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TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING: GLOBAL ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES

Shibao Guo (Ed.). Routledge, New York, 2013, 150 pages.

Transnational Migration and Lifelong Learning: Global Issues and Perspectives offers a timely and relevant exploration of the interconnections between migration, globalization, and learning. In this 10-chapter edited collection, Shibao Guo mobilizes a diverse group of international scholars to analyze the complexities of migration and the influence of contemporary lifelong learning in the lives of migrants. The authors provide insights from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and South Korea while examining learning within the workplace, schools, homes, and communities.

Guo opens *Transnational Migration and Lifelong Learning* with an overview of current trends in migration, including a focus on the rise of permanent, temporary, and forced migration and the resulting shift of the "socio-cultural fabric of receiving societies" (p. 1). Despite increases in migration, Guo argues that there is a gap in the literature exploring the relationship between lifelong learning and transnational migration and further argues that lifelong learning is failing immigrants as they attempt to settle in new communities. Guo's introductory chapter examines the intricacies of migration and lays the foundation for further reflection.

Complex identities, social capital, and inattention to or undervaluing of immigrants' learning experiences are themes embedded throughout the text. In Chapter 6, Mary Alfred challenges assimilation assumptions (perhaps expectations) of migration and instead highlights the fluidity of identity(ies) and bi-directional learning opportunities nestled in contemporary migration, particularly given the connections afforded by emerging transportation and communication systems. In Chapter 8, Yan Guo explores transnational identities and hybrid cultures through the lens of immigrant parents as they navigate Canadian educational systems and expectations. Guo argues that deficit assumptions of immigrants instills a false perception of the role of immigrant parents in their children's education, fails to appreciate the value of hybrid cultures, and overlooks the informal learning opportunities intertwined within formal education. Jin-Hee Kim, in Chapter 9, also focuses on informal and non-formal learning by exploring labour migration in the context of South Korea. Kim suggests that educational policy and practices, which focus on intercultural competency, are necessary inclusions given increasing global migration.

While the contributors explore many aspects of learning and migration, three chapters specifically address gender and provide in-depth analyses of how learning and migration are gendered experiences. In Chapter 3, Roxana Ng and Hongxia Shan explore the experiences of Chinese immigrant women in Toronto as they navigate possibilities in employment,

experiences Ng and Shan argue are doubly discriminatory due to gender and ethnic biases. In Chapter 4, Tara Gibb and Evelyn Hamdon extend the reflection and analysis of the relationships between gender, migration, and lifelong learning as they examine policies and practices in the area of credential recognition. They argue that immigrant women's experiences and expertise are undervalued and opportunities to integrate into the workforce are regularly impeded by multiple injustices or borders. Finally, in Chapter 7, Sue Jackson considers the informal learning and community-building opportunities nested in social spaces for immigrant women living in London, England. Jackson argues that community gatherings or social spaces can be sites of resistance to challenge discourses of difference. Ng and Shan, Gibb and Hamdon, and Jackson enable the reader to visualize the failings and opportunities of lifelong learning for immigrant women through stories and voices. Understanding the gendered dimensions of migration, migration policies, and lifelong learning is a timely contribution given Canada's recent decision to focus primarily on the settlement of women, children, and families in response to the Syrian crisis.

Per Andersson and Andreas Fejes (Chapter 5) offer a valuable contribution as the only authors to specifically consider immigration status as an influencing factor within the interconnections of lifelong learning and migration. A more nuanced analysis of the relationship between migration, lifelong learning, and status is essential given the increasing number of persons forced to migrate due to conflict or other humanitarian emergencies. In this chapter, Andersson and Fejes examine how refugee policies and settlement programs in Sweden impact adult learning, and argue that prior work experience and foreign credentials are highly undervalued within refugee communities. Similar considerations around the differences between migration and forced migration would have further enriched the other contributions.

The final chapter of *Transnational Migration and Lifelong Learning* culminates in a discussion about social justice and citizenship. Guo challenges the use of the term immigration, which emphasizes permanency as opposed to capturing the sustained relationships many immigrants maintain to their country of origin. Instead, Guo argues for the use of the term transnational migration to capture the social dimensions of contemporary population movement, which include complex and multidimensional relations with many communities. Furthermore, using Nancy Fraser's concept of distributive, recognitive, and representative justice, Guo emphasizes the importance of recognitive justice and the need to transform migration from assimilation and deficit ideologies toward an understanding of the value of diversity within communities. Guo asserts that a transition toward pluralist citizenship embraces recognitive justice and offers a framework for lifelong learning within the 21st century.

As a scholarly practitioner working in the area of forced migration, I valued the authors' thoughtful discussions and important critiques of contemporary approaches within lifelong learning and migration. I also appreciated the critique of the dominant homo economicus approach to migration and learning, where the value of immigrants is measured against their economic productivity. The homo economicus approach is evident in the continual cuts to settlement programming, with the exception of programming oriented toward employment preparation and acquisition. In contrast, the contributors clearly demonstrate the significance of the social dimensions of migration and learning. *Transnational Migration and Lifelong Learning* offers an important critique of current approaches and provides insights toward a transformed framework for learning based on relevant critical analyses of

the imperfections and opportunities within lifelong learning in the context of migration. As people continue to come (and go), and as migration rises globally, it is essential that adult educators better understand the interconnections between lifelong learning and migration to help create and sustain inclusive, welcoming, and equitable communities.

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