



**PART V**  
Guide to New Resources

## Guide to New Resources

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### **A Just and Humane Civic Education in an Era of Rising Xenophobia**

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J. A. Banks, M. M. Suárez-Orozco, & M. Ben-Peretz (Eds.). (2016). *Global Migration, Diversity, and Civic Education: Improving Policy and Practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press. 243 pages, \$44.00 (paperback). ISBN 9780807758090.

The opening two decades of the 21st century recorded record rates of human migration compared to any previous epoch and an unprecedented increase in ethnic and linguistic diversity for nations receiving immigrants (International Organization for Migration, 2016).

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Significantly, during this period the world has witnessed an uptake in xenophobia and nativist nationalism (United Nations, 2016). According to the United Nations Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, “We still live in a world where we witness politicians and leaders using hateful and divisive rhetoric to divide instead of unite societies” (Crickley, as cited in UN, 2016, para. 2). Within this era of turmoil for migrants seeking an escape from poverty, wars, and ethnic discrimination, “Global Migration, Diversity, and Civic Education: Improving Policy and Practice” critically brings forth researched perspectives intended to engage educators with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work effectively with immigrant youth.

“Global Migration, Diversity, and Civic Education” developed out of a National Academy of Education workshop and is a valuable addition to the extensive multicultural education series from Columbia University’s Teachers College Press. This well-researched text critically moves multicultural discourse beyond the neoliberal globalization trope that the ultimate goal is for teachers to prepare their students “to compete in today’s global economy” (Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2013, p. 5). In no way do the authors of this edited collection offer Pollyannaish perspectives by defaulting to simplistic conclusions. Instead, readers will discover a collection of coherently organized chapters that are grounded in the challenges of global migration that can inform practices for civic education. Overall, the text meets its stated goals “to examine the theories, concepts, empirical findings, and promising practices related to

education for citizenship in this age of globalization and mass migration, including issues related to immigration, cultural sustainability, structural inclusion, and social cohesion” (p. viii).

The text is book-ended with an introduction and three chapters to provide a conceptual foundation and two concluding chapters that consider the future of practices for citizenship education. In between, are three chapters that serve as case studies. Marcelo Suárez-Orozco and Minas Michikyan’s introduction sets a critical multicultural tone for this collection in its recognition as to how globalization is “making the aspired coherence of the nation-state increasingly elusive” (p. 1). Since the creation of the modern nation-state nearly 230 years ago, religious, racial, and skin-color identification remain contentious intersections as to who has access to full citizenship rights. Hence, the invention and rise of the liberal nation-state resulted in a struggle over who constitutes “the people” within its imperial boundaries. Because the modern nation-state defaults to some kind of racial and ethnic identity, “the discourse of race and nation are never very far apart” (Balibar, 1991, p. 37). Relatedly, Suárez-Orozco and Michikyan draw our attention to the European colonial legacy of “*jus sanguinis* (law or right of blood)” as an underlying ideology as to who qualifies for full citizenship (p. 17), a point revisited in Zvi Bekerman’s chapter discussed below. Suárez-Orozco and Michikyan go on to provide a succinct overview of contemporary migration trends and the challenges for immigrant learners, especially those students expected to forego their native languages in lieu of educational assimilationist expectations. Given normatively unwelcoming school environments for immigrant children and the residential isolation in which their families find themselves, the result, according to Suárez-Orozco and Michikyan, is “a pattern of triple segregation—by race, language, and poverty—[that] shapes the lives of many new immigrants” (p. 14).

Following the Introduction, lead editor James Banks presents his most substantive contribution toward placing multicultural education in a global context in “Civic Education in the Age of Global Migration.” At the beginning of the new century, Banks (2001) conceded that his “work on global identification and issues is incomplete and episodic. . . . Global issues remain mostly an unrealized and hoped-for goal” (p. 14). This interest resulted in his 2004 edited “Diversity and Citizenship Education: Global Perspectives,” which contains a more expansive and representative series of case studies than the current volume under review (Banks, 2004). Over the past two decades, Banks (2013) continued to refine his conceptualization of the complexities that underlie what civic education means both theoretically and in practice in a culturally diverse world.

Here, Banks’s purpose is to describe “ways in which educators can work toward a sustainable version of social

cohesive by providing diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious groups with an education that advances civic equality, recognition, and structural inclusion” (p. 31). Banks provides a concise review of explicit examples of efforts and struggles to place parameters on nation-state identities in light of increasing migration and cultural diversity. With a critical aim to develop “a transformative conception of citizenship education” (p. 30), Banks draws primarily from social-psychological research to consider how culturally responsive teaching can be more inclusive by incorporating a clearer orientation toward civic education in light of an unprecedented influx of migrant students into public school classrooms internationally. For example, he points to research studies in which immigrant youth “distinguished *national identity* and *citizenship*” (p. 42). Regardless of citizenship status of young people, Banks cautions that “blind nationalism may prevent students from developing reflective and positive global identifications” (p. 45).

Following Banks, Zvi Bekerman states that an aim of his chapter “Between Religious/Ethnic Epistemologies and the Development of Civic Identities in Western Education” is “to open up for consideration the importance of focusing on epistemologies . . . embedded in particular sociohistorical and cultural contexts represented and interpreted with the frames made available in the intersection between hegemonic and subjugated or alternate formations” (p. 54). Bekerman’s specific concern rests with a “discursive erasure of ‘traditional’ religious epistemologies from the public sphere” and a hegemonic Western “secular narrative” (pp. 65, 64) based in a continuing legacy of a coloniality of power (see Quijano, 2000). Beckerman explains how this secular narrative draws ideologically on a religious justification tacitly or otherwise based on *jus sanguinis* that, in turn, contributes to a racialization of citizenship rights. In his philosophical treatise on the effects of competing ideologies, Bekerman calls for research on “how minority youths’ religious epistemologies are represented in the discursive space of the classroom,” including curricular materials, where students and their teachers “negotiate what counts as knowledge in this contested space” (pp. 66–67). This will be no easy task, however, especially when a nation solidifies its identity around a particular religious worldview that marginalizes other forms of religious expressions. For example, in the United States even when critical teacher education deconstructs Judeo-Christian nationalistic discourse and introduces teachers to curricular resources about Islam and Arab cultures, the actual acceptance and implementation of these materials in public schools remain uncertain to overcome Islamophobia (King, 2012).

Concluding Part I of the book is Guadalupe Valdés’ chapter on immigrant languages and their place in teaching and learning. Valdés provides a primer on the challenges to incorporating best practices on language

development into the school curriculum. Specifically, she focuses on “what is referred to as an *instructed second-language (L2) acquisition*” with the goal of “creating the conditions and circumstances necessary for the development of *elective* bilingualism in traditional classroom settings” (p. 78, emphasis in original). Valdés’ provides readers with an overview of current second-language language research that is supported with instructive tables to further clarify the substantial research in this field. Valdés arranges key sections of her chapter in the form of questions: “What needs to be acquired in L2 acquisition? How are second languages acquired? What is the end state of L2 acquisition? How then is language proficiency to be assessed” (pp. 81–89)?

This pragmatic approach troubles both conservative and progressive desires for simplistic solutions to a complex topic. For example, in regards to assessment of language proficiency, Valdés observes, “Identifying and classifying immigrant students in terms of their second-language proficiencies . . . assumes that accurate language categorizations can be created and students identified who fit into such categories” (p. 89). From there, she moves on to thorny issues as to what happens to school-age learners when taking into account the knowledge base and skills of teachers. While acknowledging the shortcomings of contemporary teacher preparation and development, Valdés identifies a knowledge base for L2 teacher education. Valdés leaves readers with a warning that language “is an instrument that can be used for the inclusion and exclusion of groups and individuals in ways that limit their potential and their future” as expressed in program designs and policies that can determine “the success or failure of immigrant integration” (p. 97).

Before addressing the three case studies, next considered are the two chapters that compose the third and final section, “Global Migration and Diversity: Implications for Practice.” In the initial chapter of Part III, Gregory White and John Myers provide a bit of a balancing act in their examination of the relationship between citizenship education for young people and nation-states that “struggle to balance social cohesion and cultural sustainability” (p. 179). The authors provide an excellent introductory overview of the tensions and differences among policies and practices with orientations toward assimilation, acculturation, and multiculturalism. Overlaying these approaches is transnationalism “and the changing reality that immigrants may no longer be leaving the past behind, but instead are forging and maintaining multinational ties” with networks that represent a “diasporic public sphere” (pp. 180, 182). White and Myers call for a shift from mainstream models of civic education “indoctrination” and exclusion to a more inclusionary approach that includes “cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, and emphasis on human rights” (p. 182).

Next, White and Myers turn to the concept of “*glocalization*,” where a “dialectical relationship between

local and global levels” are in constant interaction, a process that melds both cosmopolitan and local identities (pp. 184–185). In a radical departure from citizenship education rooted within the confines of the nation-state, “glocalized practices take into account that citizenship is no longer solely defined by the nation, that national borders are more permeable, and that there is a greater diversity of settings in which politics and social change occur” (p. 185). Hence, traditional forms of citizenship education wedded to nationalism invariably conflict with migrant youth’s transnational and culturally hybrid student identities. With an emphasis on distinct subject matter disciplines, curricular practices in K–12 schools, however, do not lend itself easily to engaging with civic identity formation under globalization. As a result, White and Meyers recommend a relatively mild remedy of “[s]tudying global issues such as cultural diversity, the environment, and human rights as core topic in world history rather than as add-ons at the end of the year” (p. 188).

White and Myers offer a typology of citizenship education in the context of globalization. Their first category is “cross-cultural sensitivity,” which has a purpose “to foster social cohesive and by reducing stereotypes and prejudices of diverse groups and helping youth acquire the knowledge and skills for cross-cultural interactions” (p. 192). Cross-cultural sensitivity is similar to the goals of the predominantly European concept of interculturalism. For example, the goal of intercultural teacher education is “to train individuals to perceive and recognize linguistic and sociocultural diversity by increasing sensitivity to socially and ethnically based prejudice, conflict, and misunderstanding; xenophobia; and racism” (Alleman-Ghionda, 2012, p. 1213). Within intercultural education, cultural competence refers broadly to knowledge and skills “which enable professionals to work respectfully and effectively with individuals, families, and communities from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds” (De Jesús, 2012, p. 504). Cultural competence and intercultural communication involve developing an internalized self-awareness of how racial and ethnic discrimination operates, which is what White and Meyers are recommending.

White and Myers second category expands upon cross-cultural sensitivity to include “global service . . . to develop intercultural competency with local community partners” (p. 193). Global service is intended to increase self-awareness so that a participant can “examine one’s own cultural beliefs and assumptions . . . in respect to the promotion of human equality” (p. 193). Next, for students to gain the knowledge to engage meaningfully with controversial issues as an informed global citizen, curricular emphasis is placed on the category of “international understanding” (p. 194). The rationale for international understanding is the need for teachers and their students “to be well-informed about world events, peoples, and places” (p. 194). The authors note,

however, “Limited emphasis, if any, is generally placed on political activism” in this category (p. 194).

In their fourth and final category of their typology of citizenship education, White and Myers focus on social action that advances “global justice” (p. 195). The emphasis here is “on issues of social justice and equality as well as the recognition of difference that extend beyond the scope of a single nation” (p. 195). The inclusion of global justice addresses Dervin and Tournebise’s (2013) findings of an “apparent lack of concern for justice” in normative intercultural education (p. 541). White and Myers address this intercultural shortcoming by calling for opportunities to “empower students to have a voice by developing them as activists who work on campaigns outside of the formal political system” (p. 195).

White and Myers conclude by using U.S. history as a nation-state example to envision a curriculum “pushing the boundaries of state-centric citizenship education” (p. 196). The authors advocate this position in an effort to critique the differing interpretations of *the public* to expand its application beyond borders to “to potentially include the entire world and all people” (p. 189). This, however, exposes a slight theoretical and pragmatic weaknesses in their loose conception and application of the public. For example, in applying the concept to public policy, Feinberg (2016) first defines “*a public*” as “a group of strangers committed to preserving and refining the process by which *public values* are formed” (p. 21, emphasis added). Feinberg further explains, “A *public value* is an evolving standard of behavior that has been subjected to sustained scrutiny and refinement, is compatible with core social ideals, and functions to shape *civic judgment* and guide individual behavior” (p. 20, emphasis added). Because a goal for White and Myers is to broaden the discourse around citizenship education in relation to globalization where teachers learn to incorporate “civic values” into the curriculum along the dimensions of “culturally specific values” and “universal values” (p. 192), Feinberg’s (2016) conceptualization of a public and public values is critical to consider. Possibly more precise but compatible with White and Meyers global conceptualization of the public is *the public sphere* that serves as “an arena for the engagement of differences and the public becomes a body of strangers so engaged” (Feinberg, 2016, p. 71).

Sonia Nieto initially frames her closing chapter “Education in a Globalized World” around challenges that undermine an inclusive civic education. While acknowledging the book is about migrant youth, she reminds readers that a “suspicion of difference” goes beyond immigrants and includes established nation-state citizens who are ethnic minorities, especially those of color and/or of non-dominant religions (p. 205). For both recent immigrant children and minority students, school policies and practices tend to marginalize or simply ignore the cultural backgrounds and histories that these

students embody, a process Nieto labels as “*symbolic violence*” (p. 206, emphasis in original). The rejection of difference in mainstream schooling, Nieto explains, stems from historical dominant and privileged groups who “fear a loss of power” as the nation-state increasingly becomes more multicultural.

For her part of the book, Nieto also critically reflects on the case chapters. Her observations reinforce the context of immigrants and ethnic minorities made in Carola Suárez-Orozco and Amy Marks’s case study “Immigrant Students in the United States.” Suárez-Orozco and Marks consider how job mobility and economic discrimination in a hierarchical society link “parents’ work with their children’s education experiences and successes” (p. 109). The ambiguous space in which migrant families finds themselves is a function of U.S. policies that has focused more on deportation than on civic engagement and education. Forced family separation across borders is one outcome. Nieto echoes Suárez-Orozco and Marks’s point that the new national home of immigrants serves as a “*social mirror*” as to how they “embody nativists’ fear of the unknown . . . [and are] subject to the ongoing racial climate of the nation” (p. 110, emphasis in original). Taken together, these hosts of tensions contribute to immigrant poverty, which is associated with negative educational results.

Immigrant children in the United States have the right of “territorial personhood” that grants them access to a public education regardless of their official citizenship status (Song, 2009, p. 613). Suárez-Orozco and Marks add, however, that undocumented youth in this condition of “*liminal legality* . . . do not have equal access to health-care, social services, or jobs” (pp. 109, 111, emphasis in original). The authors note the “cumulative stressors” of the social psychological effects that a totality of uncertainty and lack of access to basic resources can have on immigrant families (p. 113). As Patel’s (2013) research found, when services are provided, too often mental health and school officials view the adjustment of immigrant youth to their new settings as normal stages of child and adolescent development that in effect “close off inquiries into contextual factors” (p. 40).

Suárez-Orozco and Mark also note how language affects an immigrant student’s success in school, reinforcing Valdés observations that “language is a ‘loaded weapon’” for achieving academically and having a sense of belonging in the broader society (p. 97). Besides immigrant students striving to achieve academically and navigate a new culture, Valdés notes that an ability to negotiate a nation’s dominant language affects everyday life, including securing jobs and becoming civic actors. The isolating condition of an inability to communicate effectively in the dominant language is further compounded, Suárez-Orozco and Mark explain, by lack of contact with native speakers, especially when immigrants

“settle in predominantly minority neighborhoods[, they] often have virtually no direct, systematic, or intimate contact with middle-class White Americans” (p. 115).

Miriam Ben-Peretz and Tali Aderet-German’s case study in “Narratives of Success of Ethiopian Immigrants” looks at similar factors of isolation that inhibit civic engagement for Ethiopian Jews who migrate to Israel. Ethiopians faced the common litany of societal discrimination based on language, skin color, previous academic attainment, and cultural practices that included “a religious xenophobia professed by the religious establishment that doubted the authenticity of their Jewishness” (p. 146). For their chapter, Ben-Peretz and Aderet-German report their results of a content analysis of interviews with nine Ethiopian immigrants who hold professional positions in Israel. Each of the college-educated subjects in this non-normative sample had been “placed at boarding schools in order to assist their integration into the Israeli society and to ease the financial burden on their families” (p. 142). Common themes that this group of immigrants perceived as affecting their transition to active civic participation first included (a) contending with racism, (b) receiving mixed support from their boarding schools to assimilate, and (c) accepting and negotiating their dual cultural identity. The civic strength of this group eventually came from both a sense of mission and personal autonomy. Ben-Peretz and Aderet-German explain that the sample held a “commitment to carry out activities for the Israeli community, and particularly the participants’ own Ethiopian community” accompanied by an “inner feeling of accountability” (p. 144). Critical for participants in this study was when they “transformed themselves from passive subjects to active decision-makers in their life stories” (p. 144).

While Israel may become more of a multicultural society as Ben-Peretz and Aderet-German contend, the fact that the 1948 creation of Israel is based officially on a religious identity, that is, Judaism, limits this contention (see Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). Ayman Agbaria’s case study chapter further brings into question the extent of Israel’s commitment to multiculturalism based on an extreme nationalism encapsulated in “religious ethnonationalism” that can result in violence against identities existing outside of those constructed as legitimate by the Israeli nation-state (p. 156). This is the context in which Agbaria places his chapter “Ethnonational Politics of Citizenship Education in Israel and the Counterknowledge of Palestinian Teachers.” Throughout Agbaria is clear about how Palestinians have been colonized by Israel where the majority population of Jews constitute an “ethnocracy rather than a democracy . . . , which excludes Arab citizens” from full civic participation in the larger society. Arab and Jewish students attend separate schools that

function, according to Agbaria, “as a main carrier of the Zionist historiography, while disregarding the Palestinian narrative” (p. 162). Agbaria supports this contention by providing examples of Israeli construction of the school curriculum and textbooks as to what material and perspectives are included and excluded. In certain regards, this situation correlates with Nieto’s understated observation about the United States where “ethnic studies has not developed a strong foothold in many public school classrooms” (p. 209).

Against an Israeli master narrative, Agbaria describes how Palestinian teachers strive to advance a counter public narrative reflective of decolonialism. Among the strategies the author cites is the provision of a more accurate history of the forming of Israel and the inclusion of the Palestinian Nakba, or “catastrophe,” after the 1948 war when Israel state was formed around existing Palestinian residents while displacing an estimated 750,000 Palestinians. Similar to what Nieto noted in the final chapter about the Mexican-American Studies program in Tucson, Arizona, another strategy of Palestinian teachers is to focus citizenship education around current events that affect the lives of their students. Palestinian teachers also instrumentally teach mainstream knowledge necessary to qualify for higher education, including the dominant version of citizenship education. These teachers also create “an alternative sphere of belonging in which the students’ community replaces the state” and students learn about their own local histories and how to advocate for their civil rights (p. 169). In addition to noting how Israeli authorities have limited the life opportunities of Palestinian residents, these teachers also focus on “the Arab leadership for their ineffective work in Parliament and in the local municipalities” (p. 169) and use this information to encourage students to become active citizens in their communities. Similar to advice from the American Civil Liberties Union (2017) for U.S. youth profiled by police—echoing in part the political education program of the Black Panther Party of nearly a half-century ago (Seale, 1970)—Palestinian teachers emphasize “teaching legal education: knowledge about their rights” (p. 170).

Although some of the authors in “Global Migration, Diversity, and Civic Education” point to the negative effects socio-economic discrimination and poverty on migrant student civic engagement, underdeveloped is the political economy of class. In an era of growing global inequality where the “wealth of the richest 62 people has risen by 45% in the 5 years since 2010 . . . and the wealth of the bottom half fell by just over a trillion dollars in the same period—a drop of 38% . . . , the share of national income going to workers has been falling” (Hardoon, Ayele, & Fuentes-Nieva, 2016, pp. 2, 4). Primary among the exploited are immigrants and other marginalized populations. Left unanswered is whether a transformative civic education is possible when liberal

nation-states protect the property rights of individualistic accumulation of capital at a material cost to the vast majority of the population (see Marsh, 2011).

Another missing element from the collection is substantive attention to Indigenous populations, especially the people who were first subjected to modernity during the rise of Eurocentric nation-states. Although written from a critical perspective, the text under review would have benefited from a chapter devoted to decolonialism. De Lissoy (2015) explains, “This means *starting from outside the discourses of Eurocentric reasoning*, and even its familiar dialects of revolution and recognizing the historical dignity and generativity of indigenous communities, the poor, and the excluded” (pp. 102–103, emphasis added). Agbaria’s chapter is one place that contains elements of a decolonial analysis. The importance of a decolonial perspective resides in the glaring history of how Indigenous people saw their territorial, cultural, and human rights eroded and denied in much of the world by dominant forces that imposed nation-states globally. The effect of this continuing condition of coloniality is worthy of further investigation to contextualize the various meanings that can be attached to civic education.

“Global Migration, Diversity, and Civic Education” leaves readers with critical elements to incorporate a substantive and attainable civic education for migrant students. Embedded within a critical multicultural orientation, recommendations point to a transformative conception of civic education so that multiple cultures can thrive together. Despite a recognition that schools are, according to Banks, “devoting little attention to citizenship education” (p. 35), the chapter authors collectively present policy and practice possibilities that can create transformative programs of civic education to counter the influence of insular and truncated nationalism on the school curriculum. The attainment of such aims, however, will remain clouded by various forms of intolerant nationalism globally. In his conclusion, Agbaria was “skeptical about the neutrality of the state and the ability to escape the right-wing spirit that dominates Israel politics” (p. 171). His skepticism, however, should not be limited to one nation but is applicable internationally as a major hindrance to a just and humane civic education for both dominant and migrant student populations.

**To order a copy of *Global Migration, Diversity, and Civic Education: Improving Policy and Practice*, contact Teachers College Press, P.O. Box 20, Williston, VT 04595-0020. Website: <http://www.teacherscollegepress.com/index.html>**

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