

Fuchs, Eckhardt; Vera, Eugenia Roldán (Hrsg.): *The Transnational in the History of Education. Concepts and Perspectives*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan 2019. ISBN: 9783030171674; XV, 302 S.

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The Transnational in the History of Education, edited by Eckhardt Fuchs and Eugenia Roldán Vera, is the first volume in the International Standing Conference on the History of Education's (ISCHE's) new book series on „Global Histories of Education“. It aims to map a dynamically growing research field, and to interrogate and reflect on its major categories of analysis, starting with the category of „the transnational“. The volume explicitly builds on earlier explorations on „connected“, „transnational“, and „global“ histories of education, and on a conversation with neighboring disciplines.¹ Thus, it draws from the fruitful historical debates on trans-regional connections, comparisons, and multi-perspectivity, as well as from the educational borrowing and transfer research in the field of Comparative Education.² Looking at the circulation of educational knowledge, at individuals travelling across empires and nation states, and the dynamics of universalism and parochialism, the volume is of interest for all scholars who want to explore educational histories beyond and across various political entities of the modern world.

The contributions to the volume approach the problem of „the transnational“ in several supplementary methodological ways, three of which will be highlighted here. A classical approach is the study of the transnational circulation, adaptation, and transformation of institutional models and educational policies. Dorena Caroli thus looks at the transfer of the French crèches to Italy and Russia – the latter case, in turn, inspiring social welfare debates in England. The French crèches, or day nurseries, were „medical-pedagogical spaces“ (p. 71) popularized in Europe through scientific networks, journals, and international conferences. Studying crèches is an important contribution to the growing research on the global history of the institutions of early child-

hood care and education.³ It links the history of education with histories of care-work, health, and reproduction. It is also a case in which the dialectic between an internationally circulating institutional model and its appropriation for nationalistic bio-political projects is particularly pronounced. Another interesting case of transfer is the implementation of the French colonial educational doctrine of „adaptation“ in the Protectorate of Morocco and in Colonial French West Africa (AOF) in the interwar period (Elsie Rockwell). This doctrine emerged from the tension „between the national policy of educating all [French] citizens through the uniform and centrally controlled national school system of the Republic and the logic of maintaining strong boundaries between mainland and native populations in the colonies“ (pp. 151–52). In Rockwell's study, adaptation is not only an aspect of processes of educational policy transfer; she analyses it as a strategy of colonial differentiation.

Another methodological approach, chosen by Barnita Bagchi and Joyce Goodman, is to explore the writings of individuals, whose lives and texts were marked by transnational travel, communication, and experience. Bagchi explores the multilingual literary work, and the transnational female friendships of the Bengali writer Toru Dutt (1856–1877), who was „fusing European and

¹ Barnita Bagchi / Eckhardt Fuchs / Kate Rousmaniere (Eds.), *Connecting Histories of Education. Transnational and Cross-Cultural Exchanges in (Post-)Colonial Education*, New York 2014; Thomas S. Popkewitz, *Rethinking the History of Education. Transnational Perspectives on its Questions, Methods, and Knowledge*, New York 2013; Rita Hofstetter / Joëlle Droux (Eds.), *Globalisation des mondes de l'éducation. Circulations, connexions, réfractations: XIXe–XXe siècles*. Collection „Histoire“, Rennes 2015.

² Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?*, Princeton 2016; Gita Steiner-Khamsi, *The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending*, New York 2004; Rosa Bruno-Jofre / Jürgen Schriewer, *The Global Reception of John Dewey's Thought. Multiple Refractions Through Time and Space*, New York 2012.

³ Helen May / Baljit Kaur / Larry Prochner, *Empire, Education, and Indigenous Childhoods. Nineteenth-Century Missionary Infant Schools in Three British Colonies*, New York 2014; Ann T. Allen, *The Transatlantic Kindergarten. Education and Women's Movements in Germany and the United States*, New York 2017.

Bengali/Sanskrit/South Asian cultural elements and forms“ (p. 194). Goodman focuses on Japanese educator Yoshi Kasuya’s (1894–1994) comparative study of the secondary education of girls in England, Germany, and the USA, which was undertaken to make recommendations for girls’ education in Japan. Yoshi’s cultural model of modern Japanese womanhood combined „Japanese elements with facets of Western womanhood that she encountered during her periods of research in Germany, England, and the USA“ (p. 202). In Yoshi’s case, adaptation was a conscious strategy to fit the observations of the international environment with her own cultural roots. Bagchi and Goodman both explore the concept of „vernacular cosmopolitanism(s)“ to understand their research subjects’ cultural positioning, and the ways in which they related to the wider world (pp. 193, 203). This presents an interesting contrast to the anti-modern tendencies, and the search for the authentic indigenous, which marked Mohandas K. Gandhi’s (1869–1948) prominent scheme of national education for independent India (Tim Allender) – a scheme which, paradoxically, was developed in close communication with the global new education movement.⁴ This points to the multiplicity of responses to global modernity, and its educational and pedagogical knowledge circulation, including appropriation and adaptation, „silent borrowing“⁵, and explicit rejection.

Joëlle Droux and Damiano Matasci’s study on the development of global regulatory systems (from the interwar period to the 1950s) in the fields of education and child development represents a third methodological choice. They propose a „bottom-up“ transnational history approach to the study of international organizations. That is, to empirically study the emergence of complex systems of interaction between international organizations such as League of Nations, non-governmental organizations, nation-states, and colonial empires. This implies to look at collaboration, but also conflicts and power struggles, such as colonial empires’ rejection, in the 1950s, of the UNESCO’s intervention in what they perceived as their legitimate spheres of influence.

Many contributions explicitly reflect on re-

search methodologies, and the possibilities and limitations of the existing scholarship. This includes a reflective engagement with the French-German *histoire croisée* (Christine Mayer), the establishment of a dialogue between French and English colonial historiographies (Rebecca Rogers), and the relationship between „transnational“ and „comparative“ approaches (Thomas Popkewitz).

A major strength of the volume is that it includes case studies on inner-European knowledge exchange with an analysis of the circulation within and across the British, French, and Ottoman empires, and in policy networks between empires, nation states, IGO’s, and NGO’s. While the term „transnational“ (in contrast to „transcultural“, or „transregional“) refers to the complex interconnections in a world composed of nation states, many such interconnections were made in a world of colonial empires. The volume convincingly makes the case for the need to study the intersection between imperial, trans-imperial, and trans-national networks of circulation. This includes the alliances formed, and knowledge gathered by colonial subjects in the „transnational“ domain. Finally, many contributors emphasize the varying, and changing relevance of transregional, transnational, and global interconnections: there were moments and movements of nationalization, of closure, and rejection of „outside“ political and educational influences, as well as moments of an intense observation of, and search for inspiration in the wider world.

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⁴ Simone Holzwarth, A New Education for „Young India“. Exploring Nai Talim from the Perspective of a Connected History, in: Bagchi / Fuchs / Rousmaniere (Eds.), *Connecting Histories of Education*, pp. 123–39.

⁵ Florian Waldow, Undeclared Imports. Silent Borrowing in Educational Policy [U+2010]making and Research in Sweden, in: *Comparative Education* 45 (2009), 4, pp. 477–494.