Maguth, B., and Hilburn, J. (2015) ***The State of Global Education. Learning with the world and its people*****.** New York, NY: Taylor and Francis. 218 pages. ISBN-10: 0415721679.

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The State of Global Education offers a collection of mostly US-based contributions and reflections on global education theory and practice. While it would be difficult to identify a common theme that connects the chapters together – the book itself is divided into several distinct sections – approximately half of the authors engage with the topic of teacher training, teacher professional development, or teacher conceptualizations of global education. This leads to the impression that teacher education is the predominant focus of the book. In the introduction, Brad Maguth and Jeremy Hilburn suggest that the aim of the book is to promote global education research and practice.

Part 1 contains three contributions related to the theory of global education. Douglas Bourn's opening chapter on development education and critical global education discusses terminological differences between development and global education and outlines a brief historical analysis of the transition away from development towards global education. He offers an overview of different interpretations of both terms in various regional contexts, outlining some key aspects of debates in Europe, North America, and Africa. He argues that the concept of development education remains a worthy pedagogical approach framed within an understanding of development and global themes located within values of social justice and aimed at promoting critical and reflective thinking. Likewise, development education encourages learners to explore connections between their lives and the lives of others with the purpose of inciting active social engagement. He stresses the importance of critical thinking and the need to engage in discussions about global power relations, poverty, and various inequalities with a commitment to reflection, dialogue, and transformation. Bourn's contribution is the only one in the book that emphasizes the need for a more critical pedagogy that engages in an analysis of power and injustice and that encourages learners to reflect on their place in the world.

Anatoli Rapoport's chapter on global aspects of citizenship education begins with the proposition that while global citizenship is a topic of considerable interest, many

teachers still feel reluctant to engage in its teaching. He proposes that the main obstacles to teachers' greater involvement are the conceptual vagueness of global citizenship; the propensity to teach national or regional citizenship; curricular insecurity; and a lack of administrative support. Rapoport offers a comprehensive analysis of conceptual and systemic obstacles, with a strong focus on the tensions related to often conflicting administrative demands placed on teachers, where national curricula may be seen as potential barriers to global citizenship programmes. Teachers lack both the academic freedom and the curricular justification needed to include elements of global citizenship education in their work. He concludes with a discussion of the challenges that the concept of global citizenship poses against nation-oriented conceptualizations of citizenship. He stresses the need for teachers to understand the changes that globalization has brought to more traditional understandings of citizenship.

The third chapter in the theoretical section, by Caprice Lantz and Ian Davies, discusses the centrality of intercultural competences, proposing that global education and intercultural competences retain a low educational status in spite of their necessity in an increasingly globalized world. They discuss five main challenges faced by global educators interested in promoting intercultural competence through their work: the contested characterizations of the field; the continuing strength of the nation-state; the conflict between internationalization and the profit-oriented neo-liberal approach to education; unrealistic expectations for spontaneous development of intercultural competence between students; and accusations of low levels of academic work done in the field. Lantz and Davies expand on Bourn's discussion of terminology by offering more details on various understandings of intercultural competences. They also provide a compelling argument that the neo-liberal focus on the internationalization of education, with its demands for standardization and quantifiable outcomes, combined with the economic focus of universities, undermines the social and cultural goals of students' intercultural development. Consequently, strategic commitments to cross-cultural competences do not get translated into programmes and practices. The value of intercultural competences is thus increasingly seen in terms of providing employability rather than social change.

The common ground shared by all the authors is that global education needs to be defended against the changing educational, economic, and political environment by demonstrating its relevance to the needs of learners in a globalized society. Considering that the impact of increased marketization and commodification of education also resonates strongly in the field of global education, the contributions in this part of book leave the impression that in mainstream academic publications (such as this book) the space for self-reflection, self-critique, and deep theoretical questioning from within the field itself has all but disappeared.

The second part of the book, split into three sections (experiential education, university initiatives, and conceptual approaches to teaching and learning), focuses on global education programs and practices. The first section begins with Timothy Patterson's reflection on the limits and promises of international in-service teacher professional development. Patterson explores the potential benefits of these programmes and offers a critical assessment of the impact of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and the spread of Western hegemony on teachers' international experience through a case study of an in-service study tour in which US teachers travelled along the historic Silk Road in China. Patterson draws the conclusion that widespread use of CMC, coupled with risk-averse and heavily guided route preparation, prevented teachers from having experiences that would challenge preconceptions and prejudices, which in many ways were reinforced rather than deconstructed. The case study offers a valuable example of how even very resource-intensive international experiences, both in terms of time and finances, can have little or no educational impact, running the risk of replicating 'traditional tourist experiences, rather than international professional development' (Maguth and Hilburn, 2015: 75). Patterson offers a very relevant observation that the only time the teachers were challenged on the journey was during the rather limited unstructured time when they had to deal with challenges outside of the pre-designed programme.

Debora Hinderliter Ortloff and Olga N. Shonia discuss teacher conceptualizations of global citizenship by presenting a review of some of the outcomes of a study on 108 US teachers. The authors compare teacher conceptualizations between three different cohorts: teachers with no significant experience outside the US; teachers with significant international experience; and teachers who emigrated to the US from other countries. An interpretation of the data based on Banks's CATS model suggests that teachers with more international experience exhibit a greater social action and transformation engagement-oriented understanding of global citizenship (for example, raising funds and performing community service). Teachers without international experience seem more content with contributions and additive approaches to global citizenship such as special cultural days and singing songs in different languages. The text contains no discussion about what the conceptualizations of immigrant teachers might be, unless their responses were included in the first group. The authors also offer an interesting analysis of the US Department of Education 2012 policy framework for internationalization of K-12 education that positions the need for global citizenship as a response to perceived threats to US interests.

Guichun Zong's chapter on teaching globalization through community-based enquiry is the third and final part of the section dedicated to experiential education.

Zong overviews literature related to globalization and education and then moves to her work in the course Intercultural Communication and Global Learning. After exposure to selected literature on globalization, student teachers engage in community-based enquiry that encourages the exploration of linkages between local and global contexts. Students conduct interviews with members of the community and participate in various local contexts. Zong notes several challenges related to community-based enquiry, such as projects focusing exclusively on economic integration and cultural encounters brought about by globalization and the tendency of student teachers to select projects that are perceived to be safe and less controversial.

Under university initiatives, Cyndi Mottola Poole and William B. Russell III offer an overview of a study employing an online questionnaire conducted among 112 US elementary teachers. The study looked for differences between American teachers relative to their year of graduation and the number of global education courses taken; the rate of participation in cross-cultural activities; and their global perspectives. The authors conclude that while there has been significant increase in the number of global content courses, recent graduates are not more globally aware than older or more experienced teachers. They suggest that some evidence shows that such graduates may be even less cross-culturally competent. The findings present an interesting and welcoming challenge to the mainstream literature on the subject. They also raise the often overlooked issue of the potential counter-productivity of global education courses and activities.

In their contribution, Sarah A. Matthews and Hilary Landorf discuss the possibility of 'meaningful encounters with difference' in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). They offer an overview of the subject matter and express scepticism concerning whether MOOC by themselves could offer a place for such meaningful encounters. They propose *hybrid* courses with face-to-face coursework and online content as the most effective format for cross-cultural dialogue. Drawing on Braskamp *et al.* (2012), they list a set of recommendations structured around three key questions for facilitation related to the intrapersonal, cognitive, and interpersonal domains: Who am I? How do I know? How do I relate? These simple yet powerful questions have the potential to initiate necessary cognitive dissonance. However, the authors' concrete suggestions (reflection on students values, personal autobiographies, putting students in the role of group facilitators, etc.) seem to steer the educational process in the direction of re-affirming the desire for innocence, futurity, and positive image-crafting of modern Cartesian subjects, rather than opening educational spaces for uncomfortable and troubling pedagogies that would displace and disrupt narcissistic tendencies for self-exploration, self-affirmation, and self-congratulation.

In the final section, dedicated to conceptual approaches to teaching and learning, Adrienne Michetti, Rebekah Madrid, and Kimberly Cofino present International Baccaulerate (IB) schools as a model for twenty-first-century global education. Their contribution outlines a set of educational ideals that schools should embody and corresponding key elements that would lead to the fulfilment of the ideals of action-oriented, globally connected, and inclusive schools. This long list on how to create the 'ideal school' reflects an understanding that could hardly be considered as universally shared or indeed feasible in lesser-resourced educational environments. The authors do not discuss any potential weaknesses of the proposals nor do they problematize their own assumptions about what an ideal(ized) school environment looks like. They do not question the ways the idealized students are expected to think, feel, and act; the risks if schools do not act according to their ideals; and the ideal strategies they propose to reach their idealized goals. What is likewise lacking is a grounding of their proposal in educational theory or at least a critical comparison between their idealizations and educational practice.

While the authors identify the challenges that national curricula pose for global education, they offer no discussion of the challenges for global education that might emerge from the over-privileged background of so many international schools. They do not seem to be concerned with the fact that most schools across the world could never afford to offer their students the resources available to privately funded international schools. Their approach further positions students as unproblematic world-saving heroes whose motivations are completely benevolent and consistent with their drives for personal growth and social betterment. The affirmative, celebratory, and idealizing tone of the chapter makes it a particularly difficult read.

In the last chapter of the book, Ruth Reynold *et al.* share experiences from the Global Education and Teaching (GERT) team at a regional university in Australia. They offer arguments for a values-based pedagogy grounded in their educational practice and built around Lucas's (1972) proposal for teaching *about*, *for*, and *with* that the authors adopted and adapted as a conceptual framework. Learning *about* GE thus refers to learning to know and to do in a global world; learning *for* GE requires developing corresponding skills and knowledges and learning; and learning *with* GE refers to real-life experiential learning. The group also presents an evaluation and adaptation cycle that they use to modify and adapt their methods according to student feedback.

Concluding reflections

Does *The State of Global Education* merit the name it carries? The central question that kept returning while I engaged with the text was: Is this book a representative document of the field of global education in the current context, does it represent the current state of affairs, as its name would suggest? From the perspective of a reviewer

in a central European location, an under-resourced educational environment where any kind of global education practice is constantly at the margins and more often done by various NGOs rather than by teachers in schools, certain suggestions from the book seem very much out of sync with educational realities in non-Western parts of the world.

Patterson's assertion that he considers an in-service study trip where teachers are staying in 'four or five-star amenities in cosmopolitan neighbourhoods' (65) as 'largely representative of international teacher professional development programs that have primarily academic goals guiding their planning and implementation' (64) may serve as a case in point. None of the teachers I have ever met could afford such a journey on a teacher's salary and no school that I know of would be able to pay for this trip. Such is the general state of education here, not to mention the vast majority of the rest of the world. And by writing this I am not issuing a complaint; I am simply surprised that such resource-intensive tours are considered mainstream, especially if their results are as questionable as Patterson suggests.

In a similar way, proposals such as the one put forward by Michetti, Madrid, and Cofino, who recommend that more state-funded schools model themselves after private international schools, can only be read as a suggestion that lacks a more thorough analysis of some key differences between state-funded and private schools. In particular, it needs to be considered that international schools have traditionally attracted elite students and tuition is coupled with considerable expense, which is out of reach for the vast majority of the population. The authors themselves mention that children of parents working for multinational companies are among key target groups for these schools. Personally, I would be interested in exploring the controversies and paradoxes related to corporate funding for schools aimed at promoting 'action oriented, globally connected and inclusive' international schools (171). Unsurprisingly, no such consideration is even hinted at.

I find critical reflection in general and critical self-reflection in particular to be absent from most, but not all contributions in the book. This is highly problematic for a field that considers critical thinking, the capacity for self-reflection, and the capacity to challenge one's own assumptions among its distinctive qualities. If the aim of the book is to move the debate further, as the editors suggest, it remains unclear how this could happen without deep critical reflection on existing practice and theory. Similarly, the editors claim that the volume includes contributions from four different continents, but even a superficial overview reveals that most of the contributions are from US scholars, with singular chapters from Australia, the UK (representing Europe, presumably), and Asia (but written by North American scholars currently residing there). There is not a single non-Anglophone contribution in the book.

What troubles me is the thought that in the current context of neo-liberal avoidance of critique and increased impetus for commodification of knowledge, the field of global education has entered a defensive mode where potentially disruptive critical reflection is withdrawn from academic discourse because it is perceived as potentially damaging to the field itself. In this regard, the *State of Global Education* is an authentic document of the context we live in.

References

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