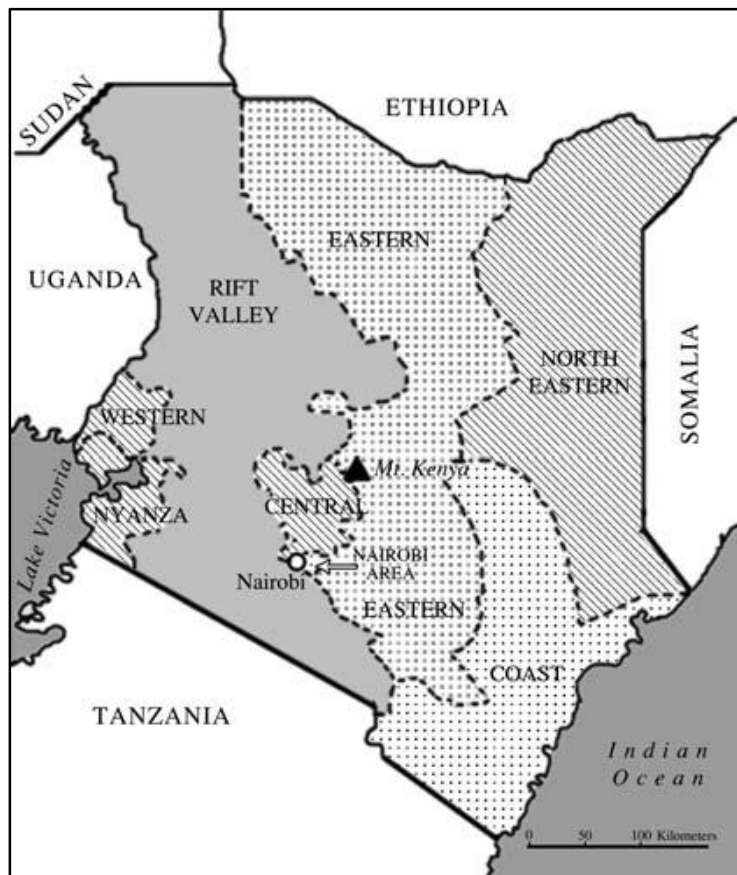


Figure 3. Map of Kenya (indicating its 8 provinces). Research sites were located in the southern area of the Rift Valley province, within 15 km of the Tanzanian border.

Currently numbering approximately 1.5 million in Kenya, many Maasai still herd and follow their cattle on seasonal migrations (Bonini, 2006). The culture and traditions of the Maasai have been both reified (as a unique, powerful and colourful tribe by the tourism industry) or

condemned (as illiterate and cruel savages by missionaries and some human rights organizations) (Phillips & Bhavnagri, 2002)⁴¹.

The challenges of the lifestyle combined with the challenges of the environment played a significant role in the social and cultural structure and traditions of the Maasai. In the very early societies of primitive times, prior to the development of instruments of production, individuals needed to work with their hands in order to tend the land and achieve the means to sustain themselves and their families. When the work became difficult, they began to call on each other and to work collectively with other members of their society. In the early indigenous cultures, collective units became known as tribes and larger units as clans. In those times, and still to this day in many areas where the Maasai live in Kenya, land was owned communally. As Masai & Munoru (1966) write, a very important aspect related to this communal ownership of land, based on indigenous ontology, is that this ownership extended beyond those living to those who have passed on and to the future generations.

Prior to the introduction of ‘formal schooling’ by British missionaries in the late nineteenth century, the Maasai had developed their own epistemological approaches which had as their goals the maintenance of a cohesive society and the survival of their migratory lifestyle (Phillips & Bhavnagri, 2002). Within the learning systems of the Maasai, knowledge was not isolated within ‘disciplinary siloes’, instead, it was linked to the land, the environment and the culture within a rich, creative, experiential and holistic approach for the purpose of social and cultural sustainability⁴². The content and learning approaches used were linked to age, gender and social roles within Maasai culture. For the young children, the elders who were largely

⁴¹It is important to note, as Engle’s (2010) argues that this *essentializing* of culture can have both positive and negative effects on both the culture itself and on individuals within the culture. For indigenous groups such as the Maasai, *strategic essentialism* has been used to fight for issues such as land rights and livelihood (Engle, 2010; Hodgson, 2011). On the negative side, *essentialization* of culture can also hide inequities and differences between individual aspects within a culture, such as those linked to gender, or can be used to create a representation of an ‘other’, such as occurred throughout the colonial conquest (Said, 1978).

⁴² This holistic approach to learning has long been adopted by other indigenous cultures and ancient civilizations as a way to recognize the important relationships between ontology, cosmology and epistemology. Both Karenga (2004) and Martin (2008) have written about this holistic approach within the comprehensive construct of *maat* in ancient Egyptian/African societies.

responsible for their learning and the passing on of cultural knowledge, skills and values drew on their rich, oral traditions and creative, inquisitive and active approaches employing narratives, parables, songs and riddles (Gacheru et al., 1999). Other symbolically creative practices that were embedded within Maasai traditional culture included: music (singing in the Maa language, percussive and traditional instruments); dancing; beadwork (for wearing and for decorating clothing or utilitarian tools); painting (face, body, weapons); ear piercing and sculpting; hair and fabric dyeing/coloring; dramatic arts; oration; carving (Floyd, 2001; Rukwaro & Maina, 2006; Turle, 1992). These cultural practices helped to create the traditional cultural identity of the Maasai (Kiplang'at & Lagat, 2009). These cultural practices played and continue to play an important role in passing on the history, values and traditions of Maasai communities and society (Floyd, 2001; Kiplang'at & Lagat, 2009). Elders socialized the children with the Maasai's cultural values of collective ideology, tribal cohesion, positive relations with others, respect for elders, and conformity to tribal norms and rituals. The close and dependent relationship with Maasai culture is reflected in the goals of their education system, which emphasize collectivity and focus on what is in the best interests of the family, clan, tribe, religion, and tradition (Raju, 1973).

Much like in other indigenous cultures, epistemology within Maasai cultures also reflected a close link with their ontological and cosmological beliefs and was deeply embedded with their notions of spirituality and the importance of humans and non-humans existing in mutual co-existence (Battiste, 2010; Omolewa, 2007). In speaking with one of the Maasai elders during my research work in the Enkolong area, I learned that many of their traditional practices and ceremonies continue to revolve around their spiritual beliefs: including ceremonies linked to stages of life (birth, transition to adulthood/initiation, marriage and death); ceremonies of thanks around food, livestock and sustenance; ceremonies of thanks praising the strength and courage of their warriors (morans); ceremonies based on fear and supplication based on personal or communal hardships or tragedies. Though his work in studying the art of the Maasai, Turle (1992) asserted that what he called “cultural arts”, including visual images and hand-crafted carvings played an important role in many of these ceremonies, as well is in other aspects of the social, cultural and spiritual life of the Maasai. During many of these social gatherings, cultural artforms, including music, dance, oration and dramatic arts also served as a way for Maasai men

and women to make sense of or help express an understanding of their natural world and of the human and spiritual relationship that existed between them (Rukwaro & Maina, 2006).

More recently, the arts have also become a tool for Maasai youth and community groups to begin to express their feelings and to challenge some of the traditional cultural practices, such as polygamy, early marriage, moranism⁴³ and female genital mutilation (FGM) which many civil society and human rights groups have called oppressive and/or violent (Hodgson, 2011; Tobin, 2009; Winterbottom, Koomen & Burford, 2009). Educational opportunities within both the formal (schooling) and informal (community) settings which facilitate open dialogue, problem-posing, inquiry, confronting of fears and oppressive practices, and locally developed, collaborative solution development can help to continue this transformative work. As I read through my field notes, I remembered a particularly illuminating lesson which came during a three day retreat that I had been invited to attend with a number of the young morans (15-19 yrs), teachers, elders and other members from the community to begin to tackle issues related to female genital mutilation (FGM) and rape. Following a full-day educational session done by a Maasai AMREF-trained⁴⁴ facilitator and two Maasai peer educators, one of the elders asked if he could speak. He spoke of the sadness and concern he had felt knowing that he had had his daughter circumcised and that his decision had been based on his Maasai traditional cultural knowledge.⁴⁵ As he continued to speak, the elder began to elaborate on his imaginings for a 'locally developed solution' to the issue of FGM. It involved training the *sergeants* (the Maasai women who are trained to perform the circumcisions) to do a “ceremonial circumcision....with

⁴³ After *initiation* (one of four life-stage transition ceremonies in Maasai culture which signals the move from child to adult), many Maasai boys take on the role of *morans*. In earlier historical times in Maasai culture, the morans were known as fierce warriors, protecting their livestock and homesteads (*manyattas*) from predators or enemy tribes. The term continues, although in current times the role of the moran is more frequently associated with protection of the livestock and less with ethnic confrontation. However, other cultural mores around *moranism* continue to be linked to a continuation of patriarchy, male power and privilege, social issues, such as rape, and drop-out from formal schooling. These issues are discussed further in Chapter six (Kenyan findings).

⁴⁴ AMREF is the acronym for the African Medical and Research Foundation

⁴⁵ From my field notes, the elder spoke of the myths he had heard and of the fear he held that omens would be placed on the woman, the marriage and on any child born within that marriage, if the woman had not been circumcised prior to marriage. He said he had never received any medical or health education around the serious short-term and long-term health risks of FGM and had never participated in open, intergenerational dialogue with educators and with other Maasai from his community.

no cutting”. The women would receive a 'certificate' of training, the cultural 'age-stage' initiation ceremony could continue and the girls would not have to endure the pain and health risks associated with FGM. The question was put forward towards the end of the *sensitization*⁴⁶ workshop, to the opinion chief of the age-group⁴⁷, about whether he thought that young morans would consider marrying a Maasai girl who had not undergone the traditional FGM and he said “yes”! As I reflected in my field notes, it was an incredible moment, but I wondered whether they would be able to continue to build on this sensitization work when they left the retreat and returned to their communities. Further, I reflected on the role that critical, creative and collaborative pedagogy could have in transformative education in the school and community.

Currently, this critical, creative and collaborative pedagogical approach for transformative education is absent in the public schools in the ASAL regions of Kenya, where many Maasai communities are situated. The structure and epistemologies of formal schooling in the Enkolong region, where I was conducting my research, continues to be based on hegemonic Eurocentric principles and policies and is very much in contradiction to an indigenous model of education (Madjidi & Restoule, 2008). As has been presented in the findings of the TJRC (2013a) report, much of the marginalization and oppression of indigenous peoples, including the Maasai, which began with the arrival of British colonists, has continued under the ethnic hierarchies of the post-colonial government. However, with the signing of the 2010 constitution, a new Bill of Rights and small steps towards democratizing the state, there exists some hope for the possibilities of imagining a new and more equitable and inclusive future for all citizens in Kenya. It is in this regard that the educational system in Kenya could continue to interrogate and

⁴⁶ Many of the participants (Maasai and other ethnicities) used the term *sensitization* when referring to informal educational initiatives aimed at addressing emerging issues in the community. This largely one-way pedagogical approach will be discussed in more detail in Chapter seven.

⁴⁷ In Maasai traditional governance systems, each age-group (grouped into 5-year age ranges) in a particular community, elects their own *opinion chief*. This individual consults with the others in his age-group on any issues affecting the collective good of their community and speaks on their behalf. He remains the opinion chief of the age-group throughout life, unless he loses the confidence of the group and is replaced. Despite spending long periods of time in solitary or small-group pastoralist roles, morans come together frequently to share information, build collective knowledge and discuss issues related to the safety and well-being of their livestock and community and to celebrate individual and collective events together through singing, dancing and story-telling.

disrupt this narrow and assimilationist approach to learning, which fails to recognize and value difference and diversity, and consider what Dei, Asgharzadeh et al. (2006) call “new approaches to schooling and education where by our differences and commonalities become the important sources of our collective strength” (p. 4).

Educational Context

Since gaining its independence in 1963, Kenya has undergone continuous and often politically motivated educational reform under a number of different educational commissions⁴⁸. Throughout many of these processes, the influence of international political and educational policy actors was often apparent (Urch, 1968). As an independent nation (and throughout many post-independence reform initiatives), Urch (1968) recounts the popular demand from Kenyans for an educational system which could help “achieve social change through an expression of the cultural values of the people” (p. 2). Further, as Urch (1968) argues, the central theme emerging from the Ominde Report was “the need for education to shift away from its British heritage and become Africanized”⁴⁹ (p. 3). For many reasons, this vision of de-linking from the educational policies and practices of colonists has yet to be achieved in Kenya, as in other post-colonial nations-states, partially due to the failure of political leaders to move away from these policies and practices and in part due to the pressures of globalization and the international community (Rizvi, Lingard, & Lavia, 2006).

Beginning in the late 1970s, the Kenyan government began to focus on primary and secondary school expansion. It encouraged communities to work together through a movement known as *harambee* to build their own schools (Mundy, 2008). At the time, it paid little attention to reforming its school curriculum to build a distinct national identity or alternative approach to development (Mundy, 2008). Mundy (2008) recounts that the government assumed an arms-length, laissez-faire approach and allowed an open-market approach. During the 1980s, a

⁴⁸ Some of the key educational commissions and reports since Independence in Kenya included the: Ominde Report (1964); Gachathi Report (1976); Mackay Report (1981); Kamunge Report (1988); Koech Report (1999).

⁴⁹ As Urch (1968) explains, the term “Africanization” sought to convey a sense of uniqueness and its most commonly used meaning arises out of the colonial experience. Urch (1968) writes “Africanization was to be a regeneration of that which was good and respected in African culture, a rejection of subservience to foreign masters and the assertion of the rights and interests of the African” (p. 5)

‘clientalist politics’ began to develop as politicians began to financially contribute to harambee schools in order to build political support and patronage. A gap began to grow between schools in wealthy communities and those in poor communities. In the early 1980s, with the global economic downturn, introduction of neo-liberal economic policies and educational reforms, educational infrastructure deteriorated and enrolment in primary schools began to decline. In response, the Kenyan government began to assert centralized control over the educational system. By the late 1980s, external financial pressures, resulting from structural adjustment policies, coincided with charges of corruption against the Kenyan government and led several donors to cease external aid.

During the early 2000s, the impact of global educational policy actors on educational policy reform in Kenya heightened. In response to the international commitments to Education For All (EFA) and the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), the Government of Kenya initiated its program of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003. As with many African countries that began to initiate educational policies aimed at achieving the goals of FPE, the focus of the policy was on increasing *access* to education (Sifuna, 2007). Within the first two years of the program in Kenya, issues began to emerge related to both *equity* and the *quality* of education that students were receiving⁵⁰. In 2005, with the release of the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 (Republic of Kenya, 2005a) many challenges related to equity and quality were highlighted including: overstretched facilities; overcrowding in schools; high pupil-teacher ratios (PTRs); inadequate teacher training; high cost of equipment and resources for rural and remote areas and children with special needs; lack of community support; gender and regional disparities; and health issues, particularly the impact of HIV/AIDS.

In responding to the recommendations arising from the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, the Ministry of Education undertook a process known as SWAP (Sector Wide Approach to Programme Planning) and developed a document entitled *Kenya Education Sector Support Programme 2005-2010: Delivering Quality Equitable Education and Training to All Kenyans* (Republic of Kenya, 2005b). The policy framework within KESSP 2005-2010 identifies twenty-

⁵⁰ Definitions and conceptions of *quality education* have been hotly contested by educational scholars and policy developers and are closely tied to differing ideological positions around the purpose of education (Acedo, 2012; Adams, 2012; Aikman, 2011; Dembélé & Oviawe, 2007; Samoff, 2007; Sifuna, 2007; Solomon, et al, 2011; Tikly, 2011; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Tikly & Dachi, 2009; UNESCO Bangkok, 2013).

three ‘investment programmes’⁵¹ based on the issues raised in the Sessional Paper to frame the rationale for “major reforms in the current education system in order to enable all Kenyans to have access to quality life-long education and training”⁵² (Republic of Kenya, 2005b, p. iii). Although KESSP 2005-2010 established a policy framework to respond to issues related to equity and quality, Sifuna (2007) cites a number of serious challenges facing Kenya with respect to the achievement of the neoliberal notion of *quality* that exists within the Education for All initiative, including “inadequate funding to ensure the provision of essential teaching and learning materials, appropriate infrastructure as well as a sufficient number of competent teachers” (p. 687). It must be noted that within the identification of these challenges, there has been no attempt to interrogate or critique what is being considered *essential teaching and learning materials*, nor *competent teachers*.

Since the adoption of the new Constitution in 2010, significant work has been done in the creation of a new educational reform document entitled *A Policy Framework for Education: Aligning Education and Training to the Constitution of Kenya (2010) and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond* (Republic of Kenya, 2012b). Although this policy document remains in draft form, it continues to promote the role of public education as “the primary means of economic and social mobility, national cohesion and social and economic development” (Republic of Kenya, 2012b, Article 1.1). As George Godia (2012), Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education in Kenya asserts, these proposed changes offer both possibilities and challenges for reforming and “modernising” the education sector by aligning it to the Bill of Rights, democratic principles within the new constitution and to the blueprint for national development, Kenya Vision 2030.

In addition to the key roles played by the Ministry of Education and other government agencies, the structured coordination of KESSP 2005-2010 also seeks the involvement of groups known as semi-autonomous government agencies (SAGAs), such as the Kenya Institute of

⁵¹ Particularly relevant to this thesis was the identification and inclusion of investment programs directed at: expanding educational opportunities in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL); teacher education; and gender and education.

⁵² Much of the language in this document reflects a strong neoliberal policy discourse, beginning with the vision of KESSP 2005-2010 as being “guided by the understanding that quality education and training contribute significantly to economic growth and expansion of employment opportunities” (Republic of Kenya, 2005b, p. iii)

Education (KIE)⁵³ and the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC)⁵⁴. These arms-length agencies help to develop and evaluate educational programs and initiatives and provide feedback to the Government. Another agency which existed as a SAGA at the time of this research, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has, under another Act of Parliament in 2012, now become an *independent* government commission with powers and responsibilities for hiring, disciplining and firing of teachers and for advising the government on matters related to the teaching profession. Rising tensions over the past two years between the TSC and the union representing teachers in Kenya (KNUT) reflect a continued the battle for power and control over public education⁵⁵. Although these tensions should be welcomed within a healthy and robust democracy, failures by the government to negotiate in good faith, have fueled the fire of union leaders who see an important role for the public sector in the struggle towards democratization of the state. As the findings from the TJRC (2013a) report remind Kenyans, the small steps forward since Independence toward the principles of democratic freedom and equality have been attributed to the "many years of activism and struggle against dictatorship and state repression or violence" (p. xii). The role played by civil society and a critically engaged public, as Nasong'o (2007) has argued, is vital to the democratization process in Kenya to help negotiate the "new rules of the game" (p. 19).

As transformative education scholars have argued, the educational system within a democratic nation has an important role to play in the development of youth to become critically, creatively and democratically engaged citizens and members of civil society. Within the first few

⁵³ Under an Act of Parliament, on January 25th, 2013, the former Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) became known as the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development (KICD).

⁵⁴ In 2009, under another Act of Parliament, the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) was established. The mandate of KNEC (Wasanga, Ogle, & Wambua, 2010) was to conduct school and post-school national examinations and conduct assessment activities including: "capacity building, preparing national assessment results and reports, and dissemination of study findings" (p. 7). The current focus of KNEC is pupil achievement in the areas of literacy and numeracy, however, there have also been discussions around the addition of "critical areas like Life-skills" (p. 7). In addition to coordinating the national assessments for the core subject areas required for the KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education) and the KCSE (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education), KNEC has been engaged in developing, conducting and disseminating the results of national assessments of literacy and numeracy at the Standard 3 and Standard 6 levels.

⁵⁵ Over the past two years there have been three strikes by the teachers in Kenya, one in the summer of 2012 and two during the summer of 2013.

pages of the current Primary Education syllabus (Republic of Kenya, 2002) for classes one to eight, the ten National Goals of Education are clearly articulated. The goals state that education in Kenya should:

- Foster nationalism, patriotism and promote national unity.
- Promote the social, economic, technological and industrial needs for national development.
- Promote individual development and self-fulfillment.
- Promote sound moral and religious values.
- Promote social equality and responsibility.
- Promote respect for and development of Kenya's rich and varied cultures.
- Promote international consciousness and foster positive attitudes towards other nations.
- Promote positive attitudes towards good health and environmental protection.

As written, these goals for education connect with some aspects of critical democratic and decolonial theoretical framework, as well as with some aspects of the conception of a robust global democracy, grounded in an ethic of a globality of humanity. However, if the goal of the educational system is to develop future citizens to become actively engaged in a robust democratic society, there must be a clear articulation of the need to promote the development of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes for critical democratic engagement and social transformation.

Curriculum, Assessment and the Arts in Primary Education

The Primary Education system, in Kenya, includes eight classes (Standard one to eight). Within the Primary Education syllabus (Republic of Kenya, 2002), the arts (called “Creative Arts”) are listed as one of ten subjects⁵⁶ that are to be included in the instructional timetable for all students from Standard one to Standard eight. The subject time allotment listed for Creative Arts is 3 lessons per week (out of 35 lessons for Lower Primary and 40 lessons for Upper Primary)⁵⁷. As stated in the syllabus, Creative Arts is designed to “integrate Art and Craft, Music

⁵⁶ The other nine subjects listed in the Primary Education syllabus (across all 8 classes/grade levels) include: English, Kiswahili, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Religious Education, Mother Tongue, Physical Education and Pastoral Programmes. Lower Primary (standard 1-3) should receive 35 lessons of 30 minutes each. Upper Primary (standard 4-8) should receive 40 lessons of 35 minutes each.

⁵⁷ Based on the data (elaborated within Chapter 6), students in the two Kenyan PS in this case study, received significantly less than this.

and Drama...to provide an opportunity for self-expression...and to provide an opportunity for the learner to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes which will be useful in talent development, economic development, self-satisfaction, entertainment, the development of creative faculties, good use of leisure time and moral uprightness” (p. 192). The *creative* purpose of the arts is clearly articulated within the syllabus, however, there is limited mention of the *critical*, *decolonial* and *transformative* purposes of the arts. The syllabus (Republic of Kenya, 2002) does identify some opportunities to utilize the arts to connect to other life issues stating that “the content has also been carefully selected to infuse emerging issues related to child labour, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS and integrity” (p. 192). However, within the Kenyan findings (Chapter six), the data illuminate ‘minimal to no’ use of critical, decolonial and transformative pedagogy by teachers with the arts, during the formal instructional time in schools.

Under Ministry policy, assessment for each of the subject areas, including Creative Arts, is to be completed and reported on to parents through an annual report card⁵⁸. Additionally, at the end of Standard eight, as part of the assessment criteria for successful completion of primary education in Kenya, all students must write and pass a large-scale, externally developed culminating examination. The examination for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), is based solely on core content material within five of the ten subjects listed in the Primary Education syllabus: English, Kiswahili, Science, Mathematics and Social Studies (including Religious Education)⁵⁹. For students in Kenya, the successful completion of the KCPE is a critical credential to enable them to continue their education to the Secondary school level. As the Head-Teachers at both Enkema and Olapa primary schools described to me, although a national policy of FSE (Free-Secondary Education) exists in Kenya, the hierarchical structure of the secondary school system in Kenya⁶⁰ creates additional equity barriers for many youth from

⁵⁸ Although all ten subjects are to be taught and assessed, the findings in Chapter six indicate that this is not happening in all schools, as a result of pressure to cover core material in the six subject areas included on the KCPE.

⁵⁹ For the purpose of this study, it is important to note that Creative Arts is not included as one of the subject areas being assessed on the KCPE.

⁶⁰ Even within the public secondary school system, Mr H, the head-teacher at Olapa PS, describes what he calls a “a hierarchy of secondary schools” beginning with local/community secondary schools, District secondary schools and National secondary schools. As he added, the District and National secondary schools employ some of the “top teachers”.

marginalized communities⁶¹. Admission to most of the District or National-level secondary schools requires the achievement of high scores on the KCPE. As will be elaborated in Chapter six, these systemic barriers continue to marginalize Maasai youth and contribute the social reproduction of an inequitable social, political and economic status quo.

Kenya's Traditional and Popular Arts and Culture: A Morphing

The arts and cultural practice in Kenya exist within both a formal and an informal educational context. In addition to the formal educational context, in which the arts are included as a subject discipline in each of the primary school classes, the Kenya Ministry of Education coordinates and sponsors a unique model, called the Kenya Music Festival (KMF)⁶². The model

⁶¹ As described in the snapshots in Chapter four of the two Maasai communities in which this research was conducted, many of the students facing multiple systemic socio-economic, environmental and cultural barriers which limit their access to and success in the formal schooling system.

⁶² Although the Ministry of Education also coordinates the Kenya Drama Festival (KDF), no schools in the Enkolong division were taking part in the KDF process. Teachers, head-teachers and other participants in the study cited reasons of inadequate financial resources and that music and dance were more culturally-relevant to the students, teachers and communities in which the schools were located. These findings are elaborated on in Chapter six. The stated goal of the KNDF is “to tap and nurture creative talent among the Kenyan youth” (Kenya Ministry of Education, n.d., About the KDF). In order to achieve this “obligation”, the KDF is run through the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards, a policy direction which reflects strong neoliberal discourse. Many of the objectives of the KDF, like those of the KMF, reflect elements from the conceptual framework of this thesis and point to the role of the arts in achieving the goals of education within a robust global democracy. The objectives of the KDF include:

- Facilitate the development of artistic potential and talent among the youth for holistic growth into responsible citizens.
- Give the youth an opportunity to develop positive character traits.
- Provide a forum for the youth to share and enrich their artistic experiences as individual Kenyans and members of the international community.
- Appreciate, develop, preserve and promote Kenya's diverse culture.
- Provide a forum for the youth to interact and co-exist peacefully as members of one Kenyan family.
- Develop the participants' eloquence in expressing their ideas and feelings so as to enable them communicate effectively and convincingly in their daily lives.
- Educate and create awareness on topical and emerging issues affecting the society
- Provide an opportunity for entertainment and valuable use of leisure time.

of the KMF utilizes the arts and cultural practices to link schools and their local communities together, as students, individually and collectively, develop their creative and critical cultural skills and talents. Performance and competition, in a wide variety of classes, begins at the local school-community division level, and extends to the district, provincial and national levels (See Appendix O). The Kenya Music Festival began in 1927, for the purpose of entertaining the European settlers and their families⁶³. When it first began there were only two *classes* (categories). It continued very much under that structure and purpose until the 1950s when the African schools joined. During the 1950s and 60s, the Festival remained under the control of a British organization and Mr N believed that the African schools were brought in “to *enrich* the cultural attraction of the Festival”. Following the independence of Kenya in 1963, the leadership and organization of the Festival began to shift. As Mr N reflected

By about 1968, the Festival really began to grow in size and began to get more expensive, so the White settlers did not want to organize it that year. But the Government of Kenya *did not want the talent to be stagnated*, so they came in and organized the Festival in 1968....and the Patron of the Festival, since that time, has always been the President of the country of Kenya.

The significant and continual growth in both size and diversity of the Festival, since the late 1960s, is reflected in the 2010 KMF syllabus. There are now more than 1500 different items or classes of competition which represent the pluriverse ethic, cultural, religious, traditional, modern, and ability characteristics or backgrounds of the Kenyan public. (Appendix O). Additionally, the Festival includes a full continuum of formal and non-formal educational participation from students in the formal school system (pre-school through to university) and from youth groups who are no longer in the formal system. This deepening and broadening of the opportunities for representation and inclusion of a pluriverse citizenry reflects an understanding that diverse creative cultural practices cut across all segments of Kenyan society. The growth and success of the Kenya Music Festival model has made it, as Mr N asserts, “the largest single school-based national cultural activity in the world. I don’t think there is any other country that has this depth of a cultural festival spanning from pre-school to university.”

⁶³ This historical background on the KMF was gathered during an interview with Mr N, in Nairobi. Mr N has been involved with the festival as a primary school student, college music teacher and as one of the senior administrators of the festival, with the Ministry of Education, since 1995. He was not aware of any formal historical record of the KMF.

The importance of recognizing, valuing, promoting, respecting and developing the rich and pluriverse traditional cultures of Kenya is seen by the inclusion of these goals, not only within the objectives of the Kenya Music Festival⁶⁴, but also within the Goals of Education in Kenya⁶⁵ and within all three pillars (social, political and economic) of Kenya's Vision 2030 (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Since its beginnings as what many have called the "cradle of civilization", East Africa has been home to a rich and diverse collection of ethnic communities. For pluriverse cultures in Kenya, as within many African cultures, the arts have played a key role in the development of their societies, in the creation of their unique cultural identities, and as a tool for community building, as communities come together to share and celebrate their collective identities. As Kiplang'at and Lagat (2009) argue "a people's cultural heritage is a vehicle of their existence, providing their identity and ensuring their livelihood. Music, for instance, can be a vital window for understanding and appreciating a people, their history and culture, serving at the same time as a prime vehicle for understanding and linking humanity locally and globally" (p. 2).

The preservation of Kenya's rich and diverse traditional cultural heritage has also gained the support of international arts and cultural policy actors, such as UNESCO.⁶⁶ UNESCO Nairobi continues to draw from international conventions which recognize the important role that indigenous communities can play in the "production, safeguarding, maintenance and re-creation of the intangible cultural heritage [of humanity]" for the purpose of enriching both cultural diversity and human creativity" (UNESCO, 2003, pp. 1-2). In 2011, in order to strengthen the capacities of Kenyan youth around safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO Nairobi (2011) sponsored a pilot project in which twenty youth from across Kenya were selected, mentored and commissioned to create artistic work around themes linked to social and

⁶⁴ Three of the nine KMF objectives connect with the purposes of the arts for democratizing and decolonizing education: promote the preservation of Kenya's rich cultural heritage; encourage creativity that will embrace emerging issues; and, provide a forum for cultural interaction that will foster national unity. Although it could be argued that a democratic and decolonial notion of national unity would see a value in pluriverse cultural interaction for the purpose of learning from each other and social transformation towards peaceful coexistence.

⁶⁵ One of the ten Goals of Education in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2002) states: promote, respect for and development of Kenya's rich and varied cultures.

⁶⁶ As was argued in Chapter two, the signing of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001) signaled an important connection between cultural pluralism and democracy, as it argued that "cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life" (UNESCO, 2001a, Article 2).

developmental issues around them. In the culminating exhibition, through their art pieces, individually and collectively, the artists advocated for issues around cultures of peace and non-violence, gender equality, sustainable livelihoods, environmental protection and social harmony. Although this type of arts-based project has the potential to contribute to both democratizing and decolonizing education, it raises a number of critical questions. How are the arts and cultural practices promoted, valued and used in order to recognize and sustain the symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging (de-linking for colonialism) that have been the basis of pluriverse cultural epistemological, ontological and cosmological beliefs? Is the focus of this development in arts practices around individual development or collective/social development? What is the purpose of the development of these arts skills (imagining local, national and global possibilities?; touching the intimate senses towards an ethic of a globality of humanity?; disrupting the status quo for equity and social justice?; development of democratic subjectivities?; social transformation?;) How are students, schools, communities further engaged to 'take action' through the use of the arts and cultural praxis?

Minette Mans (2000) has raised some similar concerns regarding both the context and policy focus with regard to the arts in education in African countries. She asserts that many African governments “face a future in which their countries strive for economic and technological development, yet struggle to retain the cultural identities which are best defined through their arts” (p. 9). She argues further that although governments have identified a ‘better education’ as a key element in the pursuit of social and economic development, the development of arts and culture within the education system has more often been seen as serving a *utilitarian* purpose “as exemplified by politicians’ demanding ‘cultural performances,’ totally removed from context and meaning, to welcome high-ranking official visitors” (p. 9). Mans (2000) argues that the cultural arts context which emerges from diverse local communities has a much deeper educational, social and political purpose, and that these purposes are being devalued by educational policies aimed at utilitarian or economic motivations.

In addition to the role that the arts and cultural practices have played within the traditional cultural context in Kenya, they are also deeply embedded within the popular cultural context (Nasong'o & Risley, 2009; Nondih, 2006; Nyairo & Ogude, 2005; Wekesa, 2004). The relevance of the popular cultural context in Kenya is poignant given its strong connections to social resistance, political activism and social transformation. Nasong'o and Risley (2009) argue

that "whereas under conditions of authoritarianism, incumbent regimes are wont to manipulate popular culture to transmit propagandistic messages to the people, critical popular culturalists often subvert such intentions to deliver aesthetically creative critiques that inspire and empower resistance against the status quo" (p. 70). In their work, Nasong'o and Risley draw from diverse global examples including Kenya, to argue that music and the arts have been integral to the mobilization and success of many social movements for democratic action. Further, Nasong'o and Risley (2009) contend that in Kenya, popular music continues to be a critical site for political discourse and political mobilization for social change. During both colonial and post-colonial histories of Kenya, pluriverse forms of popular culture, including song, creative writing, visual art, oration and drama have served to challenge the status quo and incite collective action against power and authority (Nondih, 2006; wa Thiong'o, 1998b; Wekesa, 2004).

It is important to remember that while Paris (2012) argues the need for culturally-sustaining pedagogy, other scholars (Abaza, 1993; Falola & Ngom, 2009; Gilvin, 2012) remind us that culture is not static, and indeed, embedded in both decolonial theory and critical democratic theory is the importance of exposure to pluriverse cultures to continue to grow and enrich your own culture. With new and expanded opportunities for global communication, networking, connection-making and "radical change...creativity has been tapped as a means of reflecting on, rebuffering and taking advantage of the new connectedness within a national and international social order" (Layton, 2000, p. 66). As new modes and media for communication technology arise, Layton (2000) has found that some indigenous peoples are using creativity through cultural artforms as a way of seeing and imagining the world differently, preserving traditional cultural practices, adapting/morphing with the times and creating new sources of economy for themselves and their communities which maintain a connection to their own cultural ways of knowing, being and communicating (Layton, 2000).

For youth in Kenya, the past decade has seen a groundswell in interest in new forms of popular culture which are morphing together elements of both Western and traditional cultural practices. One example of this is the recent growth of Bongo Flava among Kenya youth, a critical and creative musical style which combines "rap, hip-hop, R & B and traditional [East African] beats" (para. 2). As Quade, Martin & Ondego (2008) assert, Bongo Flava crosses political boundaries within East Africa, as individuals use this style of music to write and perform "songs society can relate to: politics, identity, HIV/AIDS, and poverty" (para. 6). Quade et al.

(2008) argue further that the creation of Bongo Flava “shows an empowered and proud face to the continent, young Africans commenting on their own situation using their own language, music style, and attitude and not limiting themselves to the safe, exportable traditional music and dance styles” (para. 58). In this regard, Bongo Flava challenges both the neoliberal capitalization and exploitation of traditional cultural heritage and also the hegemony and homogenization of Western popular culture.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I present a brief overview of four of the multi-contextual factors (political-historical, socio-cultural (Maasai); educational; arts-cultural) in which schools and teachers who wish to use the arts and cultural praxis are working. I began with a brief political-historical context of Kenya. The narrative within this context speaks to the challenges that the nation has faced, and continues to face in its “struggle towards democracy” from a British colonial-state to an independent nation-state. It also identifies some important steps that have been taken over the past five years, including the adoption of a new constitution and Bill of Rights, in 2010, and the election of a new President, during a peaceful election campaign in 2013. The socio-cultural (Maasai) context describes some of the social, environmental, ontological, cosmological and epistemological beliefs and factors that have helped to shape the traditional cultural identity of the Maasai. It also discusses some of the challenges and tensions that Maasai communities have faced under the impacts of colonialism, post-colonialism and modernity. In describing the educational context, the chapter outlines the impacts of colonial and post-colonial educational policies and the influence of global policy actors and educational policies, such as Education for All. Finally, the chapter presents some opportunities and challenges for the arts and cultural praxis in education in Kenya within both the traditional cultural context and the popular cultural context.

An understanding of the multi-faceted context in which the arts and cultural practice sit in Kenya will enable the reader to engage more critically with the Kenyan findings which are presented in Chapter six.

Chapter Six

Kenyan/Maasai Case Findings

This chapter presents the key themes emerging from the data collected from this case study which was situated in the Enkolong division of southern Kenya. Although the purpose of the analysis of the data is to attempt to answer the overarching research question and the three sub-questions, none of these questions sit in isolation from each other. As a result of the complexity of the multi-contextual factors influencing teachers' use of the arts in Kenya, many of the themes which have been identified cross back and forth between the research questions and often illuminate important relationships between them. The chapter is divided into six sections. The first section provides a case snapshot, including descriptions of the two school sites. The second section describes the educational goals and sub-goals of the teachers and head-teachers. In the third section, I present the teachers' and head-teachers' conception of the arts. . The fourth section presents the data which speaks to why teacher's in this case study choose to use the arts in and for education. The fifth section, which presents the data associated with how teachers are using the arts is further subdivided to explore the use of the arts: within formal curriculum instruction; in school-community initiatives; and within co-curricular programs (Kenya Music Festival). The final section explores the aids, constraints and tensions of current educational policies on teachers' use of the arts in and for education. In attempting to understand why and how teachers in primary schools in an indigenous Maasai region of southern Kenya are using the arts in education, it is necessary to begin with an account of the data which speaks to the teachers' understanding and beliefs around both their own and the national goals of education.

Case Snapshots

Description of the Sites

Olapa PS – Massailand, southern Kenya

The two primary schools selected for the Maasailand, southern Kenya case study, Olapa PS and Enkema PS, are both situated in what is referred to as the ASAL (arid and semi-arid lands) region of southern Kenya on lands traditionally and still primarily owned by the Maasai. The majority of the Maasai population, in this region, continue to follow a traditional pastoralist

nomadic lifestyle raising cattle, sheep and goats and migrating seasonally in search of grasslands and water. In addition to issues resulting from migration, the provision of formal schooling in ASAL regions faces other challenges including “frequent droughts, pervasive poverty and the increasing number of orphans and vulnerable children” (Republic of Kenya, 2005b, p. 129)⁶⁷.

Olapa PS and Enkema PS are two of 12 rural primary schools in the Enkolong division. As Mr Y, the area education officer (AEO) noted “most of our schools are located about 10 kms from each other, so with a normal walk, it would take approximately 1 hour....so for the small ones, this makes going to school very difficult”. These two primary schools feed into the only secondary school in the division, a boarding school build in 2004/2005, located in the central part of the division. Mr Y said that “before the secondary school was started, the transition rate of students from primary school to secondary school was only about 10%....but since its construction it has gone up to 20-25%”.

Olapa PS is the only *boarding* primary school in the division. It is located in a rural, remote area and lacks electricity. Although it has access to water from a lake in the neighboring highlands through a PVC piping system that was installed in the 1980s, there are frequent disruptions in water flow as a result of drought or clogging of the filter grates during the rainy seasons. Olapa PS had its beginnings as a day school, built in 1965 and sponsored by the Catholic Church. During the mid-1970s, the World Bank began a series of global initiatives that have been termed *structural adjustment programs* (SAPs) which were designed to "stabilize the African economies in the short term" and "re-engineer and ensure sustained economic development" (Murunga, 2007, p. 263)⁶⁸. Mr H, head teacher at Olapa PS, informed me that efforts by the area member of parliament and individuals in the community persuaded the World Bank and the government to consider building a boarding school in Olapa as one of the six pilot SAPs in Kenya. When Olapa PS was officially opened in 1985, it was, and continues to be, the only primary boarding school in the division. As with many of SAPs that were initiated during the 1980s around the world, both the World Bank and the nation-state have failed to continue their initial interest and support. As Ms H (deputy head-teacher at Olapa PS) said “the World

⁶⁷ A more detailed description of the multi-contextual factors (social, cultural, economic, geographic, environmental and political) have been included in Chapter five.

⁶⁸ The impact of these SAPs in Kenya is discussed further within the Kenyan context in Chapter five.

Bank stopped supporting the school at around 1991, teachers' houses were incomplete, *water closets* (toilets) were never completed, and parents and the government took over". However, as evidenced by the condition of the school and the teachers' houses, when I arrived to begin the research period in 2009, even the government support of the basic infrastructure of the school is limited.

Both Olapa PS and Enkema follow the Kenya Syllabus of Primary Education and conduct classes from Standard one to Standard eight. At the end of Standard eight, all students must write and pass a large-scale, national examination in order to receive the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). The school enrollment in 2010-2011 was 560 students with approximately half of the students as day students and the other half as boarding students. The school population reflects a largely homogeneous cultural and ethnic demographic, with over 95 percent of the students coming from Maasai traditional pastoral nomadic backgrounds. Some of the teachers at the school expressed a belief that, as a boarding school, Olapa PS provides some opportunity to increase diversity by bringing in some students from outside of the Maasai community. Mr H said "this mixing of the students helps to increase the exposure of Maasai students to students from other tribes to help them understand the rich cultural diversity of Kenya". As Mr H and other teachers at the school informed me, schooling at Olapa PS faces ongoing challenges as a result of persistent drought, related poverty, and what they term "negative cultural practices" such as moranism, female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriage and early pregnancy⁶⁹. At the same time, what struck me, as I read back through my field notes was the presence on many other levels of what I had described as a rich, social-cultural environment including "music, singing, drumming, dancing....laughter, joy, community, faith, hope, common bond, way of communicating, way of being (social, cultural, collective, community)" (Field notebook, YB, Oct 5, 2009). What had stood out so strongly for me throughout my time at Olapa was the significant role that cultural practices played in "creating connections between the school and the community".

⁶⁹ Traditional Maasai cultural practices and beliefs and their implications for formal schooling have been described in more detail in Chapter five.

Enkema PS – Maasailand, southern Kenya

The second primary school selected for the Kenyan case study, Enkema PS, was actually the first school selected. On my initial trip over to Kenya, when I was meeting with a number of the schools and head-teachers within the Enkolong division, I was introduced to the head-teacher of Enkema. The school is located on the edge of a small Maasai village on the southern border of Kenya. It serves as a day school for students in the tiny village and for the Maasai families who live in their bomas.⁷⁰ Many of the children enrolled in this school walk over an hour each way to attend school and then must return to their bomas in the evening to attend to chores associated with their gender⁷¹. In addition to family responsibilities, the absence of electricity and light, make it extremely difficult for students to do school work in the evenings. However, while in and around their homesteads, at communal gatherings and celebrations, traditional cultural practices such as singing, dancing, story-telling, beadwork and other crafts remain deeply embedded in the sociocultural and spiritual fabric of their lives. In my initial meeting with Mr J, the head-teacher at Enkema, I learned that Enkema PS had been the top school at the local, regional and provincial levels of the Kenya Music Festival (KMF) in two different categories (Maasai dance and Maasai folksong)⁷². Mr J, a Maasai who lived in the Enkolong area and was passionately proud of and skilled at Maasai cultural practices, particularly music and dance, told me that since he had arrived at the school four years ago, Enkema PS had also qualified for and competed at the National level of the KMF.

Initially, in developing the research design for this thesis, Enkema PS was to be the only school in the Kenyan case study. However, an unexpected situation arose within the first month

⁷⁰ Bomas are the traditional homestead that most Maasai families in this area construct and live in. The outer walls of the boma are made from thickly thorned acacia branches to keep lions and other predators out. Inside the boma is an inner 'krall' (protected area for the livestock in the evening) and generally between four and eight sleeping huts. Many Maasai families maintain a polygamous lifestyle in which the husband may have many different wives living in different huts within the boma. Frequently, there may be other extended family members sharing the boma, as well.

⁷¹ Gendered responsibilities are deeply embedded in the traditional Maasai sociocultural practices of most families in this area.

⁷² The Kenya Music Festival is one of the largest national school-based music festivals in the world. A detailed overview of the structure and organization of the KMF is included in Chapter five. Implications of the KMF model for education in Kenya is also included in the findings (Chapter six) and in the discussion (Chapter seven).

of returning to Kenya to begin the data collection for the thesis. One of the components of the research design involved shadowing, observing and accompanying the teachers and students at Enkema PS through the creation, practices and performances of their pieces for the different levels of competition of the KMF program. About two weeks before the first level of competition, the divisional (local) level, Mr Js family experienced a trauma and he needed to be with them. On the day of the divisional competition, Enkema PS ended up in second-place and another school in the division, Olapa PS was selected to move forward to the next level of competition. The events which unfolded over the subsequent three weeks will be described later in this chapter and will be re-visited in the discussion (Chapters seven), as they hold relevance to this thesis. As a result of the situation at the divisional competition, a decision was made to continue to gather data from both Enkema PS and Olapa PS and to include this data as part of the Kenyan case study.

School Organization

The school year is divided up into three terms, each is three months long with a one month break in between terms. Many students at both schools return to school over this one-month school break for ‘tuition’ (extra support work for remediation and additional preparation for KCPE). During terms one and two there is what the teachers term a ‘co-curricular’ focus. Many of the activities are promoted, with limited sponsorship to schools, by the Ministry of Education. In term one (January-March) the focus is on *athletics*; in term two (May-June) the focus is on *music* and *drama*; in term three (September-November) there are no co-curricular activities promoted to enable teachers and schools to focus on the preparation of students for the KCPE (or associated grade-level) standardized examinations which occur at the end of November.

The data in this study relating to teacher’s co-curricular use of the arts and cultural praxis is limited to the co-curricular area of music in term two. Although both Olapa PS and Enkema PS had participated in the past in the co-curricular drama activities, teachers and head-teachers cited challenges associated to inadequate funding for travel, accommodation and food. Teachers also expressed concerns around the impact of additional time away from the schools as a result of these co-curricular activities, for students and teachers related to achievement on the KCPE. I had also heard during the interviews with teachers at Olapa PS that they did not participate in

Athletics, during term one due to the same concerns around inadequate funding and the impact of time away from school on achievement on KCPE exams.

At the end of each school term, both schools host ‘Parent Days’. Many of the Maasai parents who may live or be tending cattle far from the school make significant efforts to attend this special day to re-connect with their children, to engage with their performances, and to meet with the teachers and head-teacher to get reports on their child’s progress in school. During these events the schools place an important value on the use of the arts and cultural practices as critical, creative, engaging and culturally responsive approaches to create awareness around issues in the community and nation and often to engage the parents in emerging issues around equity, human rights and social justice⁷³.

Educational Goals (“Expanding Capabilities for Engaged Citizenship and Peaceful Coexistence”)

Most democratic countries publish a formal set of ‘goals of education’ within their national or provincial educational policy documents. However, in addition to these formal policy documents, teachers’ own perceptions of the purpose of education are often influenced by a complex collection of local, provincial/national and global influences. . Within the opening pages of the Kenyan Primary Education syllabus, the ten “National Goals of Education” are clearly articulated⁷⁴. The data from interviews with teachers and head-teachers at both Olapa and Enkema PS reflected a strong collective focus on what I have grouped together as one overarching *goal of education*: the development of citizens who can contribute to their society (economically, politically, and socially). There was a strong belief among the participants that when they spoke of education, they saw a vital role for both formal and informal education in achieving these goals. Within this overarching goal of education, the data can be further divided into three *sub-goals*. The first sub-goal can be described as ‘helping students gain *knowledge*’; the second sub-goal as ‘helping students develop a *diverse set of skills*’; and the third sub-goal as ‘helping students develop attitudes/values/dispositions to live together in *peaceful co-existence*’.

⁷³ The use of the arts and cultural practices at Parent Days will be discussed in more detail in the sections which speak to why and how teachers are using the arts.

⁷⁴ The National Goals of Education in Kenya are outlined in Chapter five.

As they began to expand on the *first sub-goal*, it became apparent through the data that the goal of helping students gain knowledge was linked not only to curricular knowledge to help students be successful on the KCPE, but also to knowledge around what has been called a “curriculum of life” (Portelli & Vibert, 2002). Teachers and head-teachers at both schools spoke of the importance of learning about and addressing emerging issues from the community and culture, particularly issues of social justice and rights. When asked to comment on the type of knowledge, skills and values that the educational system should promote, many of the teachers cited the importance of going beyond the ‘formal curriculum’ to provide education that could help students critically examine their own culture in order to begin to facilitate social change for a more equitable and socially just society. When asked what she hoped students would learn or gain from their educational experiences, Ms A, the deputy head-teacher at Olapa PS, responded “I would hope that they would be able to understand the negative cultural practices that affect their education. For example, early marriages, FMG, gender roles...that bring about the oppression of girls...that they can learn to love each other and appreciate each other, irrespective of their gender. They will also learn to practice health habits, positive health habits. When they learn to appreciate themselves, they appreciate each other”.

With respect to the *second sub-goal* the vast majority of teachers spoke about the importance of helping students develop a diverse set of skills (including the development of unique talents; self-dependence and self-reliance; collective social and communication skills; creative and critical thinking skills; and practical skills). As Mr H, the head-teacher at Olapa PS argued

Everyone is talented in different areas. Like in music, if children are growing up knowing music, they could get a job in the music industry and make money...perhaps in a studio, making a music video or CD. Then, there is also drawing or carving. The students could become artist and make money are develop a career doing drawing or painting or making sculptures. Our education system needs to encourage self-reliance....so they should be using music, dancing and arts to create a form of self-employment...because, you know, today in Kenya, we don't have jobs....there are no jobs...and we need to help them develop skills to find one....because in Kenya there are so many unemployed graduates...and these arts can help them!!

Ms H, a primary teacher at Olapa PS, includes the importance of developing *practical skills* and skills that are culturally-relevant and culturally-sustainable. She makes the connection

between skill development in the classroom and extracurricular skill development for school-community events and the Kenya Music Festival.

The focus becomes more on *practical skills*....but also things like beadwork, face painting...these are also activities that the children enjoy. When they are doing something they understand, the same knowledge that they are getting in the classroom can be transformed into practical knowledge that they can be using out in the community. They are not just ‘face painting’ ...they are learning particular patterns that are traditionally used in their communities (particularly in the costumes that are being made for the dances and folksongs).

Mr K believes that in addition to providing different ways for students to engage with emerging issues in the community, the use of an ‘arts-based approach’ can also help develop a broader skill-set in students which recognizes their gifts and talents. When asked what he hoped students would learn/gain from these arts-based opportunities, Mr K replied:

I’ll talk about skills and concepts...through an arts-based approach for addressing emerging issues, these children can really acquire diverse skills that will really help them in the future. Actually we want to develop children who can be self-dependent...and can acquire skills that they can use in the future. Yes, yes, we can actually have a child who can be self-reliant. Because you know, the future these days...in Kenya, job chances are slim.

Ms H pushes further to assert that the recognition and development of a broader range of skills and talents does not only help the individual, but can also benefit the community and society. She uses a narrative to describe a response to someone who might have been her “guardian, teacher or teacher-in-charge” who was pushing her towards a career field in mathematics which did not match her skills and talents. Ms H responds:

I’m not good at calculation...but I’m good at singing...come on...give me a chance...I want to sing!! When I sing, then I communicate...I sing my heart out! I get the fulfillment that I am looking for! ...and then my audience gets educated...my audience gets fulfilled...they feel happy...and they relieve their stress...by the end of the day, everybody becomes healthy!

Like many of the teachers interviewed, Mr H believed that the development of a broad range of skills and talents could help students contribute to their families and communities in the future. As Mr H further argued, a failure to recognize and develop the diverse skills and talents of students “could limit or kill their talents and creativity! It will also reduce their opportunities for future employment...& hence, lead to poverty”.

When asked what they felt their role as a teacher was in helping students learn, many teachers expressed a belief that it was important to recognize and develop the unique talents of individual students so that they could contribute to helping others in their communities. This perception of the role of the teacher echoes elements reflected in the literature on both the indigenous Maasai socialist traditional values of education and on the democratic purposes of education. Ms A said

My role as a teacher is in helping children discover their talents...and put their talents in use....by helping others in school and by helping others in the community. Helping them to realize themselves as individuals and to contribute in their day to day life in society in general and to others, in particular. My role as a teacher is also to mold a responsible and reliable individual who will go out into society.

However, at the same time, Ms A's understanding of the purpose of education reflects an instrumental or economic purpose in which skills or capabilities development is seen to enhance future career opportunities. She adds further, "you know the *product of the school* is the *society of tomorrow*.....it is in school where we mold the society of tomorrow...the kind of *product we produce*.....the *student!* We are also helping them to succeed in their academics, so that in the future they can be *self-sufficient*. *Guiding and counseling* them to be able to understand their *future careers!*"

The data showed a strong agreement from participants around a *third sub-goal* for education which in drawing from some of the comments, I have termed "learning to live together in peaceful coexistence". After telling me about some of the situations that were happening in the country during the post-election violence in 2007, Ms H said "you know, the kids were affected and they were frightened....they may be young, but they could see and they could think and they were affected by what was going on." In underscoring her belief that one of the purposes of education is to promote peaceful coexistence, Ms H added "We're all Kenyans. These kids, when they come to school.....you teach them to understand about diverse beliefs...and that the difference in our beliefs should not be a cause for violence." For many of the other teachers, who had lived through experiences of ethnic tensions and violence within Kenya over the past two decades, their comments reflected what they saw as an important role for education to: help unify the country through nationalistic objectives; build 'moral' values; develop an understanding of different beliefs; and promote, value and celebrate rich and diverse cultural identity and heritage.

How do Teachers Understand their Conception of the “Arts”?

The conception of the arts emerging from the data in this case study reflects a combination of influences from traditional Maasai cultural practice, colonial-Eurocentric notions and neoliberal notions of the arts. Teachers and head-teachers at these two schools continued to maintain strong connections to their local cultural communities and hence, their notions of the arts and cultural practices reflect their experiences and understanding of the rich cultural traditions of Maasai and other Kenyan ethnic groups, represented by the teachers and other participants in this study. Many of the Maasai teachers continued to maintain a homestead, or *manyatta*, in the region in which these two schools are located and returned home to their communities and traditional pastoralist livelihoods on school breaks. Teachers of other Kenyan ethnic backgrounds, also returned home to their cultural communities in different parts of Kenya over the school breaks. In addition to these prior and continuing experiences in diverse Kenyan cultural traditions and practices, participants’ conceptions reflected the influence of a strong school-community cultural relationship. At both schools, there was a strong community influence through the school management committee, community leaders and parents and a distinct presence of Maasai culture in all school-community events. Even though many of the students’ parents continued to follow a traditional nomadic pastoralist livelihood, cultural traditions and practices were maintained by members of the extended family and community. During end-of-term and end-of-school year Parent’s days, the influx of parents reflected the strong interest and connection that existed between the schools and the cultural community.

However, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter seven, a distinct predominance of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal influences on teachers’ conceptions of “the arts” and on their understanding of their use of the arts appears throughout each of the sub-sections in the chapter. Even though all of the participants maintained strong connections to the local community and to their own cultural communities, they had all received their formal education, including education in the arts, since the early 1970s, under primary, secondary and tertiary education systems which largely followed colonial-Eurocentric educational policies and pedagogical approaches. The current primary education syllabus which teachers are following was revised in 2002.

Within the formal curriculum in the Primary Education syllabus, the arts exist as one of ten core subjects called “Creative Arts”.⁷⁵ Although teachers spoke passionately about the importance of the arts in education and their use of the arts in their teaching, observational data from both schools reflected minimal evidence of teachers at either of the schools teaching stand-alone instructional periods of “Creative Arts”. What stood out starkly for me, as I began my formal interviews with the teachers and head-teachers at Olapa PS and Enkema PS was their almost unanimous response to the first of my direct research questions “What type of arts do you use in your teaching?” Almost immediately, I would get “What do you mean by *arts*?”⁷⁶ I responded by encouraging them to tell me about how *they* saw the arts and about how and why they were using them in their teaching. . As the teachers and head-teachers began to speak about why and how they were using the arts, the boundaries, between formal and informal education and between what many referred to as “co-curricular” activities, began to blur. As they spoke about their use of “the arts” outside of the formal instruction time, the fixed, disciplinary notions of the arts began to crumble and the presence of many of the traditional Maasai cultural practices came to the forefront. In speaking about their use of the arts within the formal education system, teachers never spoke about teaching the ‘arts’ as a stand-alone subject or even as individual sub-disciplines. They did speak about using what they called “arts-based approaches” including: drama, drawing, coloring, painting, creative writing, modelling, building, manipulating, poetry (Mashairi), “creative artistic play”, story-telling and singing. In both schools, these “arts-based approaches” were integrated into other subject areas as a “holistic” way to: help students learn and communicate, create active and experiential learning environments, “touch the human senses”, and develop individual skills and talents. As they spoke about their use of the arts and

⁷⁵ Under each of the grade levels, Creative Arts becomes further sub-divided into ten to fifteen topic areas such as: picture making, singing, pattern making, ornaments, rhythm, melody, pitch, print making, metal work, sculpture, pottery, weaving, dance, drama dance, fabric decoration, graphic design, woodwork, basic building construction, brick making and/or performing arts.

⁷⁶ Although I tried to remain consistent throughout the data collection phase in Kenya, by using the ‘formal’ interview protocols as my guide for the teachers and head-teachers, I immediately sensed what I perceived as some uncertainty or tension around the conception of the arts, and the possible influence of my positionality as a white, Western woman in a Maasai setting and context. I had hoped that through the relationship building work I had done in both school-communities prior to beginning any of the formal interviews, that participants felt and trusted that I truly wanted to engage in a deep dialogic process with them and valued the opportunity to enrich my own learning about ‘other conceptions’ of the arts.

cultural practices in co-curricular activities and in informal education through school-community events, their conception expanded to see it as both an individual and collective, culturally embedded way of imagining, expressing, interacting and engaging. Specific examples from the data which speak to each of these aspects of the teachers' conception of the arts will be given in the sections which follow on "why" and "how" teachers and schools are using the arts.

Why are the Arts Used?

The data from the interview questions which focused on *why* teachers were using the arts in their teaching has been divided into three overarching themes: helping students learn and communicate understanding; developing skills and capabilities; and school-community engagement and *sensitization*.

Helping Students Learn and Communicate Understanding

Throughout this study, participants expressed a strong belief that the arts play an important role in helping students learn by: expanding pedagogical approaches to facilitate learning; creating rich and engaging learning environments; and providing multiple ways for students to express their understanding in both formal and informal educational settings. Teachers and head-teachers felt that the use of arts-based pedagogical approaches helped students learn by *expanding their teaching approach* from a narrow focus on written or oral communication in the dominant languages of English or Kiswahili to a broader approach which recognizes that students learn in different ways. Many teachers expressed a belief that as students begin to feel they are learning, their self-confidence also increases. Ms H, a Grade 2 teacher at Olapa PS, gave a number of examples of the way she used the arts to expand modes of instruction to include visual literacy, music and poetry to aid learning.

In teaching 'numbers'...I teach in a way that the students can 'see' the numbers so that they 'stick in their minds'. Also with music...in teaching the body parts...I use dance...they touch the parts that you're mentioning....like in lower primary...like "Head and shoulders, knees and toes..."...it becomes easier for them to understand. Also with poetry....in teaching about animals...like with giraffes....when you put it into poems...it becomes easier for the kids to understand....cause they can picture the animals....because most of the children have seen many of these animals in the areas where they live, particularly elephants and giraffes....when we 'sing about them' in Kiswahili, they understand...it helps to build their confidence.

Ms A, a Grade 8 teacher at Olapa PS, also spoke of the ways she was using the arts, including drama, drawing and poetry in Kiswahili, in her teaching, to provide different modes of instruction, other than through the use of the English language which many of her students still struggled to understand.

Maybe *dramatization*...sometimes to help make the subject more understood by the children...dramatization, role plays, poetry (especially in Kiswahili, we use poems)...teaching aids like *drawing* (especially in Social Studies)...you can't teach unless you use *charts* to make the children understand.

Secondly, teachers felt that their use of the arts contributed to student learning because it helped to create a *rich and engaging learning environment*. In describing the qualities or aspects of the arts which they believed contributed to this enriched learning environment, teachers spoke of their experiential, interactive, affective and imaginative nature. In describing why she has been using the arts in her teaching, Ms A's conception of the arts and her rationale for its purpose as a tool to help students learn touches on both the *experiential and performative* components of pedagogy. Ms A gave an example of what she calls *role play* or *dramatization* when she teaches Social Studies.

Social Studies is about people and governance and so on. You can connect the subject to the children...or bring a real life situation. You can let them dramatize things in the class. For example, when you want to show the arms of the government, that is the Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislature. Those are the ones that we have right now in our own government. To make children understand really all of them, you have to take a few children in front of that class and show them the composition of the Judiciary...the Judiciary is made up of magistrates, judges and so on...so you can put them there in front of the class to show them a real court system.

Many of the teachers believed that an active and engaged form of pedagogy could help students "retain concepts and information better". When asked why she uses the arts in her teaching approaches, Ms A replied "because they understand more, they learn more when it is done more 'practically' than when it is just done with 'theory'...and it will stick in the students minds and in their memory for a long time". Further, Ms A spoke of the importance of recognizing different learning styles of students, including visual and sensory experiences in order to help students learn. She said that she found that the use of drawings and colouring in Social Studies produced "good results" in terms of student learning. When asked why she thought so, Ms A responded:

Children learn more by seeing, especially drawings. For example, when we talk about the different parts of Africa and the types of vegetation, the climatic regions, the different types of winds....I have the students draw their own maps and use coloured felt pens....so they can remember.

In addition to aiding the retention of curricular knowledge, many of the participants in this study believed that an experiential and engaged pedagogical approach which incorporated the arts, particularly culturally relevant practices, could help to keep students in school. As schools and other social institutions in Kenya struggle to retain students, critically and creatively engaging pedagogies can help to attract and retain youth. Mr Y, the area education officer, noted “even in our other organizations, like in our Churches, they are trying to attract more people, particularly the youth, by allowing them to have Music and Dance...because they have been told that they might lose the youth if the Arts are not employed”. Some participants expressed a belief that the use of critical, creative and culturally responsive pedagogies, such as the arts, can also help to further engage *teachers* in the educational process and allow them to use teaching approaches which are more closely tied to their own individual and cultural ways of learning. As Mr L noted “through the arts the pupils are ‘actively involved in the process of learning’, which is one of the principles of learning...learning by doing. The arts makes learning ‘interesting’...so that people get self-motivated. It also enhances creativity in both the pupils and the teacher”.

Teachers’ comments about the contributions of the arts and cultural practices to the creation of a rich and engaging learning environment also focused on the *affective* qualities of the arts. As he expanded on the reasons why he believed the arts were important to education, Mr L, a teacher at Enkema PS, expressed his belief in the ability of the arts to touch the senses and the emotions and to “integrate the mind and emotions” in a holistic approach to education. Mr L said “when creativity is enhanced, we will be creating great minds because all of the senses will be put into place!” As Ms H, a teacher at Olapa PS, said “the arts are more ‘physical’ than any other subject. Through the arts they can hear, they can see, they can touch....they can ‘feel art’”. Ms H recounts a personal narrative which speaks to why she uses the arts in her teaching.

I’m quite interested in the emotional part of human life...the happiness, the joy, the sadness. It’s what makes human life. There was a poem/song that I learned when I was in College, when preparing for the Drama and Music Festival...that talks about ‘love’...that has really stuck with me....”Love is like a rose....life and sweet, every day and night....but when it gets old...it turns sour” *Ms H sings a bit and becomes emotional*...touches people’s hearts....when you’re communicating through art it’s about you playing with people’s emotions....you want these

people to feel the pain of this...you want people to see ‘through you’ these things that we’ve never heard of...it’s the most effective thing for passing on messages!...so that everyone learns...even in teaching...it touches the learners.....so when I do it effectively in my teaching...I’m changed.

This belief in the power of the arts to become a transformative tool as a result of its ability to touch and connect the mind and the senses was echoed by numerous participants in this study. During an interview with Mr D, one of the district quality assurance and standards officers (DQASOs) for the Enkolong division, I asked why he thought teachers in the schools in his area were drawn to use the arts in their teaching. Mr D described the arts as being *magical*, in the way that they could connect to and engage people of all ages and educational backgrounds by touching their “senses”. However, he went much deeper in his reflections, as I probed further by asking “what would the schools be like without the arts?” The comments from Mr D reflected similar data gathered from numerous other participants in the study who believe the transformative potential of the arts is linked to the uncertainty, excitement and aesthetic experience which goes beyond the intellect or “common sense” to touch something deeper which he describes as the “intimate senses”.

To me “art is life and life is art...they are inseparable!” It makes the difference between a human being and an animal...animals do their thing, the same thing, forever...but human beings have developed, have become what they are and are yet to become what they will be through art. So art is a tool for *transformation*. It is a tool for *information*, *formation*, and *transformation*....and we would all like to transform, form and inform for the better development of the world...Global Village with One Language...Art!!...You cannot afford to discriminate Art...you can dance to a song that you don’t know what it is...you can enjoy a dance that you don’t know what it is saying...and here is what I am thinking about...Global Unification...that Art is language that connects us, whatever ethnic background, whatever racial background, whatever denomination, as long as you have that sense of enjoying art. It is like that is because every human being would like to see what they have not seen or heard or felt and appeals in a very special way....and that is what art does. It keeps you guessing...and what you guess is something that you’ve not anticipated...that creativity within art...and that surprises and excites!! You don’t need to know the words, you just have to let your feelings open.....and when you say *common sense*, I think you forget that there is really something deeper called *intimate sense*....and that is *art!*

This interview with Mr D left me both awestruck and pondering. It had been so unexpected, as I had gone into the interview with the assumption that because he was a DQASO, he would likely be promoting more of the hegemonic globalized neoliberal discourses around the

notions of quality, measurement and standardization. How wrong I was. Mr. D's comments sunk deep into my being and gave further confirmation to my increasing awareness of what I would call an Afro-centrist (to contrast with Eurocentrist and neoliberal) notion of the place of the arts and cultural praxis in 'quality education'. Within his narrative, Mr D sees the arts as being a vital part to quality education through their individual, collective, affective and human qualities. Further, he believes that the arts possess some universal transformative power for communities and society.

Thirdly, teachers felt that their use of the arts contributed to student learning because the arts provided diverse modes for students to *creatively express their knowledge and understanding*. Ms H, who teaches Standard 3 at Olapa PS, believes this opportunity should be provided for all children beginning in the early grades. She argues that children have to be given the opportunity to discover and use their unique talents to be able to communicate messages to others. Ms H was passionate in her argument that:

Children should be encouraged to pursue arts from an early age (emphasis added by Ms H). Right from when the children starts scribbling and doodling...that's art...because a child may just scribble something...but if you can look at it through an 'artistic eye', you'll see what this kid is communicating. Because eventually they will discover what they are good at.

The participants in this case study held a strong belief that the recognition, valuing and development of creative and critical artistic talents would help more students to be able to contribute to their families, their communities and to the larger nation. Ms H argues that the development of creativity and artistic talents should begin early in the educational system "because often, right from an early age, a child may have a part inside them, say a 'musical part'....and if this part isn't nurtured, it just dies!!"

Participants also expressed a belief that providing students with opportunities to use a wider variety of creative and culturally responsive ways of engaging with, communicating and presenting their understanding around topics which are closely related to their own lived experiences can also help to build their pride and confidence. In describing a situation in which a group of students were given the opportunity to create their own dramatic presentations to address an emerging concern in the community around increasing numbers of Maasai youth leaving school prior to graduation, Mr Y noted

I remember one I time I taught my students to go and make a presentation about the issue of *drop outs*. I just gave them the *skeleton*. The students went and

formed groups and they were very creative in their work. I went and found some of the ones that were very good....they did a performance at [the district secondary school] for students and community membersand the students who presented were very proud of it....they were very proud of it because they owned it and they had made it.

The data reflected some differences in the motivations for teacher's use of the arts to help students learn between teachers in the early grades and those teaching in the senior grades. In the early primary grades, teacher's motivations for using the arts, such as singing and musical games, reflected a desire to find an active and engaging pedagogy which could help students learn and retain basic concepts, including learning English or Kiswahili. This active and experiential approach holds similarities to traditional indigenous active pedagogical approaches. Music and singing are still deeply embedded in the social and cultural practices of the Maasai living in this community. The rationale for the inclusion of poetry and creative writing within the curriculum, particularly from teachers who were teaching the senior grades, frequently held an instrumental purpose related to improving success on examinations. Ms A says that the primary education curriculum in Kenya includes poetry in the language arts unit in Kiswahili and teachers of students in the senior grades, especially in Standard eight, "encourage students to begin to develop their own poems in Kiswahili, as a way to prepare for that composition component on the Kiswahili exam for the KCPE".

Developing Skills and Capabilities

The second theme arising from the data on *why* teachers and schools were using the arts focused on the need for the development of a broader range of skills and capabilities. Teachers and head-teachers voiced a strong belief that the 'formal schooling' system valued a narrow notion of skills which privileged what Mr J, head-teacher at Enkema PS, called "academic work" and failed to recognize, value and develop skills in other areas. Mr H, head-teacher at Olapa PS believed it was important to "remind teachers that it is not only in classwork where the students can perform well". Ms H, at Olapa, agrees, adding that many of the children and youth in this region have skills and talents, beyond the 'academic work' that she felt was being promoted in Kenya. As Ms A added, the failure of the current system in Kenya to recognize and develop special talents leads to what she called "wastage". As Ms H adds

Like in music, a lot of these kids have talent, but they go to waste...because no one encouraged them...no one gave them moral support in their music and in

their dance and then we find that that thing just dies out...and by fault we find that we lose some very important people...you lose very important people in the society who would have been ambitious...people taking care of others through music and arts. You see that in most schools in Kenya, people are so much concerned about ‘academic work’...so someone will come and tell you that you are ‘good for nothing’...if you can only sing and perform in class... “what are you good at?”...so that thing kills the talent of kids! It kills the morale of that child. But if they are given support... “look here, you’re not good at such and such...but because I think you’re good at ‘this’... you can do your best and be somebody in life”...just give them the opportunity that they need...they feel ‘we are being appreciated for what we are doing’ and this gives them morale to continue building their talents.

As teachers began to speak about the reasons why they were using the arts, many of their comments and examples linked closely to the first overarching theme under their educational goals: the development of citizens who can contribute to their society (economically, politically, and socially); and to the second sub-goal of ‘helping students develop a diverse set of skills’. Teachers spoke of their use of the arts as a tool to help students develop broad creative and critical communication skills and to build their confidence through performative experiences. Teachers believed that the exposure to a wide variety of creative arts, including traditional cultural practices further enables students to “use and develop their own unique talents to imagine the world differently” and to “communicate these imaginings to contribute to social change”. When I had asked Ms A, the deputy head-teacher at Olapa PS why she felt the promotion of creativity was important, she added “so that they can come up with their own ideas in the future...and put forward their own practice...through creativity, the children will be able to bring out what is within them and express their ideas so that they will be able to help the society”. Ms H spoke about the importance of building the skills and the confidence in individuals to be able to critically, creatively and effectively deliver important messages to society. She argued that in Kenyan cultural practices such as Mashairi (poetry), the skills for effectively delivering a message go beyond reading the words, to include skills in oration and dramatization. Ms H continued to argue that effective communication includes not only the ‘words’ within the message, but “it involves every part of the body...all the facial expressions, the body movements, all that...they are communicated to the people”.

Teachers and head-teachers also held a strong collective belief that skill and talent development in the arts, including traditional cultural practices, had economic benefits. Participants felt that the identification, valuing and development of these talents could also help

to build capabilities to enable youth to gain an income and contribute financially to their families and their community. Mr J, the head-teacher at Enkema PS said that for youth in the marginalized ASAL region, the identification of talents in music and the arts could lead to potential sponsorship and opportunities to continue their schooling. Additionally, ‘performance opportunities’ created by the formal, informal and co-curricular programs can further develop talents and capabilities and enhance employability. Mr J cited an example

We have a primary school called []⁷⁷ Primary School...they have a majority of pupils who are very weak in class...so the moment they identify a child who has a great talent in the arts (as [one of our teachers] did with a boy at this school who was very good in singing), we take this child to represent at the District Level/at the Provincial Level...we sponsor him...and then he wins. If he wins, this is when he could get a sponsor to help him continue his schooling. We have some of the children who might have been performing poorly in school, but because their talents have been identified, many of them are now earning because of their music.

Given the significant economic and social challenges that the Enkolong region has faced over the past decade, as the result of lengthy and devastating periods of drought, many Maasai are looking for additional sources of income to support their families and communities. As the tourism industry continues to grow in Kenya, particularly in the areas of cultural tourism and eco-tourism, the Enkolong region has seen the construction of a number of lodges and eco-resorts. Teachers believed the development of culturally responsive skills, particularly those of traditional Maasai music and dance could help students gain employment in the local area. As Mr J noted,

They have developed and constructed several Lodges, where the students can go to sing, they attract tourism...and they earn money from them through selling and when they are spending. So Enkema really loves their art...because they know that as their children grow up, they are able to identify their talents and they are able to earn from their talents.

Teachers also believed that their use of culturally responsive approaches which promote, value and respect the development of traditional Maasai cultural skills and knowledges helps to: create links between the schools and communities; value and sustain Maasai cultural identity and practices; and increase student engagement in school. Teachers and the head-teacher at Olapa PS said that student performances at their end-of-term Parent Days addressed emerging issues in the

⁷⁷ Name of school not included to maintain confidentiality.

community “using songs, poetry or dramatic pieces in the local languages, Maa, or Kiswahili”. Mr Y, the area education officer noted that students are developing both creative and culturally relevant skills as they prepare for these performances:

They also develop some element of *creativity* because you will often see the students working on their dances and their patterns on their own and they’re the ones who are creating the dances. Even some of the costumes that they are wearing, they design them...also, the way that they paint or decorate their sticks, their bangles and their headgear.

Mr H, commented that the Chief and Maasai parents who attended these school-community events were “pleased that their traditional cultural practices were valued and being developed” in the formal school system.

Additionally, many of the participants expressed strong beliefs that the co-curricular programs which promoted and valued the development of traditional Maasai cultural skills were vital to the development of individual and collective skills and talents and also to increasing student engagement in school. Shortly after becoming head-teacher at Enkema PS, Mr J introduced a broad range of co-curricular activities which were directly linked to the traditional cultural skills and knowledge of the local community. Mr J worked with the students, parents and local community leaders to develop an exceptionally strong program in Maasai music and dance, including participating at the National level of the Kenya Music Festival for four years. Mr J believed there was a link between: opportunities for students to engage in activities which connected to their own cultural skills and knowledges, and increased engagement in the formal schooling system. He comments:

Many of the students who are doing well in co-curricular activities in my school may not be doing well in class (they struggle with the academic work...language, culture, etc.). However, we are seeing a connection between increased performance in the co-curricular activities and increased performance in class...because the students are now seeing that they are *capable*...and that they *have talents*!! It is building their self-esteem and their self-confidence. But it is important to remember that not all children are the same...children have ‘inborn talents’...some children have ‘talents’ for academics, some for athletics, some for the arts. What is important is that children have the opportunity in schools to develop these talents! It is important that these talents are *recognized* and *valued*. If these talents are recognized and valued, it also increases the engagement of students in classes/school...they come to class on time, they are eager to learn, they are more involved.

School-Community Sensitization and Engagement: Use of Culturally Relevant Approaches.

During interviews and informal discussions with participants, there were frequent references to the importance of the arts for *sensitizing* the community. This use of the term *sensitization* extended beyond these local communities and was also commonly used by teachers, community members, educational supervisors and policy makers at the district and national level when they spoke about the role of education in communities where traditional cultural practices conflicted with existing national policies. Ms S, a teacher at Enkema PS speaks of the use of the arts for “gender sensitization” in the Maasai community of Enkema:

The Maasai love singing...so we use songs!! This really helps to capture topics/lessons/themes. Even songs that are taught in a ‘different language’ (English/Kiswahili) are often very good aids to help introduce/teach lessons...the students love singing & dancing! By creating groups and mixing shy students in groups, it helps them to feel included and helps to build their confidence. These ‘mixed groups’ can also help when doing work in drama on ‘gender sensitization’ ...particularly in this community. When you have boys and girls working with acting and singing, it really helps to demonstrate that ‘what boys can do, girls can also

Teachers believe that the use of culturally relevant practices such as songs, poetry, dance and dramatic presentations which utilize the local language of Maa were effective approaches for passing on messages to parents and the community. Teachers and head-teachers believe that these student performances, which speak to emerging issues in the community or country help to open dialogue in the community, build bridges between the traditional and the modern (values, skills, practices) and plant the seeds for social change. Mr J, the head-teacher at Enkema PS said:

The use of the arts can be really effective when its used to talk about an *issue*...and the problem may not be able to be addressed *directly*, but *indirectly* through the Arts, you can begin to bring the issue out and it may help to deter the practice....because people are affected by the arts, they *get it*....they *get it*.

In building these critically engaged school-community relationships Mr D, argued that teachers and schools are using culturally relevant practices to communicate messages and open dialogue around information that comes from not only the educational sector, but also from other sectors including health, government and religious sectors. Mr D added

Through the messages that are being delivered through the arts, they also receive messages from the young people about things like fighting corruption, discouraging irresponsible behaviours, such as those that spread HIV/AIDS, preaching peace and tolerance, also preaching the Gospel. You will also find in a lot of these communities that when they are gathering in their churches, they also use that art learned from school to communicate the messages and teachings of the Bible. Also things like *diet*, they take the materials that they have learned in school and communicate these through the arts to teach the community....and they can communicate this in their own language.

As Mr H, the head-teacher at Olapa PS noted “these are the culturally relevant media” in this community. Mr Y added:

They are really considered the *folk medium*...it’s African context....You know it’s just very much a part of our culture....even a Maasai man....he hears a Folk Song....and he starts nodding....and in that way messages were passed along. It’s very special to the locals and they feel that this is their own....and they want to come and see how their children are performing.

This understanding of the strong connection between the arts, culture and the informal education context of Kenyan society was also expressed by participants in other parts of Kenya. In an interview with Mr N, senior administrator with the Kenya Music Festival, he said “you know, culture is a way of our people...it’s a way of life...you cannot leave culture. You know, in all functions that happen here...in public events, at funerals, at weddings, at birth ceremonies...it’s always there!”⁷⁸ Many of the participants in the Maasai-Kenyan case study felt that the arts have some human and collective qualities that could enable them to contribute to the betterment of society by touching the human soul and bringing people together. Ms A expressed this understanding when she said “the arts brings people together...it promotes this *spirit of togetherness*...it binds the society together”. Many other participants in this study saw their use of the arts as being a culturally relevant approach for bringing the community together for sensitization and to work together for the collective social good.

⁷⁸ However, as I noted in my field notes, the difference in the embedded nature of music and the arts that stood out starkly for me, based on my lived experiences in the increasingly corporatized global north, was that in the rural, indigenous Maasai communities where I was conducting my research, music and the arts were regularly integrated into *social gatherings*, always through *live performance* and in the majority of cases, was *collective* and *participatory*....as opposed to the increasingly embedded nature of music and the arts in the global north, under the effects of neoliberalism, as a *consumptive, individual* and *passive* form of entertainment.

Teachers and head-teachers at both Olapa and Enkema PSs considered the sensitizing role of education, and the use of the arts and cultural practices for sensitizing students and the community, to be both “curricular” and “*co-curricular*”⁷⁹. Although many of the activities, in which they were using the arts, occurred outside of the ‘formal instructional time’, all of the teachers and head-teachers believed that they were directly related to either the curriculum and/or to what they had articulated as their educational goals⁸⁰. During the period of my research at these two schools, the boundaries between formal and informal education were often blurred as the teachers, head-teacher, community leaders and local NGOs frequently engaged in educational initiatives which linked the schools and their local communities. Many of these activities will be described further in the next section: “*How are the arts used?*”

How are the Arts Used?

During interviews with the teachers and head-teachers at both Olapa and Enkema PSs, the participants spoke about multiple ways in which they were using the arts and cultural practices in their teaching in formal, informal and in co-curricular activities. However, the observational data gathered in classrooms at both schools, indicated a very limited use of what the teachers had described as “the arts” or “arts-based approaches” during their ‘formal instructional time’. When participants spoke about their use of the arts in education, their notion of education frequently blurred the boundaries between what has been called ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ education. The data which speaks to *how* teachers and schools are using the arts and cultural practices will be presented around three foci: the arts and cultural practices within formal curriculum instruction in schools; the arts and cultural practices in informal education (school-community *sensitization* and engagement); and the arts and cultural practices in co-curricular programs (the Kenya Music Festival model).

⁷⁹ I had used the term *co-curricular* during the formal interviews when I had asked whether they considered their use of the arts to be “curricular, co-curricular or extra-curricular”. As I began to gain a deeper understanding of the local and Kenyan context of education and schooling, I realized that my use of the term extra-curricular seemed *foreign* to the participants. Further, it reflected assumptions based on my own teaching and administrative experiences in Ontario, including the Western and colonial notions of the separation of formal schooling from the lived experiences and communities in which students and teachers lived.

⁸⁰ The educational goals articulated by the teachers have been described earlier in this chapter.

**Use of the Arts and Cultural Practices within Formal Curriculum Instruction
(Integrated, Experiential, Multimodal Learning, Affective and Culturally Relevant
Approaches)**

During my first visit to Olapa PS, upon entering the teachers' workroom, I noticed the school schedule written, in white chalk, on the only blackboard in the room. It listed each teachers' timetable, including the grades and timeslots for each of the subjects they were to be covering. The timetable for each of the teachers included three instructional periods each week in Creative Arts. Yet, the data collected reflects an extremely limited inclusion of 'stand-alone' classes of Creative Arts by teachers at both Olapa and Enkema PSs. Most often, teachers spoke about *integrating the arts* into their teaching of other subject-areas as a way to "help students learn the content" and "do well on the KCPE". In speaking with Ms A, at Olapa PS, she told me about some of the ways she was using language arts in her English class to prepare her Standard 8 students for the creative writing pieces on the KCPE. Ms A said that these "individual composition" pieces are included in both English and Kiswahili on the KCPE, and it is "within these pieces that their creative writing ability is assessed. They are given a topic and they must write a 2 page composition. The composition is assessed in categories such as spelling, grammar, flow and creativity".

Teachers and head-teachers, at both schools, also spoke about their use of pedagogical approaches which integrated the arts into other curriculum areas as a way to help students learn and understand curricular issues which were "particularly relevant to issues in their own lives and communities", such as HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, disease prevention and sanitation. Teachers described a broad range of arts-based approaches which they believed helped students to grasp the curricular content including: drawing, painting, singing, poetry/Mashairi, role playing and dramatization. In her teaching of Kiswahili, Ms A spoke of using a form of poetry or language art, called Mashairi, which combines using the orality traditions of Maasai and African societies with popular discourse and performance. In Mashairi, Ms A argues that skill development focusses on both the structure and content of the message, as well as on the delivery of the messages, in order to "touch the senses" of the audience you are presenting to. Ms A explained "during the Poetry lesson we usually use poems to pass some concepts to the children...for example, concepts on HIV/AIDS". I probed further to ask "are these poems *given to them*, or do they *create* them? Ms A replied "some of them are *given* in their books and some of them are

children’s own compositions....especially in Class 8, by the time they are going into Class 8, they need to be able to make their own poems.” Although I did not have an opportunity to observe the use of this pedagogy in any of the classrooms, I did observe a number of student performances of Mashairi during the Kenya Music Festival process (described later in this chapter).

Many of the teachers had used the arts as multi-modal and experiential pedagogical approaches, including visual and auditory modes to help students understand terms and concepts. Many of the students at both Olapa and Enkema PS, whose home language is Maa, struggle with both the written and oral forms of English and Kiswahili. Teachers spoke about using visual, oral and dramatic arts (such as drawing, colouring, singing, poetry and dramatization) across the curriculum to help students learn. Mr H and Ms A

Art is very wide...it is used in almost all of the subjects because...when teaching Science...you have to draw....you have to use Art in drawing...like the *heart of a human being*....the *flowers* that you teach about....so Art is involved. The issue *colour* can be used to help students learn things like the parts of the flower...like the *petals*....it must come out *clearly*. Also, when teaching about the Heart...colours can be used to show the difference between *veins and arteries*. Then also if you are teaching about CRE⁸¹....then art can be used...maybe you are teaching about Jesus and the temple; or about crossing the Red Sea...or about the Altar. Also, *singing* can be used to help to *draw attention*...and more learning can happen by *creating a song* that is related to the topic that you are to teach. And often as a conclusion, the teachers may ask the class to *sing a song* at the end of a lesson that is related to the topic. So music is also there to teach some of the concepts of the lesson.

In the early primary grades, some teachers spoke about using the arts to develop culturally relevant ‘practical skills’, including bead-work, face-painting and making jingles (which are used both to decorate and to act as percussive elements on traditional cultural outfits), although access to resources was seen as a significant limiting factor. Opportunities for the development of many of these ‘practical skills’ was often restricted to students who took part in the co-curricular clubs or activities. As Ms H stated:

When we talk about extracurricular, because now you are teaching ‘out in the field’....the focus becomes more on ‘practical skills’....but also things like beadwork, face painting....these are also activities that the children enjoy. When they are doing something, they understand. The same knowledge that they are getting in the classroom can be transformed into ‘practical knowledge’ that they

⁸¹ Christian Religious Education, a component of Social Studies.

can be using out in the community. They are not just ‘face painting’...they are learning particular patterns that are traditionally used in their communities (particularly in the costumes that are being made for the dances and folksongs).

Informal Education: School-Community Sensitization and Engagement

There was strong evidence in the data that, even though teachers’ use of the arts and cultural practices during the ‘formal instructional periods’ at both schools were very limited, participants believed their use of the arts and cultural practices, as creative, critical and culturally responsive approaches, contributed to ‘informal’ education through school clubs and school-community initiatives. Participants believed the use of the arts and cultural practices helped connect and engage schools and communities. The data also reflected a number of guiding principles which they believed would enhance the success of the use of the arts and cultural practices in school-community initiatives for *sensitization* and for socially transformative education.

Boundary crossing: Engaging students and community through creative, critical and culturally relevant approaches

As Ms A stated, although teachers’ may not be spending much time using arts-based pedagogy during the formal curriculum classes, students who are interested can join clubs, such as the Health Club, where they have a chance to utilize and develop their creative skills, “such as *drawing, painting and poetry*, and that’s where they can pass health messages to the community”. When I asked Ms A whether students were creating their *own poems*, she said “in the clubs, it is a mixture of teacher-composed and student-composed...and they are often directed by the teacher...often on *emerging issues*, such as health and negative cultural practices”. Ms A gave an example of a poem that one of the female students in Standard eight had written for one of the *own composition* classes in the Choral Verse category of last year’s Kenya Music Festival. Ms A described the poem which was “presented through the voice of a Maasai girl, in Maa, her own language”. Ms A recounted the message of the poem which said “that although I was born of a Maasai, I can be able to come out of the *cocoon of tradition*...the culture of oppressive practices...and believe that I can be able to be just like the way the others are doing”. I asked if the student had performed this poem on any other occasions other than the KMF process and Ms A told me that the student had also performed it at the Division Health Fair, sponsored by AMREF. The Divisional Health Fair, which is a popular community event

that many parents make an effort to attend, was held at one of the rural primary schools in the Enkolong division, last year. However, due to a lack of funding, Ms A said that the division was not able to hold the Health Fair this year.

Students also have the opportunity to perform many of the songs, poems, dances and dramatic pieces that they have created for parents and community members during the end-of-year Parent's Day programs. For remote rural day schools or boarding schools in the ASAL region, school-community events, such as Parent Days, provide an opportunity for Maasai youth and their parents, who have often been separated for long periods of time, to re-connect. The teachers and head-teachers at both Olapa and Enkema PSs spoke of the very important opportunities that Parent's Days provide for creating school-community linkages. I had the opportunity to be present for Parent's Day at the end of the term in July 2010. Although the 'official program' was supposed to start about 10 am, I was told that this was "African Time". Mr H, the head-teacher, waited very patiently, as did the other teachers and students, for a significant number of parents and School Management Committee members to arrive (which ended up being about 11:30 am) before ushering everyone into the Dining Hall (a large covered room in which many of the full-school events or community events were held). I heard from Mr H that many of the parents had not seen their children for many months and some would be walking for over 8 km, from their manyattas to the school, across these very barren plains and extreme heat, in order to attend Parent's Day. Mr H told me that it may have been particularly difficult this year for some parents to attend due to the extreme drought that was impacting the region. Many of the student's parents, particularly many of the father's or male members of their extended families, had had to migrate with their herds, some even into Tanzania (over 15-20 kms away) in order to find grasslands to try to sustain their cattle during the drought. As the wave of brightly coloured shukas⁸² began to arrive, with some mothers carrying their babies strapped to their backs with makeshift cloth carriers, the buzz in the school compound began to elevate. Parents, relatives and children began to set up their own little 'family circles' in one of the large open areas in the school compound in order to view the performances.

Music, dance, poetry and oration were an integral part of Parent's Day, as they were in all social and community gatherings that I attended in the Maasai community of Enkolong.

⁸² Shukas are the traditional garment (a light-cotton, red or other brightly coloured piece of fabric) that both men and women wrap around themselves in various fashions.

Following the opening by the local Catholic priest, formal speeches by Mr H, the School Council Chair, and other community leaders, there were performances by many of the classes and individual students which featured singing, dancing and poetry. Some of the pieces performed were pieces that had been prepared for the KMF program, however, others were created specifically to entertain and/or educate the parents. While at Olapa, I had the opportunity to observe a number of students presenting pieces they had created and presented using a critical, creative and culturally responsive form of poetry called *Mashairi*. In this form of poetry, the presenter is expected to deliver their message with passion utilizing elements of oration, elocution and dramatization. I was particularly struck by the piece that Lucy⁸³, a grade six female student from Olapa PS, wrote and performed, entitled “Jumbo” which addressed an increasing concern in their region around elephant poaching for ivory.

“Jumbo”

(Written and performed by a female student in Standard six at Olapa PS-August, 2010)

Another bullet again
 I crumble to the ground in a heap
 These tusks are the curse of my life
 And a burden on my head.
 Why was I made a *Jumbo*?
 Trudging the savannahs
 With happy, white teeth
 And before I ended my laughter
 You made me toothless, and lifeless.
 Oh Jumbo....with a proud life
 I shall leave the tusks behind
 Beautiful in the human pride.
 But...let me live first
 And breathe my last breath
 Before you pounce on my tusks.

The message presented in this piece written by Lucy, reflected an indigenous ontological perspective around the sacredness of wildlife in Maasai society, the spiritual connections between humans and animals. Further, given the increasing tensions between Maasai communities and the government over land rights, it raised awareness and concern about the protection of traditional cultural lands. The passion and strength of her critique and performance which spoke of the brutal killing of the elephants (known as *Jumbo/Emanyara* to the Maasai) by

⁸³ Pseudonym used.

the “white men” was incredibly powerful. In the presentation, it was not only the words that were spoken, but it was the inflection in her voice and the dramatic actions which combined to create an intensely aesthetic presentation. During the final stanza of the poem, Lucy crumbles to the ground signifying the end of the elephant’s life.

Ms A and Mr H were adamant that these school-community performances were an effective pedagogical approach to “sensitize, educate and engage the students and community”. However, there was rarely any opportunity for critical engagement between the performers and the audience after the performance. Instead, as Mr H, the head-teacher at Olapa PS added, these poems and songs were often presented to the parents and community for the purpose of teaching them “to embrace the formal Western education...which currently is the only way to earn a livelihood and to fit into the current way of life”. Ms A did speak about another opportunity in which students at the school, who called themselves the *Theatre Group*, were able to engage in some of their own critical inquiry and creative cultural productions around issues of their own interests. These students got together, as a social group, on their own time, to develop skits and dramatic pieces. Ms A said that this group is often called upon to perform for different functions at the school and also to perform on Saturday evenings “when we have entertainment for the students...in fact, that is one of the things that has empowered them to become creative! Some of the ones that they were just acting out recently were about drug abuse...the effects of drugs on adolescents”. When I asked if they had any assistance from teachers, Ms A said

No...on their own...completely on their own! They are also doing pieces on, what do you call it, the changes that are happening in the society, especially among the youth now...change from *tradition* to a *modern lifestyle*. For example, the language...this language that has changed so much these days that you can’t understand the way they speak! (*Ms A chuckled!*) They can speak their own language and the father and the mother are there and they start being amazed because they can’t understand the way they speak!! It’s mostly entertainment...but there are also lessons that are learned...for example...the importance of education.

The data reflected that teachers and schools were using creative and critical visual practices for sensitization because they felt that these visual and oral forms of communication were more culturally relevant and would help to bridge the language-communication barriers that exist between Maasai parents and community members who have limited understanding of the formal schooling languages of English and Kiswahili. Both Mr H and Mr J took me around their own schools and also to the local secondary school to view what they referred to as “Talking

Walls”. These large wall murals, painted on the sides of classrooms and other school buildings, have been the collective project of students, teachers and a local NGO called AMREF (African Medical Research Foundation). The images and messages within these murals speak to emerging health and social issues in the community identified by the students, teachers and community leaders such as: effects of traditional cultural practices on schooling, early marriage, FGM, early pregnancy, moranism, child abuse, disease prevention, drug use and AIDS. School murals at Olapa PS identified key focuses of school-community health policy and promotion (malaria control; food security; personal safety; advocacy against negative cultural practices and discrimination based on gender and ability), and also promoted the importance of school-community partnerships. Ms A commented on the role that these talking walls play in educating both students and the community “because they say ‘children learn more by *seeing*’...during their *free time*, when their minds are really tired...and the child is just resting outside the class, like this, and looking at the *drawings* on the wall...it is then that these messages get through to them”. What was noticeable to me was that there did not appear to have been much work done on these murals over the past few years and the Health Fair had not been held in the Enkolong division due to funding issues for the past two years.

Guiding principles for the arts, cultural praxis and transformative education: Support of critical leaders, relationship-building and cultural sensitivity

In probing participants further around the use of the arts and cultural practices for sensitizing the community or for addressing issues which may be perceived as controversial within the community, both teachers and head-teachers offered *guiding principles* for pedagogical approaches. Many of the comments spoke to the importance of recognizing and respecting social and cultural practices and modes of interacting, which might differ from those of the dominant culture, when developing collaborative school-community processes for transformative education. During part of the formal interview process, participants were given a hypothetical situation to reflect on and were asked to give suggestions on how it might be best to proceed. Participants were asked “if you or one of your students wished to use the arts to address an issue that might be perceived to be sensitive or controversial in your school or community, how would you proceed?” The data from participants responses to this question identifies three themes or ‘principles’ to guide arts-based school-community transformative educational initiatives: support of critical leaders; relationship building; and cultural sensitivity.

The role of a critical leader within this process was identified and discussed by teachers and educational leaders at both the school and district level. Teachers often spoke about the importance of seeking input and gaining support from their head-teacher and community leaders, prior to embarking on any topic which might be perceived as being sensitive or controversial. Head-teachers and the area education officer spoke about the role of the educational leader in terms of vetting the content and in helping teachers to understand how to present issues, which may be controversial or sensitive within a community, in an “engaging, culturally responsive and respectful manner”. Mr Y, the area education officer for Enkolong, spoke about his experiences as a head-teacher in a Maasai community and some lessons he had gained about the use of the arts and cultural practices for addressing controversial issues in a community. He stressed the importance of getting to know the community, the school management committee and the leaders in the community, particularly around any cultural practices which may be in conflict with the formal educational policies or other government policies. He gave an example of his use of a dramatic presentation by students to address an issue in which the Chief and the leaders within the community were not taking appropriate action, related to equity and girl-child rights. The performance was given at a school-community event where it was known that the Chief and other leaders would be in attendance.

First, I would wish to know the *content* of the presentation...particularly how controversial the presentation is? Maybe I could come out and assist the teacher to remove the most challenging areas...and maybe put the presentation in a *light way*...not actually mentioning names of people, but the message should be put out there, but in a softer way. That’s why it is good to vet those things. I’d also like to know the community and school committee ...Because I remember a time when I was using drama to address the issue of the Chief and the leaders not doing their job. I had to run it in such a way that they came and laughed and just towards the end, I brought the message out...before they were realizing what was happening, we had left the stage...and the majority went for the presentation...but those who were affected by it...there’s no way they could continue.

Mr H, head-teacher at Olapa PS, spoke of the value of having school leaders who have a strong understanding of the culture and have built relationships with community members and community leaders. Both Mr H and Mr J, the two head-teachers, expressed a belief that individuals holding positions as teacher or head-teacher at schools in these Maasai communities are often given a great deal of respect and are seen as being “knowledgeable”, particularly with respect to the laws and regulations of the state. As Mr H told me, community leaders often seek

the advice of school leaders in how to address emerging issues in their culture because they believe that head-teachers have knowledge and a “duty of care” in areas of human rights, equity and social justice. The role of the head-teacher is particularly valuable in assisting new teachers to determine the cultural sensitivity of a particular issue and then to help them develop culturally sensitive and respectful pedagogical approaches to address the issue.

Sometimes, I think you have to assess whether it is *really* sensitive. Sometimes the teacher may think that it is really sensitive, but because I live in the area and have experience with the community and interact with them, and speak their language, it may be easier for me to bring the group together to act as one and to listen to different ways to address it or tackle it.

In developing culturally sensitive approaches, Ms A, a teacher at Olapa PS, stressed the importance of “understanding the audience”. Further, she believes it is important to choose an approach which acknowledges and “respects” social and cultural factors such as: age, literacy levels and gender. In reflecting on how she might use the arts to address an issue which might be perceived to be sensitive or controversial in the community, within her teaching of Kiswahili, Ms A engaged in a dialogue with me.

Ms A: First, they would have to come up with a *topic*....I would have to help them to put all of their ideas together. ...and then how to *express their idea*...either through *drawing* or through *poems*, or through a *song*. Like...I would act as a *guide*.

Mary: Are there any issues that come to mind because it might be sensitive in the community or for students in the class?

Ms A: Yes...you’d have to consider the *age* of the students; who is the *audience*? Are they *literate* or are they *illiterate people*? Because both the age and the type of language to use will guide you there. And then also the *gender*, you have to take into consideration the *gender*....are you speaking to *men* or to *women*....*old men* or *young men*....*old women* or *young women*?

Mary: Especially in Maasai communities because their backgrounds, their thinking, their beliefs and practice might be quite different?

Ms A: Yes! Then also, there is the *approach*....the approach is very important! How are you going to approach the topic? You have to approach from a *humble background*...

Mary: Explain to me a *humble background*?

Ms A: You know, the *language* that you are going to use....a language of *respect*....a *polite* language.

The importance of relationship building, collaboration and the use of culturally sensitive approaches in developing a plan to use the arts and cultural practices for transformative education is captured by Mr H, head-teacher at Olapa PS, as he describes the process he would advocate to address an issue in the community which might be perceived to be sensitive or controversial:

I normally don't want to work alone, so then I would call together my deputy HT and my Senior T and we would discuss the issue together. Then, we would discuss it with the whole teaching staff. If it is agreed that we should address the issue, then, at this point we would begin to develop a strategy together, prior to presenting it to the School Management Committee, because many of the members of the SMC are illiterate, so they may not know how to manage it. Next, we would call the Chairperson of the SMC because he is the cultural representative of the community and we can't call a meeting without first discussing the issues with him. We need to explain the issues and see what his ideas are about the issue and about how the community might feel...and he may also have some thoughts about the strategy that has been developed by the staff. But we meet with the Chairperson, initially, away from the community, only with the small group (HT, Deputy HT and senior T) so that he can be *sensitized/educated* about the issue, the policies and the possible strategies. So, if he is *in agreement*...he is now *one of us*....then we call a meeting of the School Management Committee. At this meeting, he is the Chairperson (the leader) and the HT takes on the role of the *secretary*. In many cases, the Chairperson will be doing a lot of the talking, because he is the Chairperson now, because he has been *educated about the issues* and *because he is respected in the community*.

Mr L, a grade 5 teacher at Enkema PS, who identifies as a Kikuyu, came to the school and community two years ago. As an 'outsider' to the Maasai culture, he is well aware of the challenges of addressing issues related to traditional cultural practices, such as FGM (female genital mutilation) in education and of the importance of involving the members of the community throughout the process. As Mr L notes "doing it alone, without including them" risks inciting the 'rebellious' human heart, which often happens when dominant powers try to "force", rather than include and engage others in the process of transformative education. Mr L felt that:

It is not up to you, as the teacher, to just come and criticize it...you need to sensitize them first...about the disadvantages of it...let them know first it's limitations...then you can come out, when they are aware of the limitations and you can use now the arts...use songs...and even drama! These can also be used in the 'sensitization'! You can use drama...you can also use drawings...and let the community be part and parcel of the participation...when you give them room to do that, then they are going to appreciate it and whatever you are teaching about or talking about it will be more positive...they can't criticize that much! Unlike the times that you try to do it alone, without including them...then that one is

forcing the community or any person to do something...of which you know that the human heart is 'rebellious'!

Mr L was also involved in the focus group that was held at Enkema PS, on July 6, 2010. The focus group included the head-teacher and two other teachers who had been involved in assisting the school in various aspects of the arts and had worked with individual and collective student groups for community performances and KMF preparation. Mr J's expertise was in Maasai folk song and dance; Mr L was in singing, folk and traditional dance; and Ms E was in oration and poetry. The first task they had been assigned was to brainstorm what they saw as *emerging issues* in the community. The group came up with six issues: early marriage among the youth in school; early pregnancy; HIV/AIDS; Moranism; Drought and Poverty. The second task included developing a plan using the arts and arts-based pedagogies to address one of these issues, with the goal of deepening the learning opportunity for students, teachers, parents and community members. Mr L suggested early marriage and the others agreed. I recommended that they begin by brainstorming possible ideas and then synthesize their plan. They began to dialogue:

Mr J: First, need to go to the school community (Ts and HT) to discuss the issue and develop a plan...they would also need to consult with the SMC Chair (community leader).

Mr L: Need to talk about the pros and the cons of early marriage.

Mr L: We need to talk to the parents first....so they can talk to their children. Because you know, for the early marriages to take place...it is not the children that take that step....it is the parents who put the children into these situations.

Mr J, Mr L and Ms E engage in a dialogue and Mr L synthesizes the points, "So once the issue has been discussed....then we must *create awareness*". Mr J adds "Create awareness among the community (parents and youth)".

Mr L (Mr J repeats each item): You can create awareness by creating seminars....by composing songs.

Ms E adds "drama"...Mr J adds "poetry"...Mr L adds "also...posters...& what we have...Mr J adds "murals"...yes, like on the school walls".

As they create their plan under "Creating Awareness", Mr L, the note-taker, categorizes the suggestions given by the group into four possible "avenues": seminars; composing songs and drama; poetry; and the use of murals (visual sense). As he finishes this categorization to the

group, Mr L notes: “yes...and all of them (he puts a bracket around the last three items) are arts-based *what*....Mr J adds “pedagogies”. As the discussion continues, their understanding of the difference between seminars and art-based pedagogies becomes apparent. The group saw seminars as being school-community events in which “professionals” or “guidance and counselling professionals” could be brought in to present information to youth and parents about the rules and the consequences of engaging in some of the issues that have been listed. However, as Mr L and Mr J describe, arts-based pedagogies appear more culturally responsive and relevant with the use of visual, dramatic and oral (language of the community) modes of communication).

Mr L: When you come to #2-composing songs and drama; poetry; and use of murals....In composing song, you compose songs that *bring out the picture* of what is *early marriage*....and the people should be knowing that when they are engaging in early marriage, it is good for them to have an account to judge with whether to take it or not to take it.

Mr J: This is also true for *drama*....using the language of the community, Maa....for instance in HIV/AIDS....drama can be used to present messages....we can use the information from the curriculum to write the scripts to talk about infection and about how the disease proceeds...and these are issues that are affecting our community. This can also be done through the murals through painting.

Mr L: Yes...in the murals, people are going to use *the visual...you know.....if you see, it you will remember it*.

Mr J: Yes, it will be in the people’s minds.

Mr L: Yes, that it by using the visual sense...by using the visual sense it sticks in peoples’ minds”

After the group had developed the four avenues for creating awareness, I probed the group further to have them reflect on *how* they saw the development of each of these avenues by teachers or the school. As they continued on, they began to voice concerns in the plan about some of the constraints that they saw in their abilities to create awareness. Mr J said “we can compose songs and poems....but here, in Enkema....we lack resources and materials to be able to do the murals and the posters”. The significant inequities of opportunity are brought to light when Mr J adds “we have the children with the skills and talents who can do these types of visual art such as posters and murals, but we do not have the resources”.

Co-curricular Programs: Kenya Music Festival model (Possibilities and Challenges for Democratic and Transformative education)

The third example of an approach in which teachers and head-teachers at both Olapa S and Enkema PS are using the arts and cultural practices for education highlights the role of co-curricular programs. This section will focus on a specific nationally driven co-curricular program called the Kenya Music Festival (KMF), as a classic example of an educational program/policy initiative which promotes and supports students, teachers' and schools' use of the arts and cultural practices as creative, critical and culturally responsive approaches for democratic and transformative education. The KMF model was described by Mr N, the current executive director, as being the "largest school-based music festival in the world"⁸⁴. The KMF continues to remain a sanctioned and sponsored activity of the Kenya Ministry of Education and as such, the two organizations have similar goals. In addition to its goals of encouraging the study, practice and development of music, dance and elocution, other objectives include:

- Promoting and preserving Kenya's rich cultural heritage
- Encouraging creativity that will embrace emerging issues
- Providing a forum for cultural interaction that will foster national unity
- Promoting international awareness
- Exposing their talents
- Promoting opportunities for career development (Republic of Kenya, 2010a).

As a nationally sponsored and coordinated co-curricular program, both formal and informal educational organizations are strongly encouraged to take part in the Festival. For the two schools in this case study, the data reflects the influence of KMF policies and program on both why and how students, teachers and schools were developing and using the arts, particularly their local, traditional cultural practices. The data points to *two overarching themes* which connected the KMF policies and programs to teachers and schools use of the arts and cultural practices in these schools: opportunity to *create and deliver messages* around emerging issues; and opportunity to develop and sustain individual and collective *culturally relevant skills and talents* and have these recognized, valued and "rewarded". When preparing individual and collective performance pieces to enter specific classes in the KMF related to Maasai culture, Mr J noted "all of the music and arts must represent Maasai traditional cultural-practices, while at

⁸⁴ A general overview of the structure and organization of the Kenya Music Festival has been provided in Chapter five.

the same time delivering messages to the local community and also to Kenya...for example, peace, corruption, health issues”. Many of the pieces that the students and teachers at Enkema PS had created for the KMF competitions were also being used to sensitize, educate and engage the community around issues of social justice, human rights and equity.

The KMF model also encourages, values and supports the development of the unique, diverse and culturally relevant skills and talents of youth. This aspect of skill development and recognition was seen as being a very important aspect of the model for teachers in this case study, who believe their schools and students continue to be marginalized. Mr J expressed great pride as he showed me the *certificates* that Enkema PS had received for Maasai folk song and Maasai traditional dance over the past four years and spoke about their performance at State House in front of President Kibake. Mr J said “these certificates are highly valued when students are looking for employment”. From outside appearances, the school and community appeared to be so *lacking* in infrastructure and educational resources, yet the head-teacher, other teachers, students, school management committee chair, Assistant Chief (Maasai governance), parents and community members all exuded so much pride in the KMF recognition of their rich cultural knowledge and skills. As Mr A, Assistant Chief in the Enkema area, said “these opportunities help our children to value and develop their traditional cultural knowledge and skills. They may be able to use these skills to help their families and the community”.

Mr N, a senior administrator with the KMF organization, argued that recognition through the form of certificates for participation, particularly from the national level of the Festival, is seen as an important signifier when students apply for future employment opportunities. Mr N asserts that it is important to recognize achievement in areas other than ‘academic achievement’.

When they get to the National level, ALL of the *trainers* and *students* gets a certificate. Because so many of these students have many barriers to academic achievement on KCPE, the certificates in the Arts, can be an important *signifier!* We have just printed out over 50,000 certificates to take to the National Festival this year! ...and these don’t go just to the *winners*, they go to everyone who has reached the National level....because reaching the National level is a real *achievement*.

Mr J believed that these certificates held value for the students at Enkema PS when they applied for *sponsorships* or *jobs* (particularly in the *tourism* industry). In addition to the certificates of participation at the national level, schools and individuals who win their classes are invited to the Gala Concert of the festival highlights at State House, the residence of the Head

of State. Achievement of a top place finish in your class at the national level was also a significant motivator for ‘teachers’ and ‘schools’, as Mr N recounted:

Formerly, the former Head of State (Moi) would *promote* a teacher who had taken their team to the National level...and that one used to really *motivate* them. He just instructs the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to give those teachers one more move ahead. Yes, teachers were really looking forward to preparing their students to go to the National level, because it meant another grade ahead.

In moving beyond the local level, the data from this research study indicated a number of additional “possibilities and constraints” within the KMF model for teachers and schools in Kenya wishing to use the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education. During the research period, I had the opportunities to travel with students, teachers and community leaders from Olapa and Enkems PSs to observe at the various levels (local, regional, provincial and national) of the Festival. The data collected from these observations and from informal interviews with individuals associated with the Festival organization identifies *five* themes:

- Celebration of diversity (promotion and valuing of inclusion).
- Tri-sector partnerships (public, private, third sector): Aids and constraints for democratic education.
- Politics, cultural production and “Prosperity for All”.
- Marginalization and equity.
- Impact of neoliberal principles (competition; ‘results-based performance’).

Celebration of diversity; Promotion and valuing of inclusion

The organizational structure of the Festival promotes and values inclusion and diversity. In addition to being a Ministry of Education sanctioned and supported activity, the Festival has expanded its mandate to branch out to both formal and non-formal schooling from the primary level to post-secondary institutions. Competitions start at the school or zonal level and continue to the Divisional, District, Provincial and National levels. This broad, local, foundation provides an important opportunity for students to create, perform and communicate their messages to their peers, teachers, parents, community members and leaders within their own cultural communities. Additionally, it facilitates opportunities for students from diverse cultures to come together, to perform, to interact and to broaden their experiences and their learning.

Since its inception in the 1920s, the KMF has grown in both numbers of participants, and in number and diversity of classes. In 2010, the Festival included classes from five broad areas:

set pieces; folk song; traditional cultural dance; African traditional instruments; and original compositions (including special compositions). The classes of folk song, traditional cultural dance and African traditional instruments serve to address goals such as: promoting and preserving Kenya's rich cultural heritage, and providing a forum for cultural interaction. The diverse variety of classes provides an opportunity for students from pluriverse cultural, ethnic, language and ability backgrounds to develop and utilize their unique talents in music and the arts. Over 1500 classes, in the 2010 Festival, included opportunities to create and perform in: vocal solos and ensembles; choral music; dances; singing games; African traditional group dances; instrumental music; English verse speaking; Kiswahili verse speaking; other African languages verse speaking; French verse speaking; German verse speaking; and Sign Language. For a more detailed listing of the classes, see Appendix O.

For students and teachers at Olapa and Enkema PS, the inclusion of traditional indigenous musical arts classes in the KMF model expands the focus from solely *individual* performances to recognize and value *collective cultural practices*. In many Maasai cultural practices, inclusion does not just recognize the talents of individuals, but also those of 'groups' and within these groups, the opportunity for individual talents to contribute to the group. As Mr L noted "also when they are practicing arts, there is a sense of cooperation that is created" and added further, that at the same time "pupils learn to be independent in thinking...they become autonomous". I had the opportunity to observe the young men from Enkema PS, as they came together after the school day to develop and practice their Maasai dances and folksong pieces for the KMF. During these sessions, I noted this combination of individual specialization and collective group synthesis. Several distinct roles or responsibilities were assumed by individuals: two soloists, an animal horn player, two students who wore and performed with the ostrich-feather masks and two of the senior students who appeared to take on the roles of 'informal leaders'⁸⁵ The head-teacher, Mr J and one of the other teachers, Mr L, who I knew were 'in charge' of the music group, were often not in attendance at these practice sessions. It became very evident that these students had an extensive amount of cultural knowledge with respect to individual and group singing, dance and compositional aspects of these songs and dances. All of

⁸⁵ In other traditional dances or folksongs, I observed other 'specialized roles' which were assigned to individuals within the collective who had specific skills or talents in an area such as soloists, drummers, instrumentalists, dramatists or dancers.

the young men appeared intently focused and engaged in the practice and performance of their individual roles, while at the same time, seemingly consciously aware of their individual role within the collective to produce the holistic performance.

A model of tri-sector partnership (public, private, third-sector): Working together to identify and address emerging issues (Top-down and Bottom-up approaches)

As the Festival has grown through the years since 1968 when the Ministry of Education took over the organization, it has evolved into a multi-sector partnership. In 2010, participation from both the private sector, non-governmental sector (both nationally and internationally) and public-political sector was apparent. The major sponsor for the Festival was the Mumias Sugar Company. Special Composition (major theme) sponsors included: World Vision Kenya, Plan International, Amnesty International, and Kenya Vision 2030-Delivery Secretariat. As Mr N, the coordinator of Performing Arts (music, drama, sports) for the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Kenya, and executive secretary of the Kenya Music Festival, spoke about the selection of the sponsors, he emphasized that in addition to their financial support, the thematic sponsors were selected based on a common interest in the Festival's objectives of educating the public by "encouraging creativity that will embrace emerging issues" (Republic of Kenya, 2010a, p. v). Most of the thematic sponsors for the 2010 Festival came from national and/or international NGOs whose missions meshed well with emerging issues that had been identified by the Ministry of Education and Festival committee. Mr N believed that the involvement and support from the national and/or international NGOs was key to providing the opportunity for the students to "to communicate on issues affecting society in a way of *educating the public*".

The current organizational structure of the Festival provides both opportunities and constraints for the use of the arts for democratic and transformative education. The data illuminate concerns regarding the democratic potential of the model arise as a result of the decision-making process at multiple levels of the organization and as a result of the increasing involvement of private sector partners. The selection of the topics arises through a combination of both top-down and bottom-up strategies. In describing one of the top-down approaches, Mr M, a teacher at Olapa PS, described a process, which he termed *harmonization*. Within the process of harmonization, national and international level NGOs put forward various topics or themes, which their own organizations are attempting to address, and then the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education synthesize these themes. As Mr M explained:

We talk about ‘themes’, when you are talking about the KMF Syllabus...so some of the National organizations (NGOs) are given a chance to bring some ‘issues’ that need to be tackled...for example ‘World Vision’, PLAN INTERNATIONAL, ...and then we have the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education coming in trying to bring a ‘harmonized theme’ all together.

Mr N, the coordinator of the KNM expanded on the use of top-down and bottom-up approaches in the selection process and the vetting-process for the *set pieces*, *original compositions*, and *special compositions*. The set pieces are “prescribed pieces of music and elocution” chosen for each level, each year. Original compositions are to be “original in thought and style”, not previously performed at the Festival, and can be presented in any language, unless otherwise specified in the syllabus. Special Compositions are pieces composed “based on the *themes*” which have been provided by various organizations based on emerging issues. Themes are discussed, vetted and finally and selected by the KMF organizing committee, under consultation with the Ministry of Education.

Set Pieces: Mr N explained that the selection of the set pieces each year uses a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. The Ministry solicits submissions from teachers (“original writing or recommendations from textbooks”), NGOs and government agencies (“pieces that reflect a controversial issue in our country”). There are no ‘student-created’ work included for the selection of set pieces. All of the submissions are then vetted through a panel of *technical experts*. In describing this panel, Mr N noted:

Mr N: They are just teachers in schools....most of them have already participated in the Festivals and by virtue of their participation, they are usually very experienced and good in an area. These people are also the ones that we use for education to help the trainers. So we try to pick them from different areas of Music. They are chosen from a wide variety of school levels including pre-school, primary school, secondary school, colleges and university.

Mary: How broad, diverse or representative is the panel? Do they come from all educational levels and provinces?

Mr. N: No, we just sample out from a few people from the ones that we know are *very knowledgeable*.

Original and Special Compositions (Major Themes): Original composition and special composition classes open opportunities for bottom-up approaches in which students can create and/or compose their own songs or poems which speak to emerging issues in their local communities or at the national level. Like set pieces, original compositions and special compositions also face some vetting prior to selection or public performance. If a piece is written and will be performed in another language, the composer of the piece must submit the title and the translation of the song/verse to the respective festival secretary and to the adjudicators prior to the Festival. The reason given in the Festival guidelines is because “adjudicators will require to study the composition beforehand” (Republic of Kenya, 2010a, p. 15).

Special composition classes are created to represent the *major themes* that have been put forward by the major sponsors of the Festival. The content and theme of any song/poem created by students entering these classes must fit within the guidelines provided by the sponsoring organization. Many of the themes put forward by sponsors in the past have provided opportunities for participants to create pieces which focus on issues of human rights, equity and social justice. This past year, two of the NGOS (World Vision Kenya and Amnesty International Kenya) focused, respectively, on issues of *Dwelling in Unity, Peace and Liberty* and *Making Peoples’ Settlements safe for women and girls*. In the introduction to their theme, World Vision Kenya stated:

By supporting the peace and conflict theme in this year’s music festival, World Vision Kenya through its Peace Project (Marakwet, Pokot and Turkana-MAPOTO) is inviting the Government through the Ministry of Education to mainstream peace building in educational curriculum for schools and colleges. Such step will in fact help in mobilizing the pupils, teachers, Kenyan public and even the international community to promote peace in its entirety (Republic of Kenya, 2010a, p. 19).

In their advocacy work around human rights, in addressing “abuses that drive and deepen poverty and demean human dignity”, Amnesty International Kenya (AIK) put forward a theme for the Secondary Schools Choral Verse Speaking class which focused on issues associated with violence against women (Republic of Kenya, 2010a, p. 22). They noted that although “officially, FGM is illegal in Kenya, it goes on in communities that practice it with disturbing prevalence rates of between 40-95%” (Republic of Kenya, 2010a, p. 23). In their guideline to composers of these special compositions, AIK asked them to focus on: the law, policy and practice reform, sensitivity training for judicial officers and health-care workers, capacity building for girls and

women, prevention and protection, and traditional cultural practices which violate human rights and dignity. As special composition sponsors in the 2010 KMF, the AIK and other NGOs are using music and the arts as a way of educating and engaging students, teachers and the public at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Politics, cultural production and “Prosperity for All Kenyans”

It is important to remember that although the organization and administrative body overseeing the Festival is the Ministry of Education, the connections to, and interest of the Government of Kenya are significant. The value of this Festival was noted by the former British administration in Kenya and has remained an important focus under the current government. The political influence on the KMF is apparent not only through the patronage of the President, but also through the sponsorship and use of one of the Special Composition classes to promote the vision of the government. In the introductory pages of the program for the 2010 KMF, it highlights the Patron as ‘His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki, CGH, MP, President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kenya’. One of the special composition classes was sponsored by the Kenya Vision 2030 Delivery Secretariat put forward its theme of *Kenya Vision 2030: Prosperity for All Kenyans*. A discourse analysis of the policies and principles within Kenya Vision 2030, indicates a strong neoliberal bias⁸⁶. A concern exists, therefore, about the use of the KMF as another tool for the social reproduction of neoliberal ideology. Increasing involvement and control over the messages by both the government and private raise concerns for robust democratic education and engagement.

Continued marginalization and equity issues

For schools in the geographically marginalized region of the Enkolong division, participation in the Kenya Music Festival process provides students with opportunities to travel to different parts of the country, meet and interact with students from other parts of Kenya (and from other cultures) and broaden their education, as share their local experiences. Ms A, the

⁸⁶ *Kenya Vision 2030* is based on three ‘pillars’: economic, social and political which are anchored on a foundation built on ten goals: “macroeconomic stability; continuation in governance reforms; enhance equity and wealth creation opportunities for the poor; infrastructure; energy; science, technology and innovation (STI); land reform; human resources development; security; and public sector reform” (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 6). A brief discourse analysis is presented in Chapter eight.

deputy head-teacher at Olapa PS reflected on the value of these experiences when she said to me “I don’t know if you could imagine this, but also the *trips...field trips*”. She felt that these experiences, in which her students had the opportunity to interact and learn with and from students from diverse cultural backgrounds, from the seven other provinces around the country, allowed them to experience difference, enriched their learning and contributed to their deeper engagement in school when they return home.

Unfortunately, for many schools and students in the Enkolong division, the data from this study revealed that access to the opportunities provided through participation in the Kenya Music Festival process was often limited. Even though the participation rates from primary school students in Kenya at the 2010 Festival were very high (44,000 participants with representation from all eight provinces in Kenya), Mr N’s comments about the distribution of this participation reflect a continued concern about the marginalization of some regions and populations. As Mr N noted “Yes. Generally, the Western province has the highest participation, followed by Rift Valley and Nyanza.” When I mentioned that, in talking with some of the DEOs from those regions, I had learned that they had the *lowest* levels of participation, Mr N responded “Yes....because of the hardships in the area”. Teachers and head-teachers cited barriers including: financial costs associated with travel, meals and accommodation; missed instructional time for students and teachers, and associated pressures associated with the preparation for mid-term examinations and for the KCPE. Some participants also cited concerns around transparency, accountability and corruption in the selection process for individuals and schools. Concerns were also expressed that this “competitive program” placed limitations on the participation for many students. Interview data reflected that the Music Team members (dance, folk song, sacred song, Mashairi) were selected by teachers and/or Head-Teacher at both schools. Further, selection decisions around the number of students who would be able to take part were based on a number of factors: finances, talent/experience, age/grade and gender.

Impact of neoliberal principles (competition, ‘results-based’ performance and concerns around equitable practices)

Although there are many significantly positive elements within the KMF process which could support and promote the use of the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education, the findings also raise some red flags. One of the most significant concerns is the increasing impact of neoliberal policies and practices within the Kenya Music

Festival such as: competition and ‘results-based’ performance. Issues around recognition, promotion and other forms of reward based on achievement in reaching the National level and/or results-based performance at any of the levels of the Festival have begun to illuminate concerns around equitable policies and practices. Although Mr N added that new powers of the Teachers Service Commission no longer allow the President to control the promotion process of teachers, data collected throughout this research project pointed to a continuation of issues and concerns about transparency, accountability and corruption in attempts to increase opportunities for some schools or students.

Kenya has had a long and well-documented history of corruption issues in government and in other public sector fields, such as education (TJRC, 2013a). In a country in which certain cultures or groups of people have been traditionally marginalized, and corruption has long been left unchecked, opportunities for reward can often motivate people to try to circumvent the system. A concern arising from allegations of “unworthy actions” by teachers and schools arose at one point during the research period in 2010. Following a situation in which a school in the Enkolong division, which had not ‘officially’ qualified to move on to the next level of the Festival, was allowed to continue on, Ms H, a teacher at Olapa PS, has this response:

Right now with the music and drama competitions...there is what you call “unworthy competition”...like when we went to the District competition in Enkolong, we realized that they were taking only positions 1 and 2 to the Regional level....but....we find that....in a particular class, if one school did not achieve position 1 or 2, they were still moved forwardedbut if it’s ‘unworthy’...why should they continue to involve someone else who was ‘cut off’ at that particular level, who could prevent us and we have the best team...why should they do that? It’s only someone who is doing it out of malice.

Possibilities and Constraints for Teachers’ Use of the Arts and Cultural Practices for Socially Transformative Education

Although many of the teachers, head-teachers and other participants in this study spoke with great passion about why they believed the arts and cultural practices were important to quality education and schooling, the data reflects the influence of a number of constraints, and some aids, which were impacting teachers’ use of the arts and cultural practices, particularly during the formal instructional time in schools. These aids and constraints have been grouped into four broad categories which connect to educational policy (teacher education; school-

community-cultural connections; standardized curriculum and *the mean score disease*; wastage, marginalization, inequities and social reproduction).

Teacher Education

Teachers in this study, particularly those who had completed their teacher-training⁸⁷ programs after 2005, believe that recent reforms in teacher-training in Kenya, have brought increased support for and training in using the arts in education. When asked about teacher-training in arts-based pedagogy, Ms A replied “We have no problem...we are trained!” When teachers spoke about their use of the arts, their comments often reflected what Mr M and Ms H called an “arts-based approach” to teaching. Mr M and Ms H, teachers at Olapa PS, who had recently graduated from teacher-training programs, both spoke about the *arts-focused* stream in teacher-training in Kenya. Mr M and Ms H had both undertaken their pre-service teacher-training as part of the first cohort of a new model of teacher-training in Kenya which began in 2005. Under this two-year model of teacher-training, according to Mr M, students received a “broad overview of aspects of teacher-training” during their first year and were then directed into one of two “focused” approaches to pedagogy in their second year: *arts-based* or *science-based*. Mr M and Ms H said that the arts-based approach in their teacher-training program taught them about the importance of “creativity”, “improvisation” and “learner-centered pedagogy”. As Mr M described his understanding of arts-based and learner-centered approaches in his teaching of Mathematics, he said that:

Within our teaching there is an ‘arts-approach’ in tackling almost every subject...for example, in mathematics...there is construction, geometry...whereby we are talking about a ‘learner-centered approach’...whereby now you give the learner a chance to come up with different shapes and figures...we talk about triangles and cylinders and students get to manipulate different shapes...even ‘modelling’ is there...role-playing, dramatization...it is all there! Yes...quite interesting...when we get to the arts!!

A more detailed account of the teacher-training program in Kenya, with specific reference to the “arts-based” approach, was given by Ms R, a curriculum consultant at the Kenya Institute of Education⁸⁸ (KIE). Ms R’s was a senior curriculum developer in Creative Arts, across

⁸⁷ A more engaged discussion around both the discourses and the purposes of *teacher-training* and *teacher-education* is included in Chapters seven and eight.

⁸⁸ The core function of the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) is to develop curricular for all levels of education below the university. In 2013, under an act of Parliament, KIE became the

three levels from early childhood development (ECD) to secondary education. Ms R expressed a strong belief that in the development of curriculum, KIE advocated that the arts and sciences should be “put on the same level”. Ms R continued by saying “we know that there is a balance between them and that they are both critical to promote the values, skills and knowledge needed for the ‘holistic development of the child’”.

Ms R had also been a *teacher-trainer* at the teacher-training college in Nairobi. As she spoke about the “arts-based” approach that was promoted in primary teacher education, Ms R said “there was a lot of emphasis on skills and methods for the child to explore and improvise....going back to their roots and relevant to their culture or ethnic background.” Ms R said that arts-based pedagogy was seen to help “bond people together” and help students learn to “appreciate others”. In the arts-based approach, the teacher “rarely gives written questions....theory is not emphasized....the pedagogical approach is *practical*”. In describing the goals of the current two-year teacher-training program in Kenya, Ms R said they want the teacher to “get the skills”. In the second year of the program, primary teachers must choose between one of two areas: *music* or *arts and crafts*. There is a ‘practical exam’ for teacher-candidates at the end of the second year to “examine their skills”. At the end of each of the grade levels in Creative Arts in the primary syllabus, there is a topic called: Performing Arts” which expects that students will be able to participate (perform) in the two areas of *music* and *arts and crafts*.

There was an emphasis throughout the teacher-training program on developing linkages with the local community and with their traditional cultural practices. Ms R described the creation of these linkages between the teacher and their local school-community saying the teacher must “dirty his hands” and “go out into the community”. This connection with the local community was seen as being important in order to: access materials; learn local techniques; and use the expertise of community resource people. She said that particularly under the current economic conditions, “very few resources should be bought....both the materials and the techniques should come from the local community”. Ms R argues that the use and promotion of local cultural art practices, helps students to “know and remember their culture....with pride”. As

“Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development” (KICD) and its core function expanded to include conducting educational research.

will be seen in the sections below, teachers at Olapa and Enkema PS's found both benefits and limitations with respect to access to both materials and local cultural knowledge and skills.

School-Community Cultural Connections

In addition to the education and training that new teachers are receiving around arts-based approaches through teacher education, many of the participants spoke of the strong belief in the value of creativity, holistic education and experiential learning within the traditional cultural epistemological beliefs and socio-cultural context of Maasai and other African tribes. Further, teachers and head-teachers believed that the desire to see the inclusion of culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogical approaches, particularly the use of traditional cultural practices, including music, dance and oration helped to build stronger school-community bonds. Participants in this study believed that the use of local languages during the development and performance of these creative pieces, particularly when presented at school-community social gatherings provides an opportunity to begin to address issues affecting the community.

The data reflects a common belief among participants that the current hegemonic form of education in Kenya which Mr H called the "Western form of schooling" has contributed to a marginalization or subjugation of many of the ontological and epistemological beliefs and practices which are valued in Maasai society and which play an important role in the social fabric of the community outside of the school. The inclusion and valuing of cultural aspects can contribute to increased engagement in school and to cultural sustainability. As Mr Y, the area education officer, noted:

The other issues that we've been talking about the *cultural aspects of the community* are sometimes *locked out*. For example, [Enkema PS]...you know they are doing so well now in the Music. Initially, when I came here, that school was almost dying and the enrollment was very low...but you know now that they have started coming out in the areas of Music and Dance...in a way, it is one of the reasons why children are coming to school...and it also in a way has *changed them*. Because they feel that whatever they are doing at home is also being *valued* in school...that element of having that feeling that their culture also being appreciated...you're not embracing it fully, but it is being appreciated...there are still issues that need to be addressed like girls education and the transition to high school...but they are being given the opportunity to use their culture in the school. And this opportunity to embrace and perform their culture also helps to bring and attract some of the girls to school. And it is not only in [Enkema], but in [other schools in the Enkolong division]...the pupils and the teachers are much

more involved...especially in 2nd term (during the period of the Kenya Music Festival), in music and dance and poetry.

Continuing Colonial/Neocolonial Practices and the “Mean Score Disease”

One of the stark reminders of the impact of the colonial system of education becomes apparent each time I made the transition from the villages or rural areas into the school compounds, both at Olapa PS and at Enkema PS. Under the continuation of many of the original colonial strict and standardized policies, the vibrancy and creativity, when the ‘morning bells rung’ to signal the beginning of the formal school day, were visibly stifled. Each school has their own distinct uniform which all students must conform to and wear. Olapa, with its blue and white checkered dresses for the girls and blue and white checkered shirts, navy shorts and navy socks for the boys and black shoes for all; Enkema’s colours were khaki green and white checkered. As each new student arrived for registration at Olapa PS, as a boarding school student, they brought with them a locked metal storage case in which they had placed all items on a ‘standardized boarding school list’ (2 school uniforms, shoes, school supplies, and other their personal items listed). Their ‘kit’ was to be inspected by the head-teacher or deputy head-teacher and their school fees paid by the parent or guardian prior to admittance.

During my observations at both schools, even though I heard the discourse from supervisory officers, head-teachers and some of the younger teachers about *learner-centered pedagogy*⁸⁹ and the new Kenyan education policy around *Child-Friendly schools*, there was a clear and predominant continuation of many of the colonial notions of power differential between students and teachers and a predominance of the ‘banking approach’ to the transfer of a standardized curriculum. One of the journal entries in my field notebook towards the end of the 2011 research period in Kenya notes these issues of power and control:

I still saw a few examples of teachers punishing students by *caning* them...felt challenged in my own ethical thinking...because this issue of hitting a child by a teacher would never be condoned...and in fact, would lead to firing and very likely ‘abuse charges’ for teachers in Ontario. However, it appeared that this form of discipline was in some way normalized at both Olapa and Enkema PSs. In the 5

⁸⁹ Although some scholars (Tabulawa, 2003; Nykiel-Hebert, 2004) have critiqued the effectiveness and appropriateness of the transfer of Western policy approaches, such as *learner-centered pedagogy*, to non-Western countries. Tabulawa (2003) argues further that many of these new approaches to pedagogy came through international aid agencies’ and were often based more on political and ideological goals than on “pedagogical efficacy”.

½ months that I spent observing in the Maasai primary school classrooms, all classes were very much teacher-directed and issues which would be classified as *behavioural issues*, in the schools that I had worked in in Canada, were not apparent. When the teacher walks into the classroom, the students all rise and say “Good Morning, Teacher....How are you today, sir or madam?” The teacher responds with “Very well.....Sit down.” (Field notebook, Cheetah ‘spiral’, Nov. 3, 2011).

Even though a number of the teachers, in both schools spoke about their understanding and use of what they called ‘learner-centered’ approaches, under the reality of the limitations of instructions resources and the pressures to cover the core curriculum in order to prepare students for the standardized examinations at the end of each term, most teachers chose to adopt a pedagogical approach which largely resembles what Freire (1970/2000) has termed a ‘banking approach’. During classroom instruction, in both schools, there were often three to four students sharing a desk and one textbook; classrooms had one blackboard, and generally one or two pieces of white chalk; and teachers used a standardized ‘teaching manual’ which corresponded to whichever textbook had been assigned and had provided for the students in their particular grade and subject. Although the home language for over 95% of the students at both schools was Maa, the official language of instruction in schools was English. Both Mr H and Mr J, shared a belief that teachers in the lower primary grades (Standard one to three) should use Maa or Kiswahili to help students whose level of English literacy was low. However, I soon learned, through my attempts to converse with many of the students in the senior primary grades (Standard seven and eight), that many of the senior primary students also had very low levels of functional conversational English. During their instructional time, the majority of teachers spoke English; taught their lessons directly from the teachers’ guidebook (written in English); and wrote basic notes on the blackboard for the students to copy.

In specific reference to teachers’ use of the arts and cultural practices, the data identifies a number of constraints arising from the existing educational policies, particularly the assessment policies. Ms A notes the impact of the high-stakes standardized examination context in which their teaching is currently situated. Under the current structure of the KCPE, the arts are not included as an *examinable subject*⁹⁰. Although the arts are listed as one of the core subjects

⁹⁰ Ms R had asserted that in response to a public outcry that “the primary curriculum was too heavy”, the arts had been removed as an ‘examinable subject’ by the Ministry in an effort to “lighten the burden”. Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, the primary curriculum, which

within the Primary Syllabus, and are included on the instructional schedule written on the blackboard in the Teachers Room at both Olapa and Enkema PSs, teachers frequently used the ‘arts’ period in order to cover more of the curriculum content in the five subjects included on the KCPE in order to better prepare students for their exams. As Ms A recounts

These days, *Arts* is an *unexaminable* subject. These days, it is not taken seriously here. Nobody takes it seriously, as it was taken when it used to be...*examinable*.

The impact of the *Mean Score Disease* on the arts is also seen during the dissemination of the student achievement data via report cards at the end of each term and at the end of the year. Even though the arts are included in the syllabus, Ms A says, the arts are “not reported on”. The subjects that students, teachers and parents are all focussing on are the five subjects being examined for the KCPE. Many of the Maasai parents are very interested in seeing how their children are doing in school and often “look for educated people to translate” what is on the report cards for them. Ms A reiterates “lack of examination affects teaching arts”. Ms A noted that “in the past”, when she was a student at Olapa PS in the 1980s, prior to the educational reforms which introduced the current Primary Syllabus (Republic of Kenya, 2002) and assessment policies, the arts were included as an *examinable subject*. Ms A felt that because of its inclusion as one of the examinable subjects, it was given more value and head-teachers ensured that teachers were covering the curriculum expectations set out in the syllabus for the Arts.

A number of teachers at Olapa PS expressed serious concerns that the content requirements of the Primary Syllabus were “extensive” and it was “extremely difficult to cover the material” and to prepare students to be successful on all of this material for the KCPE. Mr H asserted that “students and teachers frequently spend the first two terms (January to July) *teaching the core material*, emphasizing the core knowledge in the six examinable subjects and then spend most of the third term (September to November) doing *revision* of the material prior

had been implemented in 1985 under the “8-4-4 educational policy”, was increasingly being also criticized for being overcrowded or overstretched (Owino, 1997; King & McGrath, 2002; Amutabi, 2003). According to Owino (1997), the Kamunge Report had also raised the issues of curriculum overcrowding and concerns that this “may result in a superficial coverage of the curriculum, which could not give pupils enough grasp of the basic principles and concepts” (p. 32).

to the writing of KCPE.”⁹¹ In giving an example from the Social Studies curriculum, which she teaches, Ms A said that one of the constraints influencing her ability to use the arts in her teaching was not only the “wide Syllabus, particularly in Social Studies” but also:

Ms A: The time limits, the time in which you are to complete the Syllabus...for example, we are supposed to have completed the Syllabus by the end of September! So you have to rush. In fact, in all the other subjects, like Kiswahili, you are supposed to complete them by the end of July.

Mary: Why? What happens after September?

Ms A: *Revision*....for the end of the year.

Mary: So there is no *new* teaching after September?

Ms A: Yes, so that you can have time to *revise*. Because they start doing the exams in November.

Mary: So, October is *revision month*?

Ms A: Yes.

The pressure to prepare students to achieve a passing grade on the KCPE continues to escalate. The data showed that both schools were increasing the frequency of these standardized, paper and pencil, objective tests of knowledge. One day, when I arrived at Olapa PS, I saw a chart written in chalk on the small blackboard outside the Teachers’ room....it listed the ‘Mean-Scores’ for each of the classes and their results on the past five practice-exams for their specific grade levels. Although I only observed the writing of these large-scale, standardized assessments at the end of two school terms, I learned from Ms A, during a follow-up interview in September, 2011, that “in fact, the system has changed recently and we are now doing examinations at the end of every month, plus mid-term exams and end-of-term exams for ALL grades”. Ms A added that they had even adopted a new strategy to try to push students to “achieve higher scores. We are cheating a little bit because in fact we set the level at 300 in Standard 7 as the level they need

⁹¹ Although it is only the students in Standard eight who write the KCPE examination, end-of-term examinations are conducted for students in all the other grades. These “standardized grade-level examinations” are designed to assess their curricular content knowledge from the syllabus. Mr H said that Olapa PS had purchased “practice tests” for each term of each grade levels and was re-using the same examinations each year, due to financial constraints.

to achieve in order to be promoted to Standard 8.”⁹² During the research period in 2010, I noted that these large-scale, standardized, paper and pencil examinations were also being conducted with the Baby class, Pre-Unit class and Nursery class (3, 4, and 5 years olds). Mr H expressed strong sentiments in describing the impact of what he called “the Mean-Score Disease” on students and teachers “not only at Olapa, but throughout Kenya.”

Students and teachers in this area face multiple barriers in their efforts to attain a ‘passing grade’ on the KCPE, and to gain access to secondary education. As I reviewed the results of the 2010 KCPE, I found that at Olapa PS, of the 47 students that wrote the exam, 31 passed and 16 failed. At Enkema PS, the results showed that of the 12 students writing the exam, 4 passed and 8 failed. The comments from the two head-teachers of these schools help to gain a deeper understanding of the implication of these results and of the additional barriers and challenges ahead for those students who have managed to pass the exam. Additionally, the students’ ‘test score’ on the KCPE can either open or restrict access to future educational opportunities. As Mr H explained that even if a student passes the exam, the classification of secondary school which they can attend depends on the ‘cut-off’ mark set by the secondary school. Within the Kenyan public education system, there are three classifications of secondary schools: National schools, Provincial schools and District schools⁹³. For the students who had ‘passed’ KCPE, but had not achieved the ‘cut-off’ mark, the closest public District secondary school granted them admission because they were ‘local’ students. However, the closest *public* District secondary school is a boarding school, and students must pay tuition fees in order to attend it. The next closest public

⁹² All ‘end-of-term’ examinations are marked out of 500 points. Students must achieve a mark of 250 or above in order to be promoted to the next level.

⁹³ It is important to note that within the Kenyan education system, there is a *private school system* which exists at both the primary and secondary school levels. At the secondary school level, the private schools are also classified into three divisions (National, Provincial and District schools). Students in both the public and private school systems must write the KCPE and the results for both are publically available. Following the end of each school year and the announcement of the results of the KCPE, school districts hold what are called “Prize-Giving Days” in which the results are used to award individual students, teachers and schools prizes. Competition for these prizes is separated into public and private; overall results on the KCPE and subject-specific results within the KCPE. Sometime after Christmas, the results of the KCPE are announced on the radio and are posted in the national and local newspapers. They are also posted on the ministry website. In these results, students and schools are ranked. They also note and post categories such as ‘Top Male’, ‘Top Female’, ‘Top 10 students’, and School rankings.

District secondary school is approximately forty kilometers away. Maasai students would either have to walk to and from school on dirt roads (in the dry season) or board with a relative or friend in that village, if they chose to attend.

Wastage, Inequities and Continued Marginalization

Many of the teachers spoke of the “disconnect” between the current curriculum, the current lives of students in the Enkolong region and the socio-economic and cultural context in which they were living. With the new educational reforms in 2002, came the large-scale externally developed, standardized testing of the ‘core knowledge’ within a narrow set of five examinable subjects. Ms A voiced a strong concern that this current approach to education “fails to connect to the social, cultural and economic contexts in which many of these youth live”. She argued “there is a lot of *wastage* in the current educational system in our country”. As I probed her to explain the term *wastage*, Ms A expressed a belief that the current system “failed to prepare the students in this [Maasai] community...especially those who drop out or can’t continue after primary school...with the skills and knowledge needed to get jobs so they could help their families and communities”. Prior to these educational reforms, the curriculum included a great focus on ‘skill development’ and as Ms A argued these could be used “for their own benefit after schooling...to earn an income”. Ms A added, “not just the arts, but also some of the other subjects which were eliminated under the new educational reforms, such as *Agriculture* and *Home Science*”. Ms A argued that these subjects gave student life skills that were used “in social situations” and for “survival” in this area. She spoke passionately about a number of the skills that were taught:

Agriculture could give the child *cultivation skills, farming skills* that are actually skills that are needed to survive. Agriculture is the backbone of the African society. Agriculture is not only about *crops*, agriculture is about *animals and crops*. So the children could learn the different farming methods, they could grow small shambas [garden plots] at school, different types of crops.

Although the Creative Arts curriculum in the primary syllabus includes topics related to the development of “practical skills” in music and arts and crafts, the data from this study indicates that teachers are giving limited attention to the development of these skills due to the pressures they feel to cover the curriculum in the subjects included on the KCPE. Teachers’ also expressed a number of constraints which impacted their abilities to cover the Creative Arts curriculum and to develop practical skills in music and arts and crafts for the students in schools

in Maasai communities in the ASAL region. Ms R, the Creative Arts curriculum consultant at KIE had stressed the importance of creating links with the local community in order to: gather local, culturally responsive materials; and to draw on the traditional cultural arts knowledge and skills of local community. The data from the teachers at Olapa and Enkema PS reflects many constraints in accessing local culturally responsive materials⁹⁴. In describing the use of the arts in their schools, almost every teacher and head-teacher spoke of the use of local materials which are still used in traditional Maasai cultural practices such as clay, ostrich feathers, horns, bone and wood. However, teachers spoke of the lack of availability of many of these types of materials within the formal school compounds and area. Mr L and Mr E, teachers at Enkema PS said that in the past they has used clay for modelling, however, with the extreme drought, these materials were no longer available. Ms A, at Olapa PS said they did use clay because “the river bed is almost five km away. It can be dangerous to send students there during rainy season and during the drought, it is impossible to gather clay”. When I inquired whether teachers were still employing any of the traditional wood carving in their curriculum, I learned from Ms A that access to wood in this area had been significantly depleted during the 1980s when the area was devastated by a federal policy of ‘clear-cutting’ to provide firewood and charcoal for Nairobi and the larger urban centers. Mr H, the head-teacher at Olapa, said the practice of gathering wood in this area, particularly during periods of drought, is dangerous for students due to the risk of “being attacked by wild animals.” When local materials and resources are not available, teachers at both schools said they used materials available from the school or *improvised*. Some teachers spoke about having used materials such as manila paper, felt pens and paint. However, the data reflected significant challenges in availability and access to these types of materials during formal instructional time. While he recognized the constraints of limited resources for teachers in the Enkolong division, the DQASO (District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer), Mr D argued that teachers should be able to *improvise* in order to incorporate an arts-based approach in their teaching. Mr D, believed that teachers can “often *self-generate* these things...they can *improvise*. Yes, *improvisation* here is the key! Because what we find is that it is often very costly”. Ms H noted that during her teacher-training program, the most common pedagogical

⁹⁴ Many of the traditional Maasai cultural practices utilized place-based natural materials which often held cultural, environmental and spiritual significance (Mallett, 1923; Thomson, 1885; Turle, 1992).

solution recommended to address the constraints of limited resources was also *improvisation*. She mused “you know that as a teacher, you are taught, when you are in college that you have to know how to ‘improvise’...so you know when you can’t get paint...improvise”⁹⁵.

Further, the data reflects a number of local and systemic barriers to teachers’ use of the arts within the co-curricular programs. Teachers and head-teachers claimed that *marginalization* and *inadequate financial support* constrained not only their curricular use of arts-based pedagogy, but also significantly impacted their access to participation in arts-based educational and performance opportunities within the Kenya Music Festival programs. Both Mr H and Mr J claimed that “transportation challenges”, as a result of the rugged and remote geographical location of these schools, and “financial costs” associated with participation at the various levels in the KMF (transportation, accommodation and meals) created significant constraints to their involvement in these and other co-curricular activities. Additionally, access to traditional cultural instruments in the local area, for use in co-curricular programs was also becoming increasingly difficult. Ms A said that “although they often perform Maasai dances, choral chants and folk songs, both for school/community events and during the various levels of the KMF process, they do not have a *traditional Maasai horn* at the school and only have one drum”. These traditional instruments are expected components within most Maasai traditional cultural song and dances. Both Ms A, at Olapa PS and Mr J, at Enkema PS, said that they often have to “borrow or *rent*” traditional outfits, ostrich headdresses and traditional instruments such as the horns and drums from the community or the secondary school in the Enkolong division, in order to do these cultural performances or take part in the KMF programs for the cultural singing and dancing classes.

Chapter Summary

The chapter begins with a brief ‘case snapshot’ of each of the two schools in order to situate the findings within the social, cultural, political, economic and environmental contexts in which the teachers and schools are using the arts. Secondly, participants articulate their own notions about the ‘goals of education’ and the purpose of schools. This data has been grouped

⁹⁵ Though these comments may seem in jest, the reality of the situation in which teachers work, in the Enkolong division, is that there often is no paint.

under two key themes: expanding capabilities for engaged citizenship; and promoting peaceful coexistence. Thirdly, the teachers' conception of the arts and cultural practice reflects a combination of the influences of traditional Maasai cultural knowledge, colonial-Eurocentrism and neoliberalism. However, the conception of the arts arising from the curriculum, teacher education and educational policy and programs in Kenya reflects a much stronger predominance of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal notions about the arts. Fourthly, the chapter presents the reasons *why* teachers and schools in this case study are using the arts, under three themes: helping students learn and communicate understanding; developing skills and capabilities; and, school-community *sensitization* and engagement. Fifthly, the findings which illustrate *how* participants were using creative, critical and culturally relevant approaches are grouped into three foci: formal curriculum instruction; informal education (school-community); and co-curricular programs. The chapter highlights the possibilities and challenges within a unique nationally coordinated co-curricular program, called the Kenya Music Festival (KMF), to promote students', teachers' and schools' use of the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education. Finally, the chapter outlines a number of aids and constraints which are influencing teachers' and schools' use of the arts, under four themes: teacher-training; school-community-cultural connections; continued colonial/neocolonial practices and the *Mean Score Disease*; and *wastage*, inequities and continued marginalization.

The next chapter will discuss the findings, specifically the tensions and contradictions that exist for the teachers in this case study as a result of the ideological influences of colonialism, neoliberalism and democracy on education in Kenya. Further, it will analyze and discuss the impact of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal influences more specifically on the teachers' understanding and use of the arts and cultural practices for democratic and transformative education, under six broad sections: conceptions of the arts, curriculum, school-community engagement, pedagogy and teacher education, accountability and assessment, and transformative educational leadership.

Chapter Seven

Policy and Pedagogy: Tensions, Contradictions and Possibilities for the Arts and Cultural Praxis in Schools for Democratic and Transformative education

The indigenous African cultural arts knowledge system, as an integral part of their society, is conceived and still practiced as a soft science of attitude formation, reformation and societal management (Nzewi, 2009, Knowledge Field).

For most of the twentieth century in America the field of arts education has been overwhelmingly focused on the teaching of the arts in schools. But now, when it is abundantly clear that so much learning takes place outside of the school and even well beyond the school-going years, arts educators can no longer hold on to such narrow view of where and how people can access arts learning experiences....It is time to embrace this broader view of the arts in the lives and learning experiences of young people and adults and to explore all of the ways in which we can rethink and reshape relationships and opportunities for aligning this field with long-standing efforts of artists and educators to humanize our schools, strengthen our communities, and create a healthier society. (Seidel, 2013, p. 3)

The findings from Chapter six highlighted the impact of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies on teachers' practice in these schools in Kenya, while at the same time illuminating an underlying belief, based on teachers' articulated goals of education, in the democratic and transformative purposes of education. Chapter seven will analyze and discuss the tensions and contradictions between the ideological influences of colonialism, neoliberalism and democracy on education in Kenya. Under the influence of these multiple ideologies, the chapter will further analyze and discuss the possibilities and constraints on the teachers' use of the arts and cultural practices in Kenya for democratic and transformative education. The chapter will be divided into two sections, each with sub-sections. In the first section, I analyze and discuss the impact of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal influences on the larger context of education in Kenya, in which the teachers in this study live and teach. It is divided into two sub-sections: goals of education: conflicting tensions between colonial, neoliberal and democratic ideologies in Kenya; and, possibilities for democratic and transformative education in Kenya: A brief policy analysis of Kenya Vision 2030. In the second section, I focus the analysis and discussion on the impact of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal influences on teachers' understanding and use of the arts and cultural practices in this case study. It is divided into six sub-sections: conceptions of the arts: rhetoric of effects; rhetoric of cultural production;

curriculum; pedagogy and teacher education; accountability and assessment; and, transformative educational leadership.

Impact of Colonial-Eurocentric and Neoliberal Influences on Education in Kenya

Goals of Education: Conflicting Tensions between Colonial, Neoliberal and Democratic ideologies

Although all of the teachers and head-teachers in this study have been educated throughout their formal education in schooling systems in Kenya, which many of the teachers continue to refer to as “Western education”, they have also been influenced by their lived experiences as Maasai or as other Kenyan ethnicities. The Maasai in southern Kenya had managed to sustain their cultural knowledges and practices largely due to their resistance to formal (colonial) schooling until the 1970s (Hodgson, 2011). However, as the post-colonial government in Kenya began to engage in structural adjustment programs (SAPs) introduced by the World Bank, a global neoliberal policy actor, the Olapa boarding school and a few other primary schools were built in the ASAL region of southern Kenya (Murunga, 2007). Under the impact of the formal-schooling process, which employed a deficit mentality, many of the rich, creative, culturally responsive, relevant and engaged forms of epistemology within traditional Maasai cultural practice, have been replaced by policies and pedagogical approaches which aim to promote colonial and neoliberal ideologies⁹⁶. The impact of these policies, continue to privilege those from the dominant culture (in Kenya, particularly, the Kikuyu, who were largely given governance powers following independence from the British) (TJRC, 2013a). As has been evidenced through the publishing of the TJRC (2013a-d) reports, although Kenya purported to become a democratic nation-state, following independence, the power, control and corruption within the government was often used to further marginalize and oppress those who were not part of the dominant ethnic culture. If Kenya truly wishes to move towards a vision of a robust democratic nation-state, such as is envisioned within the narrative of a robust global democracy, educational systems will need to develop critical, creative and engaged citizens who can take an active role in its social, political and economic transformation. More so, in the vision of a changing world order, theorized by Wallerstein (1998), educational reforms which recognize,

⁹⁶ The rich, creative, and engaged forms of epistemology within traditional Maasai cultural practice have been described in Chapter five.

value and promote critical democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches are necessary in order to unearth the knowledge of those groups subjugated through the colonial experience and to engage them in a robust global dialogue and action planning for the sake of a more socially, economically and environmentally just global society.

The teachers in this study clearly articulated what they saw as an overarching goal of education as the development of citizens who can contribute to their society (socially, politically and economically). As Ms A stated “to contribute to their day to day life in society in general and to others, in particular”. Although this goal may be seen as a commonly accepted goal of education within any democratic nation-state, for Maasai students and teachers living in this remote ASAL region of southern Kenya, who have been continually marginalized and oppressed under both colonial and post-colonial rule (TJRC, 2013a, 2013b), the findings speak to the framing of this goal for education as one of social and economic justice in Kenya. The teachers’ goals express a hope for self-determination, equity, social and economic justice. These notions have been included in what critical democratic education scholars call *liberatory* or, *emancipatory* goals of education (De Lissovoy, 2010; Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009; Freire, 1970/2000).

The teachers identified three sub-goals arising from the overarching goal of education which included: developing knowledge; developing skills; and, peaceful co-existence. The tensions in this goal exist between the pursuit of knowledge as identified within the core curriculum and in preparation of the large-scale, high-stakes, standardized exit examination (KCPE) or with the pursuit of knowledge, values and attitudes associated with the goals of education within a robust global democracy. The tensions within the second sub-goal exist between the notion of skill development for the market-place and skill development for democratic engagement. Although some critics argue that the development of ‘market-based’ skills continues to promote neoliberal ideology, as I walk the critical moral consciousness line for equity and justice during this research, I must continue to ask myself: From whose perspective is the development of ‘market-based skills’ a concern? and Why? From a critical theory perspective, it is not the issue of *earning an income from your skills and labour* that is concerning, it is the *inequitable distribution* of this income and issues of power and oppression. As critical comparative international education scholars remind us, it is vital to situate research within the context in which it is taking place (Acedo, 2010; Crossley, 2010). In many post-

colonial states, who lacked strong infrastructure for democratic governance, under the influence of capitalist ideologies, and corrupt leadership, equity gaps begin to appear. The post-colonial gerontocratic grip in Kenya (Nasong'o & Murunga, 2007) of powerful and corrupt leaders in Kenya that resulted in oppression and human rights atrocities, has been illuminated within the volumes of the TJRC (2013a). From the context of the teachers and students in this case study, particularly as Kenya enters a new era along its road to democracy, educational policies and pedagogies which promote the development of cultural knowledge and skills in the traditional cultural practices can be seen as contributing to social and economic justice, as well as to cultural sustainability. As Mr J argued when he showed me the certificates that they had received from the national level of the KMF, “these certificates are highly valued when students are looking for employment”. As Mr A, Assistant Chief in the Enkema area, said “these opportunities help our children to value and develop their traditional cultural knowledge and skills. They may be able to use these skills to help their families and the community”.

The articulation of the third sub-goal of education reflects the experiences of the teachers and students in Kenya who have endured a long history (colonial and post-colonial) of violence and ethnic conflict (TJRC, 2013a, 2013b)⁹⁷. The tensions associated with this goal link to the approaches to addressing issues of difference in society. A more detailed analytic discussion of each of these sub-goals will be included in the sub-section below which undertakes a critical discourse analysis of Kenya Vision 2030 and also within section two of this chapter.

Possibilities for Democratic and Transformative Education in Kenya: A Brief Policy Analysis of Kenya Vision 2030

The decision to include a brief policy analysis of one of the key Kenyan policy documents was informed by the work of Orsini and Smith (2007) who argue that given the onslaught of attacks on education from multiple fronts, policy analysts and policy makers need a variety of policy tools to deepen their analysis. In the constantly changing policy environment, critical policy analysis provides one additional tool which can be used to examine why and how language or discourse is being used in policy. It continues to probe the critical questions of why? for what purpose? and in whose interest? In reflecting on the role of policy documents and

⁹⁷ A more detailed account of the issues identified and discussed within the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission Report can be found in Chapter five.

policy actors in a robust democratic process, Joshee (2008) suggests a possible role for critical policy analysis in initiating a broader dialogue between policy discourse and policy action. Joshee (2007) uses critical policy discourse analysis and what she calls a *policy web* approach to identify the discrete and interrelated nature of policies and to present ways in which the web can serve to provide individuals with “some freedom to act in ways that support, extend, or undermine stated policy objectives and to introduce new ideas that may influence the policy discourse” (p. 174). As such, while this definition recognizes the important role of the state, it highlights that the state is not the only player as multiple actors can participate in the policy process. Joshee (2007) argues that it is within the spaces of this policy web that the radical policy approach works.

Before narrowing the focus to specific educational policy influences on the arts and cultural practice in education in Kenya, I will engage in a brief discussion of the impact of one of the key national-level policy documents which has been the basis for many of recent public reforms in Kenya, including education: Kenya Vision 2030 (Republic of Kenya, 2007). A critical analysis of each of the three pillars (economic, social and political) within Kenya Vision 2030 reflects the influence of a strong neoliberal ideology. Under the Economic Pillar, Kenya aims to “increase its annual GDP growth rates to an average of 10% over the vision horizon” (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 10). One of the six sectors included within its economic growth plan places a focus on tourism. The Vision sees tourism becoming a “leading sector in achieving [its] goals.....as Kenya aims to be among the top 10 long-haul tourist destinations in the world offering a high-end, diverse, and distinctive visitor experience” (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 10). This raises concerns from a critical theory perspective around the possibilities of a ‘hidden curriculum’ based on increasing neoliberal influences in education, market-based purposes of education and a National Goal of Education to: “promote respect for and development of Kenya’s rich and varied cultures” (MoEST Kenya, 2002, p. v). Within the conception of a robust global democracy, it is vital to recognize, value and promote the rich, vibrant and dynamic cultural knowledge and practices of the Maasai and of other ethnicities in Kenya. Decolonial and critical democratic education scholars would argue that this should not be based on neoliberal principles, but instead should be embedded within a pedagogical approach that de-links from coloniality and opens the opportunity for symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging that can challenge the status quo and create action plans for social transformation. As

Ladson-Billings (1995), Murray & West-Burns (2011) and Paris (2012) have argued, educational systems which incorporate culturally responsive, relevant and sustaining pedagogical approaches enable students to connect school and culture, and to develop the skills and talents that many of them bring into the formal schooling environment to provide more equitable approaches for youth to contribute, not only to the economic pillar, but also to the social and political pillars of Kenya Vision 2030.

The Social Pillar within Kenya Vision 2030, includes discourses which could be used to either promote and limit robust democratic engagement for social transformation as it speaks of the importance of "building a just and cohesive society that enjoys equitable social development in a clean and secure environment" (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 16). As Armstrong and Joshee (2009) argue, national discourses of *social cohesion*, reflect a neoliberal social justice view and a "benign approach that encourages us all to 'get along' and simply put aside our differences for the betterment of society" (p. 253). The narrative of a robust global democracy asserts that it is vital to open opportunities for individuals to bring their diverse knowledge and perspectives together to critically engage and to challenge the hegemonic ideologies of colonialism and neoliberalism. As part of the decolonial epistemic shift, Mignolo (2007) argues, that those who have been marginalized or oppressed under the colonial experience, through "the *pluriversity* of each local history and its narrative of decolonization can connect through that common experience and use it as the basis for a new common logic of knowing: border thinking" (p. 497). The narrative of a robust global democracy recognizes that differences exist and that individuals who live or have lived along or outside the borders bring valuable ways of knowing and being to Mouffe's (2002) notion of agonistic pluralism. In taking Dewey's (1916/2005) democratic principle of *consensus for difference*, it must be remembered that conflict and tension cannot and should not be eradicated as it is the very condition of a vibrant democracy.

The goal of the Education and Training sector, under the Social Pillar of Kenya Vision 2030, is to provide "globally competitive quality education, training and research" (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 16). Its focus and privileging of the global STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) educational reform policies is evident in its call to public and private universities to "expand enrolment, with an emphasis on science and technology courses [as] Kenya intends to have international ranking for her children's achievement in maths, science and technology" (p. 16). Concerns arise regarding the future of the arts and cultural praxis, as

well as the future of critical, creative and de-colonial pedagogy if this vision is used to inform the strategic planning for educational reforms. Kenya's Vision 2030 sees specific strategies to accomplish the vision for the educational sector to include: reforming secondary curricula; *modernising* teacher training (my italics); and strengthening partnerships with the private sector.

Although the vision of the Political Pillar in Kenya Vision 2030 sees itself as “a democratic political system that is issue-based, people-centered, result-oriented, and accountable to the public”, this vision of democracy reflects a *thin* conception of democracy influenced by *neoliberal* principles and ideology (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 22). Further neoliberal policy initiatives become evident through the discourse of high-level executive capability, rapid industrialization, decentralisation, devolution, public resource management and revenue sharing through devolved funds. (Republic of Kenya, 2007). As numerous critical scholars have argued the impact of neoliberal ideology and policies has been contributed to widening the socioeconomic gap, increasing levels of student disengagement and creating inequities in educational systems around the world (Banya, 2009; Hill & Kumar, 2009; Hursh & Henderson, 2011; McMahon & Portelli, 2012; Pieterse, 2007). Within the political pillar, the vision of democracy sees it as an issue-based and people-centered, and wishes to “harness the diversity of its peoples’ values, traditions and aspirations for the benefit of all” (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. 22). In this regard, educational policy and pedagogical approaches must be adopted which will allow, encourage and ignite pluriverse way of engaging the public in what Dewey (1954) calls a ‘community in the making’.

Impact of Colonial-Eurocentric Influences on Teachers’ Understanding and Use of the Arts and Cultural Practice

Teachers Conception of the Arts

The findings reveal the teachers’ complex understanding of the arts and cultural praxis which has been informed by three ideological influences: their traditional Maasai or other Kenyan ethnic cultural knowledge; colonialism; and, neoliberalism⁹⁸. This is not surprising as,

⁹⁸ Mignolo (2010b) puts forward the notion of a double-consciousness (modern/colonial subject). The data arising from the teacher’s understandings about their use of the arts in and for education raises what might be called a triple-consciousness, reflecting on one level their traditional Maasai consciousness (culturally-embedded “way of life”; symbolically creative way of knowing, expressing and engaging); on a second level their consciousness as a colonial-subject (deficit-

although the study was conducted in two schools located in a rural and remote Maasai region of southern Kenya, all of the teachers, head-teachers, teacher educators, arts consultants, educational policy developers and supervisory officers had been educated throughout their primary, secondary and tertiary education under systems which were largely influenced by colonial-Eurocentric policies and pedagogical approaches. Additionally, the current primary syllabus, teacher education programs and national educational assessment policies reflect the influence of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal policy and pedagogical influences. However, given that they have all been educated in and work within an educational system which continues to be dominated by colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies, their understanding of their use of the arts and cultural practices in both formal and informal education sees a much narrower conception and purpose of the arts which largely supports the social reproduction of the dominant ideologies of colonialism and neoliberalism.

An analysis of the findings reflects what Gatzambide-Fernandez (2013) calls a *rhetoric of effects* which thinks about the arts in terms of *what they do*. Gatzambide-Fernandez (2013) argues that this rhetoric has been commonly used by arts advocates and educational policy documents to justify the arts in terms of what they can do (particularly in terms of promoting and supporting the dominant ideological positions of colonial-Eurocentrism and neoliberalism). Some teacher's spoke of their rationale for teaching poetry and creative writing in the senior grades as being to further develop the creative skills of the students for success on the KCPE. Ms A had said that Standard eight students were "encouraged to begin to develop their own poems in Kiswahili, as a way to prepare for that composition component on the Kiswahili exam for the KCPE". Teachers also spoke of the development of many of the skills within the "Creative Arts" curriculum as being linked to improved possibilities for future employment. However, few of these skills were actually developed during the formal instructional time, as teachers felt they

approach and belief in the value of Western education/core knowledge over their own cultural knowledge); and third, a modernity consciousness informed by both colonial and global neoliberal ideologies (arts as a tool for the market; market-based principles of competition; focus on individual; efficiency). Although teachers may possess these three levels of consciousness, the data reflects the significant influence of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies and hence, the continued marginalization or oppression of the Maasai level of consciousness.

needed the instructional timeslot given for “Creative Arts” to cover the curriculum in the five core subjects.

However, an alternative discourse or rhetoric about the arts also appears from the data, arising from the Maasai and Kenyan cultural perspective which thinks more about the arts and cultural practice as *something everyone does* in their daily lives. The teachers’ traditional cultural knowledge and experience informs a broad conception of “the arts” as *cultural practice* which sees it as a symbolically creative way of knowing, expressing and engaging that *all individuals in society do*. Throughout the data and the literature, there is evidence that cultural practices such as singing, dancing, oration, beadwork, dramatic arts, carving, face and body painting, hair dying, etc. continue to be embedded in the daily lifestyle and livelihood in Maasai communities. Many of the comments made by teachers underscored a common belief in the role of the arts and cultural practice in the construction and sustainability of the Maasai cultural identity. Conceptualizing the arts and cultural practice in this way uses what Gaztambide-Fernandez (2013) terms a *rhetoric of cultural production*. Conceptualizing the arts and cultural practice as something that all cultures engage in, promotes and supports a more equitable policy approach which recognizes and values diverse forms of cultural practice to enable all youth, particularly those who have been marginalized under colonial and/or neoliberal educational systems, to bring and use their own cultural ways of knowing and being to contribute to democratic and transformative education. It is indeed the inclusion of these multiple perspectives in rich and robust dialogue that are the basis of a strong and healthy democracy.

Hope exists, within the data, for the democratizing and decolonizing possibilities for the arts and cultural praxis, arising from what I term a “resistance attitude” of the teachers who continue to articulate what they believe are broader goals of education which reflect elements within the theoretical framework in Chapter two of education for a robust global democracy and transformative education for social and economic justice. The remainder of this chapter will speak more specifically to the possibilities and constraints for teachers’ use of the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education in Kenya under five themes: curriculum; pedagogy and teacher education; school-community engagement; assessment; and, critical transformative educational leadership.

Formal and Informal Curriculum

Teachers in this study believe that the arts and cultural practices can play an important role in achieving the goals of education that they have articulated. However, the findings reveal some significant tensions and contradictions between the teachers' articulated goals of education, the disciplinary-siloed curriculum and the high-stakes, large-scale, standardized assessment policy which focusses on academic knowledge in five 'core subjects'. Both the teachers' articulated goals of education and the national goals of education speak to a much broader notion of quality education which sees the importance of developing a broad range of skills, knowledges and attitudes in students so that they can contribute socially, politically and economically as citizens in Kenya. Additionally, the national goals of education in Kenya speak to the need to offer a curriculum which respects and promotes Kenya's rich cultural diversity.

Under the conception of a robust global democracy, I would argue further that a broader curriculum must recognize, value and promote the development of cultural skills (including culturally responsive ways of knowing and communicating) to sustain the diverse perspectives and approaches that are vital within a robust democratic education. Decolonial scholars remind us that the colonial domination not only marginalized and subjugated the "ways of knowing and the languages for knowing" (Smith, 1999/2006, p. 68) of the colonized, but it also used the colonial languages to marginalize their "cultures, their values, and hence their minds" (wa Thiong'o, 1993, p. 31). In accepting the conception of a robust global democracy, grounded in an ethic of a globality of humanity, it is vital that we recognize, value and promote pluriverse ways of knowing, being and communicating in our efforts to address global issues which affect all who share what Kymlicka called 'the global commons' (2001). A critical-democratic and decolonial approach which utilizes the arts and cultural practices would necessitate a de-linking from the current narrow hegemonic privileging of colonial languages, literacy and forms of communication.

One of the significant tensions illuminated by the findings arises when teachers describe what Ms J called 'wastage' that results when students who drop out of school at the end of elementary school and lack relevant knowledge and skills to enable them to gain employment to sustain themselves and/or to contribute to their families and communities. She argued that 'in the past', prior to the introduction of the KCPE (high-stakes, large-scale standardized testing on a narrow notion of core knowledge in 5 academic subjects), education had a much broader focus.

During the 1990s, the curriculum and assessment policies focussed on the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes across a much wider range of subjects, including the development of traditional culturally responsive skills and knowledges which were deemed necessary for students to become contributing members of their community and society.

It is important to note that the arts continue to exist within the primary education syllabus as a subject called Creative Arts. However, within the Creative Arts curriculum, the purpose of the arts is seen as being narrowly focussed around two main objectives: the development of creativity, and skill development. In the introduction to Creative Arts, the purpose of the creative arts curriculum is to provide an “opportunity for the learner to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes which will be useful in talent development, economic development, self-satisfaction, entertainment, the development of creative faculties, good use of leisure time and moral uprightness” (Republic of Kenya, 2002, p. 192). Within this narrow curricular notion of the arts, there is limited acknowledgement of its potential to contribute to the democratic purposes of education, particularly as a way to imagine differently and as a way to express and communicate differently to increase opportunities for engaged participation. A key finding in this study is that although the curriculum adopts a narrow notion of the arts, teachers and the Maasai school-community, in both formal and informal educational settings, saw the arts as being much broader, and deeply embedded in their cultural practices. This broader conception of the arts became apparent when the participants stepped outside of the “formal schooling” context and shared their cultural knowledge, experiences and passions about the contributions that the arts could make to formal, informal and co-curricular education.

Prior to the Kenyan educational reforms in 2002, the curriculum for Creative Arts had an integration of theoretical and practical aspect of the arts, and was ‘examinable’. However, under the current primary syllabus, the Creative Arts are “wholly practical”. Ms R, a senior arts consultant with the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), argued that this “practical-oriented” approach to Creative Arts included the development of “skills, attitudes and knowledge” and emphasized *psychomotor* aspects more than *cognitive* aspects. An economic discourse and rationale for the “practical, skills-based” approach to Creative arts is clearly evident as Ms R argues “it is important to *market* the skills that the students are learning....the value of the *artifact*; the value of their *skills*”. At the same time, Ms R also expresses her *wish* that future educational reforms in the arts will continue to value and promote Kenyan knowledge and

“borrow from their Kenyan and African heritage....in order to keep it alive....and continue to promote the rich traditional cultural skills and knowledge”

During the curriculum reforms of the late twentieth century in Kenya, there was an effort made to recognize, value, and include the development of knowledge and skills within the Creative Arts curriculum which reflects the diversity within the modern and traditional cultural practices of the diverse ethnic population of Kenya. An examination and analysis of the topic and sub-topic areas within the Creative Arts curriculum finds that although there is a focus within the curriculum on the development of creative, communicative and practical skills, there is very limited mention of the development of critical skills. This narrow notion of the value of the arts and cultural practice fails to recognize that in many traditional indigenous societies, including the Maasai, cultural practices held an important place at social and political gatherings. There was a strong and collective belief from teachers and head-teachers at both Olapa and Enkema PS that the arts are still highly valued in the Maasai community as critical, creative and culturally responsive ways to address emerging issues in their community and culture, particularly for their ability to move individuals towards dialogue and collective action by touching their intimate senses. Nzewi (2010) has argued that the use of traditional indigenous musical arts practices can be an important curricular and pedagogical aspect of schooling to develop individual and collective social skills, including “humanity-consciousness”, to promote socially transformative education.

The disciplinary-siloed conception of Creative Arts, combined with a perceived de-valuing of the arts through its absence on the KCPE, was also cited as a reason why teachers were rarely teaching it as a stand-alone subject. Instead, most of the teachers were utilizing the arts in various ways and for various purposes across the curriculum integrated into other subject areas. This more *holistic* notion of the arts as a way of learning and expressing understanding follows indigenous conceptions of the education (Battiste, 2010, Dei, 2011). Further, arts and cultural praxis integration across the curriculum opens possibilities to engage in border-crossing between subjects and across student-school-community boundaries (Britzman, 1991; Bean, 1997; Giroux, 1991; Mignolo, 2007). However, even when integrated into the other subject areas, the primary purpose of the arts arising from the data saw it as a learning tool to support student learning of core knowledge and skills identified in the curriculum documents, particularly knowledge and skills, such as language arts and creative writing, which were being

assessed on the KCPE⁹⁹. Rarely were the arts integrated into the curriculum to provide a vehicle through which students could use cultural knowledge and practices to critically and creatively engage with issues in their lives and communities, ‘imagine differently’, critically and creatively express these imaginings, and perform their pieces to promote further what Medina (2012) calls *critical aesthetic engagement*.

The findings point to significant tensions between what the teachers described as their understanding of the goals of a *quality* education system, their motivations for using the arts, and the current curricular and assessment policies in Kenya. For participants in this study, the boundaries between formal and informal education were frequently blurred as they voiced a strong belief that this broad conception of the arts should be included, promoted and valued in curricular and co-curricular aspects of schooling in order to achieve the goals of education which they had articulated. The findings point to a notion of curriculum which resembles what Portelli and Vibert (2002) calls a *curriculum of life* in order to engage students, schools and the local community in addressing social and cultural issues to lead to a more socially just, inclusive and harmonious society¹⁰⁰. As a culturally responsive and relevant way to address emerging issues in the community, teachers’ believed that curricular and co-curricular arts-based activities could provide opportunities for the development of a wide range of skills and talents (including traditional cultural practices), beyond “academic work”.

Under neoliberal policies the increased framing of the arts as “skills development” has taken on a human capital or market-based approach, often using the discourse of *creativity and innovation* (D’Andrea, 2012; Florida, 2002, 2007; Florida & Martin, 2009). This neoliberal notion of skills development has been critiqued by critical education scholars as promoting inequities (Giroux, 2005). However, as evidenced by the findings, perhaps the ‘skills-based’ approach to the arts and cultural practice could also be viewed as contributing to the goals of education articulated for a robust global democracy, particularly if seen as *broad-based skills development* that focusses on local/cultural and national skills needed to: gain employment;

⁹⁹ This further reflects what Gaztambide-Fernandez (2013) calls the *rhetoric of effects*.

¹⁰⁰ The concept of a *curriculum of life* sees a dynamic relationship between teachers, students, knowledge and contexts; adopts an approach that takes students’ experiences seriously and centres of the possibilities for co-construction and co-production of knowledge; and is framed within a context of critical practice which explicitly takes into account issues of power, difference and marginality in all educational projects.

sustain traditional cultural skills and knowledge; and critically and creatively engage diverse students and school-communities. In arguing for a social justice approach to quality education systems, Tikly and Barrett (2011) argue that is important for educational systems to help build the skills that local communities value to enable students to contribute to their families, communities and to society, but also to ensure the sustainability of their local culture. In describing this alternative approach to understanding the notion of educational quality based on theories of social justice and transformation, Tikly and Barrett (2011) put forward what they call a “capabilities” approach. The three dimensions within the approach are: inclusion, relevance and democracy. Through a detailed analysis of these three inter-related dimensions of “quality of education” Tikly and Barrett's (2011) work offers an approach to educational policy which both encompasses and extends the emphasis on quality beyond that provided by a human capital and rights-based approach. Drawing on both critical democratic and decolonial theories, this approach "draws attention to the central importance of public dialogue and debate at the local, national and global levels about the nature of a quality education and quality frameworks at these levels"(Tikly & Barrett, 2011, p. 3). Further, it provides support for the value in re-visiting curricular, pedagogical and assessment methods which are being used to measure the quality of education which is being provided in schools.

Teacher Education: Arts, Cultural Praxis and Pedagogical approaches

Throughout the study, participants continually expressed their belief that the use of the arts and cultural practices in classrooms and school programs helped to create more active and interesting learning environments¹⁰¹. Teachers in this study believed that their arts-based pedagogical approaches increased student engagement and helped students learn. In reviewing the data, the key aspects of an arts-based pedagogical approach described by the teachers included: the importance of active and experiential learning; providing opportunities for students to use their skills and talents for learning and communicating; recognizing and valuing culturally responsive skills and knowledges; recognizing the *affective* power of the arts; and, including *performative* opportunities. Although teachers expressed these strong beliefs about the value of an arts-based pedagogical approach, the dominant pedagogical approach that was observed in classrooms throughout the period of this research project, reflected significant tensions between

¹⁰¹ Again, this reflects the *rhetoric of effects* (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013)

a pedagogical approach which they believed could help achieve the goals of education they had articulated , pedagogical approaches being presented in their teacher education programs and a pedagogical approach which they felt they needed to adopt to prepare their students to pass the KCPE.

As introduced in the previous section of this chapter, the blurring of the boundaries between curricular and co-curricular activities, for the participants in this study, is directly linked to their understanding of the purpose of education. Teachers and head-teachers saw the overarching goal of education as the development of citizens who had the knowledge, skills and values to live together in peaceful co-existence and contribute to their society (economically, politically and socially). To this end, participants believed that the arts, particularly traditional cultural practices, played a vital role in creating and sustaining strong school-community linkages and in opening spaces to address emerging issues in the community or nation using culturally responsive and culturally responsive approaches. However, in order to truly open spaces to engage with these issues within the paradigm of a robust global democracy, there would need to be a shift away from the dominant culture in schools, based on colonial and neoliberal principles and practices, towards one which values and espouses democratic and decolonial worldviews (Giroux, 2009a; De Lissovoy, 2010). For culturally diverse (and often 'othered') students, particularly those who have been the subjects of a *deficit approach* to teaching and who may have attempted to resist the status quo (either passively or aggressively), "assimilationist and individualistic worldviews offer only the worst form of guidance" (Margonis, 2011, p. 438). Rather than recognizing their diverse skills, knowledges and attitudes as gifts and talents to promote agency, educational policies informed by colonial and neoliberal ideologies often attempt to enforce standardization and conformity to a language structure and cultural way of being which is foreign and may even conflict with their own cultural ways of being.

In this case study, the predominant pedagogical approach that was being used by teachers, during the instructional periods, reflected what Freire (1970/2001) termed a "banking approach" in which teachers endeavored to deposit core knowledge from five subject areas into students in hopes that they would be able to withdraw this knowledge when it came time for the end-of-term or end-of-year large-scale, standardized examinations. This traditional colonial-Eurocentric pedagogical approach promotes what Paris (2012) calls a "deficit approach" in

which students are seen to be lacking in knowledge, rather than recognizing the rich cultural knowledge and skills that they possess. Even though many of the teachers gave examples of how they were using the arts within their teaching approaches, the vast majority of teachers were using the arts to help students learn the skills and knowledge to be successful on KCPE. The pedagogical approach used by teachers during the formal instructional periods significantly lacked any evidence of critical inquiry, critical-democratic engagement or transformative purposes of education.

Educational policy approaches aimed at de-linking from hegemonic colonial and neoliberal pedagogical approaches and developing the knowledge, skills and values to enable citizens to contribute to a robust democratic nation-state, must link to and inform the pedagogical approaches which are being promoted in teacher-education programs. Reforms in teacher education, since 2005 in Kenya, have attempted to expand teachers' understanding of pedagogical approaches by offering a choice of two streams in the second year of the program. However, the policy approach of asking teachers to choose either an arts-based or a science-based approach becomes problematic as it continues to create a *binary* or *siloed* approach informed by colonial-Eurocentric educational policy approaches. As a decolonial epistemic shift, indigenous and decolonial scholars would argue the need for a de-linking from this colonial approach towards a more holistic form of education ((Battiste, 2010; Dei, 2011; Martin, 2008). This holistic form of education would not only integrate knowledge across the disciplinary subjects, but would also recognize the need to reconnect the Cartesian separation of mind and spirit which is seen as vital to wholeness and balance of life (Kincheloe, 2006; Mucina, 2011). In order to prepare teachers for this decolonial epistemic shift, Kincheloe (2006) and Margonis (2011) argue that teacher education programs must aim to develop a *critical ontological awareness* or *ontological attitude* which seeks to disrupt the notion of a *coloniality of being* (Mignolo, 2011c). As Kincheloe (2006) argues further, the adoption of a critical ontological awareness also helps to deepen the social and relational bonds necessary to begin the healing of the colonial/soul wound resulting from the past and continuing colonial experiences in education.

Ms R asserted that the *arts-based approach* in the teacher education reforms in 2005 were introduced in an effort to become more “Afro-centrist” and more reflective of traditional African, indigenous learning approaches. However, the “arts-based” pedagogical approach which is being presented in the teacher-training for primary school teachers in Kenya, is primarily

aimed at helping teachers to develop the “practical skills” outlined for each grade level within the Creative Arts curriculum. Teacher-training to support the use of the arts and cultural practices for democratic and transformative education would require a more holistic approach which would see the arts and cultural practices integrated across the curriculum, and which would expand the pedagogical approaches presented to teacher-candidates to include both critical democratic and decolonial pedagogical principles that could be used in all subject areas. The addition of decolonial pedagogical principles would support, promote and value the sustainability of the rich traditional cultural skills, languages and knowledges that are currently recognized within the Goals of Education in Kenya. The addition of critical democratic principles would provide teachers with the skills to use the arts in combination with critical inquiry, problem-solving, solution-creation and engaged performances in their schools and communities for the purpose of creating awareness and taking action to address emerging issues, at the local and national level. As Paris (2012) argues, the use of culturally relevant approaches can help to confront the deficit-approach in which indigenous knowledges, skills, and ways of knowing and being were either marginalized or subjugated in favour of dominant colonial and neoliberal ideologies. The inclusion of decolonial pedagogical principles would see the value in confronting and challenging the privileging of reading and writing (in the colonial language of English) as a way of learning and communicating, to recognize, value and promote pluriverse cultural forms of expression and communication, such as orality, singing and drama in both English and in the local languages. The promotion of these more active, experiential, culturally responsive and engaged forms of pedagogy could also help to address issues such as student disengagement, drop-out or *wastage* that were presented in the data.

Additional concerns arise when arts-based approaches become conflated with “learner-centered pedagogy” and remain uninterrogated (Tabulawa, 2003; Nykiel-Herbert, 2004). Current approaches in education policy in Kenya (as well as in other parts of the world) which promote the discourse and use of arts-based approaches and learner-centered pedagogy need to be critiqued in terms of their contributions toward a robust democratic education. In describing their understanding of the purpose of these two policies, teachers at Olapa and Enkema PS felt that they would make schools feel more “inviting” and would help learning become more “active, experiential and interesting”. However, as Tabulawa (2003) argues, studies have yet to establish that “learner-centeredness is necessarily superior to traditional teaching in Third World countries

in terms of improving students' achievement in test scores" (p. 10). Tabulawa (2003) argues further that many of these new approaches to pedagogy came through international aid agencies' and were often based more on political and ideological goals than on "pedagogical efficacy". For the purpose of the argument in this thesis, learner-centered approaches need to be de-linked from any pedagogical purpose which sees them linked to success on externally developed standardized assessment and should be linked instead to the democratic purposes of education. As such, arts-based and learner-centered pedagogical approaches would value the importance of connecting learner's experiences to the learning process for the purpose of socially transformative education.

Arts-based pedagogical approaches which are tied to fixed notions of knowledge fail to open the possibilities for "releasing the imagination" that Greene (1995a) has argued so passionately about. Baldacchino (2008a) offers a bold critique of dominant notions of arts-based pedagogical approaches and argues that they are often trapped between the "assumptions of process and product" rather than taking a position which recognizes the experiential aspects of learning (p. 241). Baldacchino (2008a) speaks clearly to the challenges for arts education and for socially transformative education under a system in which knowledge is seen as something that is 'determined' and 'measurable' when he argues that "no possibilities for art or learning could ever emerge unless a radically different set of conditions give way to a state of affairs where knowledge is a matter to be *discovered* but never *determined*, and where a fixed ground is transformed into a wide horizon" (p. 241). It is these contradictions between the notion of core knowledge, the measurement of core knowledge and the goals of education within the conception of a robust global democracy which will need to be addressed in Kenya, and globally, to support the use of arts-based pedagogical approaches for socially transformative education

Transformative School-Community Engagement: Kenya Music Festival (KMF) model

Throughout this study, teachers and head-teachers asserted that strong school-community relationships were vital in order to begin the work of socially transformative education. Many participants asserted that the arts and cultural practices played an important role in linking the school and community (or even country). Many participants commented on the embedding of the arts in the social, cultural and epistemological fabric of Maasai and Kenyan society. Although teachers felt that many parents and community members were drawn to the school because of the use of the arts and cultural practices at Parents Days or Health Fairs, the data

reveals a weak sense of what Smyth et al. (2008), McMahon and Portelli (2012) and Fielding (2012) call a *critically-engaged school-community relationship*. As Fielding (2012) has argued, “in order to achieve the emancipatory potential to which these public spaces aspire we need to attend with care to a plurality of shared, subaltern/minority spaces within which identities, dispositions, and capacities can be negotiated, nurtured, and realized” (p. 12). In creating these shared, subaltern/minority spaces, Fielding (2012) raises a two-fold caution. First, the creation of too many separate ‘counter publics’ may work in opposition to the basic principles inherent to a robust democracy which necessitate a plurality of voices to provide multiple perspectives in a rich dialogue for the purpose of learning from each other. The second caution is that even though ‘spaces’ have been created for these counter publics to meet, effective critical engagement will be limited, unless there is a concurrent process to help develop the “dispositions or capacities to engage with dominant publics and the wider social and political contexts that frame present realities and future possibilities” (p. 17). For the purpose of a more in-depth discussion of the possibilities and constraints of these school-community and co-curricular programs, I would like to present a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the Kenya Music Festival, a sponsored organization and policy initiative of the Kenya Ministry of Education, which both schools participated in.

Strengths:

Teachers and head-teachers in this study believed that the KMF was an important program which supported and promoted the goals of education which they had articulated by providing opportunities for students to: develop skills, including culturally responsive and culturally sustaining skills; have these skills and talents identified and valued; and, use the themes and categories within the Festival as a focus to create pieces which addressed emerging issues in the community or country. The aim of the Festival *to value and promote the diverse traditional and popular cultures of Kenya* supports principles within a robust global democracy of pluriversality and coexistence. The experience of travelling to other parts of Kenya, during the KMF process, gives Maasai youth (and youth from other ethnic/cultural groups) the opportunity to experience diversity, to see and hear different perspectives and to dialogue and interact with others.

Additionally, the Kenya Music Festival program provides opportunities to de-link from the dominant notion of *quality education* in Kenya, in which the assessment of ‘quality’

measures students' knowledge and understanding through a narrow notion of literacy (reading and writing, primarily in the colonial language of English). Instead, the KMF model recognizes, values and promotes the use of music and creative, critical and culturally relevant ways of expressing and engaging with issues for the purpose of social transformation. These opportunities, within a Ministry-sponsored co-curricular program, enable students (and youth not enrolled in formal schooling) to bring diverse local and cultural perspectives to emerging issues affecting the nation-itself. It is these multiple and diverse perspectives which are needed in a healthy and robust democracy.

The bottom-up approach enables students and schools to perform the pieces they have written at the local level. In traditional indigenous cultures, the creative, musical and dramatic arts served a role in engaging the conscience of the community. Nzewi (2010) argues "the soft science of African indigenous musical arts was the spirit force that instilled humanity conscience, and also monitored, critiqued, sanctioned, approved the ethical conduct of societal systems" (p. 8). Story-telling through aesthetics, with music, dance & drama is still highly valued with Indigenous communities as ways to know and understand ourselves and the world. Both stories and one's life experiences are used to make sense from these, both individually and collectively. Critical performative pedagogy that brings together and engages individuals and communities sets up the possibility to create what Appadurai (1996) calls a 'community of sentiment'. Appadurai (1996) suggests that "imagination is the staging ground for action" (p. 7) and that a community of sentiment is a "group that begins to imagine and feel things together....capable of moving from shared imagination to collective action" (p. 8).

Teachers believed that the use of local languages and traditional cultural arts practices helps parents and community members to understand and engage in discussing issues presented. Both through the classes of *set poems* and *own composition*, students have the opportunity to problem-pose and to generate solutions related to emerging issues affecting their local communities and also issues impacting the nation itself. In addition to performing them within the formal competition of the KMF at the Divisional (local) level, many students will also use these creative, critical and culturally relevant pieces in performances at Parent Days and at local Health Fairs. Teachers believe that these performances help build strong linkages between the schools and their local communities. Teachers also believe that these forms of school-community

engagement are vital to help achieve their articulated goals of education by opening spaces for dialogue.

At the top-level of the Festival, the multi-sector partnerships and sponsorship, including public, private and third sector partners, and the selection of “special themes” which spoke to issues affecting the common good also reflect elements of the model which mesh with the conception of a robust global democracy.

Weakness:

Although parent and community interest and attendance is generally quite high at many of these school-community events in which the students are using traditional cultural arts practices for their performances, the rich and robust dialogue that is vital within the democratic process is very often missing. Instead, many of these performances end up being used either as a vehicle to transmit messages in one-direction; as a signaling to parents that the school is continuing to recognize, value and develop traditional cultural skills and knowledge; or simply as a form of cultural entertainment. Under the conception of a robust global democracy, concerns arise when schools are using cultural arts performances to *attract* the parents and then, to *sensitize* or deliver messages which have been influenced by a dominant ideology (colonial, neoliberal, Catholic church) without providing an opportunity for students, teachers, parents and community leaders to dialogue, debate and critically interrogate these messages following the performance.

The creation and sustaining of strong relationships beyond the walls of the classroom and school is often challenging, yet, critical scholars argue that this connection between schools and communities is essential for transformative education (Smyth, 2010; Smyth et al., 2008). Drawing on over 25 critical ethnographies of disadvantaged schools in Australia, John Smyth (2012) argues for the need to challenge the colonial and neoliberal models which promote the dominant neoliberal ideology of individualism, efficiency and accountability and have increasingly separated schools from their surrounding communities and from a socially transformative role of education. The findings from Smyth’s (2012) studies point to the possibilities for transformative education when “teachers, students, parents, and communities take seriously the opportunity to embrace a socially critical view of student engagement” (p. 74). In another of Smyth et al.’s (2008) studies which moved beyond the immediate school context to examine the effects of critical school-community engagement on student learning and

community capacity building, the findings provided an “optimistic view of the possibilities of transformative education through the intersecting notions of *critically engaged learning* and *critically engaged community capacity building*” (p. 149). To enable critical school-community engagement to this extent, bell hooks (2003) argues that the boundaries between schools and their communities need to become more permeable. By creating an environment which values and promotes school-community critical engagement teachers see themselves as “liaison[s] between communities and students, between communities and parents, between parents and the administration, between communities and administration, between administration and students” (Mary) (Solomon et al., 2011, p. 42). In their role as liaisons, teachers work to establish a connectedness with community, students and parents. The fostering of connectedness is instrumental in forging democratic spaces within the classroom.

Another weakness in the KMF model that is illuminated when analyzing the findings through a critical lens, is the absence of opportunity to challenge dominant cultural practices and the reproduction of some aspects of social or cultural inequities. This became particularly evident for me, as I noted some evidence of systemic barriers and gender discrimination, facing a number of female students during selection and performance situations. These challenges often reflect a continuation of the traditional patriarchal cultural structures, the impact of the media on the reifying of male-dominated Maasai Dance, and the potential opportunities arising for students, teacher-coaches and schools who are able to attend and win a class at the National level of the KMF. When funding is limited to support students and schools attending the Festival, teacher-coaches and head-teachers are forced to make decisions around which students and which classes they will select to fund. A particularly poignant observation came at the provincial-level competition of the KMF, in 2010, in Kakamega, when one of the schools competing in the Maasai Dance class included a number of female participants within their group¹⁰². In his comments following the performance, the male adjudicator (all of the adjudicators in the Maasai Dance class were male) said “the presence of the girls in the performance detracted from the authentic performance of this class”. It is this type of control, over symbolic creativity and freedom of mind and agency, which Greene (1995) and Arendt

¹⁰² Massai Dance is traditionally performed by the morans (the male warriors) when they come together for social gatherings or for special ‘stage of life’ celebrations.

(1958) argue need to be confronted in order to open possibilities for re-imagining the way the world could be and for taking action for transformative purposes towards social justice.

Opportunities:

The KMF model creates opportunities for students, teachers and schools to broaden the purpose of education beyond the narrow focus of achievement on KCPE to engage with emerging issues in their local communities and nation in their own languages and through their own cultural arts practices, as they present their pieces to other students, parents, and community members at school-community events. Further, it provides opportunities for students to develop, use and have recognized, a much broader range of skills and talents than are being promoted in the current standardized-testing assessment policy environment.

As schools and communities in Kenya continue to engage in tradition-modernity debates related to equity, diversity and social justice, I would argue that there is value in culturally relevant approaches which provide the opportunity for students to critically and creatively “imagine possibilities” and then engage in a rich and robust dialogue with parents and community leaders to create action plans together. At the same time, as Nasong'o and Risley (2009) and Quade et al. (2008) assert, teachers and community leaders should recognize that youth may also wish to incorporate aspects of popular culture or morph popular and traditional cultural practices together to create ‘new identities’ as they engage in confronting and challenging issues within the ‘tradition-modernity’ debate. As Ms J reminded us, the group of boys who had created the “Theatre Group” at Olapa PS had already begun some of the dramatic cultural morphing approaches.

In his work with indigenous communities in South Africa, Meki Nzewi (2010) uses traditional indigenous musical arts within schools and communities to promote *group creativity and production* for the purpose of creating action for social transformation. Nzewi (2010) asserts that the move from an educational paradigm focussed on competition and individual achievement to a group-centered approach can begin to produce what he terms profound *humanity* benefits. In his work with students exploring mono-cultural or multi-cultural themes, Nzewi (2010) found that the use of a group creativity and production approach “socializes and bonds the learners, inter-stimulates creative genius, commands mutual accommodation of one another’s capabilities and personalities, liberates introversion while taming self-centeredness, resolves disagreements and democratizes criticism” (p. 7).

The multi-leveled and progressive structure of the Festival model, particularly with its *performance opportunities* at each level, could be further developed to act as a *springboard* for post-performance engagement or community forum to reflect, dialogue, problem-pose further and hopefully begin to collectively engage in the development of local solutions. This approach would fit well with the goals of education articulated under the new “Policy Framework for Education” (Republic of Kenya, 2012b) which calls for “expanding democratic space and fostering political participation values” (p. 19). Further, at each stage of the Festival, youth-leadership forums could be created around the “special themes” of the Festival to open the spaces and facilitate the engagement of youth from around the district, province or country to use their creative and critical skills to “imagine other possibilities”, to collectively develop solutions, to develop leadership skills, and to inform the creation of future pieces.

Threats:

Although teachers and head-teachers saw participation in these school-community and co-curricular activities as being valuable educational experiences for their students, they argued that the current system, with its increasing emphasis on high-stakes, large-scale standardized examinations is creating barriers to these experiences and further marginalizing their students. Increasingly, as Mr H and Mr J asserted, there has been less financial support for these programs from the national and local levels, as priorities and funds are shifted to promote programs and initiatives which are associated with increased student success on the KCPE.

The increasing competitive nature of the KMF program, with rewards based on “results-based performance”, was also seen as being in contradiction to the democratic and socially transformative purposes of the Festival and with the teachers’ articulated goals of education. The issue of results-based performance and rewards reflects neoliberal principles and raises concerns about the increasing commodification of culture and notions of *cultural capital*. As Bourdieu (2002) has posited “economic capital is at the root of all other types of capital” (p. 288). In speaking about *cultural capital*, Bourdieu (2002) argues that it can exist in three different forms: the *embodied* state, the *objectified* state and the *institutionalized* state. It is important to examine the relationship and significance of each to educational policy and pedagogy. In Bourdieu’s (2002) conception, the *embodied* state refers to the cultivation, learning and embodiment of culture. The process of embodiment takes time, “which must be invested personally by the investor” (p. 283). This process, which Bourdieu argues implies “a labour of inculcation and

assimilation”, begins early on in life and becomes "the best hidden form of hereditary transmission of capital" (p. 284). Issues of power and its effect on the *embodied state* of cultural capital become problematic to critical scholars, particularly when this embodied state is controlled or exploited by others who possess economic or political capital (Giroux, 2008; Mignolo, 2011a). This is often evidenced in the low wages or salaries paid to artists, dancers and performers who become a marketable form of entertainment for the wealthy or privileged, such as within the growing eco-tourism industry in Kenya.

When this embodied state of cultural capital begins to produce material objects which can become 'transmissible in its materiality', (ie. songs, dances, attire, jewellery) this *objectified* state can be appropriated "both materially--which presupposes economic capital--and symbolically--which presupposes cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 285). Of significant importance to the argument in this thesis and to the ways in which educational policies and pedagogies influence the development of cultural capital is the third form: the *institutional* form. As culture becomes institutionalized within a dominant hegemonic institution, such as schools, Bourdieu (2002) argues that "one sees clearly the performative magic of the power of instituting...to impose recognition" (p. 285). In this way, schools and educational systems gain the power to decide whose culture, whose cultural epistemology and whose cultural ways of knowing and being are recognized and valued.....and whose are not.

The Mean Score Disease (Impact of High-Stakes, Standardized Testing on the Arts, Cultural Praxis and Democratic Education)

Although teachers and teacher educational institutions may believe that pedagogical approaches which recognize, value and promote the use of the arts and cultural practices can make a valuable contribution to quality education, Ms R, a senior arts consultant with the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), highlights some of the issues arising due to the interconnected nature of teacher education and National assessment policies. Ms R pointed to the impact of national examination policies, such as the KCPE on the promotion of the arts in teacher education, particularly at the primary level. Ms R asserted that “although the arts are examined at the secondary education level in Kenya, under the new assessment policies introduced in 2003, Creative Arts are not examined at the primary level. As a result, many teachers and schools do not feel that it is valued and it is not taught”. Hursh (2008) has argued that for reasons of *efficiency* and *standardization* on large-scale standardized assessments, very limited opportunity

is given for *creativity*. Ms R asserts that even though KIE believes that the arts are vital for a “balanced education”, the “mindset of those making educational policy in Kenyan’s must change”. Ms R described what she called a “close relationship between KIE and KNEC” (joint panels for analyzing exams and advising curriculum coordinators). She argues that “KNEC’s assessment policies are dictated by government policy” and that even though Ministry-developed curriculum promotes the arts, unless it is included as an examinable subject, it will continue to be “de-valued in the minds of Kenyan people”. She further asserted her belief that the recommendation to remove Creative Arts from the group of examinable subjects promoted a message to teachers and parents that “arts and creative arts should be taught, but only for practice and enjoyment”.

For teachers and head-teachers in this study, the impact of what Mr H called the *Mean Score Disease* created both tensions and contradictions for teachers and schools wishing to use the arts to achieve both their own goals of education, as well as the national goals of education. In Kenya, given the current educational policy environment in which the “score” on high-stakes, standardized examinations is seen as either opening or restricting possibilities for a student’s post-primary educational future, the teachers in this case study felt significant pressure to adopt whatever pedagogical approach would help to increase their test scores¹⁰³. Further, Ravitch (2012) and Crocco and Costigan (2007) have argued that policies and practices which aim to reward students and teachers at events like the annual Prize Day in school districts across Kenya, based on results on the KCPE, contribute to the de-professionalization of teachers and practices of “teaching to the test”. Although teachers spoke about a broader purpose of education and a much broader notion of the arts and cultural praxis than that which exists within the formal curriculum, under the pressures of the Mean Score Disease, their choice of pedagogical approach in the use of the arts was largely linked to helping students understand the knowledge necessary to be successful on KCPE.

The narrow notion of accountability for educational achievement, which is being used in the current KCPE assessment policy focusses on the ‘externally developed’ core knowledge in

¹⁰³ Higher scores on the KCPE provided increased possibilities for students to gain access to a Provincial or National level secondary school in Kenya. For students in the marginalized Maasai region, Mr H asserted that gaining access to a Provincial or National level schools was perceived as signaling a higher quality of education and increased post-secondary opportunities.

five subjects, thus privileging these subjects over others, such as Creative Arts, which are included in the Primary Syllabus. Further, it adopts neoliberal notions of efficiency, though the use of large-scale, standardized written examinations to assess students' knowledge in these core subjects. The findings reflect that the lack of inclusion of the arts within this set of core subjects has signaled to the teachers and head-teachers that the arts are not valued as highly in the curriculum as what they have called "academic work". In addition to devaluing of the arts as a subject area, teachers feel that, due to the pressures to cover the core knowledge for the KCPE, they do not have time during formal instructional periods to use the arts to go beyond the core knowledge to provide opportunities for students to critically engage, imagine differently and creatively express their understanding of a much broader range of topics and issues that are personally and culturally responsive based on students' lived experiences.

The contradiction between teachers' goals of education, the national goals of education and the current policy of large-scale, high-stakes, standardized assessment of core knowledge creates tensions of the participants around the notions of *quality* education. The narrow notion of quality education that is being created by the accountability measures within the KCPE are in contradiction with the broader goals of education in Kenya and of the goals of education in a robust global democracy. As Kenya continues to move forward along its path to becoming a more robust democratic nation-state, it would benefit from critically re-examining its conception of quality education¹⁰⁴. Under the conception of a robust global democracy presented in this thesis, the goals of education must include the development of critical, creative and engaged citizens who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute to the global common good. In order to open possibilities for students and teachers to use the arts and cultural praxis to contribute to the achievement of these goals, accountability and assessment practices must recognize, include and value the arts and cultural practices as ways for students to: build diverse culturally responsive skills and knowledge; critically and creatively 'imagine differently'; express their knowledge and understanding; and, engage with local and national level issues for social transformation.

¹⁰⁴ A keyword search in the new "Policy Framework for Education in Kenya" (Republic of Kenya, 2012b) which identified 4 occurrences of the term "democra" and 74 occurrences of the term "econom" identifies the increasing impact of neoliberal ideologies on conceptions of quality education in Kenya.

With the adoption of the new constitution and the election of a new president, Kenya continues to move along its path to strengthen itself as a democratic-nation state. The close links between education and nation-building have been identified both within the Constitution of Kenya (2010), Kenya Vision 2030 and the *Policy Framework for Education* (Republic of Kenya, 2012a). As the introduction to the new Policy Framework for Education states “education is seen as the primary means of economic and social mobility, national cohesion and social and economic development” (p. 9). The Ministry of Education’s “philosophy of education” sees education as focusing on “the acquisition of knowledge and skills” and sets as its priority “the provision of a holistic, quality education and training that promotes the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of learners” (p. 18). Further, in articulating the “mandate” of the Education Sector, the policy document sets out a clear role for education in political development by “expanding democratic space and fostering political participation values” (p. 19). In articulating its mandate toward economic and social development, it sees the role of education as going beyond building knowledge, to also develop the “skills”, “competences” and “values” to create “productive citizens” who have “the capacity to play a full part in the nation’s social and cultural development at a local and national level” (p. 19). Accountability to the public around these goals would require an educational assessment policy which goes beyond “academic knowledge” to include the assessment of “relevant and quality” under the specific mandates outlined under: economic, social and political development. The current approach of large-scale, high-stakes, narrowly focussed assessment of the core knowledge in five subject areas for the KCPE fails significantly in accounting for the broader philosophy and mandate of education within the Ministry of Education’s Policy Framework.

If the purpose of education is truly to develop students to become critical, creative and actively engaged citizens in a robust global democracy, then educational assessment must move from a policy approach based on the “assessment of learning” (through externally developed, written, standardized assessments of core knowledge of the dominant culture) towards a policy approach based on “assessment as learning” in which students and teachers are engaged in identifying the areas in which they would like to ‘grow’¹⁰⁵, as Dewey (1938) referred to education. Through the use of a broader set of assessment methods, such as portfolios or

¹⁰⁵ Dewey (1938) saw the active and experiential educative process as a process of continuity and growth.

performance opportunities, students can use pluriverse and culturally responsive ways, including the arts and cultural praxis, to demonstrate their learning and to become more critically and creatively engaged in the process of democratic and transformative education¹⁰⁶. In this way, the pluriverse and culturally responsive knowledge, skills and talents of students can be recognized, valued and developed to enable them to become actively engaged citizens and to increase their capabilities to contribute to their communities and to society.

Transformative Educational Leadership and the Arts and Cultural Praxis

Under the current primary educational context in Kenya, with its focus on student achievement through large-scale, high-stakes standardized examinations, teachers wishing to use the arts to work towards their own broader goals of education spoke of the important role of educational and community leaders. Critical educational leaders play a significant role in helping teachers, students and community members come together and work together to identify, discuss, imagine possibilities and develop critical and creative approaches for action towards social transformation. When participants were asked to describe the process they would undertake when planning to use the arts to address a controversial issue emerging within the community, many participants spoke of the need for guidance and support by leaders, from multiple levels within the school and community. In particular, the head-teacher was identified, by participants in both schools, as playing a key role. As I began to explore some of the characteristics of the head-teachers at the two schools in this research study, it was significant to note that they both identified as Maasai; both had been raised in the region and continued to live there, in traditional homesteads (manyattas) with their families; and, both were male.

Both head-teachers believed that, in addition to their formal, higher-education degrees, their cultural background, cultural knowledge and continued family presence within the community aided their ability to develop school-community linkages, particularly for addressing emerging issues in the community. As an ‘outsider’, living and learning in the Maasai community, I would add that the characteristic of being a male, as an educational leader in a

¹⁰⁶ See the work of the Boston Youth Arts Evaluation Project (BYAEP, 2012); *The Chicago Guide for Teaching and Learning in the Arts* (Chicago Public Schools, 2009); and the Multiliteracies Project (Giampapa, 2010); <http://www.multiliteracies.ca/index.php>). Although the Multiliteracies Project focusses more on multimodal, dual language assessment, it provides a strong overview of diverse assessment strategies that could also be used for transformative arts projects.

school in this region, brings with it both benefits and challenges. While in some ways, being a male leader within a traditional patriarchal society, continues to follow culturally accepted norms, both Mr H and Mr J, have also had to challenge other traditional culturally accepted practices. Although this type of socially transformative leadership role may raise different challenges for both male and female educational leaders in communities whose cultural practices differ from those of the dominant society, it speaks to issues of culturally sensitive and culturally responsive leadership development and to the selection and placement of educational leaders in schools. The findings spoke to three key characteristics of educational leaders in supporting teachers' use of the arts for socially transformative education:

- understand and value the broader purpose of education for democratic and transformative education;
- understand the importance of creating engaged school-communities (relational pedagogy; relationship-building; cultural sensitivity);
- understand the value of pedagogical approaches which are critical, creative, collaborative and culturally sensitive.

In addition to these three principles, Carolyn Shields (2011)) identifies seven principles that distinguish transformative leadership from other forms of leadership including: acknowledging power and privilege; articulating both individual and collective purposes (public and private good); deconstructing social-cultural knowledge frameworks that generate inequity and reconstructing them; balancing critique and promise; effecting deep and equitable change; working towards transformation: liberation, emancipation, democracy, equity, and excellence; and demonstrating moral courage and activism. Although this form of leadership could come from a variety of different levels in and outside the school, the school leader, principal or head-teacher usually plays a key role. Educational leadership for democracy, equity and social justice have been given a variety of terms within the literature, including critical-democratic leadership (Kincheloe, 1999) inclusive leadership (Ryan, 2006) and transformative leadership (Carr, 2011; Shields, 2010, 2011, 2013; Weiner, 2011). In her conception of transformative leadership, Shields (2011) presents a model of leadership which aligns well with critical and decolonial theory, understands the situatedness of leadership in diverse contexts and clearly articulates purpose:

Transformative leadership is a robust way of thinking about leadership that requires multiple styles and strategies. As one point, a transformative leader will

be collaborative, sharing leadership tasks and collaborating with multiple partners. Another time, a transformative leader will operate in a hierarchical, top-down way; and on still another occasion, that same leader may well engage in bargaining and securing agreement related to a mutually beneficial transaction. In other words, the style will vary with the circumstances. But what remains constant is the purpose: to work for, and to advocate, goals that are equitable, inclusive, socially just, and deeply democratic (a term I understand as a way of living together in respect and mutual benefit not as a form of governance) (p. 385)

In a truly robust democracy, transformative leadership cannot reside within the mandate of one individual in a school. The literature on transformative educational leadership points to the need to promote and engage critical transformative leadership principles and practices at multiple levels within the educational system. The findings from this case study point to the important role of transformative leaders at the local, district and national levels, including the public, private and third sectors. In addition to adults, much of the leadership within school-community groups came from Maasai youth, as was noted in the Music and Dance groups, Health Clubs and the Theatre Group at Olapa PS. As Shirley Steinberg (2011a) argues, youth are often seen through a deficit lens when it comes to taking on transformative leadership roles within a school, yet, when given the opportunity and support, these young people will often model the unbridled passion needed to initiate change projects to address inequities in their schools and within their communities. The challenge exists for school and system leaders to uphold the principles inherent in a robust democracy and to give youth the ‘permission’ to voice ideas and opinions which may conflict with dominant views.

Although both Mr H and Mr J expressed strong agreement that the head-teacher played an important role in supporting opportunities for students and teachers to use the arts to address emerging issues in the community, both also felt that under the increasing pressures of the high-stakes, large-scale standardized assessment policy context their roles were increasingly being seen as ‘managerial’. With teachers and schools increasingly being ranked based on students results of the KCPE, the head-teachers felt that they needed to focus their time and resources on instructional and assessment practices which would help improve test scores. As I listened and learned from Mr H and Mr J, I sensed the continual tension between the expectations of the formal school system, which continued to be influenced by colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies, their own goals of education, and their traditional socio-cultural ways of knowing and being. They expressed a deep belief in the importance of education to help students develop

knowledge, skills, and talents to enable them to contribute to their families and their communities, and also spoke with great pride about their rich traditional cultural skills and values. At the same time they both expressed concern that the development of these traditional cultural skills would not be sufficient to enable students to gain employment and that it was important for Maasai youth to gain what Mr H called a “Western education”. For educational systems within a robust global democracy, this move towards one dominant approach and the marginalization of pluriverse cultural ways of knowing, communicating and being is problematic. Although this issue must be taken up in much broader educational policy and pedagogical reforms, the findings from this study point to the important role of transformative educational leaders in recognizing, valuing and promoting the use of arts, including traditional and popular cultural practices in combination with critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches.

The discussion arising from the findings points to the need for educational reforms within curriculum, pedagogy, assessment policies and educational leadership development in order to open possibilities for teachers and schools to use the arts, particularly culturally responsive and culturally sustaining approaches, to support the achievement of the goals of education within a robust democratic nation-state.

Chapter Summary

Chapter seven engaged in a robust discussion of the findings around the possibilities and constraints for teachers’ use of the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education. The first section (containing two sub-sections) began by analyzing and discussing the influences of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal ideologies on education in Kenya. Within the first sub-section the analysis focussed more specifically on the tensions that exists for teachers’ around the goals of education between their Maasai/Kenyan lived experiences and the ideological influences of colonialism and neoliberalism. The second sub-section included a brief policy analysis of Kenya Vision 2030, illuminating tensions and possibilities for democratic and transformative education within its three pillars (economic, social and political). Section two narrowed its focus to analyze and discuss the influences of colonial-Eurocentrism and neoliberalism on teachers’ use of the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education. Within the six sub-sections, the first sub-section began by analyzing the influences

informing the teachers' conception of the arts and then focussed on five key themes emerging from the findings in Chapter six: curriculum; pedagogy and teacher education, school-community engagement; accountability and assessment, and transformative educational leadership. The second sub-section explored teachers' use of their arts for curricular purposes, which they see as including both formal and informal (co-curricular) activities. The third sub-section of the chapter discussed the impact of teacher education, particularly pedagogical approaches, on teachers' use of the arts for democratic and transformative education. The fourth sub-section discussed teachers' use of the arts, particularly culturally responsive and relevant approaches to promote school-community engagement and transformative education. Using a specific local-national example, the Kenya Music Festival, it included a SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of this model for democratizing and decolonizing education. The fifth sub-section discussed the significant negative impact of the narrow notion of accountability and the current high-stakes, standardized assessment policy (KCPE) in Kenya on teachers use of arts-based pedagogy during their instructional classes. Far more importantly, in drawing from the literature, it spoke to the need for reforming assessment policies and practices within a robust global democracy which recognize, value and promote: creativity; critical-democratic engagement; pluriverse forms of communication and expression; and culturally responsive knowledge and approaches. Finally, the chapter includes a discussion around the need for transformative critical educational leaders at the classroom, school and district level who recognize, value and support pedagogical approaches which are critical, creative, democratic and culturally sensitive.

The following, and final chapter, will draw from the analysis of the findings and the literature to posit a new pedagogical model, called the *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle* and discuss the implications for this model in the local context of this case study and in the global context. It will highlight areas for further research and provide some closing remarks.

Chapter Eight

Transformative Arts and Cultural Praxis Circle: Implications for Pedagogy and Policy, **Further Research and Closing Remarks**

‘Decolonization’ (like democracy) is neither achievable nor definable, rendering it ephemeral as a goal, but perpetual as a process. That is not to say, however, that ‘progress’ cannot be measured. In deed, the degree to which indigenous peoples are able to define and exercise political, intellectual, and spiritual sovereignty is an accurate measure of colonialist relations. (Grande, 2004, p. 166)

Imagination is the staging ground for action; A ‘community of sentiment’ is a group that begins to imagine and feel things together...capable of moving from shared imagination to collective action. (Appadurai, 1996, p. 7, p. 8)

Chapter eight is divided into six sections. The first section re-visits the research questions and highlights key findings. The second section uses a process which Kubow (2011) calls “cross-fertilizing” to draw from both the Maasai-Kenyan case findings and from the literature to posit a new pedagogical model, which is adapted from Mariana Souto-Manning’s (2010) *culture circle* model¹⁰⁷. In this model, which I call a *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle*, I connect the findings and the literature on critical-democratic and decolonial principles to create a more robust, engaged, culturally responsive and culturally relevant pedagogical approach for using the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education. The third section of the chapter will discuss the implications, for pedagogy and policy, of the implementation of this model in the Kenyan context and globally. The fourth section of the chapter outlines the significance of this research. The fifth section presents areas for further research, and in the final section, I offer some closing remarks.

Revisiting the Research Questions

In returning to the research questions which guided the study, I have sought to critically understand why and how teachers in this case study, located in an indigenous community in the global south, in a post-colonial, democratic nation-state were using the arts and cultural practices. The two-pronged theoretical framework of critical-democracy and decolonial theory

¹⁰⁷ Souto-Manning’s (2010) model of the culture circle was described in more detail in Chapter three.

guided my analysis of the case study. In Chapter two, I acknowledged the complexities inherent in the notion of democracy and laid out a new narrative for democracy, which I have called a *robust global democracy*, as the narrative of democracy in which this thesis is situated. In summarizing this new narrative for a *thicker* and more *global* narrative of democracy, the key elements would include: experience and social interaction; action for freedom and social transformation; an acceptance of the non-neutrality of the political and an understanding of the need for *agonistic struggle*; an ethic of the *globality of humanity*; a collective focus on the ‘global common good’; and an acceptance of the value of pluriversality and coexistence (Arendt, 1958; Dewey, 1916/2005; Grande, 2004; Louw, 1999, 2006; Mignolo, 2009, 2011c; Mouffe, 2002; Mucina, 2011; Portelli & Solomon, 2001; and, Price, 2007). In the sections that follow, I address the overarching research question and three sub-questions. Within the first section, I begin by summarizing the findings related to the first two sub-questions:

- What are the educational goals of these teachers?
- How do teachers understand their conception of the “arts”?

I then continue the summary by breaking the overarching question into two parts:

- Why are teachers and schools using the arts?
- How are the teachers and schools using the arts?

In sections two and three I discuss the final sub-question: What are the possibilities for and constraints on teachers’ use of the arts for socially transformative education? In answering the final question I draw from the findings and from the literature to posit a new pedagogical model which I call the *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle*. Within the discussion I explore the influence of national educational policies as possibilities and/or constraints for the incorporation of this model by teachers and schools in this local case study context.

As teachers’ and head-teachers spoke of their own understanding of the goals of education, what arose was an overarching goal which spoke to the development of citizens who can contribute to their society (economically, politically, and socially). This overarching goal can be broken down into three sub-goals which focused on helping students: gain knowledge; develop a diverse set of skills; and, develop attitudes/values/dispositions to live together in peaceful co-existence. Teachers’ conception of the arts and cultural praxis reflects the multiple and often conflicting influences of their traditional Maasai or other Kenyan ethnic cultural knowledge; colonialism; and neoliberalism. The dominant discourse within educational policy

documents uses what Gaztambide-Fernandez (2013) calls a *rhetoric of effects* to think about what the arts *can do*, particularly in supporting and promoting their ideological projects. However, an alternative discourse, arising from the teachers' traditional cultural knowledge, which Gaztambide-Fernandez (2013) calls a *rhetoric of cultural production* sees the arts and cultural practices as something that *people do* as a symbolically creative way of knowing, expressing and engaging.

Throughout this study, participants expressed a strong belief that the arts and cultural practices play an important role in: helping students learn; developing skills and capabilities; and, creating and sustaining school-community linkages for sensitization and education. Teachers and head-teachers felt that the use of arts-based pedagogical approaches helped students learn by expanding their teaching approach from a narrow focus on written or oral communication in the dominant languages of English or Kiswahili to a broader approach which recognized that students learn in different ways. In describing the qualities or aspects of the arts which they believed contributed to this enriched learning environment, teachers spoke of their experiential, interactive, affective and imaginative nature. In addition to aiding the retention of curricular knowledge, many of the participants in this study believed that an experiential and engaged pedagogical approach, which incorporated the arts and cultural practices, could help to keep students in school. Numerous participants expressed a belief that the transformative potential of the arts was linked to the uncertainty, excitement and aesthetic experience which goes beyond the intellect or "common sense" to touch something deeper which Mr D described as the "intimate senses".

Participants also expressed a belief that providing students with opportunities to use a wider variety of creative and culturally responsive ways of engaging with, communicating and presenting their understanding around topics which are closely related to their own lived experiences can also help to develop their skills and talents and build pride and confidence. As Ms A added, the current system in Kenya, with its focus on "academic work", fails to recognize and develop special talents and leads to what she called "wastage". Teachers believed that the exposure to a wide variety of creative arts, including traditional cultural practices, further enabled students to use and develop their own unique talents to "imagine the world differently" and to "communicate these imaginings to contribute to social change". Teachers and head-teachers also held a strong collective belief that skill and talent development in the arts, including

traditional cultural practices, had economic benefits. Teachers believe that the use of culturally responsive practices such as songs, poetry, dance and dramatic presentations which utilize the local language of Maa were effective approaches for passing on messages to parents and the community. Teachers and head-teachers believe that these student performances, which speak to emerging issues in the community or country help to open dialogue in the community, build bridges between the traditional and the modern (values, skills, practices) and plant the seeds for social change.

When participants spoke about their use of the arts in education, their notion of education frequently blurred the boundaries between what has been called *formal* and *informal* education. However, teachers' use of the arts and cultural practices during their formal instructional time was very limited as a result of the pressures they claimed were associated with preparing students for the high-stakes, large-scale, standardized examinations (KCPE). When used during instructional time, teachers almost never taught the subject of Creative Arts as a stand-alone subject, but instead integrated what some teachers called an "arts-based approach" into other subject areas for the primary purpose of helping students gain knowledge and skills required for the KCPE. Outside of formal instructional time, teachers and head-teachers were also using the arts in informal education (school-community *sensitization* and engagement), and in co-curricular programs, such as the Kenya Music Festival.

A Conceptual Model for the Arts for Decolonizing and Democratizing Education: *Transformative Arts and Cultural Praxis Circle*

The final research question explored the possibilities and constraints for teachers' use of the arts and cultural praxis for socially transformative education. The combination of the democratic notions embedded within the National goals of education, teachers' own understanding of the goals of education, and the alternative discourse of cultural production which see the arts and cultural praxis as a creatively symbolic way of knowing, expressing and engaging that people from all cultures do, provide hope and possibilities for more equitable and culturally relevant pedagogical and policy reform for transformative education. However, two significant constraints became apparent throughout the findings. The first is the impact of the high-stakes, large-scale standardized assessment policy (KCPE) on teacher practice and pedagogical approaches. The second is that although there has been a move in teacher education

to introduce an “arts-based” pedagogical approach, this approach, as explained by the participants in the study, focusses more on creativity and skill development in traditional cultural practices. The participants’ description of the arts-based pedagogical approach taught in the teacher-education programs lacks many of the critical-democratic and decolonial principles, presented in the literature in Chapter three, which could deepen its effectiveness for democratic and socially transformative education.

One of the strengths of a critical comparative international education case study methodology is the opportunity it provides to use the findings from the case analysis to inform the development of new policy or pedagogical approaches. The motivation for a new pedagogical model to support the teachers’ use of the arts and cultural praxis arose while I was immersed in both the data collection and data analysis phases of the research, particularly as a result of the experiences within the two focus groups that were conducted at Enkema PS and Olapa PS¹⁰⁸. The focus group task had been designed to give teachers and head-teachers freedom and opportunity to step outside of the constraints of the formal schooling (including pedagogical approaches), to use what Greene (2000) called their social imagination, as part of the process of developing a model for using the arts and cultural practices for democratic and transformative education. The specific task has asked the teachers and head-teachers to develop plans for using the arts and cultural practices to deepen the learning and engagement of students, teachers and community members in order to address issues which they identified as emerging issues in the community. In the analysis of both of the plans developed, I noticed similarities to what Souto-Manning (2010) has called a *culture circle*¹⁰⁹. In heeding the call from Patricia Kubow (2011) for comparativists to use the findings from *glocalized* responses to global issues to “cross-fertilize” each other. In drawing from the analysis and discussion of the findings, I have identified six aspects which the literature from critical-democratic and decolonial scholars speaks to which could be used to create a more robust, engaged, culturally responsive and culturally relevant pedagogical approach for using the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education. The six aspects include: experience; creativity/imagination;

¹⁰⁸ A description of the process and the data from the focus group that was conducted at Enkema PS is included in Chapter six under the section “How are the arts used: Informal education: School-community sensitization and engagement.”

¹⁰⁹ Souto-Manning’s (2010) culture circle model has been described in Chapter three.

pluriversality (culture and communication); affect and humanity; criticality; and, engaged performance. I call this model a *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle* (see Figure 4).

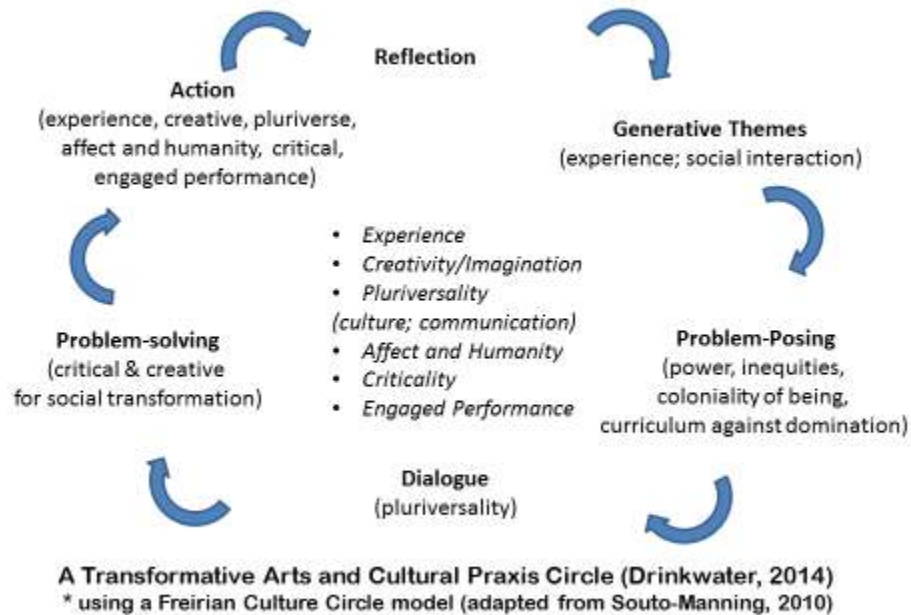


Figure 4. This new model which I call a *Transformative Arts and Cultural Praxis Circle* has been created through the “cross-fertilization” (Kubow, 2011) between the Maasai-Kenyan findings and the literature from critical-democratic and decolonial scholars.

Macedo and Freire (1998) challenged critical pedagogues to continue to reinvent educational models which will challenge and confront dominant notions and models which continue to marginalize and oppress some and privilege others. The model of a transformative arts and cultural praxis circle could be used to open possibilities for individuals, within the conception of a robust global democracy, to problem-pose, critically inquire, collaboratively create solutions, and engage schools and communities in transformative action.

The *transformative arts and culture circle* sees a cyclical process consisting of six phases: generative themes, problem-posing, dialogue, problem-solving, action and reflection. Principles and practices from critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches explained in Chapter two must be integrated into each of the components of the cycle. For example, during the stage of *generating themes*, students and teachers share and discuss reflections based on their

experiences (those drawn from creatively symbolic engaged performances and those from their own lives) which speak to issues affecting the global common, such as inequity, social injustice, and environmental sustainability, to generate the overarching themes they wish to address through the cycle. Through critical inquiry and discussion around these themes, the *problem-posing* stage could illuminate issues such as power, inequity, coloniality of being or curriculum against domination. The *dialogic* stage should recognize, encourage and promote pluriverse perspectives to deepen the understanding of an issue. Within the *problem-solving* stage, students should be encouraged to think critically and creatively in creating action plans for social transformation. The *action* stage in the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle is seen as an opportunity for students, teachers and the community to use culturally responsive and culturally relevant approaches for the purpose of expressing, communicating and engaging individually and collectively around the issues identified. The cyclical nature of the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle necessitates a *reflective* stage in which reflections arising from the engagement with the performances and/or aesthetic experiences are used to begin to generate new themes or sub-themes. Throughout each stage of the cycle, the transformative arts circle model envisions the use of arts-based pedagogical approaches which follow six principles: experience, creativity/imagination, pluriversality¹¹⁰ (communication, culture), affect and humanity, criticality, and engaged performance. Throughout the remainder of this section of the chapter, I will discuss the findings and the literature which speak to each of these six principles and will also identify potential aids and constraints.

Experience

The first principle is drawn from the literature supporting arts-based *experiential* learning for transformative education. Dewey (1938) saw experiential learning as being essential within any educational system which aimed to promote the development of democratic subjectivities.

¹¹⁰ I use the term *pluriversality* to refer to the acknowledgement, recognition and inclusion of different ways of knowing and being as we search to become what Dewey called “the Great Community” (1954, pp. 143)...a ‘community in the making’. However, on becoming this global community, we must also value differences. As Greene (1993) states “we have to remain aware of the distinctive members of the plurality, appearing before one another with their own perspectives on the common, their own stories entering the culture’s story, altering it as it moves through time” (p. 18). The notion of pluriversality has also been put forward by Walter Mignolo (2010a, 2011b) and Jan Aart Scholte (2008).

For Dewey, in *Experience and Education* (1938), the true goal of education was to prepare students to engage in the capacity to appreciate more fully the living present--to enable richer and fuller experiencing. Dewey (1938) identified two overarching principles of an educative experience--*continuity* and *interaction*.

Continuity is the principle that sees experience both taking up something from our past experiences and modifying, in some way, the quality of future experiences. The data reflects the teachers' belief that this principle is important for Maasai students, as they draw on their social, political, economic and environmental experiences to inform the pieces they have been creating. The hope of the teachers and the students is that the experience of creating, sharing and performing their work to other students, parents and community members locally, provincially, and nationally may shape future experiences both for themselves and for their audience. In *Art as Experience* (1934), Dewey argued that aesthetic experiences (experiences which touched the human emotions) increased the engagement of students and contributed to a deepening of the educative experience. In his earlier work, *Democracy and Education*, Dewey (1916/2005) had already begun to identify the link between this educative experience and democracy when he argued that education for the development of a reflective democratic citizen needed to combine both experience and philosophy. He confronted the Cartesian separation of mind and spirit and argued instead for a more holistic curriculum which integrated experience and philosophy, in working and thinking, and in action and reflection. Dewey's theoretical approach adds another important link between critical democratic theory and the place of the arts and cultural practices in education and inquiry. In *Art as Experience* (1934), Dewey argues the importance of experience, matured through wide contacts and a controlled inquiry, for making judgments, both in pieces of art and in life. The teachers' in this study believed that the opportunities that students had through the KMF process to broaden their experiences by traveling to different parts of their province or country and interacting with diverse groups of students from other ethnicities, both during performances and informally after the performances, helped to deepen their learning.

Dewey's second principle of *interaction* honors the social context of education. Dewey (1938) saw social interaction as being essential to the development of social intelligence and to the development of democratic dispositions. This social interaction could come from a combination of active engagement with peers in school and with other individuals within their

communities. The critical analysis of and self-reflection on each of these experiences prepares students for future experiences. However, as has been reflected in the findings, for truly transformative education to take place, teachers must be trained, supported and free to act as critical pedagogues to encourage, support and facilitate these meaningful learning experiences for students (Arnowitz, 2009; Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2009; Denzin, 2009).

Unfortunately, as has been discussed throughout this thesis, the influence of hegemonic colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal policies have had a significant impact in terms of the *types* of experiences that students are offered within the formal curriculum. Critical and decolonial scholars argue that these ideological controls which promote a narrow notion of the arts based on colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal notions fail to recognize the important role that the arts and cultural practices have had and continue to have in the traditional educational approaches in many diverse cultures (Battiste, 2010; Carter, 2010; Kiplang'at & Lagat, 2009; Medina, 2012; Ojaide, 2007). They also argue that the increasing economic gaps between the privileged (dominant) and other non-dominant (non-Eurocentric) cultures are limiting the exposure to this epistemologically and ontologically culturally responsive approach to education (Emdin, 2010; Medina, 2012; Paris, 2010).

In *Art as Experience*, Dewey (1934) argues further that the arts and aesthetic experiences are essential to human growth. Dewey (1934) found that interactions with art could lead to experiences that were unrivaled in their intensity and meaningfulness and promoted this type of experience as “the model for all learning experiences in school” (p. 35). Dewey (1934) found that aesthetic experiences (experiences which touched the human emotions) increased the engagement of students and deepened the educative experiences. From a decolonial perspective, while it is important to inform the intellectual work of symbolic creativity through the lived experiences of individuals, Mignolo (2010b) argues that within a decolonial epistemic shift, it is also important when viewing (reading) a piece or performance to critically question: whose experience is represented in the pieces? whose is not? and why? Under the colonial project, many pieces of art (symbolic creativity) represented the colonial experiences to support their ideology and marginalized or ‘whitewashed’ out the experiences of those who had been colonized. In putting forward his notion of *transcultural aesthetic*¹¹¹, Mignolo (2010c) argues for

¹¹¹ Mignolo’s (2010c) notion of transcultural aesthetics was explained further in Chapter three.

the importance of opening opportunities for individuals who continue to live on the border of the modern/colonial subject to draw from these experiences in their critical and creative work. This critical and decolonial notion of aesthetics extends to any individuals who have become what Giroux refers to as “border thinking” as a way to try to make sense of their experiences across real and imposed borders. For Maasai youth and teachers, as well as for others who have been marginalized or oppressed under hegemonic systems of power, transformative education must be grounded in their experiences.

In broadening the experiences of education to include experiences with and through the arts, increased opportunities are provided for the inclusion and development of pluriverse learning styles, gifts and talents. Increasingly, under neoliberal policy reforms aimed at efficiency and standardization, experiential education, including the arts have been the targets of funding cuts (Collins, 2011; Parsad et al. 2012; Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011).¹¹² Within the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle, *experiential* learning can be seen as occurring both during the creation of pieces (during the solution-finding stage of the process) and also during the experiences of either performing or being engaged as the audience in viewing and engaging with the creators of the piece and/or with others who have also been part of the performative experience (during the *action/performance* and *reflection* stages of the cycle) (ArtsSmarts, 2011; Carter, 2010; Davis, 2012). The experiences from the performance stage of the cycle must also be combined with the lived experiences of students as students reflect and then engage in the *generative themes* stage of the cycle (Bartz, 2012; Emdin, 2010; Gallagher & Rivière, 2007).

Imagination/Creativity

The second principle is drawn from the literature on creativity and imagination. It sees the use of symbolic creativity within the arts and cultural praxis as a way to envision and express ‘new possibilities’ for the way individuals should act and interact for the purpose of creating a sustainable global environment and a more socially and economically just global society. Teachers believed that the exposure to a wide variety of creative arts, including traditional cultural practices further enables students to “use and develop their own unique talents to imagine the world differently” and to “communicate these imaginings to contribute to social

¹¹² There have been strong advocacy movements through such groups as People for Education (2004, 2008) in Ontario and the Whole Child (2010) movement in the United States to remind governments of the importance of a well-rounded and experiential education, including the arts.

change”. When I had asked Ms A, the deputy head-teacher at Olapa PS why she felt the promotion of creativity was important, she added “so that they can come up with their own ideas in the future...and put forward their own practice...through creativity, the children will be able to bring out what is within them and express their ideas so that they will be able to help the society”. Greene (1995a) joins Dewey (1938) and Freire (1998) in linking social experience, social imagination and democracy by setting down two cornerstones which lay the foundation for a role for the arts and cultural praxis. In envisioning this role, Greene (2000) argues that the first cornerstone is the need for a community to come together with something to pursue, and the second is the importance of the imaginative voice of the artist in human conversation (Greene, 2000). These two cornerstones underscore the importance of linking the aesthetic, social interaction and dialogic encounters for the development of the social imagination and the development of what Dewey (1954, p.184) called ‘an articulate public’.

The traditional African cultural practice of Orature serves as a good example of this second principle in its valuing and promotion of freedom of expression and symbolic creativity, particularly when Orature artists chose certain genres. As Mugo (1991) notes culturally relevant symbolism was often used in the creation of songs, proverbs and animal tales in Gikuyu communal mode Orature, “to criticize, mock, satirize, chastise, castigate, denounce, ridicule, provoke etc., in as much as they were used to counsel, teach, celebrate, implore, encourage, love, poetize, inspire etc.” (p. 23).¹¹³ Through the use of symbolic creativity, animal tales provided another route to address sensitive issues in the community. Animals, such as the hyena, elephant, lion, monkey or hare were used to represent certain characteristics in human beings that could be used as Mugo (1991) notes to say the “unsayable”. As Mr M noted, proverbs were often seen as collected wisdom gathered through years of experience and passed on through the generations. Mr M added that “teachers in Kenya are still encouraged to include the teaching of proverbs within the formal instruction, particularly in English and Kiswahili, to contribute to composition writing and oral expression”.

¹¹³ The scholarship of Micere Mugo (1991) on African Orature explores the pre-colonial use of this African-Kenyan cultural practice by the Gikuyu people in the Kirinyaga district of Kenya as a way to address issues of social justice and human rights. Gikuyu is a native language of the Bantu family spoken primarily by the Kikuyu people of Kenya. There are four mutually intelligible dialects known as Kirinyaga, Muranga, Nyeri and Kiambu.

Western scholars have also noted a connection between social imagination, democratic engagement and social transformation. Harry Broudy (1979) posited that one of the greatest strengths of the arts is their ability to link the mind and the imagination. However, Broudy argues that barriers exist in the dominant colonial modernity model of schooling which often de-value, limit or subjugate the development of the link between the intellect and imagination. In critiquing the current state of democratic erosion in schools around the world, Linda Darling-Hammond (1998) argues that it is vital that this connection between the imagination, intellect and spirit be restored. Darling-Hammond (1998) believes that “education that nurtures the social imagination keeps our shared life alive, allowing a society to survive and to find its soul....Our society--and that of so many other democracies struggling to find and enable the best of the human spirit--needs the kind of unfettered education *that allows for and promotes robust creative and critical engagement*” (p. 78). It is this ‘unfettering’ or loosening of the controls within the educational system which critical pedagogues argue are necessary to support and encourage the freedom needed within the creative process. In metaphorically describing the importance of the relationship between creativity and freedom, Niyi Osundare (2002) states “freedom is as vital to the creative enterprise as oxygen is to a living organism. That enterprise can only flower and flourish when the creative spirit has the liberty to dare, venture, argue, make mistakes, lose and discover itself in the rapture of being and becoming” (p. 7). If there is a role for the arts within educational systems, under the conception of a robust global democracy, the development of ‘free’ and engaged citizens will require changes in policy and pedagogy which move beyond the *rhetoric* of freedom.

Although many African states slowly began to gain their own independence from their colonial masters during the 1960s and 70s, this newly gained independence did not necessarily guarantee any greater freedom of expression. As Mugo (1991) argues, many African nation-states, who lacked strong political infrastructure when the colonists left fell under the control of brutal neo-colonial military and civilian dictatorships who sought to “literally stangulate and silence the oppressed who question these abuses in very cruel ways, including the institutionalization of overt as well as covert repression” (p. 9). Under this environment, Mugo (1991) argues “the people’s creative urge is curbed and even suffocated to the extent that it becomes a struggle to meaningfully engage in the production process” (p. 9). Writers, poets and artists who were able to flee this oppressive conditions, often continued to create novels, poems,

songs and visual art work from other countries as a way of continuing to fight against these powers. When Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan writer, novelist and scholar, was arrested and sent to prison in 1977, following the publication of "Petals of Blood", a novel which clearly challenged Kenya's neocolonial regime under Daniel arap Moi, he continued his creative writing while in prison using his native Kikuyu language, the language of the Mau Mau resistance movement.

As Arendt (1958) has argued, freedom of expression and agency are essential in a robust democracy. Under the hegemonic colonial epistemological and values structures of many schools across the world, forms of creativity and artistic expression which do not sit within dominant Eurocentric ways of knowing and communicating, continue to be marginalized (Moya, 2011). However, as Moya (2011) argues, a key feature of the decolonial turn has been the work of decolonial artists and musicians who refuse to separate their creative work from politics, ethics and epistemology in order to illuminate the social condition. Maldonado-Torres (2011) notes that in addition to its increased focus by scholars in ethnic studies, gender and women's studies, and indigenous scholars, the decolonial turn has also become a political and activist focus of "artists across the entire spectrum of the Global South, including the south in the north" (p. 1). In a global robust democracy which values the pluriversality of ways of being and knowing, decolonial pedagogies with support, promote and value multiple ways of knowing, expressing and communicating are vital.

Pluriversality (Culture and Communication)

The third principle draws from the literature on *pluriversality*. As Maxine Greene (1993) has argued, in addition to recognizing, valuing and opening up opportunities for imagining different visions for a "community in the making", there is also a need for schools and teachers to recognize, value and open pluriverse ways of knowing, expressing and communicating these critical and creative imaginings. Although the formal schooling system in Kenya continues to promote a largely colonial-Eurocentric model which emphasizes English and Kiswahili in the pursuit of a standardized core curriculum, the KMF model and informal educational initiatives, such as the Health Fairs expand learning opportunities to include the use diverse local languages, traditional and popular cultural practices. Greene (1993) cites the work of Hannah Arendt (1958) who argues for the importance of recognizing plurality as "the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as

anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live" (p. 57). For Arendt (1958) individuals sharing a common ground bring with them their lived experiences from different locations on that ground and each one "sees or hears from a different position" (p. 57). Under the continuing influence of globalization, Jan Aarte Scholte (2008) takes up this notion of pluriversality as he puts forward a model for the reconstruction of contemporary democracy. Scholte (2008) argues that global trends over the past half-century have led to a shift in the notion of collective identity from one which focused on the nation-state to one in which the global society is seen as being composed of "plural communities". For Scholte (2008), an ethic of "pluriversality," becomes a "political-philosophical outlook that enables diverse collective identities to make decisions regarding their overlapping destinies with mutually enhancing intercultural communication and negotiation" (p. 329).

The importance of the maintenance and use of pluriverse forms of communication in order to confront historical, socioeconomic and political injustices has been argued by numerous critical and decolonial scholars. Falola and Ngom (2009) argue that the use of African modes of communication (including orality, popular and traditional cultural and artistic modes of communication) is being used to confront the "static, primitive and exotic Africa" and also to "unearth the socio-cultural, economic and political factors that underpin and continuously shape the popular culture landscape in Africa in this era of cultural and economic globalization" (p. xxxvi). They further demonstrate that through the use of these pluriverse modes of communication (including the arts) "Africans can appropriate and are indeed appropriating modernity and the complexities that come along with it, without abandoning the traditional cultures that underpin their societies as they respond to the new challenges....of globalization" (p. xxxvi).

Critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches which recognize, value and promote the use of multiple and culturally diverse modes of inquiry and communication can open opportunities for students who have been previously marginalized by dominant colonial and neoliberal educational policies (Kincheloe, 2004a). In illuminating the potential for the arts and cultural praxis as symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging in education, Kincheloe (2003) argues that "experiencing the arts from multiple perspectives prepares us to historicize our insights with understandings about sociocultural divisions and the power relations that inscribe them. Encounters with art provide us with the cognitive benefits of viewing a

phenomenon from a number of vantage points that confront difference” (p. ix). In my view, the principle of *pluriversality* supports the need to confront and challenge the colonial and neoliberal notions of standardization and the hegemony of Eurocentric ways of knowing and being. Using the decolonial notion of de-linking from the dominant colonial ways of knowing and communicating, pluriverse arts-based pedagogical approaches provide increased opportunity to recognize, value and develop a broader range of skills, talents, attitudes and capacities within students to enable them to contribute to a socially transformative purpose of schooling. For students and communities, from non-Eurocentric cultures, who have been marginalized from the educational system in the past, a recognition and valuing of arts-based pedagogies which are culturally responsive and culturally sustaining, can help them to: re-connect to their land, culture and identity; challenge neoliberal notions which create tensions with indigenous ontologies, cosmologies and epistemologies; develop a greater sense of agency and self-determination; and begin to heal the wounds of colonialism (Carter, 2010; Morris, 2000; Nzewi, 2010; Stack, 2007; Stevenson, 2006).

Critical and decolonial scholars argue that it is precisely for the purpose of disrupting the hegemony of dominant cultural practices and for recognizing and valuing previously marginalized cultural practices that culturally responsive and culturally sustaining pedagogies are necessary (Banks, 2010; Emdin, 2010; Paris, 2012). Dennis Carlson (1997) and Tara Yosso (2005) assert that providing diverse cultural and artistic forms of communication, when combined with critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches can provide opportunities to challenge colonial ideologies and practices. Yosso (2005) uses critical race theory to challenge the deficit mentality that is often used to describe communities that have been marginalized by the dominant culture and argues instead for a conception of community cultural wealth to focus on the vast “array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts” (p. 69). Critical-democratic teachers and school leaders need to identify and acknowledge these knowledges and skills to promote greater equity and justice among the marginalized and often disenfranchised.

Some critical post- and decolonial researchers and pedagogues have found positive benefits from the use of culturally responsive artforms as tools to address issues such as racism, low self-esteem and student disengagement (Banks, 2010; Carter, 2010; Emdin, 2010; Ibrahim, 2004). While working in a high school located in a community with a high African-American demographic, Ojeya Banks (2010) made a decision to introduce the Dambe Project (a dance

pedagogy which utilizes indigenous dance from Guinea, West Africa), in an effort to promote cross-cultural understanding. In addition to utilizing a culturally responsive practice, the project was informed by critical pedagogy, which Banks (2010) argues provided the opportunity to push “beyond Eurocentrism and a tokenistic approach to multiculturalism” (p. 18). Denzin (2008b) argues that the use of pedagogies of resistance, which are morally informed and grounded in arts-based disciplines, can “help indigenous and non- indigenous people recover meaning” that has been deliberately silenced and oppressed because of the continuing pressures of neocolonization (p.13). Additionally, Denzin (2008b) argues that these culturally responsive pedagogies honor indigenous cultural knowledge, and can help to “heal the wounds of colonization” (p. 12). This perspective provides a foundational tenet of decolonial education (Margonis, 2011; Mignolo, 2009, 2011b).

In addition to the use of traditional cultural practices, some teachers are also beginning to bring in and utilize popular culture through art, music, dance and multi-media for the purpose of engaging youth and providing pluriverse, culturally responsive or responsive forms of discourse. In an effort to begin to re-engage a group of urban Afro-American youth who had felt alienated by their school systems, Chris Emdin (2010) began to employ a critical pedagogical approach which was based in hip-hop. Emdin (2010) critiques the 'banking approach' to education, described by Freire (1970/2001) which "runs counter to how students engaged in hip-hop learn about themselves because hip-hop culture and rap, in particular, move beyond words and notions to include potential meanings, complex rather than conventional interpretations, and 'apparent meaning and metaphoric reference' (Keyes 2002)" (p. 3). Emdin (2010) drew from the literature on hip-hop and other cultural/plural ways of 'meaning-making in arguing for the need to move beyond words to create an environment in which youth could come together in a collective, creative and culturally responsive approach to learning. The pedagogical approach enabled the youth to utilize non-dominant forms of discourse, including rap, poetry and metaphoric meaning-making to engage their passions in challenging the oppressive situations in which they were living.

As a decolonial pedagogical approach, teachers and schools must be free and supported in their efforts to de-link from colonial notions and epistemological approaches which have framed the use of the arts in education, particularly those which have marginalized or subjugated other ways of knowing and being. Tanure Ojaide (2007) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1998b) have

expressed concerns over continued efforts under the dominant ideologies and political projects of colonialism and neoliberalism, to dominate others through the privileging of dominant cultures and the marginalization, subjugation or eradication of other cultural forms of knowing and communicating. As Meki Nzewi (2009) asserts, “African intellectual practice was grounded in a research culture that informed the invention and advancement of knowledge fields before colonial contacts disrupted original intellectual disposition” (p. 2). Nzewi (2009) further asserts that the indigenous African cultural arts knowledge system, as an integral part of their society, “is conceived and still practiced as a soft science of attitude formation, reformation and societal management”. The indigenous African practice of the cultural arts, which integrates a wide variety of music, dance, drama and visual arts as a holistic, systematic field of knowledge continues to play a key role as an educational tool at both local and national levels of African social, cultural and political life.

In recognizing and valuing the pluriversality of communication, decolonial pedagogical approaches which challenge the current ‘narrow’ neoliberal notions of discourse and which recognize and promote the inclusion of creative and oral discursive modes of communicating and learning have been shown to increase student understanding, engagement and learning (Abrahams, 2007, Low, 2011). In the traditional indigenous narrative or ‘storytelling’ epistemologies, arts-based forms of discourse are widely recognized and valued (Bartz, 2012; Carter, 2010; Morris, 2000; Zander, 2007). As Ali Abdi (2010) has argued, written text was rarely used as a method of communication in many African cultures. Instead, oration, drama or visual methods were the preferred cultural forms to deliver messages and to encourage public response (Abdi, 2010). Often these narratives, or as Carter (2010) terms “storyweaving”, incorporated pluriverse and integrated artforms including: orality, dramatic arts, visual arts and musical arts. Zander (2007) argues that as a pedagogical approach narratives can be used through the arts as a “discursive strategy in which speakers create their own histories about the past (including the immediate past) and the audience interprets them based on individual experience” (p. 190). Zander (2007) pushes this narrative form further to include any form of ‘story telling’, including multiple artistic mediums, which can be used “to make sense of our own lives” (p. 191).

In addition to challenging narrow notions of discourse, the current conception of literacy, also needs to be interrogated. In many global and national policy documents, the concept of

literacy has been narrowly defined and focuses primarily on reading and writing, with the majority of teaching and assessment occurring through reading and writing, in dominant colonial languages. As Ali Abdi (2012) argues, narrow language and literacy policies which privilege the colonial languages assist with cultural colonization and continue to marginalize and subjugate local languages and knowledges. In his description of what he sees as a deep-rooted extermination of the indigenous African languages by the European colonizers, in Kenya and Zimbabwe, Abdi (2012) draws from the recent writings of wa Thiong'o (2009) who used a term "linguifam" or linguistic famine, to represent the deprivation and starvation of traditional languages. Abdi argues that in order to open spaces and opportunities for all citizens in Kenya to be able to people to discourse about their experiences and their histories policies and pedagogical approaches are needed which include African languages as "media instruction". Abdi (2012) purposely uses the term media, in order to recognize, value and promote the use of multiple and culturally responsive forms of communication to support critical and creative engagement in the learning process.

Support for the importance of cultural diversity has come from global policy education actors, including UNESCO. The Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity (2001a), saw this 'plurality of identities' as a "source of exchange, innovation and creativity"...and declared that as "the *common heritage of humanity*, (it) should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations" (UNESCO, 2001a, Article 1). Further, the Declaration argued for the necessity to preserve, enhance and pass on cultural traditions and heritage "so as to foster creativity in all its diversity and to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures" (UNESCOa, 2001, Article 7). In making the connection between cultural pluralism and democracy, the Declaration continued in arguing that "cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life" (UNESCO, 2001a, Article 2). However, as will be seen in the next three principles of the conceptual framework, the flourishing and exchange of these creative ideas, in the absence of humanistic, critical dialogic, and engaged performance (action) will not be sufficient to undertake the socially transformative purposes of education within a robust global democracy.

Affect and Humanity: Touching and Stirring the Human Emotions

The fourth principle within the transformative arts circle is linked to the ethical component inherent in the concept of a robust global democracy; one which accepts an ethic of a

globality of humanity. In their pursuit of the goals of standardization, efficiency and accountability, neoliberal policies have been critiqued for a failure to recognize the learning value of a uniquely human capacity which is shared by diverse cultures around the world...the *affective* capacity to feel and to express emotion (Davis, 2008, 2012; Greene, 1993; Templeton, 1965). Many of the participants in the Maasai-Kenyan case study felt that the arts have some human and collective qualities that could enable them to contribute to the betterment of society by touching the human soul and bringing people together. Ms A expressed this understanding when she said “the arts brings people together...it promotes this *spirit of togetherness*...it binds the society together”. Mr D expressed a belief in the transformative potential of the arts through their link to the uncertainty, excitement and aesthetic experience which goes beyond the intellect or “common sense” to touch something deeper which he described as the “intimate senses”. In moving toward the concept of a robust global democracy grounded in a globality of humanity, we need to include pedagogies which do not shy away from the emotions, but on the contrary, focus on the emotion toward what Nzewi (2010) terms “humanity-consciousness”.

The Cartesian separation between the mind, emotions and spirit did not exist in the educational system of ancient Greece. On the contrary, Aristotle (trans. 350 BCE) spoke of the need for a balanced development in education and draws links between the emotions, music, leisure, intellectual activity and freedom.¹¹⁴ Aristotle (trans. 350 BCE) argued that music was introduced because it was thought that “a freeman should pass his leisure [through] the use of music for intellectual enjoyment” (Part III, para. 1). Aristotle’s philosophy of education draws links between the emotions, music, intellect and soul for the development of democratic character. Earlier, Socrates and Plato (trans. n.d.) had also put forward their belief that the nurturing of the soul or spirit was important not only to the development of self, but to the development of the society as a whole.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ It is important to remind that reader that many of the arguments that Aristotle puts forward about music in education in ancient Greece could be transferred to other *art forms* in current times in education, including visual arts, dance, drama, photography or multi-media art. Further, the links between action and leisure have been elucidated upon further in the work of Hannah Arendt (1958) when she writes in *The Human Condition* about the relationship between freedom of mind (leisure) and action.

¹¹⁵ In *The Republic*, Plato (trans. n.d.) sets out his description of the utopian society in which he describes a system of education which follows the concepts of *paideia*. The concept of *paideia* saw the city-state and the citizen existing in an educational relationship in which both the culture

Broudy (1979) reminds us that this recognition of the link between feelings, emotions, mind and spirit, existed thousands of years prior to colonial modernity, the privileging of rationality, and the use of dominant written languages. Broudy (1979) argues that, historically, the initiation of the human thought-process often began from the perception of an image or a sound (possibly through voice, instrument or nature). The perception of these images or sounds emoted a feeling which the human brain used in the process of meaning-making by comparing and contrasting it with prior experiences in order to form concepts or make judgements. It is important to note that for Broudy (1972), the creation of this imagic store did not only come from images, but also from sounds, words and movement, all of which can be found in the rich artforms of music, visual art, poetry, drama and dance. Broudy (1979) argues that "it is this relation between the imagination and the other functions of the mind that grounds the claims of arts education" (p. 348). As indigenous scholars, Battiste (2010) and Carter (2010) have echoed this need for pedagogical approaches which can help to mend and restore the connections between the mind, spirit and emotion within education and within the globality of humanity.

The connection of the mind, spirit and emotion through the arts is argued further by Meki Nzewi (2010) in his work on the collective and socially transformative purpose of the soft science of African indigenous musical arts for the development of "humanity-consciousness". In many old world cultures, the arts have been a source of both transmitting and receiving knowledge. They have also served to bring humans together (like-minded and diverse groups of people) through their power to reach the *intimate senses* (Nzewi, 2010; Rukwaro & Maina, 2006). In his work as coordinator of the Centre for Indigenous Instrumental Music and Dance Practice (CIMDA) in Pretoria, South Africa, Nzewi has been working passionately to reinstate humanity-centered creative enterprises in classroom arts education. Nzewi believes strongly that music and other artforms are powerful tools for reaching the human spirit. In his critiques of Western modernity, Nzewi (2010) talks of the need to advance the "humanning"¹¹⁶ strengths of indigenous knowledge in an *iron-heart age*" (p. 8). Nzewi (2010) argues that although the "hard sciences and technological wizardry [of Western modernity] facilitate easy living and

and the individual had reciprocal obligations to improve one another. Through their writings and orations, Socrates and Plato extended the meaning of *paideia* to the importance of cultivating both the intellect and the individual garden of the soul (Hancock, 1987; Plato, trans. n.d.).

¹¹⁶ "To make sublimely human" (Nzewi, 2010, footnote 2)

doing...they also imperceptibly forge 'stone heart' in devotees because they could warp the spirit, distort perceptions of self and life, and impoverish humane considerations in contemporary creative aspirations" (p. 2). Using a metaphor based on the duality of nature, Nzewi (2010) sees the "spiritually imbuing" soft-science of indigenous musical arts as a "countering remedial force" which offers both a humanning and a healing capacity (p. 2).

In the CIMDA education model, Nzewi (2009) asserts that there is a recognition "as per indigenous epistemology, that creativity and performance illuminate theory, and constitute the primary method for delivering humanity-centered education in the science of the musical arts" (p. 1). In confronting the Western notion of the *validity* of knowledge which is not empirical and is not documented in the 'written' form, Nzewi (2009) speaks of the "valid and unique theoretical premises" which are "often articulated orally but not written" that inform and are embedded in the practice of the indigenous musical arts (p. 1). One of these theoretical premises argues that the "sonic component" within indigenous musical arts is the "primary intangible force that stimulates as well as sustains spiritual dispositions" (p. 1). Nzewi (2009) argues further that it is due to this belief in ability of the sonic element within instrumental music, song and percussive arts to touch the emotions, soul and spirit that the musical arts are often *integrated* with other forms of artistry during social gatherings, such as the dramatic arts.

In taking some of the lessons learned while studying the African indigenous musical arts and exploring ways to integrate these lessons into his current work in contemporary classroom, Nzewi's (2010) has developed a model which draws from elements of both decolonial and critical democratic theory. Nzewi (2010) sees the integration of the arts within a model of a decolonial and democratic classroom in which students and teachers adopt collective practices for the purpose of developing the virtues of *sharing* and contributing to the *hummaning* of the classroom. Nzewi (2010) argues that the school and classroom "represent the ideal site for re-constituting the traditional (indigenous) sense of community" (p. 7). The incorporation of principles and practices of group dynamics are important both in the creative process and in the democratic processes leading towards action. Nzewi (2010) asserts that the process of group creativity and production "socializes and bonds the learners, inter-stimulates creative genius, commands mutual accommodation of one another's capabilities and personalities, liberates introversion while taming self-centeredness, resolves disagreements and democratizes criticism" (p. 7).

The humanizing power of the arts has also been recognized and written about by many ‘arts in education scholars’ in North America, as well. In her work, as a cognitive development psychologist working in North American primary and secondary school education, Jessica Hoffman Davis (2008, 2012) has shared countless examples of the ways in which the arts have been used as a pedagogical tool to enable students to both feel and express human emotions. Through the use of drama, the arts can be used as a pedagogical tool to deepen an understanding of another human being’s pain. Davis (2012) shares the comments of a male student in a drama course who said “playing the part, getting into someone else’s skin the way we do in theater, allowed me to feel from the inside out” (p. 33). From a teacher’s perspective, the arts can also be a powerful tool to help students develop empathy. Davis (2012) shares the feedback from a theater teacher at a technical high school: “I think that empathy is one of the most important lessons that...students can learn...and that the theater is uniquely equipped as a forum for learning and practicing it as a skill” (p. 34). Critical democratic pedagogues would argue that within the democratic project, empathy must be followed up by action to address situations which are oppressive or inequitable.

Within the transformative arts circle model, it is the affective quality of the arts, particularly its potential to be able to link emotion to the human condition, that Freire (2005) argued made it an important pedagogical tool for igniting or fuelling the passion, engagement and “armed love” that he believed was essential for transformative education. Peter McLaren (2007c) describes how Freire saw the connection between emotion, love and art as “viscerally emerging from an act of daring, of courage, of critical reflection....[it] is not only the fire that ignites the revolutionary but also the creative action of the artist, wielding a palette of sinew and spirit on a canvas of thought and action, its explosion of meaning forever synchronized with the gasp of human freedom” (p. 304). Within the transformative arts circle, it is this principle of *affect and humanity* that necessitates the challenging, critiquing and taking action for social transformation.

Criticality

The fifth principle illuminates the political function of art within transformative arts practices. As Chantal Mouffe reminds us there is an aesthetic dimension in the political and there is a political dimension in art (2007). From the point of view of hegemony, artistic practices play a role in the constitution and maintenance of a given *symbolic order* or in its challenging, giving

it the political dimension. Mouffe (2007) sees *critical art* as art that “makes visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate” (p. 4). Although it may not always be dialogic, in the sense of a verbal dialogue back and forth between people, Chelsea Bailey and Dipti Desai (2005) argue that the visual arts can be used to stimulate critical inquiry and critical discourse. As Greene (1991) wrote, “it is not uncommon for the arts to leave us ill at ease, nor for them to prod us beyond acquiescence. They may, now and then, move us into spaces where we can create visions of other ways of being and ponder what it might signify to realize them” (p. 27). This creation of tension or contradiction is truly a significant part of the critical democratic pedagogical approach.

Visual art provides another discursive approach in which, as Bailey and Desai (2005) argue, we can be “challenged to reconsider singular and limited expressions of human experience” (p. 39). In their work within two different communities in the United States, Bailey and Desai (2005) noted that successful transformative arts practices shared some key characteristics: they were “very much concerned with the nature of the artistic process rather than solely with the art product”; and were “largely collaborative and evolve[d] through on-going dialogue within a community” (p. 40). In providing a ‘different way of knowing’ (other than through reading the written word), Bailey and Desai (2005) argue that the aesthetic way of knowing embedded within transformative arts practices can provide viewers with “concrete ways to comprehend, process, and create responses to the complex and subtle issues explored by the artists” (p. 43). Within critically engaged school-community projects, Denzin & Giardina (2011) argue, the collective, critical art become committed to political goals, democratic, transformative, restorative, celebratory of diversity and of personal and collective freedom, and “it is not elitist” (p. 18).

In addition to the visual arts, dramatic and musical-oral arts have also been used to speak, sing and/or act out against issues of social justice and as creative forms of resistance. In this study, Maasai youth used song, poems and oration to address issues of social justice, inequity and destruction of the natural environment based on their lived experiences. Within traditional African Orature, Mugo (1991) asserts “the Orature artist was a staunch advocate and defender of human rights” (p. 21). As a member of the community, Mugo (1991) further asserts that many of the narratives created by Orature artists were based on issues of social justice, with the narrator often taking the stand of the marginalized or oppressed such as “children, women,

disabled people, orphans, the weak and impoverished, slaves and outcasts” (p. 21-22). The task of the Orature artists was to both critique anti-social behaviour and human rights abuses, and to inspire the audience to work to change these conditions.

As a decolonial pedagogical approach enacting what De Lissovoy (2010) has called a *curriculum against domination*, the arts can become a way of resisting the hegemony of colonial modernity and imagining a new globality of humanity. Critical art becomes a new way of imagining and speaking out about the “decoloniality of being” (Mignolo, 2011c) and linking back to other ways of knowing and being which are grounded in a standpoint of the global common (Kymlicka, 2001). Within marginalized cultures and communities throughout history, music and art have often been key elements in the development of a political sub-culture (Francoso, 2012). As Rosenthal and Flacks (2012) argue, the energetic and vibrant musical movement has become a powerful tool of social movements in oppressed nations around the world for the purpose of raising awareness and challenging their oppression.

In his work with black, male youth in urban schools, Darius Prier (2009) argues that hip-hop and critical art can play an important role in transformative education, if teachers and schools are willing to open themselves to democratic and decolonial pedagogies which encourage and support what he calls a “counter-public space of resistance”. When youth are encouraged to critically inquire, write, create, speak and perform, based on their lived experiences, using an artform that is culturally responsive to them, Prier (2009) asserts that they can unearth knowledges that are being marginalized by the mainstream media. Hip-hop:

Often reflected these experiences, and the ways in which the music and culture politically underscored where we were on particular issues related to social justice that were not covered in mainstream media. Urban youth were producing texts that informed the larger public of what cultural and social processes shaped the context of the many complex identities they fashioned for themselves. In a sense, they were producing knowledge that emerged from the margins of their everyday lived experiences (Prier, 2009, p. 2)

One of the greatest ironies facing teachers who wish to use the arts with critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy is that although the rhetoric of *freedom* is used across democratic nation-states in policy and program documents, a *lack* of freedom or professional autonomy is frequently cited as one of their major challenges (Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Trend, 2012). For teachers in this case study, the data from interviews and classroom observations revealed this lack of professional autonomy during formal instructional time. Teachers carefully

followed prescriptive teachers' guidebooks, 'teaching to the test' in order to impart the core knowledge needed to be successful on the KCPE. In order to develop in students the skills, attitudes and confidence to become citizens who possess what Hannah Arendt (1958) describes as "freedom of mind" and "freedom of agency", teachers need to be released from the control and censorship which exists within the constraints of an externally developed, standardized curriculum. Diane Ravitch (2012) argues further that the constraints of a standardized "high-stakes testing environment" are limiting teachers freedom to work together with students on issues of social injustice and social transformation arising from their individual and collective experiences at the local, national and global. McLaren (2007c) extends the need for freedom further to include the "freedom to be a self-directed subject and not merely an instrument of capital for the self-expansion of value, and to be a conscious and purposeful human being with the freedom to determine the basis of our relationships" (p. 310). For indigenous peoples, this conception of *free* also relates to the goals associated with self-determination and right to culture (Engle, 2010).¹¹⁷

Within the transformative arts circle, the arts and cultural praxis, in combination with critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy impact each stage of the learning cycle through critical and creative imagining, inquiry, communication, engagement, action/performance and reflection. As Dewey (1938) and Mouffe (2002) have argued, it is only through the opportunity to engage with difference that we have an opportunity to reflect on our own previous experiences and grow. Within the model of the transformative art circle, the experiences and reflections from students' critical engagement with the arts and from their lived experiences must be brought back into the cycle at the *problem-posing* and *dialogic stages* in order to unpack generative themes such as power, inequity, coloniality of being or humanity to promote further inquiry and dialogue with the classroom and across school-community borders. As teachers and students move from the dialogic stage into the *problem-solving* and *action* stages of the cycle, they need to reflect on the types or forms of art or cultural practice that might best communicate their key messages and

¹¹⁷ Numerous other critical and indigenous scholars have written about issues of censorship and control over the critical and creative use of the arts as a tools for self-determination, right to culture and critique of the colonial/modernity project including: ; Freire, 1998; Greene, 1988; Hodgson, 2011; Karai Mirin (in Morris, 2000); Mignolo, 2009; Nyerere, 1968; wa Thiong'o, 1993).

emotions for the purpose of igniting and engaging their peers and community in transformative social action.

Engaged Performance

The sixth and final principle that must be embedded within the transformative arts circle is *engaged performance*. In understanding the importance of *performance* to the democratic purpose of the arts, it is important to return to the Arendt's (1958) argument about 'democratic subjectivity'. The arts allow students to *act*, to take action in ways other than through the written word. Arendt (1958) believes that in order to develop an individual's democratic subjectivity, this action must be taken in a social situation in which others can be subjects as well (meaning they can respond to or take up the action further without being controlled or restricted). Using this conception, creative arts and cultural practices, in the absence of performance, do not provide the opportunity for an individual to *take action* in a social situation in order to develop their democratic subjectivity and contribute to social transformation.

In analyzing the data from the interviews and performance observations in this study, although teachers and participants believed that the use of the arts and cultural practices helped create strong school-community links and helped in the process of sensitization (informal education) within the community at Parent Days, Health Fairs and during the KMF process, the predominant pedagogical approach reflected a one-way, deficit model. This pedagogical approach, in which messages were being passed on to the community, but little dialogue or critical engagement was occurring either during or following the performances, reflected the dominant colonial-Eurocentric approach that the teachers had been using in the formal schooling setting. In some instances, such as with the Theatre Group that Ms A spoke about at Olapa PS, students were able to engage in some of their own critical inquiry and creative cultural productions around issues of their own interests. These students got together, as a social group, on their own time, to develop skits and dramatic pieces. Ms A said that this group was often called upon to perform for different functions at the school and also to perform on Saturday evenings "when we have entertainment for the students...in fact, that is one of the things that has empowered them to become creative! Some of the ones that they were just acting out recently were about drug abuse...the effects of drugs on adolescents". When I asked if they had any assistance from teachers, Ms A said

No...on their own...completely on their own! They are also doing pieces on, what do you call it, the changes that are happening in the society, especially among the youth now...change from *tradition* to a *modern lifestyle*.

Through Ms A's description of the performances, it becomes apparent that the teachers and other students see it as a form of *entertainment* which is presented in a 'one-way' fashion rather than in an *engaged form*. In order to deepen the pedagogical approach for more democratically engaged and transformative learning, there needs to be opportunities for critical inquiry, rich robust dialogue, problem-posing, solution-finding and actions plans developed.

It is in this regard that Denzin's work on critical or indigenous performance pedagogy becomes important. Denzin (2007) brings together the works of Dewey, Freire and Greene in his discussions of the "critical imagination". Denzin (2007) asserts that this imagination "dialogically inserts itself into the world, provoking conflict, curiosity, criticism and reflection" (p. 239). The performance ethic that Denzin (2007) describes is grounded in the discourses of indigenous peoples (Mutua and Swadener, 2004). As a radical critical performance pedagogy, the performative and the political intersect on the terrain of a praxis-based ethic (Freire, 1999). It enacts, what Greene (1995a) refers to as the "power of possibility" grounded in performative practices that embody love, hope, care and compassion.

In arguing for the need to re-imagine new pedagogies of hope and new models of democracy, Denzin (2009) asserts that *critical performance pedagogy* can help to open up the possibilities for new public spaces where "a free people can assemble, [and] speak their minds" (Carey, 1997, pp. 226-227) "without fear of repression or punishment" (Denzin, 2009, p. 379). In integrating critical theory, decolonial theory and performance pedagogy, Denzin (2008a) puts forward a decolonial performance pedagogy which he argues could be used by both teachers and qualitative researchers to explore new modes for what he calls a "practical, progressive politics of performative inquiry, an emancipatory discourse connecting indigenous epistemologies and theories of decolonization and the postcolonial with critical pedagogy, with new ways of reading, writing, and performing culture" (p. 435).

In traditional indigenous cultures, the creative, musical and dramatic arts served a role in engaging the conscience of the community. Mugo (1991) describes traditional African Orature as having a particular purpose within socialist societies as a way of engaging the public in issues of social justice and human rights. The Orature artist:

Conceived himself or herself as an integral part of the community. The idea of an artist who stands above the community, alienated from the mundane world, looking down at it from some elevated height way ‘up there’ was alien in the world of the pre-colonial Gikuyu Orature. The artist belonged to the people and was not above criticism or reproach. His or her task was to articulate the aspirations of the people, drawing themes from them and keeping constant touch with them for inspiration....The poems, stories etc. were composed for the people and often, with the people participating and restructuring the original so as to recreate it and enlarge its significance....The centrality of their participation and involvement (especially at the performance stage) were so crucial that the compositions were considered incomplete without their presence.” (p. 21)

The structure of these performances was informed by the principles of “collective participation, involvement and collaboration” (p. 22). Additionally, there are distinct references to the inclusion of what Mugo (1991) calls “democratic participation”. Mugo (1991) argues

The attempt to maintain communication and contact militated against dictatorship by the narrator or performing artist and made the whole process democratic. In this way monopoly, individualism and domination were discouraged. The process of democratic participation was further promoted through the accepted artistic rule that the audience was also a group of commentators and critics, who were at liberty to appraise what they consumed without fear. Because the skills of the artist were supposed to be a part of the community’s harvest of talents, the audience criticized the pieces and performance as something of their own. This attitude of responsibility and accountability helped to break the tensions and barriers that could result in alienation between the artist and the audience. (p. 23)

During the 1970s, in South America, Augusto Boal (1979), who had been deeply influenced by the work of Paulo Freire, introduced a form of engaged performative pedagogy which became known as Theatre of the Oppressed (T.O.). Many of the principles within Boal’s model show similarities to those of the Gikuyu-African Orature described above. Boal’s (1979) model of T.O. envisioned an engaged and interactive form of theatre in which members of the audience were invited to become “spect-actors”, a hybrid of the spectator and the actor. As Souto-Manning (2010) asserts, the ultimate purpose and model of this form of engaged performance art “forefronted the codification of themes and narratives by focusing on generative themes and situations, and sought to problematize everyday realities that were oppressive and helped maintain the imbalanced social status quo” (p. 140). The critical, creative and emotional performances touched on key social issues and connected with the lives of both actors and audience members. As audience members were given the opportunity to engage in the performance, Souto-Manning (2010) writes, they “came to feel empowered and started

conceptualizing themselves as agents...reflectively dialoguing about the suggested courses of action...and sought to engage in social action” (p. 141).

Within contemporary educational systems, the performative arts and cultural practices offer the possibility of increasing both critical and creative engagement through their intellectual and aesthetic power to: connect with feelings and emotions; touch the human senses and link to the cognitive; initiate an evaluative/judging process drawn from previous experiences; illuminate contradictions, create tension; and to incite action (Boal, 1979; Carter, 2010; Denzin, 2007; Dimitriadis, 2001; Gallagher, 2007; Medina & Campano, 2006; Mutua & Swadener, 2008; Nzewi, 2010). As part of a four-year international multisite ethnographic project, Kathleen Gallagher and Burcu Ntelioglou (2011) have been involved in studying the use of dramatic performative pedagogies to address issues of (dis)engagement of high schools students. The early findings from their work in one high school in Toronto, Canada provide some insight into both the possibilities and concerns for the use of performance pedagogies for socially transformative education. After viewing a new Canadian play called *Scratch*, by Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman, students in a Toronto high school were handed out their literacy journals and given some 'prompts' on the blackboard by their teacher. Although many students had initially expressed resistance to writing in their journals, during the sharing time following the individual reflective writing period, the teacher had noted in her field notes that she was "amazed by the thoughtful and personalized reflections students share[d]with the class" (p. 324). Gallagher and Ntelioglou (2011) found that for many of these students who had expressed resistance to writing, the performative, aesthetic and emotional aspects of the piece(s) they viewed, combined with the guided reflective writing prompts helped them to think, express (written and dialogic) and engage more critically and creatively in the learning process.

Although critical scholars have noted benefits of using critical performance pedagogy to increase student engagement, it is also important to highlight some of the ethical challenges noted in the literature associated with the use this type of pedagogical approach. Joanne Dillabough (2002) raises concerns around issues of recognition, responding, power and ethics. Concerns about the realities of power imbalances between teachers and students become increasingly problematic or concerning when teachers enter classrooms and schools which are culturally diverse and different from their own culture. Diane Conrad (2006) speaks to the ethical *conundrums* she faced in her attempts to use Popular Theatre as both a pedagogical and

research approach with a group of high school drama students, from a rural, mainly Aboriginal community. It may be argued that perhaps some of these issues could have been attributed to her being an outsider to these youth: as a researcher, as a non-Aboriginal, as an adult? Some of the ethical questions which arose over the course of her work included: “Can genuine Popular Theater occur within an institutional/school context? Is what the students were willing to share in this context representative of their feelings and impressions? From a pedagogical perspective, is it ethical to do Popular Theater which often raises difficult personal issues, in the classroom?” (p. 438). These, and other ethical issues, must be part of the conscientization that teachers undergo in their planning for the use of critical democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches which include the arts. In preparing teachers to use critical democratic and decolonial pedagogical approaches in their classrooms, Kincheloe’s (2006) argument about the need within teacher education institutions to develop a critical ontological awareness as part of the teacher preparation program is vital. Critical and decolonial scholars would argue that if the goal is to open the possibilities to move from an educational system of social reproduction towards the hope and possibilities for an educational system for social transformation, teacher educational programs must provide opportunities for the pedagogical, philosophical and ethical .

Despite the constraints that are present within the institutional structure of schools and school, some critical democratic educators are finding strategic and/or subversive approaches to pedagogy which enable them to engage with their students in culturally responsive and socially transformative education (Guerrero, Gaztambide-Fernández, Rosas & Guerrero, 2013; Gurn, 2011; Morrell, 2008). As has been articulated in Chapter two, the role of critical democratic leaders at the school and board level has aided many of these efforts to teach or act against the grain (Shields, 2011, 2013). Guerrero et al. (2013) have noted a number of possibilities for critical pedagogical approaches and culturally responsive support in the work they were doing with Latina/o youth in Toronto, Canada. Although this initiative did not focus specifically on the arts, the findings are relevant to the use of art-based critical and decolonial pedagogical approaches in drawing attention to risks and benefits in developing initiatives which adopt pedagogical approaches to move the educational system towards more equitable and socially transformative purposes. As Guerrero et al. (2013) argue, in addition to the potentially risky, but necessary initiatives in critical pedagogy which, as Kress, DeGennero and Paugh (2013) argue work “under the radar and off the grid”, other initiatives, such as *Proyecto Latin@*, which

assumes a position of “on stage and under a magnifying glass” are necessary to continue to confront, challenge and provide hope for educational change. As Guerrero et al. (2013) further argue, “in fact, it was such visibility and the positive reputation that the project gained among students at the school and the Latina/o community at large that allowed us to retain the support of the school board to continue doing this work for a second year and to begin conversations about expanding to other schools” (p. 120). Guerrero et al. (2013) argued that the heightened public visibility of the project (both within the school and within the community) further illuminated findings and reflections related to the perpetuation of gendered-privileging and racial stereotyping which they felt might have “been obscured had the project remained ‘under the radar and off the grid’” (p. 119). For critical and decolonial pedagogues there will continue to be both risks and benefits for teaching and acting against the grain.

In summarizing, the key links between the principle of “engaged performance” through the arts to critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy, Giroux and Giroux (2006) remind us that “pedagogy in this instance is not simply about critical thinking but also about social engagement, a crucial element of not just learning but politics itself” (p. 31). Pedagogical practices are always moral and political; the political is always performative; the performative is always pedagogical; and through performance, critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy aim to disrupt those hegemonic cultural and educational practices that reproduce the logics of colonialism and neoliberalism.

Possibilities for the *Transformative Arts and Cultural Praxis Circle*: Implications for Pedagogy and Policy in Local and Global Contexts

As Giroux (2009b) reminds us, the process of challenging and confronting hegemonic neoliberal and colonial notions towards a vision of a “democracy to come” demands educational policies and pedagogies which can confront the apathy and disengagement that has resulted under global neoliberal educational policies. I acknowledge that the model of the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle that I posit is presented within the context of the ideal of a robust global democracy, and that this notion of democracy may not be shared by all educational policy developers in democratic nation-states. The absence of these shared notions of democracy may pose some challenges to the development and implementation of pedagogical and policy approaches for democratic and transformative education.

In Chapter seven, I analyzed and discussed the issues arising from teachers' understanding of their use of the arts, in this rural and remote indigenous Maasai case study within a nation-state which has undergone a long and rocky road towards becoming a democratic nation-state. The findings from this analysis, combined with the literature on critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy have been used to posit a new pedagogical model, the *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle*, which could help to confront the apathy and disengagement that Giroux (2009b) speaks about, while at the same time, acknowledging the call by decolonial scholars to de-link from hegemonic colonial-Eurocentric policies and practices. I acknowledge that the introduction of any new policy or pedagogical approach holds implications for broader aspects of educational reform. As critical comparative education scholars caution political, economic, and cultural changes worldwide have challenged educational policy makers to consider new questions of power, politics, local context and relevance in relation to educational policy transfer (Crossley, 2010).

The success of the introduction of any new pedagogical approach within an educational reform initiative is dependent on many factors. In drawing from her research on the implementation of 'learner-centered' pedagogy in South Africa, Nykiel-Herbert (2004) highlights, in particular, the need to understand and value the local cultural context and the importance of teacher-education. She argues that the effectiveness of any new pedagogical approach requires that it is "suited to particular conditions"; is accompanied by teacher-education to build language skills, knowledge in content areas and in pedagogical skills, particularly culturally responsive approaches. Failure to do so can frequently turn an "intended recipe for educational success into a new variety of educational malpractice" (p. 250). Kubow (2011) urges comparativists to also consider "the unique circumstances that make local conditions impermeable to a regional vision for education or resistant to a more global or homogenized approach" to the issue. Kubow (2011) argues further that "such an approach would also facilitate greater insight on the intersection of tensions (e.g., globalization-indigenization, social cohesion–autonomy, and traditionalism-modernization)" that influence educational policy within and between nations (p. 475-476).

In speaking specifically to the importance of recognizing and valuing local contexts in educational reform initiatives, Tabulawa (2003) argues that there is value in shifting away from the idea of "universalized pedagogies" and recognizing the importance of creating culturally

responsive pedagogies. Tabulawa (200s) asserts that “there can be no justification for a universal and homogenizing pedagogy, if indeed teaching and learning are contextual activities. A universalized pedagogy necessarily marginalizes pedagogies based on alternative epistemologies” (p. 22). The suggested model of the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle attempts to provide an alternative pedagogical approach which can be further adapted based on the local context in which schools are situated.

For many countries in the global south, policy transfer has often been associated with a political and economic development aid agenda in which the transfer is moving from the global north/West to the south (Samoff, 2009). As Gita Steiner-Khamsi (2010) argues “policy borrowing in poor countries is to the education sector what structural adjustment, poverty alleviation, and good governance are to the public sector at large: a condition for receiving aid. As a requirement for receiving grants or loans at the programmatic level, policy borrowing in developing countries is coercive and unidirectional” (p. 324). I would argue that through the use of the Kubow’s (2011) notion of ‘cross-fertilizing’ in the development of the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle, rather than being a unidirectional policy transfer, this pedagogical model fits well within the notion of a robust global democracy and could benefit students, teachers, schools and communities in countries in both the global north and the global south. The process of cross-fertilizing values pluriverse perspectives and approaches in order to share knowledge and approaches to support transformative education for the local and global common good, while at the same time recognizing the importance of contextualizing the model for implementation. As a result of the intersectionality of educational policies, it is important to explore the implications of any new policy or pedagogical approach on existing policies (Orsini & Smith, 2007). Within the Kenyan context, the introduction of the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle pedagogical model holds significant implications for curriculum, teacher education, assessment policies, school-community engagement and transformative educational leadership development.

Public education policies are often driven by hegemonic powers and power structures at the local, provincial, national and global levels. In a robust democracy, it is important to hear from and to seek the involvement of a multitude of diverse policy actors. Too often, as has been shown by critical scholars, under the influence of colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal educational policies, both the voice and active participation of citizens, particularly those on the margin, have

been limited. Decolonial scholars argue for the need to de-link from colonial-Eurocentric policies and recognize, value and promote culturally responsive and culturally sustaining policies to engage all citizens in transformative education.

The implications of the findings from this research study can be grouped into four broad areas of recommendation for educational policy and programming.

- First, in order for the arts and cultural praxis to be able to play a role in socially transformative education, there needs to be a de-linking from the dominant provincial/national/global neoliberal narratives around ‘quality education’ and an opening to the possibilities for a narrative of ‘quality education’ which is informed by the conception of a robust global democracy.
- Secondly, spaces and pedagogical approaches must be created and facilitated within and across the curriculum to encourage and support critical-democratic engagement.
- Third, pedagogical training for both pre-service and in-service teachers must value and promote the use of critical-democratic, decolonial and culturally responsive pedagogies in schools.
- Finally, there must be an acceptance of the value of the arts and cultural praxis within these pedagogical approaches to contribute to transformative education when utilized within a transformative arts and cultural praxis circle model.

Significance

In this increasingly globalized world, so-called *developed* nation-states share the impacts of the political, social, economic and environmental destruction caused by the long-term effects of industrialization and neoliberal economic policies with those termed *developing* nations, in what Kymlicka (2001) has called the "global commons". Nation-states, which claim to be democracies, have the responsibility to develop and provide quality education to its citizens: *quality*, which is defined not by the ideologies of neoliberalism, but by the principles and values inherent in a robust global democracy. Reforms are needed in educational systems which are willing to challenge and confront the long-embedded hegemonic educational policies and pedagogical approaches of colonialism and neoliberalism to recognize and value pluriverse and culturally sustainable approaches to develop citizens who can become critically, creatively and

actively engaged in transformative education for the public good at the local, state and global levels. Using a case study approach, this thesis has presented both the possibilities and constraints for teachers' use of the arts and cultural praxis when combined with critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy, for socially transformative education.

The data from this study speaks to the impact of a narrow notion of accountability, arising from neoliberal ideologies, on democratic education. Kenya has made significant steps over the past four years in its move towards 'democratizing' the state...and as critical scholars have argued, education can continue to play an important role in supporting this path. However, as the data from this study indicates, the continuing influence of policies which reflect colonial principles, such as core knowledge and banking approaches to education, combined with the impact of neoliberal principles of standardization, efficiency, high-stakes standardized assessments and privatization, act as barriers to democratic and transformative education. Within a robust democracy, there is a need for educational policies which recognize, value and promote creative, critical, engaged and culturally responsive pedagogical approaches for teachers, students and communities to support the process of democratic social transformation.

Given the number of key themes related to policy and pedagogy discussed in this case study, the model being put forward should act as a guide, rather than be seen as a prescription or best practice. In drawing from the findings and the literature, this new pedagogical model, called the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle, acknowledges the importance of recognizing and valuing local context and including local and national policy actors in its adaptations prior to implementation. When combined with educational policy reform in assessment, teacher education and educational leadership development, this model offers possibilities for the arts and cultural praxis to create new counter-hegemonic discourses through the recognition, support and valuing of pluriverse ways of knowing, communicating and engaging for socially transformative education. Colonial-Eurocentric modernity and neoliberalism have, historically, and continue currently to contribute to the erosion of robust democratic principles, pedagogies and institutions. Perhaps the arts and cultural praxis can contribute through the use of critical democratic and decolonial pedagogy to challenge, disrupt and de-link from these policies and pedagogies in an effort to return to a more robust global conception of democracy for the purpose of becoming what Greene (1993) called a "community in the making" towards a more socially and economically just society. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999/2006) and other decolonial and

indigenous scholars have reminded us, decolonization of our educational systems is a “long-term process”, but vitally important to continue to strive towards.

This study contributes to the scholarly research around democratic and transformative education, critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy, the arts and cultural praxis. Further, the analysis and discussion of the findings highlight implications for education policy in the areas of teacher education, accountability and assessment, transformative school-community engagement and transformative educational leadership. The model of the *transformative arts and cultural praxis circle (TACPC)*, drawn from the findings and the literature, provides possibilities for a critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogical approach which could be used to challenge and confront the dominant colonial-Eurocentric and neoliberal notions of the arts and purposes of education. The findings from this research provide evidence to support the need for educational policy development informed by a broader conception of the arts and cultural praxis which recognizes, values and promotes them as symbolically creative ways of knowing, expressing and engaging to support democratic and transformative education. Further the findings illuminate the need for: increased and equitable access to the arts and cultural praxis; additional training for pre-service and in-service teachers in pedagogical approaches to democratize and de-colonize education; and educational policy which recognizes, values and promotes the development of a more holistic approach to education, including pedagogical approaches which use the arts and cultural praxis to build a broader range of skills, capacities and cultural practices to enable students to contribute as engaged citizens within a robust global democracy. Additionally, they speak to the importance of providing training in critical leadership for educational administrators to support critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy using the arts and cultural praxis.

It is hoped that readers of this thesis, current and aspiring teachers, faculty in pedagogical institutions, critical educational leaders and educational policy developers will find, through the data and narratives provided and through the TACPC model, an impetus to continue to search for pedagogical and policy approaches which respect and promote diversity and transformative education within the narrative of a robust global democracy. The data from this research project could be used to develop policy guidelines which could be used by teachers, administrators and policy makers to provide future direction for arts and cultural praxis education, critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy in Kenya and globally. It is recognized that teachers are not free agents. They often work within curriculum and assessment regimes that strongly influence

(if not determine) what they are able to implement in their teaching. It is hoped that all teachers will find in this thesis ways of thinking about critical-democratic and decolonial pedagogy, the arts and cultural praxis that open up possibilities for their practice, whatever the adaptations that might be necessary to fit in with the institutional constraints under which they are working.

Areas for Further Research

In the context of a postmodern, postcolonial era, with the increasing influence of neoliberal and neoconservative policies directing and changing the structure and purpose of our educational systems, there is need to continue to reflect on and challenge a number of constructs underlying educational reform initiatives. Critical theorists and pedagogues frequently ask the following four questions related to the constructs of knowledge, values, power and policy: Whose knowledge?; whose values?; who has the power?; and, who is making the educational policies? The analysis and discussion of the findings in this thesis raise two additional questions for educational policy developers: For what purpose and in whose interest are these policies being developed? Is there another and perhaps better way to bring in the knowledge of the *unspoken voices*, the values embedded in social justice and to give back the power, implicit in a robust democracy, to the people to whom educational policy will be directly affecting?

The findings from this study, in combination with the conceptual framework presented in Chapter two, point to a number of areas for further research. These include:

- Investigate whether and how the use of the arts and cultural praxis, within the transformative arts and cultural praxis circle model, can help to build students' skills and capabilities and increase critical democratic engagement within schools and communities, in other countries/contexts, for socially transformative education.
- Explore key educational policy documents from the national and global levels, using a critical policy discourse approach, to illuminate aids and constraints for teachers' use of the arts and cultural praxis for democratic and transformative education. A specific focus of this discourse analysis would be to examine two types of discourse: discourse around conceptions of democracy, and discourse about the role and value of the arts and cultural praxis. Further sub-division of the discourses should focus on three areas identified within the literature review.

The three areas of focus include *neoliberal discourses* (economic ends; market-principles; efficiency; competition; skills development; “creativity and innovation”); *democratic discourses* (inclusion; equity; critical inquiry; agonistic pluralism; critical and creative engagement; ; social transformative action) and *decolonial discourses* (pluriversality; mutuality; coexistence; traditional/local/place-based; holistic approaches; culturally relevant, responsive, sustaining).

- Explore the development of a broader range of accountability and assessment strategies which recognize, value and promote the development of critical, creative and culturally responsive skills and capabilities to enable students to express their knowledge and understanding and to become actively engaged in democratic and transformative education.

Closing Remarks

This research arose, as was outlined in Chapter one, as a result of my own experiences as a teacher and secondary school administrator in Ontario, Canada through which I observed both the possibilities and the challenges facing teachers’ in Ontario who wished to use the arts for transformative education. The opportunity to conduct this research study in the rural, remote indigenous Maasai region of a post-colonial, democratic nation-state (Kenya), in the global south provided a unique opportunity to broaden and deepen my own experiences and understanding around teachers’ use of the arts and cultural praxis in a local context. While in many respects the local context was quite different from that which I had experienced growing up in Ontario, the key findings from the study illuminate striking similarities arising from the impacts of colonial-Eurocentrism and global neoliberalism, not only on teachers’ use of the arts, but on educational systems, policies, practices and pedagogies. When I began my exploratory study in the Fall of 2009, I heard the excitement, passion and pride from the head-teacher at Enkema PS about their use of the arts for learning, I was excited to begin this research. The head-teacher felt that the arts provided opportunities for the students to develop and use their culturally relevant skills and ways of knowing and being as they drew on their lived experiences to develop the content of their songs, dances, poems, painting and dramatic pieces. For Maasai youth, it also provided the

opportunity to travel and perform at the local, provincial and national levels and to and engage with their communities to challenge the status quo in areas of social justice and equity.

The data gathered through my experiences, interviews, observations and policy document analysis in Kenya found that although teachers in these schools believed passionately that the arts and cultural practices could be used to achieve educational goals similar to those articulated for a democratic nation-state within the narrative of a robust global democracy, they faced many barriers for within the educational system in Kenya. The findings from this study illuminate both challenges and possibilities for the road ahead both for the arts and cultural praxis and for democratizing and decolonizing education.

The projects of decolonization and democratization of education may indeed be seen as lofty, ideologically-driven pursuits. However, as critical democratic and decolonial scholars have argued, we need to continue the discourse of possibility in order to confront and challenge the current hegemonic ideologies of colonial imperialism and global neoliberalism which are not only creating growing social and economic inequities, but are also contributing to the destruction of our natural environment (Giroux, 2005; Grande, 2004; Mignolo, 2011a). Educational policies and pedagogical approaches which de-link from colonial and neoliberal notions of the arts and cultural praxis in order to recognize, value and promote them as *creatively symbolic ways of knowing, expressing and engaging* can provide more equitable opportunities for *all* students, teachers and community members to imagine possibilities and begin to critically engage in the more democratic and socially transformative goals of education, as envisioned in this thesis.

We cannot lose hope. If we are in what Wallerstein (1998) referred to as this ‘transformational timespace’ moving towards a New World Order then it will take a concerted effort by policy actors at the local, national and global levels from government, education and civil society to create educational reforms that will prepare our youth to be engaged and active in a robust global democracy which is grounded on an ethic of acceptance, respect and embracing difference. As global educators for democracy, equity and social justice, we have a responsibility to continue to challenge the power, policies and pedagogies that create inequities in public education. With its unique role of being able to touch both the mind and the soul, I continue to believe in the potential for the arts and cultural practices, as Greene (1995a), Socrates (Hancock, 1987) & Battiste (2010) put forward to: reignite the imagination and learning spirit; help restore the ideological goals of a robust global democracy; and contribute to social

transformation for the global common good. However, for this to happen, as both critical and decolonial theorists have argued, a paradigmatic shift will be needed in educational systems around the world towards an ethic which accepts, respects and embraces difference; believes in the globality of humanity; works in the context of a recognition of the relations of power that currently exist and those that have shaped history; and aims to de-link from the colonization of knowledge.

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Appendix A

List of Interviews and Performance Observations

Interviewee Code	Type of Interview/Observ	Date of Interview/Observ	Country	Position
P-Olk	Informal	28/09/2009	Kenya	Cook
SC-Olk	Informal	28/09/2009	Kenya	Chair-School Council
S	Informal	29/09/2009	Kenya	Chair-School Council
C	Class	30/09/2009	Kenya	Teacher
S	Class	30/09/2009	Kenya	Teacher
JTS	Class	30/09/2009	Kenya	Deputy Head-Teacher
CT_HT	Informal	30/09/2009	Kenya	Head-Teacher Ast-Chief- sub-location
SN	Informal	30/09/2009	Kenya	Parent
JT	Informal	30/09/2009	Kenya	Parent
JM	Informal	09/10/2009	Kenya	Head-Teacher
ZS	Informal	16/10/2009	Kenya	NGO-Community member
PT	Informal	16/10/2009	Kenya	NGO-Community member
JoS	Informal	19/10/2009	Kenya	NGO-Community member
B	Informal	07/05/2010	Kenya	Head-Teacher
GM	Informal	07/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
GW	Informal	07/05/2010	Kenya	AEO (Area Education Officer)
	Music Team			
	Rehearsal	09/05/2010	Kenya	
F	Moran sensitization	10/05/2010	Kenya	NGO-Community member
SK_P	Informal	11/05/2010	Kenya	Parent
JS	Informal	11/05/2010	Kenya	Head-Teacher
JK	Class	12/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
PK	Class	12/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
DL	Class	12/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
JS	Class	12/05/2010	Kenya	Head-Teacher
	Music Team			
	Rehearsal	12/05/2010	Kenya	
MK	Class	13/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
PK	Class	13/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
JT	Class	13/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
JK-St	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Student
SK-St	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Student
JK_T	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
Mr A_P- AC-EPS	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Parent; Ast.-Chief- sub-location
MN-St	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Student

LP-St	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Student
JT-St	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Student
PT	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Head-Teacher
EW	Informal	13/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
	Music Team			
	Rehearsal	13/05/2010	Kenya	
	School	13/05/2010	Kenya	
Mr W_DEO	Formal	18/05/2010	Kenya	DEO
Mr F_DEO	Formal	18/05/2010	Kenya	DEO
Mr T_DEO	Formal	18/05/2010	Kenya	DEO
OAMY-DEOs	Formal	18/05/2010	Kenya	DEOs
Mr S_DQASO	Formal	18/05/2010	Kenya	DQASO
LM	Informal	19/05/2010	Kenya	Community member
Mr G_T-EPs	Informal	20/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
Ms S_T-EPs	Informal	20/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
MSt1-SPS	Informal	20/05/2010	Kenya	Student
EW	Informal	20/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
Mr G_T-EPs	Formal	21/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
Mr L_T-EPs	Formal	21/05/2010	Kenya	Teacher
TK_P	Informal	21/05/2010	Kenya	Nurse
JTS	Informal	22/05/2010	Kenya	Deputy Head-Teacher
	Performance	27/05/2010	Kenya	
	Community	02/06/2010	Kenya	
Mr J_HT-EPs	Formal	02/06/2010	Kenya	Head-Teacher
SN	Informal	02/06/2010	Kenya	Student
	Music Team			
	Rehearsal	02/06/2010	Kenya	
Mr M_T-OPS	Formal	03/06/2010	Kenya	Teacher
JM	Formal	03/06/2010	Kenya	Teacher
Mr H_HT-OPS	Formal	07/06/2010	Kenya	Head-Teacher
Ms A_T-OPS	Formal	10/06/2010	Kenya	Deputy Head-Teacher
LM	Informal	10/06/2010	Kenya	Community member
	Music Team			
	Rehearsal	24/06/2010	Kenya	
	Performance	28/06/2010	Kenya	

Mr K_MOE	Formal	30/06/2010	Kenya	Coordinator-Primary INSET, MOE
Ms C-KIE	Informal	30/06/2010	Kenya	Director of Policy & Planning, KIE
Ms I_KIE	Informal	01/07/2010	Kenya	Dept. Director of Curriculum Orientation & Field Studies
MK; BW; WR	Kenyatta U Convocation	02/07/2010	Kenya	
	Church service; Performance	04/07/2010	Kenya	
Mr E_T- EPS	Formal	05/07/2010	Kenya	Teacher
Ms E-T- EPS	Formal	05/07/2010	Kenya	Teacher
Mr O_T- EPS	Formal	05/07/2010	Kenya	Teacher
EW_T, JL_T, JS_HT JTS_T, SK_T, JM_T	Formal	06/07/2010	Kenya	Teacher, Teacher, Head-T
Mr Y_AEO	Formal	07/07/2010	Kenya	Teacher, Teacher, Teacher
Mr I_DEO	Formal	08/07/2010	Kenya	AEO (Area Education Officer)
Mr D_DQASO	Formal	12/07/2010	Kenya	DEO
				DQASO
Mr N_CC	Formal	14/07/2010	Kenya	Coordinator-Performing Arts & Athletics
Ms R_CC	Formal	14/07/2010	Kenya	Ast. Dir. for Creative Arts
	School Closing-end of term	29/07/2010	Kenya	
Ms A_T- OPS	Formal	01/08/2010	Kenya	Deputy Head-Teacher
	Informal	05/08/2010	Kenya	School Council
	Performance	10/08/2010	Kenya	
Ms G_MOE	Formal	20/08/2010	Kenya	Director of Policy & Planning, KESSP, MOE
Mr Y_AEO	External Validation	01/11/2011	Kenya	
Mr H_HT- OPS	External Validation	02/11/2011	Kenya	
Mr M_T- OPS	External Validation	05/11/2011	Kenya	
Ms H-T- OPS	External Validation	05/11/2011	Kenya	

Mr O_T- EPS	External Validation	05/11/2011	Kenya	
Mr J_HT- EPS	External Validation	08/11/2011	Kenya	
Mr L_T- EPS	External Validation	09/11/2011	Kenya	
Ms A_T- OPS	External Validation	12/11/2011	Kenya	
Mr B_KNEC	External Validation	14/11/2011	Kenya	
Mr M_T- OPS	Class	28/09/2009 & frequent	Kenya	Teacher
Mr H_HT- OPS	Informal	28/09/2009 & frequent	Kenya	Head-Teacher
Ms A_T- OPS	Informal	28/09/2009 & frequent	Kenya	Deputy Head-Teacher
Peter-GT- Enkolong	Informal	29/09/2009 & frequent	Kenya	Guide; Translator
Mr J_HT- EPS	Informal	29/09/2009 & frequent	Kenya	Head-Teacher

Appendix B

Letter of Information (Director of Education)

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a doctoral student in the department of Theory and Policy Studies, Educational Administration at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto (OISE/UT). I am writing to request the participation of two primary schools in your District for research aimed at studying teacher's use of the arts in primary schools in Maasailand, southern Kenya. The goal of this research is to explore how teachers understand their use of the arts in their classrooms and schools. The aids and constraints which influence their use of the arts will also be examined. As this will be a comparative international education case study, the data gathered could be used to influence educational policy related to the use of the arts in primary schools locally, nationally and internationally. This international study is being carried out under the supervision of Dr. John Portelli, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, OISE/UT. The data is being collected for the purposes of a PhD thesis and perhaps for subsequent research articles.

The research period of this study is planned to run from September, 2010 to November, 2011. The research design for this project includes: individual teacher and head-teacher interviews, teacher focus groups, observation of arts-based teaching approaches in the classroom and school, interviews of educational administrators, curriculum developers, policy makers, and analysis of publically available educational policy documents. The schools involved in this case study will have claimed to demonstrate a strong commitment to the use of arts for education in their classrooms and schools. The head-teachers at each school will have one individual interview of approximately forty-five minutes. Each teacher will have two face-to-face interviews of approximately forty-five minutes each. For teachers who wish to participate, there will be no more than three classroom or co-curricular observations per teacher per school. A focus group session for teachers at each school will be conducted mid-way through the study period and will last between forty-five minutes and one hour.

During both the individual interviews and the focus groups, teachers and head-teachers will be asked questions about what they see as the purpose or goals of education, how they use the arts in their teaching practice to achieve these goals, and what supports and constraints influence the use of the arts to achieve their stated goals of education. During the interviews and focus groups, I may ask questions for clarification or further understanding, but my part will be mainly to listen to participants speak about their views, experiences, and the reasons they believe the things they do.

During the classroom/co-curricular observations for each teacher, I will remain a passive observer. I would like to attend at least one of the performance events/exhibits of each of the classes (some of these may be combined events with a number of teachers from the same school). At these events, I will be a member of the audience observing the performance. Teachers will be encouraged to keep a journal of their thoughts and experiences during the research period, while using the arts in their teaching practice.

It is the intention that each interview and focus group will be audio taped and later transcribed to paper; participants will have the choice of declining to have the interview taped or of participating in the focus group. Participants will be assigned a number that will correspond to their interview and transcription. Transcripts will be sent to participants to read in order for them to add any further information or to correct any misinterpretations that could result. The information obtained in the interviews, focus groups, classroom/performance observations and journal entries will be kept in strict confidence and stored in a locked filing cabinet at my home. All information will be reported in such a way that individual persons, schools, school districts, and communities cannot be identified. All raw data (i.e. transcripts, field notes) will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

Participants may at any time refuse to answer a question or withdraw from the interview process. Further, they may request that any information, whether in written form or audiotape, be eliminated from the project. At no time will value judgments be placed on any responses nor will any evaluation be made of the effectiveness of teachers or head-teachers. Finally, participants are free to ask any questions about the research and their involvement with it and may request a summary of the findings of the study.

If you agree, please sign the letter below and return it to me in the envelope provided. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (613) 532-8011 or at mary.drinkwater@utoronto.ca You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. John Portelli at (416) 978-1277. The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study or if you have any complaints about how you have been treated as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Ethics, ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne (Edgeworth) Drinkwater
 PhD candidate, OISE/UT
 Theory & Policy Studies, Educational Administration; Comparative International and
 Development Education.
 613-532-8011
mary.drinkwater@utoronto.ca

Attached to this package are:

- a) Letter of Information to Principal
- b) Letter of Information/Consent Forms for Principals/Head-Teachers and Teachers.
- c) Ethics Approval Letter - from the Unit Research Ethics Review Board (OISE/UT).
- d) Consent Form – for Board Consent (to be emailed back, if approved)

Appendix C
Consent Form (Director of Education)

I have read and retained a copy of the letter of information concerning this study and all questions have been sufficiently answered. I am aware of the purpose and procedures of this study.

I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that schools or teachers may withdraw at any point during the study and may request the removal of all or part of my data without any consequences to themselves. I have also been told the steps that will be taken to ensure confidentiality of all information.

If you agree, please sign the letter below and return it to me in the envelope provided. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (613) 532-8011 or at mary.drinkwater@utoronto.ca. You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. John Portelli at (416) 978-1277. The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study or if you have any complaints about how you have been treated as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Ethics, ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273.

Board of Education: _____

Director's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Please initial if you would like a summary of the findings of the study upon completion: _____

Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

Appendix D

Letter of Information and Consent Form (Head-Teacher; Teacher)

To the participants in this study,

The goal of this research is to explore how teachers understand their use of the arts in their classrooms and schools. The aids and constraints which influence their use of the arts will also be examined. Two primary schools will be selected in Maasailand, southern Kenya for this comparative international case study based on their demonstration of a strong commitment to the use of the arts in the school and school-community. There will be an effort made to include a balance between male and female participants.

This international study is being carried out under the supervision of Dr. John Portelli, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto (OISE/UT). The data is being collected for the purposes of a PhD thesis and perhaps for subsequent research articles.

The research period for this study is planned to run from September, 2010 to November, 2011. The head-teachers at each school will have one individual interview of approximately forty-five minutes. Each teacher will have two face-to-face interviews of approximately forty-five minutes each. For teachers who wish to participate, there will be no more than three classroom or co-curricular observations per teacher per school. A focus group session for teachers at each school will be conducted mid-way through the study period and will last between forty-five minutes and one hour.

During both the individual interviews and the focus groups, teachers and head-teachers will be asked questions about what they see as the purpose or goals of education, how they use the arts in their teaching practice to achieve these goals, and what supports and constraints influence the use of the arts to achieve their stated goals of education. During the interviews and focus groups, I may ask questions for clarification or further understanding, but my part will be mainly to listen to participants speak about their views, experiences, and the reasons they believe the things they do.

During the classroom/co-curricular observations for each teacher, I will remain a passive observer. I would like to attend at least one of the performance events/exhibits of each of the classes (some of these may be combined events with a number of teachers from the same school). At these events, I will be a member of the audience observing the performance. Teachers will be encouraged to keep a journal of their thoughts and experiences during the research period, while using the arts in their teaching practice.

It is the intention that each interview and focus group will be audio taped and later transcribed to paper; you will have the choice of declining to have the interview taped or of participating in the focus group. You will be assigned a number that will correspond to your interview and transcription. Your transcript will be sent to you to read in order for you to add any further

information or to correct any misinterpretations that could result. The information obtained in the interviews, focus groups, classroom/performance observations and journal entries will be kept in strict confidence and stored in a locked filing cabinet at my home. All information will be reported in such a way that individual persons, schools, school districts, and communities cannot be identified. All raw data (i.e. transcripts, field notes) will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

You may at any time refuse to answer a question or withdraw from the interview process. You may request that any information, whether in written form or audiotape, be eliminated from the project. At no time will value judgments be placed on your responses nor will any evaluation be made of the effectiveness of teachers or head-teachers. Finally, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it and may request a summary of the findings of the study.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (613) 532-8011 or at mary.drinkwater@utoronto.ca You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. John Portelli at (416) 978-1277. The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study or if you have any complaints about how you have been treated as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Ethics, ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Mary Anne (Edgeworth) Drinkwater
PhD Candidate, Theory and Policy Studies in
Education
OISE/University of Toronto
Telephone: 613-532-8011
email: mary.drinkwater@utoronto.ca

Dr. John Portelli
Professor, Theory and Policy Studies in
Education
OISE/University of Toronto
Telephone: 416-978-1277
email: john.portelli@utoronto.ca

By signing below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in the study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions above.

Name: _____ School: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please initial if you would like a summary of the findings of the study upon completion: _____

Please initial if you agree to have your interview audio taped: _____

Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FOR TAPE RECORDING

This is to state that I voluntarily agree to the focus group/interview [cross out inapplicable] being tape recorded by the Researcher.

- ▶ I understand that the purpose of the tape recording is to record my words.
- ▶ I understand that the tape recording will be listened to only by the Researcher, unless I give written permission to share with others.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ AND I UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT, AND I FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY CONSENT AND AGREE TO HAVING THE FOCUS GROUP/INTERVIEW TAPE RECORDED.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT):

SIGNATURE:

WITNESS SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Appendix E
Teacher Interview Protocol

a) Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

b) Current/Background experience in the arts:

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. Which schools have you taught at? Can you tell me about the demographics of the schools/communities in which you have taught?
3. What grades/classes have you taught?
4. Would you consider yourself to be more a 'subject specialist' or a 'generalist'? If 'subject specialist', which subjects have been your 'major teachables'?

c) Components of research questions:

1. What types of arts do you use in your teaching?
2. Tell me about some of the ways you have been using the arts in your teaching over the past month?
3. What did you hope that students would learn/gain from these arts-based opportunities?
4. Why did you choose to use these arts-based activities?
5. Were these arts-based opportunities/experiences linked to any specific part of the curriculum or to a specific curriculum expectation?
6. Would YOU consider these arts-based activities to be 'curricular'; co-curricular' or extracurricular'? What do you think your HT would say?/Why?; What do you think your 'students' would say?/Why?
7. In what ways do you feel these arts-based activities have contributed to the learning of your students?
8. Do you feel that parents and/or community members are aware of the types of arts-based activities that you are using with your students? In what ways may they have influenced, been influenced by or been involved in these arts-based activities?
9. What is it about the arts that draws you to use them with your students in your classroom/school?
10. Have you ever felt that an arts-based activity which you had created for students in your classroom produced results which significantly surprised either you or the students, in terms of the 'learning' that came out of it? Can you describe this to me?
11. What do feel your 'role' is, as a teacher, in helping students learn?
12. If you or one of your students wished to use the arts to address an issue that might be perceived to be sensitive or controversial in your school or community, how would you proceed?
13. What aids or constraints have influenced your ability to use the arts in your teaching? Have you noticed a shift in any of these aids or constraints over your teaching career?
14. If you were the Minister of Education in Kenya.....and felt the pressure of the public to create the 'best possible schools for children in your country'what arguments would you give about the place of/value of the arts in public schools?

Appendix F

Teacher Interview Protocol (mini-interviews)

a) Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. Teacher training?
3. Are you using any 'arts' or 'arts-based approaches' in your classes? (art, music, drama, crafts, creativity, etc.)
4. How? In what ways? Egs?
5. Why?
6. What aids and/or barriers are present which affect your use of the 'arts' in your teaching

Appendix G

Head-Teacher Interview Protocol

a) Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

b) Current/Background experience in the arts:

1. How long have you been a head-teacher/principal?
2. Which schools have you been H-T at? Can you tell me about the demographics of the schools/communities in which you have been the H-T?
3. Do you teach any classes at the present time? What grades/classes have you taught?
4. Would you consider yourself to be more a 'subject specialist' or a 'generalist'? If 'subject specialist', which subjects have been your 'major teachables'?

c) Components of research questions:

1. What types of arts do teachers use in their teaching at your school?
2. Tell me about some of the ways that teachers have been using the arts in their teaching over the past month?
3. What did you hope that students would learn/gain from these arts-based opportunities?
4. Why did you think that teachers choose these arts-based activities?
5. Would YOU consider these arts-based activities to be 'curricular'; co-curricular' or extracurricular'? What do you think the parents in your community would say?/Why?;
6. In what ways do you feel these arts-based activities have contributed to the learning of your students?
7. Do you feel that parents and/or community members are aware of the types of arts-based activities that teachers are using with your students? In what ways may they have influenced, been influenced by or been involved in these arts-based activities?
8. What is it about the arts that you feel draws teachers to use them with their students in the classroom/school?
9. What do feel your 'role' is, as a head-teacher, in helping students learn?
10. Scenario: A teacher asks to meet with you to talk about a 'performance piece' that her students have asked to work on related to an environmental concern in the community that they have become aware of through their research. She is worried that the issue may be sensitive in the community, although she would also like to support her students social activism.

** What issues come to mind for you in your role as head-teacher of the school?
(Possible issues: power, surveillance, supporting agency, developing an 'articulate public', community response, ethical/cultural issues)

11. What aids or constraints have influenced the ability of teachers in your school to use the arts in their teaching? Have you noticed a shift in any of these aids or constraints over career as an administrator or teacher?
12. In this era of standardized curriculum and testing, teachers often feel the pressure to 'teach to the test'. Is the use of *critical and creative inquiry* still possible? If so, what advice could you give new principals coming into this role to support teachers in this pursuit.
13. If you were the Minister of Education in Kenya.....and felt the pressure of the public to create the 'best possible schools for children in your country'what arguments would you give about the place of/value of the arts in public schools?

Appendix H

Teacher Focus Group Protocol

A) Format; (3 teachers)

1. Introduction (led by facilitator)
2. Group Discussion on each question (led by facilitator) - microphones to record

B) Possible Questions;

2. Comment on the opportunity to use the ‘arts’ in other courses that you are teaching/have taught in previous years (across the curriculum) at other schools? How did this impact on the *learning/engagement* of students in your classes?

3. Practical/Creative Opportunity

** The group of teachers will be asked to give examples of some of the emerging issues or concerns in their school or community. They will be asked to select ONE of these issues which they would like to address using arts-based pedagogy.

TASK: Using the arts and arts-based pedagogy, create a plan to address this issue, with the goal of deepening the learning opportunity for students, teachers, parents and community members.

** The plan could include: individual/group; classroom/school/community.

** Try to make use of the ideas and contributions of all teachers.

POST-TASK REFLECTION: (To be done individually, to be done their journaling or ‘point-form notes’ and discussed at the next individual teacher interview).

1. How effective do you think the plan that was created during the focus group is? Why?
2. What are the key ‘learning opportunities’? For who? How? Why?
3. What aids would be available in your classroom/school/community to assist you in implementing the plan?
4. What constraints could limit the success of the plan?

Appendix I

District or Area Education Officer (DEO; AEO) Interview Protocol

a) Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

b) Current/Background experience in the arts:

1. How long have you been a DEO?
2. Can you tell me about the demographics of the District/schools/communities in which you administer?

c) Components of research questions:

3. In your District, tell me about ‘how’ teachers are using the arts (music, dance, poetry, drama, visual art) for education in their schools?
4. What did you hope that students would learn/gain from these arts-based opportunities?
5. Why did you think that teachers choose to use the arts?
6. Would YOU consider these arts-based activities to be ‘curricular’; co-curricular’ or extracurricular’? What do you think the parents in your community would say?/Why?;
7. In what ways do you feel these arts-based activities have contributed to the learning of your students?
8. Do you feel that parents and/or community members are aware of the types of arts-based activities that teachers are using with your students? In what ways may they have influenced, been influenced by or been involved in these arts-based activities?
9. What is it about the arts that you feel draws teachers to use them with their students in the classroom/school?
10. What do feel your ‘role’ is, as a Director/superintendent/DEO, in helping students learn?
11. Scenario: A teacher asks to meet with you to talk about a ‘performance piece’ that her students have asked to work on related to a concern in the community that they have become aware of through their research. She is worried that the issue may be sensitive in the community, although she would also like to support her students’ social activism.

** What issues come to mind for you in your role as DEO?

12. What aids or constraints have influenced the ability of teachers in your District to use the arts in their teaching? Have you noticed a shift in any of these aids or constraints over career as an administrator or teacher?
13. In this era of standardized curriculum and testing, teachers often feel the pressure to ‘teach to the test’. Is the use of *critical and creative inquiry* still possible? If so, what advice could you give new principals coming into this role to support teachers in this pursuit?

14. If you were the Minister of Education in Kenya.....and felt the pressure of the public to create the 'best possible schools for children in your country'what arguments would you give about the place of/value of the arts in public schools?
15. What would schools be like, in your District, without the arts?

Appendix J

Policy Developers/Teacher-Educators Interview Protocol

- Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

Research Questions – How do teachers understand their use of arts-based pedagogy and practice?

Background Policy analysis – (SP (2005); KESSP (2005-10); MOEST Strategic Plan (2006-11); KNEC Strategic Plan (09-10)...also Vision 2030 and MDGs.

- What is your position? Can you briefly describe your role within the organization?
 1. Throughout the policy documents, there is a continual reference to ‘quality education’. From your position, what role do you see the arts and arts-based pedagogy playing in the development of a ‘quality education’ system?
 2. I have also seen reference to a term “curriculum rationalization” (SP, 2005, p. 3 & 33), can you explain this term to me?
 3. I understand that there was a change in the Primary Teacher Education training program in 2005 (?) in which ‘specialization’ (arts/sciences) was introduced? In the current program, what elements of teacher preparation are pre-service primary school teachers receiving which would help them to use the arts and arts-based pedagogy.
 4. How does the curriculum in primary schools support the use of the arts and arts-based pedagogy?
 5. From the feedback that you are getting, particularly from primary school teachers in Maasai or ASAL (rural or geographically isolated schools), what aids and constraints are affecting their use of the arts and arts-based pedagogy?
 6. I am noticing the increased importance being placed on technology and ICT for addressing many of the ‘current challenges’ facing the educational system/schools in Kenya. In what ways does KIE partner with other stakeholders (ie. Ministry of Planning?) to provide infrastructure to ASALs (ie. Electricity; network access; computers)
 7. I see references in the KNEC strategic plan (09-10) towards a need for increased involvement in curriculum planning. In this era of ‘exam/testing focus’...in what ways might a partnership with KNEC affect teachers ability to use the arts or arts-based pedagogy in their teaching practice?

Appendix K

Policy and Planning-Kenya Ministry of Education Interview Protocol

* Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

1. In the SP (2005), pg. 3, six key concerns were listed with respect to the attainment of UPE (access, retention, equity, quality, relevance and efficiency-internal & external). In 2010, are these still the major concerns? Others?
2. Some of the educational research being done is criticizing sub-Saharan and African education as becoming 'too Westernized'. Can you comment on this with respect to the direction KESSP is going...particularly with respect to curriculum development and assessment?

(Supplement to question #2) The contributions of international 'educational aid' organizations can have an impact on the educational agenda of a country which receives this aid. I have heard some of the teachers talking about work that JICA (Japanese International Cooperation Agency) was doing. Are there other international aid organizations that have been contributing to either curriculum development or assessment? How does/has this aid affect the educational agenda in Kenya?

3. I had the opportunity to hear William Ruto (Minister of Higher Education) speak on July 2, 2010 at the Kenyatta University graduation ceremony. He spoke about a 'shift in policy directions in higher education' towards a greater emphasis on vocational and technical skills development in order to match the shifting needs of the labour market (both locally and globally).

There has been an increase in research linking education, creativity, innovation and economic development. An increased focus on the arts could help to further prepare students for these labour market demands. Do you see any similar trends arising in the primary or secondary school programs in Kenya?

4. The highlights of the UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report (2010) expressed a fear about the attainment of the six (6) EFA goals by 2015. Based on the strong comments I have been hearing from teachers, parents and community members in Magadi division, I see the potential for the arts to have a significant impact not only in education, but also in social, political, environmental and economic areas.

In looking at the 23 investment programs within KESSP, I am wondering which ones you feel might address/support arts education in schools (particularly schools in Maasai/ASAL schools)?

Appendix L

Kenya Music Festival (Ministry of Education) Interview Protocol

- Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent
 1. How long have you been involved with the KMF?
 2. Can you describe your role in the organization?
 3. Can you tell me a little about the history of the KMF? When did the relationship between the schools and the KMF begin?
 4. Can you tell me about the goals of the festival?
 5. Current participation: # of Primary Schools/Students (breakdown by province/district);
 6. It is incredible to see the wide variety of cultural dances, songs and traditions presented here at the festival. I am wondering how many tribes/cultures are still performing their traditional dances & songs (ie. Massai –morans/girls)?
 7. I see a number of classes of “Set Poems”. Who creates/writes the “Set Poems”? How are the topics/themes selected?
 8. What role do the ‘Special Interest Groups’ (Vision 2030; PLAN; World Vision; ……) play in the KMF and in educating youth and communities through Music?
 9. In what ways does the KMF ‘partner’ with schools to support the use of arts-based pedagogy in primary schools?
 10. What aids or constraints have you noticed that have affected teachers use of the arts in primary schools? Has this changed in any way over the years that you have been involved?

Appendix M

Arts Consultant (Kenya Ministry of Education) Interview Protocol

- Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

Research Questions – How do teachers understand their use of arts-based pedagogy and practice?

- What is/was your position? Can you briefly describe your role within the organization?
 1. Based on your experience as an arts consultant at KIE, why and how are the arts being used in primary schools in Kenya?
 2. From your position, what role do you see the arts playing in the development of a ‘quality education’ system?
 3. How does the curriculum in primary schools support the use of the arts and arts-based pedagogy?
 4. Which policy documents (local/provincial) would you say have played a ‘key role’ in either supporting or constraining the use of the arts in primary schools in Kenya?
 5. Which organizations locally & provincially would you say have played a ‘key role’ in either supporting or constraining the use of the arts in primary schools in Kenya?
 6. In the current Teacher Training program for primary teachers, what elements of teacher preparation are pre-service primary school teachers receiving which would help them to use the arts and arts-based pedagogy. What do you feel could/should be added to further prepare them to use the arts in their teaching?
 7. What other aids or constraints having an influence on why and how teachers in primary schools in Kenya are using the arts in their classrooms/schools?

Appendix N

Kenya National Examination Council (Administrator) Interview Protocol

a) Introductions, purpose of the interviews, consent

1. Can you tell me about your 'role' within KNEC?
2. In producing a 'quality education' system in Kenya, what role could the arts and arts-based pedagogy play?
3. What role does/could KNEC play in supporting the use of the arts and arts-based pedagogy in primary schools in Kenya?

Appendix O

Description of Classes Included in the 2010 Kenya Music Festival

1. Vocal Solos and Ensembles
 - a. Vocal solos
 - b. Vocal ensembles

2. Choral Music
 - a. Primary and Nursery Schools
 - b. Secondary Schools
 - c. Teachers Training Colleges
 - d. Technical Institutes, Youth Polytechnics and National Youth Service
 - e. Universities and University Colleges
 - f. Teachers Clubs

Additional Divisions

- i) Secular Set Pieces
 - a. Female voices (a-c)
 - b. Male voices (a-c)
 - c. Mixed voices (a-f)

- ii) Accompanied Set Pieces
 - a. Female voices (a-c)
 - b. Male voices (a-c)
 - c. Mixed voices (a-f)
 - d. Lower primary

- iii) Unaccompanied Own Choice – Nursery
- iv) Unaccompanied Set Pieces – Lower Primary
- v) Small Choir – Own Choice (a-f)
- vi) Accredited Advance Published Pieces (b-f)
- vii) Advanced Original Compositions/Arrangements (b-f)
- viii) Islamic Religious Song (a-f)
- ix) Taarab Music (a-f)
- x) Oriental Religious Song (a-c)
- xi) Oriental Vocal Group (a-b)
- xii) Oriental Vocal Accompaniment (a-b)

- xiii) Special Compositions
 - a. Dwelling in Unity, Peace and Liberty (a-b)
 - b. Learn Without Fear (a)
 - c. Kenya Vision 2030: Prosperity for all Kenyans (a-b)

- xiv) African Folk Songs
 - a. From Kenya (a-f)
 - b. From the rest of Africa (a-f)
 - c. With Sacred Text (a-f)
 - xv) Original Composition of Gospel Music
 - a. Accompaniments (b)
 - xvi) Arrangement of “Pop Tunes” and Melodies (“Zilizopendwa”)
 - a. From Kenyan Musicians (1997 backwards) (b-f)
 - b. From the rest of Africa (1997 backwards) (b-f)
 - c. Of African Gospel Music (a-b)
3. Dances
- a. Singing Games
 - i. Western Styles
 - ii. African Style
 - iii. Own Creative movement
 - b. African Traditional Group Dances
 - i. From Kenya
 - ii. With Acrobatic Style
 - iii. For the Hearing Impaired
 - iv. For the Physically Handicapped
 - v. From the rest of Africa
 - c. Western Traditional Group Dance
 - d. Oriental Dances
4. Instrumental Music
- a. Western Instrument
 - b. African Instruments
 - c. Oriental Instruments
5. Elocution
- a. English Verse and Public Speaking
 - b. Kiswahili Verse and Public Speaking
 - c. Other African Languages Verse Speaking
 - d. French Verse and Public Speaking
 - e. German Verse and Public Speaking
 - f. Sign Language