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Lifelong Learning, Global Social Justice, and Sustainability

Leona M. English
Peter Mayo

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"This book provides a fascinating account of the emergence of current concept of 'lifelong learning' from its origins in UNESCO's notion of Lifelong Education and as subsequently transformed through the work of the OECD and the European Commission. What was originally an expansive and essentially humanist idea, the authors argue, mutated into a narrower and more instrumentalist concept with pervasive influence on global education policy. This critical account is distinguished by giving due attention to the meanings of lifelong learning in the Global South and makes a forceful case for a new vision of the concept geared towards a global citizenship. It is written in an accessible style and is likely to resonate with a wide audience of adult educators."

—Andy Green, *Professor of Lifelong Learning, University College London, UK*

"This excellent study reconnects us with the multidimensional theory and praxis of lifelong learning: a book that lifts the spirits in a time of crisis."

—Maren Elfert, *Lecturer in Education and Society, King's College London, UK*

"This book is an important and wide-ranging critical exposition of the prevalent contemporary neo-liberal discourse of lifelong learning in the EU and the Western world in general. It narrates the appropriation of the UNESCO-based humanist agenda of lifelong education in the 1970s and 1980s by an agenda intended purely to serve the ambitions of economic competitiveness and the labour market. In this context it can be read as a passionate appeal to progressive educators in the contemporary world to serve the true purpose of education—learning to be. As such it is as much a must read book for them as for scholars."

—Kenneth Wain, *Professor of Education, University of Malta, and author of* The Learning Society in a Postmodern World (2004)

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Leona M. English
Department of Adult Education
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, NS, Canada

Peter Mayo
Faculty of Education
University of Malta
Msida, Malta

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In memory of Anthony Mayo (1961–2019) and Ted English (1952–2019)

Acknowledgments

This book was written during 2020 when the world was dealing with the aftermath of Brexit, the turmoil of Trump, the continued effects of mass migration, and the panic of Covid. Yet, many global actors were working persistently to facilitate and cultivate lifelong learning strategies, theories, and policies, all in an effort to contribute to a more robust civil society. We dedicate this book to those who continue in the face of adversity and who really believe, along with Irish poet, Derek Mahon that "everything is going to be alright."

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction Lifelong Learning: The Serpent Beneath the Innocent Flower?

Abstract This chapter introduces the topic of Lifelong Learning/Education giving prominence to people and movements who advocated education and learning as a lifelong process. It is argued that although the concept of Lifelong Learning seems a harmless concept, this cannot be further from the truth. It has been twisted in such a way that it reduces learning to a set of narrow competences suited to a Neoliberal economy.

Keywords Innocence · Insidiousness · Social purpose · Reductionism · Popular education

This book addresses one of the most pervasive concepts in current educational discourse: Lifelong Learning. This concept is more commonly used in Europe than the Americas where, in the Southern cone and the rest of Latin America, the terms *Educación de jóvenes y adultos* in Spanish and *Educação de Jovens e Adultos* in Brazilian Portuguese (education of

Lady Macbeth urges her husband Macbeth to dissemble in Shakespeare's eponymous 'Scottish play': "Look like the innocent flower but be the serpent under it" (*Macbeth*, Act 1, Sc.5, l. 64–65).

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youth and adults) are preferred. The story is different in Europe where lifelong learning is used interchangeably with different sectors of education, most notably in reference to the education of adults and even older adults.[1] In North America, the term is more likely to be adult education or occasionally, learning across the lifespan.

Of course, the term lifelong learning looks all so innocent, so straightforward, bordering on "stating the obvious." It looks like a rallying "wishy washy" call to be inclusive of all persons. And indeed it might well prove to be. One of us vividly recalls a *tête-à-tête* with a high-ranking university official during a reception at the end of a book launch in 2007. He said something to this effect: "Can anyone disagree with lifelong learning? No room for discord here…?" The occasion warranted a diplomatic silence with the mere utterance of a "hmmm." A more elaborate retort would have been: it depends on one's interpretation. As critical educators, we are wary of terms that appear disarmingly innocent when they serve a hegemonic purpose. Depending on one's perspective, they might well, in the scheming Lady Macbeth's words, "look like the innocent flower but" be "the serpent under it."

The more widespread and pervasive the term lifelong learning becomes, and the more policy-inducing it is in the process, the more likely it is to serve a hegemonic purpose. By hegemonic purpose, we mean, echoing Antonio Gramsci, that it garners consent, popular consent, for a given state of affairs, as we shall show and argue in this tract. Hegemony, in Gramsci's elaboration of this ancient Greek word, implies leadership and direction, the intertwining of force and consent (Gramsci 1975).

Lifelong Learning plays an important role in spreading consensus for a project that has become all pervasive to the point that it is part and parcel of "common sense," the way many of us make sense of the world without noting the contradictions rendered visible by the stark reality of everyday lives and the research which serves to dispute the assumption in question: the concept of a lifelong approach to education and learning. It might not have been so pervasive in its earlier, non-hegemonic conceptualization as Lifelong Education (Faure et al. 1972). It was expansive in scope and was born out of the necessity to promote, recognize, and validate education in its different formats—education for and of all, if you will. Lifelong Education was also born out of a post-War sense that education in all its forms must be promoted to combat negative forces (Elfert 2015, 2017). Other than either simply rhetoric or, in its most profound variety of meanings, the subject of scholarly, philosophical debates, exegeses, or

ruminations, it had little direct effect on policy, save for policy documents provided by, for instance, UNESCO. The term could be bandied around with little consequence.

Maybe it was genuinely the term's innocence-exuding apparel which lent credence to the university official's statement that we can all agree on it. We can all agree on a concept that seems "harmless," often deceptively so. We will show, in the later chapters of this book, that Lifelong Education had positive dimensions, beginning with its focus on education in broader terms. The parameters were widened. And, a possible reason for this widening of the parameters is provided in a chapter that follows. All fell in synch with the politics of a major organization that promoted it then. That was UNESCO with its "Third World" (read: majority world) orientation. We will show that the nature of membership and superpower presence in UNESCO had much to do with this.

The concept was, of course, not perfect. As with most concepts, it had its flaws and, despite its overall left-wing tenor (Wain 2004, p. 17), had contradictory individualizing sub-concepts that lend themselves to easy appropriation by forces with interests that seemed at the furthest remove from those of UNESCO (Borg and Mayo 2007, Bauman 2013). We would say they were eventually mercilessly exploited for a specific ideological end. This is when LLE/LLL took on a stronger, yet narrower, socioeconomic meaning and was tied very closely with labor market goals. Prior to that, as far as UNESCO is concerned, it had the virtue of helping us see education more expansively. It helped affirm education beyond schooling, although the latter remained important, and beyond the time-conditioned state that we associate with the more traditional notions of schooling.

This promotion of lifelong education coincided with emphasis being placed on different forms of popular, Indigenous and nonformal education. Significant amounts of literature in these areas were produced especially in fields such as adult continuing education and comparative education[2]. One might argue that this helped further growth in these areas. Latin America and Africa gained greater visibility, especially as many African countries attained their independence in the very late 50s and early 60s. Some were odd formations through colonially devised boundaries in the shape of neat rectangles or quasi-rectangles that were far removed from Indigenous boundaries. Conflicts arose around different groups lumped together (e.g. the late 60s and very early 70s conflict in and around Biafra). We read about the colonial legacies and decolonizing

possibilities for several aspects of life in these relatively new nation states, including, we would argue, education. We began to read about Nyerere, Cabral, and Nkrumah regarding an education that never ends. We became familiar with works on Africa, with regard to nonformal education (it provided a Southern dimension to Out-of-School Education), by African and non-African scholars, such as Paul Wangoola, Marjorie Mbilinyi, Joel Samoff, Frank Youngman, Ali Abdi, Peter Rule, Ruth Modipa, and Catherine Odora Hoppers. As for Latin America, Paulo Freire is undoubtedly the key figure and major source of inspiration for education as an integral component of a lifelong *praxis*, although his links with LLL are tenuous, as will be shown and argued later. The list of scholars who have contributed to the literature on nonformal education in Latin America promoting or critical of lifelong education/learning, or a notion of ongoing education that would fit such a discussion, includes Rosa Maria Torres, Carlos Alberto Torres, Daniel Schugurensky, Nelly Peñalosa Stromquist, Thomas J. La Belle, Timothy Ireland, Rebecca Tarlau, Gustavo Fischman, Vanilda Paiva, Liam Kane, Luis Gandin, Maria Teresa Muraca, Carlos Ornelas, and Moacir Gadotti, to name but a few. They all wrote on nonformal education and, while not all invoked LLL/LLE, they provided those, who sought to internationalize them, with much grist for the mill.

We read about broader conceptions of education through revolutionary and post-independence projects, some actually gaining UNESCO awards. Cuba, Tanzania, Nicaragua, and Grenada came to the fore. While easy to romanticize, especially when revolutions were concerned, particular interpretations of ongoing education were provided, as figures, contemporary or historical, such as Ernesto "Che" Guevara, bell hooks, Angela Davis, Augusto Cesar Sandino, Josè Marti, Simon Rodriguez (the teacher of Simon Bolivar), and *José* Carlos *Mariátegui (La Chira)* were heralded as people who advocated and, in the case of some, embodied "praxis" as a lifelong process. It is common for those staging revolutions to invoke figures from the countries' past and present them as the precursors of the revolution. The revolution is often presented as the continuation of a process that these figures started (e.g. Augusto Cesar Sandino in Nicaragua, Emiliano Zapata in Chiapas, Mexico, Omar Al-Mukthar in the post-1969 Gaddafi-ruled Libya, more recently Simon Bolivar in Chavez-led Venezuela). It is not uncommon to see them referred to as advocating education on the lines of a lifelong process.

Those of Marxist inspiration would regard revolutionary praxis as a lifelong concern and hence a form of ongoing lifelong education. In other parts of the world even Jesus Christ was presented as a lifelong educator to those embracing the Christian faith, and this would not be at odds with popular images in Latin America where there is often a juxtaposition between the suffering Christ and Che Guevara with the concept of the *Sangre de Cristo* (Blood of Christ) having great resonance.[3] One of us recalls a text on display at the Catholic center on campus (St. Joe's College) at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, heralding Christ as the Lifelong Educator which connects with the view of Christian formation as an ongoing process of lifelong learning and transformation as professed by Lisa Kimball (2014) from Virginia Theological Seminary, Ronald Habermas (2008), or even Habermasian scholar (Jürgen Habermas, of course), Michael Welton (1993).[4]

As for countries emerging from colonialism or in the throes of a revolution, popular and informal/nonformal education provided an appropriate context for Indigenous and revolutionary learning which would fuel the imagination of those writing about LLE. There was a charm and mystique about UNESCO's then master concept for education. Recall that UNESCO itself was very much involved in a transition to civilian rule in at least one Latin Arc European country, Portugal. Popular education, couched as Lifelong Education, inspired by Latin America, was at the forefront of the democratic reaction to the former authoritarianism of the Salazar-Caetano military junta. The "revolution of the carnations," brought about by the "Captains' Movement" acted as a spur for the flourishing of popular culture in the context of Lifelong Education in Southern Europe (Melo 1985). A paper outlining popular culture efforts in Portugal was presented at the 1984 international conference on Mediterranean initiatives in Lifelong Education for participation (Melo 1985).

This exciting and imagination-fueling proposition had to coexist however with the *realpolitik* of economic development, which entailed the reality of acquiring the skills for survival, as individuals and as a nation, in a competitive global environment (Carnoy and Torres 1990). With the notable exception of Cuba, the revolutionary aspect of one type of lifelong education petered out or was suddenly halted through such circumstances as: (1) the crushing of a revolution—Grenada (2) the toning down of a potentially anti-statist adult education (Bhola 1988,

p. 31) and, because of this, the suspension of a Freirean popular education coordinator—Portugal (Lind and Johnston 1986, pp. 61), (3) the 1990 electoral defeat and the eventual "selling out" of a once inspiring force—Nicaragua and the Sandinistas (Borg and Mayo 2007), (4) a change in leadership and economic direction—Tanzania. Much of this was precipitated by an important global event that was the collapse of "actually existing socialism" best exemplified by the fall in 1990 of the Berlin Wall and the demise, following the short-lived coup, in 1991, of the Soviet Union. It had an effect on revolutionary politics in Latin America, as did the eventual demise of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua (Borg and Mayo 2007, p. 38).

The democratic and revolutionary imaginary of alternative lifelong education was severely jolted by these and other events and developments. Once again, the above projects were not necessarily heralded, with the exception of Portugal (Melo 1985), under the rubric of LLE but they would easily have fitted the kind of thinking that falls in line with UNESCO's expansive view of the concept. This is often manifest in the writings of exponents such as the then Head of UNESCO's Lifelong Education Unit in Paris, Ettore Gelpi (Gelpi 1985, 2002), to whom we dedicate a separate chapter.

In the 1990s, a new all-pervasive philosophy "called all in doubt" with the bloodiest of its birth pangs having occurred much earlier, precisely in contexts which would have constituted fertile ground for popular nonformal education, namely Chile first, Argentina second and Turkey third, but which was rendered more universal by Thatcherism in the UK (1979, the year ironically marking the Sandinista revolution) and Reaganomics (1981 onward). Lifelong education was still a much bandied about concept at the time, still part of an appealing *doxa*, but that was gradually to change, especially as we entered the 1990s. This was the decade in which UNESCO tried to reclaim its slipping status in the international sphere. Threatened by the increasing power of the instrumentalist OECD, UNESCO upped the ante in inviting EU Commissioner Jacques Delors to head up a commission to study education for the new millennium, which was just around the corner. The Delors Commission was late to the party, as instrumentalism had already taken hold and there were few traces of the humanism and hope of the Faure days. When Delors' *Learning: the Treasure Within*, was released in 1996, it continued the rhetoric of UNESCO's emphasis on citizenship

and claimed a space for learning across the lifespan, but it was too late, too philosophical and too removed from what was happening globally.

The global milieu in which Delors was writing was not reflected in his document. The creep of neoliberalism into education had long begun. This neoliberalism was a concept that was to change the view of LLE drastically; it worked in pandemic like ways to infiltrate all movements and connections. And, as in all pandemics, our language shifted to meet the challenge. Rather than LLE, we were exposed to an all-pervasive concept of Lifelong Learning (henceforth LLL), a not politically innocent change in terminology as will be explained in the chapters that follow. We argue, with others, that the old concept of LLE was disfigured almost beyond recognition. It became the "Trojan Horse," as many critical educators labeled it, for ushering in a market-oriented notion of learning from cradle to the grave, well suited for fortifying the workforce in the 20–65 age bracket and beyond. Under neoliberalism, the individual assumed far greater responsibility for the cost of education and the state assumed far less. Private donors and foundations were invited to take over education and to control it (Field 2001). The reasons for this change in the discourse will be provided in the relevant chapter. All we would state at this stage is that, for those like us who adhere to an expansive, broad humanistic and ecologically sensitive notion of lifelong learning, in the spirit of Faure, the concept while, for some, still looking like the innocent flower, became, for others like us, the serpent under it.

It is this trajectory that the Pivot book traces, from the initial UNESCO discourse to the neoliberal conversion and hijacking of the concept to the hope and possibilities offered by an alternative conceptualization or series of conceptualizations. We talk of UNESCO at one stage having a Utopian vision of LLE (at least in the 1960s and 1970s), as will be argued.[5] In reality, even in alternative forms (alternative to the hegemonic neoliberal one of LLL), it would make more sense to talk of heterotopian visions. This affects learning within justice-oriented social movements. In this regard, we will look at LLL from a gendered and intersectional perspective and, in addition, from the perspective of how a nation state, a member of the "supranational state" that is the European Union, sold on to an economy-oriented view of LLL, seeks to articulate ideas "in and against" this hegemonic discourse to broaden the agenda. It does so, in our view, in an attempt, at the level of a policy document, to respond to national concerns, an approach that resonates with other nations also having regional concerns.

The trajectory takes us along a route that enables readers to explore possibilities opened up by the current and ever-emerging discourse concerning LLL for Sustainable Development. If taken seriously, it must embrace an entire holistic reconceptualization of LLL in which learning involves critically questioning not simply how we produce but especially what we produce and for what purpose. It also poses the question of the relations between human beings and the rest of the cosmos, i.e. how do we learn to live in a world of biodiversity where the ramifications of action in one place can be felt in others located in various parts of the world, within and across the "North"—"South" divide.

As the book title suggests, we shall be engaging in an international approach to this subject, drawing from Europe and North America, where we, the two authors, are respectively located. We shall also be venturing beyond as we trace the origins and resonance of the LLL discourse globally and trans-locally, beyond the interrelationships of nation states to the ways that people are entwined in spaces that are neither physical nor bound, in a complicated arrangement of ideas, connections, and people. (see Freitag and Von Oppen 2010).

Toward the end, we give due consideration, in critically advocating a LLL for sustainable development, to the issue of migration which has close connections with LLL with regard to climate change and the global struggle for decent and dignified living. The SDGs are at the foreground of our analysis in all our discussions. Little did we envisage, when writing the various chapters, the outbreak of the present pandemic, Covid-19. It would have been inappropriate to craft such a work without any sustained discussion of the Corona virus and its various implications for LLL. We therefore added an original chapter to the book as originally planned. We regarded this as *de rigueur*.

Notes

1. Torres, R. M. (2002). Lifelong learning in the north, Education for All in the south. In C. Medel-Anonuevo (Ed.), *Integrating Lifelong Learning Perspectives* (pp. 3–12). UNESCO Institute for Education.
2. It is no surprise then that UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning produces one of the longest running international and comparative education journals, *International Review of Education*.
3. We are indebted, for this point, to Eugenio Enrique Ramirez Cortez, Professor at the University of Castilla La Mancha at Cuenca, Spain.

4. Welton's essay, "Seeing the light: Christian conversion and conscientization. In Peter Jarvis & Nicholas Walters (eds.), *Adult education and theological interpretations*. Malabar, Florida: Krieger, 1993, makes significant links between Christian conversion, conscientization (Freire) and transformative learning (Mezirow).
5. See Maren Elfert (2017), which provides an excellent, inside view of the organization and LLL, noting the post-War environment in which education as a human right and lifelong education with Faure et al. came into being. See also Elfert (2013) where she reports that Piaget and Montessori were on the first governing board of UIE, and that Maria Montessori addressed the inaugural meeting of the board, on the inner life of people.

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CHAPTER 2

From Lifelong Education to Lifelong Learning: Reneging on the Social Contract

Abstract This chapter traces the concept's trajectory from an expansive notion as promoted by UNESCO, to the adoption of the term Lifelong Education, to its transmutation in the hands of the OECD and the EU, among others, to the reductive notion of Lifelong Learning where the primary emphasis is on personal rather than social responsibility and the main preoccupation is with employability which does not necessarily mean employment. In the initial part, light is shed on the work and ideas of a group of writers gravitating around UNESCO, some being utopian in tenor, while others, such as Ettore Gelpi, being more pragmatic in approach. The main part of the chapter focuses on the EU and its ICT and employability policy discourse centering on the notion of developing a Knowledge-Based Economy. We also note a return to a more holistic notion of Lifelong Learning as propounded by the UN with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals. We argue that for these goals to be

This chapter develops out of the following publication: Mayo, P. (2013) Revising Lifelong Learning. 13 Years after the Memorandum. In J. Baldacchino, S. Galea and D. Mercieca (Eds.) *My Teaching, My Philosophy: Kenneth Wain and the Lifelong Engagement with Education*, Peter Lang. Permission to republish in revised form granted by Peter Lang.

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realized, the LLL concept must be stripped of its 1990s+ baggage to become holistic in scope.

Keywords Lifelong education · Lifelong learning · Self-directed learning · Employability · Sustainable development

Lifelong Learning as Part of the Dominant Doxa

Europeans have grown used to pronouncements and declarations on learning. The same is not true in most Western States such as Canada and the USA, where education is overseen often at the local level and the most significant pronouncement is the budget allocation to schooling or higher education. If there is a policy directive on education, it is often focused on early years such as the controversial No Child Left Behind and its successor Every Student Succeeds.

In Europe, the EU and various international bodies such as UNESCO and OECD see themselves as dispensing wisdom on the direction of education and learning, certainly the case with the EU Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (LLL) produced in 1999, and its much-awaited follow-up document which has not materialized. Members of the EU Grundtvig working group, and others attending workshops (now called social innovation labs) and conferences in connection with this action in the decade following the publication of the Memorandum, were promised this follow-up document. For many, us included, there was hope that this much anticipated new document would take on board insights derived from the various critiques of the Memorandum that were made, as part of the consultation process, in different settings. These included discussions held within the EU's different "epistemic communities." We were eager to see whether there would be departures from the *doxa* which dominated the previous decade and whether lessons had been learnt from the critiques. The critiques were made not only in Brussels and related forums but also in national seminars, in member states, as well as in the literature. This topic drew writers not normally expected to feature in the LLE/LLL literature including the redoubtable Zygmunt Bauman who wrote about it in one of his "liquid" books (Bauman 2005) and later in an adult education compendium (Bauman 2013) published a couple of years before he passed away.

One of LLE's major exponents, theorist Ettore Gelpi, also weighed in on the debate with a book published in his native Italian around the time of his passing (Gelpi 2002). All was not perceived as being well in the State of LLE, or LLL, by many writing in this vein. Indeed, the signs of a transition in emphasis and purpose, in the LLL discourse, had already been explored by a variety of writers with a strong critical acumen and social justice orientation, Mark Murphy (1997), Bill Williamson (1998) and Ian Martin (2000) featuring among them. They certainly exposed "the serpent" beneath "the innocent flower." The same is true of the person who introduced one of us, when an undergrad at the University of Malta, to the concept and philosophy of LLE, the professor in question being Kenneth Wain (1987, 2004a). Bauman quotes Wain prominently, on LLL, in the *Liquid Life* chapter (Bauman 2005, p. 122).

These and other writers provided alternatives, based on expansive, sophisticated conceptualizations of LLE that built on the earlier UNESCO writings, drawing on major writers such as Jürgen Habermas, John Dewey, Michel Foucault, Raymond Williams, R.H. Tawney, Bogdan Suchodolski, Seyla Benhabib (cf. Wain 2004a) and others.

Almost two decades have passed since the EU Memorandum's publication. The much promised, in EU circles, production of a revised and updated document, remained just that—a never-to-be-fulfilled promise. What was provided instead was a skimpy Agenda for Adult Learning which can be interpreted as a last-ditch attempt, by a group of socially conscious educators, to keep adult education on the EU agenda for education.

We feel that the critiques, emanating from different quarters, would have provoked an overall response, as promised. If not a response to critiques from those like us who articulate a more grassroots and social justice-oriented LLE, it could, more recently, have been one that addressed LLL (Gleason 2018, p. 7) as conceived by, for instance, the World Economic Forum which, through its Chairperson, Klaus Schwab (2016), heralded the brave new world of the 4th industrial revolution (4IR). Spokespersons for this "revolution" advocate, on Capitalist grounds, a process of LLL that extends beyond STEM, engages the imagination, and accords pride of place to the humanities (Lewis 2018; Gleason 2018, p. 6). We register our concerns regarding what is, in effect, a broad notion of LLL, guided by the imperatives of Capitalism and not by those of a grassroots democracy. This notwithstanding,

the expansive discourse contrasts strikingly with the narrow economic-oriented approach to LLL that prevails in most of the policy discourse internationally.

In this chapter, we provide an overview of the concept as it has changed from its UNESCO origins, to that transmogrified by the OECD but most specifically by the EU, as captured in the six messages of the EU's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. The latter type of LLL changed the concept in almost ludicrous ways, distorting a once expansive concept beyond recognition—diluted/adulterated old wine in new bottles? We also attempt a preliminary articulation of how this concept can be recast to retrieve its former expansive nature, and be revitalized by raising questions over agency, the "right to govern" (sovereign citizenship), ecological responsibility, and sustainability. It also attempts an initial articulation of how it can be carried forward to spearhead an education fostering the idea of a world not as it is but as it can and should be, in terms of ensuring dignified living within what some Indigenous people call the "web of life." In short, this would be LLL/LLE for dignified living within and throughout the cosmos (O' Sullivan 1999; Berry 1999; Clover et al. 2013; Leal Filho et al. 2018).

The Impetus for the Concept's Adoption

The Lisbon European Council of March 2000, for its part, declared the European Union's target to be that of becoming the "most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world" (CEC 2001, p. 6), a very bold assertion still being repeated today despite the fact that ten years have elapsed since the original target year—2010. Eight months later, and in response to the conclusions reached in 1996, designated the European Year of Lifelong Learning,[1] the European Commission produced the much referenced "A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning" (referenced above) which was meant to provide a set of guidelines for educational policymaking in member states, the EEA, and accession countries, each of which carried out a broad consultation process (CEC 2001, p. 7). This process involved a variety of actions including seminars in which the Memorandum was disseminated. Efforts were made to develop national strategies for lifelong learning, as we shall indicate in a later chapter.

UNESCO: Utopianism and Pragmatism

Lifelong learning has, since the 1990s, been and still is a key feature of the EU agenda for education (see Murphy 1997, p. 362) and a knowledge-based economy (KBE). As Wain and others have indicated (1987, 2004a), its progenitor, "lifelong education"[2] has been around for an even longer period including the late 60s and early 70s when it was promoted by UNESCO as its "master concept" for education. It was an integral part of UNESCO's wide-ranging strategy which took on board the different forms of education, including those of a nonformal type emerging from Latin America, Asia and Africa, that had been documented in different parts of the globe. As part of an overall strategy to promote education for everyone, for which limitations were registered with regard to the building of appropriate infrastructures, it had to broaden what counted as education. It sought to valorize what people always had, irrespective of institutional structures, namely forms of nonformal or informal learning. Education occurs in a variety of settings, not just schools and higher education institutions. It can occur "Under the shade of the mango tree," to adopt a phrase from Paulo Freire (Ch. 1, in Freire 2016). It can occur in a garage within a shantytown on the outskirts of a Brazilian or other megalopolis. It can occur among miners in the pits and during their break-time, as one former (pre-1984) National Union of Miners (NUM) activist in England once put it to one of us: reading *Capital* in the pits, with regard to collectively-directed political education. It can occur among fisher-folk on the jetty, besides the sea of a fishing village in the Mediterranean or in a different "primary production" setting in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada (Lotz and Welton 1997). These are all part and parcel of the kaleidoscope of ongoing education and learning, LLE/LLL if you will.

UNESCO had a decidedly "Third World" orientation at the time, as volumes focusing on Nonformal education in Latin America indicate (Elfert 2017; La Belle 1986; Torres 1990; Kane 2001). The UNESCO version of LLE was promoted through a body of literature comprising books and papers by a motley posse of writers, some Liberal, some Radical, some Marxist or Marxist-Existentialist, some Scientific-Humanist. Humanism lay at the core. The list would include Paul Lengrand (1970), Ettore Gelpi (1985a), R.H. Dave (1976), Bogdan Suchodolski (1976), Rodney Skager (1978), and Arthur J. Cropley (1980), all men alas. A key book was produced titled *Learning to Be*

otherwise known as the Faure Report, named after the first contributor (in alphabetical order), Edgar Faure, in a long list (Faure et al. 1972). Some of the writing had its basis in Scientific Humanism embraced by Julian Huxley, UNESCO's first Director-General (see Finger and Asún 2001, p. 22). In Kenneth Wain's words, it "had a left-wing, humanistic, democratic core, and concerned itself with individual growth and social development" (Wain 2004a, p. 86).

Though broad in scope, the early lifelong education movement, promoted by the Faure Report (1972) through UNESCO provided an expansive and humanistic view of the entire process of human learning "from the cradle to the grave." It reflected the openness of the post-War period and the belief that education was meant for self-actualization. Kenneth Wain refers to two waves of writing in the area, namely the more evolutionary utopian wave (e.g. "*towards* a learning society") and the alternative pragmatist approach (e.g. what shape have learning societies taken or been taking in different contexts in different periods?). One focuses on a society that is not yet while the other is more empirical and pragmatist, arguing for taking stock of and building on what is, rather than what should be. Wain had argued that the utopian wave can be easily criticized on the grounds that it provides a very optimistic view of a "common humanity" in which difference is subsumed under a single model, according to which a common destiny beckons (Wain 1987, p. 230).

The Pragmatist Turn

Kenneth Wain refers to an alternative model of the learning society proposed by those members of the second wave of "pragmatist" writers:

> The alternative approach is that proposed by the pragmatists, who are ready to reverse all these tendencies, to take different societies as they are and to adopt a pragmatic approach toward the concept of the 'learning society'. They are thus ready to argue that there is not any one model of such a society that can be universally imposed, and that the shape any 'learning society' will take depends upon an ongoing dialectical relationship between the ideological, economic, cultural, educational features *that it already has*, and the lifelong education programme, embodied by 'progressive' individuals or groups within that society who are prepared to take the 'long march through the institutions' that it requires. (Wain 1987, p. 230)

Wain's adoption of Rudi Dutschke's (German student leader) "long march" phrase implies an evolutionary process that takes time.[3] Wain includes Ettore Gelpi, who directed UNESCO's now defunct Lifelong Education Unit in Paris, among those who favor a pragmatist approach to lifelong education: an historical and comparative approach (see the next chapter) with the emphasis being placed on, not this concept's future possibilities, but the actual present day reality in which lifelong education is rooted (Wain 2004a, p. 19). Gelpi once wrote that LLE is not a new idea as it is a feature of many traditions, emerging from different parts of the world. What is new, he argues, is the *popular demand* for lifelong education (Gelpi 1985a, p. 18), alluding to global widespread efforts to democratize access.

In some of the more facile conceptualizations of lifelong education, we come across the rather problematic statement that it is characterized by both "vertical" and "horizontal integration," terms which were criticized within the movement itself. Gelpi, for instance, stressed the idea of conflict within societies, pointing to the opposition of formal and nonformal education in contexts such as Latin America at a time when countries in this region, such as Chile, were under authoritarian rule (Gelpi, in Mayo, 1985a). This was part of the reality which a number of UNESCO member states faced at the time.

The central concept is that of the human being (or "man" as they wrote at the time) conceived of within a humanist notion of individual growth, almost in synch with the German notion of "Bildung." It was all about "being" in a world increasingly embracing the consumer-culture ideology with its stress on "having," in Eric Fromm's important distinction. Paul Lengrand (1970), a Marxist-existentialist, argues:

> Education is not an addendum to life imposed from outside. It is no more an asset to be gained than is culture. To use the language of philosophers, it lies not in the field of 'having' but in that of 'being'. The being in a state of 'becoming' at each different stage and in varying circumstances is the true subject matter of education. (Lengrand 1970, p. 59)

The Faure Report presented a similar view. In its normative sense of providing "worthwhile" knowledge, learners were regarded as "beings" in the process of "becoming."[4] One can detect individualistic overtones here, extending to the idea of self-directed learning, easily appropriated later by those arguing for atomized individuals in a neoliberal world, a

theme to which we shall return when discussing contemporary appropriations of this concept. R.H. Dave, however, makes a brief passing reference to the "collective" (Dave 1976, p. 4). We can speak of collectively-directed learning to reinforce the idea of sociality and that learning is a social act. This underscores the collective dimension of knowledge for change promoted by Paulo Freire (2018) and others. Joan Bofill's (1985) education as participation, a feature of a communal participatory democracy in a Catalonia emerging from the Franco years with their totalitarianism and cultural suppression, fits this rubric nicely. He highlights communal festivities offering possibilities for collective learning. His was a prominent voice at a Mediterranean conference on Lifelong Education, held in Malta in 1984 (see Wain 1985). It complemented similar voices of key figures at the conference whose conceptualization of adult education, within the context of lifelong education, was likewise conditioned by the demands of a post-fascist context (Alberto Melo 1985 regarding Portugal and George Papandreou 1985 regarding Greece).[5] Later, D. W. Livingstone and Peter Sawchuk (Livingstone 1999, 2004; Livingstone and Sawchuk 2004), from Ontario Canada, and Borg and Mayo (2005) devoted ample space to a collective version of lifelong learning, the former regarding workers' education and the latter regarding education in general and social movements in particular. Patricia Gouthro (2009), also from Canada, gave space to a critical notion of lifelong learning that included women learning individually and together, in contexts as varied as the home place and the workplace and community.

Scholars provided radical versions of learning as "becoming" that recall Freire's notion that the human being's ontological vocation is to become "more fully human," a concept he modified, in his later writings, around the time of his demise, to people striving to become less contradictory, "less incomplete" (Freire 1997). In a Marxist-humanist version of LLE, Warsaw University scholar Bogdan Suchodolski (1976, p. 95) writes of the need for education not to be predetermined. The allusion is to an education based on *praxis*, with creative activities and the full development of human faculties as characterizing growth. Production had to be "economized," organized in a manner that allows for full personal and collective development. This was meant as an antidote to what Durkheim calls "anomie" and also what Marx regards as "alienation." Suchodolski wrote, in this regard, about consumption and the media, also addressed by Gelpi (1985b), therefore positing that one of the tasks of LLE is to confront and dismantle the consumer-culture ideology. One had to learn

or unlearn to eschew the hegemonic idea of a two-dimensional human being, namely a producer/consumer, roles that Marcuse collapsed into the image of "one-dimensional man" [*Sic*].

> The concept of an 'education-centred society' promises to show the way out of the hopeless situation resulting from the "producing society" and the "consuming society." Keeping the restraints and obligations imposed on society by production and consumption within rational boundaries, this new concept manifests the profound values of the human existence, thanks to an intensification of all human abilities and energies that further the development of the whole personality. (Suchodolski 1976, p. 64)

There was therefore plenty, in the old UNESCO literature on LLE, which can be built upon to subvert the current hegemonic economy-oriented notion of LLL and transform it into one that can serve as a genuine democratic and emancipatory alternative (Williamson 1998). The reductionist image of people as producers-consumers, whose sense of (individual) "liberation" is marked by their consumption patterns (slavery masked as freedom), is discarded. It is ditched for that of people as social actors participating in and extending the life of the polis (Martin 2000, p. 5).

The Discursive Shift

The LLE movement of writers around UNESCO died out in the late 80s while the concept of LLL had by then already been used by the OECD (1996). Note the OECD's emphasis on "learning" rather than "education" in what looks like a far from innocent discursive shift. There has been a shift in emphasis from educational structures to individuals (Tuijnman and Boström 2002, pp. 102–110); individuals urged to "pull up their bootstraps" and take charge of their own learning—self-directed learners. John Field (2001) provides a good and helpful overview of the development of LLE/LLL as promoted by various intergovernmental institutions. While UNESCO provided a broad use of LLE, the OECD used LLL within human capital theory, "albeit laced with a few dashes of social democracy" (Field 1998, p. 6), and unabashedly continued to do so (OECD 2007). The OECD rendered "lifelong learning" a "policy goal." (Field 1998, p. 31). John Field (2010) writes:

> In practical terms, the activities undertaken by UNESCO and OECD mainly helped focus policy attention on the educational needs of those who had benefited least from the front-loaded approach to initial education. In industrial nations, this often involved developing educational entitlements for workers, with laws on paid educational leave in a number of countries. In some, there was a broad entitlement to leave for general purposes (as in Sweden, and in state level laws on *Bildungsurlaub* in Germany); in other cases, educational leave was guaranteed for specific purposes, such as vocational training under the French law on *conge de formation* or British laws on health and safety and workplace representation. Many more countries experienced a growth of adult basic education, with particularly impressive innovations in adult literacy provision and women's basic education. (p. 90)

The change in economic climate in the late 70s, with a "more fragmented and turbulent labour market" and the growth of consumerism in Western societies, made the concept of lifelong education lose much of its appeal (Field 2001, p. 8). It did re-emerge in the 1990s in, apart from the OECD, the one supranational organization that has the power to influence the educational policies of sovereign states—the EU. It could however influence such policies through funding mechanisms, evaluation measures and classifications, etc., although it strictly cannot dictate policy in education which remains a matter of national sovereignty. In a situation, however, when many organizations in Europe and beyond (e.g. European Union centers at USA, Australian, and other universities) have become totally dependent on European Union funding, the influence on LLL policy is significant.

LLL's definition underlined the economic imperatives of this discourse: "all purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence" (CEC 2000, p. 3). This definition was formulated in the context of the European Employment Strategy launched at the Heads of State European Council, Luxemburg, 1997 (CEC 2000, p. 3). Learning became a code word for putting citizens to work and thereby strengthening the GDP.

The Memorandum's Messages

The EU's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning foregrounds six key messages. These are: (a) new basic skills, (b) investment in human resources, (c) innovation in teaching and learning, (d) valuing learning,

(e) guidance and information, and (f) bringing learning closer to home. It is important to point out that, though most of our discussion focuses on Europe, this discourse concerning lifelong learning has global resonance, though it is more pronounced in high and medium income states. Renowned Ecuadorian practitioner and researcher, Rosa Maria Torres (2003, as cited in Field 2010) argued that "lifelong learning" is very much a westernized concept which displaces the focus from the role of adult basic education as a contributor to development in the "majority world" (p. 91). As Field (2010, p. 90) remarks, the connection between the modern concept of LLL and the interests of the industrially most advanced countries, within the context of globalization, represents another significant shift from the old discourse of lifelong education as promoted by UNESCO and the Faure report which, we reiterate, was very much "majority world" or "Southern" influenced. As indicated by a variety of writers, including Gelpi (2002), the discourse focuses primarily on "employability" which, as he argues in the same text, does not necessarily mean employment. A brief discussion on basic skills would provide some indication of the main thrust of this document in terms of its "employability" orientation.

New Basic Skills for All

A report published by Cedefop, Eurydice (2001), reveals a range of interpretations of the term "basic skills."[6] However, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the dominant discourse on "basic skills" is labor market oriented. The net result of this orientation in curriculum reform is that

> Arrangements for guidance, support and identification of skills needed by the labour market, in cooperation with the social partners, are highly significant aspects of curricular provision. (Cedefop/Eurydice 2001, p. 15)

This trend toward the marketization of curricula is echoed by Viviane Reding (2001), former European Commissioner for Education and Culture, in her Preface to the above-mentioned document. Reding asserts that it is crucial to "adjust our educational systems to the requirements of the economy and the knowledge society" (p. 5). In truth, what we are provided with here is a range of functional skills in a narrow notion of competences, a key word in the EU discourse. This discourse highlights a "commercially and market-oriented" type of competences (Gadotti 2008,

p. 43), often measured through a positivist approach and according to outcomes, something which Wain (2004b) has criticized, citing Lyotard's notion of performativity in this context (Lyotard 1989, pp. 47–53). The notion of skills as vocational preparation is universal. In Canada, for instance, literacy funding is typically located in the provincial ministry of Labour (MacPhail and English 2013).

The kind of competences given importance in the dominant discourse are those that should, in theory, enable persons to become more in demand in the labor market, more "marketable." This is all in keeping with the commodification and marketization of education. Education is no longer regarded as a public good. It is, to the contrary, regarded as a consumer product, to be had and held, not lived. It is often emphasized this way by slogans such as "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance," slogans that appeal to the "common sense" of a consumer-culture ideology. In this context, "lifelong learning," particularly in its adult learning component, signifies the updating of competences in a vocational sense, in view of the mobility of capital and the opportunities and hazards this mobility provides for employment. Education, and especially post-compulsory education, including adult education, serves to develop "human resources." Developing human resources signifies, in this context, the attainment of those competences, reflected in the basic skills underlined in Message 1, that attract and maintain investment and that permit the labor force to render industry more "competitive." They render human beings marketable, commodities to be bought and sold for not their "use value" but their "exchange value."

Granted, we recognize the need for a good technical and vocational adult education set up. This is not problematic. Just because we argue for a more broadened education that helps develop a person's whole range of subjectivities, this does not mean that we give lip service to one's work capabilities. Quite problematic however are a few things. The first is the mortgaging of a child's future which, in the long run, serves to limit one's possibilities at work and in life in general. This is the point that Gramsci made with respect to vocational education (*educazione professionale*) in the reforms introduced to Italy by the Fascist Minister of Education, Giovanni Gentile, during the time Gramsci spent in prison for his political beliefs and commitments. (Gramsci 1975) The second is limiting what would otherwise be a broad range of human competences and skills to narrowly defined ones, those that fit the short-term economic demands and hence the labor market. Then there is the view regarding education as

an individual and not a social, including community, responsibility. This is the neoliberal agenda in education, more accurately neoliberalism *tout court*. It is one that confines the broader qualitative dimensions of education to a few. These include those who amass wealth and contacts through social, cultural, and economic capital accrued from attending elite institutions exempt from these restrictions. The rest are offered the chance to buy vocational services according to market prices. If not having the wherewithal to do so, they are fobbed off by an underfunded, restricted "education" that keeps them in poverty and skirmishing on the periphery of the market. These divisions and forms of educational apartheid apply not only to schools but also to universities and other higher education institutions. The fourth is, in the case of education and work, learning *how* to produce, without questioning *what* to produce. Vandana Shiva's writings on soil and not oil raise questions regarding what we produce, in addition to how we produce (Shiva 2016).

This brings into focus the issue of LLL predicated on biodiversity, the fostering of healthy and cosmically inclusive human–earth relations and the safeguarding of Planet Earth. This aspect of LLL is conspicuous by its absence in the EU's Memorandum. A follow-up Memorandum was expected to be released to address this issue and the related issue (climate change and its discontents) of Migration. Suggestions in this regard were put forward at EU sponsored conferences regarding the Grundtvig program, such as the one held in Brussels in early spring 2011. That this follow-up policy document did not surface tends to fuel further suspicions that the EU policies regarding LLL are all about economic competitiveness with little regard for basic human concerns about situations that threaten our existence as humans and that of the planet that we inhabit. These are the issues regarding LLL that we will raise further in this book.

Missing from the Memorandum's section on "basic skills" is the notion of what Freire and others (Lankshear and McLaren 1993; Shor 1999) would call "critical literacy" defined in Freire's sense of "reading the word and the world." This is something which cannot be measured in positivist terms, according to the instruments geared to condition such results—again *performativity* in Lyotard's terms. Critical Literacy is something which cannot be measured through the kind of quantitative indicators normally used in these measurement exercises, LLL indicators called "quality indicators." Critical Literacy would render the discourse on "new" skills (critical literacy is not a new literacy but can be stretched

to include new literacies such as critical media or critical digital literacies), in the Memorandum, less dominated by the ideology of competitive individualism. It would render the Memorandum more capable of serving the development (hopefully ongoing development) of a critical citizenship and therefore an education for democratic and dignified living.

Broadening the notion of "skills" in this vein, we can speak of those that enable persons to become, in the words of the Italian critical pedagogue, don Lorenzo Milani, "cittadini sovrani" (sovereign citizens) who enjoy the "right to govern" rather than simply "be governed" often, in the latter case, at a distance through self-censorship. We are here referring to the idea of atomized individuals who facilitate *governmentality*, in Foucault's sense of the term. Governmentality refers to the State's production of citizen behaviour according to its policies, fostering mindsets and practices that allow subjects to be governed "at a distance" (English and Mayo 2012). The alternative skills and competences, or, more broadly speaking, qualities called for by critical citizenship, are meant to equip persons not only individually but also collectively, as advocated by Paulo Freire. Persons would thus be equipped with a range of competences that would allow them to contribute to the development of a genuinely democratic environment. A reductionist discourse concerning competences and education would lead to a democratic deficit. It is important to hearken back to the still relevant discourse concerning education, democracy, and the public sphere developed by John Dewey, Jűergen Habermas, Michael Welton, Andre Grace, Patricia Gouthro, Aldo Capitini, Maxine Greene and others, many of whom are frequently cited in the more expansive literature on LLE/LLL, the learning society, and the public sphere.

Also included in this first message is the skill of being able to take charge of one's own learning, something that, as we have shown, existed and was appropriated from the old UNESCO literature which also counterbalanced this with ideas and projects having a collective and community dimension. This dimension is rarely to be found in the EU and contemporary hegemonic discourse on LLL, although nothing is monolithic, including the EU, and many have demonstrated ways and means, at "on the ground" municipal or territorial (in Italy's *territorio* sense) levels, to circumvent the discourse in many ways—hope springs eternal. The overall tenor of the prevailing discourse, however, remains individualistic. It almost echoes Margaret Thatcher's neoliberal dictum that "there

is no such thing as society." Responsibilization (read individual responsibility) is the mantra. The entire responsibility for learning is thrust on the individual, often at great financial expense, with the danger that failure to achieve can be explained away in "blaming the victim" terms. Similarly, the term self-directed learning, seemingly innocuous, tends to penalize learners for needing a teacher, wanting mentorship, and requiring direction (Servant-Miklos and Noordegraaf-Eelens 2019).

Education, according to these tenets, remains something which one acquires as a positional good and at an expense. People are exhorted to organize their budgetary spending, through financial literacy promotion campaigns, in such a way that they invest in their continuing education on which their employability chances depend.[7] The fallacy of this has been underlined in writings (Berg 1974) underlining that lack of jobs is part and parcel of the crisis of the Capitalist system itself and has often little to do with people's lack of investment in their own learning. The increasingly post OECD and later EU economy-oriented discourse on education has made the LLL concept a panacea for existing social ills. These include the Capitalist system's inability to provide jobs with a measure of security, with the resultant emergence of a *precarieté* situation, in a world characterized by "liquidity," "risk," and "obsolescence." A strictly reductionist LLL notion suits this scenario perfectly as it serves as the means to present a "jobs crisis" as a "skills crisis' (Marshall 1997).

The discourse occasionally ventures beyond the strictly "economic" to encompass "well-being," with its great market pull. After all, as Panagiotis Sotiris remarks:

> One should never forget that Neoliberalism is not just an economic policy. It is also the attempt towards production of a particular subjectivity centred upon economic self-interest and competition, in sharp opposition to other, more critical forms of subjectivity, such as that of the active citizen or the conscious worker. (Sotiris 2014, p. 319)

This provides people (those who can afford the relevant programs) with opportunities for learning to cope with emotional stress said to emerge from the brain's chemical imbalances (certainly not to be discounted). What is not said, however, is that for all the talk of "get on your bike" or "invest in LLL," much anxiety is caused by the dysfunctional structuring of Capitalist forces that are shaping people's lives. They generate a sense of insecurity and despair deriving from the current situation of

austerity, precarious living, and inability to plan long term. (Cooper and Hardy 2012, pp. 60, 61). This is all part of what Mark Fisher calls "Capitalist Realism" (2009, p. 19), based on the notion that people can see through the fact that Capitalism has not delivered "big time" but, at the same time, cannot come up with any alternatives. Many have constantly been remarking that the Left itself has gone "bankrupt" (Giroux 2014)—no pun intended given the bank-induced financial meltdown at the heart of recent crises and COVID pandemic. It can be argued that, rather than forms of learning which treat the symptoms, people require forms of learning that provide a critical reading of the causes that lie, to a large extent, in the structuring forces at play. Once again, the call is for a dose of critical literacy that enables one to unveil the contradictions that exist in society, learning for social change and not learning simply for individual adjustment and accommodation. Alas, "social well-being" is becoming such a part of the widespread doxa that it insidiously and uncritically creeps into the education field, rendering the kind of provision of which it forms part—"learning for domestication" and the "ideology of accommodation," to echo Freire's earliest writings.

The issue is thus individualized, rendered a matter of personal responsibility, a sure way of preventing it from becoming a much wider public issue hopefully igniting calls for structural change. On the contrary, any social contract in this regard is contained within the Capitalist system, and thus it does not transcend its parameters (Giroux 2020). It is a contract that does not serve to change Capitalist structures into more democratic ones. It, to the contrary, serves as a "band aid" remedy to help solidify capitalism (Giroux 2020). In these neoliberal times, this leads the State to abdicate its responsibilities in providing the quality education to which every citizen is entitled in a democratic society and shift them entirely onto the learners or larger entities such as NGOs, etc. In short, it becomes another way for the state, the modern neoliberal state, to renege on a broader, transcending (present structures of domination and inequality) "social contract." As indicated earlier, the shift from "lifelong education" to lifelong "learning" accommodates this discourse. We reiterate the view, expressed by Eduard Lindeman and many others, that learning is a social act (and the notion of a "learning society" points us in this direction). It is partly the responsibility of what was once a social state. In this context, the Memorandum's term "social skills" would assume a broader meaning, than simply adaptation to social customs and mores.

It would neither limit itself to the notion, often expressed in EU circles, that the skills required in social life are the very same skills required at the work place—a new form of "Fordism" if you will where LLL would thus become another instrument for moral and physical regulation of social and intimate life to enhance productivity. What happens outside and inside the bedroom is as much a concern for Capitalist production as what happens at the workplace, the sort of reinforcement of psycho-physical habits once satirized by Charles Chaplin in the film "Modern Times." If anything, the onset of Covid-19 made this correlation even more pronounced with people working at all hours from home, in an individualized, atomized manner (Giroux 2021) through online work, assuming that they have the means to carry out this work and earn a living without being placed on furlough, or unabashedly discharged outright (Giroux 2020).

The same applies to LLL which is gradually becoming more digitally mediated and atomized, reaching those who have the means to avail themselves of the contingent platforms, while many others, those who require more careful pedagogical approaches, including specific learning conditions (not settings where, even if a computer is available, there are too many people struggling to gain access to the terminal at specific times and in an overcrowded home space) become more disengaged. There are differentiating and discriminatory "invisible" LLL pedagogies at work here. Rather than LLL for all, what we seem to have is LLL for some, often those whose economic, cultural, and social capital, in Bourdieu's sense (Bourdieu 1977), is commensurate with that required for the new teaching/learning contingencies, to the detriment of the many. The fear is that this contingency will continue to be availed of post-Covid given that it ticks a lot of the business model boxes and suits the neoliberal agenda to a tee. The EU Memorandum is itself very ICT oriented and while we are not saying that it places exclusive emphasis on this, with blended approaches not being excluded, we trust that, post-Covid, LLL will not take this exclusive route.

A concept of LLL for critical sovereign citizens would, to the contrary, be intended to generate social skills that go beyond adaptation to self and social creation and recreation. It implies the social, the communal, and matters of solidarity. How do we create the relatively safe communal spaces that, even in times of pandemics, provide access to the facilities necessary for LLL for all?

A Way Forward

In sum, the over-emphasis on work, employability and ICT indicates that the discourse thus far is removed from a broad conception of education that takes on board the different multiple subjectivities that make up citizens. It still gravitates around the notion of a knowledge economy which, as certain research from Canada shows, is not the reality people are made to believe it is. It is a discourse that limits human beings to two-dimensional persons, consumers and producers, rather than expands the conception to embrace a more holistic view of persons who have the skills to engage critically and collectively not only *in* but also *with* the work process and also engage in a public sphere marked by difference. This would entail a notion of citizenship that can be called "really and critical active citizenship," embracing the "collective" (in the sense of people working and acting together, complementing each other), rather than, once again, the notion of the atomized individual (Giroux 2021) citizen that is often promoted by the dominant discourses surrounding citizenship, to which the current Covid-19 pandemic provides much grist for the mill. Many of the issues being faced throughout society call for coordinated collective actions involving both ICT and the streets and squares. This makes us recall the numerous demonstrations in Greece and other parts of Europe, and in many parts of the Arab world, in what has been optimistically, but prematurely, dubbed the "Arab Spring," not necessarily attaining the desired outcomes (the struggle remains an ongoing one). They are also public, and not simply individual, issues that entail social responsibilities.

As the literature on this kind of action has shown time and time again, this ongoing social engagement would entail constant learning and relearning, pointing to a notion of lifelong learning that, as expounded on by Wain (2004a) and others (e.g. Williamson 1998), constitutes a refreshing alternative to the one that prevails. The alternative to the hegemonic one lies in a type of lifelong learning that has been occurring for years but which has not always been recognized as such. It is one which is inextricably intertwined with ongoing popular struggles for the creation, safeguarding, and enhancing of democratic spaces in which men and women live as social actors. Yet, despite the proven effect of social movements and protests on collective change, there are some such as David Brooks in the *New York Times* who view them as ineffective and

who see policy change as coming from inside the system though so-called "conservative radicals" (Brooks 2020).

In short, there are a number of issues which the EU Memorandum failed to address, issues which concern humanity and the rest of the cosmos in its entirety and its diversity. We argue for a LLL process geared to a global citizenship, one which is inclusive and which knows no distinctions between the majority and minority worlds. For this to occur, we require a conceptualization of LLL/LLE that transcends that of the EU and its obsession with regional competitiveness within a differentiating Capitalist framework that continues to spawn inequalities and offer "band aid" solutions to and for them. Recall that the original impulse of establishing LLL as the main concept in the EU's knowledge-based economy derived not from educators and cultural workers who have the potential and tradition of seeing education, and not simply learning, in broad, holistic terms, but from the European Roundtable of industrialists in the mid-1990s. Theirs is a vision that is perforce limited to the areas in the hegemonic discourse highlighted above. They are there to consolidate Capitalism. We would argue, specifically in later chapters concerning LLL and the SDGs, that we require a process or processes of LLL that call for structural change and that transcend the Capitalist mindset and framework. In the next chapter, we visit the work of a key exponent of UNESCO's LLE discourse, Ettore Gelpi, and his concerns regarding the subsequent distortions of the concept and possibilities for its renewal.

Notes

1. Council Conclusions of 20 December 1996 on a strategy for lifelong learning (97/C 7/02).
2. For helpful discussions concerning the genealogy of the concept, see Field (2001), Tuijnman and Boström (2002), and Wain (2004a). See also Elfert (2017).
3. It could well be part of the 'long revolution' that Raymond Williams, who was ready to help a recovering Dutschke (shot at close range) complete his thesis at Cambridge, wrote about.
4. More than 2 decades later, the Delors et al. report, also from UNESCO, named the four pillars of learning and education as "learning to know; learning to do; learning to live together; and learning to be." Elfert (2015) notes that the Delors report does not use lifelong learning but rather "learning throughout life" p. 92.

5. Both experienced exile during their respective country's period of totalitarian rule. The experiments that Melo writes about are very much Third World influenced, emerging from Latin American popular education experiences. He ironically left his position as director of adult education in the Ministry of Education (see Lind and Johnston 1986, p. 61) in Lisbon because of differences in terms of orientation; there were misgivings about the 'Third World' orientation of many of the programmes. Personal conversation with Alberto Melo, Brussels, 2011. Papandreou would later become Greece's Prime Minister who had to grapple with the massive debt situation for which he and his government suffered the ignominy of resigning to be replaced by a government of technocrats imposed by the EU and the troika. The financial meltdown ironically led to claims concerning 'collective learning' occurring within the 'indignados' movement that took to the streets protesting against the 'debtocracy' (see English and Mayo 2012).
6. For a broader discussion of the actions surrounding Message 1, and therefore 'Basic Skills', contained in the 2001 Cedefop/Eurydice document, see Walters et al. (2004). For a broad discussion of the actions in connection with all six key messages, presented by the 2001Cedefop /Eurydice document, see Borg and Mayo (2005).
7. This 'financial literacy' drive is also increasingly viewed with suspicion for its 'blaming the victim' connotations (see English and Mayo 2012, p. 33).

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CHAPTER 3

Ettore Gelpi and Lifelong Education

Abstract This chapter focuses on the work of one of Lifelong Education's major proponents, former Head of UNESCO's LLE Unit in Paris. The chapter authors provide consists primarily of an analytic review of Gelpi's last work in Italian, published before his death in 2002. Gelpi takes a comparative approach to education and engages with education and work in both industrialized and majority world geographical contexts. He draws on some of the rich traditions in adult education and workers' education, arguing for an education in the context of social movements, including the labor movement. He promotes an education that engages *critically with* work and the economy rather than simply being an education *for* the economy.

Keywords Employability · Employment · Workers' movement · 150 hours · Social movements

This chapter develops out of a book review: Mayo, P. (2004). Review of Ettore Gelpi, *Lavoro Futuro. La Formazione Professionale come Progetto Politico*, in *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies, 9*(2), 119–123. Permission to republish granted by publishers.

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Ettore Gelpi is a leading figure with respect to critical approaches to the study of education. Until his death in 2002, he was the author of several essays and books about education and the world of work. He has also been the subject of a number of studies, including Timothy Ireland's monograph regarding Gelpi's view of Lifelong Education (Ireland 1978). Gelpi is undoubtedly a key figure in that movement of writers and practitioners, connected with UNESCO, who promoted the concept of LLE in the seventies and early eighties. In our view, he represents, together with Bogdan Suchodolski and arguably Paul Lengrand, the radical version of the concept. His was a left-wing humanistic version of the concept, a point stressed by Wain (2004, p. 17). Wain, as indicated in the previous chapter, considers Gelpi as the major figure in the second wave of writers, post-Faure. Reference is here being made to the Faure report, *Learning to Be*, produced by UNESCO (Faure et al. 1972) and also referred to in the preceding chapter. Wain includes Gelpi among those who favor a pragmatist approach to lifelong education: a historical and comparative approach with the emphasis being placed less on the concept's future possibilities and more on the actual present day reality of lifelong education (Wain 2004, p. 19). One can argue that Gelpi continues to adopt this approach in his last book which we discuss in some detail.

A Comparative Approach

Gelpi underlines the need for a comparative approach to research in the area of adult education in the context of work and human development. He does not limit himself to simply making such recommendations in this book but also provides his monographs with an international and comparative dimension. In *Lavoro Futuro* (Future Work), he (Gelpi 2002) discusses the theme of "education and work" in its broader contexts. This entails a discussion on not only such general concepts as globalization and neoliberalism but also the manner in which these phenomena are experienced in various regions and continents throughout the world. Gelpi in fact dedicates chapters and entire sections of chapters to Europe, the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. He broaches such relevant themes as migration, the growth of the informal economy as a response to mass unemployment and casual or part-time work, North–South relations, and the non-equitable access to information technology. All this serves to

provide a comparative dimension to the discussion concerning the education–work nexus. Comparisons and contrasts are available throughout his final work (Gelpi 2002). For example, Gelpi highlights the contrast that exists between educational priorities in the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean: lifelong learning in Southern Europe (one can detect the EU's influence here) and the specific form of permanent education present in the Southern part of the Mediterranean. We are reminded, here, of the point made by Rosa Maria Torres and John Field, in the previous chapter, that LLL is a concept that prevails in the Western nations of Europe, foregrounding, we would argue, the "colonising agenda" of the industrial centers even on territories, in the same nation or outside, where industrialization had not taken root, while it has had little purchase, as far as terminology (LLL) goes, in Southern countries such as those on the Southern part of the Mediterranean littoral. The specific form of permanent or ongoing (*our insertion*) education, one finds in the latter context, has strong links with the Muslim culture (Gelpi 2002, p. 88).

The Market and Privatization

The pragmatist approach sheds light on Indigenous or distinctly communitarian and regional traditions that can possibly provide an alternative to the hegemonic concepts of learning promoted by external forces such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. One can also mention, in this regard, the World Trade Organisation (Rikowski 2001). As indicated by Wain (2004, pp. 16–17), Gelpi and other writers on LLE were concerned with the existence of an educational system that reproduced the social injustices brought about by Capitalism. Gelpi's last book (Gelpi 2002) is not any different in the sense that it contains trenchant criticisms of the neoliberal ideology with, to reiterate, its emphasis on the market, the curtailing of the role of the state, privatization and a reductionist view of the human being as producer and consumer.

Throughout this book, Gelpi provides an attack on the general tendency to commodify education and the equally global tendency, promoted by the OECD and arguably also the EU, to reduce the one-time concept of lifelong education to simply a concept of learning that places emphasis on vocational preparation to the detriment of the other dimensions in the processes of human and social development. One of us vividly recalls a discussion with Ettore Gelpi in Catania in the

autumn of 1999. Gelpi expressed his anger and indignation for what he saw as the adulteration of the one-time concept of LLE which, in its hegemonic contemporary version, reflected a concern with developing "human resources"—a travesty of the concept as originally propounded by the movement of writers to which he belonged and the unit he headed at UNESCO. This brings to mind Schied's question: How did humans become resources? (Schied 1995). He was not replaced on retirement and the unit was disbanded, a reflection of the change in climate regarding LLE at the time, a point touched on in the previous chapter.

LLE of Adults

The same applies to the education of adults, so dear to Gelpi's heart and an important component of LLE. Adult Education is just a component of LLE, an all-embracing concept affirming the right to education at all stages of life and involving all sources available for this purpose, formal and nonformal/informal. It would, in our view, be amiss to synonymously use the term and conflate it with the latter. This, in our view, would be contrary to what is widely the case today. LLL is the catchier word and looks more attractive for funding purposes; hence the confusion. Gelpi regrets that the dominant form of adult education nowadays is also reductionist. The emphasis is placed on vocational preparation and competitive individualism. He points out, in this respect, that we seem to be overlooking the existence of another version of adult education, one that enjoys a strong tradition and that highlights the collective dimension of learning and critical consciousness (Gelpi 2002, p. 160). Gelpi argues that the dominant form of adult education today is very much subservient to capitalism's needs and is born out of an ideology that leads to mass unemployment and a clear inability to satisfy social needs. He declares that mass unemployment and the amount of social needs that remain unsatisfied constitute two strong indictments of the ideology of the marketplace (Gelpi 2002, p. 44). Gelpi discovers in the tradition of a critical approach to adult education the resources of hope to recuperate educational values that can contribute to the development of a democratic environment in which one does not discover the contemporary "apartheid" that distinguishes the "new Athenian philosophers" from the "new slaves" both of whom are considered by Gelpi to be more numerous these days than in the past (Gelpi 2002, p. 43). These ideas recall John Dewey, Paulo

Freire, and a host of other educationists, especially those adopting a critical sociological and political economic approach to education and society in general.

This brings to mind the hopes that many progressive people pin on social movements nowadays. As one would expect of someone who has been consistent in adopting a radical stance and who was also very active in the Italian Radical Party, of which he was a founding member, Gelpi expresses his faith in these social movements. He devotes space to the Latin American social movements, including the Brazilian Movement of Landless Peasants (MST: *Movimento Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra*) (see Kane 2001; Mayo and Vittoria 2017; de Sousa Santos 2017; Tarlau 2017 on this subaltern Southern Social movement). He draws inspiration, as far as a transformative approach to education is concerned, from the Latin American Popular Education tradition (La Belle 1986; Torres 1990; Kane 2001). This probably explains his interest in these Latin American movements and confirms the point made in the previous two chapters, that the tradition of LLE which Gelpi and others represent are more accommodating of Southern social movements than the more recent LLL discourses. We shall return to this in Chapter 6 centering on Paulo Freire, the most heralded popular educator to date.

Europe and Latin America

Gelpi regrets that social movements in Europe are not as much involved in adult education as their counterparts in Latin America. Gelpi regards the 150 hrs in Italy, carried out by a trade union movement, as an example of a positive involvement by a European social movement in adult education.[1]

He, however, advises caution with regard to the widespread optimism regarding the role of the so-called "civil society" in generating a transformative politics. "Civil Society" is often romanticized. Gelpi's conception of civil society seems to be different from that propagated in much of the literature nowadays. His conception seems to be closer to that provided by one of his most illustrious compatriots, Antonio Gramsci. Like Gramsci, Gelpi does not romanticize civil society. Gramsci indicates, in the *Quaderni* and other writings, how hegemony is developed and cemented through civil society that can be conceived of as a terrain of struggle through which spaces emerge in which this very same hegemony can be contested. Gelpi posits that Capitalist forces avail themselves of civil society to consolidate their process of domination. It is common

nowadays to see NGOs being involved in the social sector in lieu of the state. This is especially true of services for the most vulnerable, including sexual minorities, young adults, unemployed, aged, etc. (see Grace 2013). Gelpi reminds us that civil society in the West comprises racist movements and parties, besides numerous groups that apply violent pressure for motives that are egotistic and limited in scope (Gelpi 2002, p. 170). Gelpi goes as far as to declare that, through the myth of civil society (conceived of and romanticized in "progressive" terms when it also contains reactionary forces—a heterogeneous bag), educational systems, which worked well in "Majority World" countries and in the countries that provided examples of "actually existing socialism," were dismantled (ibid.). This notwithstanding, Ettore Gelpi remains optimistic that progressive movements can develop processes of learning and education in general, as well as concepts of work, that can serve as a means of resistance with regard to types of learning and work that are imposed from above and that are under-girded by the neoliberal ideology. Gelpi declares that unions and workers, associations of the unemployed, producer cooperatives, artisans' associations, salaried peasants, and agricultural entrepreneurs remain steadfast in their efforts to defend their mode of production (Gelpi 2002, p. 172).

Trade Unions

It can be argued, echoing Gelpi, that trade unions have an important role to play in the development of a program of workers' education that is broader and more comprehensive in scope than the kind of education for work favored by industry and which falls under the rubric of Human Resource Development (HRD). Gelpi advocates a more general education that targets all the dimensions of the human personality. It ought to be an education that can contribute to the consolidation of a democratic environment and the fostering of greater solidarity. In addition, he advocates an education that contributes to the collective dimension of learning, social action, and organization of work.

Adult Educators

To this end, Gelpi argues that one must strive to ensure the presence of a cadre of well-prepared adult educators. Programs intended to contribute to the development of adult educators should allow opportunities during

which the participants are given a broad and comprehensive picture of society and the global economic framework. In addition, it is imperative that these programs provide critical perspectives on these areas and related issues. Adult educators should be concerned, according to the author, not only with the technical aspects of learning but also with the politics of learning and work. It is important for Gelpi that adult educators develop a good knowledge of political economy and the anthropological dimension of learning. He argues that there is a need for comparative research regarding adult education covering various parts of the world. He urges progressive social movements, of the kind mentioned earlier on, to exert pressure on public institutions (e.g. Higher education institutions) so that these institutions carry out or sponsor research that extends beyond the narrow economic interests of the ruling class. Furthermore, Gelpi (2002) argues that one should refuse to endorse research that serves the purpose of manipulation and that does not address the population's needs (p. 173). The state has, according to the author, an important role to play in this regard. It has to make its presence felt to ensure quality, equity, and social justice as well as to project the view that education, including adult education, is a public good and not a consumer good characterized by privatization and commodification (ibid., p. 44).

LLL for a Radical Democracy

It would not be amiss to consider this essay by Ettore Gelpi a manifesto for a radically democratic process of education and learning and an equally radically democratic approach to the organization of work. It is a manifesto that contributes to the development of an alternative left-wing perspective on LLE and work that confronts the neoliberal ideology underlying much of the contemporary discourse in these areas. The latter perspective, as indicated by Gelpi, places the emphasis on *employability* but not *employment* and on competitive individualism rather than social solidarity and ecological sensitivity. In short, it is an ideological perspective that brings about a great degree of social exclusion. Gelpi provides a critical perspective that falls in line with the often-repressed tradition of critical perspectives concerning LLE, especially those provided by the exponents of critical pedagogy in North America and exponents of left-wing perspectives on education in Europe. Perhaps the most pleasing feature of this monograph is that he avoids the type of rhetoric or rant

that can easily mar a work of this nature and provides an international and comparative dimension to the discussion around the subject, thus rendering the study solid and convincing.

Conclusion

Ettore Gelpi is an important luminary in the educational and social fields. Marjorie Mayo (1997) engages his ideas on a radical process of LLE alongside her discussion, in the same chapter, on the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Paulo Freire. Gelpi's ideas, summarized in his final book which concludes his oeuvre, provide much grist for the mill for us to explore new pathways in LLE/LLL that take us beyond the strict economistic LLL discourse of the 1990s emerging out of Europe and other Western contexts. His highlighting of the roles of both old and new and Southern subaltern social movements, to adopt in the latter case from Dip Kapoor (2013), provides us with a useful and inspiring platform to explore LLE/LLL possibilities that can help us transcend the given economic framework. This is particularly useful as we explore the role that the women's movement and ecological movements can play in nurturing a notion of LLL stripped of its 1990s "employability" baggage to be much broader and multifaceted in scope, seeking to transform relations at the level of society and the larger cosmos: social and human–earth relations. Before this, however, it would be worth exploring how a nation state, while attempting to appease larger supranational bodies, at the level of policymaking, seeks to worm its wider national and communal concerns to broaden the LLL discourse and policy agenda itself, in short working "in and around the system," thus providing grounds, at the level of a policy document, for circumventing it.

Note

1. As we argued in a previous book (English and Mayo 2012, pp. 85, 86), it was the metal workers' union in Italy who bargained with employers for general education opportunities to improve the educational level of the rank and file. This resulted in what became known as the '150 ore' (150 hours); they were really more hours than this but the term 150 hours stuck. This educational allowance was meant for a general education and not vocational training as the latter should be the employer's sole responsibility. This provision helped allow workers attain a *titolo* (recognised level) equivalent

to secondary education first grade. They also provided paid educational leave for courses boosting personal cultural development, and this applied to various groups including unemployed persons and women, in the latter case boosting the feminist movement in Italy. The 150-hour project was hailed as a fine experiment in working class education (Lichtner 1992; Titmus 1981; Yarnit 1980), and a landmark in European adult education. People who taught in this movement, the '150 hours' movement, reminisce on this experience with a sense of pride (English and Mayo 2012, p. 86).

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CHAPTER 4

Global and National Lifelong Learning Interactions

Abstract This chapter focuses on the LLL policy discourse in Malta, one of the EU's smallest and newest member states. While creating a National LLL Strategy document, meant to spearhead educational reform, the Maltese case shows how the state bore in mind the Lisbon objectives, yet held fast to a broader understanding of education, one that appeals to the "democratic imaginary," and therefore the idea of education as a public good with due attention to environmental issues and issues of gender, disability, and aging. Light is shed on the delicate ways of circumventing the dominant EU economistic discourse to provide a more balanced view of education than this institution's funding structures would prima facie allow.

Keywords National · Glocal · Policy document · Public good · Democratic imaginary

Introduction

National Lifelong Learning (LLL) strategies and policy documents have been drawn up in a number of EU member states. These documents are meant to provide the guidelines with regard to what should be prioritized in their education systems and are key points of reference in this

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regard. They are just policy documents and should not be confused with actual policy. As far as research is concerned, they provide the overall policy discourse against which the projects analyzed can be evaluated. The actual policy is more dynamic and occurs in multiple sites. Yet what are often called "policy fidelity documents" can shed light on the general philosophy the country seems to be following. Ideally, one would expect a modicum of democratization involved where a draft document is placed in the public domain drawing reactions from members and different sectors of the general public and what is commonly regarded, in today's parlance, as "civil society." The term "civil society" has had different meanings, attributed to it, throughout the years, especially from the Scottish Enlightenment onward. It is widely used today as the third sector between the state and industry.

Malta, the smallest EU member state, which joined the Union in 2004, has had such a document developed. It was placed in the public domain, although, we are told that the response was quite disappointing and the document was adopted "as is" with little modification made to the draft version. There is enough in this document, however, to suggest that not all EU states are willing to discard aspects of social education, including community education, in their articulated vision of the shape LLL or LLE should take. The overall vision might be contradicted by actual policy at the level of practice as funding structures come into play and those who pay the piper call the tune. Nevertheless, in a policy articulation such as this, we can note a deliberate attempt to appeal to the democratic imaginary. Education is regarded as a matter of broad social concern—a public good.

Chapter Focus

In the EU, Lifelong Learning is often conflated with "Adult Learning" and the 24–65 age bracket is the cohort used for statistics and other data indicating a country's performance in this sector, where the major concern is with employability (MEDE 2014, p. 7).

The Malta case indicates that countries are often in a quandary. They must follow the piper while at the same time stepping aside to seem to be addressing the often voiced concerns of many who engage in "public sphere" debates ("whose public sphere?" is a pertinent question we cannot go into at this stage) where humanistic interpretations of the broad remit of educators and education providers are often propounded.

The discourse is of course forthcoming not only from educators and educationists, who often feature in the broadcasting media and newspapers, but also from large segments of the country's *intelligentsia*. Of course, they are up against powerful voices from industry who make no bones about where their priorities lie. There are echoes of the European Roundtable of Industrialist's concerns when giving rise to LLL as the key mantra in education for a "uniting Europe" in 1996. Those who articulated the Maltese LLL strategy sought to straddle these often conflicting but intersecting areas.

The Malta LLL Strategy document, however, while careful not to stray far from the EU discourse, provides enough material to stimulate the imagination, to provide a broad democratic education predicated on the principles of social inclusion, the collective and the individual dimension of learning.

Policy Impact

As indicated in the second chapter, LLE, as promoted by UNESCO, had minimal, if any, direct impact on policymaking, including national policy making. We have seen how, in Latin America, the concept became almost synonymous with preparation for the secondary labor market as intimated by La Belle (1986), often signifying preparation for recycling of workers for this market. Other than that, it seems to have had little purchase. Rosa Maria Torres (2013), we should recall, says that it was regarded as a westernized concept and not one that suited the reality of this region. Adult Basic Education was the primary concern there, and, one can surmise, this is what passed as LLE for the secondary labor market. It is clear that UNESCO's philosophy (it was a different UNESCO to the later post-Soviet one) lent itself to dilutions. And yet, coincidentally in a context which provided neoliberalism or "monetarism" with its trial run (Chile under Pinochet), it anticipated the turn the lifelong aspect of learning would take in later years.

Chapter 2 traced LLL's trajectory, culminating in its embrace by the OECD and the EU, an economic embrace, hardly surprising, in the latter case, given its having been propelled as the key concept to spearhead the reform in education and training by the European Industrialists' roundtable. The orientation, unmistakably economic and ICT oriented, the latter the kernel of hegemonic globalization, was clear from the start. LLL was ideologically and therefore, in purpose, much different from the

way UNESCO propounded the lifelong nature of education and learning (CEC 2001, p. 9). There was talk, in the EU discourse, of all learning "throughout life" to enhance "knowledge, skills, and competences" personally, socially and as far as employability is concerned (ibid.) The statement was subsequently modified, probably as a result of reactions by non-industrialists, and especially people involved as educators, cultural workers, or social agents, to slightly tone down its distinctly economic tenor which suggests that institutions such as the EU, pandering to different interests, are not monolithic. They exercise a hegemony, we would submit, which is never complete, is always in the making and, as indicated time and again, in this book, contains the means of its own change from within its own fissures. Immensely relevant here are Gramsci's (1975) writings around hegemony and the institutions which cement and contest it at the same time—there can be no power (in its capillary forms) without resistance but that resistance is never external to the power structure itself, to provide a Foucaultian (Foucault 1980) perspective on Gramsci's conception of hegemony. Here lie what Raymond Williams calls the "resources of hope" (1989) in this specific context.

This having been said, there still remains the overarching hegemonic view which, despite its gradual transmutations, is there to be confronted as part of renegotiating hegemonic relations, in this case educational relations in synch with wider socioeconomic relations. Education is not an independent variable. It cannot change things on its own. Our general view of LLL, in the opening chapters, still holds and would be the target of a democratizing response to the dominant discourse. For all its social democratic frills, LLL remains predominantly neoliberal in tenor. The resistance to these responses remains firm, hence, as indicated, the "no show" of the much anticipated "revised" document ten years following the Memorandum's original launch. The document was nowhere to be seen. Anticipating it was as if we were the two tramps, Vladimir and Estragon in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, awaiting, in vain and finally with forlorn hope, the mysterious person to turn up. Contrary to the play, a very lean version of what was expected did turn up. What we had was a brief agenda for adult education. Recall that this was undoubtedly the desperate effort of a few persons, who had made inroads into EU adult education or LLL circles, to maintain this specific sector on the agenda. Even here, the discourse was broader in scope that usually associated with an economic and new basic skills (ICT oriented) LLL discourse.

Was there fear of an alternative and revised discourse straying significantly from the need to reinforce the development of basic economic and digitally-mediated skills necessary to realize the dream or chimera of the unifying Europe becoming the most competitive KBE in the world? This was at a time when the original 2010 deadline had already expired, as with most deadlines such as those concerning poverty reduction and probably (hopefully not) that concerning the realization of the SDGs—of course, hope springs eternal. This impasse in broadening the remit for what passes as LLL suggests that the European powers would brook no changes to the major original objectives. And yet, there remain different levels of policy mediation and renegotiation in the different countries of Europe, especially the larger ones, with different levels of state governance from external down to national, provincial and municipal, etc. At each level a fresh round of renegotiation and interpretation occurs. This is where the real hope lies. It has its positive, democratizing side while also potentially its negative side (e.g. occasional misappropriation of funds?).

Enter the Small Member State

It is against this backdrop of the policy development trajectory that one can analyze a national LLL policy document. The nation state has its own specific characteristics. In the case of Luxembourg (one of the original founders of the European Economic Community, subsequently to become the EU), Cyprus and Malta, there is the small scale aspect to factor in which can throw a different complexion on how LLL is interpreted, not always catered for by EU's "one size fits all" documents (Mayo 2008). Cyprus and Malta are not only small states but specifically small island states with their specific set of issues—more about this further on, when we discuss the idea of schools as community learning centers.

Of course, as already underlined, one has to see how much of the old UNESCO humanistic discourse on LLL, or all humanistic and noninstrumental education in general (an all-embracing view of the former would render the latter redundant), still retains purchase among those engaged in policy articulation in the EU member states. The concept's evolution or "genealogy" (to adopt Wain's 2004a Foucaultian-Nietzschean term), in Chapter 2, provides part of the relevant theoretical analytic framework for this purpose. What can be gleaned from this discourse? What has been eclipsed and why? A number of factors come into play:

a lack of concern with broader philosophical or professed political issues among policy makers posing as "neutral"? Over-bureaucratization with bureaucracy generating its own rules which seep into the policy discourse? Aspects of the audit culture and evaluator state with its positivist approach affecting a policy containing concepts that have to be measured by relevant indicators, foregrounding "performativity" in the sense explained by Jean-François Lyotard (1989)? The indicators, even if labeled "quality indicators" by the Commission, are almost always of a quantitative nature. One of us was reminded of this in no uncertain terms when forming part of a working group called on to draw up a set of LLL "quality" educators; it proved the last straw which made him leave the group. Is there a case of historical amnesia or lack of basic knowledge of the rich history of adult education and the struggles in which it was immersed at different moments? We hasten to remark that this is more likely the case. Then there is the question of international funding, often an attractive proposition attracting players to the field who previously had no interest, let alone preparation, in adult education. EU funds, especially to newcomers such as Malta, constitute an invaluable stream to prop up educational and cultural infrastructure. The same applies to actual projects. If adult education agencies in more endowed countries such as Germany are becoming more EU dependant for funding (as indicated by Michael Samlowski, in Mayo 2002, p. 79) one can imagine the situation in countries such as Malta.

Funding comes with strict rules. And yet the earlier caveat concerning the nature of hegemony applies. It is useful to observe how an EU member state like Malta takes on the policy discourse and if possible *reinvents* it to address its own peculiar and wider concerns.

A small country with a population officially around 400, 000 but which has been growing recently not least because of immigration, including undocumented immigration, was, at the time of developing the LLL Strategy document, in the process of reorganizing its educational provision in accordance with its EU Lisbon Objectives obligations. These entail one's tackling LLL, "embedding" it in Maltese society and outlining national priorities, in this regard, for the forthcoming years. (MEDE 2014, p. 7) The document highlights a number of points. It underlines the need for coordination of the LLL that is provided by publically controlled entities. This connects with the small state aspect of the country where, as a result of smallness and hence limited numbers

of facility users (dead capital, rigidly specialized employment), duplication per capita is quite costly. Resources therefore need to be integrated and managed tightly, with multifunctionality a key ingredient. This is at odds with the overspecialization of policies conditioned by the requirements of larger powerful EU member states. Separating an educational entity such as a school from say community/adult education provision might therefore not make sense in a small country. The numbers might not add up to enable one to make maximum use of the resource. In keeping with the EU discourse, the country's second priority, as outlined in the policy document, is to enhance VET and the honing and, we would add, retooling, of Adult Skills for employability, personalized professional development (by implication, this would include continuous professional development) and economic advancement. Another priority is that of enhancing the quality of education provision in Malta. The emphasis here is on the quality of adult educators with the state and its funded institutions, such as the University of Malta, and the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)[1] preparing personnel in the teaching of various age groups, including adolescents and adults. The issue of connectivity is also given due importance and this has proven indispensable during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many educators have been encouraged to teach online, and therefore the priority of developing Open Education Resources for connected learning could not have been more timely. The issue of social difference was given priority with the emphasis on increasing and facilitating women's participation in the labor market, "empowering" communities at the margins and improving older adults' quality of life. Community learning is also a target of this document and we have seen initiatives regarding schools as community learning centers. In addition, priority is also accorded to greener living, thus regarding differences as a feature of not only social but also human–earth relations. One other point, already put into operation by the appropriate national bodies, set up for this purpose, is that of developing a sustainable system of accreditation in different spheres of education from vocational to academic (MEDE 2014).

This document was drawn up against the background of a worrying early school leaving or school disengagement rate which, at the time when the new government took office, one year before this policy document was written, alarmingly reached the 22% mark, that is to say 10% above the EU average. The EU2020 strategy, as we are reminded by the National LLL Strategy document, has set a target of 40% of young

people successfully completing tertiary level education or other education of equivalent standard (MEDE 2014, p. 9).

The document is by and large geared toward enhancing social development without overlooking the EU focus on generating economic growth. The point to register, however, is that it is somewhat problematic to harp on economic growth, detached from the spread of social justice and fair distribution of resources. We shall argue, in the penultimate chapter on SDGs, that, in addition to distribution, we need to question what resources to distribute and for which economic ends. In short, not only is it a question of *how* we produce and *who* benefits, but also *what* we produce: economic growth at whose and what expense? One final point regarding economic growth is that many countries in the so-called BRICS group, despite their growing economic performance, are hardly worth emulating as far as their social casualties are concerned. Of course, there are laudable pockets and movements such as the MST in Brazil (one of the BRICS group) seeking to change the nature of not only peasant families but also the state (the long-term goal) with whom they develop an “in and against” relationship (see Tarlau 2019). The task was much easier under Lula and Dilma Roussef but more difficult now under Jair Bolsonaro and his right-wing (neofascist, some declare) nefarious politics.

Antecedents

This is not the first time an attempt at a national LLL strategy was made in Malta. The previous administration replaced by the Malta Labour Party in 2013 also commissioned a draft strategy. Unfortunately, this document was never placed in the public domain and therefore not adopted. One wonders why. Did it stray far off from the parameters allowed by the Lisbon objectives? In this regard, did it provide a sharp contrast to the economistic orientation of the policy guidelines emanating from Brussels? One of the authors of this draft document was none other than Kenneth Wain who, as readers will have noticed by now, is a prominent figure in the international literature on LLE and LLL. He was also involved, together with one of this volume’s authors, in drafting responses to the EU LLL Memorandum as part of the national consultation process in Malta. True to his usual self, espousing an expansive conceptualization of LLE, in the manner of the old UNESCO literature, Wain criticized the economistic tenor of the Memorandum’s Message 4 which focused on what is valued as learning. He wrote that “the whole tenor of the section

could send out the wrong message to governments, institutions, and individuals, namely that "what is valued is *only* this kind of learning, vocational learning for the purposes of the economy and the job market." He recognized the importance of this learning but maintains that "learning for other than vocational purposes should have been duly recognised and given space in the memorandum…"[2] This criticism was reproduced and shared by Zygmunt Bauman in *Liquid Life* in his chapter on LLL as indicated in earlier chapters (Bauman 2005, 2013). This type of concern fuels further speculation why the earlier draft was not placed in the public domain, although the jury remains out on this one.

There were no such qualms concerning the present strategy document. Participation in adult education, as reported in the document, extended beyond employability courses. There is an attempt to critically appropriate the EU discourse, as the country is dependant for many of its programs on EU funding. The document, though naturally documenting programs ostensibly EU-driven, indicating "employability" strategies, suggests a more balanced approach to education—education also having a social and "public good" purpose. It is not about simply being producers–consumers (Martin 2001). The emphasis on competitivity and "employability" is of course there for all to see and the "employability" issue is foregrounded in the document. One would not expect otherwise from a document emerging from the Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE). A closer reading than a cursory one would easily identify the *social dimension*. We are told that LLL is a vehicle for "employability but above all for social inclusion and democratic participation, personal development and well-being. People need to be given fair opportunities to discover and nurture their talents" (MEDE 2014, p. 15).

The document identifies a number of existing and potential players in the country's adult education scene. Not all of these are education for employability oriented. Many are involved in social purpose education. NGOs feature prominently among them (MEDE 2014, pp. 72–75) and the document urges further support to be given to these important adult education providers. Due prominence is accorded local councils (municipal councils) which are in place in every locality on the substantially inhabited islands of Malta and Gozo in the Maltese archipelago. They are identified in the policy document for the key role they can assume in adult continuing education provision, and also in community education more generally. (MEDE 2014, p. 40). Community education and action

should, in our view, be the *sine qua non* of these examples of state governance at the municipal level. We would also suggest that they observe experiments in Brazil in the context of the "participatory budget" which can also cover education initiatives. This would be a case of learning from the South, and not the only one as far as Malta is concerned, as we shall soon see. It highlights community education and action, and coordinated networks in this regard, foregrounding, with appropriate documentation, issues concerning LLL among men, women, the elderly, the disabled—in short, social difference (MEDE 2014, pp. 34–37). And, difference extends, as we have noted earlier, the specifically human to the bio-centric with the emphasis, in keeping with the UN goals, on sustainable development, involving the greening of LLL, a point we explore in greater depth, at a global level, in the book's penultimate chapter. (MEDE 2014, p. 76)

The document would have been out of tune with present reality, not only globally but specifically with regard to Malta and the Mediterranean, had it ignored or provided lip service to *Migration*. It does not disappoint in this regard. Migration is a phenomenon that the EU Memorandum overlooked, even though this phenomenon of mass human mobility across the Mediterranean was already present around the early 2000s. The Malta document provides a valuable corrective in this regard, as I am sure do many other national LLL strategy documents. In Malta, adult education, mainly in the form of adult literacy programs, was historically an important aspect of the preparation for the emigration of Maltese to foreign lands, notably Britain, the USA, Canada, Australia and, to a lesser extent, New Zealand. Now the reverse is true as many NGOs and established institutions, such as trade unions or church-sponsored centers, are involved in the adult education and initial education (children) of immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East (Syria because of the war), and elsewhere. This is a growing field of adult education provision in Malta, with lots of activities by NGOs (some EU funded) taking place, for instance, in open detention centers. The Strategy document for Malta provides signposts for adult education to "facilitate the integration of migrants in Maltese society" (MEDE 2014, p. 72). We wonder whether a "10 years after" follow-up document to the Memorandum would have attached importance to this area and what provisions would have been recommended.

The Maltese document also highlights interesting initiatives in spreading the arts and sciences throughout the islands. The Adult Education Survey in Malta (Malta Government 2013) had indicated a large

percentage of people frequenting activities of a cultural nature, cinema among others, and this was reported with some prominence in the national strategy document. This would suggest a view of adult learning or LLL that extends beyond employability. Other initiatives include the university's Liberal Arts & Sciences program, public courses, in the form of Extension University Continuing Education that can be accumulated toward a degree (MEDE 2014, p. 56), and this at a time when Liberal Arts have been under attack (Giroux 2014; Zakaria 2015). Interestingly, the 4th IR (Fourth Industrial Revolution) discourse has been reclaiming the area as of importance for economic growth and we also have the much-discussed Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS) (Shennan 2013; Scholz 2013).

The Malta document on LLL issues a call for converting one of the Maltese TV outlets into an educational channel, thus reviving a station (Education22) set up in the 1990s but eventually abandoned. It also draws on Maltese research in the field, some of which critical of the neoliberal nature of much of contemporary LLL policy (see Wain 2004a, b; Walters et al. 2004; Borg and Mayo 2004, 2005). Its call for a department of adult education at the University of Malta was heeded—this was set up in October 2015. This development also goes against the grain as other Anglophone universities had shut such outlets.[3]

One important idea, still moving slowly with pilot projects for the moment is, as indicated earlier, that of developing schools as community learning centers (SCLCs) (Mayo 2012). In this regard, the strategy document reinforces the point made time and again in a series of policy documents, since 1998, including the multi-volume, National Curriculum Framework (NCF). It underlines the need to extend "the role of state schools into adult community learning centres" warning that certain "adults may be reluctant to use premises used during the day as primary and secondary schools." It therefore repeats the recurring point in earlier policy documents on this issue that certain "buildings may well need to be restructured to accommodate adults; new state schools need to be conceptualised as community learning centres from the very start" (MEDE 2014, p. 41). Quite recently an announcement was made that a state of the art auditorium and sports facilities will be added to a new school in a particular locality in Malta. They will be open to participation, in several cultural events, by members of the surrounding community of St. Lucia. In addition, EU funds were secured for an initial pilot project in SCLCs in Valletta, Malta's capital city. These are positive steps in translating written policy into reality.[4]

As briefly touched upon at this chapter's outset, the task is to put the building to *multifunctional* use, an important way of avoiding dead capital, after certain hours, and duplication of resources in a small context in which the per capita expenditure on such resources is higher than those in larger contexts. The latter reach a larger amount of people and draw on different specialized personnel. This over specialization might not work in small contexts where people wear different hats. This applies to educators who can, theoretically, serve as lifelong educators, teaching children in the morning and switching to teaching adults, at piece rate payment in the evening and foreign language (mainly English) to foreigners in the summer months. Flexible specialization is of essence in small states with implications for teacher education—the goal of being effective multifunctional educators.

As with the LLL strategy document, there was also an attempt at developing SCLCs (recall: schools as community learning centers) in the past. Dependant on ESF (European Social Fund) financial backing, the pilot project was not renewed after one year. It must have been perceived, by local gatekeepers, to have fallen short in this regard (Mayo 2012). It did not seem to have convinced the perhaps "holier than the pope" local gatekeepers that it was delivering an education for "employability." Newcomers are more likely to err on the side of rigid interpretations, rather than simply caution, not to "disappoint" their Brussels overlords.

The idea of SCLCs is either a harmless idea or one which stimulates the imagination, hence it is being a recurring feature of local policy documents. This idea is certainly not an original one and can be traced back to a project that was written about by Didacus Jules (Jules 2013) and meant for the small island states of the Caribbean. It was introduced in Trinidad & Tobago[5]—a model for small states to benefit from cost-effective, resource maximizing facilities. There are architectural implications. It would be replete with necessary facilities as a school, an auditorium, a multimedia library, internet connectivity, computer terminals, and of course fine settings where adults can meet without being "granddaddy longlegs." The challenge of educational facilities so conceived, accommodating both initial compulsory and adult education, is that adult education does not become a form of adult schooling (MEDE 2014, p. 41).

Conclusion

While it would be foolish to avoid considerations concerning LLL and employment, given the latter's importance in people's lives, it is somewhat refreshing to see a document providing a more or less holistic view of learning. This document, though perforce foregrounding the challenges of employability for our livelihood, salvages some of the broader educational discourse that characterized the old UNESCO promotion of LLE. The authors must have been uncomfortable with a strictly instrumental exposition of LLL. The concept of citizenship, the document projects, extends well beyond that decried by Marcuse as one-dimensional or, as is often denounced in the educational literature, as two-dimensional (producer-consumer), a recurring point of criticism in this book.

Hopefully, as the basic precepts guide educational developments in Malta in the forthcoming years, recognizing the great disruption caused by the unanticipated Corona virus outbreak, a few important points are considered. It is increasingly becoming evident that public libraries and an effective online multimedia library system are widely considered a major feature of a nation-wide LLL system. The onset of online learning makes this a perfectly attainable goal in a country such as Malta. The major issue, of course, is the digital divide, not very drastic in this country. A place attached to the school, reserved for multipurpose usage and which can accommodate adults especially pensioners during conventional school hours in the mornings and afternoons, can provide a number of accessible computer terminals for those who wish to make use of them in the community. Courses for those still not attuned to computer work can be made available either by the local council or the school itself in its after-hours program among community members in a SCLCs context.

This multipurpose set up should not make us overlook the many other sources of LLL available in the community and society at large. As should be clear from our discussion thus far, LLL extends its reach well beyond institutions, such as schools, public libraries, training outlets, university, MCAST, the myriad degree-granting private institutions that have mushroomed across the country, gaining accreditation from the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE—the national accrediting agency), as well as cultural institutions. These are no doubt key, tangible sources of LLL. The idea of a learning society or learning societies however drives home the point that sources of LLL are infinite. There are many learning webs, to use Illich's term, that have

been sprouting worldwide from cultural circles in Freire's sense to conversion of popular communal celebrations and commemorations as sources of not only learning but also organized nonformal education. We are thinking of projects in Malta around what Spaniards call the "Semana Santa" with its wealth of knowledge concerning rituals, spirituality, colonialism/imperialism, gender, environment, art (popular/highbrow), theater, and so forth. (Grech and Mayo 2020) These learning societies can be based on the somewhat Illich-inspired notion of the existence of learning webs constituting often interacting networks of learning communities. Each country has its own manifestations of popular events, some external, as in most "Southern" environments, others held in closed environments. This is also the stuff of LLL and LLE (Bofill 1985).

Much has been written about learning across and within social movements with their brand of "politics from below." We read about learning in and with the MST in Brazil, the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, the various movements in India and Africa, and one can go on and on. Needless to say, there has been great literature around the so-called Old and New social movements, as distinguished from the Southern Subaltern Social Movements to which we have just referred. We learn nowadays from the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movements and the Me Too Movements, as well as the Occupy Movements. These have captured the imagination worldwide as did the Civil Rights movement in the 60s with its different learning settings such as informal and nonformal learning across the board or in established settings such as Highlander in Tennessee. As with several other countries, Malta too has its fair share of organizations connected with social movements. These provide learning settings and spaces of different types. The list is long and cannot be exhausted. We can mention the Alliance against Poverty, the Environmental Movement, the Cooperative Movement, the 'Justice in Trade' movement, the anti-Racist Movement, Migrants' Solidarity Movement, the BLM (protests about black lives killed not only in the USA but also in Malta, especially after the wanton cold-blooded killing of Lassana Cisse, a migrant originally from the Ivory Coast, allegedly by two members of the armed forces in an adventurous drive-by shooting), the LGBTQ Movement, the Occupy Justice Movement (against corruption, silencing of journalists and truth cover-ups, triggered by the car-bomb assassination of the country's prominent journalist/blogger, Daphne Caruana Galizia). They include a variety of NGOs, reflecting different types of democratic

struggles concerning identity issues, the migration situation, and environmental protection. There have been movements born out of single issues such as those against an attempted Government "migrant push-back," the building of a golf course in an agrarian area, with deleterious effects on farmers lives, and the proposed setting up of a private university in an "outside development zone" (ODZ).[6] All these were successful in their respective campaigns. The learning issues are many. One learns about the history and ramifications of Capitalist encroachment on public land, primitive accumulation, corporatization of higher education, financial speculation, offshore banking and investment, tax evasion, and the 1951 Geneva Convention on human and asylum rights. One also learns about tactics, organization, publicity, and advocacy.

LLL via social movements and other groups, striving for social justice and change, can help people in another important way. They can help people learn to convert *prima facie* personal into the public issues. What can erroneously be perceived as isolating private concerns can easily connect with similar concerns of other people. The collective dimension helps this come about. This collective dimension of learning has a long history. This includes education *for* the working class *by* the working class (e.g. the Plebs League in England—see Waugh 2009), learning in the women's movement (Belenky et al. 1986), learning in the landless peasants' movement (Tarlau 2019) and so forth. This is a key dimension of LLL that is missing from the European LLL discourse, despite the recurring phrase "active democratic citizenship". It needs to be acknowledged in National LLL Policy documents and in their translation into practice or, better still, *praxis* (the bridging of theory and practice, reflection on action for transformative action).

Notes

1. An important public higher education institution in Malta. MCAST comprises institutes and colleges including a university college (separate from the University of Malta) granting degrees at Bachelor's and Master's levels. It provides both sub university-level and university level courses.
2. Short paper on 'Valuing Learning' (EU Memorandum on LLL, Message 4), by Kenneth Wain, delivered at the National LLL Consultation Conference, Malta, May 2001.
3. The Department of Arts, Open Communities and Adult Education, Faculty of Education, University of Malta.

4. News item, ‘Ongoing works continue in the multipurpose hall being built in the St Lucia Secondary School’ *Live News Malta* (online portal) 2 September 2020. http://livenewsmalta.com/index.php/2020/09/02/ongoing-works-continue-in-the-multipurpose-hall-being-built-in-the-st-lucia-secondary-school/. Accessed 4 September 2020.
5. Information obtained from Dr. Didacus Jules, Director General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.
6. The government sought an alternative site for the campus of the Jordanian-funded American University in Malta.

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CHAPTER 5

LLL: A Gendered and Intersectoral Approach

Abstract This chapter views LLL from a gendered and intersectional perspective. It argues that configurations of social inequalities occur and take form within intersecting oppressions. Social issues have to be understood in terms of the way social actors are situated in specific historical and present power relations. The chapter also argues that because of their different discursive locations, different people or groups of people have distinctive standpoints on social phenomena. Furthermore, when developing LLL policies and taking action, we need to meet challenges, concerning historically marginalized groups such as women and specific ethnic groups, with our eyes wide open. We need to remain politically alert in order to navigate the systems that are continuously shifting to privilege the already privileged.

Keywords Gender · Women · Intersectionality · Popular education · Social justice

Whether the term is lifelong learning or lifelong education, the question remains: Who benefits from it? As Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, a former professor of one of us, used to ask: Who is doing what to whom and for what purpose? And so it is with lifelong learning especially as it relates to people of color, women, sexual minorities, or those whose identity does

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not conform to societal norms. Our starting point is that there is more than one person or factor involved in understanding who is affected by lifelong learning policies, procedures, or practices. We follow Patricia Hill Collins (2017) in taking an intersectional approach here in recognizing that

> (1) racism, sexism, class exploitation and similar systems of oppression are interconnected and mutually construct one an-other; (2) configurations of social inequalities take form within intersecting oppressions; (3) perceptions of social problems as well reflect how social actors are situated within the power relations of particular historical and social contexts; and (4) because individuals and groups are differently located within intersecting oppressions, they have distinctive standpoints on social phenomena. (p. 20)

The intersectional approach to lifelong learning makes it clear that there are enormous causes and implications for inequitable access and participation to formal, nonformal, and informal learning, especially for women, who are disproportionately affected by the cracks and crevices in the system. And, whether we speak of lifelong learning or lifelong education, the focus needs to be on the intersectionality of challenges and contexts in which lifelong learning operates, and in the politics of whether it is supported or is not. Women, various disadvantaged groups, the aged, and the racialized and ethnic minorities do not have unfettered access to lifelong learning or educational opportunities though admittedly there are signs of hope. Yet, we need to know more about how access and participation play out in workplace and labor market-related learning, in community literacy contexts, and in civil society. This chapter examines some of the questions in these contexts.

The issue of lifelong learning can be approached from the local and the international contexts. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), set to be achieved in 2030, are crucial to this discussion. Agenda 2030 (UN 2015), which articulates the goals, has put emphasis on Goal 4, highlighting the value of education and its interrelationships to the other 17 goals. Goal 4 (UN 2016b) reads: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." Alongside it, Goal 5 points to the importance of gender in the achievement of the Agenda by 2030 (UN 2016b): "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." Goals 4 and 5 are closely intertwined and underscore that the stakes are very high for women

and that equity is extremely important in education. Along with SDG 10 (reducing inequalities generally) the goals point to the intersectional issues of sustainability for the common good.

The international community is empowered by the SDGs to work for gender and education for all, which is crucial since all the international assessments show that women and girls are challenged to be equal in lifelong learning pursuits. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning's *4th Global Report Card on Adult Learning and Education* (UIL 2019) acknowledges that while women's participation in ALE is growing, they continue to lag behind and tend to engage less in programs for professional development, which has implications for their participation in the labor market and eventual equitable participation in civil society. The stakes are high.

Social Transformation Perspective

The concept of social transformation can be helpful here in understanding the need to look at the larger picture, and to renegotiate our boundaries when it comes to creating a level playing field.

This social transformation approach is evident in work by Darlene Clover, Cindy Hanson, and Andrea Cornwall (see English and Irving 2015) all of whom are working to advance the work of women in the community, both nationally and internationally. They are calling for gender justice and for learning theories that recognize the centrality of women in lifelong learning.

We draw here also on Nancy Fraser's (2003) theories of justice and injustice, particularly her twin concepts of redistribution and recognition, to look at lifelong learning for women from both an economic justice perspective and from a recognition or cultural approach. This theory of justice pushes a politics of cultural recognition (group and individual identity) and economic redistribution (changes to the market and economic distribution). According to Fraser, it is not enough to be recognized as a group or an individual: we need to have redistribution of resources and recognition of the multiple effects and contexts which operate on us. Fraser calls attention to the embedded nature of social injustice in lives, not just surface-level sex differences. Her notions of equality show that one approach, e.g. identity politics, will not work—we need to recognize the multiple ways in which women need to be recognized and their resources redistributed. Only in using both economical

and cultural resources and perspectives can the injustices of misdistribution and misrecognition be realized. Her conceptualization of justice makes it clear that a multipronged approach is necessary.

Fraser's (1990) ideas fit within a social transformation approach to learning (see English and Irving 2015). Social transformation, in the tradition of Freire, draws on critical concepts of participatory democracy and on transformative learning. This social transformation perspective takes the view that nothing but a total transformation of the interlocking systems of oppression will do. This perspective can be seen best in the work on popular education being carried out by social movement theorists such as Shirley Walters, Astrid Von Kotze, and Shauna Butterwick. Walters and Von Kotze (2019), for instance, argue that popular education is the way forward in a society obsessed with league tables, international assessments, and a discourse of accountability. They call for teaching and learning at the local level, engaging people in projects in their own freedom. There is reason to find hope in their approaches. Whereas gender was all but absent from declarations resulting from CONFINTEA VI in Belém, by Agenda 2030 (UN 2015) it had been put back on the table in Goal 5 and has taken a critical transformative approach to integrating it into the SDGs. Women's rights to sustainable living have been enshrined in international policy.

Yet, it is not enough to say that women have rights. As former US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton (2020), has pointed out, these rights need to continue to be politicized: Women not only need human rights, but also the power to exercise them. Writing some 25 years after her address to the UN's Fourth International Conference on Women in Beijing, Hillary Clinton reiterated her 1995 declaration that women's rights are human rights and vice versa. The Platform for Action that resulted from Beijing has been a guiding light in women's rights since that time. Clinton points to the ways in which women's leadership in countries like Finland, New Zealand, and Germany has helped those countries negotiate the COVID crisis better than others. She also notes that nations like Canada, Sweden, France, and Mexico are working to increase women's visibility at the political level. Yet, Clinton laments the continued problems and the ways they have not been able to fully claim the rights to education, housing, and participation in democratic fora. Drawing on the work of Cambridge classicist, Mary Beard, Clinton shows how misogyny has been a persistent and insidious idea for centuries. As controversial as

Clinton has been in American politics, she has made substantive contributions to our understanding of women and their contributions to the public sphere. The challenges continue.

Women at the Center: Literacy, Work, and Lifelong Learning

Building on these various theoretical frameworks, we look here at several key areas that need to be attended to in lifelong learning to put women at the center so they can claim their rights in lifelong learning.

Focus on Literacy

Women's literacy is important for the family's literacy, for participation in schooling, for centering learning in communities and nation states. Nowhere is this more important than in developing contexts, the issues of women with access to schooling continues. Literacy, as Daphne Ntiri (2015) notes, is an area in which women's leadership is essential. She draws attention in particular to African women who are affected by lack of access and privilege, and how this disadvantage affects them and their households. They are less likely to be able to access resources, to participate in schooling, and to have the technological savvy to access resources. As the primary caregiver, universally, women have the need to have resources like family literacy at their disposal. Ntiri notes that women need literacy to be not only literate in a narrow sense but to participate fully in civil society, both "knowing and understanding the world and women's place in that world" (p. 12).

Ntiri and her authors (2015) know whereof they speak when they call attention to the crisis in literacy. The global reports on adult literacy and skills, especially the reports from UNESCO (GRALE) and the OECD, show that women are generally the losers especially in the majority world. Routine reports from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC; see OECD) continue to show the challenges to women and girls in terms of literacy and educational achievement. Yet, we must use caution in reading these assessments, based as they are on masculinist notions of learning and value, as they give pride of place to a limited set of skills (Deakin Crick and Joldersma 2007). What is often ignored in them is the many ways in which learning is embedded

in the lifeworld, the homeplace, and the contexts in which women live and function (see Gouthro 1999). The issue is not only how literacy is measured but what is measured as literacy.

A helpful approach to viewing literacy is offered by Ulrike Hanemann (2015), the unnamed author of UIL's policy brief on literacy (UIL 2017). Hanemann points to the need to see literacy as one of a complex set of skills and competencies that need constant care and updating. She views literacy as less a place-in-time skill and more as one that is affected by learning through life within various contexts. This lifelong learning continuum involves family literacy projects that bring families together and situate literacy in the lifeworld. Hanemann (2015) shows in her own intersectional approach to literacy that it cannot be a discrete set of skills and must be an integral part of living. Her approach challenges the largely individualistic approach of many of the international assessments like PIAAC or even UIL's Grale reports (e.g. UIL 2010). Such global assessments can be seen as isolating persons and skills from capacity building and engaged participatory democracy.

In support of similarly inclusive approaches to literacy, Lynn Tett (2020) provides a helpful analysis of family literacy projects in the UK. Using the distributive and recognition frameworks of Nancy Fraser, Tett draws attention to issues with identity politics and the effects this isolated theorization has on our understanding of women and their learning. She points to the problems that come with focusing solely on equality of opportunity without taking a more comprehensive approach to viewing the effects of misdistribution and misrecognition, which are part of a neoliberal mindset of atomization and individualism.

Women and Work and Learning

A second area to examine here, with a particular lens on women and LLL, is the world of work where women are particularly disadvantaged, especially with regard to learning in traditional times and spaces. Neoliberalism promotes lockstep progression through organized learning programs in state-sanctioned educational institutions in preparation for participation in a productive labor market. It then assumes full and equal access to continuous training and education. Yet, it is clear that this linear trajectory is followed less and less by women who continue to be disadvantaged by the labor market and continue to have challenges in income and employment, relative to men.

In a special issue of the *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, editors Niemeyer and Colley (2015) point out that the consistent issue for women relates to the difference between reproduction and production. In their words, "the persistent inequality between women and men was and is still related to the general division between paid labour and unpaid homework, closely linked to societies' constant reproduction of gendered patterns" (p. 2). This recognition of the homeplace and caring responsibilities has been given lip service for many years; one wonders when child care subsidies, more flexible hours, and more paid family leave will be implemented to help women participate more fully in learning and the workplace.

Writing in the same special issue of the *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, Sue Webb (2015) draws attention to female migrants who are affected both by workplace policies that do not acknowledge race and gender. She makes an argument, based on her qualitative work with women who are highly skilled migrants entering Australia, that there needs to be more support for the training of migrants as they face particular language and color barriers that are not faced by white women who are quickly assimilated into the Australian culture. Webb and the other authors in this issue are keen to show that gender intersects with labor and with full and active engagement in the workforce. In not addressing the multiple intersectoral issues at play, everyone loses.

Similarly, Avis et al. (2017) "emphasise that race is not a discrete form of identity but one that is co-constructed with social class, gender, dis/ability, age and sexuality" (p. 288). They point to the ways in which VET is used to de-skill immigrants and to channel them into training or jobs well below their acquired levels of expertise. For women this may mean not finding a workplace that acknowledges and rewards their educational level. There is a clear need for sophisticated and complicated national qualifications frameworks that help to negotiate job entry and migration, and to interrupt systemic racism.

Likewise, apprenticeship programs for women in the skilled trades, in countries like Canada, can work to undervalue potential for various segments of the population. Although these programs tend to show openness to all citizens, especially women, they assume homogeneity and gender neutrality on the part of the learner (Statistics Canada 2020). Geared to help women train and thereby increase earnings, these programs can sometimes require women in their childbearing years to work away from home on job sites in different provinces and territories,

such as in the Tar Sands of Northern Alberta. Some of these apprenticeship programs do indeed help learners with child care support and transportation, making participation accessible. Clearly, a multifaceted approach is required to fully integrate citizens into these opportunities.

Women in the academy also have issues that affect their learning and participation in the academic workforce. Eversole and Crowder (2020) show that for women there are major issues in higher education. They have a different set of circumstances, usually linked to child care and family responsibilities, that affect their ability to research and teach at the same time. The academic mother often has to contend with the same rules and responsibilities as others, without any accommodation for their circumstances. Hutchins and Kovach (2018) look at advancing women in science technology and engineering careers in higher education and suggest interventions such as family friendly policies to bring in women and minorities into fields to which they have been historically underrepresented. Multipronged approaches that recognize gender, ethnicity, family status, and age must all be considered in supporting them.

Discussion

For all the progress for women and racial and ethnic minorities, there continue to be lifelong learning challenges, even in supposed Western democracies. The first Black US president, Obama, elected in 2009, is not likely to be repeated soon, though in 2020 a Black woman, daughter of two immigrants, Kamala Harris, was named as a vice-presidential candidate. The visual impact of a woman of color in a leading position in a Western state is a powerful one. Yet, Harris and Obama are hardly representative of those who are challenged in the lifelong learning spectrum. Both are from middle-class families and have had many educational and economic advantages.

These exceptions aside, writers such as Patricia Hill Collins (2017) note that none of the existing systems, neither liberalism nor participatory democracy, work for citizens who are racialized or economically disadvantaged. They have no rights in a system that is supposedly universally free and open, due to the multiple systems of oppression to which they are subjected. Just having equal representation, or human rights as Clinton (2020) frames it, is not enough—we have to do new things in new ways to interrupt the politics of misdistribution and misrecognition (Fraser, in Dahl et al. 2004).

COVID challenges us in particular ways to look at the politics of lifelong learning for many groups, especially women and marginalized groups. The UN (2016a) has observed that "COVID has been especially hard on women and may have reversed some of their gains in ways that are detrimental." They go on to say:

> Women play a disproportionate role in responding to the virus, including as frontline healthcare workers and carers at home…. Women are also harder hit by the economic impacts of COVID-19, as they disproportionately work in insecure labour markets. Nearly 60 per cent of women work in the informal economy, which puts them at greater risk of falling into poverty. (UN 2016a)

Our challenge is to continue to meet these kinds of challenges with our eyes wide open. We need to remain politically alert in order to navigate the systems that are continuously shifting to privilege the already privileged.

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CHAPTER 6

Paulo Freire and the Debate in Lifelong Learning

Abstract Paulo Freire's name is often referenced in debates around LLE and LLL. The chapter tackles this question: should Paulo Freire's name and concepts be pulled into the current discourse on LLL in Europe as promoted by the EU? This chapter answers "No", if the version of LLL is the hegemonic one reflecting the reductionist, economy-oriented discourse focused exclusively on "employability" on neoliberal lines, anathema to a Freirean conception of education and learning. The answer is "Yes" if the concept of LLL is associated with an alternative discourse avoiding strictly corporate business interpretations and that sees it as an all-embracing mobilizing force for change and revitalization of the public sphere and Planet Earth.

Keywords Critical literacy · Conscientização · Biodiversity · UNESCO · Earth Charter

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In the EU Memorandum's consultation process with different stakeholders and across different "epistemological communities" in the Union's fold (Borg and Mayo 2005), such as "working groups," the names of several key education thinkers were bandied about. Included are those who lend their name to EU projects, such as Jan Amos Komensky (John Amos Comenius), Erasmus of Rotterdam and *noblesse oblige*, as far as adult education goes, Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig—indeed, all European figures and Central or Northern European ones at that. It would however come as no surprise to identify one Southern and non-European thinker whose name would feature in these discussions—Paulo Freire.[1] The question that arises is: should Paulo Freire's name and concepts be dragged into the current discourse on LLL in Europe as promoted by the EU? As argued in this chapter, the answer would be "No" if the version of LLL is the hegemonic one reflecting the reductionist, economy-oriented discourse focused exclusively on the, often illusory, notion of "employability" on neoliberal lines, anathema to a Freirean conception of education and learning.[2] The answer would, on the other hand, be an unequivocal "Yes" if the notion of LLL adopted is associated with an alternative discourse eschewing strictly corporate business interpretations and that conceives of it as an all-embracing mobilizing force for change and revitalization of the public sphere and Planet Earth.

It is important to remember here that Freire did not come deus ex machina into the world with revolutionary ideas. He grew up in a culture that was ripe for change and he was influenced by those ideas and people around him, including liberation theology. His ideas were deeply influenced by Marxism and Christianity, and were promulgated by many others such as Rosa Maria Torres and bell hooks. The educational world was open to his insights as a way to counteract increasing industrialization and dehumanization. Hooks, for instance, has been clear on Freire's influence on her and her influence on him, making him more aware of his sexism and his need to embrace feminism in his work (see Kirylo 2011).

Recall that LLE was integral to UNESCO's efforts to promote education worldwide, especially in low-income countries, some of whom had only recently become formally "independent" seeking to shrug off the shackles of centuries of "direct colonialism" (see Chapter 1). The impossibility of ensuring the construction of schools for everyone in each of these countries (recall how Tanzania, under President Julius K. Nyerere, could only provide universal primary education by 1977) must have prompted

UNESCO to foreground different forms of education including Indigenous education (Semali 2009) and other forms of nonformal education, including popular education in Latin America (La Belle 1986; Torres 1990; Kane 2001). Recall that UNESCO had a decidedly "Third World" orientation then and the concept of LLE led to further UNESCO literature, and that produced by collaborating agencies, highlighting different forms of education in the majority world (e.g. Bhola 1984; Lind and Johnston 1986). It is worth reiterating that this was a time of interesting developments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America with Cuba's revolution still going strong, backed by the USSR that then constituted an important force in the UN and UNESCO, the Grenadian and Nicaraguan revolutions and the postindependence educational projects in Tanzania under Nyerere (Chapters 1 and 2; Mhina and Abdi 2009). Meanwhile, countries in Africa and elsewhere released themselves from Portugal's colonial hold, also indirectly liberating the colonial power in the process. The events brought an end to the dictatorial regime in Portugal and served as a catalyst for the country's transition to civilian rule. Recall also, with respect to the argument in this chapter, that UNESCO played a key role in Portugal's education during this transition period (Melo and Benavente 1978; Guimarães et al. 2018).

In this context, the association between LLE and Paulo Freire was a very plausible one, even though Freire himself never systematically adopted the term and did not belong to that coterie of writers on different aspects of the concept who gravitated around UNESCO.[3] The "Third World" orientation of UNESCO and use of the concept often made Freire a point of reference in some of the literature, especially the first wave of writings around LLE. Education, in its normative sense of providing "worthwhile" knowledge, can, according to Faure et al. (1972), enable persons to become beings in process, "incomplete" beings in the process of becoming in "an unending process of completion and learning" (p. 157). Recall that the evolutionary conception of moving toward a learning society, or the idea of people as *being* and *becoming* rather than as they are, must have echoed Freire's notion, as expressed in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, of a person's *becoming more* (*ser mas*) and the statement that the ontological vocation of human beings is to become "more fully human" (Freire 1970; 1993, p. 44). The latter formulation is criticized nowadays for its inherent essentialism.

The Faure Report regarded nations as having the potential to become "learning societies" (Faure et al. 1972, p. 263) also conceived of as futuristic and utopian (see Faure et al. 1972, pp. 163–164). We have seen how Wain (1987, p. 230) underlined this very optimistic and totalizing view of a "common humanity" overriding difference, a point which can also be made of Freire's early work (Freire 2018); see Weiler's criticism (Weiler 1991).

We have seen, thanks to Wain (1987, 2004) and others, how the second wave of writers on LLE was more pragmatic in orientation, with Ettore Gelpi as arguably its major representative. The focus was more on empirical evidence of how LLE is played out in different communities with different cultures in different political and economic scenarios. Put simply, the argument goes: LLE and Learning Societies already exist and the task is to identify the way LLE and Learning Societies occur in different contexts. Likewise, the idea of learning organizations emerged and gained prominence, with scholars promoting the notion of every space being a learning space (Senge 1990).

> My thinking is that lifelong education, fundamentally, belongs to the history of education of all countries; it is not therefore a new idea… (Gelpi 1985, p. 18)

This leads to a more comparative approach, evident in Gelpi's own work (Gelpi 1985, 2002) which spans, albeit through "armchair empiricism," different continents that he visited as a much-traveled educationist. Needless to say, Latin America and its different forms of popular education feature prominently in Gelpi's surveys, and this makes the connection with Paulo Freire even stronger. It would be pertinent to note that Gelpi is on record as having once asked the question: are there other Freires in the South? (Gelpi 1999, p. 263). He obviously felt that an empirical approach to the area will foreground other thinkers and practitioners from the South in adult education and LLE to redress an imbalance in the international literature dominated by Northern writers. Indeed, there are many Freires in the South and around the world, promoting his ideas and furthering a Marxist analysis of learning, including those who work in a feminist Marxist framework (Carpenter and Mojab 2011).

Freire and UNESCO

While Freire never associated himself with the LLE movement, the expansive version provided by UNESCO allowed scope for his ideas to form part of the LLE discourse. His association with nonformal education, especially through his significant work among functionally illiterates in Angicos, enabling them to "read the word and the world" (Freire and Macedo 1987; Freire 1995), must have rendered him *de rigueur* for any discussion on the subject within the context of LLE.

It was a different UN then to the one that has been operating since the fall of the Soviet Union; UNESCO's policies reflected this. The UNESCO literacy award was given to entities responsible for some of the most left-wing experiments in literacy education. The literacy award, sponsored by the USSR between 1970 and 1992, carried the name of *Nadezhda Krupskaya Lenin*, who, among other things, led the Soviet Union's Adult Education Division and was Deputy Education Commissar to *Anatoly Lunacharsky*. Once the Soviet Union collapsed, that award was no longer given. Freire himself was a recipient of a UNESCO Award, although not the Krupskaya Prize: he received the 1986–1987 Peace Prize.[4] Articles on or by him appeared in UNESCO publications such as *Prospects, International Review of Education*, and *UNESCO Courier*. In short, the Third World focus and expansive view of education promoted by UNESCO easily accommodated Freire's ideas whose early *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Ivan Illich's *Deschooling Society* were published in English just two years ahead of Faure et al.'s *Learning to Be*. Both were major exponents of the kind of out-of-school-education (popular education and learning webs, respectively) that appealed to UNESCO with its emphasis on the validation of nonformal education as part of LLE for all.

One dimension of learning given lip service in UNESCO's discourse, however, is, as we have commented upon, the *collective*. Only on rare occasions (Ravindra Dave and Bogdan Suchodoloski provide some examples) in the past has there been a reference to the collective (Dave 1976, p. 4). Recent examples would be UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning's emphasis on family learning and literacy (Hanemann 2015) as well as learning cities. Yet, the collective dimension of learning is an important aspect of Freire's political-pedagogical approach. People liberate themselves not own their own but in concert with others, we are told in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire 2018, pp. 85–86).

We keep arguing that self-directed learning has too much of an individualistic ring to it and appealed to the OECD and the EU with infinitely more direct effects on policymaking in education than UNESCO can ever have. Their stronger influence results from the structuring financial resources at their disposal—and this despite the fact that the EU is said to have only a "partial jurisdiction over educational matters" (Murphy 1997, p. 362) amounting to, in Jackie Brine's words (1999), a "still narrowly defined legal competency" in the area (p. 53). The EU can fund national and local projects on a large scale. As the old saying goes, those "who pay the piper call the tune," something UNESCO can never do, despite the laudable research projects and reports it commissions (e.g. Global Education Monitoring Reports, Global Report on Adult Learning and Education-GRALE) in the hope of influencing policy at national, regional, or other levels.

The OECD and EU's "economic competitivity" intentions (Regmi 2015, p. 133) have been registered in earlier chapters. In the EU's case, education was meant to serve as a means of bringing nations together to pool their educational infrastructural resources for greater competitiveness (Murphy 1997, p. 363) in the face of the transnational and multinational corporations' ability to reap the advantages of economies of scale through the expansion of international capital mobility. With the first impulse for this turn coming from not educationists or educators but from industrialists, with the publication of *Education for Life: A European Strategy* (Kairamo 1989), any link, tenuous though it might have been, between Freire and the idea of LLE, is likely to have been severed in this scenario. Coupled with the fact that, as far as Freire's Latin American context goes, LLL very much became a Westernized concept (Torres 2013), which removes the focus from the role of adult basic education in the majority world's development (Field 2010, p. 91), the link with Freire becoming ever more severed. We are now at the furthest remove from the spirit of the Faure Report (1972), let alone Freire.

Needless to say, we will occasionally note the odd reference to Freire in the contemporary discourse because it remains trendy to bandy his name around and to co-opt his ideas, as with MOBRAL under the military dictatorship in Brazil which kept him in exile for 16 years and more recently Charter Schools in the USA, some having the effrontery to name their schools after him. His name is used in the same way that Swatch Watches and Energy drinks use and, thus besmirch (by association), Che Guevara's name—an insult to his revolutionary memory.

In fact, more than anything else, Freire's pedagogy is more in tune with attempts to provide critical progressive antidotes to the "technical-rational/employability fix" found in current hegemonic LLL discourses. Freire's ideas promote a view of learners as collective social actors as opposed to those who advocate the current mantra for LLL based on "employability" (which, as Gelpi 2002 reminds us, does not mean employment). They are also opposed to the idea of people reduced to two-dimensional, or effectively one-dimensional, producers/consumers, the latter, as we have seen, with a key quote to boot, ironically being the object of criticism by Bogdan Suchodolski (1976) in his specific use of the Learning Society concept (p. 64).

While the emphasis in the widespread hegemonic use of LLL is on learning for liquid life (see Bauman 2005, 2013), a life that lacks stability and is characterized by precariousness, Freire's notion is on the broader political dimensions of learning to "read the word and the world." This type of learning entails an engagement in *critical literacy* whereby, collectively with others, one helps unveil contradictions in the current society. As we make the point in a later chapter on gender and learning, this type of learning is an important step for people to exercise the "right to govern" in the context of sovereign citizenship, a far cry from what has been criticized as hegemonic LLL for "governmentality," to adopt Foucault's term, learning self-regulation (Olssen 2006).

Freire's approach continues to make sense in a situation when the promises of what results, in terms of "employability" conditions, from what passes for conventional LLL are constantly broken (Brown et al. 2010). Phil Brown, Hugh Lauder, and David Ashton (Brown et al. 2010) challenge the conventional wisdom that more education will lead to greater individual and national prosperity. Drawing on a body of international research they underline the global competition for rewarding, middle-class jobs. Arguing that there exists an auction for cut-priced brainpower on the basis a massive expansion of higher education worldwide, they posit that emerging economies such as China and India have provided a new high-skill, low-wage workforce that is causing a lack of good, lucrative jobs. The struggle for these jobs will leave many highly qualified people disappointed, suffering underemployment, precarious living, and possibly poverty (English and Mayo 2012, p. 80).

There is also an ideology at play as we and many others have argued (see Chapter 2) that the onus is on the individual in a process of what has been termed "responsibilisation" (see Leibenberg et al. 2015). Survival

and well-being become matters of individual rather than social responsibility, hence, it is worth reiterating, the discursive shift from Lifelong *Education*, with education having a normative dimension, to Lifelong *Learning*. This change in emphasis, in our view, expressed earlier, enables the concept to easily dovetail with the hegemonic view that education and social well-being (as is the case with other aspects of state provision, such as pensions, now becoming non-sustainable) are characteristics/virtues of the "good citizen" who does not depend on the "nanny state" and public funds (as if the citizen does not pay taxes to bolster these funds—public funds for private gains?) (Borg and Mayo 2005, p. 207).

The clear inference, as though one cannot repeat the mantra often enough, is that failure to invest in LLL is an individual error of judgment (see Chapter 6 in Giroux and Searls Giroux 2004). If the link between Freire and the old UNESCO literature would have been tenuous but plausible, any link with the later economy-oriented and neoliberal variant of the concept, morphed into LLL, is untenable. It would, in our book, be anathema to Freire or to anyone subscribing to a Freirean conception of education.

Alternative LLL

Freire strikes us as being most relevant to alternative democratic conceptions of LLL with social justice as the goal in mind and the idea of "critical literacy" as the major process involved, a key feature of ongoing democratization. In these conceptions, learning is recognized as a lifelong process, captured in Freire's idea of persons in the constant struggle to learn to come to terms with their contradictions. This is carried out with a view to generating transformative action—action intended to enable one to confront one's contradictions, to become less "unfinished"/incomplete, less incoherent, as Freire put it a couple of years before he passed away. This emerges from the piece by Freire (1997) in *Mentoring the Mentor*, and works subversively below the radar in all his work. It is implied in Freire's exhortation, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, to recognize the presence of and to confront the "oppressor within"—the "oppressor consciousness" (the internalization of the oppressor's image), echoing Hegel's Master–Slave dialectic, manifest in a variety of places including theater (See Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and the subplot involving Pozzo and Lucky). In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,

Freire had argued that, through a problem-posing approach to education, human beings are conceived of as persons engaged in a "process of becoming"; they are unfinished persons engaged in and with an "unfinished reality" (Freire 1970; 1993, p. 84)—more accurately their task is to strive to "become more" (*ser mais*), not in an individualistic, atomized sense but in harmony with the collective. Being central to his notion of "history as possibility," the notion of "incompleteness" remains a key theme in his work and features in practically all of his later works which include at least one essay, available in English translation, focusing on the topic (Freire 1997, pp. 73–79). LLL to counter incompleteness makes sense in this context. It is LLL which is broad in scope and based on a series of ethical commitments to others. It is LLL predicated on love for others, for humanity, and the rest of the cosmos, in a process whereby people see themselves rooted in, rather than apart from and ready to exploit, nature. This represents a significant departure from the anthropocentrism of his early work and images (see, for instance, the reproduced images in Freire 1973). This approach to LLL is underpinned by social transformative learning on the lines of what Freire (1997) has called "unity in diversity." He used it to account for social difference and as part of a search for elements unifying the various subaltern groups in their struggle against oppression. One can build on this notion, also taken up by his followers and by Freire himself through the "thematic complexes" introduced to the "popular public schools" in São Paulo. Freire was Education Secretary in São Paulo's Municipal Government in the late 80s (Freire 1993; Torres 1994; O'Cadiz et al. 1998) helping in the formulation of policies that gave rise to these schools. Ecological issues featured prominently among the generative themes, within the interdisciplinary curriculum, developed in these schools as part of the reform introduced by Freire and his associates (see O'Cadiz et al. 1998, pp. 152, 201). In light of all this, diversity would assume a broader meaning in a concept of LLL marked by our connectedness to the ecosystem that sustains us, as opposed to the current state characterized by the technical-industrial values of Western-Eurocentric culture (O'Sullivan 1999). One would therefore speak of the need for "unity in biodiversity" in this context (Mayo 2004, p. 100).

Freire's collaborators and followers have taken this further with work in connection with the Earth Charter (*Carta da Terra*), a charter that recalls the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (IPF 2000, pp. 11–12), and Sustainable Development. One important work to be cited, in

this context, is that by the Costa Rican based, Francisco Gutierrez, and Cruz Prado (2000), the term *Ecopedagogia* being used in this case. It is also heartening to note that the Instituto Paulo Freire (IPF) in São Paulo, officially founded on September 1, 1992, has a program in Ecopedagogy, contributing to the construction of a *planetary citizenship*.

All this lies in stark contrast to the soulless nature of a life centering on the vagaries and volatility of the market, where "clinical efficiency" becomes the prime value. We must ask with Janet Stein, "Efficient at what?" The notion of LLL concomitant with Freire's ideas would be one in which people are conceived as relational beings in harmony with the rest of the cosmos, as distinct from an industrially conditioned notion of LLL whereby people are restricted to constantly (re) learning the skills to produce and consume without limits, actions. Needless to say, the latter has repercussions for the survival of Planet Earth borrowed from future generations—a recurring theme in this book. As Gadotti (2016) argued "The World Bank and the European Union's conception of Lifelong Education (*read: Lifelong Learning, our insertion*) points to a direction running contrary to one that leads to a fair and sustainable manner of living. The aim of these bodies is the standardization, and not connectivity in difference, and individualism, not solidarity" (p. 9).[5]

The UN, in contrast, regards LLL as an important vehicle for attaining its sustainable development goals. For LLL to be meaningful in this urgent struggle, it must be rescued from the reductionist, economic-oriented paradigm in which it is currently entrapped to be presented as broader in scope, embracing all forms of intra-human and human–earth relations. Freire's pedagogical politics would find a congenial home in the wider conception of LLL for sustainable development, certainly in tune with the writing and teaching of fellow Latin American, Pope Francis (2015). We shall address this in greater detail in the next chapter.

The relational aspect of LLL, with its collective and "unity in diversity" dimensions, brings to mind, once again, social movements, often decried for being more focused on single specific issue politics than on a broader politics targeting the structural forces of oppression that span various differences. It is for this reason that we were careful not to extricate the discussion around the Women's Movement from the wider issue of *intersectionality* with regard to other forms of oppression and macro/micro aggressions. We pursue intersectionality later in this book. It is the task of confronting single issue politics with a broader politics that led Freire to use the phrase "unity in diversity" (Freire 1997) in the first place. That

piece in *Mentoring the Mentor* was a response by Paulo Freire to activists and scholars expressing their views from different social vantage points. The World Social Forum, emerging from his native Brazil, provides an ideal context for many of these movements to coalesce around an effort to confront neoliberal globalization as a powerful, all-pervasive structuring force. Needless to say, Freire's name and work were, and continue to be, in the various social forums, constant and very apt sources of reference.

Social movements appealed to Freire. Most of his books from the mid-1980s onward attest to Freire's recognition of the role of social movements as agents of change. His writings and interviews reveal how the emergence of the MST (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra*—Landless Peasant Movement) in Brazil (Tarlau 2017, 2019) and other movements elsewhere, including Europe, captured his imagination. He himself was part of, and indeed contributed to, a movement, the Liberation Theology movement, which strove for an important process of change, of radicalization, within the Catholic Church, an important institution in Latin America and beyond. He and his team at the Education Secretariat in São Paulo saw themselves as giving rise to the emergence of a curriculum reform movement. MOVA-SP (Stromquist 1997) has also been described as a "federation of movements" (O'Cadiz et al. 1998, p. 57).

Freire strove to bring social movements and state agencies together in São Paulo when Education Secretary there (see Chapter 3 in O'Cadiz et al. 1998). Ironically, given Freire's use of the phrase, O'Cadiz, Wong, and Torres quoted Moacir Gadotti as saying that "being tactically inside and strategically outside" the system was the stance adopted by social movements with respect to their relationship with the São Paulo Education Secretariat. They were wary of the state's nature in this city, even, if in this particular case, the state was being represented by a progressive municipal administration (O'Cadiz et al. 1998, p. 44) which however depended for its funding on a Federal government under control of the opposing party. This attitude, on the social movements' part, did not deter the municipal government from striving to forge a collaborative partnership with them.

As a founding member of the PT (Partido Trabalhadores—Workers' Party), a party born, to a certain extent, out of social movements, Freire also insisted that the party had to listen to and learn from social movements without trying to take them over. He is on record as having said:

> Today, if the Workers' Party approaches the popular movements from which it was born, without trying to take them over, the party will grow; if it turns away from the popular movements, in my opinion, the party will wear down. Besides, those movements need to make their struggle politically viable. (Freire, in Escobar et al. 1994, p. 40)

Working in the context of social movements implies an ongoing process of learning and relearning, formally, nonformally, and mainly informally.[6] Social movement learning provides an alternative form of LLL to the mainstream. This process of learning projects notions of people not in two-dimensional reductionist terms but primarily as social actors (Martin 2000). It is to this type of LLL that Freire appeals, becoming quite relevant. This alternative concept of LLL makes Freire relevant in view of the process of *conscientização* embedded in his approach to gaining critical distance from what people know to perceive things in a more critical light (*Praxis*), thus seeing through the ideology of the prevalent socioeconomic system and working through the contradictions. This provides an antithetical view of LLL based not on a view of working *for the economy*, with all the illusions of prosperity involved, but on *engaging critically with it* and society in general, understanding its underlying contradictions.

While the EU promotes digital and other functional literacies as its much-valued new basic skills, Freire promoted critical literacy, which, as we had occasion to comment countless times, is conspicuous by its absence in the EU discourse. Critical literacy has the potential to enable one to read and write (Taylor 1993) the world as well as the word through the process of praxis which enables one to stand back from the context one knows to see it in a more critical light. That this term is lacking from the EU Memorandum's list of "new basic skills" is revealing with regard to the transmission model inherent in this particular hegemonic notion of LLL. A Freire-inspired notion of LLL would, to the contrary, be based on the use of skills not simply to function in the economy, important though this is, but to interpret and change it. This hearkens back to the old Socratic dictum, as reproduced by Plato in the *Apologia*, that an unexamined life is a life not worth living. Also not worth living is a life that does not allow people the possibility of collectively changing it, thus rewriting history in the process.

Furthermore, this alternative Freirean process of LLL is based on not simply engaging in individual solutions to anxieties deriving from current states of risk, liquidity and precariousness, preventing people from

planning long term, but to critically read the world and identify the structuring forces that cause these effects—the dysfunctional structuring Capitalist forces shaping people's lives. They generate a sense of insecurity and despair deriving from the current situation of austerity, precarious living, and inability to plan long term (Cooper and Hardy 2012, pp. 60, 61). Once again, rather than LLL treating symptoms, there appears to be a need for LLL that provides a critical reading of the causes (see Mayo 2017).

Social Transformative LLL and the Politics of Hope

Rather than simply antibiotics and other medicines, what is required is social/structural change for greater social justice. The kind of LLL for this purpose, for which Freire's pedagogical ideas are relevant, is one predicated on a conception of the world not as it is but as it can and should be from a social justice perspective. It is LLL with a socially transformative edge that Freire helps inspire rather than the kind of neoliberal LLL we encounter today with its reproductive function based on the problematic "Capitalist realism" (Fisher 2009, p. 19) mantra that there is no alternative (TINA) to the present.

To end on a positive note, reflecting a pedagogy and politics of hope (Freire 1994), we reiterate that we would do well not to regard such institutions as the EU as monolithic. We also repeat, in this regard, that hegemonic structures contain, within their interstices, the spaces and possibilities for contestation and movement toward change. This is how hegemony works, being never complete and constantly in flux. The EU is no exception and so there are possibilities for those operating "in and against it" to bring a socially transformative edge into their LLL work, worming their agendas into the programs available, being, once again, as Freire and other Brazilians would put it, "tactically inside and strategically outside" the system. What renders this even more possible in certain countries, albeit the larger European ones with their regional variations, is that there are different layers of mediation that a policy has to go through to reach the grassroots territory/site of practice: from Brussels itself, where different policy actors with different orientations are present in various EU epistemic communities, bringing their own values to bear on policy interpretation,[7] to the national coordinating body to the regional areas or territories, in Italy's *territorio* sense, and to the municipalities.

Lots of hybridization, transmutations, and appropriation, hopefully critical appropriation, can occur along the way. Much depends on the stance adopted by the gatekeepers concerned, some, as we have seen in recent accession countries, proving more rigid than others. The flow is however never straightforward. As with teachers and school leaders, who reinvent and mediate policy discourses in their specific sites of practice (Giroux 1988), people entrusted with implementing policy can also "reinvent" such policies in their own specific contexts—all mediators in the process of cultural transmission and production. This should offer hope to those seeking to transform "in and against" a neoliberal-driven system.

Notes

1. An eyewitness account. Peter Mayo was a working group member for the Grundtvig project and also a member of the working group on Quality Indicators for LLL. He represented his country, Malta, in both areas.
2. This was also the position that Moacir Gadotti (2016) defended at CONFINTEA BRASIL + 6, held in Brasília, Brazil, April 25–28, 2016, at a conference session on "Popular Education and Lifelong Education."
3. An exception is his address at the 40th Anniversary of UIL, See P. Freire. (1992). The purpose of education. In UIE (UNESCO Institute for Education) (Ed.), *The 40th Anniversary of the UNESCO Institute for Education*. UIE Reports, 6 (pp. 23–28). Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education.
4. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001229/122930Eo.pdf.
5. A tentative translation from the original in Portuguese by Moacir Gadotti. The original reads: "A concepção de Educação ao Longo da Vida do Banco Mundial e da União Europeia aponta para uma direção oposta a um munto justo e sustentável. A aposta desses organismos é a uniformização e não a conectividade na diferença, o individualismo e não a solidariedade." Gadotti uses "Lifelong Education" (Educação ao Longo da Vida) although the term used by the two institutions, especially the EU, is LLL with, as we have seen, all its ideological differences from the old UNESCO concept of LLE.
6. We are here using UNESCO's classifications (Coombs and Ahmed 1974), regarding different types of education; these classifications serve a heuristic purpose—we often come across a combination of two or more occurring inextricably in a given educational experience or project.
7. A classic case is the decision by the relevant body in Brussels to support the proposal for an International Erasmus Mundus Master in Adult Education for Social Change (IMAESC) with its content very much focusing around

social justice and in which Freirean pedagogy plays an important part. It was accorded the largest allocation of funds from among the selected Erasmus Mundus International Master programs. http://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/erasmusmundus/imaesc/.

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CHAPTER 7

LLL Challenges: Responding to Migration and the Sustainable Development Goals

Abstract The twenty-first century has seen massive migration of peoples escaping the degradation of the environment, effects of war, threats to security, and lack of opportunity in their countries of origin. Those who survive, some coming to terms with the trauma of losing loved ones along the way, enter as migrants, refugees, and temporary workers. This paper examines the plight of these vulnerable migratory populations in light of the global responsibility for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Special attention is given to the supports necessary for a lifelong learning (LLL) response to enable this population to live a life characterized by dignity. The authors argue for a LLL process that addresses the particular politics of "disposability" (Bauman 2006, p. 40) surrounding many migrants' lives.

Keywords Lifelong learning · Migration · Poverty · SDGs · Temporary workers · Work

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Introduction

One could be forgiven for thinking that the nation state no longer matters, given the amount of migration from country to country in the twenty-first century. Even a casual glance through international publications such as the *New York Times* shows that migration, especially the decades of illegal migration of Mexicans into the USA, is top of citizens' minds. The same applies to migrants in Europe where their "illegality" and their being "Sans-Papiers"[1] (Badiou, as cited in Nail 2015, p. 109) renders migrants TCNs (Third Country Nationals), the term for people in transit from their home country and in the process of moving to another (in the EU, non-EU citizens). They are exposed to exploitation throughout the journey and, if successful, later exposed to traffickers (those who smuggle migrants for huge sums of money, often referred to in Latin America as *coyotes*) at one end and unscrupulous employers at the other. They capitalize on migrants' lack of choice in having to work, as disposable beings (Bauman 2006), for a pittance, with the threat of deportation hanging over them. While others work in the comfort of their homes or in other relatively secure spaces, migrants, together with others who place their bodies on the line because of the nature of their work or simply because of precarious employment, face the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic as the alternative is starvation. Yet, in the face of these odds, many persevere in traveling to Europe. In the first six months of 2017, more than 116,000 migrants had entered Europe (IOM 2017).[2] Despite the differences among migrants, refugees, and temporary workers,[3] we see great similarity in their issues—the quest for decent work and LLL opportunities—and address them collectively with a particular focus on the integrated efforts necessary to make improvement possible.

The right to dignified basic living, essentially entailing full access to those rights that are the bedrock of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),[4] is severely limited in non-legalized and vulnerable migrant populations, who are the focus of this chapter. The 17 SDGs, especially Goal 4 for a quality education and Goal 8 for decent work (those most directly related to lives of migrants) are unlikely to be achieved by the proposed UN deadline of 2030, in part due to the inability to effectively address migration, compounded by several issues, most notably the outspread of Covid-19, often ludicrously blamed, in Right-wing sources, on migrants themselves. This chapter argues for the centrality of LLL policies and practices in the global effort to respond

to increased migration. We draw on UNESCO publications, published literature, and examples from select countries, to make the case for LLL, used in its all-embracing meaning of education and learning at all stages of life, and policy approaches that might lead to migrants being gainfully employed. In our view, LLL's intersectoral principle would lie at the heart of a pedagogical effort to contribute toward attaining sustainable development.

We draw, for this purpose, on UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning's (UIL) definition of LLL as:

> rooted in the integration of learning and living covering learning activities for people of all ages (children, young people, adults and the elderly, girls and boys, women and men) in all life-wide contexts (families, schools, community, workplace and so on) and through a variety of modalities (formal, non-formal and informal) which together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands. Education systems that promote lifelong learning adopt a holistic and sector-wide approach involving all sub-sectors and levels to ensure the provision of learning opportunities for all individuals. (UIL 2015, p. 2).

This is quite refreshing when contrasted to the EU's definition in the Memorandum. The holistic approach speaks to the economic, cultural, and other resources needed to make learning a reality both in schools and in the community. This definition guides our discussion of vulnerable migrants.

The UN's International Office of Migration (IOM) reports quarterly on migration, including on the surge of peoples, from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), to the EU, through access points in the Mediterranean. Often displaced and disenfranchised from conflict zones, some migrants first cross the Sahara trying to survive Libya (including those who come from the Middle East, especially Syrian refugees) and then attempt the dangerous Mediterranean crossing. Some 22,394 people of all ages lost their lives crossing the Mediterranean during the last two decades (Brian and Laczko 2014, p. 20). There is no sign of such a carnage abating, the toll being 3279 in 2014; 3784 in 2015; 5098 in 2016; and 521 in just the first two months of 2017 (IOM 2017).[5] Yet, this is not exclusively a Western phenomenon as "South"–"South" migration also creates tensions; witness the reception of Zimbabweans who move to South Africa (Claassen 2017).

Even more than a "Social Europe" or a "Social America" (see Worth 2006)—states that provide for the social welfare of citizens, the former more than the latter—there is need, we argue, for a social world. This would be based on a general awareness that practices in one part of the globe have ramifications for other regions and continents, as all are interconnected: politics in the "North" have repercussions in the "South" and vice versa. The relation between the two, however, often remains a colonial one characterized in the South as inequality and often by a lack of social supports such as housing and medical services for all. This is far from a Social World where provision is made in all respects for the well-being of peoples, regardless of citizenship. There is a particular need to echo the SDGs' emphasis on LLL to be an integral part of this vision: the stakes are high. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Global Monitoring Report (UIS and EFA-GMR 2017) notes "if all adults completed secondary school, the global poverty rate would be more than halved" (p. 1). Achieving the SDGs requires considerable interdependence, especially of goals 4 and 8.

There are, however, few comprehensive and effective policies in the EU and elsewhere to coordinate the migrant surge or to welcome newcomers. Thus far, most policies regarding migrants are left to the nation state, a point which calls into question the so-called receding of the nation state in a context of globalization (see Augustín and Jørgensen 2016). Solidarity between member states on this issue is absent as a result (Mallia 2012). Understandably, therefore, there are few if any policies for LLL to address these issues. No such policy is featured in the EU Memorandum on LLL (CEC 2000, 2001), for instance, and any efforts to include it in a proposed revised document ten years after its introduction failed.

Low-income countries, mostly located in the global South, "are home to a disproportionately large share of the global out-of-school population" (UIS 2017, p. 9). The creation of adequate LLL policies would constitute a massive paradigmatic shift in world history and can be a catalyst for preventing migrants and refugees from risking their lives. A migration policy that focuses on LLL would constitute one of the contributory means to bring about a humanitarian change in this aspect of cross border mobility. We stress the keyword "contributory" since we recognize that education cannot change things on its own as it is not an independent variable. It can, however, *contribute*, together with other variables such as poverty reduction and access to decent work, to change.

International Response to Migrants: Policy Gaps

Globally there have been variable responses to migrants. Though the EU countries, for instance, have agreed on the Dublin Regulation (EU 2013), which addresses TCN immigration and asylum in a specific and, to some, problematic manner, there still remains a large gap in implementation and compliance, and there has been little or no attention in this Regulation to LLL. This mixed reception contrasts sharply with the EU's trumpeting of a "Social Europe" or the notion that these countries cater effectively for the social welfare of citizens though policy and benefits (Mayo 2017; Worth 2006).

The issue has been exacerbated by terrorist attacks in Paris, Nice, Madrid, London, Brussels, New York, and other cities, linked to particular regions and religions such as radical Islam. European countries such as Slovakia and Hungary have deepened their resistance to immigration and heightened the degree of Islamophobia by stating a preference for migrants who are Christian rather than Muslim. Of course, the insidious issue here is the distorted conflation of Muslim, migrant, and refugee with "terrorist." Migrants are left foundering as a result of these reactionary policies and practices, including the xenophobia documented in South Africa (Claassen 2017), which causes insufficient attention being devoted to lifelong learning strategies. Once again, migrants are often made scapegoats for the spread of the pandemic, a situation used as a pretext for the closure of ports in Malta and Italy during the recent lockdown because of Covid-19. Sheer ignorance has led to xenophobic reactions to the presence of East Asian people in the West and elsewhere, including Higher Education students.

Along with Europe, North America has been deeply affected by the rise in migrants and asylum seekers. Canada, for instance, has received migrants throughout its history as it has a complex ethnic makeup and defines itself as multicultural, so immigration, migrants, and refugees have been part of its history and its complexion. With the exception of the dispossessed Indigenous, most Canadian citizens are migrants or offspring of migrants of some sort. The country's strict immigration policy, however, prioritizes skills and employability. At the time of writing, Canada's issue is the wave of migrants who have entered the USA and are breaching Canada's borders in both the West and East, to avoid limited potential for full US integration, especially among first-generation migrants. Trump's racial and neofascist politics, in this regard, exacerbates

this situation. As far as Canada is concerned, this system has its weaknesses, since even professionally educated migrants are unemployed and underemployed in their new host country (Slade 2015, p. 67). Though basic education is provided to all citizens free of charge, as throughout the EU where "every foreign minor even if undocumented has the right to be enrolled in public schools" (Tarozzi and Torres 2016, p. 107), access to public higher education is not. Yet, a comprehensive national policy that stresses decent work and education, or sources for lifelong learning for migrants, including those who have become the backbone of the service and food production industries, are virtually absent. Critics such as Shan (2015b) point to the ways in which existing and partial policies and practices focus on deficits of migrants, instead of assets.

Even within specific countries, the response to migrants, including a willingness to provide basic services such as education, is mixed. While major US cities such as New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago have declared themselves sanctuary cities willing to take in migrants, this has not been an international trend, nor has it necessarily been well received by those opposed to migrants and increased migration. How are different countries responding to migration in the context of realizing the SDGs by 2030? Have they developed a LLL response? This is difficult to ascertain as even agencies such as IOM report numbers, not actual policies.

Closer to the heart of the humanitarian crisis in Europe, the countries of Malta and Greece provide strategic entry points to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea (Mayo and Pisani 2017). Both countries have been reached by undocumented arrivals from North Africa, the Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa; a situation that has long been constructed as an ongoing crisis (see Mainwaring 2012). Yet, the Dublin Regulation (EU 2013) makes it imperative that each country retain the non-legalized migrants (they are fingerprinted lest they move to some other country) because it assigns responsibility for examining an asylum claim to the member state that marks the first point of irregular entry into the EU. The talk of European "responsibility sharing" and "solidarity" are bypassed by the Dublin Regulation that plainly and simply keeps migrants grounded in the countries of entry, subject to other countries' willingness to share some of what politicians problematically call the "burden," although only a few countries have shown such a commitment to date. In the past, there were cases of resettlement in the USA and we have witnessed the announcement of the first EU relocation exercise (EC 2017). The EU's plan to distribute 120,000 refugees among different EU member states

met with resistance (especially from Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary) with only Malta and Finland then on course to fulfill their obligations (Mayo and Pisani 2017). Outside this specific EU relocation exercise, other European countries such as Germany have taken more than their share of refugees. Meanwhile, processing of asylum applications takes a long time, as migrant futures are left dangling without protection or access to rights, work, and education.

The MDGs, the SDGs, and LLL

In an effort to provide leadership, the UN has worked across and with states to provide guidance, both in terms of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were succeeded in 2015[6] by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) scheduled to be met by 2030. In articulating these goals, the global community hopes to orient the world to issues that are interconnected and problematic for sustainability on the planet and which underscore basic human rights. In naming quality education as Goal 4, the UN proposes to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." This seems innocuous for many, yet it is the goal that is most entwined with not only Goal 1 (poverty reduction) and Goal 8 (decent work), but also with Goal 5 (gender equality) to render possible such goals as good health and well-being (Goal 3). The targets for Goal 4 are also instructive here. Specifically, target 9 looks at increasing access to higher education through scholarships to enable adults to increase access to vocational training, in particular.

Despite the promise of the SDGs, for a migratory population, the stateless, the landless, and the dispossessed, the goals remain illusory. As the UIL definition of LLL notes, any approach to support these migrants and their learning, specifically the implications of Goal 4, has to be inclusive and holistic, and interdependent on others, as this section demonstrates.

Specific Attention to Adult Learning and Education

Although Goal 4 is broad and encompasses learning all through the life course, adult learning and education (ALE) is especially needed for adult migrants. UNESCO (2015) sees ALE as crucial in working with those

who are in a precarious state, calling for special attention to "vulnerable groups such as individuals with low levels or, or no, literacy and numeracy and schooling, vulnerable youth, migrant workers, unemployed workers, members of ethnic minorities, indigenous groups, individuals with disability, prisoners, the elderly, people affected by conflict or disasters, refugees, stateless or displaced persons" (p. 11, paragraph 23c). UNESCO's attention to adult education is in sync with the need to assist those who are migrating as they have been "affected by conflict or disaster, [or are] refugees, stateless or displaced persons" (ibid.). In addressing education, and especially ALE, receiving countries are better able to help the whole or extended family. UNESCO is strategic in drawing attention to these countries' needs and their ALE agenda: provide a holistic approach, as opposed to exclusively emphasizing vocational skills and assimilation.

Verstehen[7]: Understanding the Causes of Migration

One important target for LLL in general is the fostering of a general understanding worldwide of why migrants leave their place of origin and come knocking at the gates of countries perceived to be prosperous. Countries in North America and Europe are not without blame in terms of their contributions to scenarios in Africa and other areas forming part of the Tricontinental world (Africa, Asia, and Latin America)[8] that lead to mass migration. People might be fleeing Indigenous practices such as female genital mutilation and wars fueled by a Western-based arms industry. They are also fleeing legacies of centuries of colonialism including educational legacies as a result of which the West is presented as the "Eldorado" for the good life in contrast to the underdevelopment of their countries brought about by European colonial powers and their networks of beneficiaries (see Rodney 1973). Then there is the issue of climate change and the precarious state of Planet Earth, often induced by the ravaging efforts of Western-based corporations, efforts that wreak havoc among the lives of impoverished peoples in both North and South.

Make no mistake, migration from South to North, and from South to South, will rise exponentially in the coming years as corporations continue to place profit before people and seek short-term gratification. Even in this pandemic situation, several states place economic imperatives over the lives of people as efforts are made to expedite the return to work

and "normalcy" as far as the economy goes, even when the pandemic shows little sign of abating. Some are sacrificed on the altar of economic efficiency, especially the old and vulnerable, with Jair Bolsonaro's "So what?" becoming a slogan in Brazil against such discriminate policies. All this adds to the "human waste disposal industry," in the late Zygmunt Bauman's words (Bauman 2006). This raises the issue of being grievable, in Judith Butler's (2016) terms; who is allowed to live and prosper and who is allowed to be grieved?

The rise in voracious capitalism contributes immensely to the "greenhouse effect" which renders the impact of individual's efforts at sustainable living miniscule when contrasted with the efforts that are expected of corporations and other powerful entities. Climate change will become unbearable for people in the South: the year 2015 was the hottest thus far and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts an increase of 1.5 degrees centigrade. 20–30% of the planet's species would be at risk of extinction. In the summer of 2015–2016, Southern Africa faced calamitous droughts that were unprecedented with millions facing starvation. As climate change gets worse, millions will face famine, extreme weather, floods, and heath waves; wars over resources will occur and diseases like malaria will hit countries hitherto unaffected by them (Empson 2016, pp. 1 and 2). Many are those who will risk life and limb to evade their situation—escaping war over resources, droughts, and diseases. Droughts are often not assisted by appropriate famine relief from Western powers and corporations lest the market prices become destabilized. This is a Capitalist practice of long standing including historical tragedies as the Irish potato famine in the nineteenth century (Empson 2016, p. 17). This situation continues to prevail in many places today[9] (e.g. hoarding of rice in India—Young 2003). Such inaction is excused by influential politicians who fail to provide relief on the grounds that it is a result of the overpopulation mentioned by Thomas Robert Malthus,[10] a theory debunked scientifically, a long time ago, by Marx and Engels[11] and others (Empson 2016, p. 17). There is enough food to feed each person on Planet Earth almost twice over[12] but heartless and unscrupulous "profit before people" considerations prevent it from reaching those who need it most (ibid.). The same applies to other effects through the weakening of public transport in favor of the use of polluting cars (Empson 2016, p. 23), to name one other aspect having a detrimental effect on the climate situation.

LLL for SDGS would therefore include not simply efforts to help migrants survive in their new environment, but a widespread process of conscientization,[13] initially based on a process of *verstehen* (understanding) of some of the real causes of mass migration from South to South (e.g. from Mogadishu to Libya—Lutterbeck 2012) and, for those who manage to survive there, South to North. This process of *verstehen*, in Hannah Arendt's sense of the word, is the initial step to hopefully make people act as global citizens by putting pressure on the institutions of capitalism to change their modus operandi—understanding and advocacy as features of LLL. Mass agitation and mobilization are needed to save Planet Earth and therefore prevent people from forcibly being uprooted in search of survival. The need is, once again, for a social world consisting of people who see themselves as being rooted in and not standing apart from Nature (Empson 2016).

LLL, generating awareness and understanding of the larger issues and providing the tools for advocacy, can coexist with, if not be an integral part of, down to earth processes of learning involving a variety of survival and empowerment skills and strategies. One of these concerns second language acquisition, a specific lifelong learning task that is important here for the success of Goal 4. Migrants may or may not have the language or indeed the literacy skills necessary to succeed in the new environment. In most states, language proficiency is required for participation in the labor market and all too often this proficiency is determined by test taking that may or may not correspond to the job being sought or the receiving society. Drawing on her extensive research on skills and economic policies, Gibb (2015) notes that in this "global knowledge economy, the new work order involves a 'novel word order'" (p. 251); language can be used to exclude people—it can be a way of strengthening national identity and building exclusionary borders for those found deficient, as if migrants do not have their many strengths, potentially a source of social enrichment. Rather than assisting with immigration, stringent language policies and lack of instruction support the continued dominance of Western colonial powers and the economic and social stratification of newcomers; migrants are constructed as deficit.

Gibb (2015) points to the need for those language assessors and tests for assessment to be held to high standards of training and review; else, they further reduce the complexity of language to a written test and ultimately short-change newcomers. Often forgotten in work with

migrants is the need to incorporate difference: societies that are inclusive,[14] not assimilative, work better for migrants (Shan 2015a) and citizens in general. The homogenization of cultures works contrary to the SDGs which advocate biodiversity, relational beings, partnerships, equality for citizens, not centralization and reproduction. Inclusion of citizens must be about what Guo (2015) calls "pluralist citizenship" (p. 49) or one that is about diversity and difference, rather than homogeneity. Guo sees ethno-cultural diversity as essential for change and difference.

Moving to Redress the Deficit Approach to Skills

Goal 8, decent work and economic growth, is central to the migrants' ability to succeed economically and contribute to the new society. To assist with this, and ultimately serve the needs of the labor market, some receiving countries have developed elaborate systems of educational transfer known as RVA (Recognition, Validation and Accreditation), which has a cache in many spheres, as it tries to provide credentialing and recognition of acquired skills and abilities, including those from everyday life (UNESCO 2012). The intent is primarily for integration into the labor market, regardless of where they were trained or credentialed or where they previously worked (Singh 2015, p. 2). RVA allows the marginalized to be recognized for their nonformal and informal learning. RVA is premised on the notion that all learning is social and needs to be evaluated in its social sphere. In documenting best practices around the world, in developed and so-called developing contexts, Singh observes that some countries have been more effective than others in implementing the systems of RVA or prior learning and assessment and recognition (PLAR), as it is variously known.

Indeed, according to a rigorous analysis of sixteen RVA frameworks, Allais (2011) has shown that despite the promise, RVA practices have not been fully integrated whether for lack of support or lack of implementation policies. In Europe, RVA is especially important to EU citizens traveling across different countries in the Union, especially at the University level through the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) within what is known as the Bologna Process.[15] A number of countries outside the EU, such as Morocco, Egypt, and Turkey, are seeking to have their system develop in line with the EU process—a source of internationalization, the process, in EU parlance, of enticing students from outside the EU to study at higher education institutions within it. There was also an

attempt, through the Union of the Mediterranean,[16] with its secretarial base in Barcelona, to create a Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education area, which, one assumes, would allow for knowledge and qualifications transfer (Mayo 2019). EU countries also assess qualifications of migrants, formal and nonformal, through their national qualifications framework (NQF). The study of RVA makes clear that, to decrease barriers to entry to education, the workplace, and social networks, each country needs mechanisms that provide equivalencies and ease access. They are essential to the SDGs' achievement.

Yet, often those RVA systems that exist are ad hoc and need to be more robust (Kahanec et al. 2013) and seen as trustworthy if they are to be usable and practical. Clearly, RVA is complex, multifaceted, and affects movement of migrants between provinces and countries. Ultimately, however, what these programs propose to do is move migrants from the world of deficit to the world of assets. Instead of focusing on what migrants do not know, such systems focus on what they know and try to support and accentuate that.

Attending to Professional Knowledge in Practice

Goal 8, decent work and economic growth, is entwined with the goal to end poverty (Goal 1) and world hunger (Goal 2). All of these goals are important, given the practical reality that professional knowledge and skill are migrating steadily across borders, carried by vulnerable people, including those professionally educated, who may be avoiding environmental disasters, war, and inhospitable living conditions. Adult educator Bonnie Slade (2015) has looked critically at the movement of knowledge in the context of migration, pointing to the need to attend to the flow of skills, professional competences, and abilities. Depending on the kinds of education and qualifications policies that respective countries have, this professional knowledge in areas such as engineering, law, and medicine, for instance, is harnessed or not, to the detriment of the receiving country. Many migrants have problems, as Slade points out, arising from the fact that their overseas' experience and education are often undervalued and misused, resulting in de-skilling, underemployment, and alienation. Countries like Canada and the USA, with a long history of immigration, have not negotiated transfer of skills well, resulting in a broken immigration system that says it values these skills, diplomas, and competencies but fails to do so in most cases. In Europe, many countries

have at least tried to use the credentialing system, including those most affected by the flow of undocumented migrants. In Malta, for instance, the slowness of the bureaucratic process, in recognizing diplomas and other qualifications, discourages people from applying for recognition of credentials; this jeopardizes their employment prospects (ibid.). The European Network against Racism (ENAR) indicated, in a shadow report about Malta in 2014, that lack of recognition of foreign qualifications is a "critical problem," forcing asylum seekers and other migrants into underemployment (Attard et al. 2014). The report states that

> asylum seekers and other migrants are often forced to undertake employment which they are overqualified for. There is an underlying assumption that migrants' capabilities are limited to certain jobs, an attitude which is often coupled with a charity instinct of thinking that "at least they're doing something and earning something." This failure to recognize qualifications must also be considered within the context of a labour market which has been geared to attract higher value added activities. (pp. 20, 21)

This attention to skills and knowledge is important for the recognition of professional knowledge, acquired through years of education and training (Slade 2015). It is a way of attending to the information and knowledge that come into a country, mostly untapped and underutilized. Slade notes that all too often there is lack of recognition and uptake for the skills and knowledge professionals bring from their home country. The translation of skills and abilities across borders is especially problematic for immigrant women. Slade sums up the ALE responsibility:

> Professional migrants are often shocked to experience deskilling; they do not imagine migration to be a transition from professional practice to labour jobs. But although deskilling is experienced individually, it is structurally accomplished and adult education has become a vital part of the institutional response to deskilling through provision of courses geared at helping immigrant professionals get back into their professions. (p. 72)

Slade's point is that working to keep professionals in jobs they are trained for and to help migrants, documented and undocumented, move into these kinds of work is a priority for adult educators. In many ways, her argument upends the debate that ALE should be dedicated to social purposes and reform rather than to serve the government or the needs of the labor market. ALE should include both. The labor market and

its needs is an adult education issue because it is a "people issue" that involves meaningful work (Goal 8) needed to help solve a very complex social issue. In moving people across borders, we move capital, including cultural capital. We move people whose roles *include* and *extend* beyond those of workers. This is why adult educators, conscious of a holistic view of persons' education and lives, need to be involved.

Challenges for LLL, SDGs, and Migration

Nation states are struggling with migration and with the basics of providing support for those streaming across their borders; the conundrum is how to continue leading a nation of citizens while integrating new citizens in a meaningful manner that advances the quality of life for all. The UN expressed the need for governments to engage in the long process and struggle of achieving the SDGs, for not only their own citizens but the global community. From a lifelong learning perspective, the task is daunting, especially in light of the immediacy of the 17 SDGs slated to be achieved by 2030.

What is unaccounted for here is the way that migrants resist systems that oppress them, such as finding underground sources of employment. Migrants have always learnt and will always learn to resist oppression and lack of opportunity (Mirchandani et al. 2010). For all migratory populations, there are challenges but also resistances that need to be traced and accounted for, even if they are hidden. Resilience has always been a feature of migrants in both their journey through hazardous routes, including riding across a raging sea which was previously alien to them as they hailed from landlocked territories, and their eking out an existence, though marginalized.

Given the unprecedented waves of migration in the twenty-first century, the global community is facing issues of enormous import for social cohesion and the strengthening of the economic and social systems in which societies are embedded. While there has been a coordinated effort internationally to identify the SDGs and to articulate the world we want, there has not been a coordinated international response with respect to learning, education, and decent work. The timely accomplishment of the SDGs demands that their needs be addressed. Achievement of the SDGs is impossible without active government, citizen support, and advocacy for migrants. Those concerned with LLL are in a key position

to address the SDGs not only through assisting migrants to become integrated through language and housing efforts, but also through addressing government policies that affect the health and well-being of peoples (Goal 3). We move now to offer some key points to consider with regard to policymaking, curriculum development, and "face to face practice" in LLL, bearing sustainable development in mind.

Policymaking, Curriculum Development, and LLL Practice

It is clear that LLL for SDGs needs to address the issue of disposability or unworthiness (quasi-human beings—Tarozzi and Torres 2016, p. 106), whether it applies to humans or other species. Migrants have for long been victims of what Zygmunt Bauman (2006) called the "human waste disposal industry" (p. 36) that incorporates other elements in the cosmos, all seen as things to be bought and sold as objects of commodification. The issue of educating against disposability, in its broadest biodiverse sense, becomes an urgent issue for all education, not just adult education. It would build on the premise that we are all relational beings, living and acting in relation to other species-beings, fostering the idea that we are rooted in a larger cosmos entailing healthy intra-human and human–earth relations.

LLL for SDGs would develop in a manner that regards human beings as having a range of subjectivities that extend beyond those of being migrants, members of the Indigenous population, workers, etc. Adult educators, or any other educators for that matter, would do well to keep in mind that although the work factor weighs heavily on migrants' minds, the notion of citizenship ascribed to them would extend beyond that of being producers/consumers. Hence the education provided needs to help migrants obtain secure employment commensurate with their qualifications and life experience; it should also be more holistic to enable them to become critically active citizens with basic human rights. For this reason, we state that LLL for SDGs should extend beyond *asistencialismo* (welfarism).[17] The educators involved would avoid treating migrants as deficits. LLL would, drawing on Paulo Freire's (2018) approach to education, provide space for people to act as *subjects* and not *objects* in history.

This would entail learning that treats migrants as active beings and not simply passive consumers of knowledge from above. It will engage

their own strengths and cultures and build on them, taking into account their perspectives on things, allowing them co-ownership of the program through democratic participation and a dialogical approach where all knowledge is at the center of epistemological co-investigation. It would entail *praxis* or the means for all participants in the group setting, including the official educator, to gain critical distance from their past and present environments to perceive them in a critical light.[18] In this regard, LLL for SDGs would project the notion of migrants not as deficits, empty receptacles to be filled with information, but as active citizens who participate in the making of history and contribute to changing society into a more socially just one. LLL would be premised on the valorization of their many roles, including but not exclusive to the role of their labor in the smooth functioning of some of the host country's essential services—health and transport services, child and elderly care, etc. LLL can also foster an understanding of the richness of the cultures that migrants bring with them, indicating these cultures' contributions to, and often appropriation by, "Western Civilisation." This is all part of the cultural capital that travels with migrants across borders.

To threaten with deportation people who have contributed to the community, in this and other ways, is racism *tout court*.[19] For this reason only, LLL for sustainable development needs to confront xenophobia by having a strong anti-racist dimension at its core. Programs and policies in this regard would have a strong interethnic dimension targeting people working or in contact with immigrants: army, police, people in the entertainment industry, teachers, journalists, members of the judiciary, etc. There is a specific anti-racist role for trade unions and agencies of workers' education here. Workers' education, in the context of LLL, can provide an understanding of the nature of workers' solidarity in this day and age. Social classes are *international* and not *national* in scope. A LLL programme, demonstrating cognizance of this, would help counter the danger of misplaced alliances. These misplaced alliances would involve people of opposed class interests, autochthonous workers, and business people, combining efforts against the economic competition (Marshall 1997)—foreign companies and foreigners threatening local workers' jobs (Mayo 2016).

The disproportionate burden of movement on Southern people has been a centuries old colonial policy that serves to segment the working class on ethnic and nation of origin lines. This suggests that an anti-racist

approach to LLL for SDGs can be rooted in discussions concerning colonialism in all its forms. This consolidates the view expressed earlier that LLL has an important role to play in the struggle to generate an understanding of the causes of migration and, we would add, their derivation from the unequal exchange relation on which some Western countries thrive.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion underlines the complex nature of supporting lifelong learning in the twenty-first century. One cannot engage in work and learning with migrants, in the context of integral and sustainable development, without addressing the related policies and issues in receiving countries. This chapter and the book in general have raised issues of government regulation, struggles to recognize qualifications, and misinformation about migratory populations. The challenges are many. Educators operating in the context of LLL can work with learners, including migrant learners, to create a *safe space* for migrants to overcome the fear of their oppressors, especially, but not only, with regard to the labor market and the threat of deportation. The issue of genuine trust is key in any educational encounter involving people who are differently located in social, cultural, and geographic spaces.

The search for genuine democratic intra-human relations is an integral part of achieving the SDGs by 2030, especially in achieving goals related to decent work, education, and the alleviation of poverty. We have much to learn about human relations, from our encounters with and inclusion of migratory populations.

We reiterate that all are related and connected in this world. There can therefore be no carefully delineated social context (e.g. region, country, or continent: "Social Europe") unless it exists in harmony and in solidarity with a social world. We are invited to embrace this challenge in the context of an increasingly complex and mobile world.

Notes

1. The French term *sans-papiers* [without (identification) papers] refers to immigrants without legal status.
2. Europe and Central Asia are among the most important regions in terms of migratory flows—with Germany, Spain, the UK, and France hosting

the highest numbers of the estimated 31.9 million non-European Union (EU) nationals residing in Europe. The two subregions combined host 72.5 million migrants, representing 8.7% of the total population. Despite the economic crisis, net migration remains positive in the major migrant destination countries. All figures taken from IOM.

3. The International Office of Migration defines a migrant as “any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person’s legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is (IOM 2011). A refugee “is someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion” (UNHCR 2010, p. 3, referring to UN 1951). A temporary worker, in this context, is defined as someone who enters another country, albeit temporarily, to fill immediate labor needs, as in harvesting seasonal foods.
4. For detailed definitions of each of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), visit the Sustainable development knowledge platform at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs [accessed 6 November 2018].
5. We are indebted to Maria Pisani of the University of Malta and the Integra Foundation for pointing us to this source of information. See Mayo and Pisani (unpublished 2017).
6. The eight Millennium Development Goals were concerned with (1) eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; (2) achieving universal primary education; (3) promoting gender equality and empowering women; (4) reducing child mortality rates; (5) improving maternal health; (6) combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) ensuring environmental sustainability; and (8) developing a global partnership for development. Achievements were evaluated in a final report (UN 2015).
7. The German verb *verstehen* means to understand. In this particular context, we refer to the sense it was used in by philosopher Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), namely as a deep understanding of the human condition (Arendt 1964, 1998, p. 6).
8. The term “tricontinental world” was coined by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro in the wake of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. They envisioned a “solidarity [of these regions] against forces from the economic and military powers of the Global North” (Elam 2017, p. 2).
9. This is also reflected in Come on! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population, and the Destruction of the Planet (Von Weizsäcker and Wijkman 2018), the most recent in a series of reports to the Club of Rome published since The limits to growth (Meadows et al. 1972).

10. Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834) was an English political economist.
11. German political philosophers Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) engaged in virulent critiques of Malthus' population theories in *Capital*, Vol. 1 (Marx 1887, p. 357), *Theories of Surplus Value, 1861–1863* (Marx 1951), and *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844* (Engels 1987). For a critical commentary on these trenchant criticisms, see Yves Charbit (2009), especially Chapter 5.
12. A recent report on Food security and nutrition in the world (FAO 2018) does not consider whether a redistribution of all available food resources worldwide would, theoretically, be sufficient for more than the current world population. However, the report provides data which demonstrate the imbalance: "The absolute number of people in the world affected by undernourishment, or chronic food deprivation, is now estimated to have increased from around 804 million in 2016 to nearly 821 million in 2017. The situation is worsening in South America and most regions of Africa; likewise, the decreasing trend in undernourishment that characterized Asia until recently seems to be slowing down significantly. Without increased efforts, there is a risk of falling far short of achieving the SDG target [this refers to SDG 2] of hunger eradication by 2030" (FAO 2018, p. xiii).
13. The online *Oxford English Dictionary* defines conscientization as "the action or process of making others aware of political and social conditions, especially as a precursor to challenging inequalities of treatment or opportunity; the fact of being aware of these conditions" (OED 2018).
14. An inclusive society welcomes diversity, regarding newcomers who bring their own cultures to their host community as an enrichment. By contrast, an assimilative society expects newcomers to adapt to its social and cultural norms.
15. The Bologna process was designed to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications. It enables university students in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) to choose from a wide and transparent range of high-quality courses. It is based on the Bologna Declaration (EHEA 1999) which was signed by Education Ministers from 29 European countries in 1999.
16. According to its own website, "the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is an intergovernmental EuroMediterranean organisation which brings together all 28 countries of the European Union and 15 countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean" (https://ufmsecretariat.org/who-we-are/ [accessed 9 November 2018]).
17. The Spanish word *asistencialismo* refers to a political attitude oriented toward solving social problems by way of external assistance (charity) instead of making efforts to generate structural solutions.
18. In this context, the term praxis refers to learning through "refection and action directed at the structures to be transformed" (Freire 2018, 126).

19. This racism consists of a labeling that erases the multifaceted identity and name of the person concerned—well captured in Woody Guthrie's classic folk song "Deportee" (Guthrie 1948).

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CHAPTER 8

Lifelong Learning in the Time of Corona 19

Abstract Covid-19 poses a number of challenges to LLL. It has turned the day-to-day world of education on its head. Education alternatives offer certain educators a relatively safe adjustment to the changed scenario in stark contrast to other people for whom the current situation presents a choice: exposure or starvation. Precarious educators, including academics working part-time and according to definite contracts and students coming from humble backgrounds, also face problems in this age of Corona. Furthermore, within the relatively safe "middle class" context of secluded and virtually mediated educational work and transaction, there are still issues to be considered bearing in mind to the future of LLL itself.

Keywords Precariat · Social class · Ethnicity · Virtual learning · Blended learning · Community · Study-environment

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Introduction: Phantom City?

Education is constantly being exposed to several challenges in this day and age. The Covid-19 pandemic has offered a series of challenges which have plunged many educators and students alike into modes of delivery and interaction, that differ considerably from the hitherto established norm. As we argue in this chapter, certain educational institutions offer their educators a relatively safe adjustment to the changed scenario (some have been attuned to this for quite sometime before the outbreak). This is in contrast to other people for whom the current situation presents a (Hobson's?) choice: exposure or starvation. Even within the relatively safe "middle class" context of secluded and virtually mediated educational work and transaction, there are issues to be considered with regard to the future of education, especially institutional education itself.

Desperate attempts to curtail the spread of the Corona Virus are said to have turned many localities in different parts of the world into seemingly phantom cities, specifically after the outbreak of the first wave of the virus and subsequent lockdown. For some, this was a spectre of an "unreal city." For others it laid bare the clear and unadulterated design of the city itself, city center or square. There are those who hailed city vistas, including open spaces, as "things of beauty" untrammeled by such paraphernalia as ticket booths, market stalls, coffee tables, chairs, and umbrellas. Others underlined the eeriness of the site—a setting in which strange matters can unfold and which fuels the imagination. It is no small matter that those most directly affected by COVID are already marginalized. Those who work on the front lines in the service sector, those who have the fewest educational credentials, for instance, are exposed more to the virus and have access to fewer resources, if infected (Waller et al. 2020). These are often women.

One of the more helpful analyses of how ALE can be a tool in this pandemic is provided by Lopez and McKay (2020). They see COVID as presenting a health literacy challenge and they point to the role of ALE in increasing literacy and in preventing further outbreaks. Yet, they recognize the enormous challenge of low literacy rates, especially in fragile states, and they suggest there is a need for a cross-sectoral approach to these issues. In their view, literacy cannot be addressed in isolation from health, labor, environment, and so on. The authors draw on McKay's research in South Africa to show how health literacy can be embedded in literacy campaigns to increase knowledge and proactive behaviors in the

face of pandemics like AIDS. As well, Lopez and McKay show that ALE can be used to increase literacy, numeracy, and digital inclusion, which are important for citizens to negotiate serious illness. They argue that when ALE is fully integrated into a national and international response, it is possible to diminish the negative effects of a pandemic. Yet, they acknowledge that there are issues in using ALE, at all levels. We focus now on several issues that affect the higher education sector, in particular.

Education, Middle-Class Jobs, and the Class/Ethnic Divide

Education sites, especially higher education campuses, have not been immune to this process. The institutions in question have been "closed" sites with administration reduced to skeleton staff and educators urged to seek alternative ways of interacting with students. As Donatella della Porta underlined, in a Facebook remark, middle-class work allows for such contingencies as being able to work from home, a possibility not allowed to many working class and certain service-oriented middle-class professionals, the latter, we would add, including medical doctors, nurses, health workers in general, and pharmacists. Are educators, involved in education as a lifelong process, engaged in "middle class" work fostering a "middle class" ethos even when working with predominantly working-class students? They are often said to be, in the words of the recently deceased Eric Olin Wright (Wright et al. 1998), in a contradictory class location. "The pandemic has complicated the class divide, by singling out a privileged class of those who can work from home in a secure labour condition.[1]" (Della Porta 2020; Lopez and McKay 2020). She raises an important sociological question for those engaged in exploring the nature of class stratification in this day and age: "…who is producing and distributing all those products that keep those who can [be] comfortable at home…"? (ibid.) We might therefore argue that these centers in the city and adjacent streets are not as barren as certain pictures shown on the social media and newspapers would have us believe. There are moments when they are full of people scampering around as their livelihood depends on this. This is a time when abuse and exploitation of those engaged in the informal economy, necessary in certain countries or regions to keep the formal economy afloat, reach an unprecedented level (Borg 2020). The "realm of necessity" has not receded into the background for certain people.

There can be mental health issues arising from living in a restricted room or two, or outside sleeping under cardboard covers, in shacks, or beneath bridges (Rosa Luxemburg's most tangible form of "barbarism" today)—all this in contrast to the palatial settings of certain dwelling places. The most graphic illustration of this destitution is the heart-rending sight of men and women filing outside a prominent megastore, on Brussels' Rue Neuve, at 19.00 CET (closing time), on a cold and wet December evening, awaiting their share of cardboard boxes to seek refuge within them. It evokes King Lear's "poor naked wretches" lamentation and soul-searching outside the hovel.[2] Of course, these sights are experienced in several cities throughout the world—an indictment of contemporary barbarism.

There is a demarcation with regard to those who can work safely and continue to live and survive the virus and those who have had their odds on doing so lengthened. Students throughout the LLL and Life-wide learning spectrums, more than their formally designated educators, feature among them. While some, educators and students, can teach/learn online from the comfort of their home, many others need to be relieved of their overcrowded spaces and attend to family livelihood concerns including "hidden economy" engagement. Social class and, we would add, ethnicity become important variables in the chances of overcoming or succumbing to the virus, especially in the area of menial and intermittent, often clandestine, work carried out by immigrants especially undocumented immigrants. One would have to add here the intersections of social class, ethnicity, gender, citizenship/non-citizenship (including *sans papiers*), and age. Elderly people without help or assistance and living on their own are particularly vulnerable in this regard, and one has to see how older adulthood intersects with many of the other variables.

The choice for these is between exposure and starvation; and people who have risked the vagaries of the desert, the anarchic state of Libya and the ocean, are most likely to be ready to risk exposure to the virus. Some were less fortunate as the pretext of Corona prevented their hitherto resilient bodies from entering Southern European ports, a number succumbing to the fatality of dehydration or drowning—a sad and tragic end to a brave but doomed saga. This is compounded by the stubbornness of uncompromising, dour (heartless?) governments intent on forcing a bigoted, self-interest-driven European Union to share in the responsibility of taking migrants, as indicated in the previous chapter. At a time

when you would expect a pandemic to boom out loud the call for cooperation and compassion, giving the lie to Margaret Thatcher's mantra "There is no such thing as society," there are those who persist in a "dog eat dog" mentality. Self-interest lies at the heart of not only individuals, under neoliberalism, but nation states as a whole.[3] Organized LLL can easily reflect this mentality.

All into Proper Perspective

All this is to place the travails of LLL, in the time of Corona, into proper perspective. In many respects, there are sources of LLL, such as universities, with their mainstream and continuing education programs, which provide privileged places. Of course, there are many exceptions: students surviving the HE and continuing education fees regime and other conditions by the skin of their teeth, living in crowded spaces where the tranquillity of online learning and home study in general is a luxury "devoutly to be wished" but difficult to realize—all this while assuming that they can afford a computer and its accessories, some, at best, sharing one computer among several family members.[4] This also applies to school children whose only source of formal education is their schooling, from which they can be easily disengaged, unless enticing and meaningful pedagogical approaches are adopted.

This disengagement becomes more possible through the less intimate relationships spawned by online platforms, especially when large classes in the public education system are concerned. It seems easier for young learners to disappear off the radar this way. We need to gauge the impact of the *digital divide* on students electing to go AWOL. (Apple 2020; Giroux 2020). Quite serious, insofar as the online approach is concerned, is the danger of de-skilling educators as the contingency lends itself to the greater onset of prepackaged learning. This can satisfy major commercial interests in education, with little regard to context, especially community context. This is already a feature of LLL, branded Global LLL, worldwide. There is the danger that this industry provides a quick fix solution for LLL both during the Corona period and also in the long term, based on the ever commercially driven belief that "a one size fits all" approach can provide better learning "outcomes." Apart from the neocolonial issues it raises, an approach that is contextually insensitive, it also assumes a lot of the lifelong learners regarding access to different sources of education. It minimized the role of the full breathing human subject that is the

lifelong educator. This is equally true of the school teacher, the further education educator or the higher education lecturer. This situation can easily play into the hands of those who advocate teacher-proof systems.

It also exacerbates the class divide regarding not only access to sophisticated apparatuses and physical learning spaces at home or elsewhere but also the materially rewarding cultural, social, and economic capital, in Bourdieu's terms (Bourdieu 1977), for "home schooling" and hence home LLL in such countries as the USA, as indicated by Michael W. Apple (2004, p. 176) and others. Can we speak here of LLL for greater social atomization? (ibid., Giroux 2021).

There is then the case of adjunct faculty in Higher Education (including university) LLL often paid at piece rate. They cannot benefit from the time and space afforded their full-time colleagues for research as they are overburdened by excessive teaching and marking loads. Some need to juggle university teaching with other jobs. Adjunct faculty, working in precarious conditions, are an increasing feature of contemporary Higher Education in many parts of the world—the first casualties of crises-induced cuts. This is how the post-1968 mass university or HE institution copes with increasing student numbers. Many, since the times of Raymond Williams with the Oxford Delegacy for Extra-Mural studies, have been involved as marginal tutors, when LLL takes on a distinctly adult education approach (Williams, in McIlroy and Westwood 1993).

These are important considerations that have to be taken on board when exploring LLL alternatives, from a social justice perspective, at the time of Corona and after. Our guess and fear is that all this will continue to be given short shrift. Schools and HE institutions, and especially universities, by and large still accommodate a middle-class viewpoint. Let us take HE as an example, a component, like schools and other entities, of an all-embracing LLE/LLL. Despite laudable and interesting experiments among peasants in Latin America[5] (De Sousa Santos 2017; Connell 2019; Mayo 2019; Mayo and Vittoria 2017) and also in Western Europe (Neary 2014; Earl 2016; Tarlau 2019), the institution, as we conventionally know it, and in which most academics work, remains a "bourgeois institution" with an unmistakably bourgeois agenda. Many institutions have come a long way since the exclusive and exclusionary days of old, though the few elite bastions that survive and thrive on endowments, elite residues from that period, persist in their social selection—your *Grandes écoles* and Oxbridge colleges.

The general ethos, however, as with the whole competitive educational ethos, remains what it was when we were undergrads. What follows therefore can come across as carping by relatively privileged commentators. Yet there are issues to be raised with regard to these institutions' future, the epistemological foundations of the knowledge they promote (De Sousa Santos 2017) and their chances of engaging wider communities (Walcott 2020), in short their greater, genuine democratization. The same applies to schools, the topic of much Sociology of Education and Critical Education/Pedagogy over the years. Their basic tenets need not be rehearsed; they have been engaged throughout the book (see McLaren 2015).

Standard Corona Response

During this period of Covid-19, educators have been urged, if not compelled, irrespective of their training for this purpose, to place their courses and carry out their teaching online. This has led many to herald the "brave new world" of online learning as the panacea for the crisis. There are those who would consider the present period as the potential watershed in establishing this already widely practiced mode of delivery as the dominant form of teaching in Higher Education. This reaction, couched in phrases such as "every cloud has a silver lining," is to be expected and falls in line with the neoliberal tenets that have been underlying most common sense thinking about mass-oriented education. We argue for caution in this regard.

The history of education is full of episodes when necessity, through crises in the form of occupation, led to ingenuity. Under Nazi occupation, Polish universities went underground; study material moved from one place to another. This echoed the earlier "flying university" of the Partition period, when Marie Curie (Puiu 2020) and Janusz Korczak were among the students. It was innovative and attested to the resilience of the Polish academic community (students and professors) involved. It resurfaced when Poland was under Soviet control. They mirrored what went on in public compulsory education which was complemented by clandestine, perhaps "flying," learning settings.

The present crisis makes those who are resistant to modern digitally mediated technology take the plunge, whether adequately trained for this purpose or not. Many educators from Greece, Italy, Cyprus, and the UK revealed that online learning is a new experience foisted on unprepared people, educators/learners alike.[6] It might enable them to

transcend archaic ways. It is common knowledge that most universities throughout the world have placed their courses and are delivering their teaching online. Some universities already had adequate preparation for this as a good percentage of their students are distance learning students. It is likely that the teachers involved have had adequate training. A former tutor at the UK's Open University, which backs distance learning with a variety of other approaches, including tutorials carried out by academics ensconced in different parts of the country, spent a year's preparation period before joining the university staff. This however does not apply to all HE staff. Would the same apply to school teachers and popular educators in a LLE LLL contingency situation? The present crisis can well make us recall, in certain cases, the situation during the immediate post-revolution literacy campaigns in Latin America and elsewhere when young literacy workers were rushed to the field without adequate preparation (Arnove 1986). As LLL educators, we have been thrown in at the deep end, because of this crisis. Will online production and education have to become a major component in teacher education programs conceived in a LLE/LLL context? The young generation of student-teachers, as most students these days, seems to be enormously savvy in matters of handling ICT. As professors, we often become their "students" in this regard. The same applies to parents, in Maltese family households, who, in an adult education research project, claimed to learn about the uses of computers from their own children—a case of *LLE/LLL and intergenerational learning* (Borg et al. 2016, p. 64) Again, this recalls the case of the literacy *brigadistas* during the *Cruzada de alfabeticación* in Nicaragua who, while teaching literacy, were learning modes of community living from their hosts in the country (Arnove 1986)—cases of intergenerational learning.

This mass scale online learning approach can extend beyond a crisis response as the institution begins to see the lucrative side of it, a means of spreading one's net far and wide. This is more likely to be the case of HE institutions in this neoliberal age. They are urged to "market" and "sell" their programs, a perceived measure of their "validity" (Mayo 2019). Now it would be foolish to overlook online learning's positive aspects, reaching communities at the furthest remove from the restricted physical spaces of universities, schools, and centers. It reaches communities with issues concerning physical access and time.

Once the dust settles, however, will there be space for critical reflection regarding how technologically mediated delivery complements what

is good about "face to face" and adequate teacher-student human interaction? It is claimed that online learning can address mass students anywhere and at any time throughout the world. Educators, therefore, really need to think about the appropriate pedagogical approach to take and use made of the most modern technology. Development of good learning environments requires specialist skills and is a team effort based on collaboration between educators, communities, and learning designers. There is also the danger of surveillance especially when the sessions are recorded ostensibly for the benefit of those who could not gain access in real time. The fear of recordings and of outside parties gaining access to the conversations might make participants hesitant to talk freely in the virtual classroom sessions, especially foreign students in HE hailing from countries abroad with a poor track record when it comes to human rights and civil liberties. They would fear the extent, real or imaginary, of the home country's intelligence operations.

To what extent is online learning part of the blended approach which reserves space for different forms of interaction including "human to human" and "human to earth" interaction? The push for a lucrative share of the global HE education market, for instance, can easily make institutions, in this sector, forget the "face to face" aspect of the blended learning approach. Meanwhile elite schools ("blue-chip" schools, colleges, or universities) continue to enjoy a monopoly in the latter type of learning.

Consumer Product or Public Good?

How do we strike a happy medium between online and "face to face" teaching at any stage of LLE/LLL? Will online learning continue to drag education further along the business route (Giroux 2014)[7] or will it play its part in an overall conception of education as a public good? And if it is to be part of education as a public good, what provision is to be made in conditions of normalcy, that is when education institutions reopen their doors, to ensure that all students have access to the resources necessary for a genuinely good quality education to which they are entitled (face to face or blended)? To strike an optimistic note, as hope springs eternal, we reproduce the words of one of the US's most prominent critical educators, Ira Shor: "Critical teachers who question the unequal, toxic status quo will deliver critical education no matter the delivery system" (Shor, in Mayo 2020).

COVID-19 and Neoliberalism

It is the uncritical educators, those who go with the flow, ever so eager to embrace new fads, who are of great concern to us. There is a terrible and unequal world out there that needs to be confronted. Covid-19 has shown the true face of neoliberalism as years of reneging on and shredding of the social contract have finally taken their toll with few public resources available to counter such a calamity. We believe in a social contract that transcends the Capitalist system (Giroux 2020). Hopefully, the much professed and newly rediscovered sense of solidarity among certain educators, in these Corona times, will enable them to rethink their mission as people who not only *interpret* the world but contribute toward *changing* it. To do this, the genuine human factor in research and education remains key. The virtual classroom might be serving its purpose as a contingency during the crisis. Once the crisis is over, would it be only part of a more holistic approach that foregrounds "face to face" encounters? Our feeling is that the educator's approving eye contact (difficult to occur online) can be enough to encourage shy or hesitant students to express what their facial gesture suggests but which would otherwise remain suppressed. The holistic approach would also include engagement with communities (Walcott 2020) and ever-changing communities at that—migrants are important agents here (Mayo 2019). This applies to all disciplines for, as a science student is on record as having said, during the pandemic, "…now, when the world's attention is on a virus—a topic I've spent my whole adult life studying—what I think about most are social structures, inequality, and sacrifice. I think about people." (Quizon 2020)—LLE/LLL in a "social contract" that transcends the Capitalist framework. This accords due societal importance to the Humanities and Social Sciences but, we would argue, that similar importance ought to be given to most LLE/LLL areas of knowledge and learning as they all impact on society and the rest of the environment.

Notes

1. https://www.facebook.com/donatella.dellaporta. She reminded us, through personal correspondence, that not all "smart work" is "middle class" and not all "middle class" work can be carried out from home.
2. "Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are, That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm, How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides, Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you From seasons such as these? O, I

have ta'en Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp; Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel, That thou mayst shake the superflux to them, And show the heavens more just." Lear, in William Shakespeare, *King Lear* Act 3, scene 4, 28–36.

3. So much for the so-called receding of the nation state through the intensification of globalization.
4. Indebted to students in the University of Malta MA Adult Education class ACA5001 for this point.
5. These include higher education institutions connected with social movements as are the Escola Nacional Florestan Fernandez, connected with the Landless peasant movement (MST) in Brazil, and the UNITIERRA in Chiapas, Mexico.
6. Electronic exchanges with one of the present authors during the Covid-19 lockdown.
7. Quite interesting here is the development of MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses). Do they represent a case of "testing the waters" for a business approach to Higher Education? Sarah Speight (2017) indicates the gradual mainstreaming of MOOCS. They are becoming a feature of degree courses offered at a considerable financial cost. Speight argues that MOOCs target people with a good education and familiar with basic learning modalities. They are those who can afford the "state of the art" facilities that enable them to cope with the online provision—a case of giving more to those who already have? Is this a CPD (continuing professional development) outlet? The fee structure for courses is steep, according to Speight (2017). MOOCs are considered a key feature of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4th IR) (Xing and Marwala 2017).

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