

Universalized discourses: in whose interests in teacher education?

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ABSTRACT

In this paper I present a case study of the universalized discourses that dominate environmental education, particularly the teacher education publications for environmental education forthcoming from Unesco. Since its inception a Western, Eurocentric, industrialized, male and English speaking worldview has dominated statements about environmental education, particularly those made at the international level. Such statements can be read as attempts to universalize environmental education, but they can also be read as an effect of colonization and marginalization of others by male English speaking worldviews. The silencing of the voices of the colonized and marginalized at United Nations meetings is increasingly being recognized, and the universal models developed for environmental education within this worldview have been limited in their success even within the genre in which they have been developed. Drawing on a poststructural analysis of these Unesco models I argue that the colonialism and marginalization they embody only serves to privilege the powerful and that a different approach is needed for environmental education in teacher education, one that starts from the silenced voices in all our societies.

Introduction

My aim in this paper is to critically examine the assumptions and limitations of some of the foundational documents of environmental education. However, in developing this critique I recognize that I walk a very delicate line. I am a privileged, white, English-speaking academic who has been known to endorse the dominant discourse (see, for example, Greenall 1985). I also speak and write in the language of the coloniser as I am of British descent. Yet, being female, I am also an Other who is concerned about the silencing of women's and other marginalized voices and therefore I argue from a position of one who is silenced by the dominant discourses in environmental education for changes in these discourses. I therefore do not wish to be patronising and speak for others. Rather I wish to draw attention to my concerns, from a Western perspective, with the dominant

discourses in environmental education and with the colonialism and marginalization inherent therein. Thus I adopt the deliberate strategy of allowing marginalized voices to speak in this article by using my privileged position to disrupt the structures of power from within by allowing them to be heard, rather than these voices being seen as discontents "on the outside", or silenced "others".

Environmental Education and the Year of Indigenous Peoples
This International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples provides a timely opportunity to focus on the discourses of environmental education in terms of their inherent colonialism and marginalization. For some time indigenous peoples have been trying to have their voices heard with respect to the environment. Occasionally their voices are heard, for example, in tragic circumstances such as through the murder of Chico Mendes,

the Brazilian rubber tapper and fighter for the Amazonian rainforests who opposed the ranchers intent on ravaging the jungle for short term gain and was murdered for his trouble (Revkin 1990). Or they are heard through the production of attractive "coffee table" books (see, for example, Davis and Henley 1990). And occasionally they are heard through the more academic writings of people such as Vandana Shiva (1989). But more often the non-Western voices are not heard. That politics are played, and voices are silenced, is encapsulated in a reaction to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, or the Rio Summit) by a representative of the Quechua people of Bolivia, Guillermo Delgado-P. (1993: 3) who commented:

Given that questions of environment and development both closely affect Indigenous cultures, one might assume that Indigenous peoples would have been at the centre of discussion on policies of viable environmental conservation. However, in circles where international decisions regarding development and environment are made, the voice of Indigenous peoples is hardly heard.

A similar reaction to UNCED was forthcoming from several others. For example, Godfrey M'Mwereria (1993: 2) noted that the March 1993 follow-up consultation to UNCED of the Southern Networks for Environment and Development (SONED) - Africa Region "reflected a protest against and rejection of co-option, exclusion and marginalisation of Southern countries in international economic, political and cultural spheres, and an affirmation of African alternatives".

These reactions were significant in that one of the major achievements of UNCED, the Rio Declaration, proclaimed that "Indigenous peoples and their communities... have a vital role in

environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices". In similar wording the Declaration also proclaimed that "Women have a vital role in environmental management and development". The participation of both these groups is seen as essential to achieving sustainable development. Yet reactions from the indigenous peoples and from women (see, for example, Salleh 1992 and writers in The Ecofeminist Newsletter) indicate that their voices were not heeded.

Environmental education has been around now for twenty five years, more or less. During this time the field has undergone many changes. It has also been associated with many other forms of education - such as science, social and outdoor - and it incorporates many elements of these. Its global history within Unesco can be precisely charted because of the activities of the Unesco-UNEP International Environmental Education Program (IIEP). This program had its origins in the recommendations from the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, Sweden. The outcomes of the various activities conducted through the IIEP can be read as attempts to universalize (make one for all) statements about environmental education. By making universal statements the IIEP could be seen as saying that there is only one problem and one solution, thereby masking any differences that may exist. However this universalization also can be read as an effect of colonisation of others by the English speaking world, and of marginalization of non-English speaking views. Colonisation has a new meaning in this context. Here it is applied in the realm of ideas, texts, language and discourse rather than just in terms of geography. It is this possible reading of the ideas and language of the IIEP statements on environmental education that is explored in this paper.

I have been working in the field for two decades now, but have only recently started to look at the language of some of the statements and publications of Unesco in the area of environmental education. This focus arose from my academic research interests in developing a critical perspective on the relationships between gender, science and environmental education. However it has led me to looking at issues of marginalization of people and perspectives that are not Western, not English-speaking, and not male, in environmental education statements. IIEP and other Unesco statements have been used as the foundations of national and school level policies and programs in environmental education in many places. Thus the worldview implicit in these statements should be critically examined, not only because of their influence on environmental

education, but because of the influence they also have on related areas such as teacher education. In this paper I analyse some of the Unesco environmental education documents from this perspective in the hope that this will prompt a critical re-examination of the directions for teacher education related to environmental education.

The IEEP Publications

A Western, Eurocentric, English-speaking, and developed worldview¹ has dominated the statements and discourses of environmental education for much, if not all, of the past two decades for a number of reasons. Most of the trend papers presented at the 1975 Unesco Belgrade workshop were biased towards the developed world. As one of the participants reported (Fensham 1976: 4),

Because of the overwhelming preponderance in published form of information about Environmental Education in countries like those of Europe and North America this bias was not surprising but it did tend to give the impression that the models for developing Environmental Education must also be those for the developed world.

Unesco has continued to perpetuate this view through continuing to publish a Western perspective² in the volumes of the Environmental Education series of the Unesco-UNEP International Environmental Education Program, even though, to adapt Fensham's words, these perspectives are largely irrelevant to most of Unesco's countries. At the present time there are thirty volumes in the series, of which twenty nine are currently available³. These have been published between 1983 and 1992 and prepared by authors whose national affiliations are shown in Table 1.

Country/Continent of author	No. of volumes authored	Comment
Africa		
Australia		
Europe		
India		
Jamaica		
Philippines		
United States of America		
Unesco		

Unknown
(because of unavailability)

1

1
9
3
1

1
10

3

1 edited in USA
edited in USA
none edited in USA
all edited in USA
edited in USA
edited in USA

all written in Europe,
not edited in USA

Table 1: Authorship of Unesco-UNEP Environmental Education series
volumes

The vast majority of the IEEP volumes are of direct relevance to teacher education because they have been written as either pre-service or in-service teacher training modules and programs (11 of the 30 volumes), as education modules for classroom use (7) (which has implications for teacher education), as guides and approaches to various aspects of environmental education (9) (which also have teacher education implications), or as a trend paper or surveys (3). Of particular concern in this paper is the universalized nature of the statements made in these volumes given the diversity of cultures, environments, languages, religions, stages of 'development', and politics within the world, as well as differing stages of colonization and post-colonization. How can universal statements meet the needs and interests of such a diversity?

Authorship of IEEP volumes

Unesco, of course, makes the usual disclaimer about the opinions being those of the authors and not necessarily coinciding with any official views of Unesco, but it seems more likely that the views do at least coincide with those who direct the Unesco-UNEP International Environmental Education Programme given that the authors were commissioned by them to prepare the volumes. Also, the contents of the various volumes have then been promoted through lead articles in the IEEP newsletter, Connect. That there is a particular acceptable worldview from the Unesco and IEEP is also reflected in the authors (and their countries) they selected compared with the ones that were overlooked. That such politics are played, and voices are silenced, is supported by the above quote from Fensham (1976: 4) which he elaborated in a more recent interview (as cited in Greenall Gough 1993: 15):

because, even with the best will in the world, the liberals will

find themselves confronted by groups who are much more radical than they are, and yet the liberals will always be in charge, because only liberals get put in charge of things.

The domination of the authorship of the IEEP volumes by Europeans and particularly Americans is noticeable, especially when it is noted that all the volumes not written by Americans, Europeans or Unesco have been subsequently edited by Americans. It could be contested that the editing of the volumes from outside Europe and the USA influenced the content of the texts. However, that such editing was carried out could nevertheless have resulted in the colonization⁴ of the language of the texts by an American perspective. This certainly seems to be an intent in some of the volumes. For example, Hungerford, Volk and Ramsey (1989: i), who are Americans, universalize their work in terms of being

an ideal around which a team of educational planners can make intelligent decisions about what their own curriculum should look like. Even though the curriculum outlined here may exceed the constraints placed upon a given school or nation, all of the

major components should probably be represented in one way or another.

Another example comes from Marcinkowski, Volk and Hungerford (1990: 1) where it is claimed that

When implemented as intended, these guidelines will, in fact, result in teachers who are sufficiently competent and skilled to offer instruction in environmental education that will clearly contribute to the development of environmentally literate students.

Such statements raise questions about what makes these particular prototypes for an environmental education curriculum appropriate for places other than where they have been developed and whether the major components and guidelines they have identified are also appropriate. In making their universal statements the prototypes do not take into account that there are different perspectives, goals, and strategies for change in other countries, and that these are grounded in the different social and political contexts of each of these countries (Sangari 1987). From a non-American perspective these types of materials are very much in the vein of what Wole Soyinka (in Slemon and Tiffin 1989: ix) calls "a second epoch of colonisation", or how "Western theoretical practice applies itself, even with the best intentions, to the cultural productions of the non-Western world":

We... have been blandly invited to submit ourselves to a second epoch of colonisation - this time by a universal-humanoid abstraction defined and conducted by individuals whose theories and prescriptions are derived from the apprehension of their worlds and their history, their social neuroses and their value systems.

Many authors are discussing "the material, often devastating, consequences of a centuries-long imposition of Euro-American conceptual patterns onto a world that is at once 'out there' and yet thoroughly assimilable to the psychic grasp of Western cognition" (Slemon and Tiffin, 1989: ix). Of particular relevance to environmental educators is the work by Vandana Shiva (1989) on women, ecology and development. She documents how the effects of the imposition of Western scientific knowledge and attitudes to economic development in India have destroyed life and threatened survival during the first epoch of colonization.

Just as important for environmental education is the work currently being undertaken on the "second epoch of colonization" which focuses on the realm of ideas, texts, language and discourse. This work builds on the recognition that knowledge is socially constructed and that language is a key participant in producing the reality people wish to present. As Hawthorn (in Spivak, 1990: 17) argues:

All that we can know is what we say about the world - our talk, our sentences, our discourse, our texts. There's nothing outside these texts, no extra texts. There's nothing prior to these texts, no pretexts, there are just more texts. Indeed this claim itself is just another text.

This statement encapsulates one of my major concerns with the texts of the IEEP. By promulgating a Western, Eurocentric, English speaking worldview through the authorship of these texts IEEP are supporting the imposition of the associated conceptual patterns, and corralling of social meanings, rather than allowing other voices to be heard. Once in print these views become

legitimated and difficult to contest, particularly if they are published in a language other than that which is natural for the reader. As an environmental educator I am concerned that practitioners and policy makers then focus on the pedagogy of implementing these texts rather than looking at the language and the worldview that imbue the IEEP texts. If we do this then our actions are limited by the existing discourses and their assumptions, such as nature having no intrinsic value but only a utilitarian value.

Interestingly, it is not only in the realm of environmental education that Unesco seems to be silencing “Other” non-Western, non-male voices. Zia Sardar (1993) notes a similar phenomenon in the field of future studies where Unesco has, with one exception, only sampled Western literature in the compilation of an authoritative bibliography in its supposedly global reference tool, Unesco Future Scan.

Languages of the IEEP volumes

The language in which the text is written is important. As Giroux (1992: 19) argues:

it is in the domain of language that the traces of a theoretical and political journey begin to emerge as part of a broader attempt to engage meaning as a form of social memory, social institutions as powerful carriers and legitimators of meaning, and social practices as sites in which meaning is re-invented in the body, desire, and in the relations between the self and others.

Western domination can be found in the languages used in the Unesco-UNEP series, as Table 2 illustrates. The dominance of the use of English is perhaps explicable in terms of it being the universal language for United Nations documents, however Unesco is supposed to be a multilingual organization. The use of English nevertheless conveys particular messages and limits access to the volumes to those who are very proficient in English (which may, of course, be seen as a blessing in disguise). Gayatri Spivak (1987) argues that colonised races and peoples have been forced to articulate their experiences in the language of their oppressors. Ngugi Wa Thiong’O (1986: 4) further develops this point; “The choice of language and the use to which it is put is central to a people’s definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire universe”.

Language used in volume No. of volumes in that language*

Arabic

English

French

Spanish 12

28†

14 or 15●

3 or 13#

* Of the 30 volumes, all except two have been published in English with some also being published in other language(s)

† Of these volumes, Volume 19 is claimed to be available in English, but it has never been sighted and it is listed as ‘unavailable’ in the Unesco-UNEP newsletter, Connect (XIV(3): 6-8), and in recent correspondence.

- Volume 29 states that 15 volumes are in French, whereas Volume 30 states that 14 volumes are in French, as does Volume 21 which was published in 1992 (Volume 25 is the uncertain one).
- # Unesco itself seems uncertain about the number of volumes published in Spanish. The listing of documents in the IEEP series given at the beginning of Number 29 only notes 3 Spanish volumes

(all published in 1983), Connect (XIV(3): 6-8), lists 13 volumes published in Spanish. Both listings were published in 1989. The volumes published in 1990 and 1992 list 13 volumes as being available in Spanish.

Table 2: Languages of Unesco-UNEP Environmental Education series volumes

The limited number of volumes published in Spanish is interesting, especially given Fensham's comments (1976: 9) about the Latin American participants at the Unesco Belgrade workshop being so active although ultimately much over-ruled in the final statements. The paucity of Spanish language volumes seems to raise several possibilities: either Spanish speaking peoples are being given no option but to interact in English, or they not interested in what Unesco is producing (it is not seen as relevant and therefore not worth the effort of translating), or Unesco is not interested in providing information to Spanish speaking peoples, or... Similar questions can also be raised about the paucity of Arabic and French volumes and the total absence of Russian volumes (given that Russian is an "official" language of the United Nations) and volumes in non-European languages.

Further indications of discrimination against the non-European languages of the most populous nations on the planet, can be found in the recently reported release of plain language versions of Agenda 21 (Keating in press), the action plan adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. In an advertisement in The Network (22: 4), it is stated that the plain language versions "will initially be produced in five languages: English, French, German, Italian and Russian. Additional languages are planned for later release". If "this popular version of Agenda 21 will benefit a broad audience, including governments, the independent sectors, the education community and concerned individuals" (The Network 22: 4) as the publisher claims, then surely the question must be asked as to why the plain language versions are so limited in their languages.

Where is the voice of the marginalized in environmental

education?

Only a few authors have questioned the colonial domination implicit in the environmental education discourses which have been published. As mentioned previously, Fensham (1976, 1978) is one who has drawn attention to the Other voices. Leopoldo Chiappo (1978), a Peruvian, and Daniel Vidart (1978), a Colombian, are other critics. However, other voices that should have been more vocal, such as the report on Environmental Education in Asia and the Pacific (Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific 1981), have been silent, choosing instead to adopt the master narrative or dominant discourse. Chiappo (1978: 456) questions whether the inhabitants of the needy South can “accept as valid the way of seeing and interpreting ecological facts adopted by the countries of the super-industrialized, wealthy North”, asserts that it is “necessary to reveal the ideology that underlies the attitude of dominance”, and then asks “What are the central issues of environmental education?”. His answers differ greatly from the generally accepted ones. For him, the fundamental issues of environmental education are the awakening of critical awareness of the social and political factors of the environmental problem and the development of a new ethic of liberation: “Failure to tackle these two issues may reduce environmental education to a purely pedagogical and informative exercise” (1978: 458). He also draws attention to the silences in

the Tbilisi Declaration: “it is true only for what it says, not for what it does not say” (1978: 463). For example, by omitting the word ‘economic’ from its reference to “the new international order” (in Recommendation 3, Unesco 1978: 27), Chiappo argues that “it has left out the essential, since the issue is essentially an economic one” (1978: 464)⁶.

Chiappo (1978: 457) asserts that the perceptions of environmental problems which underlie the dominant conceptions of environmental education are not as the North (or what elsewhere in this article has been called West) portrays them: “The present crisis is not due to lack of resources, but to the unjust exploitation and distribution of resources. It is the result of wastage and profit-seeking. The industrial mentality is what must be challenged”. Both Merchant (1980 1989 1990 1992) and Shiva (1989) argues similarly, linking modern Western-style scientific knowledge and economic development with the death of nature. For example, Shiva (1989: xiv) argues:

The Age of Enlightenment, and the theory of progress to which it gave rise, was centred on the sacredness of two categories: modern scientific knowledge and economic development. Somewhere along the way, the unbridled pursuit of progress, guided by science and development, began to destroy life without any

assessment of how fast and how much of the diversity of life on this planet is disappearing. The act of living and of celebrating and conserving life in all its diversity - in people and in nature - seems to have been sacrificed to progress, and the sanctity of life been substituted by the sanctity of science and development.

Throughout the world, a new questioning is growing, rooted in the experience of those for whom the spread of what was called 'enlightenment' has been the spread of darkness, of extinction of life and life-enhancing processes. A new awareness is growing that is questioning the sanctity of science and development and revealing that these are not universal categories of progress, but the special projects of modern western patriarchy.

From my own experiences and readings, the industrial development mentality still dominates much environmental education, and many of the environmental problems are framed in terms of a reductionist 'us' against 'them' discourse where, for example, the cause of environmental deterioration and the exhaustion of the planet is attributed to population growth in the Third World.

However there is also an increasing questioning of both the effects of science and technology and of the worldview implicit in the knowledge that frames both science and economic development. This critique is forthcoming from a number of sources, but particularly from Asian as well as Western scientists, feminists and postmodernists (see, for example, Aronowitz 1988, Goonatilake 1984, Haraway 1989, Harding 1991, Lather 1991 1992, Merchant 1980 1989 1992, Shiva 1989). Haraway (1989), for example, documents how national interests are reflected in the research orientations of primatologists: whereas American and European primatologists are obsessed with studying sex and war among primate groups, Japanese primatologists focus on the construction of a specifically Japanese scientific cultural identity where "the Japanese monkeys became part of a complex cultural story of a domestic science" (1989: 244). According to Haraway (1989: 263), Indian primatology has a different orientation again, representing "a post-colonial nation with a sophisticated national primatology and the political and technical ability to restrain western biomedical and military hegemony over its own inhabitants, human and animal".

Given this growing recognition that there is no one way of looking at the world, no 'one true story', but a multiplicity of stories then we should be looking at a multiplicity of strategies for teacher education in environmental education. These strategies should be ones that are not universal and part of the dominant discourse, but ones which are from the lives of the

colonized and marginalized. As Chinua Achebe (1960: 45) argues, "Let them come and see men and women and children who know how to live, whose joy of life has not yet been killed by those who claimed to teach other nations how to live".

Listening to the Voice of the Marginalized

Linda Hutcheon (1990: 176) asks "How do we construct a discourse, which displaces the effects of the colonizing gaze while we are still under its influence?". The task is to dismantle colonialism's system, expose how it has silenced and oppressed its subjects and find ways for their voices to be heard. As Edward Said (1985: 91) argues, the problems are concerned with

how the production of knowledge best serves communal, as opposed to factional, ends, how knowledge that is nondominative and noncoercive can be produced in a setting that is deeply inscribed with the politics, the considerations, the positions, and the strategies of power.

Some answers to these problems are being suggested. For example, Homi Bhabha (1985 1986) has asserted that the colonised is constructed within a disabling master discourse of colonialism which specifies a degenerate native population to justify its conquest and subsequent rule. Gayatri Spivak (1987 1990) argues that colonised races and peoples have intimate experience of the politics of oppression and repression and have been forced to articulate their experiences in the language of their oppressors. In environmental education we need to be working to disrupt the oppression of the native voices and listening to people expressing themselves in their own languages. This we will not find in the IEEP texts, unless we are Western, Eurocentric and English-speaking.

Postcolonialism and feminism have developed as parallel discourses which have much in common, and some writers are starting to draw the two together (for example, Spivak 1987 1990). Feminist and postcolonial discourses both seek to re-instate the marginalised in the face of the dominant (the former coloniser), and both are oriented to the future, "positing societies in which social and political hegemonic shifts have occurred" (Ashcroft et al 1989: 177). Postcolonialism provides a possible approach for it "challenges how imperial centers of power construct themselves through the discourse of master narratives and totalizing systems; they contest monolithic authority wielded through representations of 'brute institutional relations' and the claims of universality" (Giroux 1992: 20).

Feminist critique provides another, yet similar, approach from the perspective that "Women in many societies have been relegated to the position of 'Other', marginalized and, in a metaphorical

sense, 'colonized', forced to pursue guerrilla warfare against imperial domination from positions deeply imbedded in, yet fundamentally alienated from, that imperium" (Ashcroft et al 1989: 174). The experiences of India's Chipko movement (see Di Chiro 1987a, Merchant 1992, Shiva 1989), and and the Kenyan Greenbelt Movement (see Merchant 1992), are examples of women pursuing ecological guerrilla warfare as attempts to maintain or achieve sustainability. Merchant (1992: 200, 206) argues that "many of the problems facing Third World women today are the historical result of colonial relations between the First and

Third Worlds", but that Third World women "are making the impacts of colonialism and industrial capitalism on the environment and on their own lives visible".

In this there is both a challenge and a dilemma (or two or three) for teacher educators. The politics of difference goes beyond being "simply oppositional in contesting the mainstream (or malestream) for inclusion", and beyond being "transgressive in the avant-gardist sense of shocking conventional bourgeois audiences" and aligns itself "with demoralized, depoliticized and disorganized people in order to empower and enable social action and, if possible, to enlist collective insurgency for the expansion of freedom, democracy and individuality" (West 1990: 19). We need to be aware that there are ways other than those to which we are accustomed of looking at the environment and its problems. And we need to be aware those those ways and the voices that accompany them have to date been silenced in the IEEP texts.

Some too, are starting to relate the discourses of colonisation to those of environmentalism, particularly ecofeminism. Since the seventeenth century European colonisation in the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australia and the Pacific has resulted in a colonial ecological revolution that has disrupted native ecologies and native peoples' modes of subsistence. For example, Carolyn Merchant (1992: 201) notes that "Third World women have born the brunt of environmental crises resulting from colonial marginalization and ecologically sustainable development". Indian physicist and environmentalist Vandana Shiva (1989) links the violation of nature with the violation and marginalisation of women in the Third World. There have also been some attempts to relate these discourses of ecofeminism to environmental education, see for example the work of Giovanna DiChiro (1987ab) and Valerie Brown and Meg Switzer (1991), but such efforts have so far been rare. However the silencing of women's voices is also apparent in the IEEP series (see Table 3).

Male author Male editor Female author Female editor

Unstated

(Unesco or other institution as author) Unknown*

No of volumes

(total of 30 published) 44 8 13 3 5 4

* Either because gender was unable to be determined from name, e.g. "Pansy" or because volumes were unavailable.

Table 3: Gender of authors and editors of Unesco-UNEP Environmental Education series volumes

The role of women in achieving sustainable development was recognised in the Rio Declaration (1992): "Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development." However, women's access to education can be limited. For example, the literacy rate for women in Pakistan as a whole is estimated at only 23 per cent, and in villages as nil (del Nevo 1993), and gender as well as caste affects women's access to education. Although silenced as well as colonized and marginalized through this process, women do have a vital role in environmental education: they are often responsible for the health and nutrition of their families as well as their other duties, and their involvement is essential if we are to overcome the barriers to succesful implementation of environmental education. As a way of overcoming the barriers perhaps, as Sandra Harding (1991: 268, emphasis as in original) suggests, we should

be moving from

including others' lives and thoughts in research and scholarly projects to starting from their lives to ask research questions, develop theoretical concepts, design research, collect data, and interpret findings... that would provide less partial and distorted accounts of nature and social relations.

Ashis Nandy (1986: xv) argues similarly that we must choose the slave's standpoint, not only because the slave is oppressed but also because the slave represents a higher-order cognition which perforce includes the master as human, whereas the master's cognition has to exclude the slave except as a "thing". Vandana Shiva (1989: 53) also argues that liberation should begin from the colonised and end with the coloniser. In environmental education we are concerned with both the liberation of nature and of people, thus we should be considering starting from others' lives, both human and non-human, in the spirit of deep ecology (see, for example, Devall and Sessions 1985)7.

The dominant accounts of the environment and its problems, and the modern Western development views of science that dominate the IEEP publications do not encourage starting from others' lives. Rather, their authors know the one true story and they are concerned with implementing their message. Yet we know their message is flawed. It is grounded in the same view of science that has precipitated the environmental crisis - so should we not look elsewhere, start from others' lives, to look for solutions?

Conclusion

Returning to the title question, in whose interests are universalized environmental education discourses in teacher education? My answer is - not ours.

The environmental education publications of Unesco and the IEEP are an attempt by a privileged few to teach other nations how to live. We, as environmental educators, and particularly as teacher educators, should instead be listening to the silenced voices speaking in their own languages, and encouraging our students to do the same. The colonialism and marginalization implicit in the dominant discourses, such as the IEEP documents, are barriers to the successful implementation of environmental education through teacher education. The documents are based on worldviews, and written in languages, that are quite alien to non-Western, non-English speaking and non-male people. And this "Other" category is very varied, with the differences within being as great as or greater than the differences from the West (Inayatullah 1993). Elizabeth Minnich's (1989: 286) comments about the absurdity of expecting a Black woman to learn the same things as a white man studying alongside her are appropriate in this context:

We have seen Black people admitted to institutions that continue to offer the same curriculum they offered when Black people were excluded...an overwhelmingly if not exclusively white curriculum... (But) ...The full absurdity of assuming that a Black woman, studying a curriculum that is by and about white men is having the same experience, is learning the same things as a white man studying alongside of her is still not fully evident to some educators.

The language of the publications is also important. A.S. Byatt, in her award-winning novel *Possession*, summarises this position well when she writes "it's the language that matters, isn't it, it's what went on in her mind - " (1991, p. 55). Although, in the case of environmental education statements, it is very much what went on in his mind. As has been discussed in this paper, the

domination of the discourses of environmental education by the English language and by Amero-Eurocentric authors, and the

potential this has for privileging only certain male, English speaking voices in those discourses, raises many concerns about environmental education per se. If we are to critically confront the environmental crisis then we must listen to more voices than these. What is clear is that we must contest statements such as “environmental education does have a substantive structure” (Hungerford, Peyton and Wilke 1983: 2) when it is clear that such statements are made by white, Western, Amero-Eurocentric, English-speaking males. These males have also been associated with the IEEP texts (see, for example Wilke, Peyton and Hungerford 1987, Hungerford et al 1988, Hungerford, Volk8 and Ramsey 1989, Marcinkowski, Volk8 and Hungerford 1990) and invoked their structure for environmental education in these texts.

It seems to be time to move beyond the silencing effect of colonialism to a stage where sufficient space can be created so that “the colonised can be written back into history” (Parry 1987: 39), and written into the discourses of environmental education. Like the African SONED (M’Mwereria 1993), we need to be rejecting co-option, exclusion and marginalization of non-Western, non-English speaking and non-male peoples and affirming alternatives. Rather than studying other peoples as objects (as is often done in school projects), or including their lives and thoughts in projects (as is starting to happen in some works, for example, Huckle 1988), we need to start from others’ lives (see, for example, Greenall Gough and Robottom 1993, and as discussed by Gough 1991) to develop less partial and less distorted accounts of nature and social relations.

Environmental education is not the only area affected in this way; we all should be looking at texts for who is saying what and for what purpose, and asking questions about whether the discourses which are of interest to us start from others’ lives or perpetuate the dominant discourses.

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1 This dominant worldview originated in the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century (“the Age of Enlightenment”) and is secular, empirical and mechanistic, and characterized by seeing the human species as apart from nature (and thus nature has no intrinsic value). Material progress is an essential part of this worldview, as is belief in technological innovation and a capitalist market-led economy. “In essence, the dominant worldview has become so ingrained in our way of thinking, particularly in Western society, that it acts hegemonically to maintain itself as the dominant ideology” (Robottom and Hart 1993: 29). Within environmental education, and education in general, this has led to a view of inquiry as analytic, reductionist and based on scientific neutrality, rationality, divisibility of knowledge and emphasis on quantitative measurement and observable phenomena (see, for example, Hart 1990).

2 The domination of Western perspectives in the United Nations was highlighted recently in a letter to the editor of *Time* Australia following the attacks on the U.N. Secretary-General by demonstrators in Bosnia and Somalia. Choudhary (1993: 6) writes that the actions were not personal attacks, rather “(t)heir actions show contempt for the U.N. This so-called world leader is perceived by the Third World as a tool of the organization created and operated by the Western powers to advance and protect their own economic and political interests”.

3 Interestingly, in terms of the possible politics involved, Volume 19, *Analysis of Results of Environmental Education Pilot Projects*, seems never to have been released.

4 By colonization of the language I mean changing the original author’s language (and values) to suit the American editor’s

intentions and meanings rather than allowing the author's voice to be heard.

5 That is, the languages of China, India, Indonesia and the Arabic nations.

6 Interestingly, the much debated (Fensham 1976) 'A. Environmental Situation' section of The Belgrade Charter did refer to "The recent United Nations Declaration for a New International Economic Order". The change is therefore remarkable and opens up questions of the politics being played at the Tbilisi conference.

7 It is important to note that some ecofeminists (see, for example, Warren 1990) dispute the perspectives of deep ecologists, so this is not a simple solution, but rather something to be discussed in a future paper.

8 Trudi Volk is a rare female voice in this group.