TABLE OF CONTENTS

POSTCOLONIAL DIRECTIONS IN EDUCATION
Volume 11 Issue 2, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Postcolonial Directions in Education

Focus and Scope

Postcolonial Directions in Education is a peer reviewed open access journal produced twice a year. It is a scholarly journal intended to foster further understanding, advancement and reshaping of the field of postcolonial education. We welcome articles that contribute to advancing the field. As indicated in the Editorial for the inaugural issue, the purview of this journal is broad enough to encompass a variety of disciplinary approaches, including but not confined to the following: sociological, anthropological, historical and social psychological approaches. The areas embraced include anti-racist education, decolonizing education, critical multiculturalism, critical racism theory, direct colonial experiences in education and their legacies for present day educational structures and practice, educational experiences reflecting the culture and 'imagination' of empire, the impact of neoliberalism/globalisation/structural adjustment programmes on education, colonial curricula and subaltern alternatives, education and liberation movements, challenging hegemonic languages, the promotion of local literacies and linguistic diversity, neo-colonial education and identity construction, colonialism and the construction of patriarchy, canon and canonicity, Indigenous knowledges, supranational bodies and their educational frameworks, north-south and east-west relations in education, the politics of representation, unlearning colonial stereotypes, internal colonialism and education, cultural hybridity and learning in postcolonial contexts, education and the politics of dislocation, biographies / autobiographies reflecting the above themes, deconstruction of colonial narratives of civilization within educational contexts. Once again, the field cannot be exhausted.

Peer Review Process

Papers submitted to *Postcolonial Directions in Education* are examined by at least two reviewers for originality and timeliness in the context of related research. Reviews generally are completed in 30-60 days, with publication in the next available issue.

Open Access Policy

This journal provides immediate open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge.

EDITORIAL: RETIREMENT OF FOUNDING EDITORS

Anne Hickling Hudson and Peter Mayo

Founding Editors, *Postcolonial Directions in Education*

After a twelve year involvement in the establishment and co-editing of *Postcolonial Directions in Education,* we both decided that the time was ripe to hand over the reins of the journal to an excellent new editorial team. The new editors are:

Charmaine Bonello – University of Malta
Carmel Borg – University of Malta
Nisha Thapliyal – University of Newcastle (Australia). (Nisha Thapliyal joins the new editorial team in 2023.)

It will, of course, be heart-wrenching to retire from this fascinating project, but, as in other aspects of life, one needs to know when to let go even of that to which one has given birth. This is in the interest of ensuring our brainchild's evolution into a sustainable institution. With the completion of Volume 11 in December 2022 marking the accomplishment of twenty one issues, *Postcolonial Directions in Education* has become well respected and established. It has just been indexed by SCOPUS. We will be happy to be of service to the new editorial team should this be requested, for example with regard to ideas for further indexing, given the data we amassed for SCOPUS, special issue themes, and access to useful contacts, among other things.

Editing the journal has been a challenging road. We originally started with two years of co-editing another now defunct journal of postcolonial studies in education, for which we had been attracting very good articles. Unfortunately serious differences with the publisher made

our position as editors untenable. We decided, supported by our editorial advisory board, to start afresh in 2012, naming the new journal 'Postcolonial Directions in Education'.

We initially sought leading publishers and received encouraging responses, but felt uneasy about the common scenario of having subscriptions from institutions in the 'West' and next to no take-up from countries in the political 'Global South' – those hardest hit in terms of neo-colonial repercussions and, in certain cases, the continuation of direct colonialism. This is why we heeded the advice, given to us by Professor Shirley Steinberg and Professor John Willinsky, both based in Western Canada, that we opt for an open access approach. No system is foolproof, and open access, although far more accessible, still faces the issue of the global digital divide. This is an ongoing struggle with which, we are sure, the new editorial team will engage. Our thanks to Shirley and John for this advice, the latter also for his forwarding to us links to the platform of Open Journal Systems.

Benefiting originally from the voluntary help of expertise in our academic circles at the University of Malta, notably Dr Alex Grech and later Prof Milosh Raykov, we take this opportunity to express our thanks to them. We later sought funding from the University of Malta, to secure the services of a private company. This is how we started operating in 2016 until the same University pointed us to its own Communications agency, whose officials took the journal's production on board. We thank all those involved - Renald Cassar, Gabriel Izzo, Pierre Cassar and Angela Xuereb - for their helpful response to our publication needs.

Our thanks go to the many stellar advisory board members, in different areas of the world, for their

voluntary evaluations of articles, and also the external referees who occasionally helped us with reviewing. We express our gratitude to the authors of the insightful and often pathbreaking articles published in the journal. The contributions took the form of extensive articles, reviews of books and other texts (plays, exhibitions, films etc), in-memoriam tributes, and anniversary pieces. Wonderful contributions were also made by guest editors of special issues covering a variety of themes. The journal has featured well-researched pieces by many highly established as well as emerging scholars.

We sought, in our own way, to accord visibility to a variety of languages worldwide by providing abstracts in not only English but also in the authors' first language, some of them Indigenous languages. This is a prominent feature of this journal which also reviews books and other materials written in languages other than English, the *lingua franca* adopted, for wide communication purposes, throughout the journal issues. We recognise the contradictory situation involved in this.

The contributors are many and of different backgrounds. It is they who have helped make this journal a key reference point in postcolonial and decolonising education debates. We hope to facilitate the future editing of a selection from the journal's articles into a comprehensive handbook on Postcolonial Education, as we think this would be very beneficial to the field. We extend our sincere good wishes to the new editorial team.

Peter Mayo (University of Malta) peter.mayo@um.edu.mt and Anne Hickling-Hudson (Queensland University of Technology, Australia) a.hudson@qut.edu.au

December 2022

THE LANDLESS PEASANT MOVEMENT AND POPULAR EDUCATION: ADDRESSING POSTCOLONIAL VIOLENCE IN BRAZIL

Laura Mentini
"La Caixa" Foundation Research Fellow,
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)

In the context of Latin America's resistance to hegemonic power relations, several subaltern movements emerged with their own educational projects and pedagogies. The Brazilian Landless Peasant Movement (MST) adopted a model of "popular education" which was recognized as a political actor endeavouring to counter colonial injustices and ongoing forms of neo-colonial violence.
By applying a 4Rs analytical framework (cf. Novelli et al., 2017), the paper analyses how the movement's aims, philosophy, organisation, and role of popular education have been able to promote social justice and peacebuilding processes, at the same time discussing constraints and limits encountered.

Keywords: Landless Peasant Movement, Brazil, Popular Education, Resistance, Postcolonialism, Violence.

Vários movimentos proletariados com projetos educacionais e pedagogias próprias surgiram no contexto da resistência às relações hegemônicas de poder na América Latina. No Brasil, o Movimento Sem Terra (MST) adotou um modelo de "educação popular" pelo qual foi

reconhecido como ator político. O movimento pretendia enfrentar as injustiças coloniais e as formas de violência pós-colonial. Aplicando um quadro analítico chamado 4Rs (cf. Novelli et al., 2017), o artigo analisa como os objetivos, a filosofia, a organização e o papel da educação popular do movimento têm sido capazes de promover justiça social e processos de construção da paz e, ao mesmo tempo, discute restrições e limites encontrados.

Palavras-chave: Movimento Sem Terra, Brasil, Educação Popular, Resistência, Pós-colonialismo, Violência

Introduction

Brazil is a country characterised by persistent contradictions and inequalities. While it emerges as one of the fastest growing economies in the world and the largest economies amongst all Latin American countries (O' Neill, 2022), it presents high levels of inequality in land distribution, income, and poverty amongst different groups (Carter, 2010; Da Costa et al., 2019; Rolon & Vieira, 2020; Silveira et al.,2016). The country has a long history of colonialism and maintains strategic relations with former colonial countries, which provide economic growth and global recognition (Cesarino, 2012). However, as dependency theorists such as Escobar (2004) argue, the colonial roots also maintain the country in a 'peripheral' and 'dependent' position compared to the 'western' world. These neocolonial power relations not only affect the country's material and economic conditions but have repercussions also on the cultural misrecognition of marginalised people. In Galtung's (2000) terms, direct, structural, and cultural violence are thus linked. To resist such forms of domination, during the 1980s, several subaltern collective movements emerged in the context of a 'fourth wave of democracy' and left-leaning governments

in Latin America (Pahnke et al., 2015). One of the most active is the Landless Peasant Movement (MST - Movimiento Sin Tierras, in Portuguese), which emerged as a coalition of peasants claiming land reform. The movement's strategy, organisation, and philosophical principles were reflected in an alternative educational model, which was a key instrument for the movement's struggle (Barbosa, 2016; Kane, 2016).

The paper aims to identify, analyse and discuss how the Landless Peasant Movement (MST from here on), through the promotion of a popular model of education (Kane, 2016), was able to respond to Brazil's forms of violence that continued as a consequence of colonialism. The analysis is based on the 4Rs theoretical framework developed by the *Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding (2014-2016)*. The adoption of this framework provides an original contribution to the studies on subaltern forms of resistance. The framework identifies four key aspects (Redistribution, Representation, Recognition, and Reconciliation), which help analyse the contribution of education to sustainable peacebuilding and are seen as necessary to achieve peace-building and social transformation processes (Novelli et al., 2017). The framework is suitable for analysing the Brazilian context, considered a place where violence and inequalities are perpetuated. Using this conceptual framework, I explore and analyse the link between the MST's educational innovations and its wider political and social goals.

The paper is structured as follows. In the first section, a theoretical framework based on Galtung's (1990) concept of violence and the adoption of a postcolonial perspective will present the context where the MST emerged, the legacies of the struggle over land, and the contemporary injustices the marginalised rural population face. The methods and analytical framework adopted are further described. In the main body of the paper, results are presented. I will first explore the emergence of MST as a

form of social movement linked to subaltern forms of resistance, focusing on the role of education and pedagogy in the movement's struggle and achievements. Next, I utilise the 4R framework, Redistribution, Representation, Recognition, and Reconciliation, to describe and analyse the key strategies, approaches and educational aspects of the MST. I then problematize some of the movements' potential contradictions and challenges in achieving its goals. The last part of the paper concludes with a reflective overview of the main points of the discussion.

The contribution of this article in relation to existing literature is based on the achievement of these stated aims. Although there is literature on the MST (e.g., Barbosa 2016; Carter, 2010; Kane, 2016; Machado, 2011; Tarlau, 2013a; Tarlau, 2013b; Tarlau et al., 2014), to my knowledge no study has yet analysed the movement through a conceptual framework which visibilizes and discusses the use of pedagogical and political strategies against multiple forms of systemic oppression.

Context: Brazil's structural and cultural violence

To analyse Brazil's context, Galtung's concepts of structural and cultural violence emerge as relevant. The author refers to three forms of violence: direct, structural, and cultural (Galtung, 1990). Direct violence refers to a direct injury, [a visible event] perpetrated against another human being. Structural violence refers to the contextual [indirect] material conditions, inequalities, and social differences linked to the global and local redistribution of resources (Dilts, 2012). Finally, cultural violence is associated with the symbolic cultural means "that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence" (Galtung, 1990, p. 1). Cultural violence forms include religion, ideology, art, language, and science. Galtung argues that structural and cultural violence forms become internalised and institutionalised, maintaining and

reproducing a condition of violence through what the author describes as a "triangular symptom of violence" (Galtung, 1990, p. 302). Furthermore, according to the author, a positive peace-building process should come from challenging the status quo and addressing those inequalities and injustices (Galtung, 1967).

Colonialism, postcolonialism, and struggle over land: structural and material conditions

Brazil's material and economic structures can be considered forms of structural violence. It is essential to acknowledge Brazil's position within a subcontinent with a long colonial and postcolonial history (Cesarino, 2012). The struggle of the MST is indeed profoundly linked to conflict over land, which emerged during the colonial slave plantation system (the colonial period under Portuguese rule comprises the period from 1500 to 1815). In this context, several large-scale land expropriations caused peasants to lose their land and the establishment of a system of 'latifundus' (Barbosa, 2016). Land ownership was concentrated in the hands of creole elites entitled to live on it.

Forms of coloniality continued also after political independence. Indeed, after the abolition of slavery (1888), a 'land law' enabled consistent gifts of part of the land to privileged colonial families. The best land was used to export crops and for for-profit use, not for the productive needs of the wider population (Kane, 2016).

Further, during the 1950s and the two dictatorships (1964-84), many rural workers were forced to leave their lands and migrate from rural areas to favelas in the cities with the modernization of agriculture. Those remaining in rural areas faced an increase in impoverishment, misery, and inequality (Tarlau, 2013a).

From the 1960s to the late 1980s, beliefs for radical change in Latin America were strong and several grassroot

struggles for democracy emerged. Through the 20th century, organisations rose, claimed and occupied unused lands as a form of non-violent strategy (Tarlau et al.,2014). However, they were silenced by the 1964 military coup. The land became an investment for new economic groups, which used it for their profit and financial interest (Kane, 2016).

Further on, the economic crisis of the 1970s exacerbated the conditions of rural people. An answer to the economic crisis came from Brazil's administrations (Cardoso to Rouseff presidencies), who opened up to the agri-business sector and rural elites' interests to increase economic gains (Tarlau, 2015), showing a resistance of the elite to the democratic struggles.

As a consequence of a long history of struggles (Tarlau, et al., 2014) and since its return to democratic rule (1985), the country has been actively pursuing agrarian reform (*Brazil - country profiles*, 2011). The 1988 Constitution highlights the government's commitment to agrarian reform, ensuring land rights and cultural diversity for the rural population. However, although the Constitution also enables the expropriation of land that does not comply with its social function, most of it is still underused or misused (Carter, 2010). Forms of inequalities linked to the agrarian structure are thus inherited from the colonial period and further strengthened through neo-liberal agricultural policies and capitalist development.

During the 2000s, the MST established relationships with left-wing governments (PT - *The Workers' Party*), which supported the movement, but through a market integration (Bretón et al., 2022). Agri-business and private interests emerged clearly also in the more recent contemporary governments, escalating into waves of violent repressions against peasants and indigenous communities during the recent Temer (2016-2018) and conservative Bolsonaro government (2018- present).

These processes, as a consequence of the country's history, have led to unequal resource distribution, persistent poverty (Silveira et al., 2016), the lack of employment opportunities, and the violation of human rights in the countryside (Carter, 2010). Brazil is the country in Latin America with the least significant land distribution (Carter, 2010; WCMC, 2021), with almost half of it in the hands of one percent of the population (*Brazil - Country Profiles*, 2011). As can be appreciated in the table here below, Brazilian wealth and land distribution is still and persistently highly unequal. The country ranks amongst the highest in the GINI index (*GINI index World Bank estimate*, 2019) and is amongst the ten most unequal countries in the world (Sasse, 2021).

Table1: Brazil - social and geographical indicators

Indicator, year, source	
Population, total (*Brazil - Economic Indicators*, 2022)	213.939.639
Population, urban (*Brazil - Economic Indicators*, 2022)	86.2% of total population
Land (*Brazil - Economic Indicators*, 2022)	8.358.140 sq km
Land use - agricultural land (*Brazil - Economic Indicators*, 2022)	32.9%
Arable land (*Brazil - Economic Indicators*, 2022)	8.6%
Land ownership concentration (UNEP - WCMC, 2021)	GINI index of 0.73 (1% of population owns 45% of all land)
Uncultivated land (*Brazil - Country Profiles*, 2011 based on National Institute on Colonisation and Agrarian Reform - INCRA)	1mil square km
Indigenous secure land rights (*Brazil - Country Profiles*, 2011)	12%

GINI Index (*GINI index World Bank estimate,* 2019)	48.9
Distribution of wealth, by wealth percentile (2021) (Romero, 2022)	Bottom 50%: - 4% Middle 40%: 20.6% Top 10%: 79.8% Top 1%: 49.8%
Occupational index, by race groups (*DESIGUALDADES SOCIAIS POR COR OU RAÇA NO BRASIL,* 2018)	68,6% (white people) 29,9% (black/mulatos)
Rural youth population (2017) (Rolon & Vieira, 2020)	11,7 million
Poverty in rural/agricultural populations (2013) (Silveira et al.,2016)	19%
Average years of education, by area (rural/urban) (Da Costa, 2019, based on Pnad/IBGE)	9,1 (urban areas) 5,8 (rural areas)
Percentage of students who are enrolled in higher education (Da Costa, 2019, based on Pnad/IBGE)	19,7% (urban areas) 7,2% (rural areas)
Access to water services, by area (Rodrigues, 2021)	88% (urban areas) 72% (rural area)
Children with access to drinkable water, by wealth groups (Hermoza, 2016)	20% richest: 99% 40% poorest: 87,6%

Source: author's elaboration

The Brazilian context can also be referred to as a 'situated postcolonialism,' where the conditions of the indigenous rural population are exacerbated by the country's position as an emerging global actor (cf. De Souza and Andreotti, 2009). The process of domination of the rural areas has led to a division of the country into 'two Brazils': an 'urban modern' and a 'rural traditional' one, with the former being considered the 'shame of Brazilian's modernization' (Cesarino, 2012: 89). In this sense, Brazil has faced a 'double colonisation' (Santos, 2002 in Cesarino, 2012), where the legacies of colonial relations are still present and where external colonial oppression has shifted into the

hands of national elite groups exercising domination over subaltern ones. In this sense, the term "post" in postcolonialism does not mean that colonialism has ended; rather that there are political, economic and socio-cultural consequences of colonialism (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004). From the perspective of conflict and social justice studies, such economic dimensions (i.e., resource inequalities and struggle over land) generate a sense of resentment and injustice and they can be the underlying causes that fuel conflict (Ellison & Smith, 2012).

Western hegemony and ideology as cultural violence: the role of resistance theories

The hegemonic ideology that reproduces dominant power relations can be considered a form of cultural violence in Brazil. The Brazilian nation-state was built by incorporating indigenous people into modernity and 'civilization' (Cesarino, 2012). This has generated a culturist indigenous conflict inherited from the colonial period. 'Modernity' is, in this sense, associated with a Eurocentric project, which hegemonically represents the world from its claimed position of centre and universality (Escobar, 2004; Mignolo, 2013). In addition to forms of structural and material inequalities, the ties with colonialism have, therefore, also led to the subordinated cultural position of Brazil's indigenous population (de Souza and Andreotti, 2016). In this sense, Mignolo (2013) refers to the idea of 'coloniality' as the emergence of cultural inequalities and 'cultural supremacies,' which exist in the global structures of today. It follows that, according to postcolonial theory, "we cannot assume that colonialism is over, only that colonialism continues to order and reorder the economic and cultural hierarchies of knowledge and discipline" (Hickling-Hudson et al., 2004: 3).

The neo-liberal paradigm and ideology promoted in education, as well as the neoclassical doctrine of the scientific economy, are forms of cultural violence and domination of one group over the marginalised others (Galtung, 1990). In Brazil's context, recent administrations and national elites have served the interests of an international order based on capitalist values and economic profit. Again, in the concept of a 'double colonisation', Brazil is considered a 'third world' periphery to the 'first world.' At the same time, the indigenous cultures are located in a 'peripheral' position in the urban industrialised modern nation-state (De Souza and Andreotti, 2009).

The ideology and actions of the MST can be therefore seen as decolonising struggle and read through the lens of southern resistance theories, which refer to those set of debates, discourses, and practices that challenge the European/'first world' domination and their effects on the distribution of world resources, identities and social relations (Andreotti, 2006). Accordingly, postcolonialism acknowledges "a space for moving beyond the negative patterns that persist after colonialism began (...) seeking to explain opposition, privilege, domination, struggle, resistance and subversion (Hickling-Hudson, et al., 2004: 2). Different postcolonial perspectives exist, but I will refer to a Marxist/neo-Marxist reading, which relates the dominant hegemonic colonialist discourses to a power system. Accordingly, Brazil has a long history of resistance, with peasant leagues and movements which emerged in the North-east of the country during the 1950s-60s, in the call for a 'revolutionary struggle,' creating a mobilised collective identity that contested the western hegemonic power relations of a modern industrialised Brazil (Pahnke et al., 2015). To address and transform the oppressive forces and power relations, processes of self-organised movements and networks, which foster counter-hegemonic discourses and practices

through a 'politics of difference,' emerge (Escobar, 2004). These liberation processes aim to create a space of resistance, where the marginalised are heard and included through democratic voice, agency, and self-determination (Andreotti & Souza, 2016; Hooks, 1989). Popular education[1] movements in Latina America are linked to class struggles and [uniquely] connected to a collective class action. Indeed, popular education experiences played a significant role in the grassroot struggles for change, as they encompass active participation, political awareness, collective values, participatory democracy and a range of specific skills (Kane, 2016). They contest the reproduction of class relations and the interest of the dominant class, also resisting the performative, market-oriented, and neo-liberal ideology which dominates the educational agendas (Mayo, 2013). Popular education is based on a clear analysis of inequality, oppression or injustice, and is informed by a clear political purpose, which has to do with the "struggle for a more just and egalitarian social order" (Crowther et al.,1999: 4). In this sense, "popular education is "popular" because it seeks to place its objectives, contents and methodologies at the service of this project of popular emancipation" (Torres, 2008: 18). Such 'politics of resistance' challenges the hegemonic cultural means and practices embedded in everyday life (cf. Mignolo, 2013).

In Brazil, this type of education can be traced back to the Brazilian pedagogist Paulo Freire and the Liberation Theology movements[2]. Freire's contribution is in fact relevant to understanding the philosophy and struggle of

---

[1] Popular education, often described as "education for critical consciousness" (Freire, 2000), is a movement, practice and theory of social change that emerged in the 70-80s in Latin America.
[2] 'Liberation theology' was a current that emerged during the 1960s/70s in Latin America by which priests defended the causes of the poor and supported political and economic struggles.

the MST. The author contrasts a popular education to the traditional "banking" educational method, which is seen as reinforcing a system of domination (Freire, 2000). As Bordieu and Passeron (1990) would also argue, forms of hierarchy in knowledge and education maintain and reproduce the structures of the social order. Schools are not neutral places but represent spaces where the values of a dominant class or group are reproduced through culture, relationships, and organisations (Bordieu & Passeron, 1990). In addition, Freire refers to 'practices of resistance', meaning a conscious and practical strategy of building a counter-hegemonic project (Freedman et al.,2014), such as a pedagogic model ('pedagogy of the oppressed), which can emancipate and liberate the oppressed from the violent structures of relations and power they are subject to (Freire, 2000). Freire (2000) also sees education as a political space where critical thinking, dialogue, and collective action should be promoted to intervene and transform social reality.

Therefore, although the term "popular" education does not have a univocal meaning, and is sometimes associated with public schooling, as it supports public education as a fundamental right for everyone (Kane, 2016), it has less to do with helping the 'disadvantaged' and is very different in its aims from formal or informal education (Crowther et al.,1999; Barbosa et al., 2016). It refers instead to a set of principles based on critical consciousness, collective empowerment, commitment to social and political change, and a direct link between education and social action (Crowther et al.,1999).

Analytical Methods: the 4Rs Framework

I will use the 4Rs framework (cf. Novelli et al., 2017), an analytical tool created in the context of education conflict and peacebuilding studies (by the *Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding (2014-2016)*, in partnership

between UNICEF and the University of Amsterdam, the University of Sussex and Ulster University) to analyze the contribution of the Brazilian MST in resisting forms of cultural and structural violence, in a postcolonial perspective. Literature, web sources, and documents on the movement will be used as data sources. The 4Rs analytical framework will be used to analyse different aspects of the MST's work and philosophy according to Redistribution, Recognition, Representation, or Reconciliation processes. According to this conceptual framework, Redistribution is concerned with addressing inequalities, such as inputs and resources (access, outcomes, and resource allocation in the education sector). Recognition is discussed concerning diversity in terms of cultural recognition, curriculum representation of different groups, and citizenship participation. Representation relates to the dimension of the involvement in decision-making at the political level and in the governance and administration of the education system. Finally, Reconciliation processes focus on addressing past inequalities and injustices to achieve sustainable societal transformation and justice. However, these categorizations should not be taken as fixed boxes. As will emerge, the analysis of the MST and its contribution will be placed in nuanced spaces within these different aspects.

Results

The MST and the resisting role of education

Grassroots peasant movements spread all over Latin America as a way to address inequalities and forms of structural and cultural violence. One of the largest and most active is Brazil's movement of landless peasant workers (MST), which emerged during the mid-1980s to contest the historical inequalities in land ownership. The movement formed as a political actor during a conference

in 1984, which addressed rural issues and aimed to transform landless peasants' political, social, and cultural conditions by acknowledging the need for agrarian reform (Barbosa, 2016). The agrarian reform and rural struggles taking place were supported by priests who followed 'liberation theology.' They saw land redistribution as a way to transform the relations of production and achieve a more just, socialist-oriented society. In this line, the movement focuses on three main goals: land ownership, land reform, and the achievement of a just society (Kane, 2016). The first aim (land ownership) is related to peasants' right to land and land's 'social function,' also embedded in Brazil's constitution. As previously discussed, this right was historically denied because of land expropriation and for-profit use. Thus, to address the injustices over land ownership, groups of peasants and small farmers started to occupy the unutilized lands in the southern part of the country. This political action to contest the expropriation of land was one of the symbols of landless struggle and resistance from there on (Barbosa, 2016). The second aim of the movement is to democratise land use, which would serve as a complete structural change by including marginalised rural populations in society (Kane 2016). In fact, after successfully occupying the land, peasants created 'settlements' (or 'encampments' if considered illegal) in the occupied territories, where families lived while negotiating for the reform and reassignment of lands.

Peasants organised networks of families and small groups with leadership committees, which encouraged protests and promoted alternative rural development plans (Carter, 2010; Mariano et al., 2016). The organisation in settlements also enabled the development of an alternative education project. Initially, the MST mobilised the right to education through forced actions, occupying government sites. The movement then started to develop specific pedagogical and teacher training programs in the camps,

which were sensitive to their cause and needs (Tarlau, 2013b). In 1987, the Education sector of the movement was created, and by 2009 fifty secondary schools and fifty-two 'itinerant schools' (which have permission to move around within the communities) were recognized by the government as state public schools (Mariano et al., 2016).

The movement's overall goal is to create a 'just society' and achieve a 'popular democratic state.' The movement aims at building a political actor and a historical project which can collectively transform the reality of the countryside (Barbosa, 2016; Kane, 2016) and thus achieve broader social justice in the whole country. To summarise, the movement started its struggle through a strategy of 'occupation' of the land and further developed an autonomous project aimed at societal transformation.

In terms of educational methods, the movement uses a popular pedagogy and 'socialist educational project,' which can be seen as resisting the reproduction of social and cultural inequalities and capitalist modes of production (Pahnke et al., 2015; Tarlau, 2013b). The next four sections will discuss how the 4Rs framework of 'Redistribution, Recognition, Representation and Reconciliation' relates to the MST's education project in its socio-political context.

Redistribution: an education for agrarian reform

The first "R" of redistribution relates to a range of 'remedies' to social injustices caused by unequal distribution of resources, exclusive systems of participation in economic structures, and a lack of equal opportunities (Novelli et al., 2017). Redistribution is not only related to the goals of MST's education, but also to the struggle over the redistribution of natural resources and the claims over rights of land, land ownership, and use. Considering the development of the movement's struggle, the redistribution of educational access and

resources would not have been achieved without changes in property and land use. During the four left-wing administrations (between 2003 and 2016), over 51.2 million hectares were distributed to about 720.000 families (da Silveira et al., 2016, pp. 11–12). However, as some authors argue, such redistribution had faced limitations vis-a-vis large private owners, where in the end only between 120.000 and 250.000 families benefited from the agrarian reform (Sauer & Mészáros, 2017).

After having gained control over the land, the MST asked for an increase in access to primary, secondary, and tertiary education for the rural population, due to the government's inadequate attention to access to public schooling for children living in the countryside (Barbosa, 2016). The MST started to put pressure on governments to build schools in their communities and provided education through 'itinerant schools,' which were recognized by the government but administered by the MST and had permission to move wherever the encampments were located (Barbosa, 2016). Incorporating schools in the camps ensured that every aspect of the schooling system reflected the causes and needs of the movement (Carter, 2010). In fact, along with the request for access to public schooling, the movement, after realising that the state's education project was in sharp contrast with the MST goals of social transformation, started to also ask for "another type of school" (Mariano et al., 2016: 213). Demands were related to political training for activists, and the transformation of public schools which contributed to the movement's political and social vision for the countryside. The goal of the itinerant schools was to develop students' capacity for autonomous action and self-governance, who would then fight for new forms of social relations in the wider society (Mariano et al., 2016).

In this sense, there is a profound link between rural schooling and the movement's struggle i.e., concretely attempting to interrupt the capitalist relations of

production in the countryside. The movement fights for values such as solidarity, collectivity, self-governance, and autonomy, against capitalist development, which is seen as having exploited and dehumanised peasants, and sees literacy and knowledge as crucial ways to promote a transformative society (Machado, 2011; Tarlau et al., 2014). Also, the technical and commercial skills promoted in the curriculum are related to agricultural socialist modes of production. A fundamental component of the movement's philosophy is the importance of manual work shaping intellectual study (Machado, 2011). In this sense, students plan the production of school agriculture and take care of the plantations, thus supporting a 'socialist pedagogical model' (Tarlau, 2013b), where rural workers cultivate their land and promote collective modes of production. Family production, indigenous seed preservation, and diversification of crops are examples of alternative models of production (based on cooperative collective work) that are a contrast to the capitalist industrial agricultural system (Pahnke et al., 2015) and to the individualistic and competitive state education model, often based on textbooks and a standardised teaching (Mariano et al.,2016).

Although recognized as public schools, by 2016 most of the itinerant schools were closed because of the critiques, and direct political attacks received by the state, as a consequence of the threat perceived by the elites (Mariano et al., 2016). However, since its formation, the MST has pressured governments to build almost 2.000 new rural primary schools in the occupied encampments with 200,000 children attending them (Tarlau, 2013a). In fact, one of the most important strengths of the MST was that representatives of encampments and settlements came together within the organisation and in social mobilizations to pressure the state; by the 2000s the movement had thus achieved a wide territorial autonomy (Bretòn et al.,2022).

In addition, the movement also received significant recognition and funding from international institutions such as UNESCO and UNICEF, which enabled the expansion of educational access for children and youth living in camps and settlements (Tarlau, 2015). Under President Lula, a bachelor's degree program in pedagogy was implemented (LEDOC). This trained and certified people to teach in rural high schools and aimed at reaching the highest number of rural students possible. The MST thus first addressed broader issues of land redistribution and was further able to develop an education model supportive of the material conditions and ideology of the peasants' struggle.

Recognition: a practice of culture

The second "R" of recognition entails possible solutions to injustices that have to do with status inequalities, often related to inadequate acceptance or space for cultural, ethnic, linguistic, racial, gender, age, or other diversities (Novelli et al., 2017). The socio-cultural recognition of peasants' identity is, in this sense, a relevant part of the program's education and pedagogy. The movement's educational model focuses on peasants' cultural identity and claims for culturally relevant and meaningful education (Mariano et al., 2016). As a result, during the 1990s, the MST achieved a concrete project (*Educação do Campo* - Education of and by the countryside) and developed its educational system, representing the identity and diversity of peasant communities. The *Educação do Campo* project aimed at creating an autonomous space for education that responded to the local needs, culture, and knowledge of rural people (Barbosa, 2016). The MST also has 'itinerant schools,' which have autonomy regarding education. Resistance and learning are thus seen as coming from below, from the "broader thinking" within the

'peripheral' countries, to connect language, power, and knowledge' (Andreotti, 2006; Mignolo 2013). To resist the 'cultural logic of domination', it is, in fact, necessary to provide a space of resistance that goes beyond maintaining one's own culture, values, and knowledge (De Souza & Andreotti, 2016).

To achieve these goals, the movement uses a specific teaching approach named 'pedagogy of the land,' based on developing a collective identity and respect for diversity, linking anti-capitalist struggle, education, and culture (Kane, 2016; Tarlau et al., 2014). One of the movement's principles is the promotion of cultural practice, focused on practising inherited values, activities, and the enhancement of different local cultures (Mariano et al., 2016). Rural culture, beliefs, practices, and traditions remain essential to the MST struggle (Kane, 2016). For example, students engage in a daily 'mistica,' which includes creative activities such as songs, performances, theatre plays, national anthems, and other cultural expressions (mst.org website). These are performed daily at schools and before any MST meeting and event. In addition, for education to be critical, relevant, and meaningful, it should be applied to real-life situations (cf. Ten dam & Volman, 2004). Teachers are at the forefront of this principle. They should continue developing a collective reflection of their practice (MST 1996).

The educator is crucial to this objective, as Freire points out (2000). Thus, it is not only curriculum values and skills previously mentioned that are important. Also vital is how the curriculum is transmitted, and how learning takes place. These ideas are reflected in the constitution, which in 1988 ensured a culturally relevant and meaningful education for all citizens, recognising the history of past rural struggles. In addition, through state recognition and MST concern for public schooling, there has been acknowledgment and recognition of the MST's pedagogical approach by state, left-wing groups, and

international organisations (Tarlau, 2015). Indeed, during the first half of the 1990s, the movement received formal recognition from local municipal councils, which ran their teacher training programs. Also, through the LEDOC bachelor's degree program, thousands of activists could study for bachelor's and master's degrees, which provided an alternative education program for the rural population. Therefore, the role of the MST's system of education is to access and resist hegemonic discourses, and to ensure the right to self-determination and collective identity formation through meaningful, relevant education. The struggle for agrarian reform, through the role of education, can be thus read as a cultural struggle.

Representation: struggle for democracy through citizen action, participatory democracy, and critical thinking

The "R" for representation stems from the goal of transformative politics to counter the unequal participation of citizens in decision-making or claim-making processes (Novelli et al., 2017). In terms of Representation, the movement aims at achieving a socialist democracy, which is rooted in Marxism, socialism, and the theology of liberation ideologies (Tarlau, 2013b). To support this vision, the organisation and governance of the settlements are based on democratic and participatory principles and collective values. The camps are organised in cooperative units and shared housing, and decisions are based on dialogue, reflection, and consensus (Mariano et al., 2016). The collective units are then responsible for dialogue with national and federal committees.

Democratic and participatory principles are also highly promoted in the schooling system. For instance, the movement supports participatory governance of the school, where all members are equally crucial to contributing to the school decisions and collective actions

(MST, 1996). Indeed, education promotes the development of organisational skills such as democratic, cooperative management, and leadership competencies (MST 2005, in Machado, 2011). Also, students are involved in developing lessons and educational activities with the teachers, as well as planning financial and administrative tasks of the school. This horizontal relation is in line with Freire's notion of participatory pedagogy, where students are seen as active citizens and not empty vessels to be filled with information (Freire, 2000). The movement also highly supports the self-organisation and independence of students, who can come together, discuss, and make decisions relevant to their participation in school and society (MST 1996). Therefore, students must have a space to develop their solutions and practice democracy and democratic governance (Giroux, 2010). To support this, the curriculum focuses on enhancing active citizenship skills (i.e., exercising rights and developing awareness of public issues) that lead to engagement in political action. Education is used in this way as a base to exercise advocacy and democratic citizenship participation (Carter, 2010). Along with this, the notion of critical education and critical pedagogy as a way to increase voice, consciousness, and social mobilisation (Andreotti & Souza, 2016; Freire, 2000) seems particularly relevant.

It can be argued that by promoting skills and competencies with a social purpose, the movement is resisting the individualistic, for-profit, capitalist values embedded in neoliberal education agendas (cf. Giroux, 2010). By building a culture of collective work and cooperation, the movement creates a discourse that is counter hegemonic to the neo-liberal instrumental value of education (cf. Mayo, 2013). The movement successfully linked its education project (*Educação do Campo*) to rural public education and, therefore, carried out dialogue and gained representation in educational policy processes. Although successful in implementing its autonomous

educational system, the MST went beyond providing education in rural communities, and managed to transform its initiatives into a national proposal. The proposal was formally institutionalised within the Ministry of Education in 2004, was accredited with legal force by da Silva (2012), and further put into practice by President Rousseff.

Reconciliation: social transformation for the creation of a 'just society.'

The fourth "R" for reconciliation refers to a process that is crucial for (post)conflict societies to prevent returning to conflict and includes education's role in dealing with the past and historical memory, truth and reparations, transitional justice processes, issues related to bringing communities together, methods of forgiving and healing and the broader processes of social and psycho-social healing (Novelli et al., 2017). Ultimately, the basis of the MST's ideology is creating a 'human environment.' The focus is not only on increasing access to education. The movement has also created a theory of education that enhances the promotion of human values and relationships to build a new social order (Kane, 2016; Tarlau et al., 2014). For instance, according to the MST (2005, in Machado, 2011), the practice of 'mistica' earlier described enhances the values of social relations. It acts as a way to welcome new people into the family. For the MST, schools should promote values such as solidarity, social justice, respect for diversity, and realising dreams (MST, 1996). Horizontal, equal relations between teachers and students are precious to achieve these humanistic goals. In addition, in alignment with Freire's (2000) advocacy of emancipatory and humanising education, for the MST, education should promote a class-consciousness and collective political action aimed at transforming society.

Therefore, the focus of educational content relies on the critical understanding of the movement's history, educational philosophy, principles, and links with the MST's struggle. Students learn from past histories of collective movements and analyse the experiences to move their struggles and action forward (Mariano et al., 2016). The curriculum enhances the application of knowledge to real-life situations and the historical context to promote active citizenship and mobilisation, again underlining the economic dimensions and material relations of production. In this sense, the link between theory and practice is highly valued (Machado, 2011; MST 1996) since the curriculum is based on concrete situations to which students can relate. Students are also continuously embedded in social struggles and participate in debates, protests, and occupations (Mariano et al., 2016). As Freire (2000) puts it, education has a political nature and popular education is intentionally political. The role of education, much broader than knowledge transmitting, is to promote understanding of the more comprehensive social order and the cultural universe in which schools are embedded and to use schools as a space of radical transformative action. The curriculum is not only formative but also socially beneficial, linked to the movement's objectives and broader societal interests (Tarlau, 2015). Schools become politicised through processes of 'conscientizaçao' (Freire, 2000) - which means conscious awareness, critical reflection linked with 'praxis' (i.e., modes of practical and political action) – and which enables schools to contribute to the transformation of society and the 'liberation' of the oppressed (Freire, 2000). The movement is thus profoundly linked to the concrete conditions – by responding with its actions and ideology to the historical conditions from which it emerged, and by creating, through education, a historical, cultural, and political identity able to transform the society and the country's future history (Machado, 2011).

However, notwithstanding the alignment of the MST goals with reconciliation purposes, the extent to which concrete social transformation and the creation of a just society is being reached is to be questioned. The goal of reconciling elite elements in society to the decolonising aims of the MST is ambitious, and may have to remain aspirational. In the next section, I will discuss challenges and contradictions faced by a socialist-style education endeavour to reconcile the interests and goals of the most marginalised with those of elites.

Challenges and obstacles: Limits to complete recognition and reconciliation

a) *Perceived threat*

The MST faced several challenges and obstacles because of the negative perception and hostility generated by the government, media (Veja magazine in particular), and other interests (Carter, 2010). The movement sometimes failed to become fully democratic, due to hierarchies and control in the camp's organisation (Kane, 2016). In addition to its autonomous radical positions, illegal forms of protests have rendered the movement disruptive of peace and contributing to increased levels of violence, thus discouraging some teachers and students from participating in its education system. The escalation of violence resulted in the massacres of peasants during Cardoso's administration (1995- 1996). Violence also escalated during the recent Temer (2016-2018) and conservative Bolsonaro governments (2018- present), which criminalized social movements.

Over this period, a large amount of land was expropriated, followed by peasants occupying the land and consequent massacres by police forces. Between

1985 and 2003, more than 1000 peasants were killed (Carter, 2010), whilst since 2016, more than 100 rural movements activists were killed, 300 receiving death threats, and another 700 physically assaulted (Bretòn et al., 2022). Its autonomy, activism, and radical position are thus seen as both the success and the limitations of the movement: success in using its struggle to gain wide recognition, limitations in terms of association with disruptive and violent disorder (Pahnke et al., 2015; Tarlau, 2015).

b)   Hierarchies, elites and bureaucracies

Integrating the movement within the government structures also brought challenges and obstacles to recognizing the movement's original goals and representing the activists' voice in the government's administration. Initially, the movement dialogued with the Ministry of Education, still maintaining control and coordination over the *Educação do Campo*. With the creation of a department for Citizenship and Diversity, the movement faced a restriction of power, a decline in status, and high barriers when dialoguing with the Ministry and influencing other departments (Tarlau, 2015). Also, under Rouseff's government, the movement felt they lost what they were initially claiming. The recent administrations were more prone to expanding internationally renowned programs and including the MST's cause and struggle in rural education (Tarlau, 2015). In the case of the Bachelor's degree program (LEDOC), the Ministry pushed for universities to make the program part of their structure. This change in administration decreased the MST's capacities to participate in the program interventions while also losing the initial principles and proposal of the MST. That is, no activists were present in the program, and students came from the countryside but had no previous connection with social movements –

therefore resisting collective ideology of the program (Tarlau, 2015). Since Lula's second mandate (2006-2010), land occupations were failing in front of agri-business sectors. Indeed, large private owners increased their coverage, controlling more than 200 hectares (Farah, 2015). In this sense, recent research argues how most of the agrarian reform was not distributed, but only 'regularised', and how the MST's economic autonomy has been challenged amidst growing capitalist interests (Bretón et al., 2022). In the most recent historical period, the repressive policies, violent evictions and dismantling of Agrarian reform implemented by Bolsonaro's government, have also been a challenge for the MST, as for all resistance movements in Brazil. The emergence of right-wing conservative forces marks a further complication for the movements' strategies (Bretón et al., 2022).

c)   *Political contradictions and constraints*

I would like to finally reflect on the political discontinuities and contradictory discourses of the Brazilian federal administrations, which may have limited the effectiveness and recognition of the MST's struggle. After the massacres of 1995-1996, Cardoso's second administration decided to focus on the market–based agrarian reform approaches. The aim was to decrease social tensions while expanding and supporting the agribusiness sector (Tarlau, 2015). Also, Lula's administration, which was a more supportive administration, continued to implement agri-business reforms. Since the 2000s, the influence of the agribusiness sector has increased and it has acknowledged rural education as a way to support their interests, especially in the sense of an educated workforce as potential consumers. In this sense, within the Brazilian authorities, there is a historical combination of populist discourses with a 'threat of co-optation' (Kane, 2016; Pahnke et al., 2015), referred to as "the attempt of powerful actors to use

the language of policy reforms to promote their own goals" (Tarlau, 2015, 3). Indeed, these political contradictions and support for capitalist modes of production have lessened the influence of the movement's ideologies and demands. As previously outlined, the movement strongly advocated for a socialist production model based on collective practices and rural population owners of their land. The MST argued against the appropriation of their goals by the agri-business sector, and was reluctant to imagine that the industry was interested in overcoming land inequalities (Tarlau, 2015).

Following this reasoning, we should also acknowledge the complex relationship, and the conflicting claims that exist between the MST and the different indigenous communities in Brazil. In Brazil, the MST supports the indigenous communities' demands, but it is not its main struggle (Bretón et al., 2022). The revolutionary aims, material and pragmatic gains of the MST are at odds with the indigenous community's claims for sovereignty over their lands and for the survival of their people (Hendlin, 2018). Also, due to government and corporate pressures, and the displacement of landless peasants on indigenous lands, the MST and indigenous communities were found to be against rather than in support of each other regarding environmental justice (Hendlin, 2018), aspect which further reinforces the hegemonic structures and elite power over subaltern social movements.

In summary, although the integration in government structures and the relationship with other grassroot struggles brought an expansion of the movement's programs and increased recognition, this further affected the MST's representation, autonomy, and power to implement its initial programs and principles.

Concluding Reflections

From a postcolonial perspective, western ideologies and cultural, social, and economic power dynamics of colonialism have shaped the life of the marginalised groups, especially the rural indigenous population, in Brazil. In this context, the analysis shows how the MST has emerged as an aspirational political actor, which was able to innovatively address the historical inequalities and ongoing forms of structural and cultural violence present in the country. The movement managed to successfully reach families in the settlements and camps and enhance educational access for children and adults living in rural areas, thus addressing inequalities in educational provision. In terms of Recognition, throughout the years, the educational model, which represents the identity and diversity of rural peasants, was recognized by international organisations and leftist administrations, which incorporated the schools into the public education system. The movement was also able to dialogue with the government structures, thus having a voice in the educational policy making, although facing obstacles in terms of hierarchies and bureaucratic processes. Indeed, an aspect which is seen as supporting the MST's success on land claims is the closer relationship and pressure exerted on the government on redistributive gains as compared to indigenous communities (Hale, 2018).

On the other hand, however, some limits have been discussed. These relate to the political, administrative, and economic context of the country, which is ideologically in line with the notion of Brazilian's 'double colonisation, in which the interests of western, neo-liberal market forces are being supported, thus overseeing the requests and socialist ideology of the movement. As shown, the MST has often remained vulnerable to governments' interests and to forms of co-optation and repressions. In this sense, realistic achievements of reconciling the elites with the

MST socialist aims, has been put into question. The MST thus represents a successful actor in addressing and arguing against postcolonial legacies; however, as in the case of other countries with a colonial continuity (i.e., South Africa), colonial arrangements continue to be expressed in different forms and fundamental changes are perhaps still needed to radically shift the inequalities and achieve greater social justice (cf. Christie, 2021). In addition, the radical position of the movement may have limited the achievement of a peaceful society, ultimately restricting the advancement of its struggle.

At the same time however, the analysis has shown how education was a key instrument for achieving the movement's aims due to its political power and pedagogical style. Popular education principles support the promotion of democratisation and social transformation by addressing past injustices and envisioning a just future through the resistance and liberation of the marginalised. By linking the pedagogical and educational philosophy of the movement to the anti-capitalist neoliberal modes of production and ideology, I have argued how the MST resists and transforms the root causes of structural and cultural violence present in Brazil's countryside. As Freire (2000) argues, critical liberatory education is crucial to changing the unjust imbalances of power relations.

Utilisation of the 4R analytical framework (see Novelli et al., 2017), clarifies how the movement primarily focuses on the Redistribution of wealth and resources (land), developing an educational model which entirely supports this cause. Redistribution of land emerges as the key to achieving both the Recognition of the rural identity of peasants and the Representation of the democratic ideals of the movement to support the achievement of a democratic country. It also emerged how the interlink between Redistribution and Reconciliation is profoundly embedded in the movement's philosophy and ideology. Indeed, land reform, in which social and cultural

structures are transformed, is functional for achieving a just and equal society.

To conclude, it has been shown that if overcoming exploitation and addressing past injustices is key to the achievement of a sustainable peace building (Galtung, 1967), the MST's contribution, where the interests and struggles of the marginalised are being addressed, can represent a potential and relevant actor in support of this process.

References

Andreotti V. (2006). "The contributions of postcolonial theory to development education." *Development Education Journal. 12*(3): 7-10. Republished as a 'ThinkPiece' by the DEA, Thinkpieces, Education for a just and sustainable world.

Andreotti V. and Souza D.L. (2016). "Critical Education and Post colonialism." *Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Springer Science+Business Media Singapore, 2016. DOI 10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_182-1.

Barbosa, L. (2016). "Educação do Campo [Education for and by the countryside] as a political project in the context of the struggle for land in Brazil." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44: 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2015.1119120

Bordieu P. and Passeron J-C. (1990). *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, London: Sage Publications (CA), Vol. 4.

Bretón, V., González, M., Rubio, B., & Vergara-Camus, L. (2022). Peasant and indigenous autonomy before and after the pink tide in Latin America. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 22(3), 547–575. https://doi.org/10.1111/joac.12483

Brazil - Country Profiles (2011). LANDLINKS. https://www.land-links.org/country-profile/brazil/#land

Brazil - Economic Indicators (2022). MOODY's Analytics Economic Indicators https://www.economy.com/brazil/indicators

Carter, M. (2010). "The Landless Rural Workers Movement and Democracy in Brazil." *Latin American Research Review* - LAT AMER RES REV 45(4), 1-51. https://doi.org/10.2307/27919219

Cesarino L.M.C. (2012). "Brazilian Postcoloniality and south-south cooperation: a view from anthropology." *Portuguese Cultural Studies* 4: 85-113.

Crowther, J., Martin, I. & Shaw, M. (1999) (Eds.) *Popular Education and Social Movements in Scotland Today*, Leicester: NIACE.

da Silveira, F. G., de Arruda, P. L., Vieira, I., Battestin, S., Campos, A. E., & Silva, W. (2016). Public policies for rural development and combating poverty in rural areas. *International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth* (IPC-IG) *United Nations Development Programme* (pp.1-55).

da Costa F.N. (2019). Desigualdade no Ensino Rural. *Blog Cidadania & Cultura* https://fernandonogueiracosta.wordpress.com/2019/07/16/desigualdade-no-ensino-rural/

De Souza L.M. and Andreotti, V. (2009). "Culturalism, difference and pedagogy, lessons from indigenous population Brazil." in: Moore M. (2009). *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Policy and Practice: decolonizing community contexts* (pp. 72-86) New York: Routledge.

Dilts A. (2012). "Revisiting Johan Galtung's Concept of Structural Violence." *New Political Science* 34(2): 191-194.

DESIGUALDADES SOCIAIS POR COR OU RAÇA NO BRASIL (2018). IBGE Educa. https://educa.ibge.gov.br/jovens/materias-especiais/21039-desigualdades-sociais-por-cor-ou-raca-no-brasil.html

Ellison C. and Smith A. (2012). "Youth, education and peace-building," *International Institute for Educational Planning,* UNESCO Centre. 1-23.

Escobar A. (2004). "Beyond the Third World: imperial globality, global coloniality, and antiglobalisation social movements," *Third World Quarterly*, 25(1): 207-230

Farah, T. (2015). 'Concentração de terra cresce no país', O Globo, January 9. http://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/concentracao-deterra-cresce-latifundios-equivalem-quase-tres-estados-de-sergipe-1500405

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* New York: Continuum

Freedman, E., Tomasino E.B., Payés, I. (2014) "*Mapeo de experiencias de educación popular con movimientos sociales*", Consejo de Educación Popular de América Latina y el Caribe (CEAAL)

Galtung J. (1990). "Cultural Violence." *Journal of Peace Research*, 27(3): 291- 305.

Galtung J. (1967). *Theories of Peace, A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking.* Oslo: Oslo: International Peace Research Institute. 1-238.

Giroux H. A. (2010). "Bare Pedagogy and the Scourge of Neoliberalism: Re-thinking Higher Education as a Democratic Public Sphere," *The Educational Forum* 74(3): 184-196

GINI index (World Bank estimate) - Country Ranking (2019) Index mundi. https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/indicators/SI.POV.GINI/rankings

Hendlin, Y. H. (2018). Environmental justice as a (potentially) hegemonic concept: a historical look at competing interests between the MST and indigenous people in Brazil. *Local Environment, 24*(2), 113–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2018.1488823

Hermoza D. (2016), *Las diferencias entre ricos y pobres no son solo de dinero,* Banco Mundial. "20th June 2016. https://www.bancomundial.org/es/news/feature/2016/06/22/desigualdad-las-diferencias-entre-ricos-y-pobres-no-son-solo-de-dinero

Hickling-Hudson, Anne, Matthews, Julie, & Woods, Annette (2004) Education, postcolonialism and disruptions. In Woods, A, Matthews, J, & Hickling-Hudson, A (Eds.) *Disrupting Preconceptions: Postcolonialism and Education.* Post Pressed, Flaxton, Australia, pp. 1-16.

Kane L. (2016). "Popular education and the Landless People's Movement in Brazil (MST)." *Studies in the Education of Adults* 32(1): 36-50, DOI: 10.1080/02660830.2000.11661419

Machado V. (2011). "The "Sem Terra" Movement and scholar education: the construction of a pedagogical proposal beyond the school walls," *Revista de Ciências da Educação* 8(25): 1-23.

Mariano A., Erivan H. and Tarlau R. (2016). "Pedagogies of struggle and collective organization: the educational practices of the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement." *A journal for and about social movements* 8(2): 211 – 242

Mayo P. (2013). "Competences' for a Critical Formation. An Educationist's Perspective", *Education, Politics and Culture*, 2(1), 11-20.

Mignolo, W. D. (2013). "Geopolitics of Sensing and Knowing: On (De) Coloniality, Border Thinking, and Epistemic Disobedience." *Postcolonial Studies* 14(3): 273-283.

MST. (1996). *Caderno de Educação nº 8.* Princípios da educação no MST. São Paulo.

Pahnke A., Tarlau R. and Wendy W. (2015). "Understanding rural resistance: contemporary mobilization in the Brazilian countryside." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(6): 1069-1085.

Novelli, M., Lopes Cardozo, M.T.A., and Smith, A. (2017). "A Theoretical Framework for Analysing the Contribution of Education to Sustainable Peacebuilding: 4Rs in Conflict-Affected Contexts". *Journal on Education in Emergencies, 3*(1), 14 – 43. Published by: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies.

O' Neill, A. (2022). Brazil: *Gross domestic product (GDP) in current prices from 1987 to 2027.* Statista. https://www.statista.com/statistics/263769/gross-domestic-product-gdp-in-brazil/

Rodrigues M. (2021). *Disparidades en acceso al agua en Brasil se mantienen durante pandemia.* IPS - Interpress Service. https://ipsnoticias.net/2021/09/disparidades-en-acceso-al-agua-en-brasil-se-mantienen-durante-pandemia/

Rolon C. E. K., & Vieira M. G. F. (2020). RURALITY AND EDUCATION IN BRAZIL Inclusion of Rural and Remote Populations in Formal Education in Brazil. *Background paper prepared for the 2020 GEM Report Latin America and the Caribbean.* Global Education Monitoring Report. UNESCO.

Romero, T. (2022). *Percentage distribution of wealth in Brazil in 2021, by wealth percentile.* Statista. https://www.statista.com/statistics/1294715/distribution-wealth-by-percentile-brazil/

Sauer, S., & Mészáros, G. (2017). The political economy of land struggle in Brazil under workers' party governments. Journal of Agrarian Change, 17, 397–414. https://doi.org/10.1111/joac.12206

Sasse, C. (2021) *Recordista em desigualdade, país estuda alternativas para ajudar os mais pobres.* Fonte: Agência Senado. https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/infomaterias/2021/03/recordista-em-desigualdade-pais-estuda-alternativas-para-ajudar-os-mais-pobres

Ten Dam, G. and Volman, M. (2004). "Critical thinking as a citizenship competence: teaching strategies." *Learning and Instruction* 14(4): 359-379.

Tarlau, R. (2013a). "Landless Workers and Schools: An Alternative Approach to Rural Education." *Grassroots Development: Journal of the Inter-American Foundation* 34: 28-33.

Tarlau R. (2013b). "The Social(ist) Pedagogies of the MST: Towards New Relations of Production in the Brazilian Countryside," *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 21(41): 2-22.

Tarlau R. (2015). "Education of the countryside at a crossroads: rural social movements and national policy reform in Brazil." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(6): 1157-1177.

Tarlau R., Zimmerman de Moraes, M., Witcel, E., and Thapliyal, N. (2014). "Learning and transformation: an overview of education within the landless worker's movement in Brazil." *Postcolonial Directions in Education* 3(1): 18-41.

Torres, A. (2008). *La Educación Popular. Trayectoria y actualidad.* 2ª reimpresión. Editorial El Búho. Bogotá, Colombia

UNEP - WCMC (2021). *Novel study maps out the inequality of land distribution and ownership in Brazil.* Trade, Development & the Environment Hub. https://tradehub.earth/2020/08/10/novel-study-maps-out-the-inequality-of-land-distribution-and-ownership-in-brazil/#:~:text=The%20Gini%20index%20(a%20statistical,land%20inequality%20in%20the%20world.

BEYOND THE WEIRD EDUCATION SYSTEM
IN THE AGE OF AI

Agnieszka Uflewska
Gameli K. Tordzro
University of Glasgow School of Education

Abstract   In this article, we aim to contribute to the ongoing debate on reimagining education systems, their content and underpinning values in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Indeed, twenty-first century education is being transformed into a global network (Dede & Richards, 2020), with new constellations already emerging (Phipps, 2019). From the outset, we analyse the omnipresence of the 'western' European tradition across the education systems globally (Bhambra et al., 2018; de Sousa Santos, 2014; Smith, 2012; Mignolo, 2011; Fanon, 2001; wa Thiong'o, 1986; 1969), and its incongruity with the knowledge and values needed for sustainable coexistence in the cyber-physical (hybrid) reality of natural life and AI. To do so, we refer to the work of Henrich et al. (2010, p 29) appearing in *Nature*, where the authors coined the acronymic pun, 'WEIRD', to highlight the education system's 'western, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic' origins and ties. We not only use it but also propose to extend it by adding an additional letter, 'O', to 'WEIRDO' to underline the systems' growing *obsolescent* content and values. We propose to reach beyond this WEIRD-ness, shifting the debate from 'western' eurocentrism and decolonisation into wider post-discriminatory and ethically committed approaches and practices, such as SEEDS: *smart educational ecosystems*

of dependence and support. Underlining a gradual emergence of de-centralised and proactive initiatives, SEEDS focus on the *'motion out of the notion* of *inclusivity* into the concept of *embracing'* (Tordzro, 2019a; 2019b; Tordzro, 2018; 2016; Kumordzi et al., 2016), constituting a set of signposts aimed at reconfiguration of the current epistemological, methodological and axiological disbalances into ones directed at harmonious co-existence and loving kindness. SEEDS is consonant with the recent reports of the European Commission (2022, online), emphasising the 'triple imperative to protect, prepare and transform', and UNESCO (2021) urging for a new social contract for education in the face of current dangers to humanity and planet Earth. Examples of such educational outlooks already exist, including Ubuntu (Caraccioli & Mungai, 2009), Adinkra (Tordzro, 2019a; 2019b), Afa (Kumordzi et al., 2016), Moana (Hendry & Fitznor, 2012), Hawaiian and Pacific (Herman, 2014), and the First Nations of the American (Pacari, 1996; Deloria, 1970) and Australian continents, each going beyond the WEIRD education system in the age of AI.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence's (AI) mimicry of human behaviour has led it to be described as 'the most human of technologies' (Fan & Taylor, 2019, p 8). Indeed, AI has established itself as capable of surpassing human intelligence in various domains, with the seminal conquering of *Go* being AI's most preeminent achievement to date. It should be noted that the scope of AI is now understood beyond the human mind and applies to any knowledge domain where a machine displays rationality and acts rationally (Russell & Norvig, 2021). Yet, rationality and the human heart occupy entirely different realms. One should, therefore, carefully heed the warnings of leading AI researchers like Kai-Fu Lee (2018, p 231),

who saw beyond these rational limits of AI, stated in his research that 'instead of seeking to outperform the human brain, I should have sought to understand the human heart'. The possibility that AI might be used to reproduce or create knowledge and cultural hegemony in the same manner that colonial legacies permeate education systems globally today is worthy of serious consideration. A necessary first step in this regard requires an in-depth examination of the epistemological underpinnings of the current education system so that we might not inadvertently replicate previous hegemonies or create new ones in the age of AI.

WEIRD epistemology of education

The 'western' Eurocentric epistemology of the education system, its knowledge, content and values, is a vague yet multifaceted construct. Its core meaning, according to Henrich et al. (2010, p 29), might be encoded in the already mentioned playful acronymic pun 'WEIRD', emphasising the 'western, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic' heritage (see also: Colares da Mota Neto & Santana de Lima, 2020). The *weird*ness and unusualness of this epistemological approach should not be underestimated, particularly in the context of emerging multilingual, multicultural and globalising education environments, with the potential to be enhanced by AI through delivering personalised learning and teaching (Akgun & Greenhow, 2022).Indeed, the 'western' reference is especially noteworthy, as it locates the geographical origins of knowledge and values in education and emphasises western socio-cultural structures globally (Wrey, 2014). According to Dussel (1993, p 71), the concept dates to the Hegelian tradition of the 'heart of Europe'. This notion generally includes 'Germany, France, Denmark and the Scandinavian countries' but centres on 'England and Germany' (Dussel, 1993, p 73). The author

underlines that out of such a 'western' construct of the European continent emerges the 'other' Europe, consisting of 'Poland and Russia' and the central, eastern and southern parts of the continent (Dussel, 1993, p 73). This distinction between the 'west and the rest' within the European context is of paramount importance, as it has largely marginalised the 'other' Europeans' voices and identities for centuries now (Uflewska, 2018; see also: Smith, 2012).

The 'educated', 'industrialised', 'rich', and 'democratic' aspects of the WEIRD epistemology tend to be linked with the modern world-systems' conceptualisations (Wallerstein, 1979; 1974; see also: Hobson, 2012). Although distinct, as Mignolo (2002) emphasised, these concepts are strongly interrelated through certain ideas and practices, particularly the notion of capitalism. According to Dussel (1995), capitalism masks the 'western' epistemological violence in knowledge production, economic exploitation and actual genocides of the 'others'. Indeed, describing the process, Dussel (1995, p 75) emphasises that

> 'the modern [western European] civilization became to understand itself [through its education system] as the most developed, the superior, civilization. This sense of superiority obliges it, in the form of a categorical imperative, as it were, to *develop* (civilise, uplift, educate) the more primitive, barbarous, underdeveloped civilisations. The path of such development should be that followed by [western] Europe in its own development out of antiquity and the Middle Ages, where the barbarians, or the primitive, oppose the civilising process, the praxis of modernity must, in the last instance,

have recourse to the violence necessary to remove the obstacles to modernization'.

In particular, Dussel (1993, p 73), reflecting on the Hegelian tradition, emphasises the role of the 'English and German' (the Anglo-Saxon; often synonymous with the 'British', which is not) power construct, as each nation assumes the 'absolute right as the bearer of the [Hegelian] Spirit in its moment of development', with 'the spirit of other peoples having no rights'. In other words, as Richardson (2018, p 236) observes, the idea of 'non-western inferiority' justifies the discrimination and the use of violence, including the epistemological one, towards any form of 'otherness' that contradicts the WEIRD.

The implications of the WEIRD epistemology for education are vast. This includes the work of Deloria (1970, p 19), a distinguished Great Sioux Nation scholar, who emphasises the use of it as the 'Western tendency to silence all the voices of others'. Contemporary to Deloria, Fanon (2001; 1986) additionally highlights applications of tactics, such as racism and xenophobia, interwoven throughout the education systems, to control and maintain discriminatory social relations as 'natural'. Fanon (2001; 1986) extensively documents the systemic internationalisation of these practices through subjugation and imposition of inferiority towards colonised identities, aiming at the emulation of the views of the oppressors. His observations are consonant with the work of wa Thiong'o (1986; 1969). This Kenyan novelist and critic of the WEIRD epistemology of education, wa Thiong'o (1986; 1969), underlines the omnipresence of this discriminatory approach in learning and teaching across the African continent, resulting in the undervaluing of local cultures, languages, histories, geographies, religions, arts and traditions, to the point that they are rejected by the local populations, who then choose to

emulate instead the discriminatory knowledge and values imposed by the (praxis of) colonial oppressors (see also: Foucault, 2002).

Indeed, recognising the colonisation encoded and seeded within education, its WEIRD-ness, and unusualness remains important. According to Loomba (2005, p 3), approximately '84.6 per cent of the land surface of the globe' has been affected by the 'western' European colonial knowledge and values. This constitutes, as noted by Loomba (2005, p 3; see also: Mignolo, 2011), 'by far the most extensive colonial [knowledge and values] domination in human history' and is reflected in the content of education systems across the Americas, Australia, Asia, Africa, as well as in Europe up to this day. Loomba (2005, p 50) argues that the 'the growth of modern western knowledge system and backgrounds of all "disciplines" has been embedded within and shaped by' the discriminating and undervaluing of non-western ideas, making the world 'an extension of the west' and assuring the reproduction of WEIRD epistemology 'by the West for the West' (Bhambra et al., 2018, p 5; wa Thiong'o, 1986; 1969).

WEIRDO education system

The education system exists in part, at least in theory, to provide a framework to understand the surrounding world and to empower those within it to advance it (Fadel et al., 2015). It also shapes and sets peoples' identities and how they relate to each other and the planet, setting the discourse within which all ideas about themselves and others are presented and exchanged (Wray, 2014). It acts through a learning process, the latter described by Tegmark (2018), an MIT professor of physics and a president of the *Future Life Institute*, through an allegory of acquiring software after birth. Reflecting on this process

within a machine learning context, Tegmark (2018) highlights the importance of collecting information about the nearby environment to decide how to *act* back, re-*act* and inter-*act*. Tegmark (2018) emphasises that by applying reinforcement learning, an idea inspired by behaviourist psychology (see also: Skinner, 1953 on operant conditioning), AI already guides and modifies human behaviour. The danger exists that such technological capabilities could reproduce or create hegemonic education systems through neo-colonial and discriminatory corporate and state-sponsored acts rather than making them obsolescent.

Indeed, 'obsolescent' is also the last of the characteristics we felt inspired to include in Henrich et al. (2010)'s famous acronymic pun WEIRD, adopting WEIRDO to capture the current education system's obsolescent unethical and unsustainable content. Originating over a century ago, the WEIRD education system emerged as a tool to re-train (re-*act*) predominantly agrarian societies to fit into the new industrial reality of the first three Industrial Revolutions (Bhrambra et al., 2018; Soysal & Strang, 1989). Those three eras of unprecedented technological progress, occurring at breakneck speed, resulted in the unparalleled geographical movement of people, including the 'Age of Migration', as Castles et al. (2014) refer to it, progressively interweaving disparate local cultures and structures across the globe.

Influenced by the most advanced organisational model of those times, namely the factory, the emerging education systems were designed to address these changes and to mass-produce socially conditioned docile workers and obedient citizens equipped with enough literacy skills, values and attitudes necessary for developing susceptibility in undertaking employment often torn of dignity and care (Mokyr, 2001). According to Toffler (1981,

p 43; 1971), the system was envisioned for a 'brutally repetitious factory and office' working life, 'in which time is to be regulated not by the cycle of sun and moon but by the clock' (see also: Robinson & Aronica, 2016; 2015; 2010; Craft, 2011; Craft et al. 2001). Describing the system, Bowles and Gintis (1976, p 151, citing Adams, 1880) point to its industrial qualities, including 'huge, mechanical machines, so organised, as to combine the principal characteristics of the cotton mill, the railroad, with those of the model state prison' (see also: Cubberley, 1919). And as within a prison, the obedience within that education system was and has been ever since, assured, according to Gatto (2010, p 60), by

> 'industrial bureaucracy and permanent discipline: a set of strict rules and laws demanding compliance and squelching creativity for a promise of a degree for learners, while for teachers and academics, as in hamburger-flipping industry, the pay-check is the decisive ingredient. (...) We all have to eat'.

That education system was also set to pre-adapt for segregation, including that based on age, but also on race, ethnicity, gender and social class (Fanon, 2001; 1986; wa Thiong'o, 1986; 1969) to fit into the norms expected within the industry (Robinson & Aronica, 2016; 2015; 2010; see also: Toffler, 1981; Gatto, 2010). The age-based discrimination, especially in higher and lifelong education, has been primarily unchallenged to this day, with examples including students' sub-classification of the *adult,* meaning *the other learner.* This explicit age-based students' segregation in higher and lifelong education is particularly troubling, as all participants of the tertiary education system are considered 'adults' according to both the socio-psychological and legal interpretations. Addressing the issue, Tuckett (c.f. Wilby, 2014), a former

chief executive of the UK-wide Institute of Adult Learning and Continuing Education, explains that the concept of an 'adult' in education was created at the beginning of the twentieth century to assist the economically deprived members of the public in gaining relevant literacy skills. Therefore, the concept of 'adult education' was addressed to a certain type of 'other adults'. In the context of the early twentieth century UK, this included former soldiers, women and widows, former slaves of colonies, the Scots, Welsh, Irish, and 'other' Europeans, also known as 'migrants' (as opposed to the western and colonial 'expat', Uflewska, 2018), all of the patchy educational stories, 'funny' names, accents, pronunciations, skin, eye and hair colours, grouped under the disguise of an 'adult' learner (Wilby, 2014; see also: Crenshaw, 1991; 1989; Collins, 2015; 1998; 1990; 1986 on simultaneous multiple forms of discrimination). According to Chen (2017), the continuous presence of the ongoing segregation of 'other' learners/ 'adult' students in higher and lifelong education profoundly affects their psychological wellbeing, educational belongingness, learning confidence, self-worth, social perception, as well as prevents these students from a full engagement with the learning processes (see also: Cooley, 2005; Mead, 1967; Goffman, 1990; 1959; Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Dodgson, 2017).

Counterhegemonic perspectives on WEIRD inclusion

Interestingly, the inclusion of the 'other' has been at the centre of debates in education for a few decades now, with the development of non-traditional and critical pedagogies, curricula and leadership policies being some of the most actively explored pathways to change the status quo. Gale et al. (2017) point to two bodies of literature illustrating this process, differentiating between the (1) inclusion and embedding of the 'other' into the

contemporary education system(s) and (2) creation of the 'southern theory' in education that replaces the colonial epistemological tradition. Analysing implications of both aspects, the authors refer to the work of Dei (2008) and Connell (2007), emphasising the existing imbalance of power in knowledge production through a metaphor of the metropole centre of knowledge, and relatively voiceless peripheries (Gale et al., 2017). Citing Connell (2007, p viii-ix), the authors underline the significance of the specific type of 'relations, such as authority, exclusion and inclusion, hegemony, partnership, sponsorship, appropriation between the intellectuals and institutions in the metropole and those in the world periphery' that still tend to characterise the education systems globally (Gale et al., 2017, p15, see also: Ainscow, 2016).

The first approach, centred on including and embedding the 'other' within the WEIRD knowledge production, constitutes the basis of inclusive education scholarship. Defined as a set of 'distinct normative beliefs about the purpose, content and organisation of education', it acknowledges the structural power imbalance in the design and delivery of education due to 'diverse systems of vales' (Magnússon, 2019, p 70). It is rooted in learner-centred pedagogies (Schweisfurth, 2015a; 2015b; 2013) that aim to place the learners in a position of seemingly active control over the content and delivery of knowledge for positive progressive and democratic outcomes (Dewey, 1963; 1916; Freire, 1996) through problem-based learning and constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978). In particular, arts-based pedagogies have been actively explored to enhance this inclusivity in education, especially within cross-cultural and multilingual education settings (Phipps, 2010). These include the role of music as a tool for cross-community engagement and community-based multicultural communication (Tordzro,2019; Tordzro &

Phipps, 2016; Odena, 2018). Other art-based, non-verbal pedagogies, such as wordless narratives, explore using pictures and drawings (Arizpe et al., 2015). Calling them a space for soul expression, Arizpe et al. (2015) urge to give the non-verbal means of multicultural and multilingual communication more prominence for achieving a more power-balanced multicultural, inclusive education (see also: hooks, 2015; 2003; Frimberger, 2017 on importance of performative approaches to address experiences of epistemological violence, cultural and linguistic exclusion; Phipps et al., 2020). These inclusive and critical frameworks in education have been supported by developments in educational leadership, with Dimmock (2020) emphasising an emergence of a novel phenomenon aimed at global knowledge construction. Highlighting the field's major challenges in developing an inclusive paradigm that encompasses the diversity of international policies and perspectives in education, Dimmock (2020) underlines the significant obstacles plaguing the aim, including the ongoing cultural disjunctions, limited cross-cultural connectivity and often minimal awareness of local (peripheral) educational embeddedness by the leading metropole. Nevertheless, despite their progressive and democratic underpinnings, these approaches often interpret inclusion as a mere add-on to the established knowledge structures (Gale et al. 2017).

The second approach to counter-narrate the WEIRD hegemony is based on decolonisation and the subsequent creation of the 'southern theory' that replaces the colonial epistemological tradition in education. According to Bhrambra et al. (2018), the decolonisation of education is needed, including its structures, curricula, pedagogies and research methods. This is consonant with Smith (2012), who, while arguing from the point of the discriminated, highlights the alienating and disconnecting experiences of such education and research, particularly

when considering the needs of local (peripheral) communities. Among many, Smith (2012) emphasises that the current metropole-hegemony-centred education tends to provide only one way out of local (peripheral) communities, draining them of their much-needed talent and preventing thriving. However, it must be highlighted that the decolonial stances, necessary as they are, are not devoid of exclusivity and its concomitant discrimination practices, as both originated in the Kantian and Marxist philosophies. Not recognising the limitations of such metropole-periphery power relations traps the educational discourse within the hegemonic duality of 'rest vs the west' and 'us vs them' (Mignolo, 2011).

2020 digital shock

Although not new, these bubbling tensions in the design, delivery and conceptualisation of education have especially come to the surface during the global shutdown due to the SARS-Cov-2 (Covid-19) pandemic of 2020-2022. Similarly, the digitalisation of services, including education, has been ongoing for decades (Schmidt & Cohen, 2013). Yet, the 2020 digital shock brought structural changes of 'biblical proportions (…) dissolving the world as we know it' (Schwab & Malleret, 2020: 12; see also: Schwab & Malleret, 2021). Characterised by unprecedented complexity, velocity, scope and impact, interconnecting physical, biological and virtual aspects, this digital shock altered the structures of societies globally at an exponential rate. Indeed, according to Check Point Software Security Report (2021), the pandemic accelerated digitalisation across the service and education sectors such that previous decades of change occurred in the year 2020 alone. The rapid mushrooming of smart cities and smart nations looms on the near horizon, with the speed and sheer scale of changes ahead having no historical precedent.

The implications of this digital revolution are still to be identified and assessed. At first glance, the impact has 'dramatically exacerbated pre-existing dangers that we have failed to confront adequately before' (Schwab & Malleret, 2020, p 15). In this context, education systems, and their underpinning WEIRD values, are still barely considered and get limited recognition. Approximately a century ago, Pressey (1924, c.f. Petrina 2004, p 305) noted that 'there must be an industrial revolution in Education', to radically reorganise understanding, content and method and 'to modernize the inefficient and clumsy procedures of conventional education'. AI is being actively applied with this goal in mind, yet the extent to which this occurs through the lens of WEIRD colonial attitudes and values is unclear. The role and impact of AI applications such as face and emotion-detection software and algorithms for mass surveillance and social credit scores (Wakefield, 2021) also raise concerns. Emphasising these alarming trends, the European Commission Report (Breque et al., 2021) urges for recognition of 'societal goals beyond technological efficiency' as the key to developing new service models, including education, of multilocal, multicultural and multilingual characteristics (see also: OECD Report on the *Future of Education*, 2018). According to UNESCO (2021, online):

> 'Without consensus around a normative vision for education in post-pandemic economy and society, the fundamental innovation in content and delivery has remained limited. Clearly defining quality learning in the Fourth Industrial Revolution is thus an important first step in setting the direction of innovation in education and reviving it as a pathway to social mobility and inclusion in the future'.

Dede and Richards (2020) responded to this vision by proposing the 60-year curriculum as a new conceptualisation of the process of education, shifting its understanding from the one-off experience into a life-long venture characterised by the multiplicity of equally valid entries and exits, enabling adaptation to the quickly evolving job market. In particular, the authors highlight the aspect of *unlearning*, that they insist on becoming as significant as the learning itself (Dede & Richards, 2020). The impact of AI on education has also been recognised by Jemielniak and Przegalińska (2020), who emphasise the role of technology-mediated group cooperation in creating a more equitable economy. This is an important area of study, with Lund et al. (2021, p 1) emphasising its growing significance in light of post-Covid-19 trends, including remote work and virtual interactions, e-commerce, digital, digital transactions and deployment of automation and AI'. Yet, technology-enhanced collaborative societies have already been vastly studied, including the network society (Castells, 1996; 2001), transnationalism (Basch et al., 1994; Smith & Guarnizo, 1998; Vertovec, 2010; 2008; see also: Glick-Shiller et al., 1992), superdiversity (Vertovec, 2019; 2017; 2007), and the 'CODE' approaches addressing collaborative ownership within the digital industry (Ghosh, 2005). In this context, the technology-enhanced ways of collaboration, as Fadel et al. (2015) insist, are neither a solution nor an end in itself but rather a set of tools to improve the speed and scale of cooperation and business as usual.

Hence, merely letting loose the unprecedented scale and the speed of AI-enhanced cooperation within the rarely challenged WEIRD hegemonic praxis may result in an unparalleled replication of discriminatory outcomes, reproduced at scale and speed unmet before (see also: Curtis et al., 2022). Tordzro (c.f. Tordzro & Ndeke, 2020,

p190) alludes to aspects of this in his poem, *Motion From The Notion*

> […]
> We have been included
> Yet we are not embraced
> […]
> We have been invited
> Yet not welcomed
> […]
> Where food is wasted
> Abundances in dichotomy
> With Scarcity
> We are in motion from a notion
> Of inclusivity into embracing us
> We are unstuck
> Beware!

In his work, Tordzro (c.f. Tordzro & Ndeke, 2020) acknowledges the existence of the *'self-replication'* of degeneration. AI algorithms have the potential to super-charge this by enabling a rapid reproduction of hegemony and re-emergence of neo-colonial values and attitudes, reflected in discriminatory and silencing practices on a mass scale worldwide. Hence, reimagining education beyond the WEIRD paradigm in the form of constellations of harmonious co-existence and loving kindness ecosystems is a crucial step towards developing counter-hegemonic praxis for education in the age of AI.

Harmonious co-existence and loving kindness

Berberich et al. (2020) promote embraced and harmonious co-existence with oneself, others and the natural environment. This is consonant with recent reports by the European Commission (2022), emphasising humanity's triple imperative to protect, prepare and transform, and

the UNESCO (2021) report urging a new social contract for education in the face of danger to humanity and the planet Earth. Inspired by this, we propose *smart educational ecosystems of dependence and support* (SEEDS) to encode complex networks of knowledges and value systems for peaceful and harmonious planetary coexistence. The need for this kind of approach has been emphasised by many, including the American Association of Colleges and Universities (Nair & Henning, 2017, online), highlighting the necessity to 'critically engage with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies and their implications for people's lives and the [E]arth's sustainability'. The planetary harmonious outlook has also been highlighted throughout the work of Mazzucato (2018, p 806; 2016), underlining the much-needed redirection from a human-centric perspective to create a 'fundamental knowledge about the nature and behaviour of living systems'. Quoting the US national agencies' strategic missions, including that of NASA, Mazzucato (2018, p 806) underlines their focus on 'the need to drive advances in science, technology (…) to enhance (…) stewardship of Earth'. In this context, it is worth noting that the knowledge and traditions of the First Nations of the Americas and Australia, as well as across Africa, embrace harmonious co-existence and planetary outlook within the structurally complete and holistic manner of their traditional way of life. Indeed, the Hawaii and Pacific Islanders embrace the need for '*Malama* – Taking Care', in particular, of '*Malama Honua* – taking care of the Earth', through the '*Ike* – Knowledge, *Po'okela* – the Pursuit of Excellence, *Kuleana* – Rights and Responsibilities', and especially, '*Pono* – Acting in a Balanced [sustainable] Way', through '*Aloha* – the Loving Kindness' (c.f. Herman, 2014, online).

Other aspects, such as ethics, fairness and mutual recognition and respect, are highlighted within the

knowledge systems of First Nations of South America, including the concept of *Pacta-Pacta*, denoting a collective democracy, active participation and ethical relationship-building among the equals (Pacari, c.f. Mignolo 2011). According to Pacari (c.f. Mignolo, 2011, p 334, see also: Pacari, 1996), a Quechua lawyer, politician, and a judge of the Constitutional Court of Ecuador, this act of 'recognition and equal embracement of the cultural codes of [all] nations' political and economic philosophies that guide local livings, thoughts, and aims is of critical importance to carry the epistemic freedom' (c.f. Mignolo, 2011, p 335). These concepts are also interwoven in the already-cited work of Mazzucato (2018, 2016). A London-based UCL professor of innovation economics and public value, Mazzucato (2018, p 3), coined the term *meaningful innovation*, being 'the combination of the need for embracing the sustainable directions from above while enabling the [free] bottom-up creativity and learning'. Mazzucato (2018; 2016; 2011) challenges the 'customer's preference' organisation of the value and worth systems globally, emphasising that apart from the rate, the economic growth is also characterised by the *direction dimension*, which according to Mazzucato (2018; 2016; 2011) is greater than the economic profit. The latter example has been famously explained by Jobs (1997, online) at his annual Apple Worldwide Developers Conference, stating: 'you've got to start with the customer experience, and work back to the technology – not the other way around'. Two decades later, Mazzucato (2018) challenges Jobs' (1997) profit-driven customer approach, insisting that the economic strategies must point towards harmonious embracing and sustainable directions and work back emerging technologies for these directions, not the other way around.

Her calls echo the values embedded within 'On [social] Liberty' by Mill, co-written with his lifelong friend, wife, and philosopher, Harriet Taylor Mill (2001). Mill(s) (2001, p 55) conceptualise this idea through an allegory of a 'tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides' and hence, from all perspectives. Indeed, '[they] who knows only one [hegemonic] side, know little of [the world],' Mill and Mill (2001, p 35) argue. More recently, Tordzro underlines the same principle encoded into the Ga language conceptualisation of Knowledge in his 'Story, Storying and Storytelling' (2018). *No le ye dzen*, as Tordzro (2018) explains, refers to *No* - a Thing, *Le* – to Know, *Ye* – to Be, and *Dzen* – the World, meaning: *knowing in of the world*. In this context, Tordzro (2018) highlights the role of the diversity of home languages and cultures in overcoming the WEIRD hegemony and devaluation of peripheral knowledges and values. This, however, will not happen until the education system embraces and functions by the principles of ethics. Reflecting on the value of ethics within the praxis of contemporary education, Cahn (2011, p xv) recalls a time when he was asked to deliver a lecture addressing the issue. Upon hearing the news, a faculty colleague remarked, ' it will be a short talk'. According to Cahn (2011, p 4-5), power abuse and exploitation in education are far too vast and too frequent, both through individual misconduct and collective institutional malpractice, calling them a disgrace. In the age of AI, communities' success and the planet depends on local ethical education for peaceful, harmonious co-existence and loving kindness (see also: Holmes & Porayska-Pomsta, 2022).

Conclusions

The rapidly digitalising post-pandemic humanity is becoming embedded in the global AI matrix, while the education systems worldwide stay anchored in the WEIRD

knowledge and values paradigm. The post-pandemic *digital shock of 2020*, destabilising as it was, proffers new opportunities to re-imagine education systems and to challenge their underpinning values. While AI provides humanity with a 'unique opportunity to flourish like never before', it can also become the tool of self-destruction (Tegmark, 2018, p 22). Indeed, the previous technological revolutions of the Industrial age led to disproportional abuse of power, culminating in the rise of the WEIRD, colonialism, genocides and irreversible damage to life on our planet (Mignolo, 2011; see also: Elkins, 2005; Herman, 2014). Drawing together AI researchers like Kai-Fu Lee (2018), who implicitly recognize the importance of the individual and the human heart in the AI domain, with educational researchers aligned with the philosophies of embraced and harmonious planetary co-existence, and the indigenous stakeholders worldwide would be a welcome first step away from hegemony in education.

References

Ainscow, M. (2016). Struggles for equity in education: The selected works of Mel Ainscow. London: Routledge World Library of Educationalists Series.

Akgun, S. and Greenhow, C. (2022). Artificial intelligence in education: Addressing ethical challenges in K-12 setting. AI and Ethics, 2, 431-440.

Arizpe, E., Colomer, T. and Martínez-Roldán, C. (2015). Visual journeys through wordless narratives: An international inquiry with immigrant children and the arrival. London: Bloomsbury.

Basch, L.G., Glick Schiller, L. and Szanton Blanc, C. (1994). Nations unbound: Transnational projects, postcolonial Predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states. London: Routledge.

Bhambra, G.K., Gebrial, D. and Nisancioglu K. (2018). Decolonising the university. London: Pluto Press.

Bowles, S., Gintis, H. (1976). Schooling in capitalist America: Educational reform and the contradictions of economic life. New York City: Basic Books.

Breque, M., De Nul, L. and Petridis, A. (2021). 'Industry 5.0: Towards a sustainable, human-centric and resilient European industry'. European Commission, Brussels: Directorate General for Research and Innovation.

Cahn, S.M. (2011). Saints and scamps, ethics in Academia. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Castells, M. (1996). The rise of the network society. The information age: Economy, society and culture trilogy. Oxford: Blackwell.

Castells, M. (2001). The Internet galaxy: Reflections on the Internet. business and society, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Castles, S., de Hass, H. and Miller, M.J. (2014). The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Caracciolo, D. and Mungai, A. (2009). In the spirit of Ubuntu stories of teaching and research. Transgression: Cultural Studies and Education. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Check Point Software (2021). Cybersecurity Report. Tel Aviv: Check Point Software Technologies.

Chen, J.C. (2017). Nontraditional adult learners: The neglected diversity in postsecondary education. SAGE Open, Special Collection – Innovative Teaching and Differential Instruction to Cater for Student Diversity, 7(1), 12.

Colares da Mota Neto, J. and Santana de Lima, A.R. (2020). Challenges of educational research from a decolonial perspective. Postcolonial Directions in Education, 9(2), 154-197.

Collins, P.H. (2015). Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas, Annual Review of Sociology, 41,1-20.

Collins, P.H. (1998). It's all in the family: intersections of gender, race, and nation, Hypatia, 13 (3), 62-82.

Collins, P.H. (1990). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness and the politics of Empowerment. New York City: Routledge.

Collins PH (1986). Learning from the outsider within: The sociological significance of Black feminist thought. Social Problems, 33(6), 14-32.

Connell, R.W. (2007). Southern theory: The global dynamics of knowledge in social science. Crow Nest: Allen & Unwin.

Dei, G.J.S. (2008). Indigenous knowledge studies and the next generation: Pedagogical possibilities for anti-colonial education. Australian Journal of Indigenous Education, 37 (Supplementary), 5-13.

Cooley, C.H. (2005). Social organization: A study of the larger mind. London: Transaction Publishers.

Craft, A. (2011). Creativity and education futures: Learning in a digital age. Stroke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Craft, A., Jeffrey, B., and Leibling M (Eds. 2001). Creativity in education. New York City: Continuum.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of Colour. Stanford Law Review, 43, 1241-1299.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). 'Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics University of Chicago Legal Forum, 1/8, 139-167.

Cubberley, E.P. (1919). Public Education in the United States. Retrieved from archive.org/stream/publiceducationi032029mbp/publiceducationi032029mbp_djvu.txt on 15 Oct 2019.

Curtis, C., Gillespie, N. and Lockey, S. (2022). AI-deploying organizations are key to addressing 'perfect storm' of AI risks. AI and Ethics. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/s43681-022-00163-7 on 30 October 2022.

Dede, C. and Richards, J. (2020). The 60-Year curriculum: New models for lifelong learning in the digital economy. London: Routledge.

Deloria Jr., V. (1970). We talk, you listen: New tribes, new turf. New York City: The Macmillan Company.

de Sousa Santos, B. (2014). Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide, London: Routledge.

Dewey, J. (1963). Experience and education. New York City: Collier Books.

Dewey, J. (1916). Democracy and education: An introduction into the philosophy of education. New York City: The Macmillan Company.

Dimmock, C. (2020). Connecting research and knowledge on educational leadership in the West and Asia: Adopting a cross-cultural comparative perspective. *Comparative Education,* 56(2), 257-277.

Dodgson, L. (5 Aug 2017). PhD students have double the risk of developing a psychiatric disorder than the rest of the 'highly educated' population. Business Insider UK Strategy.

Dussel, E. (1995). The invention of the Americas: Eclipse of 'the Other' and the myth of modernity. New York City: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Dussel, E. (1993). Eurocentrism and modernity: Introduction to the Frankfurt lectures. Boundary 2 (The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America), 20(3), 65-76.

Elkins, C. (2005). Britain's gulag: The brutal end of empire in Kenya, London: Pimlico.

European Commission (2022). Industry 5.0: a transformative vision for Europe. Brussels: Directorate-General for Research and Innovation.

Fadel. C., Bialik, M. and Trilling, B. (2015). Four-dimensional education: The competencies learners need to succeed. Boston: Centre for Curriculum Redesign.

Fan, S. and Taylor, M. (2019). Will AI replace us? A primer for the 21st century. London: Thames & Hudson.

Fanon, F. (2001). The wretched of the Earth, London: Penguin Books.

Fanon, F. (1986). Black skin, White masks, London: Pluto Press.

Freire, P. (1996). Pedagogy of the Oppressed, London: Penguin.

Frimberger, K. (2017). The ethics of performative approaches in intercultural education. In M. Schewe and J. Crutchfield (Eds.). Going performative in intercultural education: International contexts, theoretical perspectives and models of practice. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Retrieved from https://pure.strath.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/904 17777/Frimberger_2017_The_ethics_of_performative_ approaches_in_intercultural_education.pdf on 20 September 2019.

Foucault, M. (2002). The archaeology of knowledge, London: Psychology Press.

Gale. T., Molla, T. and Parker, S. (2017, p 7-22). The illusion of meritocracy and the audacity of elitism: Expanding the evaluative space in education. In S. Parker, N.G. Kalervo and T Gale (Eds.). Policy and inequality in education. Singapore: Springer.

Gatto, T.J. (2010). Weapons of mass instruction: A schoolteacher journey through the dark world of compulsory schooling. Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers.

Ghosh, A.R. (Ed. 2005). CODE: Collaborative ownership and the digital economy. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Glick Schiller, N., Basch, L. and Blanck Szanton, C. (1992). Towards a transnational perspective on migration: Race, class, and nationalism reconsidered. New York City: New York Academy of Science.

Goffman, E. (1990). Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity. London: Penguin.

Goffman, E. (1959). The presentation of self in everyday life. Garden City: Anchor Books.

Henrich, J., Heine, S.J. and Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. Nature, 466: 29. Retrieved from www.nature.com/articles/466029a.pdf on 30 Sept 2019.

Hendry, J. and Fitznor, L. (2012). Anthropologists, indigenous scholars and the research endeavour: Seeking bridges towards mutual respect. New York City: Routledge, Routledge Studies in Anthropology.

Herman, D. (2014). A new way for stewardship of Mother Earth: Indigeneity, Smithsonian Magazine. Retrieved from smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/new-way-stewardship-mother-earth-indigeneity-180952855/ on 07 Feb 2020.

Hobson, J. (2012). The Eurocentric conception of world Politics: Western international theory 1760-2010. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holmes, W. and Porayska-Pomsta, K. (Eds. 2022). The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in education: Practices, challenges, and debates. London: Routledge.

hooks, b. (2015). Feminism is for everybody: Passionate politics. New York City: Routledge.

hooks, b. (2003). Teaching community: A pedagogy of Hope. New York City: Routledge.

Jemielniak, D. and Przegalińska, A. (2020). Collaborative society. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Jobs, S. (1997). Apple's worldwide developers conference 1997, San Jose Convention Centre, San Jose, CA. Retrieved from superapple4ever YouTube channel youtube.com/watch?v=GnO7D5UaDig on 27 Sept 2020.

Kumordzi, D., Tordzro, G.K., Imperiale, M.G. and Benagr A. (2016). Eduketi and dokuma: Rediscovering educational principles and processes using Adaganda etymology. RM Borders Early Career Researchers' Conference, School of Performing Arts. Accra: University of Ghana.

Lee Kai Fu (2018). AI super-powers: China, Silicon Valley and new world order. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Loomba, A. (2005). *Colonialism/Postcolonialism.* London: Routledge.

Magnússon, G., Göransson, K. and Lindqvist, G. (2019). Contextualizing inclusive education in educational policy: the case of Sweden. Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy, 5(2), 67-77.

Mazzucato, M. (2018). Mission-oriented innovation policies: challenges and opportunities. Industrial and Corporate Change, 27(5), 803–815.

Mazzucato, M. (2016). From market fixing to market-creating: A new framework for innovation policy. Industry and Innovation, 23(2),140–156.

Mazzucato, M. (2011). Building the entrepreneurial state: The state has not just fixed the markets, but actively created them, Demos. Retrieved from oro.open.ac.uk/30159/1/Entrepreneurial_State_-_web.pdf on 07 Feb 2020.

Mead, G.H. (1967). Mind, self and society: From a standpoint of social behaviorist. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mill, J.S. and Taylor-Mill, H. (2001). On Liberty. Kitchener: Batoche Books Limited.

Mignolo, W. (2011). The Darker side of western modernity: Global futures, decolonial options. Durham: Duke University Press.

Mignolo, W. (2002). The geopolitics of knowledge and the colonial difference'. South Atlantic Quarterly, 101, 57-96.

Mokyr, J. (2001). The rise and fall of the factory system: technology, firms, and households since the industrial revolution. Carnegie-Rochester Conference Series on Public Policy, 55, 1-45.

Nair, I. and Henning, M. (2017). Models of global learning. Washington: Association for American Colleges & Universities eBooks.

Odena, O. (2018). Musical creativity revised: Educational foundation, practices and research. London: Routledge.

OECD Report (2018). The future of education and skills: Education 2030. The future we want. Paris: OECD Publishing. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/education/2030/E2030%20Position%20Paper%20(05.04.2018).pdf on 20 October 2020.

Pacari, N. (1996). Ecuador taking on the neoliberal agenda. NACLA Report on the Americas, 29(5), 23-32.

Petrina, S. (2004). The politics of curriculum and instructional design/theory/form: critical problems, projects, units and modules. Interchange, 35(1), 81-126.

Phipps, A. (2019). Decolonising multilingualism: Struggles to decreate. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Phipps, A. (2010). Drawing breath: creative elements and their exile from higher education. Arts and Humanities in Higher Education, 9(1), 42-53.

Phipps, A., Sithole, T., Tordzro, N.D. and Tordzro, G.K. (2020, p 183-198). English last: displaced publics and communicating multilingually as social act and art. In E. Scandrett (Ed.). Public sociology as educational practice: Challenges, dialogues and counter-publics. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

Richardson, W.J. (2018, p 231-248). Understanding Eurocentrism as a structural problem of undone science. In G.K. Bhambra, D. Gebrial and K. Nisancioglu (Eds.). Decolonising the university, London: Pluto Press.

Robinson, K. and Aronica, L. (2016). Creative schools: The grassroots revolution that's transforming education. London: Penguin.

Robinson, K. and Aronica, L. (2015). Creative schools: Revolutionising education from the ground up. London: Allen Lane.

Robinson, K. and Aronica, L. (2010). The element: How finding your passion changes everything. London: Penguin.

Russell, S.J. and Norvig, P. (2021). Artificial intelligence: A modern approach. Hoboken, NJ: Pearson.

Schmidt, E. and Cohen, J. (2013). New digital age: Reshaping the future of people, nations and businesses. London: John Murray.

Schwab, K. and Malleret, T. (2021). The great narrative. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

Schwab, K. and Malleret, T. (2020). Covid-19: The great reset. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

Schweisfurth, M. (2015a). Learner-centred education in international perspective: Whose pedagogy and for whose development? Abington: Routledge Education, Poverty and International Development.

Schweisfurth, M. (2015b). Learner-centred pedagogy: Towards a post-2015 agenda for teaching and learning. International Journal of Educational Development, 40, 259-266.

Schweisfurth, M. (2013). Learner-centred education in international perspective. Journal of International and Comparative Education, 2(1), 1-8.

Skinner, B.F. (1953). Science and human behaviour. New York City: The Free Press.

Smith, L.T. (2012). Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples. London: Zed Books Ltd.

Smith, M.P. and Guarnizo, L. E. (1998). Transnationalism from below. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Soysal, Y.N. and Strang, D. (1989). Construction of the first mass education systems in nineteenth-century Europe. Sociology of Education, 62(4), 277-288.

Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behavior. Social Science Information, 13: 65-93.

Tajfel, H. and Turner, J.C. (1979, p 7-24). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In W.G. Austin and S. Worche (Eds.). *Psychology of intergroup relations*, Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Tegmark, M. (2018). Life 3.0: Being a human in the age of Artificial Intelligence. London: Penguin Books.

Toffler, A. (1981). The third wave. London: Pan Books.

Toffler, A. (1971). Future shock. New York City: Bantam.

Tordzro, G.K. (Ed. 2019a). Funtunfunefu 'synched'. Glasgow: Meli Creatives Publishing.

Tordzro, G.K. (2019b). Azorli blewu: Ha Orchestra. Compositions.

Tordzro, G.K. (2018). Story, storying and storytelling: A reflection on documentary film, music and theatre as creative arts research practice. PhD Thesis. Glasgow: University of Glasgow.

Tordzro, G.K. (2016). Music across Borders. Documentary.

Tordzro, G.K. and Ndeke, N. (Eds. 2020). Mazungumzo ya shairi. Glasgow: AdinkraLinks Publications.

Tordzro, G.K. and Phipps, A. (2016). Broken world, broken world – the making. Theatre Production.

Uflewska, A. (2018). From nowhere to now-here: Online and offline belonging identity negotiations of millennial Poles in Glasgow, Scotland. PhD Thesis. Glasgow: University of Glasgow.

UNESCO (2021). Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education: Report from the International Commission of the Futures of Education. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. Retrieved from https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379 707.locale=en on 30 October 2022.

Vertovec, S. (2019). Talking around super-diversity. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 42(1), 125-139.

Vertovec, S. (2017). Mooring, migration milieus and complex explanations. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 40(9), 1574-1581.

Vertovec, S. (2010). Towards post-multiculturalism? Changing communities, conditions and contexts of diversity. International Social Science Journal, 61 (199), 83-95.

Vertovec, S. (2008). Transnationalism. London: Routledge.

Vertovec, S. (2007). Superdiversity and its implications. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 30, 1024-1054.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological process. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wakefield, J. (26 May 2021). AI emotion-detection software tested on Uyghurs. BBC News Technology. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-57101248 on 09 September 2021.

Wallerstein, I. (1979). The capitalist world economy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wallerstein, I. (1974). The modern world-system. New York City: Academic.

wa Thiong'o, N. (1986). Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature. London: James Currey Ltd.

wa Thiong'o, N. (1969). Homecoming: Essays on African and Caribbean literature, culture and politics. London: Heinemann.

Wilby, P. (2014). Alan Tuckett: the man who invented the adult learner. The Guardian (21 Oct 2014). Retrieved from theguardian.com/education/2014/oct/21/man-invented-adult-learner-alan-tuckett on 14 Sept 2019.

Wrey, M. (2014). Cultural sociology: An introductory reader. New York City: W.W. Norton & Company.

FREIREAN CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND THE DECOLONIZATION OF MINDS: IMPORTANCE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Ana L. Cruz*
Joachim Dorsch*

*St. Louis Community College at Meramec, United States

Abstract As an important part of U.S. higher education, community colleges provide access to post-secondary education for students commonly underrepresented in higher education and from marginalized segments of U.S. society. These students also carry with them a long history of colonization resulting in domination, oppression and exploitation. They are susceptible to conform to workforce vocational training that emphasizes rote skills acquisition and to fitting into the corporatized society as 'obedient' workers. A Freirean critical pedagogy with concepts of *conscientização, praxis,* and *questioning* can constitute an avenue for students to decolonize their minds leading to awareness of possibilities and realization of potentials. Employing a Freirean critical pedagogy can also counter workforce vocational training by developing a *critical pedagogy of work education* as envisioned by Simon, Dippo & Schenke (1991) or a *democratic vocational education* as articulated by Kincheloe (1999).

Keywords: U.S. higher education; community colleges; Paulo Freire; Freirean critical pedagogy; decolonization of minds; critical pedagogy of work; democratic vocational education

Introduction

There is still a common belief in U.S. American society that the American dream is within reach for all those who 'work hard.' What sometimes is not clear is how education, particularly higher education, fits within this context of achieving this dream. Throughout U.S. American history, higher education appears to be predominately associated with the 'well-to-do' and privileged segments of U.S. society making higher education to be perceived by many as a realm for those who can financially afford it. Although financial assistance is available for students in the U.S., steeply rising costs for post-secondary education and stagnant/declining family income result in students facing unmet needs. College affordability is pushed into crisis mode and the debt students incur to finance their education reached dramatic proportions with far-reaching societal consequences (e.g., Goldrick-Rab & Steinbaum, 2020; Goldrick-Rab, 2016). Goldrick-Rab & Steinbaum, (2020) state that "[p]aying for college challenges all but the wealthiest Americans." (p.534)

The colonizer mentality, employed to dominate and conquer those who are 'different,' spares no effort to continue the colonization in order to perpetuate status and privilege. The colonization of those who are 'different' emphasizes the need to maintain social stratification and school settings are prime agents to colonize the minds (e.g., Fanon, 1963/2004; Memmi, 1965/1991; Freire, 1970/1994; 1977/1978). Privilege and status are learned to be respected by those who are 'different' to the benefit of those in power who in turn wield their power to make decisions about schooling, curricula, standards, and educational policies. Schools streamline marginalized students through a *'language of power,'* making language an instrument that teaches conformity, obedience, docility, compliance with rules, and acceptance of

preordained roles in society. Illich (1971) posits "[s]chool is the advertising agency which makes you believe that you need the society as it is." (p.113) The 'language of power', therefore, becomes the tool to colonize the mind making all those progressing through school encapsulated within the designs and desires of those in control and power. Please note that the reference to language in this context is not centered on the national and/or official language(s) spoken in a nation or yet any languages spoken by immigrant groups, but a new form of language developed to control, intimidate and dominate. The 'language of power' is an oppressive mind-colonizing language that re-defines the meaning of words and contexts in order to subordinate individuals and to disavow dissent, a language that treats respectful disagreement as uncivility, pitting the 'civilized' against the 'uncivilized,' while creating a compliant milieu and a disengaged culture.

Paulo Freire and the critical pedagogy rooted in his work continue to be of relevance and importance, even more so today in our time of neoliberalism morphing into authoritarianism. During this year's remembrance of the 100th anniversary of Paulo Freire's birth, celebrated with this special issue of *Postcolonial Directions in Education*,[1] it is fitting to recall Giroux's (1992) statement of Freire's work and its political insights "[...] the profound and radical nature of its theory and practice as an anti-colonial and postcolonial discourse." (p. 15)

The title of this paper borrows the phrase 'Decolonization of Minds' from Paulo Freire (1977/1978,

---

[1] This article was originally invited for the Special Issue on Paulo Freire's Birth Centennial Celebration, *Postcolonial Directions in Education*, Vol. 10.2, 2021, but was inadvertently omitted.

p. 20) -- referencing Aristides Pereira[2] -- "descolonização das mentes" (translated as *decolonization of minds*; please see also Freire, 1985, p. 187). Paulo Freire, being from Brazil – a country colonized by the Portuguese -- and based on his extensive educational work in Lusophone Africa, was very aware from personal experience of colonization and its effect on people. The work of Frantz Fanon (1963/2004) and Albert Memmi (1965/1991) on colonizer and colonized already features prominently in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970/1994)[3] and his development of the oppressor/oppressed relationship. A Freirean critical pedagogy is fittingly suited to address the effects of colonization and to decolonize the mind of those exposed to long-lasting subordination, domination and oppression (e.g., Mayo, 2017).

In his book *Decolonizing the Mind* Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o uses the image of the cultural bomb to describe the impact of colonization on the minds of those who experience this colonization. According to Thiong'o (1986)

> The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves … [to] see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement […]. (p. 3)

Within U.S. higher education, specifically, it is crucial for a large number of students to shed imprinted notions of

---

[2] Aristides Pereira (1923-2011), member of the leadership (joining Amilcar Cabral) of the Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde independence movement from Portuguese rule and President of Cape Verde from 1975-1991.

[3] Freire apparently worked with a Spanish translation of The Wretched of the Earth (published in Mexico, 1965; original 1961 *Les Damnés de la Terre*) and the English translation of *Portrait du Colonisé, précédé par Portrait du Colonisateur* (1957): The Colonizer and the Colonized (1967; Beacon Press).

inferiority -- of having nowhere to go within society -- which were/are imparted over centuries continuing to the present. These students from marginalized segments of U.S. society, if provided with an opportunity for higher education, predominantly attend community colleges. It is vital for these students and their families to break the cycle of colonization and, not the least, it is critical for the survival of a substantive democracy.

The first part of this paper provides an overview of the U.S. community college, its students and its place within U.S. higher education. This is followed by a brief overview of some concepts of Freirean critical pedagogy. The last part of the paper shows the importance of applying tenets of Freirean critical pedagogy for (a) the decolonization of community college students' minds – a process that will lead to the recognition of their right to choose their educational path while fulfilling their potential – countering the legacy of subordination and sense of inferiority brought about by colonization, and (b) to develop a critical and holistic democratic vocational education, in contrast to vocational training and rote skills acquisition as emphasized in neoliberal workforce development schemes promoted by local, state and federal legislative initiatives.

The Community College within U.S. Higher Education

Higher education in the U.S. has a long history and with time there has been a continuous expansion in the number of institutions in response to societal, economic, and national security demands (historical overview provided, for example, by Thelin, 2019; Hutcheson, 2020). One major development was the growing importance of 'practical' higher education and the introduction of widespread 'agricultural' and 'mechanical' arts; this coincided with the Morrill Land Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890 that led to the establishment of state

flagship universities and the expansion of public college/university systems. The development of modern professional education (for example for law and medicine) and the demand for education of the developing middle class were other drivers in the growth of U.S. higher education. What is sometimes referred to as mass higher education started with the G.I. Bill at the end and following World War II.

A persistent theme throughout the history of U.S. higher education is exclusion and stratification. Segments of society were excluded from higher education starting with gender-based exclusion, with women not able to attain a post-secondary education; exclusion based on socio-economic status; and exclusion based on race. Separation of races, in fact, was still encoded in the Morrill Land Grant Acts (Hutcheson 2020). Exclusionary practices also led to the founding of separate institutions (e.g., women colleges; today's HBCUs -- Historically Black Colleges & Universities). Stratification in U.S. higher education at the institutional level is evident, for example community colleges are 'junior' colleges or were also referred to as 'sub-colleges;' in addition, social stratification of the student body occurs within institutions.

Community colleges, initially referred to as junior colleges, originated in Illinois in 1901 with Joliet Junior College through an agreement between Joliet High School and the University of Chicago (Cohen & Braher, 2008) with the aim to prepare students not yet ready to enter established higher education institutions, such as the University of Chicago. This is the common narrative, but the historical reality indicates that this picture may have been a bit more 'complicated' (Hutcheson, 2020). Junior colleges were designed to provide the first 2 years of a liberal arts education that would allow students to transfer to a 4-year college/university program and to

accommodate the rising number of students who sought post-secondary education. Accommodating this increase in students seeking post-secondary education resulted in an increase in the number of community colleges, most significantly in the early 1960s (Cohen & Braher, 2008; Hutcheson, 2011, 2020), with currently 1,043 institutions (936 public, 35 tribal, 72 independent) (American Association of Community Colleges, n.d.). With time, vocational education leading even to terminal 2-year associate's degrees, that qualified students for a profession, became more prominent at community colleges at the expense of its original transfer-function (in order for students to complete a 4-year bachelor's degree, they will have to transfer from a 2-year community college to a 4-year college or university). Within the U.S. higher education landscape, community colleges occupy a rather special place. They were conceptualized as open-access (non-selective) institutions of higher learning with low tuition allowing students to pursue post-secondary education (Cohen & Braher, 2008). In addition, community colleges are characterized by comprehensiveness, life-long learning, community connectedness, and teaching focus (Bahr & Gross, 2016). Significantly, community colleges provide primary access to higher education for commonly underrepresented segments of U.S. society (Bahr & Gross 2016):

- 1st-generation students
- students from low-income backgrounds
- underprepared students
- minority students
- students of non-traditional ages and circumstances.

Community colleges are clearly an integral and important component of the U.S. higher education landscape. They provide education for 39% of all U.S. undergraduate

students, and they provide post-secondary education for a large segment of a student population that is historically not represented in higher education. The average age of community college students is 27 years and a large proportion of first-generation students to attend college do so at a community college. As a matter of fact, the diversity of students at community colleges is of major significance (Table 1) – both for providing educational opportunities and enriching the classroom experience for all students as a microcosm of the larger society.

Category	Percentage
White	44
Hispanic	27
Black	12
Asian/Pacific Islander	7
Native American	1
2 or more races	4
Nonresident Alien	1
Other/Unknown	4

Table 1. U.S. community college student demographics based on Fall 2020 enrollment data (American Association of Community Colleges, n.d.)

Significantly, of the total U.S. undergraduate students, 53% of Native American, 50% of Hispanic, 40% of Black, and 36% of Asian/Pacific Islander students attend community colleges (Fall 2020 enrollment data; American Association of Community Colleges, n.d.). This implies whatever political, societal, economical forces affect community colleges will affect primarily students from segments of society who are commonly underrepresented within U.S. higher education.

U.S. community colleges readily accepted neoliberal free-market principles (e.g., Levin, 2001, 2005; Saunders, 2010; Boyd, 2011; Kroll, 2012, 2016;

Rhoades, 2012; Cruz & Dorsch, 2015). As with other institutions of higher learning – worldwide – (e.g., Slaughter & Rhoades, 2000; Giroux & Searls Giroux, 2004; Giroux, 2009; 2014; Levidov, 2005; Kumar, 2016) this adoption of free-market business-driven ideas permeates the fabric of the U.S. community colleges exacerbated by the fact of a long history of ties to the corporate world (Boyd, 2011). This neoliberal thrust is illustrated, for example, by the implementation of an auditing culture; the decrease of full-time faculty coupled with an increase in contingent faculty; the standardization of the curriculum; the growth in the number of courses emphasizing corporate values; the abandonment of shared governance and the installation of top-down management; the emphasis on skills acquisition correlated to demands from corporations; and the introduction of business language and corporate leadership structure (e.g., Saunders, 2010; Cruz & Dorsch, 2015). Reflecting on this take-over of higher education (which includes U.S. community colleges) by neoliberal philosophy Giroux (2019), for example, states that higher education institutions are "[...] willing to make the culture of business the business of education" and that "[...] education is now viewed either as a form of mass entertainment, training, or aligned to market values and dominated by the imperatives of economical exchange." (p. 12)

The COVID-19 pandemic, starting in late 2019, had a significant impact on education and students from the pre-K-12 through postsecondary education (e.g., United Nations, 2020). The pandemic-induced conversion to exclusively online education also affected U.S. community colleges which experienced a significant drop in enrollment (twice as much as experienced by U.S. 4-year colleges) (e.g., Saul, 2021), as students struggled with economic challenges, health concerns, and the digital divide when the required technology resources for

online education could not be matched by students and their families. Although all U.S. community college students were affected, the proportion of African-American, Hispanic and other minority students was especially high (e.g., Saul, 2021) with a fear that this is not just a disruption in their college education but that they might drop out completely with subsequent enormous social and economic implications.

The change in the U.S. in January 2021 from the Trump-Pence administration to the Biden-Harris administration also offered a potentially significant opportunity for U.S. community colleges. The Biden-Harris administration's proposed legislative initiative 'American Families Plan' includes $109 billion for tuition to cover two years of community college education (e.g., The White House, 2021; Jaschik, 2021). This initiative emphasizes workforce training ("American workers need and deserve additional support to build their skills, increase their earnings, remain competitive, and share in the benefits of the new economy" – The White House, 2021) and harks back to the unfunded 'American College Promise' proposal of the Obama-Biden administration in 2015 that also emphasized workforce training at U.S. community colleges (e.g., Kroll, 2016). With the Biden-Harris administration's plan, U.S. community colleges can expect an increase in student enrollment. However, with such an increase in enrollment there also needs to be the funding for additional infrastructure, support staff and instructors to align with this expected upsurge in students attending U.S. community colleges. At the moment, the Biden-Harris administration's plan for free community college education is stalled (e.g., Rogers, 2022) but may be reconsidered during the second half the administration's tenure.

Freirean Critical Pedagogy: A Pedagogy of Liberation

Considering the nature of U.S. community colleges, the spectrum of students attending community colleges and their backgrounds, and the colonizing attitudes many of these students are exposed to, critical pedagogy can play a crucial role in overcoming the disadvantageous circumstances faced by many of the students. Critical pedagogy, however, is indeed a complex notion; some scholars even go as far as stating that there are several critical pedagogies and in some countries it appears under a different name, for example as liberation pedagogy in Germany. Within the context of this paper critical pedagogy as espoused through the work of Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux is the focus; it emerged with the practical work of Paulo Freire on literacy in Northeastern Brazil and with his scholarly work starting in the early 1960s. In an effort to try to explain critical pedagogy Darder, Baltodano & Torres (2003, p. 3) have stated that critical pedagogy

- attempts to link the practice of schooling to democratic principles of society and to transformative social action.

Kincheloe (2008, p. 6-11) adds that critical pedagogy is

- grounded on the social and educational vision of justice and equality;
- constructed on the belief that education is inherently political;
- dedicated to the alleviation of human suffering.

Leystina and Woodrum (1999) approach critical pedagogy as

[...] challenges us to recognize, engage, and critique (so as to transform) any existing undemocratic social practices and institutional structures that produce and sustain inequalities and oppressive social identities and relations. (p. 2)

A Freirean critical pedagogy encompasses several salient concepts (e.g., Cruz, 2012 & 2015 -- based on Freire, 1970/1994; 1974/2005; 1998a; Freire & Faundez, 1989; Table 2).

Dialogue	Curiosity	Questioning
Love	Hope	Ethics
Conscientização	Praxis – Agency	

Table 2. Concepts of a Freirean critical pedagogy

Dialogue, the 'speaking with' and not the 'speaking to,' is essential. A dialogic and problem-posing approach to teaching also needs to involve respect between the individuals involved; it constitutes the opposite of the banking model of teaching in which prepackaged knowledge is mechanically deposited into the minds of passive students. Q*uestioning* and c*uriosity* (curiosity always driving the act of 'asking questions') are both instrumental in the generation of knowledge and both are related to the ability to think critically. Higher education institutions must provide an environment that promotes critical thinking, questioning, and critical analysis regarding the nature of knowledge. In a democratic education, students need to learn to question where knowledge is coming from, how to evaluate its quality, who produced it, how it was produced, and whose interests does it serve. This all supports a functioning democracy; authoritarianism, on the other hand, suppresses questioning for the sake of 'order.' *Love* is at the heart of freeing the oppressed and it is at

the core of teaching. Paulo Freire refers to 'armed love' as the "fighting love of those convinced of the right and the duty to fight, to denounce, and to announce" (Freire 1998b, p. 41). Central to a Freirean critical pedagogy is the concept of *conscientização*. It "[...] is the active process through which a critical understanding of the socio-political-economical circumstances is gained that enables one to actively change oppressive circumstances." (Cruz, 2013, p. 173) The concept clearly involves both the process of reaching critical awareness and the acting upon this realization which leads to a transformation of the conditions that are at the root of oppression. In the words of Paulo Freire (1972)

> Conscientization [conscientização] implies, then, that when I realize that I am oppressed, I also know I can liberate myself if I transform the concrete situation where I find myself oppressed. Obviously, I can't transform it in my head: that would be to fall into the philosophical error of thinking that awareness "creates" reality, I would be decreeing that I am free, by my mind. And yet, the structures would continue to be the same as ever – so that I wouldn't be free. No, conscientization [conscientização] implies a critical insertion into a process, it implies a historical commitment to make changes. (p. 5)

Praxis is the continuing dialectic relationship of action and reflection; action must be followed by reflection, which in turn, might lead to further action. The concept of *hope* permeates Freirean critical pedagogy and is a key to transformative education; Freire states "[...] though I know that things can get worse, I also know that I am able to intervene to improve them" (Freire 1998a, p. 53). In addition, the concept of *ethics* plays an important role in a Freirean conception of critical pedagogy; a universal

human ethic resists fatalism and the insistence that a current reality cannot be changed.

Freirean Critical Pedagogy: Emancipating Students through Decolonization and Democratic Education

U.S. community colleges provide post-secondary education to a large number of working-class students, 1st-generation college students, and African-American, Hispanic and/or indigenous students. Students from this cross section of society experienced/experience a dominant condition of social existence that is colonial "because there continues to be a structured relationship of cultural, political, and economic domination and subordination […]" (Tejeda, Espinoza & Gutierrez, 2003, p. 13). Tejeda, Espinoza and Gutierrez (2003) also employ the term internal neocolonialism to emphasize the forms of domination, oppression, and exploitation reaching to the present and experienced by these students and their families.

These marginalized students commonly underrepresented in post-secondary education enter U.S. community colleges carrying with them the attitudes, ideologies, and preconceived notions instilled through internal neocolonialism. Therefore, there is concern that these students, already imbued with predisposed lower expectations and aspirations, are made to believe that they should conform to the predetermined notions of where their place in society should be and that their only educational path is limited to vocational studies which could, consequently, inhibit these students to fulfill their inherent full potential.[4] For each individual student to

---

[4] A criticism of the U.S. community college system, voiced first in the 1970s and 80s (Karabel, 1972; Brint & Karabel, 1989; see also Brint, 2003), was that it contributes to cementing social stratification in U.S. society. In this argument, marginalized and minority student populations are force fed into

reach their potential, and ultimately for a betterment of society and strengthening of a functional democracy, a 'decolonization of the mind' is crucial. Freirean critical pedagogy with the concepts of conscientização and praxis and the emphasis on questioning (see above) can be the path to such decolonization (see also Tejeda, Espinoza & Gutierrez, 2003; Austin, 2015) that will enable students to situate themselves within society, to realize the factors that determined their societal context, and to allow them reach their full potential and to start transforming their current condition. Students can overcome colonizing attitudes and opinions and choose the educational path and career and not to conform to predetermined notions of where their place in society should be. A Freirean critical pedagogy will enable "[…] that we engage young people in the process of questioning their future identities and possibilities." (Simon, 1992, p. 122)

A decolonization of the mind does not only apply to students. Biased preconceived notions regarding the potential of students commonly underrepresented in post-secondary education held by some community college instructors and community college administrators also need to be addressed and challenged. In the same vein, policymakers at the local, regional, state, and federal level also need to be mindful that policies set into place for college education must not reinforce oppressive and neocolonial conditions. At an even more fundamental level high school guidance counselors and community college academic advisors, often the individuals students will consult for career advice, will need to be conscious of the neocolonial factors that dominate and subordinate students in order to try to counterbalance their impact. There truly is a wide and varied educational landscape that needs to be attended

---

the economic system and find their place in society by being 'channeled' into and through vocational studies (Pincus, 1980; Brint & Karabel, 1989).

to with a Freirean view of an emancipatory and liberating education that will allow students to recognize their potential and then "[...] to take their dreams for reality and define images of "that which is not yet."" (Simon, 1992, p.123)

The choice of a post-secondary education option, of course, is up to the students themselves. A segment of students will choose a career with the prospect of a well-paying job with benefits after graduation that requires following the vocational path at the community college. After all, the U.S. community college is characterized by offering a large selection of vocational programs (Bahr & Gross, 2006) and this is part of the community college identity. For a long time, community colleges are also the testing ground of the tension between the vocational *training* and vocational *education* emphasis, with the upper hand commonly with the former. The focus of federal support on workforce development supports this and maps out a continuation of the preference for training and skills acquisition at community colleges. Training for a job and rote skills acquisition constitute, following Simon, Dippo & Schenke (1991)

> [...] an approach that emphasizes the production, organization and regulation of human capacities to fit the existing social and technical relations and material conditions of the workplace. (p. 6)

and embrace

> [...] constricted schooling agendas that emphasize individual, technical, and narrow economic interests. (p. 6)

Students on the vocational path, of course, need to acquire the skills and knowledge to succeed in their chosen profession. However, this is not enough. They also need to receive a critical education that allows for, in

the words of Kincheloe (1999, p. 9), "[...] true democratic empowerment of vocational students [...]." Kincheloe (1999) refers to this as *democratic vocational education* and Simon, Dippo & Schenke (1991) and Simon (1992) describe it -- their *critical pedagogy of work education* -- as

> This is a pedagogy that begins with the premise that while students need to learn about the "realities of work" and develop marketable skills, the primary task of work education *is not* to prepare students to meet the needs of employers nor to ensure a student's immediate economic survival. We are interested in education for work and not simply training for jobs. Therefore we ask what knowledge, skills, and abilities do students need in order to understand and participate in changes that are taking place in the work world? This, we assert, is a question of cultural politics. Helping students to understand the economic, social, and cultural relations that shape their sense of what is possible and desirable influences the extent to which they are able to define an expanded range of possibilities for the future. (Simon, 1992, p. 123)

A democratic vocational education resulting in a worker educated to be an active and critical citizen within a democracy -- and able to support a substantive democracy -- and also able to understand "what democracy means in the economic sphere" (Kincheloe, 1999, p. 7), can best be employed by following the tenets of a Freirean critical pedagogy, an education for liberation not domestication (Freire, 1970/1994). This includes learning and practicing a critical literacy (Freire & Macedo, 1987) based in the social sciences, humanities, and physical sciences that allow students to

critically interrogate statements, data sources, data acquisition, etc. This exposure to critical literacy is not only important but fundamental in a post-truth era, as it would allow seeing through lies, misinformation, alternate truths, and "contempt for facts" (Arendt, 1951, p. 350). A "training to be obedient workers" (Aronowitz, 2009, p. x) and to conform without being able to ask questions is not supportive of a vibrant democracy and could lead down the path to a more authoritarian political system. U.S. community colleges must implement critical pedagogy and a democratic vocational education as it will be the path to developing the critical attitude and understanding that is necessary for a productive citizen in a truly democratic society who will be able to speak out and act against authoritarian tendencies and designs in a post-truth society.

A narrowly designed training for a specific local/regional workforce also entails the danger that many jobs and careers as defined today will no longer be available at graduation or shortly after graduation from a college program. Kroll (2012) provides examples from Michigan where a narrow certification training program designed in collaboration with local corporations left graduates stranded when the jobs for which they trained for vanished. Another consideration is that with the rapid advancement of 21st century technology the future work landscape is unknown, what current jobs will be obsolete or completely transformed, and what new jobs/careers will emerge. Students need to be educated as critical thinkers with a broad-based education -- not narrowly focused -- that will allow them to be adaptable to novel situations in the future and not require a constant return to vocational training for 'job re-training' making education not the pursuit of knowledge but a mere commodity 'sold' for training the 'obedient' worker.

Conclusions

A Freirean critical pedagogy, build on the concepts of *questioning, conscientização,* and *praxis,* is crucial for decolonizing the mind of U.S. community college students; many of these students are from segments of U.S. society commonly underrepresented within higher education and marginalized based on race, socio-economic status, and cultural backgrounds. These students face a legacy of colonization extending to the present that often results in internalization of preconceived notions of inferiority and acceptance of a place within society predetermined by those in power. A Freirean critical pedagogy can be the path to emancipation, transformation and the realization of the students' full potential. A Freirean critical pedagogy can also enable the development of a *democratic vocational education* that will reach beyond 'workforce training' emphasizing corporate-aligned narrowly-focused rote skills acquisition. If a vocational path becomes a true choice for interested students, it must be a democratic vocational education. A democratic vocational education based on Freirean critical pedagogy concepts constitutes a solid avenue to foster professionally competent, critical and politically literate citizens who can be supportive of a substantive democracy in a post-truth era. It is only by engaging citizens with their own humanity, their need for freedom, and the possibility of a renewed historical context that the decolonization of minds as a process can take place. As Paulo Freire (1985) stated "[w]e need to decolonize the mind because if we do not, our thinking will be in conflict with the new context evolving from the struggle for freedom." (p. 187)

References

American Association of Community Colleges (n.d.). *About community colleges.* Retrieved from http://www.aacc.nche.edu/research-trends/fast-facts (September 30, 2022).

Arendt, H. (1951). *The origins of totalitarianism.* New York: Schocken Books.

Aronowitz, S. (2009). Foreword. In: S.L. Macrine (Ed.). *Critical Pedagogy in uncertain times – Hope and possibilities.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Austin, J. (2015). Decolonizing ways of knowing: Communion, conversion, and conscientization. In M.A. Peters and T. Besley (Eds.). *Paulo Freire: The Global Legacy.* New York: Peter Lang.

Bahr, P.R. and Gross, J.L. (2016). Community colleges. In M.N. Bastedo, P.G. Altbach and P.J. Gumport (Eds.). *American higher education in the 21st century* (4th ed.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Boyd, S.H. (2011). The spread of neoliberalism in US community colleges: TQM accreditation, "consumers," and corporate sponsored non-profits. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, *9*(1), 242-266.

Brint, S. (2003). Few remaining dreams: Community colleges since 1985. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 586*(1), 16-37.

Brint, S. and Karabel, J. (1989). *The diverted dream: Community colleges and the promise of educational opportunity in America, 1900-1950.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, A.M. and Brawer, F.B. (2008). *The American community college* (5th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cruz, A.L. (2012). A global culture of questioning to confront neoliberalism: Henry Giroux's clarion call for collective agency to sustain a substantive democracy. *Aula de Encuentro, N° Especial* (Junio), p. 69-79.

Cruz, A.L. (2013). Paulo Freire's concept of conscientização. In R. Lake and T. Kress (Eds.). *Paulo Freire's intellectual roots - Toward historicity in praxis*. New York: Bloomsbury.

Cruz, A.L. (2015). From practice to theory & from theory to praxis: A journey with Paulo Freire. In B.J. Porfilio and D.R. Ford (Eds.). *Leaders in critical pedagogy: Narratives for understanding and solidarity*. Rotterdam: Sense.

Cruz, A.L. & Dorsch, J. (2015). The pervasive influence of neoliberal ideology on U.S. community colleges and a Freirean view on "Reclaiming the American Dream." In M. Abendroth and B.J. Porfilio (Eds.). *Understanding neoliberal rule in higher education: Educational fronts for local and global justice, Volume II*. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing.

Darder, A., Baltodano, M. and Torres, R.D. (2003). Critical pedagogy: An introduction. In A. Darder, M. Baltodano and R.D. Torres (Eds.). *The critical pedagogy reader (3rd ed.)*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Fanon, F. (1963/2004). *The wretched of the earth*. New York: Grove Press.

Freire, P. (1970/1994). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1972). Conscientizing as a way of liberating. In Anonymous (Ed.). *Paulo Freire. The LADOC "Keyhole" Series 1.* Washington: USCC Division for Latin America.

Freire, P. (1974/2005). *Education for critical consciousness.* New York: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1977/1978). *Cartas à Guiné-Bissau: Registros de uma experiência em processo.* Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.

Freire, P. (1985). The politics of education: Culture, power and liberation. Westport: Bergin & Garvey.

Freire, P. (1998a). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy and civic courage.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Freire, P. (1998b). *Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare teach.* Boulder: Westview Press.

Freire, P. and Faundez, A. (1989). *Learning to question – a pedagogy of liberation.* New York: Continuum.

Freire, P. and Macedo, D. (1987). *Literacy: Reading the word and the world.* Westport: Bergin & Garvey.

Giroux, H.A. (1992). Paulo Freire and the politics of postcolonialism. *JAC: A Journal of Advanced Composition, 12*(1), 15-26.

Giroux, H.A. (2009). Democracy's nemesis – The rise of the corporate university. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies, 9*(5), 669-695.

Giroux, H.A. (2014). *Neoliberalism's war on higher education.* Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Giroux, H.A. (2019). Authoritarianism and the challenge of higher education in the age of Trump. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education, 18*(1), 6-25.

Giroux, H.A. and Searls Giroux (2004). *Take back higher education: Race, youth, and the crisis of democracy in the post-civil rights era.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Goldrick-Rab, S. (2016). *Paying the price: College costs, financial aid, and the betrayal of the American dream.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Goldrick-Rab, S. and Steinbaum, M. (2016). What is the problem with student debt. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 39*(2), 534-540.

Hutcheson, P. (2011). Goals for United States higher education: From democracy to globalization. *History of Education, 40*(1), 45-57.

Hutcheson, P.A. (2020). *A people's history of American higher education.* New York: Routledge.

Illich, I. (1971/2002). *Deschooling society.* New York: Marion Boyars Publishers.

Jaschik, S. (2021). Biden proposes free community college in $1.8 trillion plan. Inside Higher Ed. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/04/28/ biden-proposes-free-community-college-18-trillion- plan (April 30, 2021).

Karabel, J. (1972). Community colleges and social stratification. *Harvard Educational Review, 42*(4), 521- 562.

Kincheloe, J.L. (1999). *How do we tell the workers? The socioeconomic foundations of work and vocational education.* Boulder: Westview Press.

Kincheloe, J.L. (2008). *Critical pedagogy primer (2nd ed.).* New York: Peter Lang.

Kroll, K. (2012). Teaching in the commercialized community college. *Radical Teacher, 93*(Spring), 12-21.

Kroll, K. (2016). The commercialization of the community college. In J.L. DeVitis and P.A. Sasso (Eds.). *Higher education and society.* New York: Peter Lang.

Kumar, R. (Ed.) (2016). *Neoliberalism, critical pedagogy and education.* New York: Routledge.

Leistyna, P. and Woodrum, A. (1999). Context and culture: What is critical pedagogy? In P. Leistyna, A. Woodrum and S.A. Sherblom (Eds.). *Breaking free: The transformative power of critical pedagogy.* Cambridge: Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series No. 27.

Levidov, L. (2005). Neoliberal agendas for higher education. In A. Saad-Filho and D. Johnston (Eds.) *Neoliberalism: A critical reader.* London: Pluto Press.

Levin, J.S. (2001). Public policy, community colleges, and the path to globalization. *Higher Education, 42,* 237-262.

Levin, J.S. (2005). The business culture of the community college: Students as consumers, students as commodities. *New Directions for Higher Education, 129,* 11-26.

Mayo, P. (2017). Twentieth anniversary of Paulo Freire's death (1997-2017): Freire's relevance for understanding colonialism. *Postcolonial Directions in Education, 6*(2), 183-192.

Memmi, A. (1965/1991). *The colonizer and the colonized.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Pincus, F.L. (1980). The false promises of community colleges: Class conflict and vocational education. *Harvard Educational Review, 50*(3), 332-361.

Rhoades, G. (2012). Closing the door, increasing the gap: Who's not going to (community) college? Center for the Future of Higher Education Policy Report #1. Retrieved from http://knowledgecenter.completionbydesign.org/sites/default/files/368%20Rhoades%202012.pdf (March 15, 2021).

Rogers, K. (2022). Free community college is off the table, Jill Biden says. The New York Times. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/07/us/politics/jill-biden-free-community-college.html (August 15, 2022).

Saul, S. (2021). The pandemic hit the working class hard. The colleges that serve them are hurting, too. The New York Times. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/covid-19-colleges.html (April 30, 2021).

Saunders, D.B. (2010). Neoliberal ideology and public higher education in the United States. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, 8*(1), 42-77.

Simon, R.I. (1992). *Teaching against the grain: Texts for a pedagogy of possibility.* New York: Bergin & Garvey.

Simon, R.I., Dippo, D. and Schenke, A. (1991). *Learning work: A critical pedagogy of work education.* New York: Bergin & Garvey.

Slaughter, S. and Rhoades, G. (2000). The neoliberal university. *New Labor Forum, 6,* 73-79.

Tejeda, C., Espinoza, M. and Gutierrez, K. (2003). Toward a decolonizing pedagogy: Social justice reconsidered. In P.P. Trifonas (Ed.) *Pedagogies of difference.* New York: Routledge.

The White House (2021). Fact sheet: The American Families Plan. Retrieved from https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/28/fact-sheet-the-american-families-plan/ (April 28, 2021).

Thelin, J.R. (2019). *A history of American higher education (3rd ed.).* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ wa (1986/2005). *Decolonizing the mind: The politics of language in African literature.* Woodbridge: James Currey.

United Nations (2020). *Education during COVID-19 and beyond.* United Nations Sustainable Development Group, Policy Brief. Retrieved from https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-education-during-covid-19-and-beyond (February 4, 2021).

POSTCOLONIALISM AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN SMALL ISLAND STATES: INTERNATIONAL INSIGHTS

Anna Baldacchino
University of Malta

Abstract Inspired by postcolonial theory, islands studies, and small state studies, this paper reviews some of the impacts of colonialism on early childhood education in small island states. Its arguments are fleshed out from the analysis of responses to an online questionnaire sent out in 2016 and to which replies from 64 respondents were received, with at least one respondent from each of the world's 27 small island states (with populations of one million or less).

The research findings are suggestive of a colonial lingering in early childhood education in these jurisdictions. Manifestations of this include: the use of standard English as the language of instruction; a top-down pedagogy that obliges an early start to schooling; a strong focus on literacy and numeracy in the early years; and restrictions in play-based learning.

Being a small island state has its challenges. Findings from this study suggest that: role multiplicity, lack of expertise and training; and scarce resources are impacting on the pedagogy and practices of early childhood education in such countries. Recommendations include: the provision of adequate funding and training; support and mentoring when implementing new early years polices; stronger recognition for both local and global

languages; and having early childhood education within the purview of the Ministry responsible for Education to enhance standardisation in this sector.

Sommarju   Imnebbaħ minn tejoriji postkolonjali, mill-istudju tal-gżejjer u mill-istudju tal-istati żgħar, dan l-artiklu jeżamina kif il-kolonjaliżmu ħalla l-impatt tiegħu fuq l-edukazzjoni tas-snin bikrin fi stati żgħar li huma ukoll gżejjer. L-argumenti f'dan l-artiklu oriġinaw minn analiżi li saret fuq it-twegibiet għall-kwestjonarju li sar *online,* mibgħut lil madwar mitt persuna mis-27 stati żgħar li huma ukoll gżejjer madwar id-dinja (b'popolazzjoni ta' miljun ċittadin jew inqas). Erba' u sittin persuna wieġbu dan il-kwestjonarju, b'tal-inqas persuna waħda minn kull stat żgħir li huwa wkoll gżira jew arċipelagu.

Ir-riżultati ta' din ir-riċerka jissuġerixxu legat kolonjali fuq l-edukazzjoni tas-snin bikrin f'dawn il-pajjiżi. Dan id-dell tqil jidher b'mod speċjali: fl-użu tal-Ingliż bħala lingwa tat-tagħlim; f'l-istil ta' tagħlim impost minn fuq li jobbliga li tfal minn eta' żgħira jiġu mħejjija għall-iskola; f'emfasi qawwija fuq il-qari u n-numri fis-snin bikrin; u fi xkiel u ostakli fejn jidħol it-tagħmil permezz tal-logħob.

Li tkun stat żgħir u gżira jġib miegħu diversi sfidi. Dan l-istudju jagħraf kif: ċittadini jkollhom jilbsu iktar minn kappell wieħed fuq il-post tax-xogħol; hemm nuqqas ta' esperti u taħriġ fil-qasam tas-snin bikrin; u hemm nuqqas ta' riżorsi meħtieġa li qed iħallu impatt hazin fuq il-pedagoġija u l-prattiċi tal-edukazzjoni tas-snin bikrin f'dawn il-pajjiżi.

Rakkomandazzjonijiet li ħargu minn dan l-istudju jinkuldu: proviżjoni ta' fondi adekwati għat-taħriġ, appoġġ u moniteraġġ tal-għalliema meta jkunu ser jiġu mwettqa politiki ġodda; li sew il-lingwa lokali kif ukoll dik globali tiġi rrispettata u użata fl-anbjenti edukattivi; u li l-edukazzjoni tas-snin bikrin tkun taħt l-awspisju tal-Ministeru responsabbli għall-Edukazzjoni (u mhux, per eżempju, tas-servizzi soċjali) biex b'hekk ikun hemm iktar standardizzar fis-settur.

Kliem importanti: kolonjaliżmu, edukazzjoni fis-snin bikrin, bilingwaliżmu; postkolonjaliżmu, stati żgħar li huma ukoll gżejjer.

Introduction

This paper offers a rare comparative (albeit indicative) glimpse of the situation of early childhood education (ECE) in the world's 27 small island states (SIS). In particular, it examines the extent to which colonialism may have impacted the pedagogy practised in kindergarten and early years settings located in SIS. It hopes to contribute new knowledge to address a gap in postcolonial literature with regards to ECE in SIS (Baldacchino, A., 2019). The impact of colonialism is demonstrably manifest at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education (e.g. Crossley and Tikly, 2004; Hickling-Hudson, 2006; Jules, 2012; Sultana, 2006). Colonialism, and its legacy, would also have impacted ECE in SIS (Nieuwenhuys, 2013; Viruru, 2005b); however, there is scant literature to document this practice.

The doctoral study on which this paper is based, is inspired by postcolonial theory, island studies and small state studies. It sought to answer the following research questions: (1) What elements influence the pedagogy and practice of early childhood education (2 to 5-year-olds) in small island states? (2) What impact, if any, has

colonialism had on early childhood education in small island states, and how is that impact manifested in the current postcolonial epoch?

Data was collected from in-depth case studies of ECE settings: 2 in Malta and 2 in Granada. The author resides in Malta and chose Granada due to particular similarities with Malta in terms of land area and their common histories as British Colonies. The methodology used to collect such data included a mixed method approach consisting of: (1) twelve interviews with educators; (2) four focus groups with parents; (3) fieldnotes and observations; (4) a research journal; and (5) an online questionnaire.

This paper focuses on the replies to this fifth component: an online questionnaire which was sent out to 100 persons residing in the 27 SIS around the world, defined as countries with a resident population of up to one million (Atchoarena, et al., 2008) (see Table 1 & Map 1). Sixty-four individuals responded to the questionnaire. This included at least one individual from each of the 27 countries in the reckoning. This is by no means a representative study; but it is possibly the first of its kind and the ensuing data and its critical analysis hopefully offers a glimpse as to how ECE in SIS is shaped, also because of the colonial legacy that remains ingrained in the cultures and protocols of such small island states.

Caribbean Sea	Pacific Ocean	Indian Ocean	Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea
Antigua & Barbuda (UK)	Federated States of Micronesia (US)	Comoros (F)	Cape Verde (P)
Bahamas (UK)	Fiji Islands (UK)	Maldives (UK)	Cyprus (UK)
Barbados (UK)	Kiribati (UK)	Seychelles (UK)	Iceland (D)
Dominica (UK)	Marshall Islands (US)		Malta (UK)
Grenada (UK)	Nauru (UK)		São Tomé & Príncipe (P)
St Kitts – Nevis (UK)	Palau (US)		
St Lucia (UK)	Samoa (UK)		
St Vincent & the Grenadines (UK)	Solomon Islands (UK)		
	Tonga (UK)		
	Tuvalu (UK)		
	Vanuatu (UK/F)		

Table 1: Small island states with a resident population of less than a million

Note: The former colonial power/s is/are in brackets: UK – United Kingdom; P – Portugal; F – France; US – United States; D – Denmark
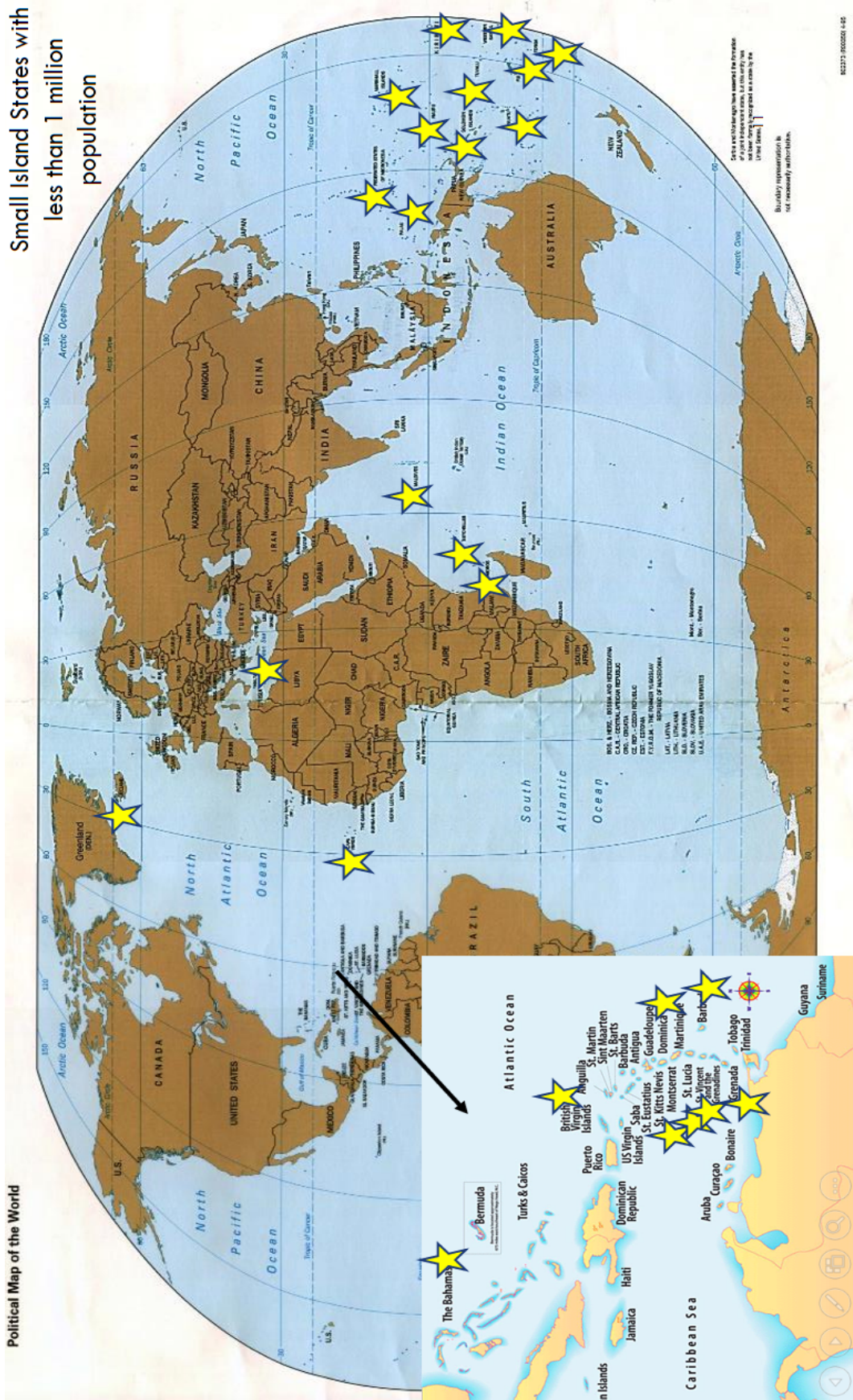
Map 1 – **Political Map of the World (2000) using Robertson Projection, with locations of 27 small island states added in by author.**

Postcolonialism and small island states

Postcolonial theory suggests that colonial impacts may linger in a country long after it secures its political independence. In spite of how sovereignty provides a clear political break with the past, one cannot separate the 'past' so easily from the 'present' (Bhabha, 1994): the impact on cultural, economic, political and educational issues can persist, long after the demise of colonial rule (Baldacchino, 2010). Thus, 'postcolonialism' is being used here to account for processes of domination that have their origins in European (and subsequently US) colonisation, but which "extend beyond the period of direct colonisation to take on new forms, notably those of neo-colonialism, dependency and the intensification of globalisation" (Hickling-Hudson & Mayo, 2012, p. 2).

SIS loom large as locales that have borne the brunt of colonisation. They are "products of a European maritime culture of the last five centuries" which have also, amongst all colonies, "retained colonial links longer" (Caldwell, Harrison and Quiggin, 1980, pp. 954, 960). These states are amongst the earliest European colonies; and among the last of these to gain independence.

This colonial impact has left its mark on early childhood education (Baldacchino, A., 2019). Colonial education systems have effectively dispensed a particular form of education, along with its accompanying disciplinary framework (Burton, 2012;). Baldacchino, A. and Baldacchino, G. (2017, p. 3) argue that: "it is the formal, post-16 educational sector in small island states that continues to steal the research limelight", even though current research emphasises the importance of the early years as pivotal in the formation and development of later learning (Howard-Jones, et al. 2016).

Impacts of Colonialism on Education

The implications of the impact of colonialism on education in SIS are various. And yet, Tarc (2009, p. 195) warns us that: "Postcolonial studies are slow to come to education, in part because postcolonial studies threaten to undo education, to unravel the passionately held-onto thought and knowledge of the modern Western-educated student and scholar". We are dealing with a sensitive topic here.

SIS exist in a co-dependent world, and most function within the influence and shadow of a long colonial past. Their governments struggle with limited human resources and the challenges of scale, while continuing to aspire to higher standards of living, themselves often based on Western canons of 'development' (Bray, 1991) which, in themselves, often seek to produce moral citizens suitable for the maintenance of bourgeois democracy (Burman, 2016, Chapter 14). The "education systems [in SIS] are structured according to familiar patterns, with pre-primary education at the base and higher education at the apex" (*ibid.*, p. 16) adopted from their colonisers' educational models. SIS are also usually heavily dependent on foreign trade. This may in turn influence the structure of the education system, in that people may be required to learn foreign languages, sometimes to the detriment of local ones. In fact, many small countries continue to impose the language of the erstwhile coloniser within education systems. The long impact of colonialism in SIS has included the steady mainstreaming of the colonial language among the local population, particularly those interested in social and occupational mobility and in finding work with the colonial administration (Talib, 2002).

Research offers some glimpses into the impact of colonialism on very young children in developing countries (Omar, 2012). Gupta's (2015) research in postcolonial urban India shows how "philosophical and pedagogical

boundaries that are defined by diverse cultures and ideologies might be navigated in the practical implementation of an early childhood curriculum" (p. 260). Her research highlights a "complex and multifaceted curriculum" (p. 261), influenced by various cultural, historical and social elements. These include: a curriculum based on ancient Indian beliefs mixed with elements adopted from Euro-American education; and "a highly structured academic curriculum mandated by the government and historically rooted in the educational policies of the British colonial administration" (*ibid.*, p. 261).

Another study analyses the bicultural early childhood curriculum framework in New Zealand known as Te Whāriki and how this seeks a balance between Indigenous culture, neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism in ECE (Tesar, 2015). The author proposes Te Whāriki as an example of how local *and* global economic and market pointers can shape national ECE policy.

Narrowing the search specifically to SIS, two scholarly articles stand out. Viruru (2005a, p. 8) discusses how, in spite of the influential nature of the idea that mediated postcolonialism has significant consequences on young children's lives, the literature only talks about a "slight if any impact on the field of early childhood as an academic discipline and even less on the daily practices of early childhood educators". She suggests that the idea of colonialism has been mainly modelled on specific authoritative and oppressive models of child rearing. Some prevailing principles of how children allegedly grow, learn and develop have become "another of colonialism's truths that permit no questioning, and that are imposed unhesitatingly upon people around the world [allegedly] for their own good" (*ibid.*, p. 16).

Nieuwenhuys (2013) contends that the backbone of the drive to colonise was formed by the idea that Caucasians were the chosen ones, pre-ordained to subjugate darker skinned people in faraway countries. The ongoing belief was that of a "civilising mission" (*ibid.,* p. 4): the colonised needed to be rescued and educated about and from their "alleged abuses, such as child marriages and infanticide, that primitive or oriental men would visit upon children (and women)" (*ibid.*). No wonder that Christian missionaries were an integral component of this initiative; and that schooling in small island colonies was often "... knowledge production that was entirely under the control of missionaries" (Campbell, 2006, p. 195). Nieuwenhuys adds that "colonialism and childhood are inseparably harnessed together for interpreting human life as a trajectory leading towards increasing and endless perfectibility" (p. 5). It was only when both the child and the colonised could be seen as "vulnerable, passive and irrational" beings that the educated colonisers could justify the implementation of their noble cause (Nieuwenhuys, 2013, p. 5).

Clearly, the impacts of colonialism, tangible and intangible, run deep in formerly colonised countries. They may run even deeper in SIS.

Methodology

As mentioned previously, one method of data collection used for this study was an online questionnaire, aimed at collecting a wider view about the elements that might influence ECE in SIS. Online questionnaires have a number of advantages over structured interviews. These include: "cost, speed, appearance, flexibility, functionality and usability" (Lumsden, 2005, p. 1; Murthy, 2008). The questionnaire in this study, set up with Google Sheets, was intended to reach individuals residing in the 27

countries that fit the SIS definition. Bryman, Teevan and Bell (2009, p. 71) contend that: "…[a] questionnaire is especially advantageous if a sample is geographically dispersed". Murthy (2008) agrees that online questionnaires can reach global respondents when it would not otherwise be practical, timely or affordable to reach such respondents via conventional snail mail.

The questionnaire consisted of three open-ended and 13 close-ended questions. This instrument was included in the research design to secure a broader picture of what residents in SIS thought about ECE, particularly from respondents who would be directly involved in the education sector.

After securing ethics clearance, the questionnaire was made available between August and December 2016, through the list-serve of the International Small Islands Studies Association (ISISA) - of which the author of this paper is a (text withheld) - to various individuals who reside and/or work in these 27 SIS. An email together with the link to the questionnaire was sent to those who welcomed the invitation. The survey tool was prefaced with a letter of informed consent. Answers were received during the same period.

Data Analysis

Since the questionnaires consisted of both close and open-ended questions; different methods of analysis were used. Microsoft Excel ©® graphs helped analyse the results of the close-ended questions. NVivo 11 ©® software was used to help code the responses to the three open-ended questions. Following a formalised computer procedure enhanced the trustworthiness and quality of the findings (Sinkovics, Penz and Ghauri, 2008).

Sixty-four individuals from all 27 small island states replied to the online questionnaire. The largest cohort was aged 41-55 (43%); followed by the 25-40 (36%) and the 55-and-over (21%). No participants were less than 24 years of age.

The occupations of respondents were varied but tended to deal mostly with education. These included: teachers, lecturers, early childhood educators and kindergarten assistants; school principals and private early childhood settings' directors; social workers, a communication officer, education officers, and consultants. This diversity served to reach a broader circle of individuals; while some of the respondents were not educators, they were nevertheless likely to have an awareness of the ECE sector in their country, given their background and their willingness to answer the questionnaire.

Findings

Ministry responsible for early childhood education

In some countries, ECE, especially for the 0-3 years age bracket, does not form part of the portfolio of the Ministry responsible for Education. Being placed within the remit of a ministry responsible for social policy or social services, suggests that childcare (and in some cases even kindergarten) is seen as a social benefit or service, rather than mainly having an educational value: this was a conclusion reached from a review of ECE in twenty countries (Felfe and Lalive, 2018).

Respondents to the online questionnaire were asked which Ministry in their country was responsible for ECE in the two age brackets of 0-3 and 3-5-year-old children respectively. Participants from all 27 SIS responded to both questions (Figures 1 and 2):
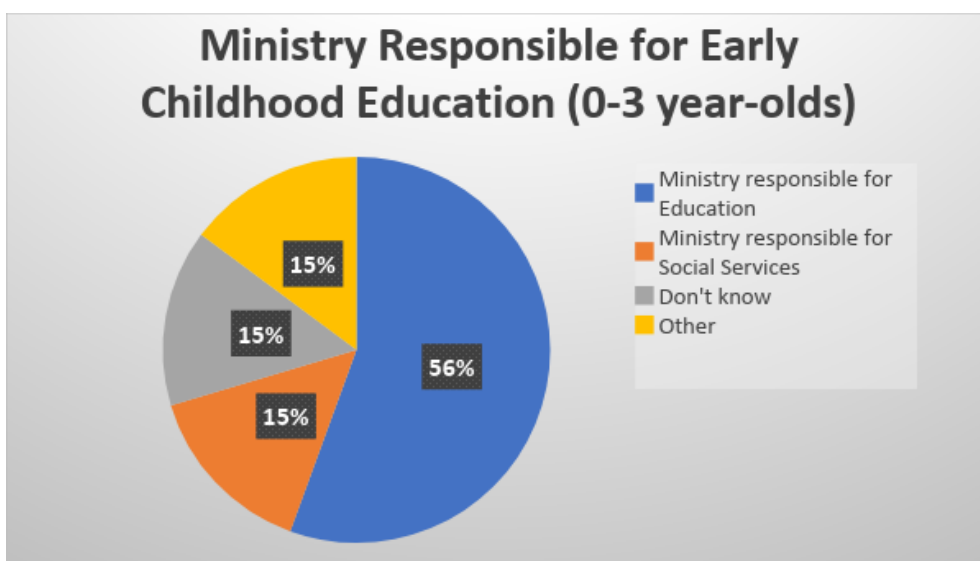
Figure 1 – Ministry responsible for Early Childhood Education (0-3-year-olds). N = 27 SIS.
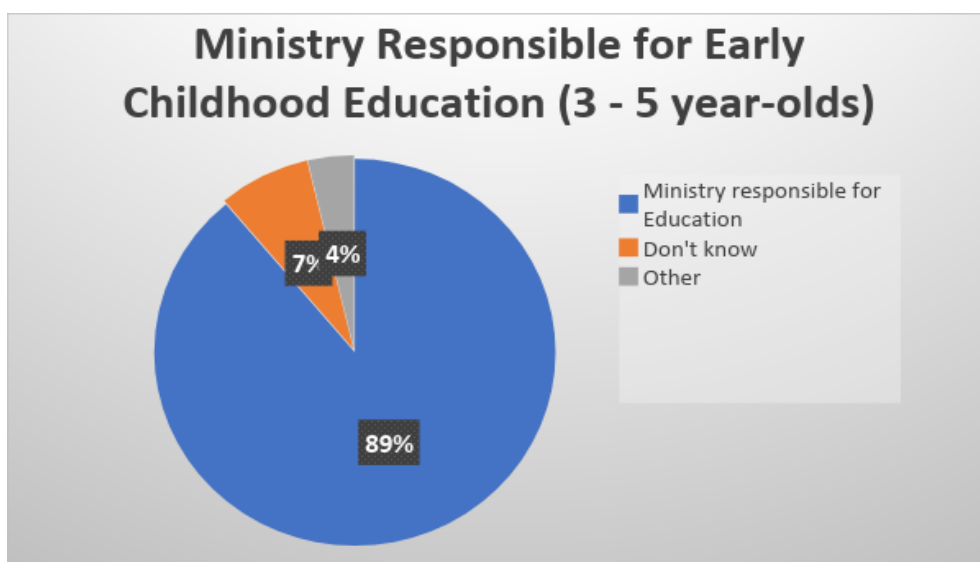
Figure 2 – Ministry responsible for Early Childhood Education (3-5-year-olds). N = 27 SIS

Just over half the respondents stated that responsibility for ECE for children under 3 years of age falls under the Ministry responsible for education (55%). However, there are still some small states where the Ministry for Social Services, or other ministries apart from education, is responsible (30%). The respondents from the Marshall Islands said that ECE for 0-3-year-olds is the responsibility of the family or babysitters; respondents from Palau said that ECE falls under the responsibility of

the Community Action Agency; the respondents from St Vincent and the Grenadines said that ECE falls within the purview of the Ministry for Health; while in the Federated States of Micronesia it is a joint responsibility between the Ministry for Education and the Ministry for Social Services.

Looking at the findings in Figure 2, participants report that government responsibility for ECE for the 3-5 age bracket now mostly falls under the remit of the Ministry for Education in almost all SIS (89%). This time, none of the respondents chose the Ministry for Social Services as their answer. This suggests that many more SIS governments acknowledge that the 3-5 age bracket deserves educational attention and ECE for such children should be seen as essentially a learning opportunity rather than a form of child care. Being under the particular education ministry also helps with the standardisation of programmes, regulation and quality of childcare provided and "is less likely to account for variations in child development" (Felfe and Lalive, 2018, p. 3); and thereby strengthening the process of social and political acculturation.

Importance of ECE Provision

The issue of the importance of ECE provision was put forward to respondents of the online questionnaire. They were presented with a multiple-choice question and asked to choose which of the following three statements was most relevant to them: (1) The provision of licensed early childhood education and kindergarten enables parents of young children to participate actively and more fully in the labour force; (2) Licensed early childhood education and kindergarten encourages children to socialise, interact and learn with and from other children; (3) Licensed early

childhood education and kindergarten is a waste of time and money: children of a young age should stay at home.
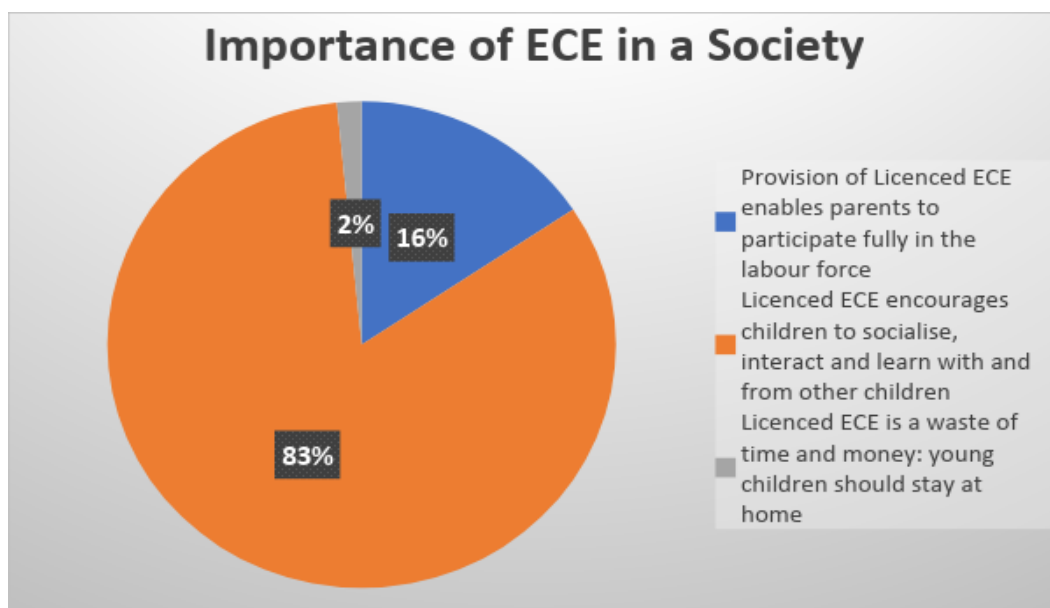
Figure 3 – Importance of ECE in society. N = 64 participants.

Figure 3 tabulates the results to this question. Fifty-three out of 64 respondents (83%) chose the second statement and agreed that licensed early childhood and kindergarten are mainly intended to encourage children to socialise, interact and learn with and from each other. Ten respondents chose the first statement, that the provision of ECE would mainly enable parents to participate actively and more fully in the workforce (16%). Only one individual agreed with statement number three: that ECE was a waste of time and money. The notion of ECE as essentially meant to 'park' one's young children in child care to liberate parents, especially mothers, to engage in gainful employment, still has its adherents.

Good Quality Early Childhood Education

There are various definitions of what good/high quality ECE means. Payler and Davis (2017, p. 12) argue that "the term quality is itself contested by policy makers and those in practice". According to the OECD (2017), a good quality

ECE is based on process elements such as the programme and priorities for learning, as well as structural aspects such as staff-child ratios, physical environment, and trained staff.

Payler and Davis (2017) argue that having qualified staff in early years settings helps ensure a high-quality service. A longitudinal study which followed 3,000 children from age 3 into primary and secondary school (Siraj Blatchford, Traggart, Sylva, Sammons and Melhuish, 2008) found a significant positive relationship between good-quality early childhood provision and children's achievements and development throughout primary school. Dalli, White, Rockel, Duhn, Buchanan, Davidson, Ganly, Kus and Wang (2011, p. 1) argue that: "evidence demonstrates that quality early childhood education at this very early age has lasting benefits for infants and their families". Good quality education has positive benefits and impacts on children's achievement in later life (OECD, 2012; Shonkoff, 2010).

Online questionnaire respondents were given a set of six statements from which they were asked to choose those conditions that they deemed relevant to quality early childhood education: (1) Providing worksheets to children; (2) Creating opportunities for free play; (3) Assuring school preparedness among children; (4) Developing a stimulating environment; (5) Teaching children the numbers and the alphabet; (6) Committing time and resources to water and sand play.

The findings presented in Figure 4 show that the respondents valued most: developing a stimulating environment (30%) and creating opportunities for free play (27%) much more than the other four statements, three of which (#1, 3 and 5) reflected views which conceptualised ECE as preparation for primary school and formal learning. The least selected options by respondents were

the statements about providing worksheets to children (5%) and teaching the children the numbers and the alphabet (6%).
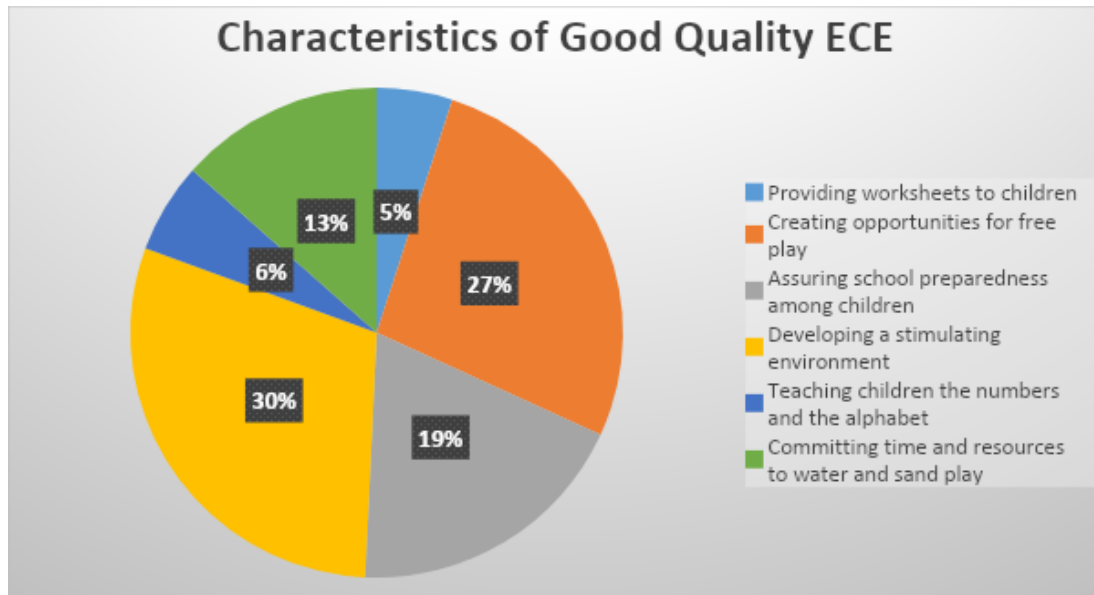
Figure 4 - Characteristics of good quality early childhood education. N = 64 participants.

Of course, the choices tabulated in Figure 4 might depict the respondents' ideal view of a good quality education, and not necessarily what is being actually implemented in the settings of their respective countries.

Qualities of Good-Practising Early Childhood Educators

Various studies have reviewed the good qualities of an early childhood educator (Adams and Pierce 2004; Glenn 2001; Usher 2003). These often include such characteristics as enthusiasm and a positive attitude to life. Good-practising educators have long been recognised as needing to be: qualified and trained in ECE; have a personal interest in each child; are able to establish a warm and caring environment; and show enthusiasm with children (Johnson, 1982).

Taylor and Wash (2003) identified ten characteristics of an effective educator: being passionate, flexible, an

effective communicator, a lifelong learner, being knowledgeable, accepting of others, patient, organised, hard working and caring. Working with 43 kindergarten teachers, Colker (2008) reported similar characteristics, including: passion; perseverance, pragmatism, patience, flexibility, lifelong learning, a sense of humour, and care and respect for children. A more recent study lists five similar characteristics of an effective early childhood educator: enthusiasm and passion for children; patience and humour; communication skills; respect for differences; creativity and flexibility (Bean-Mellinger, 2017).

Respondents to the online questionnaire were presented with the following three statements to choose from with regards to what, in their opinion, would constitute a good-practising early childhood educator: (1) An educator who plans activities for children in advance; (2) An educator who involves children in the planning of activities; (3) An educator who does no planning and allows children freedom to do as they please.

Figure 5 offers a graphic view of the responses to this question:
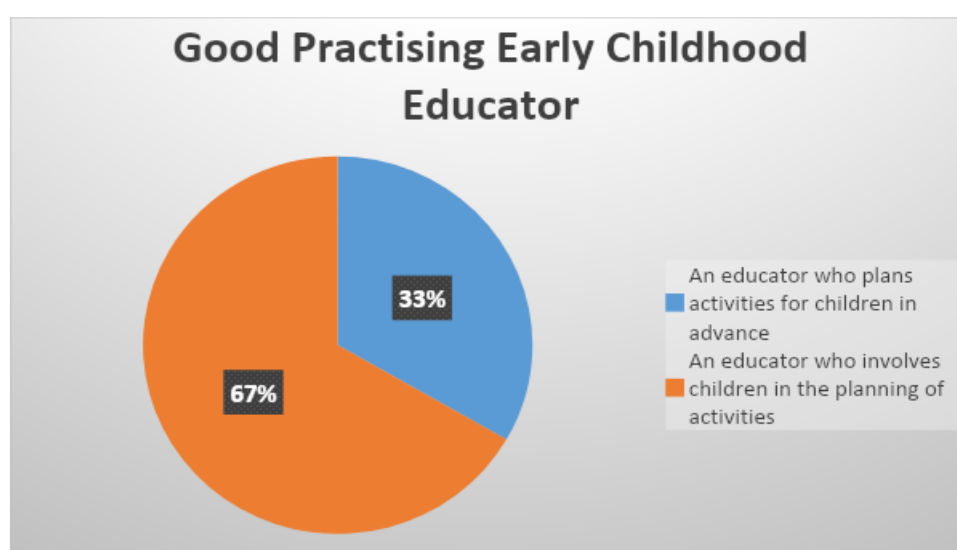

Figure 5 - Good practising early childhood educator. N = 64.

Two-thirds of respondents (67%) chose statement number two: an educator who involves children in the planning of activities. There has been a surge in encouraging the adoption and implementation of a child-centred approach where focus and agency are transferred from the educator to the child (Chesworth, 2016; O'Neill and McMahon, 2005). The educators see the child as a competent and capable human being (Fraser and Gestwicki, 2002; Gandini, 1993). The planning of activities revolves around the interests of the child and therefore involves their own participation in the planning through mind-maps and other relevant methods. Having said this, a third of respondents (33%) said that a good-practising educator is one who plans activities for children in advance. This betrays a view whereby educators are expected and preferred to come prepared with activities to the setting. Thus, while the respondents may value a child-centred approach, they may still expect the educator to plan ahead anyway. None of the 64 respondents was keen on educators who grant children complete discretion to determine what to do by and for themselves while under their care.

Qualified Early Childhood Educators

Respondents to the online questionnaire were asked to choose what, in their opinion, were the minimum qualifications required for an individual to work as an early childhood educator, dealing with children in the 0-3 years and 3-5 years age brackets in their respective country. Figure 6 graphically presents the respondents' answers in percentages:
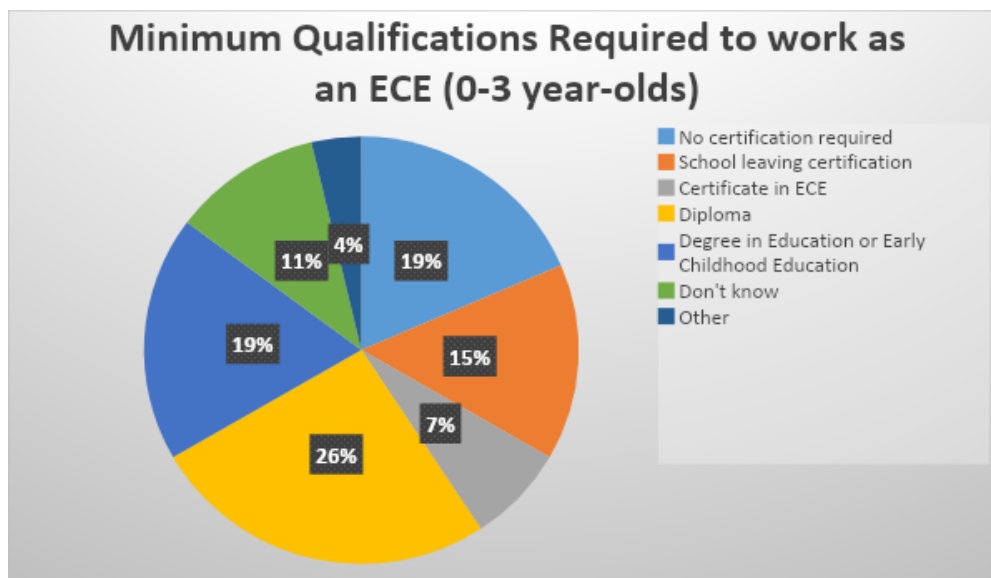
Figure 6 - Minimum qualifications required to work as an ECE (0-3-year-olds). N = 27 SIS.

Answers ranged from no certification at all (five countries – 19%) to a degree in education or early childhood education (five countries – 19%). The most common answer was that the minimum qualification required is a diploma (seven countries – 26%). Respondents from nine countries reported either no certification or a school leaving certificate as a requirement: individuals who work with very young children are often looked upon as babysitters and not educators who need to be knowledgeable about the development of the children in their care. The general public's perception of early childhood practitioners may still be that of a substitute mother and not an educator (Moss, 2007); a "poorly qualified 'mum's army'" (Payler and Georgeson, 2013b, p. 382), and with staff that is both "poorly educated" and "poorly paid" (Moss, 2014, p. 254). A lack of standardisation and regulation leads to uneven professionalism in this sector (Payler and Davis, 2017).
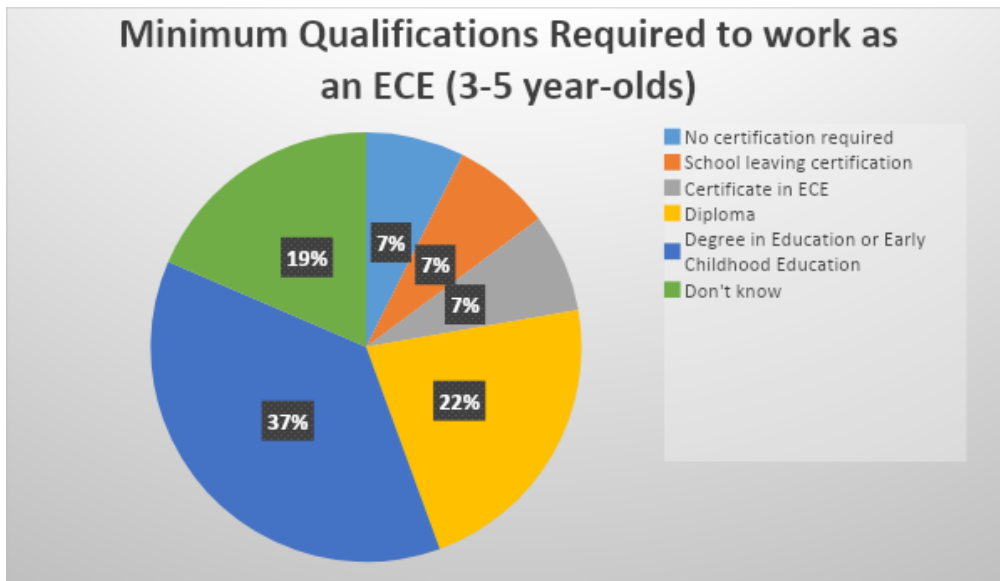
Figure 7 - Minimum qualifications required to work as an ECE (3-5-year-olds). N = 27 SIS

Figure 7 shows responses to the same question, but applied to dealing with 3-5-year olds. The number of countries whose respondents now opine that the minimum qualification for an ECE is a degree in education or early childhood education has increased from four to nine (37%). This might be due to the fact that children would now be enrolled in kindergartens that might form part of the school system, so a higher qualification level may be necessary. For six countries (22%), a diploma remains the minimum qualification required.

The more qualified and well-trained early childhood educators are, the more favourable the expected outcomes in early childhood settings and beyond (OECD, 2006; Payler and Davis, 2017). "There is a general consensus, supported by research, that well educated, well-trained professionals are the key factor in providing high-quality ECEC with the most favourable cognitive and social outcomes for children" (Taguma, Litjens, and Makowiecki, 2012, p. 1). Such results suggest that more educators need to be offered and exposed to more training in most of the world's small island states so that they might provide

high quality early childhood education to the children in their care.

Colonial Language Legacy

Respondents to the online questionnaire were asked to indicate the language of instruction used in ECE and the language practised and/or encouraged at home in their own country. Responses are displayed in Figure 8.
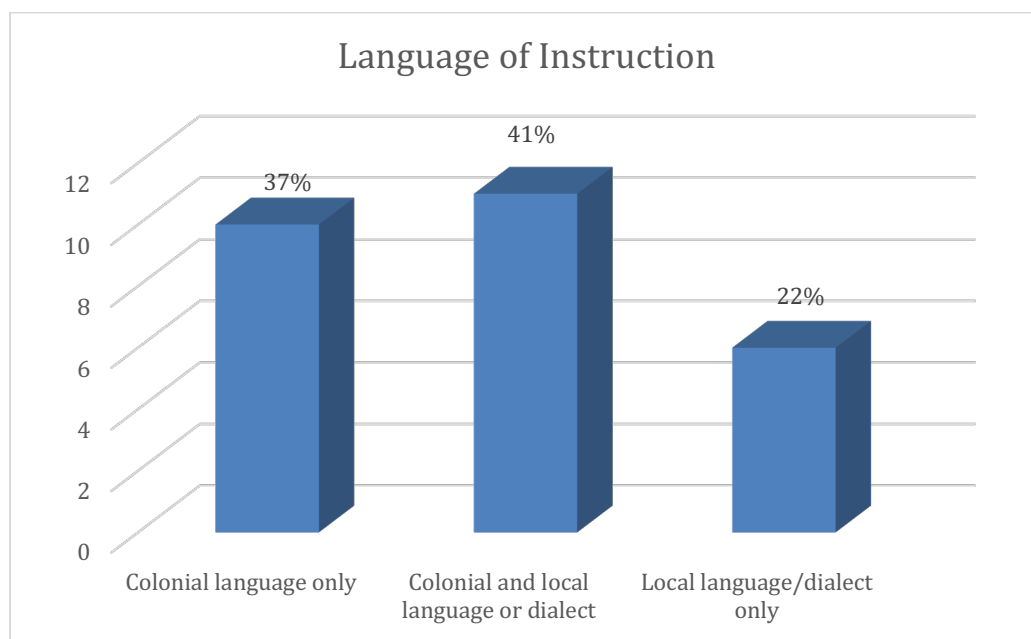
Figure 8 – Language of Instruction. N = 27 SIS

Respondents from 10 countries reported that their colonial language is the only language of teaching and learning in their country (37%). Nauru claimed that both English and local Nauruan are used for teaching purposes. Respondents from 11 other countries, including those that were colonised by France and Portugal, use a mix of colonial languages (English, French or Portuguese) together with the local language for teaching and learning in the early years (41%). In the six other remaining SIS (22%), the language of instruction is uniquely local. In Samoa, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu, Melanesian and Polynesian languages are the media of instruction.

These are Pacific island states where the duration of the colonial experience has not been as deep and lengthy as in the Caribbean. Colonial infiltration in Iceland, colonised by Denmark, has also not been so thorough: Icelandic, a local language, is used throughout; Danish used to be the second language, now supplanted by English. Cyprus, although under British rule, managed to keep its local languages alive: Greek, serving as a national focal point for nationalism and resistance; and Turkish, the language of the minority community in Cyprus. These two European small island states are the world's only SIS where the language of instruction *and* communication is not a colonial language. This observation confirms the depth of the colonial experience in SIS outside Europe.
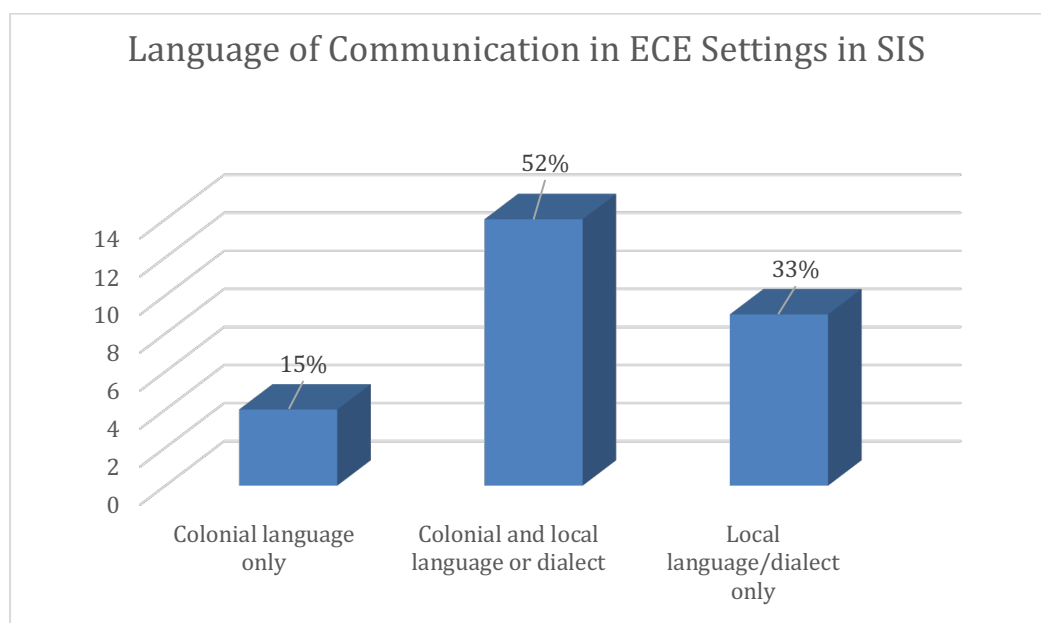
Figure 9 - Language of Communication. N = 27 SIS.

Figure 9 refers to the language of communication used at home in these small island states. The resort to a mix of colonial and local languages or dialects (52%) in this context is more predominant than that for instruction (41%). The proportion of SIS using the colonial language *only* as a means of communication is now much less (15%) than the percentage of those using the colonial language

only for instruction (37%). Indeed, the local language/dialect is the preferred medium for communication now (33%), as opposed to 22% for instruction. This was also evident in the data collected through interviews with parents together with observations in childcare settings conducted as part of the author's doctoral dissertation (Baldacchino, A., 2020). The colonial language was used for instruction while the local language/dialect was preferred for communication purposes. Hence, the home environment comes across as more attuned to local culture in these SIS; while educational institutions in SIS are likely to promote colonial languages, even when the preferred language of communication is a different one.

Qualitative Findings from the Open-Ended Questions

ECE Policies, Curricula and/or Frameworks

Policies, curricula and/or frameworks are meant to help in the advancement of early childhood development, reduce social inequality, and "provide a social protection floor below which no human being can fall into extreme poverty and deprivation" (Bachelet, 2012, p. 2).

Respondents were asked if there was an official early years policy, curriculum and/or framework in their country. Respondents from 26 countries concurred. Respondents from the Comoros stated that they did not have such a policy.

> *In the Comoros, children start going to the Koranic school from the same age as kids in the West, that is to say 5 years. There is no national policy for this sector (Comoros, 42).*

> *Here, ECE from 0-3 is the responsibility of the Ministry for Health and Early Childhood and*

from 3-5 it falls within the remit of the Ministry for Education. There is a programme, but it is not standardised. No national policy (Comoros, 44).

Challenges of ECE in SIS

Some of the general challenges relating to education in small island states include: the relative lack of funding for education; a relative lack of human resources, which necessitates a multiplicity of roles in the workforce; and a lack of material resources (Sultana, 2006). Bacchus (1993) argues that the lack of human resources frequently leads to individuals becoming 'experts' without, however, having the requisite qualifications. As one respondent states:

> *Most kindergartens are provided by communities where the teacher is usually a relative of an influential person in the community. Regardless of their educational background, teachers are identified and selected based on who they know or are related to, and not on how qualified one is (Vanuatu 25).*

Respondents were asked to discuss their thoughts about whether challenges, if any, facing early childhood education in their country were impacted by its relatively small size and island geography. In the case of the online questionnaire, 54 out of the 64 participants responded to this question, covering 24 of the 27 small island states. Twenty-five respondents agreed that there are challenges pertaining to ECE on SIS, suggesting a broad consensus. These challenges, the respondents suggest, include: a lack of funding in the ECE sector which then leads to a lack of adequate resources in the settings; a lack of skilled human resources which often lead to under-trained and/or unqualified early childhood educators; and a degree of

inevitable multifunctionality in the workforce. The situation can be exacerbated in archipelago states. A respondent from Cape Verde sums this up by saying:

> *Cape Verde is a country with nine islands / nine 'sub cultures', nine dialects, etc. Being an island is a challenge: imagine being nine (Cape Verde 49).*

Meanwhile, 29 respondents felt that small size and islandness had little or no impact on early childhood education in their country:

> *No, except in so far as the smallness impacts on the economy and the level of poverty of parents and their ability to get their young children to school, whereas the older ones can venture out on their own (Dominica 2).*

Such results should not be surprising: the challenges of small size and island geography tend to be less visible except to those who have the benefit and privilege of a comparative perspective. It is only by having experiences of, or ideas about, other (including larger and continental) states that the specific circumstances and effects of smallness and islandness are teased out and brought to focus (Baldacchino, 2008; Hey, 2003; Thorhallsson 2012).

What follows are some challenges that the respondents attributed to ECE because of the relatively small size of their island state.

Early Childhood Education is not a priority

Twenty-four respondents felt that early childhood education was not deemed to be a high priority on the government's agenda:

Political will is missing, which is essential to make ECE a priority on the agenda. Research proves that ECE is a wise investment affecting all facets of a country's well being. (Federated States of Micronesia 29).

Early childhood education has yet a long way to go; but it also requires more attention by the government as opposed to primary or secondary education (Samoa 39).

Improving quality education in the age group of 0-3 years, including professional staff, should be given more importance by the government (Malta 10).

This is a pity and a lost opportunity: young children's brains from birth to age five "rapidly develop foundational capabilities on which subsequent development builds" (Shonkoff, & Levitt, 2010).

Quality and Adequate Training

Ten respondents also shared the view that obstacles to the achievement of quality ECE provision included: the island mentality; cultural norms; lack of funding for adequate staff training; and a general lack of resources. Here are some of their views:

I believe there are challenges that we face as a small island, mainly that culturally we are still inclined towards a more prescriptive approach… Foreign literature keeps us in line with other countries, yes, but at the same time some concepts in such literature remain foreign to us because of our island mentality. (Malta 10).

Yes, the geographical distance between islands makes it costly and challenging to train

kindergarten teachers, especially when the qualified teachers do not want to move to the rural areas to teach. (Vanuatu 25).

Yes, the challenge is that we do not have many opportunities for training and sharing of good practice [in early childhood education] (Cyprus 65).

A challenge we are facing is looking for qualified teachers who have ECE degrees and/or with an Associate Degree with an Early Childhood Certificate which is mandatory. Because we are a small populated island state, we have very little chances of finding anyone with expertise. (Palau 52).

I can concur and sympathise with the respondent from Palau: in the case of Malta, after obtaining their degree in education with a focus on the early years, most university students are placed in the primary sector instead of in kindergarten, either because there is a lack of staff in those levels, or because it would cost the government a lot more in salaries to employ individuals with a degree rather than with a diploma at kindergarten level. Indeed, at present, individuals with an NQF level 4 (a diploma in ECE) certification are being recruited to teach in Maltese kindergartens. The practice is a far cry from a previous policy document that had recommended that, by 2015, all kindergarten educators should be in possession of a bachelor's degree and a teacher's warrant (MEDE, 2010).

Funding and Material Resources

Lack of funding in early childhood education was another stated concern. The general feeling was that governments did not invest enough in ECE also because presumably it

is not a priority policy, as discussed above. Some respondents declared a sense of frustration: they feel that they either lack funds or lack trained staff to sustain quality ECE programmes in their respective countries:

> *More often than not, the already small budgetary allocations for ECE are the ones cut when disaster strikes (Marshall Islands 22).*

> *There is uncertainty of how long the funding from the US Aid for preschool will continue to support the programme for the children and parents in Palau and the unexpected could happen…with no more funds to operate the programme. (Palau 52).*

> *The major challenge of our programmes resides in our ability to financially sustain the ECE programmes (Federated States of Micronesia 29).*

> *Early childhood education is underfunded, and the staff overworked. Some [educators] are not even trained properly because of the lack of funds (Maldives 8).*

Human Resources and Multifunctionality

Respondents were asked to consider if living in a small island state incentivised the resort to multifunctionality amongst the country's labour force. Bray and Fergus (1986) contend that, in some small island states, the economy needs personnel to take on available jobs; but there may not be enough skilled persons around to fill up these positions, so a resort to less qualified employees may follow. Multifunctionality: "…is a direct result of the nature of labour markets in small states, where some of the sectors have to perform the whole range of tasks that their counterparts do in larger states" (Sultana, 2006, p.

32; Sultana, 2008). Human resources may be too scarce and valuable to be wasted, nor may there be a sufficient and regular demand for certain task or skills to warrant all year-round employment (Jules, 2012) As one respondent put it:

> *Yes, being small and being an island are two facts that pressure you to be multi-tasked and creative...it's a survival attitude (Cape Verde 49).*

Responses to this question were obtained from 53 out of the 64 responses to the online questionnaire, covering 23 out of the 27 SIS. Forty of the 53 responses to this question agreed that the experience of multifunctionality is a feature of their country's workforce.

Various respondents opined that preschool educators had to 'wear many hats' in their line of work:

> *We take on more tasks within the pre-school than we would in Australia [my home country]. We teach the children and also manage finances, training local teachers, registration, etc. In Australia, this would be split into different roles, e.g. teacher, director, accountant (Vanuatu 41).*

> *The teachers not only teach in the classrooms, but they perform other tasks and responsibilities too inside and outside the classroom. They also become parents and judges, pastors, cooks, cleaners and councillors. (Tonga 16).*

> *This is a feature of small states. There are insufficient resources and capacity to permit specialisation. Thus, persons in various productive sectors have to be multi-skilled. The result can be a loss of efficiency or quality of output (Iceland 31).*

> *I greatly feel the pressure to multi-task because I know that this island does not have the other*

types of experts and I feel that I have to answer for them – as I am the "best educated person" around (Federated States of Micronesia 9).

Lack of sufficient funding compounds the issue:

When the country has limited resources for development, people's wages are limited, … When you are employed to do a job, you may have to do all the related activities that produce the desired outcomes, because the state or other employers cannot afford to employ the support workers (Dominica 2).

There are constraints of high labour costs which largely affect small privately-run early childhood providers which in turn leads to multi-tasking (Barbados 32).

Limited financial and human resources demand well-coordinated teamwork and multitasking. (St Lucia 37).

Discussion

The unique dataset behind this study lends credence to the hypothesis that early childhood education in small island states is a site where postcolonialism and its influences are visibly rampant, and often unquestioned. Across the world, we come across situations in small island states where early childhood educators operate in a sector that is not high on the domestic policy agenda; may confront geographical fragmentation, difficulties of access and logistic challenges; may be poorly paid; and may lack suitable training, funding, teaching materials and expertise, while working flexibly with curricula and pedagogic practices that are premissed in a tacit morality that either supports child-minding (shorn of educational intent) or rewards preparation for (formal) schooling. Apart

from the Pacific region - where the colonial epoch has been the shortest, and where the "fatal impact" led to a decimation, but not extinction, of local populations (Moorehead, 2000) - already in early childhood settings, the language of instruction and communication is typically not a local one. Even where Indigenous languages are present and privileged, there remains scope for a decolonisation of both curriculum and pedagogy.

The reflections of this paper also constitute a postcolonial critique. As Parry (1994, p. 172) argues, such is "... designated as deconstructing and displacing Eurocentric [and, as in this case, USA-centric] premises of a discursive apparatus which constructed the Third World not only for the West but also for the cultures so represented". An anti-colonial discursive approach recognizes the central role played by culturally sensitive and locally-constructed knowledge, inclusive of oral stories, reclamation of native languages and dialects, "cultural histories and daily human experiences and social interactions" (Dei, 2000, p. 117).

Using early childhood education as its frame of reference, this study does not merely confirm such a stance amongst SIS; it also suggests that SIS may be amongst the best exponents of this construction. At the same time, securing a "decolonial linking" (Mignolo, 2011) - which is a presumed solution to such a state of mind and practice - is fraught with epistemological challenges; and indeed, may spell "institutional suicide", as one particular study of the Marshall Islands, a SIS, soberly warns (Kupferman, 2013, p. 349).

Conclusion

"Little research has been influenced by postcolonial analysis of educational issues in specific island-state

systems" (Stewart, 2015, p. 25). This paper has set out to offer a rare comparative (albeit indicative) glimpse of the situation of early childhood education in the world's 27 small island states. Respondents have largely agreed in describing the sector as underfunded, underequipped, understaffed and underappreciated, challenged by pressures to: broaden expertise; and to teach in non-local languages or dialects. In a minority of cases, and most so in the 0-3-year bracket, the sector is excluded from the purview of the Ministry of Education; which suggests that the state does not consider this sector as essentially an educational concern.

Early childhood education has often been the last frontier in education to embrace the professionalisation of its staff. This development has accompanied the sector's gradual mainstreaming as a critical and essential piece of the educational puzzle, even in the world's smallest countries. Concurrently, we cannot fail to observe that various practices that unfold within this sector across the world are not sufficiently home-grown and locally inspired; and regulating the early childhood education sector ironically tends to further reduce any privilege accorded to indigenous traditions and mores.

References

Adams, C. M., and Pierce, R. L. (2004). *Characteristics of effective teaching.* [online] Available at: http://www.bsu.edu/gradschool/media/pdf/chapter12.pdf

Atchoaréna, D., Da Graça, P. D. and Marquez, J. M. (2008). Strategies for post-primary education in small island developing states (SIDS): Lessons from Cape Verde. *Comparative Education, 44*(2), 167-185.

Bacchus, K. (1993). Some problems and challenges faced in decentralising education in small states. In: Lillis, K. M. (Ed.), *Policy, planning and management of education in small states.* Paris, France: International Institute for Educational Planning (pp. 76-93).

Bachelet, M. (2012). *Importance of early childhood development: Policy challenges.* Keynote speech delivered at Models of Early Childhood Services International Conference (Vol. 6). June. Available at: https://childcarecanada.org/resources/events/12/06/international-conference-models-early-childhood-services

Baldacchino, A., & Baldacchino, G. (2017) Conceptualizing early childhood education in small states: focus on Malta and Barbados. In: T.D. Jules and P. Ressler (Eds.), *Re-reading education policy and practice in small states: Issues of size and scale in the emerging 'intelligent society and economy'.* (pp. 97-109). Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Baldacchino, A. (2019). Early Childhood Education on Small Island States: A Very British Story (unpublished doctoral thesis). The University of Sheffield, UK.

Baldacchino, A. (2020). Global or Local. Languages and Colonialism in Small Island States. In J. Jimenez-Salcedo, C. Helot & A. Camilleri Grima (eds). *Small is Multilingual.* Berlin: Peter Lang (pp. 25-46). ISBN: 978-3-631-83341-4

Baldacchino, G. (2008). Studying islands: on whose terms? Some epistemological and methodological challenges to the pursuit of island studies. *Island Studies Journal, 3*(1), 37-56.

Baldacchino, G. (2010). *Island enclaves: Offshore strategies, creative governance and subnational island jurisdictions.* Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Bean-Mellinger, B. (2017). *Qualities of a good teacher in early childhood development.* [online] Available at: http://work.chron.com/qualities-good-teacher-early-childhood-development-8694.html

Bhabha, H.K. (1994). *The location of culture.* New York: Routledge.

Bray, M. (1991). *Making small practical: The organisation and management of ministries of education in small states.* London, UK: Commonwealth Secretariat.

Bray, M., and Fergus, H. (1986). The implications of size for educational development in small countries: Montserrat, a Caribbean case study. *Compare 16*(1), 91-102.

Bryman, A., Teevan, J., and Bell, E. (2009). *Social research methods.* (2nd Canadian edn.). Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.

Burman, E. (2016). *Deconstructing developmental psychology* (3rd edn.). New York: Routledge.

Burton, L. J. (2012). Building on living traditions: Early childhood education and culture in Solomon Islands. *Current Issues in Comparative Education, 15*(1), 157-175.

Caldwell, J. C., Harrison, G. E., and Quiggin, P. (1980). The demography of micro-states. *World Development, 8*(12), 953-962.

Campbell, M. (2006). Indigenous knowledge in Jamaica: A tool of ideology in a neo-colonial context. In G. Dei & A. Kempf (eds.), Anti-*colonialism and education: The politics of resistance.* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers (pp. 193-210).

Chesworth, L. (2016). A funds of knowledge approach to examining play interests: Listening to children's and parents' perspectives. *International Journal of Early Years Education, 24*(3), 294-308.

Colker, L. J. (2008). *Twelve characteristics of early childhood teachers.* Beyond the journal. Young children on the Web. [online] Available at: http://www.fbcherndon.org/weekday/docs/article_ BTJ_Colker.pdf

Crossley, M., and Tikly, L. (2004). Postcolonial perspectives and comparative and international research in education: A critical introduction. *Comparative Education, 40*(2), 147-156.

Dalli, C., White, E. J., Rockel, J., Duhn, I., Buchanan, E., Davidson, S., Ganly, S., Kus, L. and Wang, B. (2011). *Quality early childhood education for under-two-year-olds: What should it look like? A literature review.* Ministry of Education: New Zealand. [online] Available at: http://www. educationcounts. govt. nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/89532/965_Qualit yECE_We b-22032011. pdf

Dei, G. (2000). Rethinking the role of indigenous knowledges in the academy. *Journal of Inclusive Education, 4*(2), 111-132.

Felfe, C., and Lalive, R. (2018). *The levelling effects of good quality early childcare.* [online] Available at: https://voxeu.org/article/levelling-effects-good-quality-early-childcare

Fraser, S., and Gestwicki, C. (2002). *Authentic childhood: Exploring Reggio Emilia in the classroom.* Albany NY: Delmar Thomson Learning.

Gandini, L. (1993). Fundamentals of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. *Young Children, 49*(1), 4-8.

Glenn, R.E. 2001. *Admirable teaching traits. Teaching for excellence.* [online] Available at: https://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr387.shtml

Gupta, A. (2015). Pedagogy of third space: A multidimensional early childhood curriculum. *Policy Futures in Education, 13*(2), 260–272.

Hey, J.A.K. (Ed.) (2003) *Small states in world politics: Explaining foreign policy behaviour.* Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner.

Hickling-Hudson, A. (2006). Cultural complexity, post-colonialism and educational change: Challenges for comparative educators. *Review of Education, 52*(1), 201-218.

Hickling-Hudson, A., & Mayo, P. (2012). Furthering the discourse in postcolonial education. *Postcolonial Directions in Education, 1*(1), 1-8. Available at: https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar//handle/123456789/19604

Howard-Jones, P. A., Varma, S., Ansari, D., Butterworth, B., De Smedt, B., Goswami, U., Laurillard, D., & Thomas, M. S. C. (2016). The principles and practices of educational neuroscience: Comment on Bowers (2016). *Psychological Review, 123*(5), 620-627.

Johnson, M. (1982). *Effective teaching as perceived by teachers and principals in selected Indiana school corporations.* Ball State University doctoral dissertations. [online] Available from: https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=7329310

Kupferman, D. W. (2013). Does Marshallese studies exist? Towards the uncomfortable institutionalization of difference. *Postcolonial Directions in Education, 2*(2), 314-354.

Lumsden, J. (2005). *Guidelines for the design of online questionnaires.* Technical Report NRC 48231, National Research Council (of Canada).

MEDE, Ministry of Education and Employment (2010). *Agreement between the Government and the Malta Union of Teachers.* MEDE Floriana: Malta.

Mignolo, W. D. (2011). *The darker side of western modernity: Global futures, decolonial options.* Durham NC: Duke University Press.

Moorehead, A. (2000). *The fatal impact: Captain Cook's exploration of the South Pacific; Its high adventure and disastrous effects.* New York: Barnes & Noble.

Moss, P. (2007). Bringing politics into the nursery: Early childhood education as a democratic practice. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 15*(1), pp. 5-20.

Moss, P. (2014). Early childhood policy in England 1997-2013: Anatomy of a missed opportunity. *International Journal of Early Years Education, 22*(4), 346-358.

Murthy, D. (2008). Digital ethnography: An examination of the use of new technologies for social research. *Sociology, 42*(5), 837-855.

Mustard, J. F. (2010). Early brain development and human development. In *The encyclopaedia of early childhood development.* [online] Available at: http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/Pages/PDF/MustardANGxp.pdf

Nieuwenhuys, O. (2013). Theorizing childhood(s): Why we need postcolonial perspectives. *Childhood, 20*(1), 3-8.

O'Neill, G., and McMahon, T. (2005). *Student-centred learning: What does it mean for students and lecturers.* AISHE Readings, Dublin University College. [online] Available at: https://www.aishe.org/readings/2005-1/oneill-mcmahon-Tues_19th_Oct_SCL.html

OECD (2006). *Starting strong II: Early childhood education and care.* Paris: OECD.

OECD (2012). *Encouraging quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC).* Paris: OECD.

OECD (2017). *Starting strong 2017: Key OECD indicators on early childhood education and care.* Paris: OECD.

Omar, S. M. (2012). Rethinking development from a postcolonial perspective. *Journal of Conflictology, 3*(1), 42-49.

Parry, B. (1994). Resistance theory/Theorising resistance, or two cheers for nativism. In F. Barker, F. Hulme & M. Iversen (eds.), *Colonial discourse/Postcolonial theory* (pp. 172-196). Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Payler, J., and Davis, G. (2017). Professionalism: Early years as a career. In: *British Educational Research Association Early Childhood Special Interest Group and TACTYC: Association for Professional Development in Early Years*. BERA-TACTYC: Early childhood review 2003-2017 (pp. 9-19).

Payler, J., and Georgeson, J. (2013). Multi-agency working in the early years: confidence, competence and context. *Early Years, 33*(4), 380-397.

Shonkoff, J. P. (2010). Building a new bio developmental framework to guide the future of early childhood policy. *Child Development, 81*(1), 357-367.

Shonkoff, J. P., & Levitt, P. (2010). Neuroscience and the future of early childhood policy: Moving from why to what and how. *Neuron, 67*(5), 689-691.

Sinkovics, R. R., Penz, E., and Ghauri, P. N. (2008). Enhancing the trustworthiness of qualitative research in international business. *Management International Review, 48*(6), 689-714.

Siraj-Blatchford, I, Taggart, B., Sylva, K., Sammons, P. and Melhuish, E. (2008). Towards the transformation of practice in early childhood education: the effective provision of pre-school education (EPPE) project. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 38*(1), 23-36.

Stewart, S. (2015). Schooling and coloniality: conditions underlying 'extra lessons' in Jamaica. *Postcolonial Directions in Education, 4*(1), 25-52.

Sultana, R. G. (2006). *Challenges for career guidance in small states.* Tarxien, Malta: Gutenberg Press.

Sultana, R. G. (2008). Looking back before moving forward: Building on 15 years of comparative educational research in the Mediterranean. *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies, 13*(2), 9-25.

Taguma, M., Litjens, I., and Makowiecki, K. (2012). *Quality matters in early childhood education and care: Slovak Republic.* Paris: OECD.

Talib, I.S. (2002). *The language of post-colonial literatures: An introduction.* New York: Routledge.

Tarc, A. M. (2009). Post-colonial studies as re-education: Learning from J. M. Coetzee's disgrace. In: Coloma, R. S. (ed.), *Post-colonial challenges in education.* NY: Peter Lang, (pp. 195-214).

Taylor, B., and Wash, P. (2003). *3,000 educators respond to preferred dispositions.* Paper presented at the Second Annual Symposium on Educator Dispositions, November 20–21, in Richmond, Kentucky.

Tesar, M. (2015). Te Whāriki in Aotearoa New Zealand: Witnessing and revisiting neo-liberal discourses. In: Pacini-Ketchabaw, V., and Taylor, A. (eds.) *Unsettling the colonial places and spaces of early childhood education.* (pp 98 - 113). London: Routledge.

Thorhallsson, B. (2012). Small states in the UN Security Council: means of influence? *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy, 7*(2), 135-160.

Usher, D. (2003). *Arthur Combs' five dimensions of helper belief reformulated as five dispositions of teacher effectiveness.* Paper presented at the Second Annual Symposium on Educator Dispositions, November 20–21. Richmond, Kentucky, USA. Available at: https://silo.tips/download/2-nd-national-symposium-on-educator-dispositions

Viruru, R. (2005a). The impact of postcolonial theory on early childhood education. *Journal of Education 35*(1), 7-29.

Viruru, R. (2005b). Postcolonial theory and the practice of teacher education. In: Ryan, S., and Grieshaber, S. (eds.), *Practical transformations and transformational practices: Globalization, postmodernism and early childhood education.* London, UK: Emerald Group (pp. 139-160).

BOOK REVIEW

Lars Jensen, Julia Suárez-Krabbe, Christian Groes, Zoran Lee Pecic (eds.), *Postcolonial Europe: Comparative Reflections after the Empires*, **ISBN 978-1-78660-304-3 (hb), 978-1-78660-305-0 (pb), London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018, 268 pages**

Postcolonial Europe is a volume of 13 chapters, consisting of a series of case studies of how postcolonial legacies and dynamics play out in contemporary times. Different chapters focus on: racialization in Italy, in view also of the North-South divide; on the notion of *el moro* in Spanish and Catalan society; on the disempowerment of Roma people in Europe; on the contemporary effects of Dutch coloniality; on how the work of the Santomean poet Conceição Lima raises critical questions on Portugal's colonial past; on the relation between 'geo-linguistics' and colonialism with regard to the idea of a 'Lusophone community'; on critical questions raised by translations of Fanon's texts and their role in Anglophone postcolonial studies; on contemporary relations between France and African nations, particularly the 2013 French military operation in Mali and its aftermath; on the question of Greenland's relation to Denmark; on Belgium's colonial past in Congo and its contemporary legacy; on the postcolonial backlash in Poland's contemporary conservative politicians; and on the relation between China and a postcolonial Europe.

As can be attested by this list of topics, this volume is eclectic (in the best of senses), making use of a wide-range of analytical approaches, methodologies and disciplines.

In fact, as the editors indicate in their contextualizing introduction, the book originated from an interdisciplinary conference which invited scholars to "rethink European colonialism in light of the vanishing historical horizon of the European empires and the rise of new forms of power formations" (p. 4). Such a wide-ranging task necessitated a plurality of approaches that include critical race studies, post- and de-colonial studies, gender studies, anthropology, media theory, security studies and international relations. We see these approaches playing out in the different chapters that tackle the idea of postcolonial Europe through analyses of film, poetry, discourse, translation, policy and political developments. In this regard, this volume constitutes a series of very rich and meticulous studies that bear witness to true inter-disciplinarity.

Chapter 1, by Gaia Giuliani, focuses on images of blackness and whiteness in contemporary Italy, examining how sexuality and colour are expressed in public discourse in examples from 2010-2012. Her analysis demonstrates that such public discourse recreates racial stereotypes and white heteronormativity. Giuliani's analysis shows how whiteness remains unmarked, as opposed to the hyper-signification of the black male body, which she analyses through case studies on migrant field workers in southern Italy and the abuse directed towards footballer Mario Balotelli. Giuliani also considers the orientalization and sexualization of the Southerner and the non-European brown Mediterranean women. This colonial tradition is analyzed and demonstrated through a study of Berlusconi's 'go-go girls'. Giuliani also studies the criminalization of brown heterosexual men in view of the targeting of such men in a police investigation of the murder of a 13-year old white Italian girl.

Chapter 2, by Carmine Conelli, takes its cue from how the neoliberal EU discourse placed responsibility for the eurozone economic crisis on the so-called 'PIGS' nations, distinguishing between a supposedly responsible north and PIGS nations with 'bad habits' of corruption and wasteful spending. Conelli compares this logic to the colonial 'civilizing' discourse, demonstrating how northern countries are constituted as rational and civic-minded while the southern region is portrayed as irrational and irresponsible. Conelli shows how this logic played out in the Italian context, with the former Prime Minister Mario Monti (born in northern Italy) accusing the 'Mezzogiorno' (i.e. the southern regions) for not complying with 'European standards'. The author makes interesting use of postcolonial theories and Gramsci's work on 'the southern question' to analyze the history of the Mezzogiorno as deeply entwined with colonization, with the southerners being portrayed as requiring saving from the Piedmontese civilization. The thrust of Conelli's argument is the idea that the construction of the Italian nation state "has overall been an elite achievement" (p. 32) and has happened through an exclusion of the contribution of the south from national discourse. This gesture is read alongside Edward Said's suggestion that western dominance aimed at the denigration of the east. The author notes how there were attempts to legitimize this domestic colonization within Italy through 'scientific' theories of racialization whereby biological differences between Italians were theorized. Interestingly, the unification of Italy across such north-south divides coincided with the first Italian attempts to create an overseas colonial empire, whereby the problem of southern rural overpopulation was 'solved' by settling southern Italian peasants in Eritrean lands. The author concludes by arguing that while anti-south racism is today more latent than manifest, recent waves of migration have now provided new targets of racialization.

Chapter 3, by Martin Lundsteen, presents an ethnography done in a small town in the northern region of Catalonia, which has a significant population of African immigrants, mostly Moroccans who are often labelled *moros*. The author discusses Spanish identity as an imagined national community, whereby "the hegemonic idea of Spain (and Spanishness) is built on the historic negation of Muslim and Jewish identity" (p. 43). The rich ethnography presented in this chapter demonstrates that, rather than 'culturalist' readings that regard culture as the main cause of social conflict, we should instead look at the political-economic structuring of such social realities. In this chapter, the use of the term *moros* is traced back to the *Reconquista*, which after pogroms, massacres and expulsions of Jews and Muslims, led to a series of forced conversions, with the converted Muslims being referred to as *moriscos* or *moros*. Lundsteen notes how what followed this time was an external expansive colonization projects in the Americas and Africa, with the category of *moro* developing further into eighteenth century Spanish colonization projects. Lundsteen notes how, in contemporary times, the label of *moro* is predominantly used by working-class people who themselves would have migrated to Catalonia from other parts of Spain, thus establishing a divide between new and old migrants. The author notes that during the 1960s and 1970s, there was an internal influx of migrants into Catalonia, resulting in the new category of *el xarnego*, i.e. a derogatory term used to designate descendants of mixed marriages between Catalans and Spaniards. When, later, socioeconomic changes in the 1990s led to an influx of migrants from old colonies, including Morocco, attitudes towards Moroccan immigration started to shift. This led to a differentiation between *xarnego* and *moro*, with the former enjoying a more privileged position. The author concludes that right-wing media and politicians in contemporary Spain fuel discourses of 'invasions' and

moral panic that lead to a criminalization and marginalization of *moros*, who is placed in opposition to Spanish society and identity.

Chapter 4, by Sabrina Marks and Miye Nadya Tom, focuses on past and present situations of Roma populations in Europe, arguing that the case of Roma populations challenges the modern idea of Europe as homogenous. The authors adopt a postcolonial lens to problematize centuries of state-sanctioned efforts to dominate and eradicate the 'Otherness' of Roma people. The authors claim that "the situation of the Roma is an outstanding example of how coloniality has shaped the idea of not only 'what' Europe is but also 'who' belongs there" (p. 72). The authors note that the Roma are one of the most disadvantaged and marginalized populations, facing dehumanizing stereotypes and severe attempts to control their movement. The authors also point towards the failure of several postcolonial scholars to include Roma histories in their analyses of what Chakrabarty calls 'asymmetrical ignorances'. The authors note how even the label of 'Gypsy' is a false characterization of Roma people, since this is a misnomer based on the idea that they originated from Egypt, whereas linguistic studies yield evidence that they began to migrate from northern India. In being constituted as primitive, resisting modernity and non-settlers, the Roma people are excluded from the construction of 'Europe'. The following captures some of the various efforts in recent history to oppress Roma people that the authors mention: "ethnic profiling in Italy; segregation, discrimination and bullying in schools throughout Europe; mass evictions from their homes in Spain; the expulsion of Roma refugees in France and Germany and forced sterilizations throughout CEE" (p. 70). Moreover, asylum regimes operating under a racist colonial logic are treating Roma people as 'bogus asylum seekers'.

Chapter 5, by Patricia Schor and Egbert Alejandro Martina, problematize an award-winning student anti-polarization campaign in the Netherlands, titled "Dare to be Grey". The authors note how, despite its good intentions, the campaign actually rests on problematic assumptions and discourses. The campaign promotes an anti-extremist attitude through which a spirit of 'togetherness' can be achieved by abandoning the 'black or white' extremes. The authors rightly pick up on the racialized distinction implied by this discourse; for them, the campaign's reference to 'greyness' does not present a non-aligned alternative to black/white thinking, but "actually reinforces the colonial logics of whiteness and anti-Blackness" (p. 76). Moreover, the chapter shows that, by suggesting a kind of 'bothsidesism', the campaign normalizes racial violence by promoting a politics of constraint, which amounts to a post-political (or depoliticized) notion of polarization. According to the authors, beneath the campaign's rootedness in a tradition of 'respectful dialogue' and the Dutch ideology of the *Polder model* (a political metaphor for consensus) lies a disqualification of racialized subjects, which can be seen through racialized subjects suffering racial profiling by police, unjust treatment by public servants, and also in the debate surrounding Zwarte Piet (a Dutch folklore character usually portrayed in blackface and red lipstick). Thus, the authors contend that the campaign's discrediting of anger in the face of racial inequalities prevents the formation of radical black subjectivity. The dominant discourse of such campaigns uses anti-polarization as an attempt to, wittingly or not, curtail anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-capitalist critique. The authors conclude that the campaign's intention to go from black and white to grey actually functions to reproduce white as legitimate and in place, and black as excessive and out of place. This gesture ultimately serves to reinforce a resilient Dutch coloniality.

Chapter 6, by Inês Nascimento Rodrigues, reads the poems of Conceição Lima through the idiom of haunting, ghosts and specters in order to show how they "help to unveil histories, voices and a profoundly shattered Santomean society that remains haunted by the consequences of colonialism" (p. 91). Interestingly, the author indicates that Jacques Derrida's conception of the spectral – itself the basis of an influential analytical perspectives – actually rests on Eurocentric and ahistorical biases. Instead, the author turns to other ways of reading the concept of haunting (such as Esther Peeren's and Achille Mbembe's) so as to challenge homogenizing narratives of the postcolonial nation, in this case the Santomean struggle against the Portuguese. The focus of this chapter is the 1953 Batepá massacre of the *forros*, the Santomean dominant ethno-cultural group. The author notes that the *forros* considered themselves as 'authentic' Santomean, distancing themselves from contract workers who came from other Portuguese colonies to work in the plantations. The involvement of the contract workers in the massacre, and their collaboration with the colonial power, was concealed over time, not least by Santomean nationalists who feared that this information would weaken their struggle against the Portuguese. Lima's poetry often refers to the contract workers in an attempt to narrate nationhood otherwise. The chapter reads the figure of the contract worker as the living dead in Lima's poetry, haunting the nation. The author also draws on Boaventura de Sousa Santos' sociology of absences and emergences, insofar as Lima's poetry gives voice, recognition and agency to these people rendered invisible by hegemonic discourses and narratives of the nation.

Chapter 7, by Elena Brugioni, adopts a postcolonial approach to consider the ambiguities surrounding geo-linguistics, namely, the use of language in constructing a

community, with particular reference to the notion of a Lusophone linguistic community. Brugioni raises critical questions on how the category of 'Lusophone' functions, for example, when university courses classify literature from, say, Angola or Cape Verde as a single literary system of 'Lusophone African literature'. Or when discourses connoting 'possession' or 'betrayal' were invoked as a reaction to Mozambique's admittance to the Commonwealth. This chapter reminds us that the institutional dimension of language foregrounds the colonized/colonizer relationship, and the homogenization and essentialization demanded by the supposed community of the colonized. The chapter closes with an interesting discussion of the notion of community, drawing on the work of Giorgio Agamben and Jean-Luc Nancy, particularly their respective notions of 'the coming community' and 'inoperative community'. Such notions can reanimate our thinking of "a far more decolonized 'postcolonial conviviality'" (p. 110).

Chapter 8, by Sarah Scales, presents an interesting discussion concerning translations of Fanon's *Peau noire, masques blancs* (*Black Skin, White Masks*), highlighting the important divergences in translation between Charles Lam Markmann's first translation and Richard Philcox's more recent one. Scales demonstrates how such differences in translations matter, particularly from a postcolonial perspective, especially in view of the central role that Fanon's text came to have in Anglophone postcolonial studies. The author indicates instances where Markmann's translation amounts to an assimilationist domestication of the text, where the original text is rendered more readily understandable at the expense of important meanings being lost in the process. For example, Scales notes how Markmann's translation displaces Fanon's emphasis on the lived experience of the black man, does not foreground the

French Caribbean context of Fanon's writing, and repositions Fanon's text in an attempt to show how this text can be applied in the American context of the civil rights movement. This can also be seen in the way that Markmann translates some of Fanon's dialogue in a kind of American South register. Such translation choices can have a questionable effect on the work, "turning it into a text that people *want* to see, rather than the text it is" (p. 121). Towards the end of the chapter, Scales turns to Edward Said's travelling theory, suggesting that understood in this light, the adapted translation can also be seen to have the positive effect of increasing the appeal of Fanon's text in its literary afterlife as it travels to a new American readership. Scales' important conclusion proposes that scholars of postcolonial studies must "reconsider the reliance on English translations of key texts, or at the very least, treat them in a more circumspect and considered manner" (p. 126) in order to appreciate the multilingual nature of postcolonial studies.

Chapter 9, by Alice Brown, examines the postcolonial discourses employed in the reporting of the 2013 French military operation in Mali and its aftermath, namely the hostage crisis in the Algerian town of In Amenas. Brown demonstrates how themes from African colonial history are still recurrent in the contemporary postcolonial world, and that France's foothold in Africa still colours the current situation. This chapter critiques the "false bravado of politicians" (p. 135), as witnessed in the French military operation, which results in a series of further conflicts and crises. The author notes how the media plays a role in this, particularly with its use of 'liberator's discourse' to justify its military actions. Brown argues that the French strategy was that of "a publicity campaign to clear out certain areas, quickly declare victory over the Islamist militants, before moving on and leaving the Malian army with the arduous task of re-establishing order and control" (pp.

137-8). This chapter concludes by suggesting that between the imperialist exceptionalism shown by the French postcolonial foreign policy and the new form of domestic colonization brought about by African despots, "the unfortunate result is an every-deteriorating socioeconomic plight for the masses, who have seen little change in the past thirty years" (p. 142).

Chapter 10, by Lars Jensen, analyses the Danish entry for a 2012 architecture biennale, titled 'Possible Greenland'. Jensen contextualizes the Greenland question by highlighting that despite being politically autonomous, Greenland is still financially dependent on the Danish state. Jensen's chapter proceeds by highlighting the internal contradictions and ambiguities implied in the 'Possible Greenland' project – including in the discourse of the project's curator Minik Rosing, a popular Greenlandic geologist – between messages of modernization against preservation, or sustainability against neoliberal dictates. Jensen points towards three crucial challenges that Greenland faces, which the Danish pavilion identifies. These are climate change issues, evidenced by the retreat of the glacier; local demographic challenges whereby inhabitants of small settlements struggle to attract inhabitants in order to be eligible for funding; and the resource boom predicament. Jensen's chapter concludes how pointing out that, despite its attempts, 'Possible Greenland' did not manage to adequately face the inherently contradictory aspects of neoliberal modernity faced by Greenland, and that the curatorial language surrounding the exhibition still reflects the Danish modernization project.

Chapter 11, by Sarah Arens, presents a postcolonial reading of Belgium, particularly as some of its municipalities, such as Molenbeek, have drawn a lot of attention in view of the 2016 bombings. Arens discusses how contemporary Belgium is still full of icons and

monuments that reflect its colonial past, such as monuments celebrating colonialism. This chapter consider a 2015 film (Bilall Falah's *Black*) and a 2011 novel (Patrick François' *La dernière larme du lac Kivu* [*The Last Tear of the Kivu Lake*]). What Arens highlights through these artistic productions is how young male bodies of colour, in this case Belgian-born and of Moroccan heritage, experience mobility in complex postcolonial Belgian spaces. The author maintains that, in the case of *Black*, "the film's representation of black male characters and its problematic gender politics tap into long-established and mediatized stereotypes thereof," (p. 169) with the film's one-dimensional portrayal of certain characters reinforcing "a racist discourse of atavistic violence reverberating with the rhetoric of savagery and barbarism" (p. 171). With regard to François' novel, the author argues that it offers a bleak picture by "presenting the only mobility of black male bodies that state power allows as them being driven around in a police van" (p. 174). Ultimately, Arens concludes that the mediatized discourses contribute to constructing some bodies as belonging to certain neighborhoods while being prevented from other spaces.

Chapter 12, by Dorota Kołodziejczyk, discusses what she calls the "postcolonial backlash" (p. 177) in populist right-wing discourses in Poland. This chapter conducts an interesting analysis of how the right took over certain postcolonial terms and notions, such as 'decolonization', 'self-colonization' and 'hegemon' in order to reinforce their right-wing politics and attempts at nation-building. In the right-wing discourse and rhetoric, the 'self-colonizing subject' comes to stand for that who is open to European liberal projects and ideologies, while the 'true national subject' is the one who constructs their identity in opposition to liberal concepts of civil rights or personal choices. In this way, a politics of *ressentiment* is "used to

legitimate radical nationalism as a postcolonial reclamation of the self and (denied) authenticity" (p. 179). Such right-wing media also promote the idea of the EU as a 'colonizer', thus tapping into desires for unbounded sovereignty. Kołodziejczyk concludes the chapter by turning to the work of Laclau and Mouffe to show how contemporary right-wing Polish politicians are making use of powerful 'empty signifiers' that ultimately have an exclusionary function. Interestingly, the chapter closes with a reference to an observation by George Lakoff that "the 'conservatives' have a much more effective communication policy than the 'progressives'" (p. 189), particularly with regard to how "the 'conservatives' are more assertive about resorting to the higher grounds of (their) value system than 'progressives' who tend to downplay their participation in the 'progressive' value system" (p. 190). This is an interesting insight which, as Kołodziejczyk argues, should invite a European re-animation of the ethical dimension of a 'common dream', if only as a counter-discourse geared towards radical democracy and the ethics of sharing.

Chapter 13, by Zoran Lee Pecic, is an interesting addition in a collection about postcolonial Europe in that it takes China as its case study, which Pecic studies through an analysis of the portrayal of queerness in the 1996 film by Zhang Yuan, *East Palace, West Palace.* Specifically, Pecic also adopts the theoretical notion of 'thirdspace' from Edward Soja in order to describe the portrayal of queerness in this film as a "space caught in-between two views of non-normative sexuality in China: the 'progressive' global and the 'authentic' local" (p. 193). Pecic's chapter demonstrates how this Chinese film challenges and problematizes Euro-American notions of queerness and 'coming out' narratives'. In doing so, the film is presented by Pecic as destabilizing notions of a liberated modern West as opposed to a local and

oppressed 'tradition'. Thus, the film is read as an opportunity "for investigating Chinese queerness without adhering to polarizing discourses of the West and the East" (p. 212).

The volume closes with a brief but highly incisive afterword by Gurminder K. Bhambra, in which she offers her take on the notion of postcolonial Europe. Bhambra points out some of the grievous malaises that haunt contemporary Europe, from crises of austerity, to refugee 'crises', exacerbated far-right politics, suspicion about multiculturalism, and rising levels of inequality. In view of this, a postcolonial Europe "is the Europe that disappears from view in the standard narratives that present either cosmopolitan accounts of Europe or nationalist ones" (pg. 216). Bhambra importantly highlights the colonialism at the heart of the construction of Europe, pointing out that "countries that came to constitute the European Economic Community (EEC) and then eventually the EU were not, for the most part, nations, but rather empires with not only colonial histories but also colonial presents at the moment of European integration" (p. 217). For this reason, Bhambra argues that it is untenable to speak of the European project without foregrounding this, not least because the unification of Europe went hand in hand with a joint colonization of Africa, such that "the European project cannot be understood outside of its own colonial ambitions and intent" (p. 218). Bhambra concludes by critiquing the EU's construction of the influx of refugees as a 'crisis', suggesting that "if we do not wish refugees at our borders, then one thing that could be done is to lobby our governments to end their complicity in producing the situations that create refugees" (p. 219).

Despite my attempt at providing some engagement with all chapters in this volume, it is hard to capture the full richness of these chapters which, in their diversity, offer ample insights on the historical circumstances that

go some way to explaining the contemporary postcolonial European situation. Readers of this volume will be benefiting from detailed and nuanced studies of highly pertinent matters structuring contemporary political life. The chapters in this volume remind us of the perils of forgetting not just European colonial pasts but present imperial hang-ups. *Postcolonial Europe* makes for an edifying experience to newcomers to the field as well as more specialist readers.

Kurt Borg

University of Malta

BOOK REVIEW

Charmaine Bonello, *Boys, Early Literacy and Children's Rights in a Postcolonial Context*, Routledge, London, 2022, ISBN (hbk) 9780367646202, (pbk) 9780367646271, (ebk) 9781003125525, 117 pages

It is high time that we beat the boredom and unease some boys equate with reading and writing. The author, Charmaine Bonello, is a mother of two boys, an educator with many years of experience with boys in the early years, an advocate of children's rights, a researcher and lecturer within the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta. Through this publication, she invites readers to listen to the unheard voices of the boys in her study. She firmly believes that all children deserve, and have a right, to an excellent and meaningful reading experience so they may become passionate about reading and writing. To capture these voices Bonello held focus group interviews with 14 boys, aged 5 to 6 years (Year 1 in Primary School) old within three State Schools in Malta.

In Chapter 1, Bonello presents the historical, cultural, social and economic context for the study. The researcher's values, beliefs, attitudes and work experience guided her to conduct a mixed method case study which explores boys' underachievement in literacy in early years education in Malta. Although the participants were young boys, elements of the context in which they live can be traced much further back in time. It is for this reason, that the researcher adopts the dual lens of children's rights

and postcolonial theory. The Maltese islands have been occupied by a succession of foreign powers. The author argues that the legacy of foreign influence is reflected not only in the languages with which five-to six-year-old Maltese boys become familiar but also in the ways in which they come to experience and struggle with schooled reading and writing practices in a Maltese post-colonial ECEC context. This study does not only strive to document the 'voice' of the children in their own familiar setting, hence the children's rights stance. By adopting a postcolonial perspective, the research aptly highlights that when children engage in literacy practices in their everyday school life they do so from within a local context which is tied to global contexts. This local-global relationship has important implications when attempting to understand the perennial "why" of gender differences in literacy achievement.

In the second chapter, the author takes a critical approach towards the dominant gendered discourse that percolates early literacy practices in Maltese schools and that seems to position young boys at a disadvantage. The so-called *gender gap* is unpacked, and the reader is invited to revisit, question and refute traditional gender stereotypes. Freire's thinking on the diverse and subtle shapes and forms that oppression and control can take is used to create awareness of those factors that may be shaping and negatively impacting boys' identities and attitudes towards literacy learning. Bonello argues that it is only through a critical lens and the joint effort of all stakeholders involved that specific action for change can be taken - the author proposes a bottom-up approach that prioritizes the participation of children and their families in the co-construction of learning spaces that are equally safe and enabling for all learners. Apart from providing a fresh view of early literacy learning, this book, and this chapter more specifically, authentically mirrors the work

and advocacy of the author in her determination to give a voice to the voiceless, and to help create the right conditions for a shared understanding and a shared dialogue about culturally and socially just pedagogies.

The third chapter re-examines the views of young boys in Malta's highly formalized approach to early literacy learning that is still prevalent in our schooling system. Children should be given the opportunity to be co-participants in their experiences of early literacy and this does not happen when education is highly formalized and overly teacher-led, referred to by Bonello as 'the early literacy oppressive pedagogy'. Moreover, Bonello points out that boys seemed demotivated by the highly formalized and structured approach to reading instruction that placed systematic synthetic phonics at the centre. Other literacy rich experiences such as those inherent to a balanced literacy approach (storytelling, shared reading, read alouds, guided reading, songs, rhymes, play, drama, and so on) did not seem to be given the time or space required. Bonello argues for children's interests and reading abilities to be recognized and reflected in the selection of books available in schools. Through analysing the boys' interventions she calls for texts related to popular culture, community-specific and culturally relevant texts in class to reduce the gap between home and school literacy experiences for the children. Research indicates that frequently books are sent home for children to read but it is less common to find the literacy exchange going the other way – from home to school.

Bonello uses Chapter 4 as a springboard to advocate for literacy as a social practice for the under-sevens. The chapter challenges a formal and traditional approach to early literacy learning as it unravels the impact it has on young boys. The author's in-class observations as well as excerpts from interviews with different stakeholders,

reveal that some five- to six-year-old boys struggle to be motivated and engaged with the required, menial, literacy tasks. Without proper transition, these boys moved from a play-based kindergarten environment to a formal school setting, where they were subject to the drilling of repetitive words and the filling of endless pages of workbooks. The author asserts that this ingrained colonial philosophy devaluates play and maintains a formal and traditional concept of school and the teaching of literacy in structured and decontextualised ways. The chapter reveals how hidden colonialism and the effects of neoliberal principles, that provoke top-down pressures, prevent educators in postcolonial contexts from providing more democratic and socially just early literacy pedagogies. Bonello invites us to re-envision, reconfigure and recreate our notions of literacy learning and urges political, institutional and individual stakeholders to deconstruct a colonial frame of mind and reconstruct a literacy pedagogy that empowers all children. The young boys and several stakeholders in this chapter tell us that a highly formalised approach to literacy for the under-sevens is not socially just and fails to honour the principles of a children's rights perspective – this is too important and too significant, to be ignored.

This publication will appeal to policymakers and educators at all levels as it will enable them to become aware of the local situation and understand how we can overcome the current literacy challenges to provide all young children nationwide with quality literacy education.

Rosienne Camilleri
Josephine Deguara
Josephine Milton
Tania Muscat
University of Malta

BOOK REVIEW

Linda Herrera, *Educating Egypt: Civic Values and Ideological Struggles,* ISBN pb 978-1-6490-3102-0, hb 978-1-6490-3169-3, 2022, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 256 pages.

Educating Egypt offers a topical and compelling account written against the backdrop of immense changes taking place within Egypt's 'new' education system. What makes this book unique is that it traces Herrera's research trajectories from being a postgraduate researcher conducting an ethnographic study of a Cairene school in the early 1990s, to becoming a key consultant in Egypt's efforts to reform and digitise its education system. Despite this involvement, she is under no illusions regarding the difficulties facing Egypt's youth in accessing an empowering and just education. The book aims to trace 'the everyday practices, policy ideas, and ideological and political battles relating to education from the era of nation building in the twentieth century to the age of digital disruption in the twenty-first' (p.1), with the main theme being how schooling and education, more broadly, 'have consistently mirrored larger political, economic, and cultural trends and competing ideas about what constitutes the "good society", the "good citizen", and the "educated person"' (ibid.). At first glance, a challenging feat given Egypt's complex history, nonetheless, remarkably achieved in an accessible and engaging manner.

In addition to an introductory chapter that illustrates the key issues shaping Herrera's oeuvre, the book is divided into four parts. Part One traces her ethnographic work presenting a vivid portrayal of the everyday workings of a girls' preparatory school in the early 1990s; a period shaped by the First Gulf War, the growth of Islamist influence on education, and Egypt's Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Programme (ERSAP). Chapter One, aptly entitled *An Ethnographer's Orientation*, illustrates the dilemmas and delicate balances that have to be negotiated within the Egyptian context. A reflection that is contemporary to ethnographers in 2022. Chapter Two focuses on a unique feature of Egyptian schools: The *Tabur*. The morning assembly that 'brings together the entire school community, the body politic, in a ritualistic performance of nationalism, discipline, and community building' (p.35).

In Chapter Three, gender is utilised as a lens to examine the school as 'a space of political socialisation and integration into middle class urban society' (p.50). Herrera focuses on the subject of Home Economics which, at the time, was compulsory for all female students at the preparatory level. She argues that through unpacking the subject's associated hidden curriculum and ideological underpinnings, one is able to understand how traditional gender roles are maintained and middle-class consumer culture embraced. This, problematically, 'did not reflect the lived reality of students from predominantly urban poor and lower middle-class sectors' (p.60) where 'middle-class sensibilities implicit in the home economics framework…played out in a manner that accentuated class differences and set students apart' (p.65).

Chapter Four shifts the lens towards the steady decline of teaching as a respected profession in Egypt. Unable to earn a liveable wage, working in difficult conditions, and suffering from a deteriorating social

status, many teachers had to resort to giving private lessons, with some having to draw on 'a sadistic arsenal of hitting, insulting, and psychologically abusing students to bully them into taking private lessons' (p.77). Chapter Five builds on this by focusing on another vital factor contributing to the growth of private lessons: high-stakes exams. This has inevitably led to the formation of a 'shadow education system' placing a huge financial burden on Egyptians. This conundrum is pertinently summarised when Herrera argues that 'The shadow education system exists and thrives in an environment where examinations are sacrosanct. Private tutors act as high priests and priestesses who prepare students to enter the temples of examination rooms, where futures and life chances are determined' (p.87).

Part Two, entitled *Political Islam and Education*, consists of three chapters based on Herrera's doctoral research on private Islamic schools. Chapter Six showcases the Egyptian state's conflict with Islamist militancy and how it played out in the education system leading to education becoming further engrained within Egypt's security apparatus. In doing so, the chapter offers an overview of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) which 'provides an important context for understanding the heightened securitisation of Egyptian education from the 1990s into the 2000s' (p.102). Herrera additionally outlines how, in the process of purging schools of Islamist influence, the Egyptian government inadvertently contributed to the rise of private Islamic schools as part of its privatisation push. This served to exacerbate the ongoing conflict to control official school knowledge.

Chapter Seven offers a deeper analysis of how these private Islamic schools were able to cultivate alternative ideas about civic belonging and group identity. By focusing on three schools, Herrera illustrates how, although different 'in terms of class affiliations,

educational vision, and business models, they all shared to some degree a recognition of themselves as working toward a counternationalist project' (p.126). One that does not necessarily reject Egyptian identity, but advocates a notion of citizenship based on being a particular kind of Muslim. Chapter Eight, the shortest chapter, sheds light on 'downveiling', the shift by Muslim girls and women to less concealing and conservative forms of Islamic dress and changing embodied religious practices. Downveiling should be viewed as a dynamic and non-linear process representing 'citizenship in action' where young women push boundaries and reshape norms.

Part Three on *Youth in a Changing Global Order* consists of four chapters connecting education to empire to 'interrogate the effects of the post-Cold War global order on education systems and the teaching profession' (p.136). Chapter Nine focuses on Mubarak's regime and his proclamations that the 1990s represented Egypt's 'Education Decade'; one that witnessed an impressive quantitative growth in terms of state education budgets, schools built, and enrolment numbers, that, nonetheless, was not reflected in Egypt's performance in developmental indices. Herrera specifically points to how these educational reforms hardly paid attention to youth, let alone involved them in the process. The section on the politics of curriculum reform highlights, I believe, an issue that is scarcely paid attention to. Namely, USAID's role in influencing curricular reform in the region and its push for a global citizenship that downplays issues of 'global power, inequality, and geopolitics, but rather serve[s] as a way to erase and mute these issues' (p.147).

Chapter Ten follows two Egyptian youth and illustrates their disparate yet overlapping future hopes and concerns. These interviews were conducted prior to 2011 and puts into perspective the circumstances leading to the Egyptian Uprisings and aims to dispel the myth that

the immediate challenges facing youth are the spread of Islamist movements and radicalism. Rather, the key issues revolve around the scarcity of jobs and the absence of justice in education, employment, and government accountability. Chapter Eleven focuses on the immediate period following Mubarak's in February 2011 and chronicles the changes in Egyptian youth's 'digital' engagement in public life within and beyond schools and universities. The chapter also warns against considering this as a panacea to challenge the existing education system given the digital inequality facing many Egyptians.

Chapter Twelve employs Guy Standing's 'precariat' to argue that youth in the region have similarly been affected by the global crisis leading to growing anger, anomie, anxiety, and alienation. Here, Herrera critiques prescriptive models of development (in particular, the 2016 Arab Human Development Report) that dismiss youth as agents of change capable of realising new forms of social, cultural, and political action. She also critiques mainstream (read: neoliberal) prescriptions for reforming education and youth unemployment which 'unproblematically correlat[e] education with jobs and the demands of the labour market' (p.188).

Part Four questions whether we are capable of re-imagining the future of schools. Herrera argues that Covid-19, alongside the Egyptian government's push to digitally transform education, has opened up avenues to 'disrupt' how we teach and learn. Nonetheless, and in keeping with earlier caveats, she argues that 'The act of upending the older education system and replacing it with a different one does not necessarily "fix the old problems" or lead to improved outcomes for the majority of the population' (p.199). If education consistently mirrors larger political, economic, and cultural trends, then in order to truly transform education, we will need to ensure that this process is not separated from the reality facing

Egyptians. We must be bold and imaginative in our demands for a better future where we are able to 'strive to build knowledge and engage in dialogue about how education can best serve and support the common good, the global good' (p.200).

In short, *Educating Egypt* represents a significant contribution to debates surrounding education in the Global South. It offers a sober and timely analysis which will be of relevance to students, academics, and policy makers. I first came across Herrera's work as a PhD candidate which helped shaped many of my arguments and continues to do so. Undoubtedly, many others will also be as inspired when they read this book.

Nadim Mirshak
University of Manchester

BOOK REVIEW

Maria Alicia Rueda, *The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren: Pioneering Working-Class Education in Latin America.* New York and London: Routledge, 2021

Maria Alicia Rueda has made an essential contribution to education and Marxist studies with the publication of *The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren: Pioneering Working-Class Education in Latin America.* By focusing on the early twentieth-century Chilean Marxist, the author showcases a lesser-known Communist leader and pioneer in working-class education. As the author states "the book is not a biography, nor does it approach him as a 'great man' but rather as 'an organic intellectual' of the working class".

Recabbarren was born in Valparaiso in 1876 and was schooled by French priests. From a family of modest means, he worked from a young age in a print shop, where his work as a typographer trained him for his lifelong work as a newspaper publisher and journalist. At the age of 15, he participated in the Chilean Civil War as a military recruit and having published anti-government propaganda, he was judged in a military court but exonerated. From that time onward, he was an engaged activist joining the Democratic Party in 1894, a party that represented working-class interests. Throughout his years

in the Democratic Party, he identified himself as a "revolutionary socialist". During his years in the party, he founded newspapers and was elected to Congress, the first working-class leader to achieve that distinction, but he did not take office when he refused to take a religious oath.

Recabarren self-exiled to Argentina in 1906 after serving prison time for organizing miners in northern Chile. In Argentina, his socialist thinking was refined. Following the severe repression of working-class protests in Chile in 1907, he returned to his native country. He wrote one of his most important essays, *Rich and Poor through a Century of Republican Life,* a scathing critique of the shortcomings of Chile's supposedly democratic system. As he radicalized, he broke with the Democratic Party and, in 1911, founded the Socialist Workers Party (POS), a forerunner to today's still influential Communist Party of Chile. The years surrounding World War I were crucial to developing the POS and Chilean socialism. He was involved in forming several unions and socialist newspapers during that era. His strategic thinking generally followed the reflection of the Second International that socialism was a natural and non-violent progression of human development that could be achieved with the full extension of voting rights to the working class. In this context, he placed workers' education on socialist ideas to the forefront of both his writings and practical work through speaking tours and newspaper editing.

Like all socialists of that era, he was influenced by European events. When most of the European socialist parties of the Second International supported their governments in the war, Recabbaren and the POS took an antiwar stance and later, with the triumph of the

Bolshevik Revolution, joined the newly formed Third International under Soviet leadership. In the postwar period, as a member of Congress for the POS, he led the Federation of Chilean Workers (FOCH), which organized into a single union federation the majority of the workers in the country. He championed the unity of the working class as a key Communist objective as part of a long-term strategy of bringing about socialism in Chile. Tragically Recabarren died in 1924 following a military coup of gunshot wounds presumably of his own making. Like the death of Salvador Allende almost fifty years later, the circumstances of his death have always been disputed. Still, his impact on the development of the Chilean working class and socialist movements cannot be disputed. As the author argues, he should be considered a figure of significant importance in Latin America in the same category as Agosto Cesar Sandino, Jose Marti, Carlos Mariategui, and Jose Antonio Mella.

It is important to note that the working class struggles of Chile took a different form from ones that focused on armed struggle. Instead, the Chilean struggle was conducted "not by caudillos but by educators". As a result, a primary focus of Rueda's book is Recabarren's work as an educator. His view of the role of education for the working class was the following:

> The major obstacle to social equality today is the difference in culture, education, and customs. That can be resolved by providing the means for education and cultivation, and in a few years of active work, all lack of culture and manners will disappear (Recabbaren, 1912/1976, p. 133).

The education of the working class would require a multifaced approach involving the intelligentsia, the press,

the schools, and municipal governments. However, he saw no role for the Roman Catholic Church, a group usually charged with an important educational role, critiquing their failure to produce a morally good citizenry. While he saw education as the task of many organs of society, his focus was the role of working-class organizations. He identified different structures and wrote about their respective roles. One type of organization was the manocommunales, mutual aid societies of the working class that held sway in the 19th century. These bodies mainly served as defenders of workers' rights. Still, Recabbaren worked with them to add an educational function with the publication of newspapers and the building of worker-operated spaces where there could be the education of both adults and their children. This was part of a strategy of arguing for night schools in the absence of proper public schools. He would later apply the manocommunal experience to all the working-class organizations he worked with. Rueda contends that this was a crucial part of his legacy.

Gary Prevost

College of St. Benedict and St. John's University

References

Recabbaren, L.E. (1976) El Socialismo. Que es, y como se realizara? [Socialism. What is it, and how it will be accomplished?]. In D. Castenada Fuertes (Ed.), *Obras* [Works] (pp. 101-185). Havana, Cuba: Casa de las Americas (Original work published 1912)