

Education for Cultural Continuity and Change

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Draft

As the twenty-first century opens, it has become abundantly clear that efforts to improve education cannot ignore culture. The very process of education is one in which cultural knowledge is constantly transmitted, acquired, and produced. Cultural beliefs and values shape what occurs within formal education systems. Economic and political changes are often expressed in cultural terms, and through value conflicts about what should be taught in schools. Meanwhile, culture also works as a force to reshape the environment and therefore influences economic and political systems. Anthropological perspectives on cultural continuity and change can thus make critical contributions to more informed and enlightened educational policies and practices in the new millennium.

Culture has been defined in a number of ways. In everyday use, culture often refers to the beliefs, values, and meanings that bind a group of people together. In other times and places, culture has referred to a group's entire "way of life," including patterns of behavior and uses of material artifacts. Here we will place emphasis on culture as shared symbol systems, along with the cognitive models in the mind that make such symbol systems meaningful and intelligible. In short, culture refers to the symbolic meanings by which the members of a society communicate with and understand themselves, each other, and the world around them.

Human beings are above all great symbol makers and manipulators. Unlike most other animals, our instinctual repertoire is quite limited. The knowledge to survive that most other animals have genetically hard-wired we must acquire through learning. We

are probably the only species to regularly use symbols in this learning process, and to systematically transmit the rules of symbol use to succeeding generations. We certainly seem to be the only species to engage in the self-reflexive manipulation of symbols—what we might call metacognition. In each culture, in each individual, we seemingly recreate the entire evolutionary process through which human beings learned to create, communicate, interpret, and use symbols. In fact, this is a workable definition of education. At heart, education is the transmission and acquisition of symbolic knowledge for understanding, controlling, and transforming the world.

Of course, education is much broader than schooling, which is an institution of more recent historical invention. Until the development of agriculture and the rise of city-states some 10,000 years ago, tribal societies likely educated their young through complex and deliberate practices, but not in separate institutions like those we call schools. Rather, education was probably a seamless part of everyday life, and took place through the productive and ritual activities characterizing a society's way of life. A school, on the other hand, is typically an age-graded, hierarchical setting where, as Judith Friedman Hansen puts it, "learners learn vicariously, in roles and environments defined as distinct from those in which the learning will eventually be applied." Only since the beginnings of the modern period some two hundred years ago—a period characterized by the rise of capitalism, large-scale urbanization, the consolidation of the nation-state, and the ubiquity of the printing press—have mass school systems been created and much of human learning been confined to schools. Especially since the Second World War, schools have become the dominant format for learning in most areas of the world. Still, schools are no less influenced by culture than are other, informal means of education.

Given the centrality of culture to human life, we might go so far as to call human beings the “symbolizing animal.” As animals, we share an important biological legacy and an equally important ecological fate with the rest of the organic world. The anatomical and neurological design of our bodies—evolved through millions of years of a highly successful adaptation to multiple environments—provides the most basic parameters for how we can and ought to be educated. Yet along with our biology, we evolved a deep dependence on the communicative role of symbols. Clever but physically defenseless, proto-humans and early homo sapiens required complex forms of social coordination, communication, and tool use to survive. Primitive forms of language and culture thus undoubtedly emerged as distinctive adaptive traits of early human social cooperation. Over time, the very structure of the human brain co-evolved with this unique sociocultural adaptation—this way of thinking and talking that relies on creating and manipulating symbols to interpret the world.

In the broadest sense, then, education underwrites every human group’s ability to adapt to its environment and thereby reproduce the conditions of its existence. It is, in this sense, a fundamentally conservative social process. As Jules Henry puts it, if education can “free” our minds, it rather more often “fetters” them. Yet amidst this group imperative, individuals may also develop their own educational repertoires from the cultural resources at their disposal. Through their creative agency, both constrained and enabled by culture, individuals may alter the pattern by which social groups reproduce themselves. The dialectic of continuity and change often constitutes a balancing act between group concerns and individual interests.

From an anthropological perspective, then, the educational process fundamentally oscillates between an emphasis on continuity and an emphasis on change. This is because the challenges of evolution, broadly speaking, require a social group to adapt to novel circumstances through innovation, and then consolidate and perpetuate this adaptation through repeated inculcation. Through the use of culture, human groups have wrested a living from the environment and assured themselves biological and social continuity.

Finally, we must also be cautious about how we conceive of the “group” that educates. As human societies have grown more differentiated, biological and cultural adaptation to the physical environment has become more highly mediated by complex traditions and institutions. Intensive agriculture, urbanization, and industrialization have led to occupational and class stratification, as well as large-scale political formations, such as empires or nation-states. The concerns of the “nation-state” as a large-scale human group, for instance, must not be confused with the concerns of those groups that constitute any given nation-state. While some educational systems and processes may seem “adaptive” for the nation-state as a whole, they may be highly maladaptive for particular groups, such as the Amish farmers of the United States or the Quechua Indians of Peru. Moreover, certain kinds of educational processes, such as the teaching of an ethic of competitive individualism, may be adaptive in relation to the economic foundations of a capitalist nation, but not in relation to a self-sufficient village or, ultimately, in relation to the Earth’s biosphere. All of this is why we cannot view education as simply “functioning” to benefit all individuals and groups in a given society. Education can just as likely serve as the vehicle of domination of one group over another as it pursues its own interests.

The nature of culture and the conceptualization of education

As we have seen, the educational process cannot be separated from the broader human process of cultural adaptation. What then, is culture, and what are the social science concepts that best describe the way culture is created and recreated in the educational process?

From their very origins as disciplines in the 1800s, anthropologists and sociologists wondered how human societies could reproduce themselves from one generation to the next without falling into disarray. What allowed a society to adapt to its environment while retaining some historical cohesion and continuity? How did a society conserve essential features of its cultural and technological repertoire? Social science theories of education largely sought to address these questions through an analysis of the process of **cultural transmission**—the passing on of basic cultural knowledge and values across the generations.

Working in small, face-to-face societies, anthropologists examined informal teaching, often conducted through simple mechanisms of imitation or rote memorization. They also emphasized the educative role of ritual for binding members of a society to a common cultural vision. Sociologists, on the other hand, tended to examine the emerging industrial, urbanized, and highly stratified societies of the nineteenth century. The rise of industrial capitalism and the consolidation of the nation-state as the most widely accepted political framework went hand in hand with the development of modern school systems. In the characteristic view of the great French sociologist Emile Durkheim, such school

systems functioned to produce the kinds of persons deemed necessary by the predominant institutions in society. Above all, in a highly differentiated, stratified society, Durkheim thought that schools ought to create a “degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child, from the beginning, the essential similarities that collective life demands.”

Meanwhile, even within the emerging sociological tradition, scholars like Karl Marx, and later the German sociologist Max Weber, drew attention to the potentially pernicious effects of such homogenizing education systems. Though they rarely criticized formal schooling, these scholars provided the conceptual foundation for analyzing education as a modern tool of social domination. In Durkheim’s view, a complex division of labor presided over by a political elite was a precondition of social integration under modern capitalism, and an education system designed to secure consent for such an arrangement was highly desirable. In this formula, society would function smoothly, and all parties would win. Marx and Weber, on the other hand, inaugurated the “conflict” perspective in sociology, which has viewed the goal of consent through schooling as an apology for a highly exploitative social system. In this perspective, homogenization only serves the ruling classes and enables domination to persist.

After many years of focus on processes of cultural transmission and the achievement of cultural continuity, anthropologists and sociologists began to examine more closely how education contributed to change. If cultural transmission occurred smoothly, how did societies challenge their own inertia? If education mainly served to mold the young into the cultural patterns of a society, how did innovation ever occur? From cultural transmission, and the role of “teachers,” attention turned to **cultural**

acquisition, and the role of the learner. How did relatively novice individuals acquire the basic cultural knowledge of a society, and what distinctive interests and traits might they bring to the learning process? This question spawned a tremendously fruitful collaboration between anthropology and psychology, giving rise to the new field of “cross-cultural psychology.” The work of the Soviet psychologist L.S. Vygotsky, with its emphasis on the role of symbolic “tools of mediation” in the relation between individual and society, has become central to this field. Cross-cultural psychology has been especially adept at showing how peer group socialization and good teaching can use such tools of mediation in moving students to higher and more complex forms of cognition. More recently, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger have proposed a powerful theory of “situated learning,” in which society is fundamentally composed of overlapping “communities of practice” that serve as the vehicles for cultural acquisition. Such an account places identity at the heart of cultural learning. As one moves from “legitimate peripheral participation” (Lave and Wenger) to a more central, expert role in a community of practice, one increasingly develops identities of mastery and their corresponding emotional investments.

An important overarching concept that has emerged to encompass the processes of cultural transmission and acquisition is that of **cultural production**. Education may be seen as a constant process of cultural production. Even if education is oriented primarily to the achievement of continuity, in a relatively closed system, the theoretical possibility of modification and change always exists. In the process of acquiring transmitted cultural knowledge, individuals or subcultures can modify or extend the knowledge, in effect organizing the knowledge for themselves while producing and adding new knowledge to

the common stock. For example, as a carpenter teaches an apprentice the techniques of stair laying, as well as the cultural value of precision, the apprentice may discover a new cut that saves time without sacrificing much precision. The communication of this discovery becomes an act of cultural production. Over time, the change may be adopted by most carpenters, or it may be deemed by some too sloppy a compromise. As Judith Friedman Hansen summarizes, “the transmission of knowledge is subject both to conservative forces and to tendencies toward continual redefinition.”

A final set of terms helps us to further conceptualize the role of education in cultural continuity and change. **Enculturation** refers to the basic process of cultural transmission by which individuals come to acquire the basic meanings and understandings of their primary culture, usually the local community or kin group (cf. the sociological term, “socialization”). Often this primary enculturation is then supplemented or replaced by incorporation into non-local, in many cases, foreign cultural systems. The term **acculturation** refers to a kind of one-way supplanting of one set of cultural values and orientations for another. It is a phenomenon that occurs most strongly under situations of classical colonialism or internal colonialism, as in the case of American Indians sent to boarding schools to be shaped “in the White man’s image.” Yet in a deeper sense, most children undergo some form of acculturation every year, when they make the transition from the familiar environment of their homes and communities to the relatively alien context of the school. Finally, with increasing contact between different societies and cultures, and increasing recognition of the value of cultural diversity, elements of various belief systems may be incorporated into a kind of hybrid personal belief system. This phenomenon of **transculturation** has been receiving increased

attention, especially as globalization accelerates new flows of people and ideas, and as transnational migration makes new kinds of identities possible and desirable (see below).

The swinging pendulum of continuity and change: historical and contemporary examples

For hundreds of years, members of the modernizing West tended to view tribal societies as exemplars of the remote past. Using pejorative terms such as “primitive” or “savage,” we perceived tribal societies in a state of evolutionary stasis, a fixed repertoire of adaptive practices that had served them well for eons, but which now assured their doom under the crushing wave of modernization. Tribal education systems, we thought, emphasized continuity above all. Conversely, industrial societies were conceived in dynamic terms. We had evolved education systems oriented to change, to constant adaptive innovation.

Closer examination has revealed the bias of such views. Tribal societies have continued to adapt themselves to changing physical and social environments, and have proved remarkably resilient. Their educational practices, while typically embedded in everyday activities, nevertheless can show an openness to observation and insight characteristic of the best empirical science. Meanwhile, so-called industrial societies, while employing the more efficient and abstracted technique of mass schooling, can settle into their own stagnation. Modern schools have more often than not educated for a kind of stultifying obedience, and there is ample evidence that contemporary schools of the

nation-state may fail to prepare children adequately for a changing world. Thus, elements of continuity and change in varying degrees form a part of any educational endeavor. All societies undergo historical processes of continuity and change, and all societies engage in a kind of ongoing cultural debate about the proper uses of education. This is as true of large-scale polities like nation-states as it is of more circumscribed cultural groups, such as first generation Cambodians in the United States or the indigenous Ainu of Japan.

Indeed, in the Western experience perhaps nothing better illustrates the tension between continuity and change than the debates between the Churchmen and the Enlightenment thinkers of 17th-18th century Europe. The Christian legacy in Europe insisted that knowledge could only be divinely revealed, and human affairs divinely regulated. Both formal and nonformal means of education tended to perpetuate such a conservative view. Yet Voltaire, David Hume, and other Enlightenment thinkers sought to place the pursuit of knowledge squarely in the human realm. Arguing that only through a rational, empirical apprehension of the world could social progress occur, Enlightenment philosophers provided the conceptual foundations for a dynamic humanistic science. Yet even today, religious inculcation and divine revelation sit side-by-side with public school systems that may instill a strong dose of skepticism and scientific method. Such seemingly contradictory orientations can coexist because in their everyday lives people use the symbolic tools closest at hand to make sense of their world and make peace with it.

If we look to the Mesoamerican world of present-day Mexico and Central America, we find other rich examples. Both the Mayan and the Aztec civilizations, at their height of development around 900 A.D. and 1500 A.D., respectively, developed

elaborate educational practices to facilitate cultural adaptation and sustain cohesive worldviews. Both were deeply religious societies that sought to use strong educational means to situate everyday activities within a cosmic order. The Aztecs developed one of the first compulsory schools, called the *cuicacalli*, in which all children from the ages of twelve to fifteen would learn sacred songs and chants, and gain knowledge of the ritual cycle. Meanwhile, specialized schools existed for the training of both warriors and religious priests. Aztec education emphasized the memorization and transmission of vital aspects of group knowledge. We know less about the earlier Mayan civilization, but we can infer a strong emphasis on social conformity and what today might be called “character education.” While the Mayan and Aztec systems would both seem overwhelmingly oriented toward continuity and preservation, each in its own way also facilitated experimentation and change. The Maya, for instance, would never have been able to develop their impressive knowledge of astronomy and mathematics had their educational processes not fostered, to some degree, a spirit of empirical inquiry.

The founders of the United States of America faced an educational dilemma which also throws the perennial balance between continuity and change into relief. Basic education was a family or community responsibility during the American colonial period, and most children only learned the rudiments of reading and writing, with a strong application to Bible study and religious inculcation. Only a very select few, especially from the cities, continued on to more formal education for the professions or the ministry. Education was thus generally an affair of continuity. After the Independence struggle of the late 1700s, important statesmen like Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Rush advocated the development of a strong national education system. They argued for an education that

would develop basic skills and, most importantly, consolidate the gains of a growing democracy. In Rush's mind, local allegiances and prejudices might compromise the integrity of the Republic, so he argued for a strong brand of patriotic learning. Jefferson, meanwhile, placed the emphasis on literacy and history, hoping that schools might equip citizens of the new democracy with the tools to safeguard liberty against would-be tyrants. In both cases, the goal of education was change—a change in orientation, or a change in the capacity for critical discernment. Partly because of popular reticence to embrace such lofty goals, neither Rush nor Jefferson's visions were ever fully realized. It would take another fifty years, and the growth of a common school movement under the leadership of Horace Mann, to lay the foundation for mass schooling in the United States. Even then, Horace Mann succeeded in large part because he wisely struck a balance between continuity and change. Common schools were meant to empower poor folk and provide them with the tools to change their lives, yet they were also conceived as places to create social harmony and thereby validate the status quo.

If we jump to the 20th century, we find another fascinating example in Mexico. On the heels of one of the century's great social revolutions, in 1921 the newly consolidating revolutionary government set about to design Mexico's first mass-based education system. Preserving many of the principles of the Liberal constitution and worldview (separation of church and state, combating "superstition"), post-revolutionary education in Mexico attempted to strike a proper balance between an emphasis on creating a dynamic scientific culture to drive national development, and an emphasis on creating national unity to preserve the social gains of the Revolution. Even across a succession of post-revolutionary governments, emphases varied. As the first Secretary of

the new national ministry of education, in the 1920s José Vasconcelos sought to build a new “cosmic race” of Mexicans through a critical, literary education. “Cultural Missions” also brought the latest knowledge to remote rural communities. Then there was a shift to the “socialist education” of President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), which highlighted class struggle and the need for a scientifically literate working class. After 1940, the pendulum swung back to a more conservative emphasis on national unity, a strong work ethic, and technical expertise. We could find similar examples in Russia after its 1917 Revolution, or in China after its 1949 Revolution. In each case, through a series of educational reforms, a communist regime struggled to transform a rural country into an industrial powerhouse and create ideological unity.

A more contemporary example of differing orientations would be the debate between education for mastering a common body of knowledge, a common culture, versus education for liberation and personal growth. E.D. Hirsch’s notion of “cultural literacy” has placed the highest value on building a common stock of historical and civic knowledge, even through means of rote memorization. On the other side, the radical Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, whose work has been influential in many parts of the world, developed an educational method to liberate socially oppressed peoples from the worldviews imposed upon them by powerful elites. In Freire’s terms, education must be for “critical consciousness,” for the ability to see one’s self as an active agent who can transform the world and thereby create new knowledge. Freire would reject Hirsch’s “cultural literacy” as one more guise of elite cultural imposition, through the means of what he sardonically called a “banking” approach to education.

Around the world, current educational problems and dilemmas testify to the ever-present tension between education for cultural continuity and change. In many areas of Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, for example, school attendance inspires children to question and challenge traditional social roles. Herding families in Africa, for instance, may want their sons to gain the skills of basic schooling in order to better defend their interests or bargain with traders, but they still expect the boys to assume the ritual responsibilities of adulthood and master the herding enterprise. Yet the boys learn about the wider world and often aspire to professional careers in the larger cities. Their individual mobility up the social ladder may be perceived as coming at the cost of solidarity with the kinship group or village. Likewise, girls may draw on images of “modern” careers, and cite the aspirations of their school peers, to press for permission to pursue advanced schooling instead of embracing the culturally traditional option of early childbearing and domestic proficiency. In places like contemporary Iran, for instance, if young women opt to veil themselves and accept single-sex education, they can still take advantage of the “paradox of tradition and modernity” (Golnar Mehran) in pursuing previously unavailable careers.

Too often, the paths of post-primary education and local community commitment are conceived as mutually exclusive options; by choosing one, students are closing off the other. Yet there is also evidence that young men and women are learning to negotiate these conflicting choices, and that new kinds of hybrid identities are making themselves available through a kind of pragmatic societal adaptation. In Mexican towns, young women are generally still expected to marry young, but they are also encouraged to pursue a professional degree. The professional degree may come to signify not complete

independence, as it does elsewhere, but rather the ability of women to “defend themselves” economically should their future husbands abandon them or fall on hard times. A similar phenomenon has been occurring in traditional Asian societies like Japan and Korea, where women now attend university in numbers comparable to men, but still may be vocationally prepared for traditional female careers, with the anticipation that they will leave the job market to become wives and mothers.

Meanwhile, for young members of tribal and indigenous communities, advanced schooling is no longer seen as the opportunity to leave their indigenous identities behind. Rather, new programs and discourses, such as those flourishing among the Purhépecha Indians of west-central Mexico, encourage young people to pursue advanced degrees in order to return to the community and serve its development with cultural pride. Similarly, schools have been developed among the K!ung San, or Ju/hoansi, of Botswana’s Kalahari Desert. Such schools may help integrate the tribal San into the modern Botswanan nation, but they also provide the San with critical skills to articulate their claims to indigenous rights and to effectively advocate for themselves vis-à-vis an encroaching political world.

The knowledge and credentials of schooling may indeed draw youth away from their cultures of origin and encourage their identification with other spheres of value, yet schooling can also foster unanticipated critical perspectives. While political elites of a modern nation may design a school system to effectively sort youth for a differentiated labor force, and to legitimate the status quo, schools are never seamlessly effective in socializing students to a dominant worldview. Along the way, students are likely to acquire concepts and skills that enable them to question the prevailing order. Such is certainly the case for the Chinese student democratic movement, which took great risks in

challenging socialist orthodoxy in Tiananmen Square. Less dramatically, the youth in Papua New Guinea studied by Peter Demerath show what often happens when the expectation of social mobility fostered by schools meets the absence of viable employment. Such contradiction can lead to widespread disaffection and protest, or, in the case of New Guinea, a revival of traditional values and economic activities that challenge the state's modernist agenda. Thus, schools may have as their intention the continuation of a regime or the stabilization of an economic system, but they also can plant the seeds of radical change.

Around the world, a burgeoning media culture oriented toward youth has unsettled traditional authority relations between the generations. Children and youth may learn through the media that their elders are old-fashioned, out of step with the latest values and trends. Electronic music may be valued over traditional strings and drums; computer programs may displace oral tradition. Such questioning of the older generations can extend to the authority of schoolteachers themselves, who may be seen to represent the old order. Yet ironically, school-based pedagogies and curricula can also drive a wedge between youth and their cultures of origin. Teachers often denigrate students' home languages and dialects as inferior, or they devalue the kinds of skills and values that students bring to school. For example, as the Ecuadorian state has built schools for the Huarani Indians of the Amazon River basin, teachers have attempted to "deskill" the Huarani of their environmental knowledge and obliterate the sense of equality that prevails between the generations (Laura Rival).

Since schools historically have been used to build national cultures and identities, the recent creation of the European Union poses interesting new challenges. For decades,

if not centuries, European schools have educated children for strong national identities. Now these same schools are being asked to create a pan-European identity. The rest of the world is looking to see how Europe will educate its young for continuity (strong national identity) and change (new European identity). Similarly, in South America schools are being used in attempts to overturn the historic dominance of Spanish over indigenous speakers. Once designed to assimilate indigenous peoples into a Hispanic culture, such schools now have the mission of providing bilingual education for a pluralist nation.

Finally, the intense growth of worldwide transnational migration over the course of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first has created ever more pointed dilemmas for the national orientation of most education systems. The process of migration has always created dramatic educational tensions. Wrenched suddenly from a familiar cultural world, refugees and immigrants must make their way in a foreign society. The new host society may ask immigrants to question, modify, or even discard existing identities and values. This often happens through a kind of strong assimilation, in which schools and other educational agencies are charged with teaching young immigrants to acculturate themselves to the new milieu. It may continue to occur even long after the initial migration and settlement. The Mexican-American scholar Angela Valenzuela, for instance, coined the term “subtractive schooling” to describe the way that a Texas high school worked to systematically deny the cultural heritage of its Mexican-origin students. Yet in the United States, historically third and fourth generation immigrants have attempted to reclaim the lost culture of their grandparents; after the strong assimilation of the first generations, there is a quest to preserve a hidden heritage. More recent changes

in transportation and communication technologies, along with the rise of new multicultural education policies, have provided the conditions for embracing multiple identities. No longer forced to choose between one identity or another, and often in much closer contact with their society of origin, transnational migrants may become “transcultured.” In other words, they may develop a sense of comfort “in between,” what some have called transnational or hybrid identities.

The growing strength of bilingual and multicultural education policies in the latter part of the twentieth century gives some hope that students’ cultural traditions will be respected and incorporated into school programs. In an increasingly interconnected world, global education is also crucial. Students can value their own traditions while building new intercultural competencies to adapt to a globally interdependent world. The anthropological perspectives outlined here, along with a sensitive awareness of the cultural basis of education, can lead to more enlightened educational policies and practices. Hopeful examples of multicultural and global education can be found, yet they must be more broadly diffused in order to enable individuals to cope with increased cultural complexity, and to fashion satisfying identities for a better future. Building a multicultural bridge to the future while preserving deep connections to identities of the past may be yet one more way schools attempt to balance the age-old tension between education for cultural continuity and change.

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Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750* (2001); and

Neil Postman, *Building a Bridge to the Eighteenth Century: How the Past Can Improve our Future* (1999).

For a solid, readable history of early U.S. education that explicates and situates the ideas of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush, and Horace Mann, see Wayne Urban and Jennings Wagoner, *American Education: A History*, 3rd ed., (2003).

On the shifts in 20th century Mexican education, see

Bradley A.U. Levinson, *We Are All Equal: Student Culture and Identity at a Mexican Secondary School* (2001); and

Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (1997).

E.D. Hirsch's original statement about the need for a common civic stock of knowledge, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (1987), was followed by *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, 3rd ed. (2002).

Paolo Freire's most well known and widely translated book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), is arguably surpassed in acuity and accessibility by his later *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1973).

Educational change.

Excellent books have been written about the educational implications of the transition from herding or agriculture to an industrial-based society, and then again from an industrial to an information-based society. Perhaps the best recent treatment of these issues is the book by Robert A. Levine and Merry I. White, *Human Conditions: The Cultural Basis of Educational Development* (1986).

Some scholars have placed heavy emphasis on the uniformity of schooling around the world, arguing that common school curricula and structures, issuing from Western models of nation building, displace local cultural understandings. See, for instance,

Bruce Fuller, *Growing-Up Modern: The Western State Builds Third World Schools* (1991); and

John Meyer et al., *School Knowledge for the Masses* (1992).

For a fascinating and telling response to this position, which places emphasis on the way that local societies mold schooling to their own ends, see

Kathryn Anderson-Levitt (ed.), *Local Meanings of Global Schooling* (2003); and

Maurice Bloch, "The uses of schooling and literacy in a Zafimaniry village," in Brian V. Street (ed.), *Cross-Cultural Approaches to Literacy*. (1993); and

Caroline Bledsoe, "The cultural transformation of Western education in Sierra Leone," in Bradley A.U. Levinson (ed.), *Schooling the Symbolic Animal* (2000).

For ethnographic descriptions of the often unexpected influences of schooling on traditional identity and the possibilities for social mobility, see

Alan Peshkin, *Kanuri Schoolchildren: Education and Social Mobilization in Nigeria* (1972); and

Robert Serpell, *The Significance of Schooling: Life-Journeys in an African Society* (1993); and

Amy Stambach, *Lessons from Mount Kilimanjaro: Schooling, Community, and Gender in East Africa* (2000); and

Laura Rival, "Formal schooling and the production of modern citizens in the Ecuadorian Amazon," in Bradley A. Levinson, Douglas Foley, and Dorothy Holland (eds.), *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person* (1996); and

Debra Skinner and Dorothy Holland, "Schools and the cultural production of the educated person in a Nepalese hill community," in Bradley A. Levinson, Douglas Foley, and Dorothy Holland (eds.), *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person* (1996); and

Peter Demerath, "The cultural production of educational utility in Pere Village, Papua New Guinea," *Comparative Education Review* 43(2):162-192 (May 1999); and

Peter Demerath, "Negotiating individualist and collectivist futures: Emerging subjectivities and social forms in Papua New Guinean High Schools," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 34(2):136-157 (2003); and

Deborah Reed-Danahay, *Education and Identity in Rural France: The Politics of Schooling* (1996).

For particular emphasis on the dilemmas and possibilities of transforming education for girls and women, see,

Margaret Sutton, "Girls' educational access and attainment," in Nelly P. Stromquist (ed.), *Women in the Third World* (1998); and

Golnar Mehran, "The Paradox of Tradition and Modernity in Female Education in the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Comparative Education Review* 47(3), 268-286. (2003); and

Sarah Levine, *Dolor y Alegría: Women and Social Change in Urban Mexico* (1993); and

Merry White, *The Material Child: Coming of Age in Japan and America* (1993); and

Lila Abu-Lughod, *Writing Women's Worlds: Bedouin Stories* (1993).

For a pointed statement about the challenges of creating a new supra-national identity, see Vaclav Havel, "About European identity," Speech made by the President of the Czech Republic to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on March 8th, 1994 <http://www.eurplace.org/diba/citta/havel.html> (February 3, 2004).

Nancy Hornberger usefully charts the challenges of employing schools to create new pluralistic identities in her article, "Bilingual education policy and practice in the Andes: Ideological paradox and intercultural possibility," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 31(2):173-201 (June 2000).

At the end of his widely used college text on the so-called "Kung San Bushmen" of the Kalahari Desert, Richard Lee describes recent educational developments: Richard B. Lee, *The Dobe Ju 'hoansi*, 3rd ed., (2002).

Regarding the educational possibilities and challenges entailed through the process of migration, see

Carola and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, *Children of Immigration* (2002); and

Carola and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, *Transformations: Migration, Family Life, and Achievement Motivation among Latino Adolescents* (1995); and

Louise Lamphere (ed.), *Structuring Diversity: Ethnographic Perspectives on the New Immigration* (1992); and

Charles Glenn, *Educating Immigrant Children* (1998); and

Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (1996); and

Alejandro Portes and Rubén G. Rumbaut, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* (2001).

Recent ethnographic works on transculturated youth, who develop complex, often hybrid identities, include

Kathleen Hall, *Lives in Translation: Sikh Youth as British Citizens* (2002); and

Daniel Yon, *Elusive Culture: Schooling, Race, and Identity in Global Times* (2000).

For examples of powerful work that shows how contemporary schools and after-school programs can both draw on and enhance cultural diversity, see

Olga Vásquez, *La Clase Mágica: Imagining Optimal Possibilities in a Bilingual Community of Learners* (2002); and

Ellen McIntyre, Ann S. Roseberry, and Norma González (eds.), *Classroom Diversity: Connecting Curriculum to Students' Lives* (2001); and

Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African-American Children* (1997).

Increasingly, scholars have called for the need to develop “global” and “intercultural” education to accompany “multicultural” programs that tend to place most emphasis on distinct ethnic minorities. See, for instance

Merry Merryfield, *Preparing Teachers to Teach Global Perspectives* (1997); and

Sheila Aikman, *Intercultural Education and Literacy: An Ethnographic Study of Indigenous Knowledge and Learning in the Peruvian Amazon* (1999); and

Greg Tanaka, *The Intercultural Campus* (2003); and

Christine Fox, “The question of identity from a comparative education perspective,” in Robert F. Arnove and Carlos Alberto torres (eds.), *Comparative Education*, 2nd ed. (2003); and

Elsie Rockwell, “Constructing diversity and civility in the United States and Latin America,” in Bradley A.U. Levinson et al. (eds.), *Ethnography and Education Policy Across the Americas* (2002).