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Review

Reviewed Work(s): South-South Cooperation in Education and Development by Linda Chisholm and Gita Steiner-Khamsi

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and education and globalization, including analyses of cultural diversity as it relates to increased inequality and widespread violence on a global scale. The book could also be paired with grounded national and comparative case studies to illustrate the kinds of debates Inglis refers to in it. Inglis uses clear, concise, and straightforward language to describe growth in cultural diversity in many nations and the role and approaches of educational policy makers and planners. This makes *Planning for Cultural Diversity* useful for the study of cultural and ethnic diversity, nationalism, and bilingual and multicultural education from an international perspective. The book makes an important contribution, providing readers with an overview of the major debates and key concepts in this area of study.

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*South-South Cooperation in Education and Development* edited by Linda Chisholm and Gita Steiner-Khamsi. New York: Teachers College Press; Cape Town: Human Science Research Council Press, 2009. 304 pp. \$44.95 (paper). ISBN 978-0-8077-4921-0.

This book is full of interesting stories. One concerns a transfer of the Monitorial Schools (an attempt in the nineteenth century to achieve high efficiency) from Cádiz to Latin America. Another is the extraordinary expansion of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) schools. There are stories of Turkey's effort to expand influence into Central Asia and Japan's effort to transfer the Japan International Cooperation Agency lessons from Asia to Africa. There are stories of failure and backfire, including the startling experience with racism experienced by African students in Chinese universities, the dominance of political agendas in the relations between South Africa and India, and of course, the long-standing distortions that foreign assistance brings to circumstances and situations in many countries around the world. And finally, there is a most interesting story of the reapplication of foreign aid rules and regulations to meet local needs and interpretations in Mongolia, a story told by Gita Steiner-Khamsi elsewhere in more detail.

The problem concerns the title of the book, that of "south-south cooperation." However interesting they are as individual stories, as a group they add up to nothing of substance. There is a long and confusing discussion as to the meaning of "south" and of "south-south cooperation." Linda Chisholm describes south-south cooperation as "the effort to improve countries' unequal position on a global scale" (1). However, she points out that "south" is not confined to countries in the southern hemisphere and in fact every country has its own "south" and "north" within it. In Chisholm's view, south-south cooperation constitutes the effort to protect the weak and the vulnerable from "traveling reforms" in which countries become the victims of ideas that are "uncritically transferred from one continent to another"

(1) and “where the countries are too weak to assert an independent development path in the face of the new global agenda” (4).

But who are these weak and vulnerable peripheral countries? In Marcelo Caruso’s story, it is admitted that the idea of Monitorial Schools originated in Britain, but it is classified as an example of south-south cooperation because the idea was transferred to Latin American from Cádiz instead of Madrid, the colonial capital. In Yoko Mochizuki’s story, south-south cooperation is used by Japan (through the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]) as a means to transfer lessons learned from one recipient country in Asia to another recipient country in Africa (not the other way around). As she puts it, “Japan’s commitment to South-South Cooperation constitutes an integral part of Japan’s ongoing effort to expand its power on the international scene” (70).

In the story of Michelle Morais de Sa e Silva the confusion continues. She sees south-south cooperation as the outgrowth of dependency theory in which developing countries need to be released from the exploitative relationships that northern countries had forged since the time of colonialism (43). However, she says that south-south cooperation has gone through three phases, and none of them seem to represent “the release” she describes. In phase 1 (1949–79), south-south cooperation constituted a political line of argument provided “officially by socialist countries” (3). In phase 2 (1980–98), south-south cooperation was “demobilized” because of structural adjustment and the debt crisis (40). In phase 3 (1999 to the present), south-south cooperation has been taken over by international agencies (55).

If south-south cooperation is financed by development assistance agencies often for their own purposes, it does not seem as if the ideal purpose of south-south cooperation is maintained. There is, for instance, some doubt as to how “global” BRAC would be without the sponsorship of UNICEF or how enthusiastic countries would be in “buying” *escuela nueva* without the assistance of the World Bank. In Adriana Abdenur’s article on triangular cooperation, two nations cooperate to provide technical assistance to a third nation. Japan pays Brazil to provide technical assistance to East Timor, and UNDP creates a special unit to boost technical cooperation among developing countries, apparently helping to make south-south cooperation an accepted mechanism to deliver traditional foreign aid. But the question remains: Is this cooperation a true measure of demand or another outgrowth of the rich countries trying, once again, to control the agenda of recipient countries?

Perhaps the story of the private sector might provide an answer. But in Zahra Bhanji’s story of transnational corporations “as propellers of educational transfer in the Middle East” (87), one finds that World Economic Forum, with 1,000 private sector members, is interested primarily in educational transfer so long as it provides new markets. The discovery schools in Jordan, for instance, foster new pedagogies and technologies and e-curricula from which computer software firms such as Intel and Microsoft take advantage. The best that can be said as to the altruism of the private sector story is that “they develop new markets by doing good” (100).

This book leaves out examples of south-south cooperation. There is no mention of universities, such as al Azar in Egypt, which for centuries have supplied Islamic scholars to Asia and Africa. There is no mention of the Kuwait fund, the Arab

League, or the many *waqf* charities that sponsor mosques, madrassas, and social programs.

What we have, in essence, is a gathering of interesting stories with an outdated and naive summation of their utility by Chisholm, the senior editor. There seems to be no questioning as to whether there is such a thing as a pure victim and a pure victimizer. From this book it might be safe to assume that if the World Bank and the World Trade Organization help transfer ideas from the south to the south it is bad, but if UNICEF does the same thing it is good. Once the mismatch is discovered between the content of this book and the characterization of that content, one might wonder whether the book adds or detracts from the comparative education literature. To the extent that the characterization of south-south cooperation is that of benign, impoverished, well-meaning institutions and nations at the periphery trying to avoid the hegemonic, wealthy, evil-intentioned institutions and nations in the center, it does a disservice.

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*Sociology, Gender, and Educational Aspirations: Girls and Their Ambitions* by Carol Fuller.  
London: Continuum, 2009. 208 pp. \$140.00 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-8264-9938-7.

As with the classic study by Paul Willis, which focused on school-to-work transition in the lives of working-class British “lads,” this volume by Carol Fuller attempts to reflect on the issue of class in relation to a group of girls from working-class backgrounds in the United Kingdom.<sup>1</sup> In this volume, Fuller argues that although social class may go a long way in explaining differences in educational achievement, the picture may be more nuanced than this. She provides the reader with a comprehensive review of the relevant surrounding literature, and as such this publication serves as a good example of research that attempts to reflect on the age-old issue of the relationship between education and class.

The volume includes a total of seven chapters. The first chapter explores several initiatives by the UK government to raise educational attainment and aspirations. The discussion is useful. However, in this chapter and throughout the volume, Fuller makes reference to various issues that are perhaps particular to the United Kingdom but that may not be familiar to the general reader with little contextual knowledge of the UK system. Furthermore, in chapter 1 Fuller provides a brief description of the fieldwork for the study, which is based on a longitudinal case study. In Fuller’s own words, she “adopted the deviant case approach . . . [choosing] to focus on a setting where certain outcomes would be expected . . . where low academic achievements and consequently aspirations would be the expected norm” (2). As a result, she chose to focus on students with high aspirations. It

<sup>1</sup> See Paul Willis, *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).