Radical Pluralism and the Challenges of Educating for Democratic-Ecological Civic Identities: Reflections from the Mexican School Context

Abstract

This paper builds on the growing importance of concepts of identity and diversity in citizenship education studies, and argues for an expanded conception of diversity that ultimately includes the non-human and even inanimate realm. The dramatic pace of human-induced global climate change requires a commensurate urgency in developing forms of citizenship education that shape new ecological as well as political civic identities, and which expand democracy beyond the human community. Situating my empirical work on Mexican civic education reform in a global, comparative context, I consider the challenges that all schools and school systems will need to address to incorporate even deeper practices of respect for diversity and acknowledgement of the radical pluralism that life (and non-life) on earth presents.

Keywords: DIVERSITY, IDENTITY, PLURALISM, CITIZENSHIP, ECOLOGY

Introduction

As readers of this Journal surely know, the concepts of identity and diversity have become central to the field of citizenship education; most efforts to educate for democratic citizenship now seek to form enduring, inclusive civic identities with behavioral consequences for achieving greater social justice. For the last 15 years I have been tracking the development of citizenship education in and around the lower secondary school (*secundaria*) in Mexico, where, not surprisingly, tropes of identity and diversity have become more salient, too. At the same time, like many I have watched with alarm as the Global North continues to lead the world in per capita ozone-carbon emissions that have come to threaten the possibility of continuing human, let alone non-human life on the planet. Countries of the Global South, like Mexico, have largely followed suit in their state policies and education programs, which also tend to reinforce strict divisions between the human and non-human realm, and which fail to recognize the interconnectedness of living and non-living things. My reflections on these developments, as well as on the field of citizenship education more broadly, have led me to rethink some of our most cherished priorities and assumptions.

In this necessarily compact space, I aim to provide some basic elements for rethinking citizenship education beyond human forms of pluralism and diversity. First acknowledging the importance of a shift in the field toward concepts of identity and diversity, I will introduce concepts of identity and public-making and discuss some of the inherent challenges in school-based citizenship education for democratic civic identities. Not least of these challenges is the "dilemma of the schoolhouse wall," which both limits the potential for creating vibrant democratic "communities of practice" and a more radically pluralist identity. Finally, I will conclude with an urgent call for a citizenship education that moves beyond the human-human interface to situate learners' identities in a

more broadly ecological figured world. This will require us to expand our conception of democratic pluralism beyond the typical tropes of human diversity (race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) toward a much more radical conception and practice. Throughout the argument, I shall use the case of Mexican secondary education as a touchstone for practice and possibility.

Identity, Diversity, and Citizenship

From the 1990s forward, the enormous burst of scholarly interest in the "new citizenship education" was part and parcel of "the return to democracy" in many parts of the world that had lived under authoritarian rule. During this same period, many national school systems around the world questioned their existing approaches to teacher-centered instruction, and began to reform both curriculum and teacher training to adopt a more learner-centered, constructivist approach (Vavrus and Bartlett, 2012; Altinyelken, 2012), replacing a cognitive focus on knowledge with a more active emphasis on developing civic "competencies" and dispositions. Mexico was no different (Levinson, 2005; Levinson, 2004).

Now, even as school-based programs for civic education recently have grown more dynamic and sophisticated, most scholars in the field have acknowledged that school is only one among many contexts where learning for democratic participation takes place (Parker, 2002; Rubin, 2007; Biesta, 2006; Arthur et al., 2008; Stevick and Levinson, 2007; Stevick and Levinson, 2008). Moreover, scholars have also acknowledged that the kind of civic learning and identity necessary for sustained democratic participation gets shaped over the entirety of the life course, but is perhaps especially formative during youth and the adolescent years (Flanagan, 2013; Sherrod et al., 2010). Recent studies, which include much qualitative and mixed-methods research, have tried to identify clear "developmental pathways" to robust democratic civic identities and action so that such pathways could be cultivated intentionally (Strobel et al., 2006; Camino and Zeldin, 2002; Flanagan, 1998; Gordon, 2008). Still other studies emphasize the benefits of classroom deliberative discussions (Hess, 2009), or service-learning and participation in other community organizations (Quintelier, 2008) for fostering future civic action or "political participation" (Feldman et al., 2007; Youniss, 1997; Print, 2007). Some of the research in this literature has begun to challenge operational categories (often conceived as dependent variables) like "political efficacy," and incorporated studies of "authentic" youth civic engagement in activities that the literature has not always considered part of democratic citizenship, including "youth social action" which cultivates "alternative frames for civic identity" or a "critical civic praxis" (Kirshner, 2007; Ginwright et al., 2006; Ginwright and Cammarota, 2007; Kirshner, 2009; Ito et al., 2015).[1]

Here I offer some working definitions to flesh out this relationship between education, citizenship, and identity.[2] I conceive of citizenship as a mode of relatedness to others in a polity or public; this mode of relatedness is constituted by the meanings, rights, and obligations of membership in *publics*, as well as the forms of agency and modalities of participation implicated by such membership.[3] A practice-based anthropological concept of citizen identity captures the varying senses of social belonging and commitment, identification (Hall, 1996) or attachment, in relation to diverse publics. I view social identity as the way we position and re-position ourselves in relation to the "figured worlds" we both inherit and create through practice. According to my preferred formulation (Holland et al., 1998), a figured world is a "socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes

are valued over others" (p. 52). Now, some of these identities are more situational and ephemeral (a particular context that evokes the figured world), while others are more enduring across time and context (a figured world that covers more time and space, such as our sense of being a certain kind of professional, a particularly gendered father or spouse, or a member of a nation).

In the broadest anthropological sense, and to paraphrase Jean Lave (Lave, 2012), all education, no matter how technical, necessarily involves identity formation. Thus, the question for us here, I presume, is what forms of education best can constitute enduring democratic *citizen identities*.[4] The study of citizenship education for democracy is therefore the study of efforts by democratic (counter) publics to educate their members to imagine their social belonging and exercise their participation as democratic citizens. Of course, schools are one vital place for carrying forth such education, but we must always reckon with the full diversity of de facto modes of citizenship education beyond schools, and more intentionally connect the shaping of identity in schools with the shaping and expression of identity in and for diverse democratic publics beyond school? Then, how do we also educate pluralistically in recognition of the many different modes of **being** in polities, and on a planet, that continues to suffer from an addiction to homogenizing citizenship (which makes many forms of citizenship invisible or unrecognizable) and monocultural economic imaginations (such as unregulated extractive and carbon capitalism), in what some are calling a potentially cataclysmic Anthropocene? Ultimately, how can we reimagine citizenship education for social justice and democracy in a way that expands both terms beyond a strictly human community?

One of the primary challenges of contemporary school-based civic education, of course, is the full recognition of and respect for the manifold sociocultural diversity within any given polity. Among others, Walter Parker (Parker, 2003) has written quite eloquently about the ethically imperative link between democratic citizenship and the recognition of diversity. Like in so many other national contexts, formal programs for Mexican citizenship education have slowly shifted from an emphasis on national identity and solidarity through assimilation, to a multicultural emphasis on forms of democratic membership and participation.[5] Yet such advances in educational policy and curricula are limited and sometimes contradictory: they still remain firmly within a neoliberal framework of recognition without redistribution (Fraser, 1997), thus negating fuller forms of structural inclusion; and even then, they fail to adequately recognize the full range of diversity in Mexico. [6]

Still, within the limitations of these not fully recognized identities and rights, Mexico has attempted to implement robust programs for citizenship education in its secondary schools, called *secundarias*.[7] Here it's important to note key historical and structural elements of the Mexican school system. Created after the Revolution in 1921, the modern school system largely followed the French example in concentrating administrative and curricular power at the federal level. Despite important decentralization reforms in 1992, most matters of curriculum and reform remain centrally controlled by the largest of Mexican bureaucracies, the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP). The *secundaria* was born in those early years of the SEP, in 1923, and it has always covered the three years following the 6 years of primary school. Since 1992, it has been considered the final cycle of "basic" compulsory education. In more recent years, reforms of the *secundaria* have tried to encourage more constructivist, student-centered pedagogies to challenge the older "encyclopedic" instruction of the past. Above all, *secundaria* teachers are exhorted to teach the "whole student," starting from their interests and concerns, rather than emphasizing the content of their particular school subject of their expertise. Yet

the yawning gap between ambitious national reforms and local school practices typically reveals deep contradictions between reform intentions and outcomes.

Since 1999, the school subject called "Civic and Ethical Education" (FCE for its Spanish acronym) has been a mainstay of the lower secondary curriculum (Grades 7-9). In addition to the stipulated lessons and contents in the program of study, from the very beginning teachers were encouraged to incorporate so-called "transversal" (cross-curricular) themes, which included environmental education, intercultural education, and education about gender roles and equity. Then, with the broader reform of the *secundaria* in 2006, these themes, now including "values" education, were supposed to cut across virtually all school subjects and activities. With its new emphasis conjoint lesson planning (*trabajo colegiado*) across subject areas, the 2006 reform intended for these themes to be introduced through concrete inquiry projects and school-wide activities. However, as Levinson's 2007-08 fieldwork revealed, the growing importance of standardized subject testing at the same time, together with the fragmentation of teacher's contracts and schedules and the aforementioned structural obstacles in Mexican schooling (Levinson and Casas, 2009; Levinson et al., 2013), virtually assured that few schools were attending to such themes in practice.[8]

Bridging the Schoolhouse Wall

This leads us to a related theme: as we reimagine diverse citizenship identities for democracy, we must also face what I call the "dilemma of the schoolhouse wall." The growth of the modern school went hand in hand with the professionalization of teaching, the institutionalization of bureaucracy, and the rationalization of this decontextualized form of learning as most effective and efficient. Indeed, it is difficult to argue against schooling—the structuring of our social and economic lives now virtually require it, and there are many good arguments for the superiority of school-based learning over proposals to "deschool society" (Illich, 1970) into forms of apprenticeship and nodes of experiential learning. And aside from arguments about efficiency and quality control, there is also a deeply important role for schooling as a public space of diversity for beginning to practice democratic life. Reently, the concept of "communities of practice," first introduced by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and then expanded in Wenger's book of the same title (Wenger, 1998), has been seized upon and combined with a Deweyan logic to shape democratic citizenship identities. This is an attractive move, since Lave and Wenger are quite persuasive in demonstrating that the most meaningful and effective learning, and the most enduring formation of identity, occurs in and through communities of practice. Yet as we point out in an earlier work (Levinson and Brantmeier, 2006), the attempt to build "communities of practice" entirely within the school is virtually a contradiction in terms, since Lave and Wenger posit a deep critique of school knowledge as inherently decontextualized. The proverbial schoolhouse wall keeps any attempt to create a community of practice from being **authentically** engaged with the extramural contexts—the ongoing, enduring communities of practice—in which knowledge and identity should be formed.

Fortunately, we are witness to growing efforts to build bridges over the schoolhouse wall. One of these forms has to do with connecting students' learning in school with the work of both government agencies and non-governmental organizations beyond the school. By creating inquiry projects and enjoining students thereby to engage in the public sphere outside the school, teachers can foster their "legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave and Wenger, 1991) in democratic communities of practice outside the school. However, here, too, we face structural barriers and challenges. In Mexico, for instance, the original FCE program launched in 1999 required a substantial inquiry project during

students' final semester of secundaria (9th grade). The project enjoined teachers to form students into coordinated working groups that would identify social problems, gather and circulate information, and then propose solutions. During this period, teachers would often enough limit the project to school-based issues and problems. But some teachers did partner with local NGOs to carry out the research and diffuse the results, while others encouraged their students to study local problems outside the school and bring their findings to local municipal authorities. Some even encouraged students to join such organizations as a way of providing continuity in their citizenship education as they moved on to high school. However, the success of this curricular innovation should not be overstated. Tellingly, by the time of the 2006 secundaria reform, this final semester project had been removed from the curriculum altogether, and largely at the urging of FCE teachers themselves, who found themselves either too poorly trained or too poorly connected to make the projects work effectively. In my 2008 research, I could hardly find any FCE teachers who were still trying to pursue this kind of "authentic" civic engagement from within the school—it involved swimming against too strong a current. And a recent study only confirms the trend I had perceived in 2008—that Mexican teachers are failing to encourage a more participatory approach to citizenship education(Pérez-Expósito, 2015).Metaphorically speaking, the schoolhouse wall has reasserted itself.

Of course, the growth of digital applications and social media obviously constitute another important source of reaching over the schoolhouse wall. Studies conducted largely in the U.S. have shown the tremendous potential of such media for connecting school-based civic education with powerful publics and social movements beyond school (Kahne et al., 2016; Ito et al., 2015). Kahne and his colleagues argue that the use of social media are particularly effective for joining students to new forms of "participatory politics," which they contrast with the "institutional politics" emphasized by traditional civic education. Movements such as "Black Lives Matter" and the "The Dreamers" are currently among the most popular in the U.S., especially amongst students of color. Social media connections often lead to a growing sense of membership in these movements amongst school-based youth, and authentic collaboration on projects that lead to street protest or other forms of political participation. Though the jury is still out on whether this kind of participatory politics leads to interest and engagement in institutional politics, especially after youth reach voting age, there is growing evidence that strong social identities are being created in the figured world of civic action and protest.

In Mexico, high school youth have participated in comparable movements such as #YoSoy132 (a protest against the Mexican media monopoly and its tendentious role in electoral politics) and the Ayotzinapa movement (to pressure for government accountability and legitimacy in the apparent political murder of 43 normal school students in the state of Guerrero), but there is little evidence about formal or sustained collaborations between high school teachers and these broader organizations and movements, not to mention with more established NGOs. It is also important to recognize that in more resource-constrained contexts like Mexico, schools may be poorly equipped to support such collaboration. While it's true that cell phones or tablets might be minimally necessary to create and sustain such collaboration, other web-based platforms, smart boards, or video-conferencing projection used in rich countries like the U.S. may not be available.

Finally, we must remember that the "schoolhouse wall" carries a good deal of ideological baggage as well. It is not only policies and organizational structures and technological constraints that inhibit the formation of bridges across the wall. Many teachers and other school authorities simply view

school knowledge as superior to knowledge that issues from beyond the school. In Mexico, one often hears teachers suggest that school knowledge is embattled by the negative forces of the media, or peer culture, or the "uneducated" family. The school is conceived variously as a safe haven, a correctional institute, or a seedbed of knowledge that is threatened by outside forces. One civics teacher, for instance, waxed enthusiastic about the competencies and knowledge that the new FCE subject was fomenting in his students, but he worried about influences outside the school. As he put it, quite evocatively, "It's like throwing a seed out into the middle of the desert" (*Es como echar una semilla al puro desierto*).[9]

From Diversity to Radical Pluralism: The Next Frontier of Citizenship?

As I've sketched out here, educators already face enormous challenges in using schools to develop citizenship identities for democratic life in a diverse human society. Efforts to face such challenges are worthy of study and support, yet they still don't go far enough. Rather, we badly need a deeper engagement between the field of citizenship and the fields of environmental, ecological, and/or sustainability education. Such a call for engagement has been made before, to be sure (Houser, 2009). But it seems to me that it is precisely in and through the concept of pluralism that we can perhaps best understand how to foster new figured worlds for new, even more inclusive citizenship identities. Of course, many approaches to "global citizenship education" attempt something similar, but a radically pluralistic approach to life on planet Earth goes well beyond the human realm; indeed, it goes beyond the realm of life itself.

I have already addressed the crucial importance of a pluralism that attends to the existential conditions of differently cultured and socially positioned fellow-citizens. In Teaching Democracy, Walter Parker cites Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous quote about the "inescapable network of mutuality" to justify an approach that recognizes our responsibility to one another amidst and across deep differences (p. 11). Yet this very same phrasing could be applied to the network of relations between the human and nonhuman world. Indeed, given the current state of our earthly habitat, there can be no greater sense of urgency than to incorporate into citizenship education such an expanded conception of pluralism. Citizenship **must** incorporate an understanding of self well beyond the human dimension, and this cannot be shunted off into environmental education or related fields. I think of this as the final frontier of citizenship (though I reserve the right to shift that frontier to outer space if and when sentient life is discovered there!).

One of the premier political theorists of pluralism of our times, William Connolly (Connolly, 2017), calls attention to the hubris of "human exceptionalism" that characterizes dominant Northern philosophy and religion, and argues for a pluralism that grants agency to the non-human and even inanimate realm. Drawing on Bruno Latour's Actor Network Theory, and especially Jane Bennett's account of "vibrant matter" (Bennett, 2010), Connolly argues for ever-expanding dimensions of pluralistic recognition. Transposed to my language here, any citizenship education worth its salt must help shape identities for a public that recognizes the figured world of nature and agentic matter that acts back upon human affairs in complex and unpredictable ways.

Practically speaking, there is a need to push for greater collaboration across the traditional school disciplines of science and social studies. But more broadly, we ought to follow the example of

recent and powerful interdisciplinary work that challenges us to learn the" arts of living on a damaged planet" before it becomes too late(Tsing et al., 2017). Such work forces us to reckon with the ways that unfettered capitalism as a driving economic force has not only created enormous inequalities but also made life on Earth increasingly unsustainable. Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (Tsing, 2017) shows us through the example of her work on the global and ecological interconnectedness of the matsutake mushroom how we can cultivate "arts of noticing" amongst our students, thereby bringing the non-human world into the purview of our embrace of "diversity." Turning our arts of noticing to the non-human world also has the salutary effect of de-centering hegemonic forms of Western science, which often presume to be the only game in town. Tsing shows how different national and ecological contexts (U.S., Japan, China, and Finland) produce very different ways of knowing and conducting the science of matsutake mushrooms; she thereby demonstrates and embraces epistemological as well as ontological pluralism.

I would also call attention to the ways that the Global South, in particular Latin America, can and does provide us with a diversity of modes of ecological thinking vitally pertinent to the present moment. Enrique Leff (Leff, 2012), among others, provides us with an account of distinctly Latin American lineages of environmental thought, some of them issuing from indigenous cosmovision and practice, others from struggle against the imposed coloniality of Western and Northern logocentrism. As Sousa Santos argues (Sousa Santos, 2018), an "epistemology of the South" provides a vital counterpoint to the universalizing and hegemonic pretensions of Northern scientific rationality. Sousa Santos presents active methods of "intercultural translation" to achieve life-affirming "ecologies of knowledges." As he emphasizes, it's not a matter of favoring or romanticizing indigenous knowledge over the insights of (diverse) Northern science. Rather, it's a matter of incorporating forms of identity and figured worlds from the Global South which already do a better job of recognizing the interconnectedness of humanity and non-humanity. For instance, the acknowledgement of *pacha mama* ("Mother Earth") in the Quechua-speaking Andean world results in a corresponding educational-spiritual practice of mutual relatedness and responsibility. It is not too far a leap from these seemingly distant lifeworlds to practicing, as Jane Bennett does (Bennett, 2001), the "enchantment of modern life" in Northern polities and publics, too.

So to sum up: As scholars, theoretically, we need to work with concepts of education and identity that are sufficiently attuned to the multiplicity of self-imaginings that obtain in everyday social life and to the identities that pertain to living in various publics/figured worlds that necessarily include broader animate and inanimate realms; strategically, we need to continue to bridge the schoolhouse walls that we've built up over generations of formal educational development, and reimagine the relationships between school-based citizenship education and the various modalities of such education outside the school; and normatively, as scholar-activist-educators, we need to advocate for an expanded conception of plurality that incorporates: a) non-hegemonic forms of knowledge production and science from the Global South; b) the non-human world and, c) non-capitalist (not necessarily anti-capitalist!) forms of economic production and exchange.

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Tsing AL. (2017) *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins,* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Tsing AL, Bubandt N, Gan E, et al. (2017) Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Vavrus F and Bartlett L. (2012) Comparative Pedagogies and Epistemological Diversity: Social and Material Contexts of Teaching in Tanzania. *Comparative Education Review* 56: 634-658.

Wenger E. (1998) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity,* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Youniss J, McLellan, J.A., and Yates, M. (1997) What we know about engendering civic identity. *American Behavioral Scientist* 40: 620-631.

Notes

[1] Research on youth citizenship identity and education in Mexico has tended to pursue similar questions using similar methods. Some have used survey designs to assess secondary students' civic knowledge and attitudes Tirado Segura F and Guevara Niebla G. (2006) Conocimientos cívicos en México: Un estudio comparativo internacional. *Revista Mexicana de Investigacion Educativa* 11: 995-1018, Alonso J. (1994) *Cultura politica y educación cívica,* Mexico: Porrua., while others have used qualitative methods to explore contradictions between the explicit principles of Mexico's new school-based civic education programs and teachers' actual classroom practices Araújo-Olivera SS, Yurén Camarena MT, Estrada Ruíz MJ, et al. (2005) Respeto, democracia y política, negociación del consenso: El caso de la formación cívica y ética en las escuelas de Morelos. *Revista Mexicana de Investigacion Educativa* 10: 15-42, Elizondo Huerta A. (2000) El discurso cívico en la escuela. *Perfiles Educativos* 22: 115-129, Elizondo Huerta A, Christiansen AS and Ruíz Avila D. (2009) Democracia y ética en la escuela secundaria: Estudio de caso [Democracy and ethics in the secundaria: A case study]. *Revista Mexicana de Investigacion Educativa* 14: 243-260, Molina García A. (2011) *Prácticas y espacios para la formación ciudadana: Una revisión desde el programa de Formación Cívica y Etica en educación secundaria,* Pachuca, Hidalgo, Mexico: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo/CONACYT, Landeros LG. (2005) Trayectorias y concepciones educativas de los profesores de formacion civica y etica de la secundaria. *Departamento de Investigaciones Educativas.* Mexico City: CINVESTAV-IPN.. Among the more innovative studies are those that have attempted to compare students' learning in schools with their civic learning and communication in social movements, such as struggles to preserve the environment Tapia Uribe M. (2007) Construcción social y ciudadana del desarrollo sustentable en México. *Revista Interamericana de Educacion para la Democracia* 1: 59-83., or efforts at community organization Fernández Alatorre AC. (2013) Nuevas ciudadanías: Procesos identitarios de los jóvenes involucrados en la acción social. Ibid.4: 53-69..

[2] I would draw your attention to an observed disjuncture between practitioner and academic discourse: practitioners and policymakers tend to refer to the shaping of civic competencies, skills, habits, and behaviors; meanwhile, scholars tend to refer increasingly to the creation of civic or citizenship practices and **identities**. I can only speculate about the reasons for this apparent disjuncture, but it would seem to be related to the rather capacious definitions of identity that we as social scientists entertain. School contexts tend to impose rather more static and homogenized conceptions of learning outcomes; no matter how flexible or "student-centered," for pragmatic reasons schools must specify identifiable outcomes in terms of "competencies" or behaviors. Social scientists, on the other hand, are all too aware of the multiplicity of identity and culture. Those of us who study education, both in and out of schools, strive to articulate the conditions for school practice that could accommodate such multiplicity. And I take it for granted that those of us who study identity are ultimately interested in behavior. In other words, identities are the commitments and imaginings of the self that ultimately encourage (drive?) our behavior. If we want active, critical, mutually engaged and loving citizenship behavior, then we want to help shape and form the identities that will facilitate it.

[3] Traditionally, citizenship has been defined in terms of the rights and obligations of membership in a political community. However, when political communities are defined strictly in terms of legal status (e.g.,. who has a right to vote, who has access to the means of public speech), they often exclude many groups from the corresponding public sphere. Thus, following Nancy Fraser (1997), I define publics as those diverse social spaces, beyond close kin

and consociates but not fully encompassed by the state, in which people reason together to define and attain a common good.

[4] I retain the plural emphasis here on identities in recognition of the fact that while we ought to strive toward common elements of a democratic civic identity in an inclusive public sphere, we must also recognize the multiplicity of ways of being democratic, and the counter-publics that are likely to always be generated by ongoing processes of exclusion from a common public sphere.

[5] In Mexico and Latin America, the term intercultural is preferred (Dietz G and Mateos Cortés LS. (2011) *Interculturalidad y educación intercultural en México: Un análisis de los discursos nacionales e internacionales en su impacto en los modelos educativos mexicanos [Interculturality and Intercultural Education in Mexico: An Analysis of National and International Discourses and their Impact on Mexican Educational Models],* Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública.) To be sure, Mexico has a long way to go in fully recognizing and empowering its **indigenous** population with the rights of full pluricultural citizenship. Yet insofar as ethnocultural identification and membership has figured into the dynamics of modern Mexican citizenship, it has always been conceived in terms of the relationship between the mainstream (mestizo) population and the indigenous. Little attention has been paid to the full racial-ethnic and religious diversity of Mexico's citizenry, including African heritage populations, immigrants from Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, migrants and exiles from Central and South America, and return migrants from the United States. These are the forms of ethnocultural identity and membership that remain relatively invisible in Mexico, overshadowed by "the indigenous question," and thus barely registering on the radar of most citizenship education programs Levinson BA and Luna ME. (2017) Stealth Diversity and the Indigenous Question: The Challenges of Citizenship in Mexican Civic Education. In: Banks JA (ed) *Citizenship Education and Global Migration: Implications for Theory, Research, and Teaching.* Washington, D.C.: AERA, 403-430.

[6] On the one hand, one could say that state-sanctioned assimilation has been effectively abolished. Yet as Charlie Hale Hale CR. (2006) *Mas que un indio: Racial ambivalence and the paradox of neoliberal milticulturalism in Guatemala,* Santa Fe,NM: School of American Research Press. has noted for the case of Guatemala, as well as Guillermo de la Peña and others for Mexico De la Peña G. (2006) A new Mexican nationalism? Indigenous rights, constitutional reform and the conflicting meanings of multiculturalism. *Nations and Nationalism* 12: 279-302., these recent legal changes, while strong on recognition of indigenous rights to govern their own affairs, comport perfectly with neoliberal governments' desires to limit land claims and other material forms of redistribution, as well as more robust claims for social services as citizens of the nation and state. For this reason, Hale calls this new wave of Latin American legal reform a "multiculturalism that menaces" Hale CR. (2002) Does multiculturalism menace?: Governance, cultural rights and the politics of identity in Guatemala. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34: 485-524.. It is a recognition-based multiculturalism that grants limited forms of autonomy and educational-linguistic provision while still preserving indigenous peoples' subordinate status as national political subjects. The structural inequalities rooted in colonialism persist to the present day, and very few indigenous groups have achieved meaningful land reform or sustained economic development.

[7] Diversity and interculturality are referenced as one of 10 major "characteristics" of the 2006 reform, with the exhortation that "each school subject…incorporate themes, contents, or particular aspects related to the cultural and linguistic diversity" of Mexico (SEP, 2006, p. 30). Teachers of different subjects are told to encourage their students to "understand that human groups form parts of different cultures, with their own languages, customs, beliefs, and traditions," and to "recognize plurality as a characteristic of their country and of the world, and that the school becomes a space where such diversity can be valued and appreciated as an aspect of everyday life. Interculturality is a proposal to improve communication and sociality between communities with different cultures, always beginning with mutual respect." In addition to this mention of diversity, in the 2006 version of the FCE subject, one of the 8 key "competencies" spelled out for the secundaria is that of "respecting and valuing diversity."

[8] The literature in our field confirms time and time again that proposed pedagogical and curricular innovations for shaping more robust civic identities in schools often face severe, even insurmountable, challenges for successful and sustainable implementation. Despite the noble efforts of the IEA and its ICCS work, the global growth of

standardized assessments that focus on literacy, math, and science have tended to crowd out the citizenship agenda in most schools. As well, schools and teachers typically are far more enmeshed in their own professional prerogatives or structures of accountability than in the lives of their surrounding communities to deeply engage students in the work of citizenship. The question is how we can help to create the conditions in schools for ever-growing numbers of teachers to undertake this kind of work—and not only in the social studies classroom, but across the school. This is a larger structural question that involves struggle over education policy in regional and national contexts.

[9] Moreover, we can't forget the ideology of adolescence that accompanies secondary schooling in Mexico and elsewhere Levinson BA. (1999) "Una etapa siempre dificil": Concepts of adolescence and secondary education in Mexico. *Comparative Education Review* 43: 129-161, Levinson BAU. (2002) Valores y cultura estudiantil en la secundaria mexicana. In: Ornelas C (ed) *Valores, Calidad, y Educación: Memoria del Primer Encuentro Internacional de Educación.* Mexico City: Santillana, 173-204.. Developmentally, students are often conceived as incomplete beings, perhaps even incapable of meaningful civic participation. Such thinking is also part of the legacy of the schoolhouse wall.