

***Empire and Education in Africa: The Shaping of a Comparative Perspective*, edited by Peter Kallaway and Rebecca Swartz**

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Kallaway and Swartz's collection grows out of a desire to stimulate interest in the history of colonial education, as well as their strong international links with historians of education who were drawn to a workshop at the University of Cape Town in 2013 to share new work. While Swartz's work has focused on the nineteenth century, Kallaway's recent work has concentrated on the inter-war years. The authors represented in this valuable collection traverse both periods. While the majority of chapters focus on British colonial Africa and just over half on South Africa, the geographical reach of the book spans British, French and German colonies.

Each chapter is a gem on its own, casting light on the bigger mosaic of colonial education in Africa. Authors' approaches and emphases differ, providing insight into the diversity of lenses currently being cast on colonial education. Chapters embrace a rich variety of themes including new emphases on transnational connections (Allender, Swartz, Cappy and Healy-Clancy), the relationship between educational policy and practice (Ludlow and Rockwell), industrial and adapted education (Swartz, Cappy, Glotzer and Rockwell), language (Willan, Kallaway, Rockwell and Rosnes) and gender (Healy-Clancy and Guidi). Below I try to provide a sense of the overlapping and discrete treatment of major themes in colonial education in the respective contributions.

The first two chapters, by Australian historian of education, Tim Allender on "Lessons from India," and South African, Rebecca Swartz on industrial education in nineteenth century Natal draw on new literatures and theoretical approaches emphasising the multi-



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directional connections across territories. Allender's fascinating chapter, rich in insight, emphasises the "empire modelling" that occurred when British colonial administrators stamped an elite and racialised brand of education "template-like across the empire, with minimal concession to local circumstances" (p. 33) and asserted English as the assumed language of superiority. Senior British officials, with their colonial mentalities, travelled from India to Africa to which they transferred their expertise, but also their "towering ignorance" of and hostility towards local learning traditions. The chapter also touches on the link between Indians (including Ghandi) in Africa. A substantial scholarship exists on the links across the Indian Ocean; this is the first piece, to my knowledge, that takes it up in the field of education.

The centrality of industrial and adapted education in colonial thinking is rightly a major theme in the book. In looking at industrial education in Natal, Swartz examines the "links, connections and points of comparison between different metropolitan and colonial contexts" (p. 54), showing how industrial education in Natal was both a response to the labour crisis in Natal, as well as broader, global discourses about the role of "civilising" the working poor in England, emancipated slaves in the West Indies and colonised people in settler colonies. Industrial education became the centrepiece of the notion of adapted education promoted across the colonial world from the beginning to the middle of the twentieth century. Much has been written and is known about it and the role of the American-based Phelps-Stokes Fund and Carnegie Corporation in supporting and legitimating these ideas through research. Cappy casts new light on the deep and extensive connections and personal networks between the foundations, missionaries, government and the men who became the key players in black and white education in South Africa. Similarly, Glotzer's biography of Loram demonstrates his close links with leading missionaries in Natal and moreover examines his relationships with black South Africans and theirs to him.

In three very different but equally fine chapters, Ludlow, Willan and Rockwell complicate the picture by looking at what policy meant in practice. Ludlow looks at the enactment of colonial policy in context and explores the daily difficulties of a teacher tasked with starting a school in the early nineteenth century in the Cape Colony. Willan takes up the extraordinary story of why an enthusiasm for Shakespeare, the antithesis of the aims of mission preferences for Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and industrial and adapted education, emerged and was manifested in Sol Plaatje's translations and later reference to Shakespeare's works as the "Robben Island Bible." And Rockwell's careful and important study of student texts explores what "adaptation" meant in a French colonial context in the teaching of language. "Adaptation in this region and period," she argues, "never implied the use of indigenous languages; students learned through standard school French" (p. 257). The "traces of adaptation" found amounted representations "fabricated through a long line of ethnographic studies of the different races" (p. 258).

The relationship between the official colonial language, whether English or French, and the mother tongue(s) is an enduring theme of colonial education. In different ways, the chapters by Willan, Rockwell, Kallaway and Rosnes all deal with it. Willan and Rockwell, as shown above, gently disentangle established assumptions about an equivalence between intentions and outcome or policy and practice. For Rosnes, whose chapter examines the literacy practices embodied in French colonial and mission educational endeavours, their different purposes and goals were critical in defining the nature of their efforts. For French colonial officials, it was assimilation into a French-speaking secular culture. Teaching the French language was critical to this purpose. For Lutheran Norwegian missionaries, who also had to teach French so that pupils could pass the formal exams which were set in French, the goal was “to lead people to a personal relationship with God through reading the Bible in a familiar language” (p. 271). For there to be understanding, learning had to be more than memorisation and therefore through a known and not a foreign language. For them, a more contextualised literacy practice, rooted in the local language, was vital, but they simultaneously in their schools knew the importance of teaching French, and did so. The chapter provides a nuanced and multiperspectival account of the different approaches to language promoted on the one hand by colonial officials and on the other by missionaries.

Guidi and Healy-Clancy add a gendered focus. Writing about a girls’ school founded in Ethiopia by the Empress Mānān and run by Ethiopian and French-speaking Armenian teachers, Guidi’s chapter provides a rare glimpse on the one hand into the way the French strove for “influence” in an independent Ethiopia rather than “civilisation” and “how imperial strategies were patterned by their contexts” (p. 314) and on the other how elite Ethiopian girls’ education emphasised the ideal of the bourgeois French woman.

The chapters by Healy-Clancy and Kallaway are important for the reinterpretations that they offer of the origins of apartheid and Bantu Education in South Africa. To date, the main explanations for the rise of apartheid have been attributed to the Kuyperian Calvinism of the National Party that found expression in its Christian National Education policy (Shingler), the subordination of values of equality, democracy and participation to the principles of rational planning and bureaucratic efficiency promoted by ideologues and planners like WWM Eiselen (Fleisch and Kros), the labour “needs” and imperatives of the racial-capitalist labour market of the time (Christie and Collins) and the structural crisis of reproduction thrown up by the failures of mission schooling (Hyslop).

Meghan Healy-Clancy’s contribution in this book goes further to show, within a transnational perspective, that the infamous 1951 Eiselen *Report of the Commission on Native Education* “shared fundamentally similar assumptions with its counterpart from late-colonial British Africa, *African Education: A Study of Educational Policy and Practice in British Tropical Africa* (1953), which offered policy suggestions at the continental level” (p. 177). She argues with Frederick Cooper that in form and content, this text was a variation of “developmentalist colonial” discourses: “modernising

discourses by which white ‘experts’ asserted visions of economic progress that were in some ways universalist and in others predicated on continuing white management of ethnic or racial difference” (p. 177). Apartheid’s foundational myth, she argues, was not one best described as “irremediable otherness,” but as one of “*improvable* otherness.” In addition to emphasising the deep roots of the report in both South Africa and British colonial Africa, her chapter provides a subtly argued reading of the gendered politics of development embodied in Eiselen’s Commission on Native Education (1951) for the National Party, and examines its implications for the paradox of the dramatic rise of young African women’s school attendance during the apartheid period.

Kallaway’s chapter, by contrast, is interested in the specifically German contribution to “scientific” discourses about African education—and here he focuses on the thought and work of Leipzig missionary, Bruno Gutmann, who worked in Tanzania at Moshi, and Diedrich Wetermann, professor of African languages and cultures in Berlin. Both, he argues, laid the foundations for an approach emphasising the importance of community, culture and language—and specifically the importance of the mother tongue in schooling—that had deep resonance with the framers of apartheid education, who equally valued the conservation of ethnic and cultural identity as an antidote to new forces of equality and modernity.

Although there are some obvious gaps—such as Portuguese Africa—and the disparate nature of the themes and foci militate against a cohesive book, each chapter on its own has, without exception, something to offer.