

Globalization, Immigration, and the Education of “New” Immigrants in the 21st Century

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Migration, no longer restricted to regional spaces or particular nation-states, is a matter of global concern today. The accelerated movement of peoples, goods, and technologies across regional, national, and transnational borders is one of the undeniable by-products of globalization that is transforming the social, cultural, and political landscapes of societies throughout the globe. Globalization, however, and the rapid social changes it has engendered, is as much about deterritorialization and the displacement of a large and growing number of peoples, as it is about the free movement of capital, information, and services (Suárez-Orozco, 2001), resulting in profound if not violent human consequences and intensifying patterns of inequality (Bauman, 1998; Alexander, 2005). As Papademetriou (2006) notes, these “new” migrations “touch the lives of more people and loom larger in the politics and economics of more states than at any other time in the modern era” (p. xv). The current “age of migration” (Castles & Miller, 1993) and the resulting forms of cultural diversity it has given rise to, raise critical questions pertaining to immigrant identities, multiculturalism, and multicultural integration for liberal democracies and their supporting institutions.

For Western industrialized societies seemingly burdened with absorbing large flows of newcomers, immigration often inspires prickly, if not virulent, debates around citizenship, belonging, displacement, and exile. Whether framed in terms of incorporation or exclusion, the construction of the “immigrant” as a subject requiring intervention wields substantial symbolic power in “advanced” societies dealing with the “problems” of immigration today.¹ Industrialized nations’ contested relationships with immigration are manifested not only in official policies directed at immigrants, but also in popular representations of immigration and immigrants in newspapers, magazine covers, and other print media across the globe. Leo Chavez (2001) describes the range of visual imagery and metaphors employed to speak of immigration in the United States, including “national crisis,” “illegals,” and “invasion.” Such images speak to tacit assumptions and unstated questions of who legitimately belongs to the nation, who are the “real” citizens, and where immigrants and the children of immigrants fit in relation to such conceptions. An underlying message these images convey is that immigration poses a threat to the nation-state’s supposed cultural homogeneity and is thus a problem requiring redress and control (Martín Muñoz, García Castaño, López Sala, & Crespo, 2003). In this manner, multiculturalism is rendered a “challenge” rather than a form of “enrichment” (Baubock & Rundell, 1998).

As Suárez-Orozco (2001) notes, one of the most visible indicators of globalization, and the large-scale migrations it generates, is the unprecedented enrollment of children of immigrants in European and American schools. The education of today's new immigrants must be understood within the web of power relations that span transnational spaces opened up by globalization and that shape children's life trajectories and options for the future (Suárez-Orozco, 2001). The contentious nature of immigration and attendant representations of immigrants must be kept in mind when considering the experiences of immigrant children, as these often translate into policies and practices that affect educational opportunity. After all, schools do not stand apart from political processes and discourses; rather, they are implicated in them in particularly powerful ways. As Carrasco and colleagues observe, schools serve as spaces of mandatory contact between differentially positioned groups that might not have come together on their own accord (Carrasco, Ballestin, Beltran, Gaggiotti, Kaplan, Marre, et al. 2004). For this reason, they become a principal location for struggles over membership and citizenship (Bejerano, 2005). These moments of contact can either become politicized, escalating into conflict, or they can be tempered in ways that create inclusive communities and allow for expanded forms of belonging and citizenship. Although the struggles of multicultural contact are not restricted to the educational arena, schools, as microcosms of larger society, are often sites of contestation and contradiction for immigrant and minority youth who must negotiate their inherent paradoxical potential to be both "free[ing] and fetter[ing]" (Henry, 1963), "additive and subtractive" (Gibson, 1995; Valenzuela, 1999), and "welcoming and unwelcoming" (Gitlin, Buendía, Crosland & Doumbia, 2003).

An analysis of the schooling of immigrant children and youth must therefore engage with the contentious nature of immigration, the contradictions it engenders, and the manner in which national systems of education, even in their efforts to welcome and include, reproduce "unequal and dual forms of citizenship" (Burch, 2001, p. 265; see also Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). As Gomolla (this volume) argues in her comparison of school-improvement strategies in Britain, Germany, and Switzerland, schools (and nations) vary significantly in their approaches to addressing the educational opportunity gap between immigrant and nonimmigrant populations. Gomolla speaks in particular to how market-driven and performance-oriented educational reforms can work to inadvertently exclude the children of immigrants. In particular, she highlights the ways in which the pervasiveness of institutional discrimination and racism in the micro-politics of community and school settings limit educational opportunity. Her essay is a testament to the value of cross-national comparative research focused on how different nation-states address issues of inclusion and social justice. Most promising in her analysis was the Swiss school that emphasized the centrality of teaching and learning (over testing) and focused on change at the level of the whole school. Too often, teachers, students, and schools are celebrated for their testing achievements rather than for the meaningful ways in which they promote safe and inclusive environments for students.

Mechanisms of discrimination that construct racial and ethnic inequalities, as Gomolla importantly notes, often interact with class and gender. Qin (this volume) contributes to the literature in this area. Her work, which focuses primarily on the role of gender in the educational adaptations of immigrant children, draws upon a rich collection of recent qualitative studies that document immigrant girls' apparent advantages over boys in schools in the U.S. These studies and others provide mounting evidence that in a wide array of immigrant groups and across national settings girls remain in school longer, receive higher grades, and are

more likely to attend institutions of higher education than boys.² Qin's research points to the interaction between home and peer factors, as well as school structures, in shaping immigrant girls' and boys' differential school adaptation patterns. Her attention to the gendered nature of ethnic identity formation and acculturation is of particular interest in light of this volume's focus on problematizing and moving beyond the classic straight-line model of assimilation. Drawing from data collected as part of the LISA study at Harvard, a longitudinal investigation that charted the acculturation and adaptation patterns of over 400 immigrant youth for five years, Qin found that over time immigrant boys across all five groups studied were "significantly less likely than girls to identify with their culture of origin" and that "the immigrant girls were more likely than boys to choose 'additive' or 'hyphenated identities,' indicating attempts to bridge the two cultures" (p. 14). Qin's findings add to an accumulating body of work that suggests that school success is enhanced when immigrant and minority students remain anchored in their communities of origin while also drawing upon a strategy of "selective acculturation" (Philips, 1976; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996) or "additive acculturation" (Gibson, 1995). Quite rightly, Qin calls for more research examining the intersecting impacts of gender, ethnicity, and class on academic achievement. Specifically, additional research is needed on why immigrant boys may have a more difficult time than immigrant girls pursuing the additive strategy described above. Additionally, the field would benefit from studies that shed light on how schools themselves, through their structures and practices, promote or impede the acquisition of bicultural and hybrid competencies.

Other relevant areas of inquiry include the ways in which immigrants and the children of immigrants negotiate the contradictions inherent in nationalist frameworks, as well as the manner in which they participate in (re)imagining alternative forms of citizenship and belonging in their everyday lives that extend beyond assimilationist and integrationist discourses. The concept of "cosmopolitanism" that Walker and Serrano (this volume) discuss is a potential paradigm for understanding the transnational networks and reformulations of citizenship taking place at simultaneously local and global levels. Drawing from their work with the Otavalos population in Ecuador and overseas, Walker and Serrano counter assumptions that the more cosmopolitan a group becomes, the less it remains rooted in and attached to its indigenous culture and values. In fact, one might characterize the Otavalos as successfully practicing a strategy of selective or additive acculturation. Although their study is not centered on school sites, Walker and Serrano's findings have valuable implications for education in the modern era of globalization. Their work speaks to the urgent need to create more cosmopolitan learning environments and to nurture cosmopolitan identities. In looking to how schools might do this, a note of caution is offered. Identities, no matter how cosmopolitan, are always constituted in relations of power that are historically determined. The cosmopolitanism practiced by actors whose flexible and privileged locations within the global economy have allowed for their more or less free movement across borders must be kept distinct from the tactics developed in the context of coerced displacement and continued surveillance that circumscribe the parameters of belonging and structure the social and material experiences of less privileged groups. Like Walker and Serrano, Mossayeb and Shirazi (this volume) focus on an immigrant group that remains strongly anchored in the culture of its country of origin. However, in contrast to the Otavalos, their case centers on a privileged, well-educated, and affluent group: Iranians who chose to immigrate to the United States to take advantage of the perceived educational opportunities, particularly in higher education. In examining educational and acculturation strategies across immigrant groups, it is important to

attend closely to the types of cultural, social, and economic capital immigrants bring with them. Clearly, the Iranians surveyed by Mossayeb and Shirazi are an advantaged group, rich in the forms of capital that typically propel success in school. In conducting comparative research on immigrant and refugee populations, it is essential to take stock of the ways in which a group's educational strategies and negotiations are conditioned not only by institutional structures but also by its multiple social locations in the new society, including race, class, gender, and sexuality. With respect to the Iranian group, it might be instructive to ask how its class position shapes its educational trajectories in the United States. It is also useful to ask how the educational strategies of refugee and affluent immigrant groups, such as the Iranians in the U.S., differ from those of groups lacking similar advantages.

The final paper, by Mosselson (this volume), specifically challenges researchers to attend to the experiences of refugees and the ways in which they may differ from those of other immigrant groups. Her study focuses on a group of female adolescent refugees from Bosnia who have settled in New York City. Even within her comparatively small sample of 15 young women, she finds substantial variability in patterns of identity construction and coping strategies. Although her study offers little information on these women's family situations prior to migration, it does highlight once again the need for understanding the types of capital the migrants bring with them and the strategies they employ in coping with their new environment. Mosselson points to an important finding that refugee students' academic achievements, as measured by their grades and accommodating behavior in school, may mask the oftentimes severe difficulties they in fact are encountering in adapting to their new surroundings. She cautions teachers and other educators to take a far more holistic approach to understanding the situations of their immigrant students. She also urges teachers to draw from the knowledge and experiences that these students bring with them to school.

In considering immigration and education in the 21st century, it is necessary to keep in mind that education does not equate with schooling and that much of the education of immigrant children takes place outside of schools in their families and communities. It is imperative to recognize that the world is multicultural and that both multiculturalism and multicultural education are the "normal human experience" (Goodenough, 1971, 1976).³ Moreover, in this era of globalization, it is increasingly clear that multicultural competencies are an asset. More than any other time in history, schools need to prepare children for "world mobility," a concept advocated by Margaret Mead some 60 years ago (Mead, 1946, cited in St. Lawrence & Singleton, 1976, p. 22). In seeking to prepare children for a globalized world, educators and researchers must, however, attend carefully to how schools themselves, through their unequal relations of power, provide differential access to the cultural knowledge that is valued and rewarded within schools (Goodenough, 1976). It is also necessary to explicitly and deliberately examine the constraints which inequality imposes on the acquisition of competence within school settings (Lewis, 1976) and to question who holds the authority to judge competence (Hill-Burnett, 1976).

The articles in this volume offer valuable opportunities to move beyond frameworks that construct immigration as a problem and that insist upon "repairing" immigrant students' alleged deficits. An important step in moving forward rests in the ability to shift the focus from immigrant children's "deficiencies" to the range of practices and "funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) they bring with them. Immigrants and migrants possess a wealth of cultural resources and competencies that allow them not only to function within their

local communities but also enable them to participate in a diverse and global society. Their high mobility, their travels across regional and national borders, their ability to speak multiple languages, and their ability to assume different identities depending on the context indicate that immigrants ought to be viewed as active social actors in the global community whose contributions as more than simply economic. Frameworks such as additive acculturation, selective acculturation, and cosmopolitanism, among others,⁴ which challenge the limits of assimilationist discourses and capture immigrants' agency, must continue to inform research imperatives. The value of these paradigms rests in their power to illuminate the myriad ways in which immigrants and their children draw upon their symbolic and material resources to navigate through educational systems in this increasing globalized world and to disrupt and transform static and hegemonic notions of citizenship and belonging.

Notes

1. DeGenova (2002) urges scholars to interrogate the teleological assumptions inherent in such terms as "immigrant," "immigration," and "illegal," noting how these concepts are most often posited from the perspectives of the immigrant-receiving societies. For this reason, we encapsulate certain terms in quotes as way of complicating their normal and taken-for-granted nature. The quotations are intended to signal towards questions that ask "for whom" immigration is a "problem." To avoid the tedious exercise of continuously using quotation marks, we place terms in quotations only once.
2. For earlier works commenting on the gendered nature of immigrant students' school-adaptation patterns see Gibson, 1991, 1997; Rumbaut, 1994; Tomlinson, 1991.
3. We draw here from a special collection of papers published in 1976, which continue to speak today to the paradoxes and dilemmas of multicultural education (Gibson, 1976).
4. See, for example, Rosaldo's (1994) discussion of "cultural citizenship." As an analytical framework, cultural citizenship speaks to practices that disrupt the hegemony of official citizenship and assimilationist discourses to present alternate visions and voices of what it means to belong. The lens of cultural citizenship opens up avenues for exploring the role of schools and school structures in affirming alternative forms of belonging and membership among immigrant students.

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