

in the field of lifelong learning in the context of developed countries of the North and developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

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PAULO FREIRE: ROUSSEAU OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Asoke Bhattacharya. Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, 2011, 311 pages.

This is a new volume of four chapters on Paulo Freire. It adds to the existing literature on Freire by going in depth into the social, political, and economic history of Brazil. Since many readers of Freire's conceptual works and their attendant commentaries by other writers—particularly the critical pedagogues—are not deeply familiar with the history of Brazil, this text gives a rich context to Freire's life and work. The author dedicates approximately one-third of the book (the first chapter and 20 pages of the third) to describing Brazil, from its history as a colonial possession to its emergence as an independent nation. The second chapter provides Freire's biographical background as well as some introduction to others who have written with, written about, or been influenced by Freire. The remainder of the third chapter goes through what the author calls Freire's "major works," which must be *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, *Pedagogy of Hope*, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, and *Cultural Action for Freedom*, as these are the only works cited. The fourth chapter, "Freire: The Master as They Saw Him," endeavours to give others' perspective on Freire. This draws on commentaries from both before and after Freire's death in 1997.

The flow of the book is a little disorienting. I primarily attribute this to the absence of any introduction by the author. Perhaps an introduction outlining the arrangement of the work and the reasoning behind it might clarify what, in its absence, seems somewhat nebulous. For example, the likening of Freire to Rousseau—suggested by the title of the book—may be apt, but Rousseau is not discussed anywhere within. Perhaps the connection is obvious to others, but having read various works of Rousseau, I do not find it so. Another troubling aspect is related to the book's most promising feature, the history of Brazil. Of the 106 citations in the first chapter, 77 are from three books by one author, Gilberto Freyre, and all were published from 1968 to 1970. The absence of any relevant historical scholarship on Brazil from the last four decades (1970–2010) detracts from the sense that one understands Freire "properly in the historical context" (p. 173). The overall tone is analytical, though perhaps too much so, since the book can at times read more as a collection of episodic descriptions than a single and particular contribution to the existing literature about Paulo Freire. In what seems to have been the author's intention of offering a broad and balanced look at Freire, the book, as a whole, fails to clearly advance any specific argument. Perhaps the author does not mean to advance an argument, which is valid. However, one of the text's limitations is that it does not let the reader know if it intends to make an argument or not.

The book strives to capture a wide range of ideas and aspects of Freire, but relies on a narrow range of sources, many being more than 25 years old. The issues of adult education that are addressed are not clearly adduced so as to help the reader locate this work within the field of adult education or the figure of Paulo Freire. Nevertheless, the emphasis on Brazil makes this book unique and insightful. Its attention to history and policy within Brazil adds a dimension to Freire that has not been well attended to, at least in the English language. Clarity—which could most easily come from an introduction—is what is needed most to locate this contribution. Without an introduction, even my most well-considered comments are based on guessing at what the author sought to offer.

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