Innovations in Peace and Education Praxis

Transdisciplinary Reflections and Insights

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Afterword

Reflections on a Post/Critical Peace Education

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Afterword

Reflections on a Post/Critical Peace Education

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The present book, *Innovations in Peace and Education Praxis: Transdisciplinary Reflections and Insights* (Archer, Hajir and McInerney, 2023), reflects on the contributions of postmodern, poststructural and critical scholarship as applied to the field of peace education. In particular, the authors – who are peace educators – turn inward to gaze at their own practices in the field, and to theorise on the limits and possibilities of a post/critical praxis in peace education. As longtime peace education practitioners ourselves, whose writing has also turned toward critical, postmodern and postcolonial insights in recent years (Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Brantmeier, 2013; Hajir & Kester, 2020; Kester et al., 2021; Zembylas, 2018, 2022), we are particularly intrigued by the reflexive and experientially grounded arguments throughout the book.

Specifically, the authors advance a 21st century peace education that seeks to transcend the modernist, colonial and anthropocentric approaches to peace education of the past, what Kevin refers to elsewhere as post/critical peace (Kester, 2022). The authors explain that peace education could partially transcend its modernist, colonial and anthropocentric limitations by embracing newer embodied, affective and posthumanist philosophies on education praxis. It is argued this approach might better account for the significant (yet hitherto less considered) role of the emotional, affective and human-nature entanglements within peace and peace education (Brantmeier, 2013; Cremin & Archer, 2018; Kester, 2018, 2022; Zembylas, 2018).

To make this argument, the scholars employ novel autoethnographic-inspired methods throughout the book. By engaging the subject through this intimately personal methodology, the educators are practising coherence between

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the message and the method. Together, the personal stories of the authors, told through autoethnographic-inspired inquiry, provide deep theorisation on education, peace and conflict today. For example, the book does not shy from sensitive cultural, political, economic or environmental topics, and the authors address these topics both through empirical data and narrative storytelling. This makes for a book that is at once inspiring, captivating, vulnerable (see, e.g., Brantmeier & McKenna, 2020) and ultimately practical. The book, thus, offers unique reflections on pedagogical and methodological innovations for contemporary peace education.

In the following sections, we will first enter into a dialogue amongst ourselves concerning the key contributions the book offers to the field of peace education today. We enter into this conversation to practice peace education dialogically, as many of the authors have done so throughout the book. Our dialogue here builds on Freire's own dialogical works (e.g., Escobar et al., 1994; Horton & Freire, 1990; Shor & Freire, 1987). We believe this method models several critical values of peacebuilding, including creative and innovative thinking, open communication, compassionate listening and multiperspectivity. Prior to concluding, we will offer three key insights that we posit the book brings to the fore. We turn now to our dialogue.

… … …

Kevin: To begin the dialogue, I find it especially refreshing to read the chapters in the book that lean into the personal, affective, and emotional. For example, Chapter 6 by Kragt, Lopes Cardozo, and McDonnell flows as a creative and vulnerable letter to the reader. This innovative writing method invites the reader in as an active listener, caught up in the dynamics of the story. It resonates, for me, with the dialogical and personal methods that are so frequently advocated for in peace education (Cremin & Kester, 2020; Gill & Niens, 2014; Hantzopoulos et al., 2021). In my own practice as well, dialogue, personal reflexivity and critical agency are core components to peace education. The authors of this book work at this intersection, too, engaging in critical dialogue to recognise systems of injustice – including their own embeddedness within these systems – as well as working to disrupt them. Hence, there is an unsettledness and discomfort to this very personal work that is both troubling (as we find ourselves complicit in systems of harm) and potentially transformative (as we take efforts to disrupt those systems). Michalinos, Basma and Ed, how does the personal (or affective) factor into your work as critical peace educators?

Michalinos: The personal and more specifically the affective has been fundamental to my work over the years. For example, delving into the affective difficulties of peace education in my home country, Cyprus, and realising how affect and emotion is so influential in

how teachers, parents, students, and lay people in general reflect on historical trauma and the prospects of peace in Cyprus made it possible (and necessary) to think critically about my own personal motivations for doing this sort of work. Hence, reflection on my own identity as a White male but also as someone with a refugee father, uncles and grandparents (as a result of the Cyprus conflict) made me realize that we inhabit multiple identities, yet we choose which ones to embrace and/or critique and how much discomfort accompanies this task. So, discomfort is not only inevitable but may also be embraced and constitute the point of departure for critical transformation of the self and others.

Basma: For me, I see great value in foregrounding the personal, the affective, and the emotional, particularly for their implications for and interconnection with concepts such as "relatability", "representation", and "solidarity". Growing up as a Palestinian refugee in Syria, I always felt at a loss to understand how the West could see the crude injustices in Palestine and yet continue to support an oppressive discriminating regime. I never understood the hostility to our aspirations for freedom. Later in life, reading Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) enabled me to understand the role of colonial discourses in the "Othering" of the East, to comprehend how power relations underpin knowledge production, to see the complicity of Western philosophy and knowledge in our dispossession and in the pathologisation of our suffering.

I understood the power of "representation" and its capacity to either engender "relatability" and "solidarity" or erect barriers to them. The more I witness our stories being deliberately distorted, silenced and unheard, the more I view commitment to holistic scholarship and praxis that embrace the personal, affective, and emotional as a form of political activism and as an additional tool to allow the marginalised to represent themselves on their own terms. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2018) reminds us that people do not commit to causes based on reason and arguments only. Active commitment and solidarity occur in affective and emotional spaces (ibid). I feel that peace education scholars, especially those of us who lean more towards the critical and decolonial shifts in the field, must remain attentive to the implications of these insights for our scholarship and praxis.

Ed: I love the question of the personal, Kevin. The question sparks another question for me: why are we here anyhow, doing this post/critical peace education work? Most of us come to the field of critical/peace education from direct experiences of war or violence on personal, institutional, political, cultural, and/or structural levels. I'm not sure we can always separate these interwoven layers that

form the motivation for the work. If most of us look a little deeper into this beautiful question – why are we here, doing this critical peace education work? – we will find a story intermixed with violence and love, suffering, joy, and maybe resilience. If we look deeper, we may find a deeply personal story riddled with causes and conditions within and beyond our control. I am no exception. My childhood was riddled with domestic violence, or the threat thereof. Amid these unstable conditions, my mother courageously left my father with her five children, under immense religious pressure from the Catholic Church to not get a divorce. She faced excommunication, social pressures in a small town, and still did the right thing. Her modelling of courage under fire planted the same seeds of courage and bravery in me, as well as the seeds of desire for safety, security, and peace. If a working-class beautician from rural Wisconsin with five children can challenge power structures, if she can stand up to cultural violence and institutional injustice to protect and inspire her children, I can do the same as a professor of critical peace education.

For many of us, our personal heroes, oftentimes in our own families or communities, provide the emotive inspiration and pathways of action to embrace our transformative agency. Sometimes you simply must go against the grain of social pressures and structural impositions, and do the right thing anyway. Michalinos, you have shared some insights with me recently at the annual conference of the Georg Arnhold Program on Education for Sustainable Peace, this year focused on Decolonizing Peace Education, held in Brunswick, Germany. We were discussing the impacts of our personal experiences on how we approach peace education work later in life, and you told me about your time as a military soldier in Cyprus. I wonder if you would share a little about how your personal and social experience as a soldier informs your post/critical peace education work?

Michalinos: Well, Ed, that was a different chapter of my life! I was a very different person back in my early 20s when I had to do my mandatory military service for 26 months. There were many things that bothered me about serving in the army but I always felt it was my civic/patriotic duty to do so given the unresolved political problem in Cyprus and the uncertainty of the situation. It was only after I left to study in the United States that I changed how I felt about the army and conflict in Cyprus. I could not subscribe anymore to a monolithic view about what happened in the Cyprus conflict, who the perpetrators/victims were, and so I came to believe that the consequences would be catastrophic, if there was another war in Cyprus. So reflecting back on my personal experience as a soldier, I do not want to completely erase the value of this experience, but it

constantly reminds me of how crucial it is to engage critically with militarism and the foundational role of affect/emotion in people's experiences of militarism, war, and conflict.

Kevin: Indeed, Ed, throughout many of the chapters of the book the authors reflexively position themselves to practise post/critical peace education. For example, Jwalin Patel and I write about the importance of reflective methods in Chapter 4; and, in Chapter 8, Tsuruhara and Archer encourage peacebuilders to 'walk the talk' – a critical invitation to peace practitioners to engage in deep reflection on their values and professional practises, ensuring that the two align. This is particularly the case when engaging critically with issues of militarism/disarmament, extractive capitalism, racism/White supremacy, sexism/patriarchy, and our own complicity within these systems. Here, I interpret the post/critical peace educator as a "disruptive agent", simultaneously working within and against unjust structures aware of the intersections between the personal and the political.

In this regard, Saeed and Paulson, in Chapter 2, also beautifully illustrate the importance of reflexivity and humility in peace work, keeping the peace educator grounded. And, in Chapter 3, Kurian and Rajala remind readers of the importance of critical compassion and an ethic of care, as peace educators connect on an emotional and spiritual plane (not simply a cognitive exchange) with learners. Their chapter calls on educators to interrogate systems of inequality but to also not forget personal care. Knowing your work, Basma and Ed, I believe this argument may resonate. What are your thoughts on balancing care – for the self and others – together with critical education for systemic change? Have you seen your emphasis on either the personal or social alternate throughout the many years of your work in the field?

Basma: In my previous work, I emphasised the need for balancing critical approaches with more interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary thinking. As someone from "the South", I could see the risks embedded in strongly critical and sociological arguments for Southern populations (for example, see Hajir et al., 2021; Cremin et al., 2021). For me, conceptualisations of critical agency that put the pressure of social transformation on marginalised, vulnerable populations while ignoring care for their immediate needs and well-being risk further disempowering them and negatively impacting the collective struggle. In her recent book, Abdul Hadi (2020) casts self-care as a political act rooted in the impulse toward self-determination and empowerment. She perceives 'healing and care as the positive counterparts to

struggle' (p. 3). I think that approaching Abdul Hadi's argument in light of peace education work yields valuable insights. It pushes us to consider the implications of this conceptual shift, particularly concerning the need to work across scales (Hajir, 2023) and spread 'risks, vulnerabilities, and sacrifices more evenly' (Andreotti, 2014, p. 385).

I thus see "care" as bound up in struggles for liberation and inextricably interwoven with "agency". However, I remain attentive to the risks of simplistic engagements with this argument. Balancing care with critical work must not entail, for example, adopting damaging neutral stances because we "care" for everyone involved. This, for me, is an understanding of "care" that is soaked with privilege and detachment from lived struggles. When it is evident where power lies and where hierarchy comes from, theorising "care" in peace work becomes contentious, and questions about positionalities and who is theorising for whom are paramount. Ultimately, these are essential conceptual evolutions in the field, but nuance and reflexivity are as needed as ever, and these are points we foreground in the present book.

Ed: Thanks for the beautiful question, Kevin. Gandhi's notion of a basic education involves an education of head, hand, and heart. What is all too often left out in learning environments in "higher" education is the heart and the spirit. Given the diversity of religions, wisdom traditions, and respect for secularism and atheism, I've landed on a definition of "spirit" as quite simply, "connectedness." Now that "connectedness" can be within oneself, a loved one, to a pet, a rock, a flower, a higher power, and/or a natural ecosystem – whatever works for you. Connectedness forms the basis of a relational ontology, one that inspires compassion and requires of us social responsibility and ecological stewardship. Connectedness can be cultivated through quiet centring, mindfulness practice, nature immersion, gardening, fishing, centring prayer, yoga, martial arts – it's all there in so many contemplative practices. My work on self-care with groups of people is gratifying and immediate because I/we can see tangible results after 5 minutes.

And please know that "self-care" is just a limited word package, because ultimately the "self" is connected to "others" and embedded in layers of interconnected "systems" (see also the 'Self-Other-Systems Approach' in Brantmeier & Brantmeier, 2020). Caring for the people doing the work of educational justice and peaceful social change, who all too often burn out, seems a very important part in supporting the promise of transformative agency and structural change. I have often worried about you Kevin, Michalinos,

Monisha, Maria, Zeena, Hakim, Zvi, Claire, Kathy, and others in terms of health and well-being. Such bright people tend to get out of balance with the body and the heart. I just want to encourage such bright people to balance the head, hand, heart, and spirit – if that's your thing.

My focus on the personal and social with changing elusive "structures" as an aspirational target has remained pretty steady in the last 30 years of this peace education work. As a graduate student (2000–2005) studying peace education, I meditated weekly with a few of my professors in their home. I also attended an insight meditation retreat, facilitated by the Chair of my dissertation. I additionally co-facilitated meditation retreats for others as a member of the Buddhist Alliance for Social Engagement (circa 2000–2005) and we weekly protested the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan in the aftermath of the historic 9/11 attacks. We sat silently in meditation amid a sea of protesters with signs, who were chanting and screaming 'stop the war.' We aimed to stop U.S. militarized aggression with a dose of mindfulness; sitting meditation (and also political advocacy) ultimately did not work to usurp deeply ingrained political and economic vested interests that are intertwined with money, power, oil, and the military industrial-complex. Yet we did cultivate an awareness of other forms of protest (silent disruption, nonparticipation, nonviolent protest) against structures and systems that are too often way beyond the influence of everyday citizens of peaceful conscience.

When I think of "systems change" and "structural change" I get frumpy, discontent, and overwhelmed. When I think of "structural change," I think of shooting rubberbands, a slingshot, or maybe a bow with an arrow at the stars in the dark-sky night; you can't really see where they land or the impact. What impact do 'rubberbands have on the stars' (phrase borrowed from Edie Brickell and New Bohemians, 1988)? I really want to know what structural change looks like in specific examples. I need help getting clear on what is meant by "structures" in situational contexts and how to change them. To me "structures" has been one of those words that super smart people hide behind and refer to in the abstract and general, not the specific. "Structures" (e.g., structural violence) was also a central topic of discussion at the Georg Arnhold conference we recently attended together. There, in a co-note presentation on 'Decolonizing Peace Education: Pedagogy, Publishing, Editing, and Conferencing', I asked Michalinos, 'Show me what changes structures. Show me structural change, I still don't understand?' My words were in response to a critique earlier in the conference of how inner and relational work fall short of change if structures aren't addressed. And I agree with

this theory of change – structures absolutely need to be addressed in post-critical-transformative change work. Yet I wondered about specific examples out there of peace education praxis in the field that resulted in structural change. Show me structural change related to peace education efforts. *Show Us Structural Change: Peace Education Praxis* – that would be an excellent journal special edition or a book project for some of us to take on for the field of peace education. Anyone interested? I really do want to learn from multiple contexts and know how to do structural change effectively – from comparative, situational, international, and cross-cultural perspectives. Michalinos, Basma, and Kevin, could you provide some insights here from your work or the book that we are discussing in this Afterword?

Michalinos: This is a wonderful and at the same time very challenging and provocative question, Ed! You are right that at times it seems that using the term "structures" may offer a hideout to avoid discussing some difficult issues. So I am very conscious when I use this term and I don't use it lightly. An example of Structural Change (with capital letters) is when racism is gradually eliminated from all facets of public and personal life, because of a number of measures (legal, political, social, etc.) taken at various levels that make racist behaviors and practices unacceptable. Until this happens, though, (if it ever takes place), there might be small "structural changes" (with lowercase letters), that is, small cracks to the system that sustains racism, sexism, slavery and so on. For example, introducing an education policy on anti-racist education (e.g., the Anti-Racist Code and Policy in the Greek-Cypriot educational system) or a peace education program that brings teachers and children from conflicting communities together (e.g., the program "Imagine" in Cyprus) are small steps forward in a step-by-step approach to undo racism or promote a culture of peace in schools. Given that the effects of these efforts might take years to be "shown" (you ask 'show me structural change'), we should not be discouraged, if the results are not immediate. It will take considerable strategies – political, educational, cultural and so on – to identify the most effective moves that are needed not only to initiate but also sustain some of these changes.

Basma: I appreciate Ed's question about the word "structure". As someone living the effects of structural violence, I cannot unsee "structures" even if I wanted to. For me, structures are never "abstract". They are concrete. They are tangible. I feel them in my flesh and blood. The fact that I lived all my life as a refugee, that I am not allowed even to visit Palestine, that I have not seen my parents, who are now in Syria for the past seven years, that I was the only graduate in my Master's cohorts at both the University of

Birmingham and the University of Cambridge to have her mother's visa rejected, and to have no family members attending her graduations, that I do not attend most conferences because of visa restrictions, that I had to go back home from the airport instead of travelling for my honeymoon because there was no way for my Italian husband and me to convince the passport control officer that, under the new regulations, holders of my travel document do not need a visa to Italy, that I missed out on my brother's wedding, my sister's wedding, on seeing my nieces and nephews growing up because of restrictions to my movement (and I, of course, acknowledge my privilege in comparison with my people back home in Syria and Palestine).

Colonial oppressive structures shape our lives, usurp us from living moments and making memories that others take for granted. I once read a tweet from an older Black person reflecting on the racism he faced throughout his life and concluding that racism and oppression could sometimes be more about what does not happen to us in our lives than what happens to us. I related strongly to his tweet. The moments I did not live in my life were stolen by oppressive structures. No amount of work on the individual and relational level will stop this violence if our analysis fails to attend to the conditions responsible for the unequal positions that actors inhabit and that make a particular relation/interaction happen in the first place (Joseph, 2018). This is why for me, the word "structure" is profoundly meaningful and helpful.

I love your suggestion, Ed, about a special issue in a journal about "structural change"! While it would indeed be challenging to "show" structural change because of its complex, slow and incremental nature, as Michalinos has discussed so adeptly above, I am sure that such a special issue would push us, peace and education scholars, to deepen and strengthen our theorisation of "struggle", and "solidarity" and their implications for peace and education praxis. Santos (2018) maintains that, excluding Marxism, the topic of resistance and social struggle has always been side-lined in Eurocentric social theory. If we are genuinely interested in decolonising the field of peace education and ridding it of its Eurocentric foundations, then we must engage seriously with these political questions, and the special issue you have suggested, Ed, could be an important endeavour in that direction. I strongly believe that peace education scholarship will face grave risks if we uncritically embrace the rapidly increasing shift in social science towards relational ontologies in a way that overlooks "structures", i.e., in a way that overlooks the implications of analyses of power relations and social positionings for our theorisation of social transformation and the responsibilities

of different actors at different scales, thereby risking reproducing political and socio-economic struggles.

Ed: Basma, I hear you and see you now that I know more about your intersectional identities and personal, social, and contextualised experiences of structural violence. I am emotionally moved and feel the structural violence that restricts your mobility and life choices. I am sorry for your suffering. Thank you for being vulnerable and sharing about violent structures you encounter. As a White, heterosexual, cisgender male, English-speaking, U.S. Citizen, I recognise the layers of privilege afforded in my social identities, and I try to recognize the related power structures and variegated forms of violence that operate to maintain a status quo. Yet I often have what Howard (2006) discusses as the "luxury of ignorance" that comes along with intersectional privilege; I can choose to see and feel the suffering of "others" encounters with structural violence – and also I can choose to turn my back and ignore structural violence. Figuring out how to recognise, empathise, advocate, disrupt, divest, and transform structural violence is at the fore of past and present efforts. And yet I, and dare I say we, need each other in figuring out how to co-construct alternative futures. I deeply appreciate your spotlight on not overlooking analysis of power relations and social positionalities in work toward shifting relational ontologies. Going back to the book, Kevin, are there any chapters that perhaps might offer some insight here?

Kevin: This is a fascinating and tremendously difficult topic, Ed, Michalinos, and Basma, on micro versus macro-change through peace education. I, too, struggle with this but have found inspiration in the scholarship on critical peace education, diffractive methodologies, transrational philosophies, and decolonial action (see Kester et al., 2019). In regard to the present book, one chapter that provides insights here is Chapter 9 by Gyamerah, Baidoo-Anu, and Ahmed. The authors interrogate the Eurocentric epistemologies of Western liberal peacebuilding and offer, in response, an African approach based on the philosophy of Sankofa. This latter chapter of the book brings forth questions of epistemic injustice; and within the context of this dialogue, it raises questions about whether efforts to eliminate epistemic injustice from curricula might be a form of "structural change" (lowercase) or "Structural Change" (uppercase). Key for practitioners, as Michalinos says, is to not lose hope if immediate change is not recognizable. Intentional and systematic efforts toward structural change within and beyond the classroom may provide inspiration for others, and at the very least illustrate to students and colleagues the potential of disrupting hegemonic norms. I also find hope here in the work of Freire (1970) and hooks (1994) who both outline – and illustrate throughout their life work – the broader social impact that seemingly small pedagogical changes can make.

> Indeed, as much of our own work has focused on efforts to decolonise peace education in recent years (e.g., Hajir & Kester, 2020; Kester et al., 2021; Zembylas, 2018) – through pedagogy, policy, and research – this is an area where I find the present book excels. The diversity of voices, contexts, and theoretical approaches included is much in need across the broader field, and perhaps most importantly, these narratives challenge the Euro-centricities of critical perspectives by offering some post/critical options (which is not a rejection of the critical but an invitation to move beyond pure critique towards action and alternative ways of knowing and being in peace education).
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> But, as we end this dialogue, I want to return to a recurring theme: several of us have mentioned the Georg Arnhold summer conference that we were just at in Germany. This speaks to me about the collective work that we are engaged in, that not a single one of us can make much of a mark individually upon the seemingly insurmountable problems that we face today (e.g., climate change, pandemics, war, racism, sexism, etc.). Yet together – what you refer to as 'connectedness', Ed, what Basma calls continued 'analyses of power relations', and what Michalinos has described as 'small steps forward in a step-by-step approach' – with our efforts aligned, perhaps we may then find some possibilities for achieving Structural Change. This, too, is the objective of this edited volume.

… … …

All in all, the chapters of the book are deeply inspiring, heartfelt reflections on the limits and possibilities of peace education today. Yet, before concluding, we want to reflect on three key insights for peace education that the chapters of this book bring to the surface. These are promising reminders to hold onto the essence of peace while doing peace work. Specifically, the chapters bring to light the importance of coherence between the objectives and methods of peace education, in particular in regard to humility, reflexivity and vulnerability. These three affective shifts towards humility, reflexivity and vulnerability demand that peace educators acknowledge – indeed embrace – difference.

First, humility is necessitated in the recognition of difference among peace practitioners, as each realises that they may only have a small and contingent perspective on peace, conflict or violence. Others may (or may not) see things quite differently, and hence may respond in very different ways. Humility, then, reminds peace educators that different worldviews are not necessarily incompatible; instead, they may offer transformative potential if we open ourselves to different possibilities. This humility brings us next to the practice of reflexivity.

Second, reflexivity is a continual practice of peacebuilders considering their role within both peace and conflict. Elsewhere, Kevin has written with Cremin on the role of the peacebuilder in perpetuating violence as a form of 'poststructural violence' (Kester & Cremin, 2017; see also Zembylas & Bekerman, 2013).

In turn, Kester and Cremin argue that 'second-order reflexivity' is necessary to hold peace educators accountable for their role in various forms of violence (re)production (see also the Introduction and Chapter 5 of this book for more on this argument). For example, it is telling that much of the foundational theory of peace studies tends to omit the responsibility of the individual actor in mitigating or perpetuating forms of violence, placing instead the analytical lens onto the structures of conflict and peace (e.g., Galtung, 1969, 1990). Later critical, post-structural and postcolonial insights pushed the focus of examination simultaneously inward and outward toward the individual and structures (see, e.g., Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015).

Third, humility and reflexivity in turn demand that peace educators practice a form of vulnerability, a mutual self-disclosure in a co-learning process (Brantmeier & McKenna, 2020). This involves a willingness to acknowledge limitations, change and often not knowing the right answers. Not only do humility and reflexivity allow for a practitioner to improve his/her/their practices, but they also open space for affective connections between scholars and students when they responsibly share vulnerabilities. Yet this sharing may involve uneven power dynamics and privileged vulnerabilities; again, the intersectional social identity variables of actors and their institutional power positionalities need to be critiqued and understood, as vulnerability is a risky business, and sometimes the risks outweigh the benefits (see Brantmeier & McKenna, 2020; Cremin & Kester, 2020). The authors within this book have offered several vulnerable and transformative insights that emerged from their personal experiences, research, teaching and community engagement. In this way, they have contributed to a dialogue on the possibility of transcending some earlier limitations of peace education and critical pedagogy projects. The personal and emotional, when shared with humility and reflexivity, invite the heart and spirit into peace education praxis.

In conclusion, we would argue the three shifts highlighted here, as expressed throughout the book, encompass the hope and faith in humanity that Freire (1970/2005) advocated in the Preface to his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, where he writes: 'I hope that from these pages at least the following will endure: my trust in the people, and my faith in men and women, and in the creation of a world in which it will be easier to love' (p. 40). The present book promotes this humanistic compassion and diffracts it to nature, non-human animals, the material world and beyond; indeed, to peace education at its core. It is a reflective and evolving effort toward innovative post/critical practices in peace education. Thus, the book offers new ways of thinking about peace and education in the 21st century, drawing on post/critical theories, and in so doing may be a catalyst for new ways of co-constructing peace in and through education in the years to come.

Note

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