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Michael Samuel & Hyleen Mariaye (Eds.). *Continuity, Complexity, and Change: Teacher Education in Mauritius.* (2016). 206 pp. $19.85 (ebook). (ISBN 978-1-61229-820-7)

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See table of contents

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BOOK REVIEW / CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

MICHAEL SAMUEL & HYLEEN MARIAYE (Eds.). *Continuity, Complexity, and Change: Teacher Education in Mauritius.* (2016). 206 pp. $19.85 (ebook). (ISBN 978-1-61229-820-7).

In *Continuity, Complexity, and Change: Teacher Education in Mauritius*, Samuel, Mariaye, and their three authors introduce the unique but relatable struggles of establishing a teacher education system that effectively serves the local needs of a recently independent state in a global world. The authors aim to understand who they are as teacher educators by critically analyzing their experiences with teacher education policy and practice in Mauritius. Their consideration of political, cultural, and technological influences on education in Mauritius is similar to that of Lynch Street and Matelski (2009) in *The Web of Confucius: Evolution and Revolution in Chinese Higher Education*.

Mauritius is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), where the education system has faced the same issues as many larger, developed states including inequality, meeting economic demands, and navigating strained relationships between higher education and the State. Mauritius established its first public school of education, the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) in 1973 to prepare teachers, develop curriculum, and conduct educational research. In this book, the authors collaboratively investigate 12 narrated experiences spanning three generations of staff who work(ed) at the MIE: the Pioneers (1975-1990), the Managers (1990-2005), and the Foot Soldiers (2005 to present). Their inquiry explores both the individual experiences of the people who shaped the MIE from conception to its present state to more deeply understand individual and institutional identities, organizational change, and higher education within a SIDS.

The book is divided into four sections, with a total of nine chapters and an introduction, which were written by various combinations of the three authors and two author-editors. In the introduction, Mariaye and Samuel explain the desire for MIE staff to understand their personal history, their institution's history, as well as their identities as teacher educators, members of a SIDS, and as global contributors to higher education. They identify the three

overarching themes for the book: identity, organizational change, and higher education within small island states. Part A sets up the research project with Chapter 1 addressing the Mauritian postcolonial context. Chapter 2 explains how the authors, as researchers, thoughtfully and thoroughly conducted an extensive collaborative inquiry. Although collaborative inquiry inherently limits the number of people constructing the identity of the MIE, the researchers expertly conducted the reflective practice by respecting participant voice, and constantly striving to maintain confidentiality within the small community. After completing the thorough, albeit dense methodology section, the reader is rewarded with 12 intensely interesting personal narratives from the Pioneers, the Managers, and the Foot Soldiers in Part B — Chapters 3, 4, and 5 respectively. The first-person narration builds a connection between the reader and each teacher educator, a connection that is reinforced after each narration where the author summarizes the obstacles that educators across the world commonly experience. These include oversized classrooms, outdated pedagogy, equal access to education across socioeconomic classes, understanding one's professional identity, and keeping teacher educators connected to the realities of modern classrooms. At the same time, the authors introduce us to post-independence issues such as colonization and indigenization of education, which speaks to similar issues in Canada and Australia.

Part C links the personal narratives and identities of the MIE staff to the identity and development of the MIE as an organization. Chapter 6 examines the teacher educator identity of the staff. In contrast, Chapter 7 explores and highlights the struggles of the MIE to establish its legitimacy as an institution for both higher education and teacher education. These struggles include competing with satellite campuses from international partners, sustaining indigeneity, and effecting real change in public education. Part D summarizes how higher education, teacher education, and the small island state context have brought the MIE to where it is now. Chapter 8 delves into the intricacies of local-national and local-international partnerships within Mauritius and how the dependence on international relations and trade influences academic research, higher education programs, and institutional development. Chapter 9 explains how the relationship between the MIE and the Ministry of Education changed with time as the MIE balanced post-coloniality, indigeneity, and internationalization to meet local Mauritians' needs.

Readers of this book might find themselves wondering how an education system can at once effectively serve the current and the future needs of its society while simultaneously pushing the populace toward social, intellectual, and economic progress. This question is relevant to contexts well beyond Mauritius. For instance, the MIE staff faced many of the same questions that I hear educators asking here in Canada: how can we encourage and help our teachers and our teacher educators to be more reflexive in their practice if they are already experiencing overwhelming workloads and burnout? The

authors do not attempt to answer these questions; rather, they invite the reader to explore the structures and processes through which change can be effected in education. These factors include a culture that values education, mutually beneficial national and international partnerships, political agendas, and research that is done *with* people rather than *on* people. Furthermore, the authors question what it means to be a teacher educator and how one might assume (or not assume) both the role and the identity.

Ultimately, this book provides deep insight into the Mauritian context that would not be possible for an external observer to otherwise understand. Despite a few convoluted passages and the occasional grammatical error, the reader comes out with a significant appreciation for the Mauritian context and an inspirational new perspective on their own education system. I recommend *Continuity, Complexity, and Change: Teacher Education in Mauritius* to anyone involved in developing teacher education programs, working toward decolonization, or establishing partnerships with or between institutions of higher education. The authors do not prescribe any panaceas; rather, they guide the reader in a reflection on the social, political, and economic pressures that influence education so that the reader can better understand their own context and find their own solutions.

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