LINKING MARXISM, GLOBALIZATION, AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: TOWARD A COMPARATIVE AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY POST 9/11

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ABSTRACT. In a post-9/11 world, where the politics of “us” versus “them” has reemerged under the umbrella of “terrorism,” especially in the United States, can we still envision an éducation sans frontières: a globalized and critical praxis of citizenship education in which there are no borders? If it is possible to conceive it, what might it look like? In this review essay, Awad Ibrahim looks at how these multilayered and complex questions have been addressed in three books: Peter McLaren and Ramin Farahmandpur’s Teaching Against Global Capitalism and the New Imperialism, Nel Noddings’s Educating Citizens for Global Awareness, and Gita Steiner-Khamsi’s The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending. Ibrahim concludes that, through creating a liminal, dialogical space between humanism, environmentalism, materialism, philosophy, and comparative education, the authors in these books offer a critical pedagogy in which éducation sans frontières is possible — a project that is as visionary as it is hopeful.

We are no longer strangers to the gift bestowed on us by those who rule us by the “noble lie.” We courier our wedding gifts of democracy to the rest of the world by F-16 fighter jets. Unfortunately, we will mistake the disease (free-market capitalism) for the cure (liberty and freedom)... Will we continue to interpret our defeats as victories, to reaffirm our hegemonically reproduced and ideologically conditional reflexes, or will we finally see the writing on the wall?
– Peter McLaren and Ramin Farahmandpur

In a world of instant communication and swift travel, we have become keenly aware of our interdependence. Many of us are now concerned about the welfare of human and nonhuman life, preservation of the Earth as home to the life, and the growing conflict between the appreciation of diversity and the longing for unity.... We dream of peace in a world perpetually on the edge of war. One response to these concerns is the promotion of global citizenship
– Nel Noddings

[We] take the process of globalization for granted, but have serious doubts about whether globalization necessarily leads to a “world culture,” “internationality,” or “internationalism” in education.... [Here] globalization is for real, but the international community of experts agreeing on a common [international] model of education is imagined.
– Gita Steiner-Khamsi

Éducation sans frontières, or education without (or free of) borders, is a peculiar and mystifying notion. However, can education be free of borders, and, if it is possible to conceive it without borders, what might it look like? My desire in

1. Peter McLaren and Ramin Farahmandpur, Teaching Against Global Capitalism and the New Imperialism: A Critical Pedagogy [Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005], 14. This work will be cited as TA in the text for all subsequent references.
2. Nel Noddings, ed., Educating Citizens for Global Awareness [New York: Teachers College Press, 2005], 1. This work will be cited as EC in the text for all subsequent references.
3. Gita Steiner-Khamsi, ed., The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending [New York: Teachers College Press, 2004], 4. This work will be cited as GP in the text for all subsequent references.
taking up these questions is subjective and personal. I am what you might call a
universal subject, an identité sans frontières. I was born and grew up in Africa
(Sudan), studied in France and Canada, have a Canadian passport, and now teach in
the higher education system in the United States. I do not, however, pretend to
hold Solomonic wisdom, nor do I want to occupy the role of the “native informer,”
so my intent in this review essay is to look at how, in multilayered and complex
ways, others have answered this question. Specifically, I will review Peter McLaren
and Ramin Farahmandpur’s Teaching Against Global Capitalism and the New
Imperialism, Nel Noddings’s Educating Citizens for Global Awareness, and Gita
Steiner-Khamsi’s The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending.

For French speakers, éducation sans frontières is a Lyotardian wordplay on the
world’s leading nongovernmental medical relief organization: Médecins sans Frontieres
(MSF). Purposely working against, without, and across borders, MSF has a
noble charter that is directly related to the books reviewed here, especially
Noddings’s. Its mission is to offer “assistance to populations in distress, to victims
of natural or man-made disasters and to victims of armed conflict, without
discrimination and irrespective of race, religion, creed or political affiliation”; to
observe “neutrality and impartiality in the name of universal medical ethics and
the right to humanitarian assistance”; and to demand “full and unhindered free-
dom in the exercise of its functions.” Since MSF is run by volunteers who “are
aware of the risks and dangers of the missions they undertake,” these volunteers
“promise to honor their professional code of ethics and to maintain complete
independence from all political, economic and religious powers.” If one replaces
the word “medical” with “educational,” what picture would one have, especially
at a global level? On reading these books, one ends up with three overlapping, yet
distinctive pictures. Though the noble charter is the same for all three projects, the
theoretical and discipline-based approaches taken by the authors offer different —
in some cases, radically different — answers and outcomes.

The noble charter pursued by these books is built around the tension between
the material and the philosophical, the personal and the public, the abstract and
the concrete, the suggestive and the didactic, the humanist and the exploitative,
and the global and the local. McLaren and Farahmandpur’s book is unapologetic
rote materialist; Noddings’s is humanist, environmentalist, and philosophical; and
Steiner-Khamsi’s is squarely within comparative education. Yet all authors are
fully aware of this poststructural tension, make use of it, and push its boundaries
in new directions. Furthermore, all authors operate within and place at the center
the idea of globalization and relate it to education. They all attempt to answer
the question, Is éducation sans frontières possible? Given the broad, suggestive,

4. See http://www.msf.ca for the Médecins sans Frontieres mission statement, as well as additional
information about the organization.

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and expansive approach McLaren and Farahmandpur take, I will begin with their response.

MARX, GLOBALIZATION, AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AT GROUND ZERO

Teaching Against Global Capitalism and the New Imperialism is a collection of nine essays published previously in various journals and edited volumes. In combination, these essays develop a massive metatheory that has many different threads. At the risk of oversimplifying this undertaking, the authors’ main project in these essays is to critique globalization, especially its attendant global capitalism, postmodernism, cultural hybridity, and the “new imperialism.” They do this through a return to the relevant dimensions of Marxist theory while proposing as a cure what they call “critical revolutionary pedagogy.” For McLaren and Farahmandpur, globalization is a deceptive and euphemistic term. It hides its “ugly” face: imperialism, especially cultural imperialism; the U.S. project of unilateralism and world domination; exploitation of labor; Wal-Martization; state-sponsored terrorism; the militarization of public space; a corporate media; and a “moribund” or “bargain-base capitalism” that transforms the environment into “Planet Mall” for short-term profits and at the expense of ecological health and human dignity. Thus, on their view, globalization “cannibaliz[es] life as a whole” (TA, 15).

As they sum it up, their book does not pretend to be a comprehensive account of how we have arrived at this tragic state of affairs but attempts, if only modestly, to explore some of the central characteristics of U.S. imperialism and to situate these characteristics within a specific problematic that has been our province of research for a number of years, that of developing a philosophy of praxis that has gone by various descriptions: critical pedagogy, socialist pedagogy, and revolutionary critical pedagogy being among the most prominent. (TA, 1)

Teaching Against Global Capitalism and the New Imperialism begins with a fierce critique of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s best-selling book, Empire, published before 9/11 and the subsequent invasion of Iraq. In it, Hardt and Negri announced the arrival of postimperialism and argued that, given the rise of George H.W. Bush’s doctrine of New World Order, the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, the expansion of nongovernmental organizations, the diminishing role of the welfare state, and the increased influence of multinational corporations and supranational organizations (such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund [IMF]), we have entered an era of “peaceful capitalist coexistence” (TA, 2). For McLaren and Farahmandpur, Hardt and Negri’s “stubborn insistence that state power has become obsolete or that its role has significantly diminished” is not only disagreeable, but it gives ammunition to the discourse of multinational corporations (TA, 3). In the case of the United States, for example, McLaren and Farahmandpur maintain that “the state continues to play a key role in advancing the U.S. imperial project of global dominance,” and it does so “by means of two interlocking processes: globalization and neoliberalism” (TA, 3).

Neoliberalism, according to them, is a festival of masquerade and a theater of the absurd where unregulated market mechanisms rule, antimarket policies are eschewed, social subsidies are eliminated, limitless concessions are offered to transnational corporations, the market is established as the patron of educational reforms, environmental regulations are scrapped, public education is dismantled, and a “grab-the-profit-and-run” mentality, along with downsizing or “corporate anorexia,” are celebrated in the stock market. Neoliberalism, in short, is “capitalism with the gloves off” or “socialism for the rich” (TA, 15–16). Coupled with neoliberalism is postmodernism. According to McLaren and Farahmandpur, by tacitly accepting a market economy, concentrating on the superstructure of culturalist discourse, celebrating the death of universalism in favor of “hyperindividualism,” mummifying Marxism, proposing itself as the center of “the theater of educational transgression,” and refusing to accept that “we are hardly in a ‘postcolonial’ moment,” postmodern theory falls prey to the identity politics that characterizes a “facile form of culturalism,” hence it collapses into a form of “toothless liberalism and airbrushed insurgency” (TA, 25, 18). In the final analysis, postmodernism — much like other “posts” (such as poststructuralism, posthistory, and postideology) that value différence, discursive struggles, and desire over material and political economy — amounts to a “Grand Delusion” and ultimately supports the “radical right.”

So, what exactly are McLaren and Farahmandpur’s contentions? They have three. First, they “believe that Marxist analysis should serve as an axiomatic tool for contesting current social relations linked to the globalization of capital and the neoliberal education policies that follow in its wake” (TA, 22). They admit, however, that “Marxist theory constitutes a social system of analysis that inscribes subjects and is seeped in the dross of everyday life. As such, it must continually be examined” (TA, 22). Second, when it comes to capitalism, their position is that it is “a universal system of domination that integrates and coordinates and ultimately subsumes all other forms of oppression to its brutal commodity logic and privileges hierarchies of exploitation” (TA, 29). Third, they argue that, when combined with capitalism, old-style militarism, capitalist financial practices, standardization of commodities, and the imposition of the law of the market, globalization has been converted into a form of “new imperialism.”

As a pedagogy for resisting this “new imperialism,” McLaren and Farahmandpur offer a “Freirean,” “working-class,” “socialist pedagogy,” which they also refer to as “revolutionary multiculturalism,” “revolutionary citizenship praxis,” or “revolutionary critical pedagogy.” We need “revolutionary critical pedagogy” because, they argue, what we now call critical pedagogy must do more than unweave at night what each day is stitched together by the commodity logic of capital; it must build a new vision of society freed from capital’s law of value. A critical pedagogy, in order to advance revolutionary praxis, must be able to endorse the cultural struggle of workers and coordinate such struggles as part of a broader “cross-border” social movement unionism aimed at organizing and supporting the working classes and marginalized cultural workers in their efforts to build new international anticapitalist struggles along the road to socialism. (TA, 150)
Revolutionary critical pedagogy views class struggle, political economy, and political education as central to raising workers’ revolutionary consciousness. It is an empowering, democratic, participatory, and worker-centered pedagogy; it critiques corporate-sponsored multiculturalism; it moves beyond the celebration of hybridized identities and pluralism; it calls for a redistribution of wealth and a return to socialism; it links the social identities of marginalized and oppressed groups with their reproduction within capitalist relations of production; and it “addresses the importance of unity in difference not only as a sense of political mobilization but also as a practice of cultural authenticity that neither fetishizes tradition nor forecloses its allegiance to traditional knowledges” (TA, 152). They sum up this pedagogical stance with the observation that, “We need nothing short of a social revolution” (TA, 152).

For those of us who are familiar with critical pedagogy, especially as conceived in the work of McLaren and Henry Giroux, much of the language here is a bit too familiar. There is hardly any new theorization. Charting the connections between globalization, capitalism, and pedagogy is a worthwhile project, but the book could easily be cut to half the length without losing any of the substance. For readers concerned with Marxism, education, and globalization, I recommend reading this book in its entirety; otherwise, concentrate on chapters 1 and 5.

I have three main criticisms of this book. First, its use of language: the authors throw around too many terms that assume a great deal about who the reader is or, dare I say, should be. The irony of the book is that it calls for a “working-class pedagogy” in a language that even those of us who are familiar with critical pedagogy will struggle to understand. Though the authors critique poststructuralism, I am quite aware of the poststructural notions of reading, meaning, and textuality, and this book can be faulted for some of the same offenses. McLaren and Farahmandpur do not invite the reader in; they tell you what you should think. They almost bark at you. When you are barked at so often, you get tired after awhile. To use a classically Marxist formulation, McLaren and Farahmandpur seem to believe that we are all laboring under false consciousness, especially those of us on the Left. As a postcolonial subject, I am told what I should think and how I should feel. The patronizing tone of such passages is particularly offensive and runs contrary to their goals for the project.

My second criticism concerns their idea of identity politics. After reading and rereading the book, I am still not clear on how they deal with the question of difference, whether of race, class, gender, sexuality, or ability, among others. Here, it seems, there is no tension among these categories with which we should live.

There is a clear language (unfortunately, that of the classic Marxist critique) for locating and subsuming any discussion of difference under class struggle.

My final criticism is also related to language: in reading and working through the text, one gets the feeling that an almost god-like figure is hovering over you, pointing its finger, and telling you, the reader — especially if you espouse a Left position — that you are not Left enough. Sadly enough, among scholars and activists on the Left, there has been an increase in competition to make oneself more (linguistically) chic and more radical than the last radical. This is a disquieting trend, and it permeates a good bit of the book.

To return to the question posed at the outset of this review: Is *éducation sans frontières* possible? McLaren and Farahmandpur seem to answer, yes, but they contend that for this to occur, we must create a totally different and radical notion of border, pedagogy, and globalization — one that is grounded in Marx[ism] and class struggle and that aims for “nothing short of a social revolution.”

**GLOBALIZATION, CITIZENSHIP, AND DIALOGUE**

In her edited collection, *Educating Citizens for Global Awareness*, Nel Noddings takes a different turn, not to the Left but toward progressive humanism since, as she puts it, “a progressive orientation toward global citizenship will promote peace” [EC, 4]. *Educating Citizens for Global Awareness* is a thin volume of seven chapters that begins with a foreword by Daisaku Ikeda, founder of the Boston Research Center for the Twenty-First Century and president of Soka Gakkai International, a Buddhist association. Ikeda opens with what could be a summation of the whole book:

> The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States were a grave challenge to the ideal of dialogue between civilizations, the quest on which the world embarked at the start of the new century. They were acts of wanton mayhem that threatened to undermine humanity’s most basic right to live in peace....It is my belief that the eradication of terrorism calls for the creation of new, international political, legal, and economic systems, as well as security measures. [EC, ix]

For Ikeda, there are two sides of globalization: one positive and one negative. The positive side is democratization and the spread of awareness of human rights; the negative side is war, ethnic conflict, rising economic disparity, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and the destruction of the “global ecology.” Education, for Ikeda and for the rest of the authors in this collection, holds the key to resolving the dark side of globalization. This “true education,” as he calls it, “summons forth the innate goodness of humanity — our capacity for nonviolence, trust, and benevolence. It enables individuals to reveal their unique qualities and, by encouraging empathy with others, opens the door to the peaceful coexistence of humanity” [EC, ix]. If we are to foster “global citizens,” Ikeda argues, this kind of humanist education is crucial. Situated within the Buddhist notion of “dependent originations” — the understanding and appreciation of interdependence — this “creative harmonization” calls for wisdom (the ability to perceive the interdependence of all life), courage (the courage to respect one another’s differences), and empathy (the ability to share the pain of every person and all of life).
Nel Noddings’s introduction to the book opens with Thomas Paine’s famous proclamation, “My country is the world; to do good is my religion,” and the first question she tackles is, What is global citizenship? Because it is global, she contends, our definition of citizenship can no longer depend on the modernist notion of citizenship, which refers specifically to national or regional identity, nor can we align it to a global citizenship that is defined solely in terms of economics, profit, and interest. The new definition, according to Noddings, must be anchored to the notion of “concern.” Global citizenship should be concerned with, first, the welfare of the national, the regional, the global, and their inhabitants; second, the health of our physical world and the preservation of well-loved places; third, the balance of diversity, unity, and universality; and, fourth, worldwide social and economic justice. Noddings spends the rest of her introduction explaining these “concerns,” with reference to her central principles of caring about and caring for. It is ironic that Iraq is only mentioned once and Afghanistan is not mentioned at all in the introduction to any book on global citizenship and peace education published post-9/11.

The first chapter is an essay by Peggy McIntosh. This is a worthwhile read and, in addition to the contributions by Robert Nash and Gloria Ladson-Billings, among the book’s highlights. McIntosh introduces an approach to global citizenship that is personal, historical, and social. She associates global citizenship with several capacities of the mind: the ability to observe oneself and the world around one, to draw comparisons and contrasts, to see plurally, to see power relations, and to balance an awareness of one’s own reality with the realities of entities outside of the perceived self. She also associates global citizenship with several capacities of the heart: the ability to respect one’s own and others’ feelings and to delve deeply into them; the ability to experience conflicting feelings; the ability to experience affective worlds plurally; the ability to wish competing parties well; the ability to observe and understand how the “politics of location” affects one’s own and others’ positions of power in the world; and the ability to acknowledge the embedded nature of culture in one’s own heart and in the hearts of others (EC, 23).

To help teachers operationalize this framework, McIntosh has developed five interactive phases. Phase I focuses on acknowledging the absent. Phase II works toward admitting the need to include the absent. Phase III emphasizes that the absence of the absent is a dynamic that raises the question of power relations. Phase IV works toward internalizing nonbinary thinking and thus toward seeing every person as a knower and everyone’s knowledge production as worthy of study. Finally, in Phase V, “the world of knowledge is redefined and reconstructed to include us all” (EC, 33). Depending on the political choices we make, according to McIntosh, it will take us 100 to 200 years to achieve this level of cognition.

In the book’s second chapter, Stacie Nicole Smith and David Fairman show how a group of tenth-grade students from Newton, Massachusetts, taking a world history class was able to effectively employ conflict resolution strategies. Students were required to develop a better understanding of how and why Americans might legitimately disagree regarding what the United States should do in response to
September 11. Before beginning their discussions, they were introduced to the Workable Peace Framework, which begins with the identification of the source of conflict (one of four possibilities: identities, interests, beliefs, or emotions) and then builds on conflict management strategies. These strategies can either move toward peace (prepare to seek peace, explore needs and concerns, acknowledge needs and rights, control violence, and engage in negotiation) or war (stop trying to meet each other’s needs, resort to threats, abandon talks, and wage war) (see EC, 45). The framework Smith and Fairman develop here is another highlight of the book.

Chapter 3 is another essay by Nel Noddings in which she revisits her idea of “place-based education.” Here she considers why we love certain places, sometimes so much that we are ready to fight and even kill for them. She also investigates the connection between the concepts of local and global citizenship. In chapter 4, Gloria Ladson-Billings explores what she calls “new” or “flexible citizens.” These are “complicated citizens” who are created within, and in relation to, global capitalism, international travel, communication, and mass media. As she summarizes it, “Instead of being bound by geopolitical boundaries and national loyalties, people are developing multiple allegiances that transform them into ‘flexible citizens.’ Such citizens are more committed to their work and careers than to any particular national identity” (EC, 74). Yet she distinguishes between “diasporas” and “cosmopolitanisms.” The former, for Ladson-Billings, “are comprised of marginalized, displaced, and victimized subjects trying to make a place for themselves in the modern world,” whereas the latter “are worldly, progressive intellectuals who decide to be global citizens” (EC, 74, emphasis in original). Ultimately, she argues, the aim of education is the creation of that organic, cosmopolitan, and active citizen and intellectual who is invested in developing a consciousness of global citizenship and is engaged in the public good, locally and globally.

In chapter 5, Stephen Thornton considers the different ways in which we can incorporate teaching for and teaching about internationalism into the curriculum, especially in social studies classrooms. He contends that from World War I to Serbia, the Balkans, the Great Depression, the United Nations (UN), and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, nationalism and internationalism have been inextricably linked, and he provides many practical suggestions regarding how to include teaching for and about internationalism.

Robert Nash’s contribution, chapter 6, is a personal letter to secondary school teachers on teaching about religious pluralism in public schools. He observes that “The events of 9/11 have thrown our provincial and isolationist American worldview, particularly its religious, political, and cultural elements, into turmoil” (EC, 95). Nash provides probably the most vital discussion of how to think and talk about, as well as how to teach, religions in public schools. His letter is a must-read for every history, government, and social studies teacher. It is personal and genuine, and offers tremendous experience and wisdom on an issue most urgently requiring attention in the West: the role of religion in public space, especially that
of extremism, whatever its beliefs and wherever it comes from. He argues that we need to become “more globally aware, religiously literate citizens” (EC, 93). The globally aware and religiously literate citizen is a “cosmopolitan person who is knowledgeable about, and receptive to, the complexity and richness of religious diversity throughout the world” — that is, one who is “literally educated and knows that it is impossible to understand the history, culture, or politics of most modern societies if one is ignorant of the fundamental role that religion has played in every country” (EC, 93–94). After all, Nash, quoting Rig Veda, concludes, “Truth is one, but the wise call it by many Names” (EC, 104).

In the book’s final chapter Nancy Carlsson-Paige and Linda Lantieri make the case that, given the occasion, young people can do wondrous things. They tell the story of a middle school class in Quincy, Massachusetts, that was profoundly affected by a visit from a Pakistani boy named Iqbal Masih. Masih talked to the kids about child labor. Two years later, students received the news that Masih was shot dead under suspicious circumstances in Pakistan. On learning this, the Quincy middle-school students banded together and mounted a campaign against child labor. They created an endowment in Masih’s name and forced the UN to pass a resolution to toughen child labor laws. For Carlsson-Paige and Lantieri, this is the kind of citizen we desperately need: one who is not only aware of what is going on in the world, but can do something about it. Noddings follows this chapter with a conclusion that focuses on answering the question, what have we learned?

Noddings is a philosopher, and her disciplinary training may help to explain why there are particular areas in which her work shines and others where the light seems to dim a little bit. On the whole, this book falls into the latter category rather than the former. How can one write an introduction and a conclusion on peace, global education, and war without a mention of the current political situation, especially in the Middle East (particularly Iraq and Afghanistan)? One literally sees a change in language and tone when Noddings reverts to philosophy, specifically her idea of “care.” In the book, she tries to apply that idea to the ecological system with less success. When she talks about fertilizers, pesticides, and biogenetic diversity, one wonders why she does not focus on what she does best, philosophy. Her idea of “place-based” education and pedagogy is redundant and is addressed better in other chapters in the book.

Overall, generously read, this book presents four main ideas that are new to me. The first is McIntosh’s interactive phases. She developed them as part of a larger framework she calls SEED [Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity]. These phases are not only practical, but they offer concrete ways to deal with equity, diversity, and global citizenship. Thanks to McIntosh’s framework, global citizenship is no longer an abstract category. For those of us who teach social foundations, I highly recommend using these phases. The second idea is Smith and Fairman’s notion of a Workable Peace Framework, which I discussed previously. Given what is happening in some postcolonial countries in Africa, South America, and Asia, as well as in the Middle East, this framework is worthy of study. The third idea that is noteworthy is Nash’s letter. It is multilayered and complex, and I
cannot do justice to all the ideas in it here. The fourth idea affected me on a more personal level. Ladson-Billings's notion of the "flexible citizen" hit home; it stared me in the eye. This is what I would term the "universal subject," such as myself — born in Africa, educated in France and Canada, and living in the United States. The allegiances are multiple. Given her intellectual capital, the universal subject is someone who can live and function anywhere. She carries not her bags, but her books. She can be in Australia one year, the United States the following year, and then spend her sabbatical year traveling throughout France, Germany, Argentina, and South Africa.

So, if we consider this book in light of our overarching question, is éducation sans frontières possible, the contributors' answer is, yes, of course! In peace and (global) citizenship education, many examples demonstrate this possibility.

**The Politics of Educational Policy and Intellectual Borrowing and Lending**

The third book under review here is *The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending*, edited by Gita Steiner-Khamsi. Conceived within a post-Fordist economy, the book comprises twelve chapters that are divided into three parts, an introduction, a conclusion by the editor, and a foreword by Thomas Popkewitz. Although the authors contributing essays to the book come from many disciplines, the book distinctly locates itself within the field of "comparative education." In his foreword, Popkewitz offers a succinct summary of the book while adding his own vision of globalization and the politics of educational borrowing and lending. He begins with a fierce critique of how globalization is increasingly treated as a *fait accompli*, on the one hand, and fatalistically ahistorically, on the other. We need to deal with globalization not as "planet speak" — that is, as a ubiquitous word that everybody knows — but as an empty signifier that is historically and socially defined. This is, he argues, the advantage of this book. It deals with an educational policy phenomenon — educational borrowing and lending — and explores its historical and contextual dimensions in their national and transnational studies. As such, education plays a central role in globalization, especially in the process of knowledge production, yet, Popkewitz argues, education "often is assumed to be peripheral, if considered at all" in the discourse of globalization (*GP*, viii).

*The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending* places education at the heart of globalization and sees the school as "the major institution in which the circulation of knowledge about the modern self is positioned" (*GP*, viii). The book has seven basic themes, which are well summarized by Popkewitz. First, there is a poststructural understanding of knowledge production: it conceives knowledge as historically and socially produced, so there is no universal and absolute knowledge. The very idea of citizenship has to be contextually defined within a participatory notion of civil society. Second, following this is the need to examine empirically how knowledge flows within networks, social systems, and institutions. Borrowing, lending, and converging become central concepts in the process of knowledge flow. Borrowing, for Popkewitz, does not mean copying. Rather, this concept examines "how patterns of thought move through and are
transmuted in different layers of the local and global systems” (GP, ix). Third, what was missing in the first two books is treated as central here — that is, the concrete and empirically knowable ways in which the local and the global talk to each other (in other words, how they dialogue, produce, and reproduce each other). The studies in the book look at how the local family, child, community, and nation take up, translate, and transform the global in local terms.

Fourth, the book examines from multiple angles the role of international agencies, such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), UN, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Care and Save the Children. Fifth, while working from a comparative education framework, the book is exceptionally interdisciplinary, and, sixth, it provides a systematic and historical understanding of the relation between the local and the global, as I already indicated. Finally, the book offers a nonnormative approach to comparative research. Unfortunately, the field of comparative education, according to Popkewitz, “often is designed around developing ameliorative models for the ‘transferring’ of ideas and practices” (GP, x) — that is, transfer what works! In contrast, the studies in this book show how people hold on to their local understandings and practices while learning “lessons from elsewhere.”

In her brief introduction, Gita Steiner-Khamsi gives an overview of the book, which is a response to “the global trend of transnational borrowing and lending in education” (GP, 1). It is an examination of the politics of why and how educational policies are imported or exported, and how they are adapted locally once they have been transferred from one context to another. As she puts it,

this book addresses globalization in education, and attempts to introduce both a historical and a contextual dimension that we find lacking in the ongoing debate [on the link between] the increased transnational flow of goods, finance, communication, people and ideas [globalization], and changes in national educational systems. (GP, 3)

Recognizing the complexity of the “semantics of globalization” and thinking through the idea of “global civil society,” Steiner-Khamsi argues for a reconceptualization of the idea of “borrowing.” For her, borrowing “draws our attention to processes of local adaptation, modification, and resistance to global forces of education” (GP, 5).

Part one of the book comprises three chapters. The first, by Charles Tilly, a well-known scholar in comparative sociology and history, is meant to set the stage theoretically for the book. Tilly argues that there is a misconception that globalization is a “new” phenomenon:

Since the movement of humans out of Africa some 40,000 years ago, humanity has globalized repeatedly....Any time a distinctive set of social connections and practices expands from a regional to a transcontinental scale, some globalization is occurring. Each time an existing transcontinental set of social connections and practices fragments, disintegrates, or vanishes, some de-globalization occurs (GP, 13).

Tilly’s chapter deals with “global flows.” He differentiates three recent flows or waves of globalization: one occurring around 1500, another between 1850 and World War I, and the third occurring post-1945. What distinguishes this last wave
of globalization is the “relative emphasis on commerce, commitment, and coercion” (GP, 16). He calls these the “darker sides of globalization.” Looking at economic disparity and the ecological effects of globalization, Tilly offers a larger social context analysis of the existing inequalities that accompany globalization.

In chapter 2, Jürgen Schriewer and Carlos Martinez offer an analysis of how, given the global flow of ideas, there is a tacit assumption that scholars and people in general are reading the same books and sharing increasingly similar ideas. This is not true. Hence, the authors make a distinction between globalization or internationalization (which is real) and internationality (which is imagined). This is a dense and confusing argument. Chapter 3 by David Phillips presents a conceptual framework for studying cross-national “policy attraction” in education. By studying the British fascination with and interest in educational provision at all system levels (including universities) in Germany, Phillips develops a model and a methodology for studying “policy borrowing.” He sees this borrowing as consisting of the following stages: cross-national attraction, decision to borrow, implementation, and internationalization or indigenization. To use Steiner-Khamsi’s definition, “cross-national attraction can be interpreted as an act of international cooperation advancing convergence…or as an act of inter-state competition strengthening divergence…” (GP, 10, emphasis added).

The real substance of the book, however, is in part two, which deals with “the politics of educational borrowing.” This section, according to Steiner-Khamsi, is informed by three ideas: [1] that “externalization” or educational reforms tend to take place more frequently where politics can interfere, such as privatization of education, standardization, and deunionization of teachers, among others; [2] that the policies implemented at the local level barely resemble their original sources; and [3] that in order to legitimize their reforms, decision makers and policy makers make international references, even though similar policies may exist in their own backyards. Phillips also identifies a practice that he labels “phony policy borrowing,” something Iveta Silova addresses in greater detail in chapter 4. This, as Silova describes, is more rhetorical than actual policy — that is, policy makers borrow the rhetoric from elsewhere with no intention of implementing the practices that accompany that rhetoric. Latvia, for example, ratified a minority-language policy without implementing it when it came to the Russian-language speakers.

Chapter 5 is exceptionally interesting. In it Tali Yariv-Mashal shows how the “Israeli Black Panthers” borrowed both the rhetoric and the practices of the Black Panther Movement in the United States. In chapter 6, Carol Anne Spreen discusses the case of OBE, or outcome-based education, in South Africa. She convincingly demonstrates the indigenization of OBE, originally borrowed from the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Chapter 7 by Bernhard Streitwieser highlights the ongoing debate about the role of education in post-unification Germany. The key question in this debate is whether education should primarily serve Erziehung (with an emphasis on personal, social, and political development) or Bildung (with an emphasis on literacy). Streitwieser found that the role of education was
conceived differently in East and West Germany, and the current system reflects that tension.

In chapter 8, William deJong-Lambert asks, What happens to science when it is used as an instrument of oppression? He looks at how the Polish academic community took up Lysenkoism, a method that was developed to propagate Marxist genetic theory. Lysenkoism ended up, deJong-Lambert shows, providing Leninism and Stalinism with the appearance of “scientific rationality.” He goes on to investigate how the Polish scientific community is dealing with that legacy now. Chapter 9 by Frances Vavrus is, I think, worthy of study. She examines how the World Bank policies of water privatization were translated locally in Tanzania. By translation, she means both literally (from English into Swahili) and figuratively. Using Pierre Bourdieu’s idea of the champ or field, the space where complex and contradictory discursive frameworks are constructed, Vavrus demonstrates the interplay between external and internal, top-down and bottom-up, global and local changes. Vavrus offers a complex reading, yet she does not account for power relations—that is, specifically who gives and who has the money? There seems to be no center of or to power in her analysis. Another chapter worthy of study is Thomas Luschei’s. He looks at the current Brazilian educational reforms that were initiated in 1998. This reform movement is called Escola Ativa and is borrowed from the Colombian program of Escuela Nueva. Luschei shows how, in order to borrow $62.5 million from the World Bank, the Brazilian government had to discredit its own previous reform efforts. In the end, he argues, Escola Ativa became a joint rhetorical venture of the World Bank (which needed to hear the language of borrowing and reform), the Brazilian government (which needed the money), and the Colombian model (which seemed to have “worked”). Each party was concerned with telling the others (and itself), Luschei concludes, that the money was not going to waste.

The final part of the book focuses on “the politics of educational lending.” The contributions to this section emphasize that we need to keep the actors in mind and that there is no educational process of borrowing and lending that is free of politics. Dana Burde in chapter 11 looks at the role NGOs play in a preschool reform project in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The project focused on establishing and enhancing parent-teacher associations (PTAs) as a way of building civil society. These PTAs clearly were not working, yet the NGOs kept holding on to their original approach, Burde contends, because this is how they obtain their funding. In chapter 12, Phillip Jones investigates the role of the World Bank as both a loan and lending entity. In the twenty-first century, the World Bank sees itself more as an education policy lender than a loan-providing bank. As such, it is rearticulating and reimagining itself, at least discursively. In her conclusion, Steiner-Khamsi reminds us of the history of comparative education, where the emphasis has traditionally been on exporting what “worked.” Noteworthy in the conclusion is her definition of the “externalization thesis.” Steiner-Khamsi, drawing from Schriewer’s analysis, sees externalization as an educational borrowing or “the references to lessons from elsewhere…in which either an imaginary international
community ['international standards'] or a concrete other (e.g., national education systems, reform models, reform strategies, etc.) is evoked as a source of external authority for implementing reforms that otherwise would have been resisted.” Stated differently, “the act of lesson drawing often is used as an effective policy strategy to certify contentious policies at home” (GP, 203, emphasis added). She concludes the book with a second overview of the lessons learned from the different chapters.

There are many interesting chapters in this book, especially those by Tilly, Phillips, Yariv-Mashal, Vavrus, and Luschei. McLaren and Farahmandpur would enjoy this book since, as Popkewitz puts it in the foreword, “Through the concept of externalization we...can consider the idea of neoliberalism that floats through much of contemporary comparative analysis.” Indeed, neoliberalism floats through much of this book, yet it is complexly layered and one can see many approaches to the global politics of educational borrowing and lending. To the question, is éducation sans frontières possible, this volume also answers, yes, of course! It is already taking place, as all the chapters in the book show. Indeed, the very concept — éducation sans frontières — was first introduced in this volume (see GP, 3).

There Is No Conclusion to Globalization

In Globalization, Zygmunt Bauman writes that “‘Globalization’ is on everybody's lips; a fad word fast turning into a shibboleth, a magic incarnation, a pass-key meant to unlock the gates to all present and future mysteries. For some,” he continues, “‘globalization’ is what we are bound to do if we wish to be happy; for others ‘globalization’ is the cause of our unhappiness.” Bauman’s observation effectively sums up the tension that characterizes the three books under review here. Peter McLaren and Ramin Farahmandpur are unhappy with globalization, though they acknowledge its inevitability, since it is obliterating the communal sense of work and productivity. Globalization, for them, is another name for predatory and exploitative capitalism. According to Nel Noddings and Gita Steiner-Khamsi, on the other hand, globalization opens up many possibilities. Following an Aristotelian approach, if not a poststructuralist one, Noddings and Steiner-Khamsi call for a contextualized notion of globalization that is resistant to while simultaneously working with global forces. On a personal level, as a universal subject my approach to globalization is probably closer to that of Noddings and Steiner-Khamsi and their authors than to that of McLaren and Farahmandpur. Yet, what McLaren and Farahmandpur raise will haunt me for a while. It is powerful and ethically un-resolvable. But we need to confront the questions they raise since, as Bauman puts it, “The price of silence is paid in the hard currency of human suffering.... Questioning the ostensibly unquestionable premises of our way of life is arguably the most urgent of the services we owe our fellow humans and ourselves.” The best is yet to come, but it will not come if we don’t envision it. I read all three books with that lens and I advise you to do the same. Yes, there is life after the

8. Ibid., 5.
Panopticon, and, yes, we need to move through the world as opposed to allowing the world to move past us.⁹ Indeed, we need to feel at home locally, nationally, and globally. This would require *éducation sans frontières* and rigorous intellectual border crossing. In this sense, applied to education, the MSF charter should be our guiding philosophy, our critical revolutionary pedagogy post-9/11.

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⁹. Ibid.