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Articles

- Informationalism and Informalization of Learnings in 21st Century. A Qualitative Study on Meaningful Learning Experiences– Moisés Esteban-Guitart, Josep Maria Serra & Ignasi Vila 1

- South Asian Immigration and Education in the U.S.: Historical and Social Contexts– Zaynah Rahman & Susan J. Paik 26

Reviews

- The Visual Rhetoric of Self-advocacy Organisations on Poverty: All about Courage? – Heidi Degerickx, Griet Roets & Angelo Van Gorp 53

- The Militarisation of Physical Education in Schools. An Analysis of Two Images Published in the Barcelona Press at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century– Xavier Torrebadella 7

- Women in Culture: An Intersectional Anthology for Gender and Women's Studies– Ginés Puente Pérez 109

- Gender and Migration– Alicia Rodríguez Loredo 112



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Informationalism and informalization of learnings in 21st century. A qualitative study on meaningful learning experiences

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Informationalism and Informalization of Learnings in 21st Century. A Qualitative Study on Meaningful Learning Experiences

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Abstract

Recent work on education, based on sociocultural principles, suggest an expansion of the traditional boundaries of learning research that takes into account the multiple spaces and life trajectories that make up experience across our life-worlds. This article focuses specifically on young people's significant learning experiences in order to illustrate empirically what learning means - i.e. where, with whom and how - in the 'new ecology of learning' based on the informalization and informationalization of learning in XXI century. 43 significant learning experiences were identified from four young students who recorded their specific learning experiences during a week by means of a significant learning experiences journal and photographs they took themselves. The results show the presence of informal, everyday, spontaneous activities among the significant learning experiences detected and the use of digital technologies as learning resources; they also reveal the assistance of friends and family in the learning process. In conclusion, this study illustrates how young people in XXI century are involved in a whole range of different activities across different sites and over time.

Keywords: Lifelong learning, Learning experience, Qualitative research, Informational society, Mobile-centric society

La Informalización e Informacionalización de los Aprendizajes en el Siglo XXI. Un Estudio Cualitativo sobre Experiencias Significativas de Aprendizaje

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Resumen

Recientes trabajos en la perspectiva sociocultural sugieren la necesidad de expandir las tradicionales fronteras en la investigación sobre el aprendizaje a partir de tener en cuenta los múltiples espacios y trayectorias de vida que constituyen experiencias de aprendizaje. Este artículo centra su análisis en las experiencias significativas de aprendizaje de jóvenes estudiantes con el fin de ilustrar, empíricamente, qué significa aprender en términos de dónde, con quién y cómo en la llamada ‘nueva ecología del aprendizaje’, basada en la informalización e informacionalización de los aprendizajes en el siglo XXI. Se identifican 43 experiencias significativas de aprendizaje (EsigA) a partir de 4 jóvenes estudiantes quiénes documentaron sus particulares experiencias de aprendizaje durante una semana a través de fotografías y un diario personal. Los resultados muestran la presencia de actividades informales, espontáneas o cotidianas, la utilización de dispositivos digitales como recursos de aprendizaje, así como la ilustración de la asistencia de amigos/as y familiares en los procesos de aprendizaje. En conclusión, el estudio ilustra cómo los jóvenes en el siglo XXI se implican en un amplio y diverso rango de actividades que suceden en distintos momentos y espacios.

Palabras clave: Aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida, Experiencias de aprendizaje, Investigación cualitativa, Sociedad informacional, Sociedad móvil-céntrica



According to the LIFE Center (Learning in Informal and Formal Environments), 19% of school-age children's time is spent in formal settings, while the rest is spread among informal activities. In the case of adults, almost all of their learning takes place in informal situations, for example in the work-professional sphere. These figures illustrate the spontaneous nature of much of the educational process, that is to say, the fact our learning is life-long and life-wide (Banks, Au, Ball, Bell, Gordon, Gutiérrez, Heath, Lee, Lee, Mahiri, Nasir, Valdés & Zhou, 2007) and stems from participation in a multitude of activities, many of which are, today, mediated by digital technologies.

According to Spain's Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE), in 2014, around 75% of Spanish households (almost 11.9 million in total) had an Internet connection available, which was nearly five percentage points more than in 2013 and, for the first time, the percentage of the population who were Internet users (76.2%) was greater than that of computer users (73.3%). In fact, according to the same survey, 77.1% of all Internet users accessed the Internet via mobile phone. Furthermore, ownership of mobile phones increases significantly from the age of 10, reaching 90.3% among the population of 15 year-olds (INE, 2014).

At the same time, international studies estimate that 90% of our interactions with the media take place via device screens (tablets, smart phones, computers) leaving just 10% for screen-free sources (radio, printed newspapers, magazines, etc.). This amounts to about 4.4 hours of our free time being spent looking at screens, every day, either sequentially or in parallel (multitasking) (Google, 2012).

The penetration in society of digital mobile devices, associated with their use in everyday life, has led some authors to suggest that what characterizes our era is information, which today is generated and distributed by numerous agents connected together in real time. The generation, processing and transmission of information has become the cornerstone of productivity, power and social, cultural and political organization. Information has, without doubt, always been crucial in any society, whether agricultural or industrial. However, the specific modern nature of it lies in the action of knowledge upon knowledge itself (i.e., the technology of knowledge

generation, information processing and symbol communicating) as the main source of productivity (Castells, 1996).

In the field of education, the Information Age (Castells, 1996) or the Mobile-centric Society (González-Patiño & Esteban-Guitart, 2014) brings with it a new scenario that some authors call the new ecology of learning (Barron, 2004; Coll, 2013).

The central idea in our view, and one which poses a challenge for educational science, is the need to develop a broad notion of learning which manages to incorporate the way people learn throughout their lives, as a result of participation and transit in different scenarios, practices and contexts of life as well as the content of what is learned and how it is learnt (Banks et al., 2007; Erstad & Sefton-Green, 2013; Esteban-Guitart, 2015, 2016; Ito, Gutiérrez, Livingstone, Penuel, Rhodes, Salen, Schor, Sefton-Green & Watkins, 2013).

In this sense, people do not do their learning exclusively at school with the scaffolding provided by the teacher; rather, through ICT, they access, build and distribute information and knowledge, turning the educational act into an action that is distributed and scattered among numerous scenarios and potential educational agents. In other words, thanks to mobile technologies, teaching and learning situations can emerge anywhere, anytime.

As summarized by Coll (2013), the new ecology of learning means recognizing people's need to learn throughout the length and breadth of life, beyond the exclusive realm of traditional/formal educational activity. Formal education is intentional, systematic, universal and planned; it is associated with the predominance of technologies based on the written language and the skills required to use it. Today's learning extends beyond the walls of the school through participation in communities of interest (such as a Facebook group, for example), and using different formats of representation, with a predominance of visual language and the multimodality of devices and codes.

The emergence and penetration of digital ICTs have changed the traditional spaces and forms of teaching and learning. In this sense, the Internet can be considered the main point of access to information and where it is handled, which turns the act of learning into a distributed and interconnected process, present in informal exchanges with the world at

large based on ongoing learning needs linked to the functionality, interest or feelings of the learner. In that regard, Siemens (2005) suggest the term “connectivism” to emphasize the technology’s effect on how people live, communicate and learn. Connectivism proposes to see knowledge as a distributed network across nodes and learning as a process of pattern recognition.

In addition, alongside the need to develop a holistic concept of learning, there is the need to broaden the traditional cognitive concept of the learner. Learners are no longer seen as cognitive individuals who substantially associate previous knowledge with new knowledge (Ausubel, 1963); now learners are seen as people with experiences and funds of knowledge and identity (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014) who join communities of practice and transform, through activity and participation, how they recognise themselves as a ‘certain kind of person’ in a given context (Gee, 2000): a good FIFA player, a radical independent or a good maths student. In all these cases, learning is defined as being based on the construction of an identity or affiliation to a social group, with the subsequent incorporation of their discourse and artefacts. It is a process of identity transformation that is associated with the transformation of participation, from little autonomy to greater autonomy, in the course of socio-cultural practices (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

In this context, the term ‘learner identity’ (LI) takes on special prominence. Although there is no solid agreement on how to define and conceptualize it, it can be argued from a sociocultural perspective that learner identity is the position, perception or recognition that one has in relation to oneself as a learner (Coll & Falsafi, 2010; Silseth & Arnseth, 2011; Reeves, 2009; Vagan, 2011; Wortham, 2006). According to the definition of Coll and Falsafi (2011):

An analysis of LI can be understood as an analysis of the process by which we make sense of our participation in learning activities through a recognition of ourselves as learners and the values and emotions that accompany this recognition. [...] ...we think of LI as a set of meanings in a constant process of reconstruction in different contexts in which, through the interactions we establish with others, we have experiences of recognition as learners (p. 78 and 84).

From the above definition it seems that two things deserve special attention. The first is that the process of constructing a learner identity is related to one's experience of oneself as a learner. As we pointed out earlier, the cognitive perspective in education has, traditionally, conceptualized learning in terms of acquisition or construction of knowledge. In contrast, terms such as lived experience, feeling or recognition allow us to take into account more explicitly the social and emotional aspects involved in learning. And this brings us closer to the previously mentioned, and necessary, holistic notion of the learner and learning (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; Herrenkohl & Mertl, 2010). The second aspect refers to the notions of participation, activities and contexts. In this sense, what is emphasised is the social nature of the learning process by conceptualizing it as the fruit and result of the transformation that takes place while participating in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The notion of learner identity (LI) as a unit of analysis brings us to the concept of 'subjective learning experiences'. In fact, the learner identity is articulated around the positioning – through a dialogic process, be it public or private – of negotiation of meaning and of making sense of social experiences that are subjectively recognized as motives, sources or situations of learning.

At this point, we should distinguish between 'objective learning experiences' and 'subjective learning experiences.' An objective learning experience is defined as an educational act or practice, be it formal or informal. For example, a history class in high school is an objective learning experience, as is shared reading of a bedtime story between a parent and a child who is learning to read, or even when one friend teaches another to play a particular game. Such situations can be, but are not necessarily, subjective learning experiences. For an objective experience to become subjective, the learner or participant needs to recognize and be recognized as a learner within the activity. In other words, the participant must give meaning to the activity and attribute or recognize that this is a situation in which he or she is learning something. In addition, we propose here to distinguish between 'subjective learning experiences' and 'significant learning experiences' (SLEs). Significant learning experiences require an even greater degree of explicitness since the term is used to refer to those subjective learning experiences which, because of their impact, whether

negative or positive, the learner recognizes as the most relevant ones. For example, the question ‘What has been the most significant, most relevant, learning you have experienced this week?’ focuses attention on significant learning experiences. From among all the objective learning experiences and situations that the learner may have participated in during a week, the learner can recognize subjective learning experiences in some of them, and even highlight those that have had the greatest impact –not necessarily those in which more things were learned, but those which make more sense to him or her, and which stand out for their positive, or negative, impact.

We can distinguish two trends in the analysis of subjective learning experiences in the literature. The first focuses on intra-institutional experiences in the formal setting. In this regard, previous studies have described the relationship between academic learning and the emerging social identities of students (Wortham, 2006), emphasizing the importance of certain orientations in classroom discourse that facilitate a sense of competence and recognition as learners among students (Mortimer, Wortham & Allard, 2010). The second, however, shows interest in tracking individual learning trajectories in informal situations arising from participation in communities of practice, interaction with technology and the popular culture of young artists, entrepreneurs and professionals (Erstad & Sefton-Green, 2013; Erstad, Gilje & Arnseth, 2013). It is obvious that both formal and informal situations provide resources and opportunities for learning. However, the hypothesis that sustains the concept of the new ecology of learning is that, through mobile digital technologies, learning is becoming increasingly informal and is associated with participation in accessing, creating and disseminating information: what we could call a process of informalization and informationalization of learning.

The overall objective of the study described here was to contribute to the existing literature that seeks to identify and describe subjective learning experiences while taking into account the parameters of the new ecology of learning, in particular the how, where and with whom learning takes place (Coll, 2013; González-Patiño & Esteban-Guitart, 2014), and using the notion of ‘significant learning experiences’ which we propose here. In this sense, we hope to illustrate empirically the new ecology of learning by identifying and analysing a number of different significant learning experiences, i.e., situations in which learners recognize themselves as learners and which they

identify as especially relevant from an existing range of subjective learning experiences.

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study were four teenagers, two boys and two girls, aged between 15 and 16 in their fourth year of ESO - Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (UK equivalent, Year 11; USA Grade 10). Participants were selected via purposive non-probability sampling using the following criteria: a) studying in 4th year of ESO; b) Representation of gender (two boys and two girls); c) Representation of origin (two foreign-born and two native); d) socioeconomic representation (two from a medium-high socioeconomic level and the other two, medium low); e) academic representation (one boy and one girl with low academic success, one boy and one girl with high academic success, i.e., good grades). The distribution of the different variables among the participants is shown in Table 1. The goal was to achieve the highest possible heterogeneity among the participants.

Table 1
Sociodemographic Characteristics of the participants

Pseudonym	Age	Country of Origin	Sex	Academic Level	Socioeconomic Level
Jasmine	16	Morocco	Girl	Very high	Medium
María	15	Spain	Girl	Low	High
Albert	16	Spain	Boy	High	Medium
Roger	16	Holland	Boy	Low	High

Instruments Used

Personal journal of significant learning experiences. In order to elicit narratives in relation to learner identity, we designed a personal journal to record learning situations or experiences which, in the view of the participants, were the most relevant or important. The journal consisted of five questions that the participants had to answer at the end of each day for

one week (Monday to Sunday). The questions were as follows: a) What is the most important thing I learned today? b) Where did I learn it? c) Who did I learn it with? d) How, in what way, under what circumstances did I learn it? e) What did I feel? – i.e., subjective testimony of emotional experience associated with learning. The instruction given to the participants was as follows: ‘Using the five questions in this journal, we would like you to record, for seven days in one week, the situations, occasions or experiences in which you learned something. It is important that, from among all the things you have learned during one particular day, you concentrate on whichever one is the most relevant or important for you’.

Photographs of learning situations. In order to document graphically the participants’ learning activities, situations or occasions, we asked them, for one week, to take photographs that reflect the activities or circumstances in which they had learned something or that would constitute a stimulus that had made them think or impacted them in a way they would consider significant. Such circumstances or stimuli may or may not correspond to what the participant explained in his or her journal. The instruction was: ‘During the week you are completing the personal journal of learning experiences, take pictures with your mobile or whatever device you have available at the time, of the learning situations and occasions or things that have motivated you to learn something. These situations may coincide or not with the situations that you describe in your journal’. Subsequently, the participants had to choose four photographs from among all the ones they took that were the most relevant and significant for them.

Procedure and Analysis of Empirical Material

After choosing the four study participants according to the criteria described above, we explained the purpose of the investigation, emphasizing the interest in documenting learning experiences, understood as moments or situations in which the people involved have learned something. To this end, they were given the personal journal with instructions on how to complete it and on the need to take photographs. After one week, a member of the research team interviewed each of the participants in order to clarify the content of the selected photos and the personal journal.

Based on three of the parameters of the new ecology of learning described above (how, where and with whom something is learned) the empirical data was analysed using a thematic content analysis ([Krippendorf, 1980](#)) which took into consideration the terms or concepts according to the codes of analysis described in Table 2.

Table 2.

Codes of analysis according to three parameters of the new ecology of learning

Parameters of the new ecology of learning (Coll, 2013)	Codes of analysis	Criteria for inclusion
Where?	Formal:	When the participant describes the learning as being derived from participation in a formal educational institution.
	Informal:	When the participant describes spontaneous learning situations outside the traditional educational institutions.
With whom?	Alone	
	With the teacher	
	Classmates	
	Friends	
	Parents	
	Brothers / sisters	
	Others	

Table 2.

Codes of analysis according to three parameters of the new ecology of learning
(continued)

Parameters of the new ecology of learning (Coll, 2013)	Codes of analysis	Criteria for inclusion
How?	Instruction: Community of interest:	When the participant describes learning as a result of formal, planned and systematic teaching. When the participant describes learning derived from participation in a community of practice and interest, for example, a Facebook group.
	Traditional format: Digital format:	When the participant describes learning as a result of using written language and the skills associated with its use (reading books, writing). When the participant describes learning as a result of using of digital ICT to access information and knowledge

The encoding process consisted of assigning the codes shown in Table 2 to segments of meaning linked to the significant learning experiences recorded in the personal journals or in the photographs and their explanation. While all the significant learning experiences can be designated as informal or formal and associated with one of the categories relating to ‘with whom?’, this is not the case with the category ‘how’. In this case, when the criteria for inclusion were fulfilled, the learning experience was duly coded, but if this was not the case, they could be left uncategorized.

Results

From the content of the personal journals of significant learning experiences and the photographs taken and selected by the participants, a total of 43 significant learning experiences were identified: situations, moments, or activities perceived as significant through which the participant saw themselves as a learner and declared that they had learned something. Of these 43 experiences, 27 emerged from the personal journals (almost 7 experiences per participant, the exception being one day in María's week in which she claimed to have learnt nothing relevant) and 16 photographs (4 per participant). Table 3 shows the thematic content analysis carried out according to the codes of analysis described in Table 2.

Table 3

Thematic content analysis of significant learning experiences

Participant	WHERE?	
	Formal (Secondary Education School)	Informal
Jasmine	0	11
María	0	10
Albert	0	11
Roger	0	11
Total	0	43

Table 3

Thematic content analysis of significant learning experiences (continued)

WITH WHOM?							
Participant	Alone	With Teacher	classmates	Friends	Parents	Siblings	Others
Jasmine	5			3	3		
María	3			5	1		1
Albert	4			2	4		1
Roger	7			2	1		1
Total	19			12	9		3

HOW?				
Participant	Teaching	Community of Interest	Traditional Format	Digital Format
Jasmine		4		6
María		3	4	2
Albert		2	1	2
Roger			1	6
Total		9	6	16

One of the figures that stands out from the analysis is that all the significant learning experiences recorded by the participants take place in informal settings; in addition, most of these are experienced on their own or with the peer group. As for how they learned, the emphasis was on television

and the Internet (digital media) as the devices through which participants say they learned something significant; also important were communities of interest, often their peer group gathered together for an activity or for some particular motive. Most conspicuous is the irrelevance of learning derived from schooling, as not one instance of a significant learning experience was linked to formal schooling. Below, we illustrate empirically the three parameters (where, with whom and how) through examples of the different significant learning experiences (which we will refer to as SLEs) of the participants.

Where Learning Takes Place

All 43 of the SLEs we gathered from the participants took place in informal spaces or situations, away from any formal institution, (i.e., the secondary school they were attending) with just one exception: one of the SLEs did actually take place on school premises but was unrelated to formal educational practice and was recounted by Jasmine as follows:

I have learned issues related to girls' sexuality, specifically the orgasm and the way you can achieve one. The thing about how the clitoris gets hard and so it is what makes you have an orgasm. It helps.
(Jasmine's SLE, Tuesday)

The situation, which the protagonist also records in a photograph (see Figure 1), takes place in the pause between a Catalan class and a Natural Sciences class. While waiting for the arrival of the teacher, the two friends chat for about 10 minutes.



'This is a photo of the moment my friend told me about the female orgasm; she told me about it while we were waiting for the teacher, in class. My friend is the one whose hand you can see on the left, but I didn't want to take a photo of her. And everybody's on their smartphones, like always!'

Figure 1. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by Jasmine.

However, the other SLEs that Jasmine talks about in her personal journal occur mostly at home and take place on the Internet. For example, she describes having learned how to delete information about her held by Google that she does not want people to see if they put her name in the search engine (SLE Monday), or having learned how to find, via the website notasdecorte.info, that the minimum Baccalaureate score that would gain entry to university to study law was 6.36 (SLE Friday).

Another of the significant learning contexts that Jasmine chose from the photographs she took is the mosque (see Figure 2). On this occasion, her emotional positioning is not positive, as can be read in the explanation she gives of the photograph.



'This is the mosque at Torroella de Montgrí; I go there occasionally with my father. I took the picture when I went on Saturday, but it's not really a context or stimulus that I like. I've included it because it is very important to my family, and because I should like it more, but I don't.'

Figure 2. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by Jasmine.

Although none of the 4 participants referred to any SLEs derived from the process of teaching-learning that took place in the formal setting of the

school, there were, in fact, a number of SLEs related to the content in school programme.

Measuring magnitude is not the same as measuring the intensity of earthquakes or seismic movements. They are often confused but they are different. The Richter scale is not the only measure used to measure this. (María's SLE, Sunday)

I understood, or I think I do, Einstein's theory of relativity: $e = mc^2$. (Roger's SLE, Monday)

In the first case, María reported that she had learned this difference between the magnitude and intensity of earthquakes at home, preparing for an exam with the help of the Biology text book for her 4th year ESO class. In the second case, Roger says he learnt about Einstein's theory at home through a collection of DVD's from the television series *Cosmos*, by Carl Sagan. He went on to explain that, after finding a reference to the series on Internet, he found a set of DVDs of the series at home several days later. 'I'm learning loads of stuff and I'm really interested in this series. It's like going to class without having to go to class, and you have a great time. I did a search for information on Carl Sagan and he was a great broadcaster' (Roger's SLE, Monday). In fact, from watching the collection of DVDs at home, Roger highlighted other learning achievements during the week:

We are made of stardust and, in fact, we are mineral matter which became organic matter and this organic matter acquired life (Roger's SLE, Tuesday)

The idea that we are on the shore of the cosmic ocean is an idea that I really liked and it's one that conveys the idea of the size of the universe (Roger's SLE, Thursday)

Cosmos means the order of the universe and chaos is the opposite, disorder (Roger's SLE, Sunday)

Besides the home, there are other contexts that appear in the stories of the participants. Many of them reference the street or everyday situations such as in a pet shop, a perfume shop, at the gym, or at the disco.



‘This is the gym where I go three times a week and where this week I discovered stuff about Clenbuterol which I’ve written about in my journal (see written journal), taken the day after I learned this new thing’

Figure 3. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by Roger

According to Roger, he learned at the gym that Clenbuterol is a medicine used to burn fat. He said he learned this from a conversation, between two people older than him, about a sympathomimetic drug called clenbuterol, widely used for the treatment of lung diseases because of its bronchodilator effect.

Who they Learn with

The participants mostly reported being alone during their significant learning experiences (19 out of 43 SLEs, see Table 5). Albert, for example, reported that all he had learned by himself – by observing life on the street – that ‘you cannot trust the zebra crossings’ (Albert’s SLE, Monday); from the internet he had learned that ‘psychiatrists are doctors and can prescribe medication and psychologists are not doctors and cannot prescribe medicines’; and, as a result of reading Bret Easton Ellis’s American Psycho, published in 1987, which tells the story of a yuppie murderer famous for being the archetype Wall Street capitalist, he discovered that ‘many people resemble those of the yuppie culture in Reagan’s America during the 1980s’

Another common reference are friends, especially in the case of María, and the family (father, mother), especially in the case of Albert. In María’s case, for example, she says she learned that the ABS braking system unblocks the brake discs of cars. A friend of hers, who was studying for her driver’s license, explained it to her and showed her the details in a book.

Also with friends, María says she learned the best things to combine with cava (see Figure 4).



'I have become an expert on alcohol and drugs. I drink quite a bit at the weekends and I know more about it than most of the boys and girls my age, because I never get drunk and I have a better time than them. I am an expert in this and there are people who get to thirty and they don't know how to drink. On this day, I learned with some friends what goes best with cava, and we took these bottles with us on a night out'

Figure 4. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by María

Regarding the SLE that took place with his parents, Albert recounted a conversation with them about the dangers on the road, something he reported in his journal and in one of the photographs he selected (see Figure 5).



'In the written journal, I've described it in more detail, but I was amazed to see this crashed car and learned that there can be lots of ways to die if you drive like a maniac on the road. I talked a lot to my parents about what the most serious accidents are and which parts of the car withstand the best if it you crash into someone'

Figure 5. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by Albert

Other social learning situations included a perfume shop, in the case of María, who says she learned how to use lipstick properly with the help of the sales assistant in the shop or, in the case of Albert and Roger, with animals.

Albert, for example, after visiting a pet shop, noticed how the mother birds raise their young chicks and established a comparison with the human family. Roger, on the other hand, after attaching a photograph of a dog says: ‘Today I learned about the domestication of dogs, which I wrote about in the daily journal, and this is the dog in my house in the country which inspired this reflection’.

How they Learn

Finally, with regard to the learning context and the process involved in learning, ICT devices stand out as the tools used to learn things according to the participants. A very illustrative example of this is the case of Albert who, for one of his four photographs, chose a picture of his mobile phone (see Figure 6).

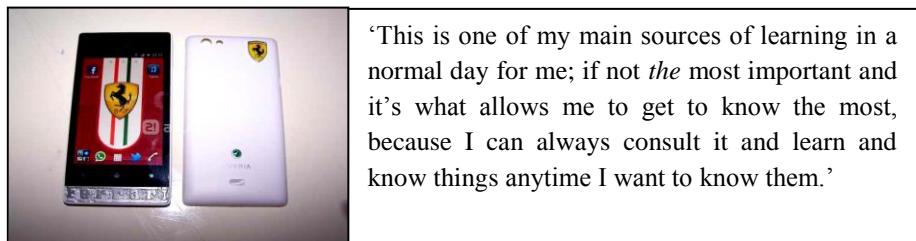


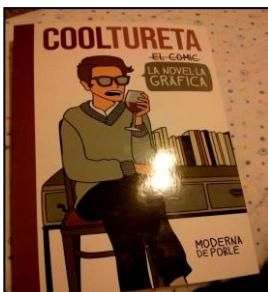
Figure 6. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by Albert

Other commonly referenced learning contexts are television (María says she learned that L’Oreal had released a new lipstick because she had seen it on the television) and especially the Internet, using Google, for example, to find and download information. Jasmine, for example, says she learned about the Crusades via the web.

I learned lots of stuff to do with the Crusades, because I downloaded the film Kingdom of Heaven, and I watched it with great interest because it talks about the conflict between the two main cultures in Catalonia and I understand much better now why people fight so much. I felt cultured! I learned a lot but there are still things I have to find out. I will try to find more things and learn more about it. Why

don't they teach us this stuff? We do years and years of History and hardly anyone my age knows what the Crusades were and how important they were (Jasmine's SLE, Sunday).

Despite the prominence and importance of digital technologies as learning tools (TV, tablet, mobile, computer, etc.) there are also references to traditional formats such as magazines or books.



'I wish they made us read these books and do work on them; then more people would read and not hate books. I really like this book and I always have it close to hand at bedtime. It's like my Bible, and it's a commentary on the guys who go through life thinking they're cool. There are loads of these types of guys and sometimes they don't even realise it' (SLE by María)

Figure 7. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by María

With regard to the communities of interest, the participants referred mainly to gatherings of friends for a common interest or reason, for example, fashion, flirting at the disco or motorcycles.



'I don't know how to ride a motorbike, but I really like looking at them. I didn't take this photo myself but I asked a friend to take it so I could bring it here, and I think it's valid because I wanted to be in it to prove I was there. It was an area for motorbikes and I was with my friends; we really like bikes.'

Figure 8. Photograph and description of it in relation to a significant learning experience (SLE) by Albert

Discussion and Conclusions

Recent studies in science education have shown that there is a need to expand the traditional boundaries in research on learning. Notions such as ‘learning lives connected’ (Erstad, Gilje & Arnseth, 2013), ‘connected learning’ (Ito et al., 2013), the ‘mobile-centric society’ (González-Patiño & Esteban-Guitart, 2014) ‘funds of identity’ (Esteban-Guitart, 2014, 2016) or ‘new ecology of learning’ (Barron, 2004; Coll, 2013) have set out the need to situate learning as the result of a lifelong personalized set of socially and culturally mediated transactions or experiences.

The school, as an institution, has traditionally been regarded as the repository and transmitter of information and knowledge; now, with the Internet and digital information and communication technologies, access to knowledge that is constantly reissued and re-constructed is available to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Moreover, people today are not passive recipients of information, nor are they mere spectators of what happens; rather, they actively participate in the creation and distribution of such information. Wikipedia is perhaps the paradigmatic example of this ‘collective intelligence’ (Jenkins, 2006) or Mind, with a capital ‘m’, as Gee would say (Gee, 2013). This online encyclopaedia is the fruit and result of a distributed collaboration among people and cultural artefacts. This is what Jenkins (2006) encapsulates in his well-known notion of ‘participatory culture’ and what González-Patiño & Esteban-Guitart (2014) summarize using the label of ‘creating-sharing’. Such collaborative and collective intelligence is the result of membership of and participation in liquid communities of interest (Facebook, Instagram, MySpace) or ‘affinity spaces’ (Gee, 2013), where text and images are produced and shared (via YouTube, Twitter or Instagram, for example), and where problems are solved (in certain online games, for example).

The significant learning experiences described in this article are evidence of the informal and informational nature of learning. Firstly, formal schooling does not appear in any of the learning experiences identified; the situations described take place in informal situations, in many cases the participants are alone or else with family of friends from their peer group. Hence, we can talk about informalization of learning. Secondly, digital media which offer opportunities, resources and learning experiences are the

commonest tools reported by the participants. Hence, the concept of learning becomes informational as a result of access to and creation of information, via digital media devices or screens, mainly smartphones, computers and television.

The first conclusion, concerning the informality of the significant learning experiences identified, is in line with the existing literature regarding the crisis of meaning in the school as an institution (Coll, 2009; Gee, 2013; Tedesco, 2011). In particular, our study shows that any learning that takes place in school is not reflected in the significant learning experiences that our participants told us about. The second conclusion, concerning the informatization of learning, illustrates the impact of the information society (Castells, 1996) or mobile-centric society (González-Patiño and Esteban-Guitart, 2014) in shaping the activity of teaching and learning. Specifically, it is an empirical illustration of the potential educational resources that digital ICT devices, crucial for accessing, generating and distributing information, offer the learner.

We believe that the main contribution of our study lies in the empirical illustration of a number of parameters regarding the new ecology of learning (where, with whom and how one learns) using the notion of ‘significant learning experiences’, or SLEs, identified using the tools designed for this study: the Journal of significant learning experiences and photographs of times, stimuli or situations to do with learning. We think that the notion of SLE can become a specific unit of analysis within the broader notion of learner identity.

Notes

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South Asian Immigration and Education in the U.S.: Historical and Social Contexts

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South Asian Immigration and Education in the U.S.: Historical and Social Contexts

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Abstract

This article examines the historical and social contexts of South Asian immigration and their current socioeconomic and educational outcomes in the United States. Based on an adapted model of incorporation and literature review, this historical analysis examines government policies, societal reception, co-ethnic communities, as well as other barriers and opportunities of three immigration waves before and after the Immigration Act of 1965. The study reveals the modes of incorporation differed for each immigrant wave as well as subsequent socioeconomic and educational outcomes within the South Asian community. Before 1965, the earliest migrants had several barriers to incorporation coupled with government and societal hostility. After 1965, South Asians began immigrating under more favorable or neutral modes of incorporation. They were also more wealthy, educated, fluent in English, and had professional skills. While the majority of South Asians today represent this demographic composition, a rising subgroup of immigrants arriving under differential circumstances since the 1980s are facing more unique challenges within this community.

Key words: South Asian American, immigration history, co-ethnic community, modes of incorporation, educational outcomes

Inmigración del Sud de Asia y Educación en USA: Contextos Histórico y Sociales

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Resumen

Este artículo examina los contextos históricos y sociales de la inmigración del sur de Asia y sus actuales resultados socioeconómicos y educativos en los Estados Unidos. Basado en un modelo adaptado de integración y en la revisión de literatura, este análisis histórico examina políticas gubernamentales, la recepción social, comunidades co-étnicas, así como otras barreras y oportunidades de tres olas migratorias antes y después de la Ley de Inmigración de 1965. El estudio revela los modos de integración diferenciados para cada una de las olas migratorias así como sus subsecuentes resultados socioeconómicos y educativos dentro de la comunidad sudasiática. Antes de 1965, las primeras personas inmigrantes encontraron diversas barreras para la inclusión junto a la hostilidad gubernamental y social. Después de 1965, las personas sudasiáticas empezaron a inmigrar bajo condiciones de integración más favorables o neutrales. También eran más ricas, educadas, con un inglés más fluido, y con habilidades profesionales. Si bien la mayoría de personas surasiáticas representan actualmente esta composición demográfica, un creciente subgrupo de inmigrantes que están llegando bajo circunstancias diferentes desde la década de los 80 se enfrentan a retos especialmente difíciles dentro de esta comunidad.

Palabras clave: inmigración del sur de Asia, historia de la inmigración, comunidad co-étnica, modelos de integración, resultados educativos

Asian Americans have recently been reported as the fastest growing, most educated, and wealthiest racial group in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2012, p. 3). South Asians, in particular, saw one of the highest rates of academic and socio-economic growth in the US. They have also recently gained visibility through notable individuals, such as actors Kal Penn, Mindy Kaling, and Aziz Ansari, authors Jhumpa Lahiri and Deepak Chopra, and politician Bobby Jindal. While South Asian Americans overall have high professional skills, income levels, and educational attainment rates, polarization in outcomes and experiences do exist within this community today. For example, newer immigrants in the urban ethnic enclaves often struggle in blue-collar jobs as taxi drivers, store clerks, or small motel operators. Additionally, South Asians across the board have been cast under post-9/11 discrimination as people resembling brown-skinned Muslims (Verma, 2008). Consequently, they have faced more racism and discrimination within society and schools in present day.

The monolithic view of Asian Americans has been notably challenged by scholars over the past decade. In the same vein, South Asians also have diversity within their own ethnic community (i.e., Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, etc.). Although many South Asians are successful in the US, there is a growing group of immigrants that struggles upon arrival. There is limited research on the successes or struggles of this growing South Asian community. In many cases, they are also completely neglected from inclusion in studies examining Asian Americans in general (Blair & Qian, 1998; Teranishi, Ceja, Antonio, Allen, & McDonough, 2004).

In order to understand the diversity within this ethnic community and their current socioeconomic and educational outcomes, it is important to understand the historical and social experiences of South Asian American communities. An examination of immigration factors such as government policies, societal reception, co-ethnic communities, settlement patterns, class status, education, occupation, language ability and time of arrival to the US would help to understand overall and differential outcomes for this ethnic group.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to better understand the historical and social contexts of South Asian groups in terms of their present-day educational and socioeconomic outcomes in the US. This article focuses on

the three largest ethnic groups, Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis; other groups were not included due to the dearth of data and scholarly literature. This article will: 1) utilize the Asian American modes of incorporation framework (Paik, Kula, Saito, Rahman, & Witenstein, 2014) to understand the immigration experiences of South Asian communities; 2) present current demographic, occupational and educational data on South Asians, 3) provide historical context on three waves of South Asian immigration to the US both before and after the Immigration Act of 1965, and 4) discuss how past immigration experiences link to present-day ethnic communities and their educational trends. The article will conclude with how this historical analysis can help inform practice and policy recommendations for South Asian American communities.

Theoretical Framework: Modes of Incorporation

The theoretical framework is based on the “Asian American modes of incorporation” by Paik et al. (2014), adapted from Portes and Rumbaut’s (1990, 2001) early work on modes of incorporation, to examine the immigration experiences of Asian communities in the US and their impact on later group outcomes (e.g., education). The framework consists of four key factors that affect immigrant experiences in terms of adaptation to the host country: a) *Government Policy*, b) *Societal Reception*, c) *Co-ethnic Communities*, and d) *Other Barriers & Opportunities*. The first three factors derive from Portes and Rumbaut’s original model. The fourth factor was added by Paik et al. (2014) to examine how time of arrival; location and settlement patterns; class status, occupation, and educational level; and language abilities affected immigrant experiences. Each of these four factors is categorized as positive, negative, or neutral experiences, as described below. The adapted modes of incorporation framework will be used to understand how current educational and occupational trends are impacted by the South Asian immigration trajectory.

Government Policy

Under this framework, government policy is characterized as “receptive”, “indifferent”, or “hostile” towards immigration for ethnic groups. *Receptive*

policy encourages immigration with assistance or incentives, *indifferent* policy allows legal immigration without added assistance, and *hostile* policy blocks immigration.

Societal Reception

Societal reception refers to the public perception and prejudices against immigrant populations, which often influence the types of employment and other opportunities for new immigrants. Societal reception by immigrants is characterized as “prejudiced,” “neutral” or “unprejudiced.”

Co-ethnic Communities

Portes and Rumbaut (1990, 2001) described co-ethnic communities as resource networks, rather than social networks, within each ethnic group that provides newcomers with access to information, resources and socioeconomic opportunities. Co-ethnic communities are characterized as “weak”, “strong”, or “dispersed” based on the concentration or disbursement of laborers, professionals, or entrepreneurs. A community is “strong” if the ethnic group is comprised mostly of professionals and highly educated individuals living in areas of high ethnic concentration. A community is “dispersed” if its group members are skilled professionals, but dispersed geographically because of their low reliance on their ethnic communities for resources. And a community is considered “weak” if its members live in areas of high ethnic concentration, but consist primarily of less skilled individuals.

Other Barriers and Opportunities

Paik et al. (2014) included six factors under “Other Barriers and Opportunities”, which are critical to understanding immigration experiences for Asian immigrants: a) *time of arrival* (pre-or post-1965; marked by the Immigration Act legalizing immigration from Asia, thereby enabling a more favorable environment for immigrant groups); b) *settlement patterns* (coastal or inland; coastal settlements offered easier access to co-ethnic networks); c) *class status/SES* (higher or lower; higher status acceded greater benefits); d)

occupation (professional or working class; professional and entrepreneurial fields produced better prospects); e) *education level* (higher educational attainment lead to greater opportunity); and f) *English language ability* (greater English ability enabled easier acculturation to the host country). These factors play an important role in the types of opportunities or barriers experienced by Asian American groups.

South Asian Communities in the US: Current Demographic, Educational, and Occupational Data

South Asian Americans have roots from the Indian subcontinent, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives (Sandhu & Madathil, 2008). According to the US Census, in 2010 the South Asian population was estimated to be about 3.86 million, reflecting over 20% of the Asian American population (US Census, 2010). They were also the fastest growing among all Asian Americans (Asian American Center for Advancing Justice 2011). This study will focus on immigrants from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, because these countries have sent the largest numbers of immigrants to the United States, and much of the available data and scholarly literature pertains to them.

While migration from all three countries has steadily increased, Indians make up the highest US population of South Asians. Indians account for just over 80% of South Asians and are the third-largest Asian American group in the US behind Chinese and Filipino Americans. The 2010 Census statistics show the Indian population in the US grew from 1,899,599 in 2000 to 3,183,063 in 2010; a growth rate of about 68% (US Census, 2010). Pakistanis numbered at over 409,000 and Bangladeshis at 147,000 in 2010. A notable fact about the South Asian population is that they represent mostly new immigrants. Over three-quarters arrived after 1980 and are therefore mostly foreign-born (US Government Accountability Office, 2007).

Today, these South Asians live primarily in metropolitan areas on the East and West coasts. The largest South Asian communities are located in California, New York, New Jersey and Texas. Indians and Pakistanis are also populous in Illinois, while Bangladeshis have sizable populations in Michigan (US Census, 2010). Table 1 presents a visual description of the US South Asian population from 2010 Census data:

Table 1

South Asian American 2010 Demographic Data

Ethnic group	Population (alone or in any combination)	% of AA population (17,320,856)	Most populous states
Indian	3,183,063	18.4%	CA, NY, NJ, TX, IL
Pakistani	409,163	2.4%	NY, TX, CA, IL, NJ, VI
Bangladeshi	147,300	0.85%	NY, CA, TX, MI, NJ

Source: 2010 US Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey,

Race/ethnicity population alone or in any combination.

In terms of educational trends, South Asians generally exhibit high K-12 and post-secondary achievement. Table 2 shows that all three South Asian groups have more bachelors and graduate degrees than Whites, Asians, and the overall US population. Indians lead with 38.8% earning graduate degrees ([US Census, 2010](#)). Not only are many South Asian Americans completing bachelors and graduate education, some scholars have found that the more successful Asian American groups are also overrepresented at first-tier universities ([Sakamoto, Goyette, & Kim, 2009](#); [Xie & Goyette, 2003](#)). Regarding K-12 achievement, South Asians have high grades compared to Whites and other Asians. Kao's use of ([1995](#)) data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 ([NELS:88](#)) found higher academic performance of South Asians, Chinese, and Korean eighth graders compared to Whites and other Asian groups from comparable family backgrounds. Vartanian et al. ([2007](#)) examined Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Southeast Asian, and South Asian populations in NELS:88 data and found that South Asian students had the highest GPA amongst them. On the other hand, some qualitative studies warn the children of a recent subgroup of South Asian immigrants arriving since the mid-1980s face difficulty in adjustment to school and performance in school ([Bhattacharya, 2000](#); [Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004](#); [National Asian Pacific American Community Development Data Center, 2005](#); [Verma, 2008](#); [Wright, 2007](#)). This trend has not yet affected the achievement statistics for South Asians overall, but there is a possibility of lowered achievement levels in the future.

Table 2

Educational Attainment of South Asian Americans in 2010

	Less than high school %	High school graduate %	Some college or A.A. %	Bachelor's degree %	Graduate degree %
<i>Total</i>	14.4	28.5	28.9	17.7	10.4
<i>White</i>	12.3	29.0	29.3	18.6	10.9
<i>Asian</i>	14.6	16.0	19.6	29.6	20.3
Indian	9.0	9.2	11.0	32.0	38.8
Bangladeshi	16.7	16.5	18.2	25.9	22.8
Pakistani	13.3	17.4	16.1	30.1	23.1

Source: 2010 US Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey, Population 25 years and over, Race/ethnicity alone population.

Occupational trends appear to be bi-modal for South Asians. Many have careers in the technology and medical fields, yet several within the community are also employed in lower-wage jobs as cashiers, taxi workers, and restaurant workers ([SAALT, 2012](#)). Indians tend to occupy the management/professional occupations while Bangladeshis and Pakistanis are in sales/office. Additionally, Indians have a much higher average income than the national average and in comparison to other non-Asian and Asian subgroups. For instance, from 2005 data the US Government Accountability Office ([2007](#)) estimated the average income of Asian Indians at \$65,000, Whites at \$52,097, African Americans at \$36,025, Hispanics at \$32,106, and Chinese (the second highest average income among Asian Americans) at \$56,000. Bangladeshis and Pakistanis usually have lower income levels than Indians.

South Asian Immigration History

South Asian immigration to the US occurred in three major waves, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. To better understand the story of this migration, it is important to be familiar with the historical context of the Indian subcontinent. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh once constituted one big nation under British rule, called India. In 1947, when British rule ended,

the country was divided into the independent countries of India and Pakistan ([Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004](#)). The majority of Indians were Hindu while Bangladeshis and Pakistanis were predominantly Muslim. In 1971, another division occurred – the eastern half of Pakistan became independent and gave birth to Bangladesh. This context explains why much of the historical literature on South Asian immigration to the US discusses only migration from ‘India’.

First Wave

In the earlier years, immigrant numbers from South Asia were small and estimated in the few thousands. The first wave of immigrants arrived between 1897 and 1924, and consisted of mainly illiterate male Sikh and Muslim peasants from the Punjab province in India ([Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004](#); [Leonard, 1997](#)). Like the East Asians, they were looking for better economic opportunities in the US and came to fulfill the cheap labor needs of rail, agricultural and lumber industries in California, Oregon and Washington. There was also a much smaller number of Muslim men migrating from the Bengal region of India (what is present day Bangladesh) working as peddlers in New York, New Jersey, Maryland and New Orleans ([Bald, 2015](#)). This early wave of immigration was marked by great anti-Asian, highly racist sentiment. The South Asian immigrants were not allowed to own land, gain citizenship rights, bring their spouses and other family members to the US, or even marry local white American women ([Leonard, 1997](#); [Purkayastha, 2005](#)). Soon, a number of immigration exclusion acts were established to curtail population growth in the US for many Asian groups. For example, the Immigrant Act of 1924 barred the entry of all Asian groups, including Indians. Consequently, the population of Indian immigrants became smaller. Some of the men married Mexican women and created new ethnic communities, such as the Punjabi-Mexicans. Similarly, the Bengali Muslim men in the East Coast married Creole, Puerto Rican, and African American women and integrated into some of America’s neighborhoods of color (e.g., New York’s Bengali Harlem) ([Bald, 2015](#)).

Second Wave

In 1965, US immigration laws were changed to accommodate labor market needs. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 marked the beginning of the second wave of immigration (Leonard, 1997; Sandhu & Madathil, 2008). This wave of immigrants was drawn from all over India and from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The new immigration laws gave preference to highly skilled professionals, such as scientists, doctors and engineers, and their families (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Purkayastha, 2005; Saran, 2007). Consequently, a large percentage of South Asians who migrated after 1965 have been college educated, urban middle class professionals, or students seeking advanced university training. Generally, these individuals achieved financial success, gained US citizenship, and were allowed to bring family members with them. They moved into the white suburban neighborhoods of America and assimilated into the dominant host society.

There has been a continuous and steady stream of students coming to the US for higher education; more than half of all Indian immigrants who changed their status in the 1950s and 60s to resident alien had arrived initially as students (Leonard, 1997). In the Institute of International Education's (2010) *Open Doors* report, its annual statistical survey of international students in US higher education found that in 2009-10, India sent the second largest group of foreign students to the US (104,897 students; 15% of all international students). The issue of "brain drain" was becoming a concern to South Asian countries with an estimated one-fourth of graduates of Indian medical colleges coming to the US annually in the mid to late 1900s (Leonard, 1997). But it did not lead to any significant emigration restrictions by the South Asian countries due to unemployment problems in the home countries and the welcomed influx of foreign-currency remittances sent to the home countries by emigrants.

Third Wave

During the 1980s, the third wave of immigration brought a significant demographic shift, increasing polarization within the South Asian immigrant community. Many second-wave and well-established South Asian Americans

were sponsoring their family members through the Family Reunification Act (Sandhu & Madathil, 2008). Thus, while skilled professionals and students continued to arrive, a subgroup of immigrants who were less educated and less fluent in English than their predecessors came to the US through diversity visas and family reunification criteria. Even those with foreign post-secondary credentials often found they were unaccepted in the US. These individuals settled into urban ethnic enclaves and worked mostly blue-collar jobs as taxi drivers, store clerks, or small motel operators, or owned small businesses (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Verma, 2008). More Bangladeshis and Pakistanis began migrating in this third wave of immigration and thus tend to have lower socioeconomic statuses than their Indian counterparts (National Asian Pacific American Community Development Data Center, 2005).

Modes of Incorporation, Barriers and Opportunities for South Asians

This section uses the modes of incorporation framework (Paik et al., 2014) to review the literature and analyze the immigration experiences of South Asian Americans. Taking their history into account, government policies, societal reception, and co-ethnic communities will be discussed in positive, negative or neutral experiences (as described earlier). Settlement patterns, class and occupational levels, education, and English fluency will also be discussed as additional barriers or opportunities for each immigration wave.

Government Policy

Before the mid-1900s, government policies were fairly *hostile* towards South Asian immigrants. Both federal and state laws restricted these immigrants from land ownership, citizenship rights, bringing family members, and marrying white women (Leonard, 1997; Purkayastha, 2005). For example, The California Alien Land Act of 1913 prevented all immigrants ineligible for citizenship to own agricultural land. Then in 1917 and 1924, US immigration laws barred entry to all Asian immigrants. It wasn't until 1946 when South Asians began seeing signs of favorable change in the decades of discrimination in US immigration policy. The 1946 Luce-Cellar Act initiated this change by accepting 200 South Asians into the US

annually and allowing their naturalization. Once citizens, they could bring relatives to the US. Then in 1965, the hallmark US Immigration and Nationality Act legalized and increased immigration for South Asians on the basis of preferred skills or family reunification (Purkayastha, 2005). With this *receptive* policy, education and work opportunities became readily available in engineering, medicine, and science, encouraging thousands of highly educated and skilled South Asians to emigrate to the US.

Since the 1980s, a subgroup of lower-skilled South Asian immigrants began arriving under the diversity visa and family re-unification criteria. While many second wave immigrants held US citizenship, the newer immigrants held temporary visas or sought political asylum. Some studies indicate this subgroup is facing difficulty adapting to the US (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Chhaya Community Development Corporation, 2012). These individuals often find their foreign degrees and professional qualifications are rejected in the US. Hence, they face competition for limited jobs and are relegated to blue collar work. Government policies and attitudes have been *indifferent* as there is very little support for these newcomers. Since 9/11, US immigration scrutiny has also fallen heavily on South Asians entering and living in the US, demonstrating the most recent form of government *hostility* towards an Asian group (Verma, 2008). Certain government policies and practices have threatened their civil liberties, such as the Patriot Act and Special Registration program (South Asian Network, 2016). The community has also been targeted for FBI surveillance and investigations, detentions and deportations. Additionally, the wait for citizenship and employment visas has been prolonged due to post 9/11 anti-immigrant legislature (Verma, 2008).

Societal Reception

American societal reception of South Asian immigrants shifted with each wave. Perception has shifted from viewing the early migrants as “the yellow peril” to the model minority and now back to seeing South Asians as backwards and dangerous (Verma, 2008, p. 19). The first wave of immigrants was perceived as illiterate and backward and heavily discriminated against in the farming communities. Their arrival in California was portrayed by American media as “a tide of turbans” flowing into the

country (Bald, 2015; Purkayastha, 2005, p. 17; Verma, 2008, p. 3). This *prejudiced* perception essentially discriminated against South Asians, subjugating the immigrants to menial jobs with unfair rules in their workplace. Their arrival was also met with white citizen's groups and labor unions stacked against them as Chinese and Japanese migration had been targeted as well (Bald, 2015).

The South Asians who migrated to the US after 1965 were well-educated, English-proficient, highly qualified professionals who settled in middle-class neighborhoods. While African Americans and other minority groups received unfavorable perceptions during the post 1960s era, Asian Americans, including South Asians, began surfacing *favorably* as the model minority (Purkayastha, 2005; Verma, 2008). Media coverage began highlighting the strong academic achievement among the South Asian population. South Asians were applauded for overcoming racial barriers and successfully integrating into American society through their hard work, compliance, and quiet determination. Nevertheless, many still encountered glass ceilings in the workplace and other barriers both socially and professionally.

South Asians from the post 1980s lower socioeconomic subgroup, as well as all South Asians in the post-9/11 political climate, encountered anti-immigration sentiment and racism. The third wave of immigrants were increasingly settling in working class ethnic enclaves and being viewed as the low-skilled “unassimilable foreigner” holding onto backwards traditions (Verma, 2008, p. 6). Their confinement to ethnic enclaves and retention of strong cultural practices has elicited *negative* societal reception. Ethnic enclaves, such as the India towns in New York City, were viewed from the outside by other Americans “as a form of ethnic separation and a rejection of American civic culture” (Veer, 1995, p. 13). Even the earlier, post-1965 migrants from South Asia harbored disdain for the newer immigrants, as their deviance from the model minority stereotype (marked by low income and lower educational performance) threatened the overall image of South Asians in the US (Bhattacharjee, 2006). In the post-9/11 political climate, South Asians in the US from all immigration waves encountered some degree of prejudice, though the post-1980s lower socioeconomic subgroup experienced the brunt of post-9/11 racism due to their vulnerable economic positions and their ethnic neighborhood settlement. South Asian, Sikh,

Muslim, and Arab Americans became the targets of numerous hate crimes, employment discrimination, bullying, harassment, and profiling (SAALT, 2012). For example, places of worship were often vandalized and attacked, such as the 2012 shooting of the Sikh gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Several education scholars also addressed the increasing levels of harassment and discrimination towards Muslim and South Asian students since 9/11 (Lee & Kumashiro, 2005; Ngo, 2006; Verma, 2008).

Co-Ethnic Communities

Punjabi immigrants from the pre-1965 era initially traveled around California in groups. Facing discrimination from local communities, they settled and found refuge in their own ethnic enclaves, forming *strong* co-ethnic communities (Leonard, 1997). These migrants were mostly composed of men, unable to bring their wives and families from India, and denied marriage licenses to marry white women. Thus, over time many of them married local Mexican women because of their cultural similarities and proximity, and formed Punjabi-Mexican bi-ethnic communities in areas such as California's Imperial Valley (southeast) and Yuba City (north). These communities still exist today with descendants of the Punjabi-Mexican pioneers. The bi-ethnic relationships helped early South Asian migrants draw on resources from both their own ethnic communities as well as the Mexican communities.

The post-1965 South Asian immigrants assimilated into middle-class, mostly white suburbs. Since this wave came with more education, professional degrees, and the ability to speak English, they did not need to rely on co-ethnic communities for employment or other resources (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Leonard, 1997; Purkayastha, 2005). Many of these immigrants were already equipped with their own human, social, and cultural capital. Despite their *dispersed* settlement, they still maintained strong ties for other social resources (Purkayastha, 2005).

The subgroup of newer, working-class immigrants settled in urban areas where ethnic enclaves are prominent and growing (e.g., Little Bangladesh in Los Angeles, Little India in Chicago, etc.) (Ingram, 2007; Purkayastha, 2005). Since jobs were not readily available for this group of less qualified immigrants, urban ethnic enclaves provided an initial social and economic

platform for newly arriving families (Leonard, 1997; Verma, 2008). This tendency to cluster in enclaves demonstrates both *strong* and *weak* community characteristics. The social networks may provide an initial platform for newly arriving families; however, paths to upward mobility stagnated due to the drained urban economy, competition for limited jobs, rejection and low acceptance of foreign degrees and qualifications, poverty, surge in anti-immigrant attitudes, and class fractures within immigrant communities (Verma, 2008).

Other Barriers and Opportunities

Time of arrival clearly determined the types of barriers and opportunities South Asian immigrants faced throughout their three waves of immigration. South Asians arriving at the beginning of the twentieth century found low-skilled jobs right away working the agricultural, lumber, and railroad industries alongside other Asian Americans. However, these immigrants came from peasant backgrounds with low literacy and English speaking abilities, making it hard for them to acculturate in the host society. They encountered a hostile and racist climate with lack of access to civil liberties.

It wasn't until the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act that restrictions were lifted and immigration policies attracted a second wave of skilled Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshis into professional and technical occupations. This second wave has been characterized as highly educated and arriving in the US with higher socioeconomic status. Individuals from this higher SES background were more familiar with the western educational system and English language due to the effects of British colonial rule, and thus had an easier time assimilating into the US mainstream culture (Leonard, 1997; Purkayastha, 2005).

A subgroup of lower SES migrants (primarily Pakistanis and Bangladeshis) in the third wave faced considerably more barriers than their earlier skilled and educated predecessors. Due to their lower education, rejection of foreign degrees, and lower English abilities, they clung to urban ethnic enclaves for support, but found themselves working in low-wage occupations and facing hardship and anti-immigrant attitudes (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Chhaya Community Development Corporation, 2012;

National Asian Pacific American Community Development Data Center, 2005; Verma, 2008).

As for their location and settlement areas, South Asian Americans continue to be concentrated in metropolitan and coastal areas. These settlement areas are normally considered a positive factor because of their easier access to jobs and co-ethnic networks (Paik et al., 2014). Today, most Indians are upper-class professionals, and they tend to have *dispersed* settlements in suburban areas. Several Bangladeshi and Pakistani immigrants with generally less skilled professions comprise a mix of *dispersed* and *weak* communities in both suburban and urban areas (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; National Asian Pacific American Community Development Data Center, 2005; Verma, 2008).

Linking Past Immigration Context to Present-Day Social and Educational Outcomes

Many South Asians in the US today are known to have high socioeconomic and educational outcomes. Census data (2010) show South Asians generally are the highest achieving group in the US with more bachelors and graduate degrees than Whites, Asians, and the overall US population. Many are economically and occupationally successful. Income levels for Indians, for example, surpass the national average and in comparison to other non-Asian and Asian subgroups. However, a closer examination of the group by national origin and immigrant wave reveals nuances in their present-day outcomes. This section highlights the link between government policy, societal reception, co-ethnic communities and other barriers and opportunities that influence present-day economic and educational outcomes for each wave of South Asian immigrants.

As described earlier, the initial wave of South Asian immigrants (mostly Punjabi Sikhs) came with low socioeconomic backgrounds, peasantry skills, limited education and English ability. They were relegated to agricultural, mining, and railroad work and were met with societal prejudice, hostility, and blocked immigration from the US government. In the face of such hostility, the Punjabi Sikhs banded together to form strong co-ethnic communities as support systems. Later they integrated with the Mexican-American community by marrying some of their women, and gained access

to greater resources through these relationships. Through the establishment of family ties with the Mexican Americans, the Punjabi Sikhs found loopholes in government policies that barred them from owning land.

Research on the descendants of this immigration wave is limited. Margaret Gibson (1987, 1988) was one of the few scholars to have conducted a study on the population which dated back to the 1980s. Her qualitative case study found that Punjabi Sikhs at the time became entrepreneurial farmers and agriculturalists through hard work and drawing on resources from their co-ethnic communities. Their children faced barriers in American schooling, but nonetheless, fared well in their education. They outperformed both White American and other minority students at the same schools, even though they experienced significant cultural conflict between home and school, little parental school involvement, prejudice, language proficiency problems, and low socioeconomic status. Interviews revealed the Punjabi working-class parents relied heavily on education as a path to socioeconomic mobility for their children.

The Immigrant Act of 1965 welcomed and recruited a second group of South Asians from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh with higher socioeconomic backgrounds and professional skills. With their English language infused by British colonial rule, they did not need to rely on co-ethnic networks to navigate the host society. They were able to easily enter the American workforce and assimilate into affluent White neighborhoods, now residing primarily in California, New York, New Jersey, and Texas (Leonard, 1997; Purkayastha, 2005; US Census, 2010). While these second wave South Asians earned reputations as the “model minority” – hard workers and high achievers both educationally and professionally – sources say they still encountered different forms of discrimination such as glass ceilings and unfair employment practices. What is unique about this Asian group is that despite their dispersed settlement, South Asians from this and other immigration waves maintained strong ethnic ties to mobilize valuable social resources across the globe. These strong transnational networks with South Asian families in multiple countries is conceptualized as the South Asian *diaspora* (Leonard, 1997; Purkayastha, 2005).

The high educational attainment, occupation, and income statistics primarily reflect this second immigration wave from South Asia who gained white collar positions as engineers, medical doctors, and scientists, and in

turn raised their children to follow similar paths. These highly skilled professionals and students continue to immigrate to the US today in large numbers. A significant percentage of international students in US higher education constitute South Asians, particularly from India ([Institute of International Education, 2010](#)). The demographic composition of Silicon Valley tech industries also illuminates the continued and growing presence of South Asians in highly professional fields. Table 3 shows that compared to all other Asian subgroups, Indians obtained a much higher percentage (45%) of their legal permanent resident status through employment-based preferences in 2010. This indicates that most Indians in the US today are still gaining legal immigration status through their professional skills.

While skilled professionals and students continue to immigrate to the US in large numbers, a particular subgroup of South Asians that differ in immigration experiences and modes of incorporation began arriving since the 1980s alongside the others. Because of this demographic shift that began forming within the South Asian American community, a third immigration wave was noted for this period. New immigration policies, namely the diversity visas and family reunification criteria, began attracting South Asians with fewer professional skills, less education, and lower English ability than their predecessors. Due to low human capital, the newest migrants gravitated to the ethnic neighborhoods in urban America. Today, they work in low-wage occupations and face hardships in the host country with competition for limited jobs, poverty, and anti-immigrant attitudes ([Verma, 2008](#)).

It is important to note that Bangladeshis and Pakistanis are the two fastest growing Asian American groups and they mostly immigrated with the 1980's subgroup. Consequently, their demographic characteristics are differing more and more from the Indians. For example, while most Indians obtained legal permanent resident status in the US through employment-based preferences (Table 3), roughly 75% of Bangladeshis and 80% of Pakistanis entered as the immediate relatives of US citizens or under family-sponsored preferences. Bangladeshi and Pakistani Americans also tend to be less wealthy than the general Indian American population. Among Asian Americans, Bangladeshis have the second highest poverty rates after Hmong, with about 20% of Bangladeshis living in poverty ([Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, 2011](#)).

Table 3

Asian Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Class of Admissions, 2010

Country of Birth	Family Sponsored Preferences		Employment Based Preferences		Immediate Relatives of US Citizens		Diversity		Refugees & Asylees		Other	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.		
Bangladesh	41	6006	6	827	33	4935	19	2800	1	171	0.5	80
Bhutan	D	0	6	0.5	28	D	99	6071	0	0	0	
Burma	4	459	1	86	5	604	3	329	89	11445	0	2
Cambodia	14	418	2	59	76	2266	4	115	4	113	1	15
China	19	13610	25	17949	34	24198	0	23	21	14943	0	140
Hong Kong	49	1196	19	464	30	731	1	30	0	7	0	4
India	21	14636	45	31118	32	21831	0	58	2	1324	0	195
Indonesia	10	306	17	515	48	1461	5	138	19	673	1	39
Japan	2	120	32	1973	63	3916	4	218	0	12	0	25
Laos	9	113	5	59	71	847	0	4	14	172	0	5
Macau	59	84	13	18	24	34	5	7	0	0	0	0
Malaysia	9	149	30	508	41	704	2	40	18	301	0	12
Mongolia	1	5	11	66	54	320	14	80	20	121	1	2
Nepal	4	269	11	788	18	1312	23	1644	44	3093	0	9

Table 3

Asian Persons Obtaining Legal Permanent Resident Status by Class of Admissions, 2010 (continued)

Country of Birth	Family Sponsored Preferences		Employment Based Preferences		Immediate Relatives of US Citizens		Diversity		Refugees & Asylees		Other
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	
Pakistan	34	6247	16	2896	47	8522	0	14	3	507	0
Philippines	31	17849	11	6423	58	33746	0	14	0	55	0
Singapore	8	65	49	377	37	289	2	14	2	18	1
South Korea	11	2351	52	11642	37	8128	0	6	0	7	0
Sri Lanka	10	195	26	530	32	645	19	394	13	258	1
Taiwan	26	1722	31	2090	40	2691	3	196	0	6	0
Thailand	4	345	6	530	44	4126	1	43	46	4276	1
Vietnam	59	18027	1	360	36	11091	0	0	3	1032	0
Total	24	84179	23	79284	38	132425	2	6167	13	44525	0.3
											1010

D = Data withheld to limit disclosure. Source: (Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, 2011) taken from US Department of Homeland Security's Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 2010.

Unfortunately, this subgroup receives little attention from the government and aid policies because their barriers and needs often get lost under the more favorable statistics and reputation of the successful South Asian groups. Immigrants in the third wave are not finding assistance to translate their foreign degrees into skilled work. Their dependence on ethnic enclaves is not as helpful when the more skilled South Asians are not connecting with the less-skilled communities. More and more scholars are starting to notice that children from this subgroup are facing difficulty in schools. Often, the model minority stereotype of South Asians confounds their struggles, as school teachers and even their parents expect them to excel in academics, yet do not have the human capital nor assistance at school to achieve those outcomes (Gibson, 1988; Saran, 2007; Verma, 2008). While educational attainment rates are still high for Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Indians in the US, the educational outcomes of the third wave subgroup may either be masked under these statistics, or there is a possibility achievement rates may drop in the future.

Finally, a more recent event in the US has affected both immigration policy and societal reception of South Asians across national origin, immigration wave, religion, class, gender and age. The 9/11 attacks with the ensuing “war on terror” has undoubtedly affected the lives of South Asians in the US (Verma, 2008). Journalists and scholars have pointed to a growing fear in the nation towards those who resemble brown-skinned Arabs, resulting in South Asians becoming targets of misguided scrutiny. This has spurred racism, anti-immigrant attitudes, and violence against the South Asian American individuals and communities. Thousands of hate crimes have occurred even to the present day, leaving many South Asians “uneasy” and “scared” (Verma, 2008). Newer immigrants succumb to prolonged waits for visas and permanent residencies due to post 9/11 anti-immigrant legislature. Students in schools are also being targeted with 9/11 racism, and schools have not reacted with appropriate assistance for these students (Lee & Kumashiro, 2005; Ngo, 2006).

Conclusions and Implications

This article uses Paik et al.’s (2014) comprehensive model to demonstrate how analysis of the historical context of the South Asian American

community provides greater understanding of their immigrant experiences and later socioeconomic and educational outcomes. South Asian Americans overall have high educational backgrounds and income levels, but there is diversity even in this group, and unfortunately some needs often go overlooked.

In summary, the majority of South Asians immigrated under favorable or neutral modes of incorporation during the second and third immigration waves. They were wealthy, educated, fluent in English, and had professional skills. Therefore, they did not need government assistance and readily found white collar jobs as engineers, medical doctors, and scientists, and assimilated into white suburban neighborhoods. These immigrants reflect the high educational attainment, occupation, and income statistics. They were indeed vastly different from the earliest predecessors who, small in number, came with several barriers to incorporation, such as low socio-economic background, lack of literacy and English skills, as well as government and societal hostility. Today, these historical Punjabi ethnic enclaves continue to exist, however, little is known about their current educational performance and their group outcomes are trumped in number by the influx of South Asians who arrived after 1965.

Some current third wave immigrants of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin are not faring as well. Disaggregated data finds that Bangladeshis and Pakistanis have much lower average household incomes than Indians, with almost 20% of Bangladeshis living in poverty ([Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, 2011](#)). Bangladeshis and Pakistanis also tend to immigrate to the US with fewer occupation-ready skills. This subgroup receives little attention from government aid and policies because their needs often get overlooked under the general, more favorable statistics of South Asians. In addition to government support, co-ethnic community members who are more well-established can help the newer immigrants navigate socio-economic institutions in the US.

Additionally, South Asians who reside in urban ethnic enclaves have been known to bear the brunt of 9/11 prejudice and racism. Educational practitioners and policymakers must be aware that the current political climate is particularly difficult for the South Asian community as children in schools are often targets of such prejudice. School practitioners must be vigilant about such incidences and respond appropriately.

An important lesson that can be learned from examining South Asian immigration experiences is the importance of disaggregating the Asian experience in general. There are about 34 Asian groups and over 300 languages that make up the Asian American demographic (Teranishi et al., 2004). Educational institutions and scholars often lump all Asian groups together in reporting and research, creating a misleading sense of homogeneity (Blair & Qian, 1998; Fong, 2008; Ngo & Lee, 2007; Paik et al., 2014). Significant between-group differences exist in the context of immigration, acculturation in the US, and educational and occupational trends. Signs of some progress are evident as some researchers and institutions have begun disaggregating information and research by major subgroups such as “East Asian,” “South Asian,” and “Southeast Asian”. However, it is important to note that diversity within each category also exists and usage of these terms can conceal such distinctions between sub-ethnic groups.

Another lesson gleaned from the case of South Asians is that the “model minority myth” can play a detrimental role in education. Overall, South Asians are still more highly educated than the general US population (Farver, Bhadha, & Narang, 2002), yet children from the 1980s subgroup struggle because they may not have the family human capital nor assistance at school to achieve the same outcomes (Bhattacharya, 2000; Gibson, 1988; Saran, 2007; Verma, 2008). The model minority stereotype can mask children’s educational needs, leaving them unmet (Ngo & Lee, 2007; Paik et al., 2014), but scholars report that many teachers expect all South Asians to excel in academics. A true understanding of the nature of South Asian immigration experiences should result in a greater awareness and support of the barriers faced by students and their families. Additionally, disaggregation of education data by South Asian subgroups is important. Census data already show that Indians lead South Asians in postsecondary achievement rates, but with the influx of more varied South Asian groups, it is important to see how students in K-12 are performing by ethnic subgroup in terms of education and later economic outcomes.

Understanding the historical context and development of diverse South Asian groups are essential for a better understanding of present-day communities and their resources. The South Asian American experiences over three immigration waves demonstrates the evolvement of immigrant

families and their co-ethnic communities over time. This historical lens also helps to understand and address current social and educational outcomes of both higher-achieving and lower-achieving South Asian subgroups. It unmasks the educational needs of some groups that have been ignored. These issues bring awareness to the diverse needs and experiences of South Asian students to educators, researchers, and policymakers. Key stakeholders within social, governmental, and educational institutions, as well as in communities where immigrant groups are concentrated, can work together to develop and support community partnerships.

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52 Rahman & Paik – South Asian Immigration & Education in the U.S.

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The visual rhetoric of self-advocacy organizations on poverty: All about courage?

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The Visual Rhetoric of Self-Advocacy Organizations on Poverty: All about Courage?

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Abstract

At the beginning of the 1990s, several European welfare states installed a policy on poverty that explicitly recognised the voice and life knowledge of people in poverty. The idea of talking ‘with’ the poor came to prominence instead of talking ‘about’ or ‘to’ people in poverty. Beresford and Croft (1995) proclaimed a possible paradigm shift from advocacy to self-advocacy. In Belgium, in the aftermath of the General Report on Poverty (1994), grassroots organisations such as ATD Fourth World and BMLIK (Movement of People with Low Income and Children) gained recognition as ‘organisations where people in poverty take the floor’. BMLIK launched the photobook Courage (1998) which contains prominent black and white photographs portraying families in deep poverty combined with oral testimonies. The central question we ask is whether and how this photobook can be considered an emblematic case for the framing of poverty as a violation of human rights, and for the way the self-advocacy paradigm has been materialised in this. Through a visual-rhetorical analysis (Foss, 1994) of Courage we present our research findings wherein the ‘pedagogical aesthetic’ (Trachtenberg, 1990) of socially engaged photography comes to the fore, as well as how this contributes to social change and justice.

Keywords: visual rhetoric, pedagogical aesthetic, poverty, self-advocacy, (social) photography

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La Retórica Visual de la Autodefensa Contra la Pobreza: ¿Se Trata de Valentía?

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Abstract

A principios de los 90, diversos estados de bienestar europeos implementaron políticas sobre la pobreza que reconocían explícitamente la voz y el conocimiento procedente de la vida de las personas en situaciones de pobreza. La idea de hablar “con” las personas pobres alcanzó mayor notoriedad que hablar “sobre” o “a” las personas en situaciones de pobreza. Beresford y Croft (1995) proclamaron un posible cambio de paradigma desde la defensa hacia la autodefensa. En Bélgica, a raíz del Informe General sobre pobreza (1994), organizaciones de base como ATD Fourth World y BMLIK obtuvieron reconocimiento como “organizaciones donde las personas en situaciones de pobreza toman la palabra”. BMLIK lanzó el fotolibro Courage (1998) que contiene destacadas fotografías en blanco y negro que retratan a familias en situaciones de pobreza profunda combinadas con testimonios orales. La cuestión central que nos planteamos es si este fotolibro puede ser considerado como un caso emblemático para enmarcar la pobreza como una violación de los derechos humanos y sobre cómo y de qué manera el paradigma de la autodefensa puede ser materializado en él. A través de un análisis visual-retórico de Courage presentamos los resultados de nuestra investigación donde la “estética pedagógica” (Trachtenberg, 1990) de la fotografía socialmente comprometida aparece en primer plano, así como su contribución al cambio social y la justicia.

Keywords: retórica visual, estética pedagógica, pobreza, autodefensa, fotografía (social)

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There is no education without ethics; and,
precisely because ethics walks constantly very close to aesthetics,
because there is a certain intimacy between beauty and purity,
education is also an aesthetic event.
(Paulo Freire, 2014, p. 25)

At the beginning of the 1990s, several European welfare states installed a policy on poverty that explicitly recognised the voice and life knowledge of people in poverty (Beresford, 2002; Beresford, Green, Lister, & Woodard, 1999; Bouverne-De Bie, Claeys, De Cock, & Vanhee, 2003; Dobbernack, 2014; Holman, 1999; Krumer-Nevo, 2005, 2008; Lister, 2002; Vranken, 2004).¹ Emphasis was laid on talking ‘with’ people in poverty instead of talking ‘about’ or ‘to’ the poor (ATD Fourth World, 1996; GRP, 1994; Krumer-Nevo, 2005, 2008; Lister, 2002). In that regard, Beresford and Croft (1995) even proclaimed a paradigm shift from *advocacy*, which implies that non-poor allies advocate ‘for’ the poor, to *self-advocacy*, emphasising the agency of people in poverty to speak for themselves (Holman, 1978; Jenkins & Northway, 2002; Read & Wallcraft, 1993). In this process, policy makers were heavily influenced by the many grassroots organisations that had emerged throughout Europe from the 1950s onwards, and which contributed to the so-called rediscovery of poverty within Western Welfare States during the 1960s and 70s (Reinecke, 2015). Starting from a structural analysis of poverty and adopting a human rights perspective, these grassroots organisations criticised the role of the welfare state and of public social services in failing to eradicate poverty, as well as the paternalism of public social work that was held responsible for reinforcing the powerlessness and welfare dependency of people in poverty (Dobbernack, 2014; Lister, 2004; Reinecke, 2015; Townsend, 1970; Valentine, 1968; Van Robaeys, Dierckx, & Vranken, 2005).

The most well-known and oldest grassroots organisation acting within this context is ATD Fourth World, which was founded in 1957 in Noisy-le-grand near Paris and soon became an international movement the militancy of which was explicitly pinned on the assumption that poverty was a violation of human rights (Dean, 2015; Lister, 2002). We refer to ATD

Fourth World as a (*self*)-advocacy organisation as they radically condemned the misrecognition of the agency of people in poverty to speak for themselves and only aimed at representing the Fourth World “to an extent that they themselves are hampered to take their own defence, and with the conviction to enable them to do so as soon as possible”, for the people of Fourth World have the right “to advocate for their own case” (De Vos Van Steenwijk, 1977). The Belgian branch of ATD was established in 1971 (Mels, 2001), but in Belgium the paradigm shift is particularly reflected in the appearance of the *General Report on Poverty* (GRP, 1994). This white paper commissioned by the Belgian Government (Dehaene, 1992) has been recognised as the first policy document in Belgium in which the importance of the life knowledge of people in poverty was emphasised and direct dialogue with people in poverty was embraced (Bouverne-De Bie et al., 2003; Roets, Roose, De Bie, Claes, & van Hove, 2012; Van Robaeys et al., 2005).

Due to the active role the Belgian branch of ATD Fourth World played during its construction process, grassroots organisations suddenly gained political and public recognition as “organisations where people in poverty take the floor” (GRP, 1994, p. 5). In the aftermath of the GRP, another (*self*)advocacy organisation influenced by ATD Fourth World (Vanhee, personal communication, 2016), the Ghent based ‘Beweging van Mensen met Laag Inkomen en Kinderen’ (Movement of People with Low Income and Children) produced and launched the photobook *Courage* (BMLIK, 1998).² With this book, BMLIK explicitly touched upon the GRP by highlighting its relentless social activism that aimed at realising human rights in situations of so-called ‘deep poverty’.³ The organisation embodied the self-advocacy paradigm, and called both the non-poor and the poor to social action. The photobook was considered an educational instrument that could sensitise the non-poor as well as present BMLIK to people in poverty.⁴

Courage then could be considered an attempt to reframe poverty as a socially unjust violation of human rights by means of the visual (on framing see, e.g., (Van Gorp, 2007; Benford & Snow, 2000), as a reaction against certain photographic traditions that “seek out poverty and create a miserablist picture of life” and against the “strategies of domination and disempowerment” that characterised documentary photography (Connell & Hilton, 2014, p. 9; Phillips, 2009, p. 54). The question, however, remains

whether and how BMLIK succeeded in this venture and whether the book can be considered an emblematic case for the framing of poverty as a violation of human rights, and for the way the self-advocacy paradigm has been materialised in this. In order to answer that question, we will analyse the visual rhetoric of *Courage*. As an object or an artefact, the book doesn't escape the common form of photobooks, as it is basically presenting images that could be “conceived in terms of a narrative within an organized framework” (Koetze, 2016, p. 543). The photographs are reproduced within an ensemble of images and words and derive their form from their “function” (Trachtenberg, 1990, p. 168). According to Susan Sontag, the understanding of photographs is indeed based on how they function, or to put it another way: “Only that which narrates can make us understand”. This understanding, however, is contextual, since “functioning takes place in time, and must be explained in time” (Sontag, 1979, p. 23; see also Blair, 2004; Kjeldsen, 2015).

As a consequence, do we want to answer our question we will have to scrutinise the function of the photographs. In order to do that, we rely on the rhetorical schema Sonja K. Foss proposed to engage in a critical analysis of visual imagery (Foss, 1994). Foss argues that the photograph's function is not the function the photographer intended but rather the “action the image communicates” (Foss, 1994, p. 216; cf. Koetze, 2016, p. 4). According to her, three primary kinds of judgments are involved when evaluating the function as communicated in the image itself: (1) the “identification” of the function; (2) an “assessment” of how well that function is communicated and the support or means available; and (3) the scrutiny of the function itself that is conducted in an “evaluation” of its legitimacy or soundness determined by the implications and consequences of the function (Foss, 1994, p. 216). We followed this schema to analyse *Courage*, and use the threefold approach to structure our paper. The first section starts from a description of *Courage* in order to identify the book's nature. This also allows us to connect our case with a long-standing tradition of socially engaged photography, and to make one critical remark towards Foss's anti-intentionalist stance. The assessment will be central in the second section and is organised around the categories of (a) the materiality of the book, (b) the subject matter of the book and (c) the craftsmanship of the photographer in order to assess the book's visual rhetoric. In the third and final section the

photobook's visual rhetoric is discussed along with the concepts of (the violation of) human rights, self-advocacy and the social ambiguity that, as we will argue, is inherent to the pedagogical aesthetic of socially engaged photography.

Identifying Courage: Poverty and Socially Engaged Photography

While I learned her to write the names of her children,
she learned me how to understand people like her,
to see their efforts and to choose their side.
(André De Cock in *Courage*, BMLIK, 1998, our translation)⁵

With these words, André De Cock, a Belgian teacher and philosopher and the founder of BMLIK, opened *Courage*. It was not the first book the organisation produced (see, e.g., BMLIK, 1988) but certainly different as compared to previous publications, taking into account both the visual and material aspects of the book. While anonymised oral testimonies of families in deep poverty prevailed in older publications and no images were used, *Courage* contains oral testimonies combined with images portraying families in deep poverty in their everyday life environment and the intimacy of their homes. The book contains 120 pages which encompass three distinct sections: 10 introductory pages, a main body with 96 pages containing oral testimonies and photographs, and 24 pages explaining BMLIK's *raison d'être*.

The introductory section is devoted to the word ‘courage’ and its meaning in relation to poverty. The word is exactly the same in French and English, and is frequently used as a loanword from French in Flemish, a regional variant of Dutch, which is the language used in *Courage*. The title *Courage* only carries a subtitle on the title page inside the book, adding the message that “[p]overty is a violation of human rights” (BMLIK, 1998, pp. 3, 5). The book is addressed to “all defenders of human rights and civil liberties” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 4). The title is explained by making use of three oral testimonies, stating that “[p]eople of the Fourth World have a special connection [and] give each other courage and good advice to never give up. There is never a light at the end of the tunnel. Still, we carry on; there is no other choice. We have to encourage ourselves by repeating that we already

hit rock-bottom. The Movement [BMLIK] unites people with and without poverty experience. This allows us to move forward. It gives us courage” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 5). By gradually adding pieces of information on overall blank pages, the readers’ gaze is attracted to the essence of the book’s underlying message, which is to foster the bond between people in poverty and the non-poor in denouncing the violation of human rights.

The main body consists of six sequences of fourteen pages, containing two pages with oral testimonies followed by twelve pages that each carry a print of one black-and-white image without caption. Glancing through the book the photographs prominently come to the fore. Initially, BMLIK volunteers intended to make a montage (see, e.g., Grosvenor et al., 2016) with photographs and captions of oral testimonies, which was a familiar practice in the history of picturing poverty (see, e.g., Sontag, 1979). The photographer, Geen [Eugeen] Lettany, however, firmly rejected this idea and asserted that “[e]ach photograph has its own story to tell” (Lettany, personal communication, 2016). According to him, a photograph provokes a unique encounter that turns the viewers’ individual interpretation into a personal experience. Lettany, moreover, didn’t want any caption to restrict the meaning of a photograph. As a result, the testimonies have nothing to do with the photographs that “lived their own lives” while the testimonies were considered “breaks” in the collection of photographs presented (BMLIK, 1998, p. 6). From archival research we nevertheless know that the testimonies were clustered around six specific themes: “misery”, “solidarity”, “courage and power”, “expectations and rights”, “responsibility and awareness”, and “dignity and pride”.⁶ The order of the themes reveals a narrative that starts from a framing that was common at the time, emphasising the misery of people living in dire straits, and which subtly makes way for a counter-narrative, stressing poverty as a violation of human rights.

The last section of the book introduces BMLIK as an organisation that brings together people in poverty and their non-poor “allies” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 101). By allowing people in poverty to regularly meet with their “companions”, the Fourth World is presented as “one family”, “one people” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 99). By means of home visits, the organisation also reaches out to those companions who live in isolation and fear the spotlights. The poor who already engage within BMLIK might become “tutors” to

others (BMLIK, 1998, p. 100). BMLIK cherishes “solidarity” and “respect” through fostering “dialogue” between poor and non-poor. They constantly seek to establish “partnerships”, particularly with policy makers (BMLIK, 1998, p. 101), as is witnessed in a series of photographs showing people in poverty engaged in a discussion with politicians (BMLIK, 1998, pp. 102-103). The people in poverty at BMLIK desire “appreciation” and “understanding” instead of being confronted with “compassion”. They want non-poor “standing at their side” as “friends” and “collaborators” and not as “masters” whose only intention is to “lead” or to “help” them (BMLIK, 1998, pp. 101, 104). BMLIK puts people in poverty on a pedestal and aims at social change by means of what they call a “civilisation project”: “We chose for a democratic society that guarantees citizenship to all and therefore commits itself to a society in which each individual could fully participate and to the development of which everyone could contribute” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 114). As a consequence, the colophon explicitly presents *Courage* as a book that is made by people in poverty. Each family that contributed to the project had to be able to identify with it. They not only participated in their own name, but also on behalf of “other people living in dire straits” allowing the images to become real symbols of “their struggle for securing a better future, a dignified life and respect for all” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 6).

Identifying the nature of the book, which is to emphasise the importance of human rights and self-advocacy as an answer to the persistent character of deep poverty, it is obvious that *Courage* uses photography as a vehicle for social action and change. It thus subscribes into the tradition of socially engaged photography, also referred to as (social) documentary or humanist photography, that dates from around 1880 and is called one of the most long-standing categories in photography (Phillips, 2009, pp. 54, 64; see also, e.g., Grosvenor & Macnab, 2015; Finnegan, 2003; Koenig, 1998; Trachtenberg, 1990). The pioneering work of “the quintessential social documentary photographer” Lewis Hine (1874-1940) and the collective work by the Farm Security Agency (1935-1943) are among the most renowned examples (Philipps, 2009, p. 65; see also, e.g., Walther, 2016; Trachtenberg, 1990). Taking into account both social photography’s social reform ideology and BMLIK’s civilisation project, *Courage* could be described as a photobook that essentially calls upon the viewer to “cross an imaginary social boundary” by presenting a “pedagogical arrangement of

images” within a “macro-structure of social meaning” (Trachtenberg, 1990, pp. 200-201). The goal of the “civilisation project”, then, could be read as “to teach an art of *social seeing*” (italics in original; Trachtenberg, 1990, pp. 192). Following Alan Trachtenberg, we would like to call this the photobook’s “pedagogical aesthetic” (Trachtenberg, 1990, p. 230). It implies that the photographs carry an “aesthetic mission” that is inextricably bound to the photobook’s “moral mission” (Sontag, 1979, p. 115).⁷

Because of this pedagogical aesthetic, that foregrounds the social agenda as well as the relation between the photographer and the viewer, it becomes difficult to step into Foss’s anti-intentionalist stance, that we in this case judge to be too radical. Moreover, since we have access to biographical and historical evidence about the intentions of the makers, we acknowledge the relevance of the author’s intentions. Indeed, even when the photographer claims that the photographs “live their own lives”, the identification of the subject of a photograph always dominates the perception of it (Sontag, 1979). Although Foss argues that the function has to be distinguished from “purpose”, which involves an effect that is intended or desired by the photographer (Foss, 2004, p. 308), it could also be said that the photographer “discloses” the possible meanings of an image (Sontag, 1979, p. 92). On the other hand, privileging the photographers’ intentions over the interpretations of viewers closes off possibilities for new ways of experiencing the photograph (Foss, 1994, p. 215). The latter creates bias, insofar that the “knowing gaze” of the makers of the book might become a “blinding gaze” (Van Gorp, 2011, p. 511). It is however impossible to isolate the oral testimonies and the book’s last section from the photographs, even without the juxtaposition of testimonies-as-captions and photographs on one page. The oral testimonies therefore could be defined as “extended captions” that “frame” the photographs by limiting their “potential openness (polysemy)” (Sontag, 1979, p. 108). It implies that we can ignore neither the interaction between words and images nor the creators’ intentions but that we equally have to be cautious in our attempt to analyse them.

Assessing Courage: A Visual-Rhetorical Analysis

Materiality of the Photographs: The Importance of Print, Paper, Format and Design

The materiality of the photobook, including its format, paper choice, print quality and overall design, influences the visual experience and the interpretation of both the photographs and texts (Finnegan, 2003). With its landscape orientation and its page size that is bigger than A4 (300 mm x 235 mm), *Courage*'s form demands attention. The cover (Figure 1) is not a hard cover, but feels silky smooth and solid. The design is composed as a stylish grey frame and a thin white border around the photograph, with a clean letter font used for the word 'courage' in light yellow. The pages within the book are shiny white and thick, colours are minimalist (shades of grey, white and black) and white space is used in abundance to frame the one-photograph-pages and testimonies. This format was chosen because of Lettany's preference to photograph in landscape position as well as his preference to print, in his own dark room, on 240 mm x 180 mm photo paper. The 72 photographs are accordingly printed in that size, with the aim to resonate the immediacy of the poverty issue with the experience of viewers.

All these aspects of the materiality of *Courage*: the big, unusual format; the shiny, thick paper; the quality of the photoprints and the minimalist design elicit a rather luxurious and aesthetic appreciation. Jan Vanhee, the project leader and president of BMLIK at the time, especially contracted extra budget of a charity organisation to make a luxurious print possible, and to underline the underlying message that costs nor efforts were spared to trigger their interest in the lives of families living in poverty. One cannot ignore, however, the tension this luxurious abundance in materiality creates as poverty, in the cultural imaginary, is predominantly related to assumptions of shortage, lack, misery, and a dark side of life (Lister, 2004). Some readers-cum-viewers even openly criticised the print choices of the book and wondered "whether the money used for the luxurious print could not be better spend?" (Vanhee, personal communication, 2016). Vanhee's main reasoning was that, exactly because it were photographs of people in poverty they were entitled to be presented in ways that do justice to their human dignity, as this was often not the case in mainstream newspapers or

on television. Therefore, he compared the project with existing artistic photobooks and concluded that BMLIK should do the same: “It is not because it are photographs of the poor that they should be printed poorly!”, he firmly stated (Vanhee, personal communication, 2016).

Subject Matter and Craftsmanship: Throwing Light on Three Photographs

In our visual-rhetorical analysis, we decided to present and discuss three images, for each photograph is essentially part of an ensemble of images and words, and could by its “social identification” thus evoke the whole for which *Courage* stands (Trachtenberg, 1990, p. 200). Therefore, the three photographs are selected for their representativeness in relation to the diverse functions as communicated through the entire body of photographs in *Courage*, particularly the aim to contribute to the overall message that poverty is a socially unjust violation of human rights which influences the lifeworlds, hopes, dreams and aspirations of parents and children in poverty situations. Specific attention was also given to the way the child is present (or not) and in which relations it is presented, since BMLIK’s main reason of existence is to advocate for the interests of people with a low income and children (being reflected in the name of the organisation). Also Lettany, who had a professional background within a Catholic youth Movement, had a clear preference to communicate “through” the child and did so by putting the child in “its context” (e.g., the house, the neighbourhood, or in relation to the parents and siblings) while photographing them during “everyday life activities” such as playing (Lettany, personal communication, 2016). This resulted in the following selection: Figure 1, the cover-photograph which is repeated on p. 12 as the kick-off of the main body, showing no children; Figure 2 (p. 29), showing a child in relation to its parents; and Figure 3 (p. 85), showing a child in relation to its surroundings.

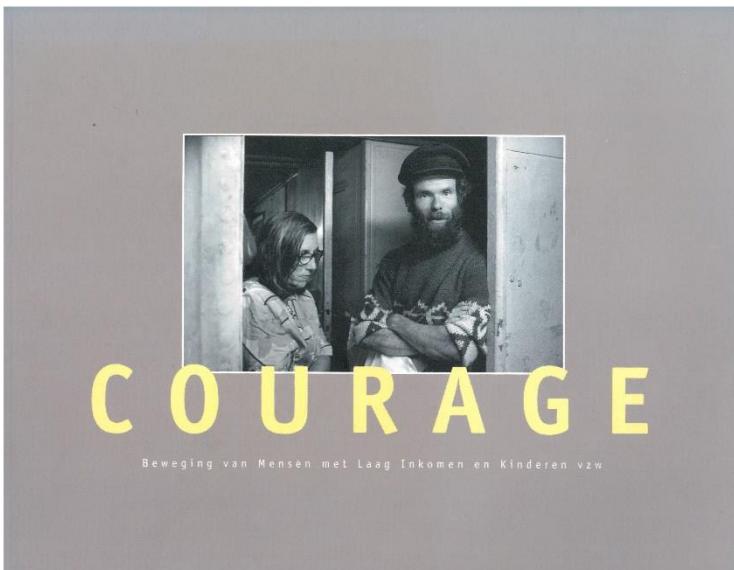


Figure 1. Cover reprinted from *Courage* (BMLIK, 1998)

Subject Matter

The cover-photograph presents a couple without any child, which is quite surprising as the main body of photographs (60 out of 72 images) show families with young children and the child appears as a powerful subject that might evoke sympathetic emotions of an audience (Grosvenor & Hall, 2012). This photograph, nevertheless, could be called emblematic for Lettany's style of social photography, which is intimate and tells an ambivalent story about poverty. In this case, the ambivalence is tangible in the way in which the man and woman are represented. At first sight, the attention of the viewer is drawn to the man, who with his eyes catches the light and looks directly into the camera, and as such connects to the viewer. Both Lettany and Vanhee (personal communication, 2016) affirmed that this photograph was chosen as cover image because of the self-conscious, proud

man who was perceived as, indeed, “courageous”. Moreover, they described the image as “very honest” and representative “for how people in poverty really live”. This interpretation is also elicited by the frontality of the man, which according to Sontag (1979, p. 36) signifies “solemnity, frankness, the disclosure of the subject’s essence”. In contrast, the woman seems to communicate the distress or shame of living in poverty, as her gaze is facing downwards, away from the camera. Her head bends down and with her cramped body position, the drooping shoulders and one hand firmly grasping the other, she looks immobilised.

Craftsmanship

Lettany’s craftsmanship comes to the fore when analysing his aesthetic approach in relation to the developed rhetoric on poverty. The white lines of the wall, for example, are supportive in framing both figures: on the left-hand side the wall helps to partially hide the woman while on the right-hand side it does the reverse by supporting the man in his straight position, slightly standing in front of the hallway. However, also practicalities in creating the images are at stake. Whereas the intention was to photograph the families in their houses, this proved to be very difficult because of the confined dark place they lived in (Lettany, personal communication, 2016). As a consequence, the subjects are often portrayed near windows or in door openings. Although it was not intended, this specific position of the couple, on the edge of light and dark, elicits a more symbolic issue, namely the expectation of people in poverty to overcome poverty, to visually step out of the dark into the light (the man) and at the same time showing their restraints and anxiety to do so (the woman). This function is visually communicated but also verbally supported in *Courage*. One of the quotes reflects this, in that the verbal image represents that “[t]here is never a light at the end of the tunnel. Still, we (...) have to encourage ourselves” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 5; cf. *supra*). As such, the reader-cum-viewer interprets and gives meaning to the visual that encompasses the verbal. The visual and the verbal are inextricably bound with each other and support processes of meaning making and the production of knowledge and understanding in the cultural imaginary.



79

Figure 2. Photograph reprinted from *Courage* (BMLIK, 1998, p. 29)

Subject matter

The majority of photographs is characteristic for the way poverty is suggested through subtle details that are presented. In order to actually ‘see’ poverty in this photograph, the viewer must follow visual suggestive clues, such as: the withdrawal and form of the man’s mouth (Is he missing teeth?); his sweater’s sleeves that are too short (lack of money/clothing?); the crate on which he apparently sits (lack of furniture?); the laundry hanging in front of the window (lack of space/lack of a dryer?). These rather subtle visual incentives all provide hints, but no visible proof. This visual embraces vagueness as a way to narrate poverty. The image might also communicate a particular constellation of the subjects, namely the ideal of the well-functioning family with the traditional role division: the father as leading

figure (central and on the foreground) and aiming for a better future (his gaze “assertively staring in the distance”/ into the light; cf. Van Gorp, 2011, p. 517); the mother (positioned lower and at the edge of the frame) as a good house wife stands by her man; and the child does what every child is supposed to do while playing around (doing peekaboo to the camera).

The function of the image that is reflected here might be the intention to reflect the traditional, *normal* family and to communicate respect to family life.⁸ This function has to be understood within its historical context: since the launch of the GRP in 1994, the practice of out-of-home placement by social work with regard to children of families in poverty was heavily criticised in the public and political debate on poverty (Van Robaeys et al., 2005). The GRP particularly expressed severe criticisms raised by people living in poverty and their allies since their collective experiences revealed that they were more often confronted with the pressure of child protection services, and particularly with the placement of their children in residential care: “The GRP focused particularly on the negative consequences of out-of-home placements for both poor parents and their children, based on their claim that their right to a family life was at risk of being violated by the system of child protection” (Bradt, Roets, Roose, Rosseel, & Bouverne-De Bie, 2015, p. 2163). Self-advocacy organisations such as BMLIK prioritised their political advocacy work to respecting the right to have a family life, and with the publication of *Courage* they also aimed to bring this in the public as well as the political realm.⁹

Craftsmanship

By diminishing the expected visual clues in relation to extreme poverty situations, space might be opened up for an alternative framing of people in poverty. This choice was intentional as BMLIK aimed to represent families “in dignity and respect” (Vanhee and Lettany, personal communication, 2016), which was often lacking in popular imagery of the poor on television and in newspapers (Putman, personal communication, 2016). Moreover, Lettany stated that he was interested in what people had to tell about their lives and what happened between them. Therefore, he wanted to focus on their “experience” and “lifeworld” and not so much on the material side of

poverty which “would only distract viewers from the real message that these people have to tell” (Lettany, personal communication, 2016). Additionally, Lettany’s craftsmanship can be seen in the way he makes use of the spontaneous action of the child. Lettany presents the child not only as part of the story, but also as a storyteller, a lead that playfully invites the viewer to pause and take an interest in this family.



Figure 3. Photograph reprinted from *Courage* (BMLIK, 1998, p. 85)

Subject matter

Also this image shows a child facing the camera, this time not in the intimacy of a home, but on a neighbourhood square in an urban context where children tend to play and adults to meet each other. The environment that is represented in the photograph communicates the decay of the 19th-

century industrial neighbourhoods around Belgian city centres that became hotspots for poor families in deep poverty, joined by the new poor immigrants families. This was a phenomenon known in many European welfare states, on different scales (Reinecke, 2015). The girl with the baby doll central in the front bites her lip while looking slightly upwards. She looks somehow isolated since neither the surrounding adults nor the other children show any interest to her. Only the photographer/viewer seems to notice her, as she catches the photographer's/viewer's gaze. This photograph elicits an intimate liaison between viewer and child, in which the viewer gets an almost voyeuristic view in the lifeworld of the girl. Within this gloomy environment, her careful smile and well-groomed appearance (pins in her hair and proper sandals and dress) might evoke positive feelings in the photographer/viewer.

Further analysing the subject matter, the mimicry between the girl and the woman sitting behind her is striking, for the woman holds a real, new-born baby while staring in the distance. Through this analogy, the function of the photograph could be related to the existence of extreme poverty and its causes and consequences as the viewers might see the consequences of deep poverty, or “generation poverty” as BMLIK calls it (BMLIK, 1998, p. 116). This is symbolised by the emotionally distant mother: her new born has done nothing more than being born, but is already affected, and the mother may not be able to connect emotionally to her child. Both are ‘trapped’ in generation poverty. The gaze primarily attracted to the girl, the photograph nevertheless expresses hope for the future. The photograph not only hints at the negative consequences of extreme poverty, but simultaneously opens up an opportunity for the viewer to be affected and to develop a sense of solidarity and social engagement.

Craftsmanship

A trustworthy relation with his subjects was important to Lettany, and contributed to his craftsmanship. Lettany spent a lot of time with the families involved in the project. He patiently waited until the subjects had resumed “normal life” in order to capture that single moment he was looking for (De Cleen¹⁰, personal communication, 2016). He favoured spontaneity and an implicit relationship between him and the subjects photographed, “which is

an attitude that is more usually found in amateurs, [such as Lettany,] than professionals” (Gautrand, 1998, p. 615). The question remains nevertheless whether the camera is intervening or not, for “using a camera is still a form of *participation*” (italics in original; Sontag, 1979, p. 12).

Evaluating Courage: Concluding Reflections

While following the analytical schema of Foss (1994) we aim in our concluding reflections to discuss more in particular how *Courage* might have been received by a wider audience in society and evaluated with reference to the implications of the action the images communicate (Foss, 1994; Koetze, 2016). We therefore focus on the photobook’s pedagogical aesthetic, its visual rhetoric in relation to the question whether this alleged civilisation project might reinvigorate the framing of poverty as a socially unjust violation of human rights, and to what we could learn from this project in terms of notions of self-advocacy that obviously entail complexity in practice. We already mentioned that *Courage*, as an example of socially engaged photography, engenders a pedagogical aesthetic, which implies that the aesthetic mission of the photobook is intrinsically interrelated with a moral mission. As Trachtenberg argued, with reference to John Dewey’s influence on the work of Lewis Hine, the aim of socially engaged photography is “to teach the art of *social seeing*” (cf. supra), while endorsing a social process of education wherein viewers are stimulated to transcend their self-interest and a society with humanity and solidarity at its core can be established. While assessing *Courage*, this seems to be the case as readers-*cum*-viewers are both verbally and visually encouraged to primarily connect with people in poverty on the fundament of ‘shared humanity’ and thus on moral grounds like “freedom and equality in dignity” that underlie human rights (BMLIK, 1998, p 114).

Following Trachtenberg, one could argue that the ‘action’ of the photographs and testimonies hold the potential to create in the viewer the need to “place oneself in the picture in the imagined role of the photographer”, who acts through his camera as a “social worker” (Trachtenberg, 1990, p. 226). It could also be argued that both the “authorship” of the photographs and the “primacy of feeling” come to the fore in *Courage* (William Stott, 1973, quoted in Phillips, 2009, p. 65). In

teaching an art of social seeing, the purpose is to “educate one’s feelings” (William Stott, 1973, quoted in Phillips, 2009, p. 65). Indeed, displaying concrete situations and lifeworlds of people in poverty might create the opportunity to unite “the rational with the emotional”, by “sensing them in an immediate and aesthetic manner” (Kjeldsen, 2015, p. 202). Additionally, Blair (2004, p. 59) argues, on the extra dimension the visual brings to the process of persuasion: “It adds drama and force of a much greater order.” The visual can persuade an audience because of its “evocative power”, it argues “in the sense of adducing a few reasons in a forceful way” (Blair, 2004, pp. 51-52). In this educational process, “the emotional understanding” that influences action (Kjeldsen, 2015, p. 2012), or the “documentary affect” of *Courage*, might turn “upon the viewer’s emotional identification” with people in poverty (Phillips, 2009, p. 65) and lead to a critical reflexivity of the wider society and to a public and political debate on poverty and anti-poverty strategies.

The assessment of the visual rhetoric of *Courage*, however, also urges awareness about the “social ambiguity of the image” that is inherent to this pedagogical aesthetic (Trachtenberg, 1990, p. 225). Ambiguity emerges particularly when the assemblage of images contains a didactic or pedagogical dialectical dimension that complexity might be at stake (Blair, 2004). In that sense, based on the argument that we cannot simply capture linear lines of reasoning in the assemblage of verbal and visual images, and inspired by Clifford Geertz’ notion of “thick description”, Kjeldsen (2015, p. 201) introduces the term “thick representation”. Based on the identification of *Courage* as a civilisation project, and on a more concrete assessment of the functions of three exemplary photographs, we consider the social ambiguity of *Courage* as an essential feature of the photobook. Also in the case of *Courage*, the complicatedness of the dialectical interaction between its creators and interpreters might lead to “vagueness and ambiguity” (Blair, 2004, p. 59). As a (self-)advocacy organisation of families in extreme poverty, BMLIK attempts “to build a collective understanding of their situation as well as construct a sense of pride that counteracts their stigmatization and isolation” (Dean, 2015, p. 144; see, e.g., the sixth theme for oral testimonies, “dignity and pride”, in the identification of *Courage*). The ambiguity in the three photographs we assessed is tangible; while the photographs seem to indicate that extreme poverty is a form of symbolic

violence, an assault on a person's humanity and a violation of human rights that leads to a tragic position in life, people in poverty are also portrayed as resilient human beings who are capable of coping with their situation with a sense of pride. Moreover, in many occasions children are notably portrayed as still unstrained, hinting at a future filled with aspirations in contrast with their parents whose lifeworld seems to be already alienated and colonised (Grunwald & Thiersch, 2009).

Since visual rhetoric is “assumed to bring people into a state of affect”, it becomes however relevant to ask whether thick representations “result in more harm than good” (Kjeldsen, 2015, p. 213). Visuals also often communicate unwanted or unintended functions, where the makers were not maybe even aware of (Foss, 1994). In the case of *Courage*, for example, some photographs (e.g., photo 1 and 2) have sometimes an unmistakable disempowering effect on women as they are subordinated in relation to the portrayed men, which is counterproductive to the overall aim of *Courage* to empower people in poverty, which is at the heart of the self-advocacy paradigm (Read & Wallcraft, 1994 in Jenkins & Northway, 2002, p. 10). This ambiguity might lead to a paradoxical and even counterproductive evaluation of the images. As Dean (2015, p. 144) asserts, “it is not possible for a person to take pride in their poverty”, at least not when this is aligned to a rhetoric of a celebration of an identity. Poverty is something “to abolish, not celebrate”, and therefore anti-poverty strategies require a particular kind of solidarity (Dean, 2015, p. 145). A main question therefore is which sense of solidarity and social engagement *Courage* actually enables when it affects the viewers in relation to how poverty as a social problem might be eradicated.

Although BMLIK (1998, p. 114) clearly states that the production of *Courage* shows how they prefer “a democratic society in which the citizenship of everyone is guaranteed”, “a society in which all people act towards each other in the vein of solidarity”, revealing solidarity and social engagement in the case of poverty is riddled with relationships of power and social inequality and therefore a tricky issue (Dean, 2015; Lorenz, 2016; Villadsen, 2007). As Lorenz (2016) argues, social solidarity can be defined and secured in very different ways. Enhancing social solidarity might equally well become “a matter of private concern” (Lorenz, 2016, p. 6) and incorporate a series of (neo-)philanthropic principles that entail returning

responsibility to the clients “to stimulate clients’ self-development” (Villadsen, 2007, p. 317) rather than revealing a shared public and political responsibility in the vein of a human rights-based solidarity rooted in the construction of the welfare state (Dean, 2015). In that regard, a very pertinent question is raised by Villadsen (2007, p. 321): “[W]hat is at stake, therefore, is the question of how we can visualize social problems. What do we see when we see a social client? Do we look for background structures and social determinants, or do we rather observe the client’s self-observation? Do we speak about socially produced capacity or inherent will-power?”

This ambiguity, however, might also do more good than harm, which implies that we also need to embrace this ambiguity as an opportunity (Roets, Roose & De Bie, 2013). Also Kjeldsen (2015, p. 202) emphasises that the challenge is to embrace the richness and semiotic thickness of visual representations rather than reducing them “to nothing more than ‘thin’ propositions” (Kjeldsen, 2015, p. 202). Representing layered and ambiguous images of how poverty interferes with the lifeworlds and situations of people in poverty as interpretative issues, might have the potential to stimulate a process of humanisation while turning poverty into a questionable issue that requires social justice and change (Freire, 1972; Schuyt, 1972). It is thought of that the self-advocacy paradigm could contribute to this process of humanisation as it ‘gives voice’ (Beresford et al., 1999; Freire, 1972; Krumer-Nevo, 2008) and – in the case of *Courage* also ‘gives face’ – to people in poverty.

As a concept, however, self-advocacy has different meanings, from “individuals gaining skills and confidence” in their self-advocacy organisations to organisations devoted to “collective action and campaigning” (Buchanan & Walmsley, 2006, pp. 134-135). In the case of *Courage*, both understandings are present visually as well as verbally. Moreover, it could be said that ‘advocacy of self-advocacy’ is central to BMLIK’s rhetoric on poverty in order to convince both the ‘blinded’ non-poor majority as well as the ‘silent’ poor majority to step forward and engage as ‘partners’ within the body of BMLIK. This *partnership* is conceived as the “touchstone for structural poverty alleviation” (BMLIK, 1998, p. 116). The ‘giving voice and face’ reminds advocacy organisations of the importance of acting on different levels, both individually and

collectively, both educationally and politically. One could therefore say that advocacy organisations become *self*-advocacy organisations when they recognise the need of a combined pedagogical-political approach to poverty. Only then the underlying power relations and social inequality will be questioned critically.

Notes

¹ Some examples of participation of people in poverty in policy making are: the *Wrésinski Report* of the Economic and Social Council in France (1987); the process leading up to the *Children Act* in the UK (1989); and the *General report on Poverty* in Belgium (1994, cf. infra).

² The organisation was established in 1983 and is subsequently referred to as BMLIK, an acronym derived from the Dutch name of the organisation.

³ Deep poverty is also known as ‘persistent poverty’ or ‘generation poverty’ and refers to the situation of experiencing extreme poverty over generations within one and the same family. ATD Fourth World referred to it with the notion of ‘Fourth World’ to emphasize the existence and persistence of extreme poverty in the rich Western countries. (Tardieu and Rosenfeld, *Artisans of Democracy*, 2000)

⁴ Jan Vanhee, [Description of the *Courage* project in an application form at the King Baudouin Foundation], 30 September 1997. BMLIK archives (unclassified).

⁵ In this paper, all quotes from the book and interviews are translated from Dutch into English.

⁶ Jan Vanhee, [Preliminary draft on the structure and content of the book *Courage*], 1997. BMLIK archives (unclassified).

⁷ With which Trachtenberg actually neutralised the binary opposition that can be found in two strands that identify socially engaged photography as either “photographs-as-aesthetic-objects” or “photographs-as-social-instruments” (Grundberg, 1999, p. 171). While the first strand puts an emphasis on beautification (of poverty, for instance) and the social photographer’s subjectivity, the second stresses the truth-telling capacity as well as the objectivity that is assigned to documentary photography (Sontag, 1979).

⁸ International Declaration of Human Rights, art. 16:

(1) *Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.*

(2) *Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.*

(3) *The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.*

Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

⁹ See, e.g., [Collection on newspaper articles on the topic of the GRP and the negative effects of out-of-home placement of children on family life], 1995-1996. ATD Fourth World Archives, Brussels.

¹⁰ Lieve De Cleen was a BMLIK volunteer who did home visits with families in poverty and introduced the photographer to the families.

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La militarización de la educación física escolar. Análisis de dos imágenes publicadas en la prensa de Barcelona de principios del siglo XX

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La Militarización de la Educación Física Escolar. Análisis de Dos Imágenes Publicadas en la Prensa de Barcelona de Principios del Siglo XX

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Resumen

En los regímenes de escolarización de la infancia de principios del siglo XX, la educación física fue afín a medios y modos disciplinarios de adoctrinamiento militar. La prensa gráfica de la época recogió imágenes que hoy nos testimonian la impronta de una militarización escolar susceptible de ser analizada desde la dialéctica-crítica y el “giro visual”. A partir de dos imágenes, publicadas en el semanario *La Hormiga de Oro* de Barcelona, visualizamos las formas (re)productoras de violencia que subyacen en la educación física y desvelamos los dispositivos disciplinares (técnicas de saber/poder) que actúan en el inconsciente colectivo de la época para construir elementos de cohesión nacional.

Palabras clave: educación física, gimnástica militar, batallones infantiles, fútbol escolar

The Militarisation of Physical Education in Schools. An Analysis of Two Images Published in the Barcelona Press at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

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Abstract

In infant schooling at the beginning of the twentieth century, physical education was similar to the disciplinary means and methods of military indoctrination. The picture press at the time printed images which show us today the mark of school militarisation which is open to analysis from a dialectical critical view and the “visual turn”. From these two images, published in the weekly *La Hormiga de Oro* of Barcelona, the (re)productive forms of violence that underlie physical education become evident and the disciplinary devices (knowledge/power techniques) acting in the collective subconscious of the time for the construction of elements of national cohesion are revealed.

Keywords: physical education, military gymnastics, child battalions, school football

El hacer historia de la educación utilizando materiales gráficos y documentos fotográficos como fuente principal (no verbal) y no auxiliar al texto, no suele ser habitual (Del Pozo, 2006; Sanchidrián, 2011). Son varias las autorías que han estudiado y argumentado las posibilidades del uso de las imágenes para alumbrar el discurso histórico en su propia realidad (Barthes, 1990; Benjamin, 1989; Burke, 2001; Burke, 2005; Gaskell, 1994; Huguet, 2002; Lara, 2005; Pantoja, 2007; Rodríguez de las Heras, 2009, 2010; Sanchidrián, 2011). Es precisamente desde esta posibilidad que surge en la historia de la educación un interés especial para poder utilizar los documentos fotográficos de los siglos XIX y XX como fuentes primarias y palmarias (Augustowsky, 2007; Burke y Grosvenor, 2007; Comas, 2010; Depaepe y Henkens, 2000; Del Pozo, 2006; Dussel, 2013; Lomas, 2011; Nóvoa, 2003; Sanchidrián, 2011; Vick, 2009; Viñao, 2005). Por otro lado, en España este tipo de estudios todavía se encuentran en un estado incipiente. Como cita Del Pozo (2006), aún queda mucho trabajo de base por hacer. Entre las primeras aportaciones conocidas, Julia Varela (1986) y Pilar Hinojosa (2003) prosiguen en la orientación iniciada por Philippe Ariès (1960) ocupándose de la infancia. Sin embargo, recientemente han aparecido algunas interesantes contribuciones (Colleldemont, 2014; De Freitas, 2015; Malheiro, 2015; Moreno Martínez, 2015; Sanchidrián, 2011). En cuanto a la historia de la educación física son muy pocos los trabajos conocidos que utilicen significativamente las imágenes (Comas, March y Sureda; 2010; Kirk, 2011; Rubio-Mayoral; 2009), a pesar del abundante y disperso material que existe en esta parcela de la educación.

Las imágenes son la congelación real de sucesos históricos (rastros y restos) y, talmente, son portadoras de una carga substantiva para re-interpretar la profundidad social que encierran (Nóvoa, 2003; Viñao, 2005). Esta cuestión se hace necesaria en una sociedad democrática y, por lo tanto, posibilita el anudar las imágenes de la historia con la memoria y el salvar una educación contra el olvido (Lomas, 2011). Para Barthes (2015, p. 30), esta memoria es “el retorno de lo muerto” y una narración que confiere elementos tangibles a la historia. También, como cita Huguet (2002, p. 13), son generalmente las fotografías las que suelen reflejar “mejor que cualquier otro documento el cambio de la historia”.

Utilizar entonces, tal y como proponía Walter Benjamin, las imágenes para posibilitar deconstrucciones de la historia, “mostrando sus puntos ciegos, evidenciado su artificialidad” (Hernández-Navarro, 2011, p. 241), es una nueva manera de hacer historia, abierta (sin cerrar el tiempo), revisada y (re)contextualizada como material del presente, de un pasado que aún no ha pasado. Así percibe Benjamin (1989, p. 182) la memoria histórica, como la narración temporal del pasado que se descubre en el presente para pasarlo “el cepillo a contrapelo”, para hacer de la historia una política crítica y una dialéctica ingrata. En Benjamin, las imágenes tienen el poder de descubrir la historia incontable (del inconsciente), aportan materiales que pueden ser intemporales, manejados por el artista-historiador para desmitificar lo contado y hacer oposición política y discurso crítico al presente (Hernández-Navarro, 2011). Por consiguiente, nos vamos a proveer del enfoque benjaminiano como cuña para abrir y desmitificar fragmentos de la historia de la educación física escolar; una historia de imágenes que empieza por apuntar a la cara oculta de la escuela (Fernández Enguita, 1990). Es por lo tanto, en esta cara oculta, que participamos del discurso de Raimundo Cuesta (2000, p. 29), cuando menciona que “las materias de enseñanza, en tanto que entidades históricas portadoras de funciones sociales implícitas y explícitas, contienen dispositivos de coacción y poder, de violencia simbólica y física, evocados en el propio vocablo ‘disciplina’”. De aquí que el concepto ‘disciplina’ participe en los encajes entre el poder/saber, que a partir de la escolarización del siglo XIX se derivan en “ciertas pautas sociales y epistemológicas que están incluidas en las prácticas contemporáneas” (Popkewitz, 2000, p. 238).

Partiendo de estas premisas, y adoptando también un análisis desde la dialéctica-crítica (Zemelman, 2003ab) y el paradigma histórico genealógico sobre el poder que desarrolla Foucault (2003, 2012), introducimos el análisis de dos imágenes (de 1911 y 1913) en torno a la educación física escolar publicadas en el semanario *La Hormiga de Oro* de Barcelona: subtitulado “La ilustración católica” (1884-1936). A partir de estas imágenes construimos un discurso crítico en el que desvelamos los dispositivos disciplinares (técnicas de saber/poder), que emanan de la convención del poder militar y que actúan en la educación física. Visualizamos así, una disciplina que disciplina y que sujetta en el inconsciente colectivo de la época

las ideas de modernidad, progreso y cohesión nacional: “orden social” y “paz civil”.

Metodología

Siguiendo a Lara (2005), hemos establecido las siguientes pautas metodológicas:

a) Etiquetar un glosario de palabras clave bajo el nexo común temático de educación física escolar (gimnástica, gimnasia, deporte, educación física, batallón infantil, educación militar, foot-ball infantil).

b) Búsqueda de las imágenes realizada a través de la hemeroteca digital de la Biblioteca Nacional. Hemos buscado en las revistas ilustradas publicadas solamente en Barcelona, entre 1910 a 1914.

c) Recopilación de las fotografías mediante el nexo común temático, fragmentando la información visual, y analizando estrechamente la imagen y su conexión espacial y temporal (Rodríguez de las Heras, 2009, 2010).

d) Construcción de la narrativa crítica de las imágenes (textos visuales o lectura de las imágenes).

Obviamente se han considerado fuentes primarias en torno al fútbol (Barba, 1912; Elias, 1914; Gamper, 1914; Sanz, 1913), vinculas al objeto de estudio de una de las imágenes. Además, se han abordado otras fuentes secundarias de estudios sociales, relativas al momento histórico y conexas al contexto de estudio (Bembo, 1912; Brenan, 1962; De Bolòs y Vilanou, 2005; Del Pozo, 2002; Florensa, 1992; Jensen, 2014; Kirk, 2007; Masjuan, 2006, 2007). Para situar las imágenes en su contexto (particular y social), hemos revisado varios estudios en torno a la historia de la educación física en España (Bantulà, Bosom, Carranza & Monés, 1997; Torrebadella, 2013, 2014abc; 2015ab).

Como hemos adelantado, abordamos el enfoque dialéctico de Walter Benjamin (1989), en busca de nuevos modos de narrar la historia (De Luelmo, 2007; Hernández-Navarro, 2011, 2012; Valdes, 2012). La “dialéctica de la imagen” que adoptamos es una dialéctica-crítica, que niega lo que realmente parece que es, para proceder al “giro visual”. Así

adoptamos la posición que permite apreciar a Boltanski (2014, p. 143), la “contradicción hermenéutica” del saber/poder institucional, con lo cual surge el dilema de negar la aceptación de “lo que ocurre con lo que es” (y ver lo contrario del que se dice y se hace). Esta posición también nos permite relacionar las proposiciones de Foucault (2003, 2012), investigar la historia-social de la educación “desde el borde” o al margen de los determinismos y reduccionismos canonizados como métodos científicos (Torres, 2006). Esta visión crítica (y política) aborda problemáticas, no reconocidas, sobre los asuntos más escabrosos de la sociedad y que no interesan al poder político-científico. Desde esta posición dialéctico-crítica podemos decir lo indecible, concienciar sobre lo desagradable y que nadie quiere visualizar, oír, decir y retener en la memoria. Así pues, desde la ruptura metodológica positivista, que surge del saber/poder dominante en las ciencias sociales, presentamos estas imágenes fotográficas portadoras de la invisibilidad retenida de códigos de violencia social, y que este saber/poder trata constantemente de borrar de la memoria colectiva de la historia (Torres, 2006).

Hemos tratado solamente dos imágenes públicas que ilustran dos caras diferentes de la educación física en el periodo indicado. Estas imágenes son de-codificadas y de-construidas a través de la narrativa visual, develando la gramática de los códigos disciplinares subyacentes que sirvieron para cimentar la educación física como asignatura. Por consiguiente, procedemos a un análisis comunicativo en el que la imagen se presenta como texto abierto y dinámico a diferentes visiones y significaciones que reconstruyen la historia de las fotografías. Pero también inferimos un análisis narrativo, por el que las imágenes son abordadas en el contexto histórico y desde la posición ideológica (dialéctica-crítica) como investigadores (Del Pozo, 2006). Además de la yuxtaposición de ambos análisis, contemplamos reforzar el discurso a través de la intertextualidad relacionada con otras imágenes y textos adscritos al mismo contexto.

Finalmente, como propone Del Pozo (2006), nos acomodamos al concepto iconotexto de Michael Nerlich (1990) (una historia poética aún no contada), pero lo hacemos desde “el giro visual”, es decir: desvelando la intención oculta que se idea a partir de la intertextualidad y el discurso crítico.

Dos imágenes al descubierto: la deconstrucción de la gramática disciplinar de la educación física

La Barcelona de principios del siglo XX y otras poblaciones próximas a su área de influencia representaron el nervio cardinal de la innovación cultural y del empuje industrial y económico del proceso de transformación social que se producía en España. En esta ciudad, el acelerado crecimiento urbanístico y productivo concentraba una populosa mano de obra proveniente de la Cataluña rural, pero también de otras regiones de España. Barcelona era reconocida por su poderosa sociedad burguesa que despilfarraba en excentricidades y ostentaciones culturales y recreativas de todo tipo (Permanyer, 2008), entre las que se destacaban las prácticas gimnástico-deportivas (Pujadas, 2012). Desde hacia varias décadas, en Barcelona se visibilizaba un importante desequilibrio social y división de clases. Si por un lado existía una pujante clase ociosa, que competía entre ella para el consumo y en el cúmulo de riquezas (Veblen, 2008), por el otro, crecía una significativa clase obrera inmersa en una lucha social por la supervivencia. En esta dialéctica social, la aparición de conflictos ideológicos politizados derivaron en brotes de violencia como la Semana Trágica, en 1909, o las huelgas generales de 1917 y 1919 (Porcel, 1978). Si la ciudad necesitaba todo tipo de servicios ociosos y de recreo para satisfacer las necesidades de las nuevas fortunas, no menos necesario eran otros servicios asistenciales, como aquellos destinados a la protección de la infancia desamparada (Sánchez-Valverde, 2009).

La concentración de la población obrera y marginal en el entorno urbano alimentaba todo tipo de escenas de corrupción o degeneración social (alcoholismo, prostitución, delincuencia callejera, mendicidad, corrupción infantil, invertidos, etc.) que estigmatizaba la visibilidad de la vida cotidiana (Bembo, 1912). Las preocupaciones (o miedos) a las enfermedades sociales y a la degeneración (Campos, 1998) afectaban a las clases acomodadas (o gente respetable), que necesitaban distanciarse de este entorno considerado depravado y peligroso, muy afectado por la insalubridad, las enfermedades contagiosas (sífilis, tifus, cólera...), la tuberculosis y una miseria generalizada (Calvo, 2012; Sánchez-Valverde, 2009).

Como describía hacia 1915 el doctor Domènec Martí y Julia (1861-1917), presidente de la Unió Catalanista, la vida de la clase obrera era extremadamente miserable (Martí, 1984). Ante esta situación, las clases

dirigentes emprendían políticas de dominación capitalista actuando sobre el orden social y el saneamiento moral del obrero (Calvo, 2012). No obstante, los conflictos asociados a la lucha obrera afloraron en movimientos anticlericales, antimilitaristas y anarquistas, que también impregnaron el sentir ideológico de la educación (Aisa, 2015; Saladrigas, 1973; Turin, 1967).

Por lo tanto, es en esta coyuntura, que las tecnologías hacia el control bio-político fueron encaminadas a un proceso de oportunas soluciones pacificadoras (civilizadoras) en torno a la medicina social, la militarización de la clase obrera, la escolarización de la infancia, el encierro hospitalario (centros de tuberculosos) y las colonias fabriles. Como trata Foucault (2012, p. 160), estos eran los nuevos espacios de la sociedad disciplinada en la que se fabricaban los “cuerpos sometidos y ejercitados, cuerpos “dóciles”, para su explotación social y lucrativa. Entre estas soluciones pacificadoras, participando muy significativamente en la modelación las corporalidades, también surgió la disciplina de la gimnástica y el deporte, y su encierro en el gimnasio y en los campos de juego (Kirk, 2007).

A propósito de este tipo de encarcelamientos, en estos tiempos se propagaron los grandes colegios religiosos (jesuitas, escolapios, hermanos de las Escuelas Cristianas, hermanos Maristas) que, destinados a educar a los hijos de las clases pudientes, en algunos aspectos, trataban de encarnar su equivalente a las *Publich schools* de Inglaterra. Por ello, estos colegios fueron ubicados en magníficos edificios con zonas verdes y campos de juego espaciosos, con todo tipo de equipamientos y los mejores maestros y especialistas (Bantulà, Bosom, Carranza & Monés, 1997). Esta condición hizo de estos colegios que se erigieran como los verdaderos pioneros del deporte escolar.

La imagen 1. Sección del Batallón infantil de los padres escolapios de Sabadell

Después de la Guerra Franco-Prusiana, los Estados-nación de Europa se apropiaron de las ideas de Clausewitz (1984) y realizaron un cambio estratégico en sus políticas: la guerra venía a ser la continuación de la política con otros medios. La instauración de los batallones escolares franceses y su extensión meridional formaba parte de este nuevo giro

político. Fue entonces cuando el ejército español se fijo en los modos de formación militar prusianos. Las ideas de Clausewitz ilustraban un cambio ideológico en las estructuras directivas del ejército, el cual pasaba por tomar un nuevo objetivo: el nacionalizar (militarizar) a toda la ciudadanía (Jensen, 2015). En fervor a esta nueva política se pronunciaban discursos ideológicos con el objeto de incorporar la instrucción militar a la escuela (Torrebadella, 2015b). De aquí surgieron, durante la última década del siglo XIX, los primeros batallones infantiles (escolares), pero es precisamente a raíz de la crisis finisecular (pérdidas coloniales) que se intensificó su aparición por todo el territorio. Coincidiendo con la guerra de Marruecos (1909-1927), estas organizaciones fueron nuevamente reconducidas con la recepción de los *Boy-Scouts*, que adoptaron el nombre de Exploradores de España (Torrebadella, 2013, 2015b). El encaje de la omnipresencia militar se materializó en acreditadas y públicas voces civiles, como la de Federico Climent (1912, p. 6), que no dejaba de advertir sobre la trascendencia de la educación militar: “la educación militar en las escuelas, como modalidad subalterna de la educación física en general, puede influir muy eficazmente”.

María del Mar del Pozo (2000) identifica en estos pequeños soldados-cristianos, la intención política de conformar un ideal nacional común, para mantener el orden establecido fundamentado en la disciplina y la obediencia. Se trataba, por lo tanto, de una invención del regeneracionismo católico y militar, que se mostraba como solución para salvar España. La presencia del ejército invadía por completo las escenas de la vida social y las escuelas se convirtieron en los dominios de una cultura militarizada (Torrebadella, 2016c).

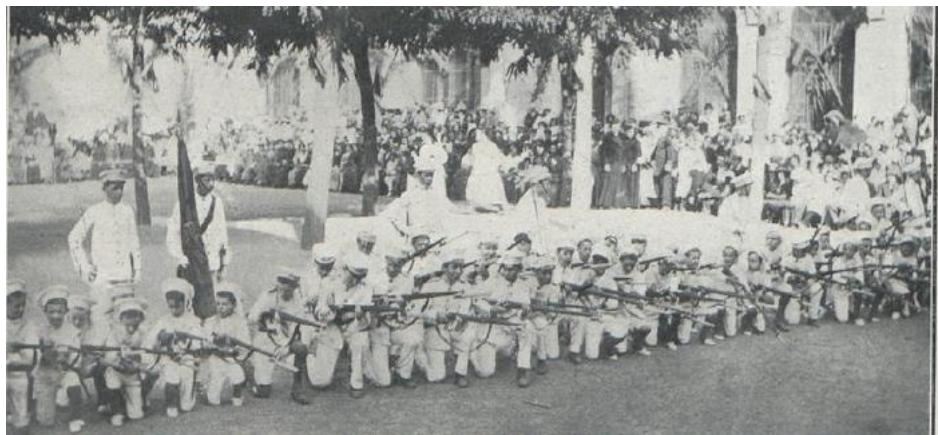


Imagen 1. *La Hormiga de Oro* (14 de junio de 1913, p. 12) Pie de Foto: “Sabadell.- Una sección del Batallón Infantil antes de disparar los fusiles”.

La imagen 1 es una sección del Batallón Infantil del colegio de los padres escolapios de Sabadell, en el Festival de Educación Física de 1913, celebrado en el patio interior del mismo colegio. En este colegio se reunían los hijos varones de las mejores familias de la ciudad (Torrebadella, 2014a). Sabadell concentraba entonces una pujante industria textil impulsada por una burguesía conservadora y católica (integrista). La industria sabadellense se enriqueció durante el transcurso de la I Guerra Mundial fabricando mantas y uniformes militares para los aliados (Deu, 1990). Como es lógico, también existía una importante concentración obrera que se manifestaba culturalmente en un conglomerado de asociaciones de signo anticlerical, antimilitarista y racionalista (Masjuan, 2006). Por otro lado, un dato a destacar es el importante núcleo anarquista que acogía. Sabadell es la ciudad de Mateo Morral, el empresario y culto anarquista que atentó contra el cortejo nupcial de Alfonso XIII y Victoria Eugenia, el 31 de mayo de 1906 (Masjuan, 2009).

Se trata de un grupo de jóvenes (unos treinta y cinco), entre 7 y 9 años, perfectamente uniformados de oficiales del ejército. Son unos uniformes elegantes de color blanco (uniformes de la Marina), símbolo aristocrático y también de pulcritud, seguramente confeccionados por la industria textil de

la localidad. Los niños están preparados en posición de rodilla al suelo, en disposición de disparar con sus fusiles tipo Máuser y con las bayonetas caladas. Detrás están sus instructores oficiales, con sable en mano, dirigiendo atentamente la actividad; uno de ellos portando la bandera. Se trata de una situación que bien pudiera representar un fusilamiento. En el fondo, a la derecha, los padres escolapios, junto a unos oficiales militares y las familias, examinan atentamente la exhibición del Festival de Educación Física. No podemos apreciar el rostro de los espectadores, pero ante la frivolidad aterradora del momento, cierto miedo oculto seguramente apresa el pensamiento de algunos. También se divisan entre los espectadores, elementos de las fuerzas vivas de la ciudad. Los alumnos están listos para disparar a un objetivo (supuestamente imaginado); es otro objetivo, que también, como la máquina de fotografiar, captará la última instantánea de una vida que se desvanece en decimas de segundo.

La imagen es un cruce de miradas. Los espectadores miran la exhibición del batallón infantil, éste mira a un objetivo que no podemos ver (puede que imaginario), que también puede que mire. No obstante, la mirada más poderosa es la del objetivo del fotógrafo, que nadie mira mientras captura toda la escena que inmortaliza. Es el fotógrafo el que dispara a todos y los in-mortaliza. Pero esta imagen no está aislada, tiene otras imágenes previas y posteriores, que también encajan en una combinación de fragmentos de sucesos y de diferentes escenarios con los que podemos construir una asociación ([Rodríguez de las Heras, 2009, 2010](#)). Revisando la prensa y otros documentos hemos encontrado otros fragmentos de la imagen y otras imágenes distanciadas en el tiempo de la primera, pero que posibilitan el conocer procesos significativos. Así se aprecian otras imágenes de los pequeños soldados desfilando por las calles de la ciudad, en el patio del colegio en solemne bendición de la bandera y, luego, ejercitando movimientos de armas. El batallón infantil del colegio de los escolapios de Sabadell fue constituido y presentado en 1912, públicamente apadrinado por Joaquín Bamboe, el Sr. Victoriano Uejido y el hijo de este, capitán de la Guardia civil ([Editorial, 1912](#)). Los festivales de educación física de los escolapios de Sabadell fueron publicitados en la elitista prensa gráfica. Ello indica el poder (económico y político) que tenía esta institución colegial, que además representaba el de las familias de estos niños. Este batallón infantil también se realizó fotos de estudio que convirtió en postales ([Masjuan,](#)

2006). En 1917 este batallón ya había desaparecido, pero se habían constituido otras formaciones sucedáneas como los Exploradores de España *Boy-Scouts*. De aquí que Miguel de Unamuno (1917, p. 6) criticase la falta “juego limpio”, puesto que la nueva institución continuaba preservando las mismas intenciones que antes.

Por otro lado, la escena de la imagen tiene una narrativa mucho más profunda de la que parece. En ella se desvela la nacionalización de la infancia. Se presentan unos niños que son preparados para la muerte, para cuando llegue el día, si la patria los necesitara, defenderla hasta con su vida. Este día, para algunos no tardaría, puesto que en 1936 ya estaban instruidos para ello: ¿Cuántos de estos niños murieron empuñando las armas? Sin embargo, para los jóvenes de esta época, la guerra no era una cosa extraña. España estaba en guerra y, en poco tiempo, el mundo entero también lo estaría. Imágenes similares eran exhibidas en la prensa gráfica nacional. Son imágenes públicas que normalizan una situación y proyectan un discurso social. Los batallones escolares estaban amparados por las fuerzas vivas: los militares, el clero, los dirigentes políticos y la llamada “buena sociedad”. Sin embargo, la pregunta crucial que debemos hacernos es: ¿A quien disparan? ¿Quién es el enemigo? ¿Son los rifeños, los anarquistas, los separatistas, ...?

Con estas preguntas, vamos seguidamente a ver la contradicción hermenéutica de la imagen y su giro visual. Como trata Foucault (2012), en los regímenes de la escolarización se definen los códigos disciplinares militares que han encontrado refugio en la colonización de la corporalidad de la infancia. Ello se consigue a través de procedimientos instructivos, inoculados por el adoctrinamiento disciplinario y la obediencia a la autoridad. La ejercitación de la gimnástica militar cumple perfectamente este cometido. La escuela se ha convertido en cuartel. Sin embargo, estos niños que juegan a la guerra, por lo que son y representan, no son los que van a ir a la guerra. Ellos, pueden pagar la cuota que los libra de su obligación. Los que van a ir a la guerra son las almas invisibles a la foto (los ausentes); los niños que en este momento rondan las calles descalzos o están trabajando en la fábrica. Esto ocurría en una ciudad como Sabadell, cuya concentración obrera acogía a numerosos niños y niñas que se veían forzados a trabajar (es)forzadamente hasta diez horas diarias como si fueran adultos, en unas condiciones higiénicas lamentables de trabajo y recibiendo todo tipo de abusos físicos y morales (Masjuan, 2006). Las clases subalternas no

visionaban del mismo modo los panegíricos militaristas, sufrían la guerra en sus propias carnes y eran anti-militaristas. Como trata Masjuan (2006, p. 77), veían en estas pomposas manifestaciones de los batallones infantiles un “escarnio cultural y una profanación de la escuela”. Reconocían que la guerra era una invención cultural. Las voces discrepantes se hacían sentir y, en la prensa antípoda, se hablaba de los padres escolapios como los “mercaderes de enseñanza que vienen a inculcar el odio de las razas y la guerra. La guerra que es el atentado más grande contra la civilización que nosotros soñamos acto de incivilidad” (Masjuan, 2006, p. 77).

En Sabadell, sin embargo, había quien se manifestaba por una pedagogía crítica y una educación física crítica (Torrebadella, 2016a). Ciertamente, como se mencionaba en el periódico *Sabadell Federal*, se producía un “triste espectáculo”, al reemplazar la educación física de verdad, por juegos de “simular batallas, en tomar trincheras, en asaltar pueblos”¹.

También el ejército venía a constituirse como el baluarte de una conciencia nacionalizadora, que al amparo de la monarquía defendía la unidad territorial y garantizaba, *manu militari*, el orden y la paz social (Cardona, 1983). En una Cataluña antimilitarista y de aspiraciones soberanistas, el ejército se presentaba como “el más fanático enemigo del nacionalismo catalán” (Brenan, 1962, p. 27) y, por añadidura, los discursos de la iglesia y la burguesía católica reaccionaria aprobaban las represiones y las violencias hacia la clase obrera (Moliner, 2000); utilizando, a propósito, demostraciones de fuerza que se manifiestan a través de los círculos paramilitares de las Juventudes Carlistas y Requés (González Calleja, 1998). Paradigma de esta situación fueron los sucesos en torno a la citada revuelta popular de 1909 (Semana Trágica), momento en el que se acrecentaron los miedos de las clases dirigentes. De aquí que la iglesia y las clases ricas buscasen protección en el poder militar, en la corona y en las políticas más conservadoras (Ucelay-Da Cal, 2003). Esta situación constituía un claro enfrentamiento social que trascendía en la ideologización política de las clases subalternas (proletarias y populares), las cuales se adentraban en un proceso de deschristianización, de antimilitarismo y sindicación obrera de signo anarquista (Porcel, 1978).

Estos son algunos de los posibles títulos (iconotextos) que, a guisa de crítica social, podríamos poner a pie de imagen: “Batallón de fusilamiento”, “Jugando a la guerra”, “Los niños que se salvaran de ir a la guerra”,

“Obedezcan y disparen”, “Disparando al enemigo”, “Soldaditos inocentes”, “Educados para matar”, “Los defensores de la Patria”, “Muertes anunciadas”, “El miedo va por dentro”, “Por qué me enseñan ha ser soldado, si no quiero ir a la guerra”, “Por qué tengo que jugar con las armas, si a mí me gustan las muñecas?

La imagen 2. Sporting Club estudiantil del Colegio de Calasancio de las escuelas pías de Barcelona

En España el deporte en edad escolar inició su institucionalización hacia los primeros años del siglo pasado. Su presencia fue empujada por la coyuntura internacional de expansión del deporte, pero también vino a satisfacer los intereses quiméricos de una metáfora modernista y de progreso (Torrebadella, 2012, 2014c). En esta época el fútbol, para algunos citado balompié, se remozaba de un discurso regeneracionista y su domino moraba en la selecta burguesía que lo prácticaba (Torrebadella-Flix y Nomdedeu-Rull, 2013). En el terreno educativo, el fútbol satisfacía la expresión más genuina de la visión arnoldiana del *christian gentleman*, que fue asumida, tanto por los colegios religiosos, como por las escuelas laicas de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza (De Bolòs y Vilanou, 2005).

En Barcelona, principal enclave en la promoción del fútbol en España (Torrebadella, 2012), los equipos constituidos en los colegios más prestigiosos se convirtieron en la cantera de los primeros clubs de la ciudad; prueba de ello es la organización en 1910 del primer Campeonato de Cataluña de Fútbol Infantil (Torrebadella-Flix y Nomdedeu-Rull, 2015). Detrás del fútbol escolar se encontraban voces como la de Hans Gamper (1911, p. 1), el cual valoraba el fútbol como un importante elemento pedagógico y de cultura física y, “sin disputa alguna, el mejor y mas completo de los deportes”. El fútbol se convertía entonces en el nuevo juego de moda y substituía a otros tan tradicionales como el del “marro”. No obstante, ambos juegos representan una escena fingida de la guerra para formar el carácter agonístico de los jóvenes (Brasó y Torrebadella, 2015ab).

El nuevo deporte del balón disponía de toda la autorización pedagógica y era aconsejado por sus características físicas y morales, pero sobre todo ensalzado por el carácter disciplinar que proporciona (Climent, 1906; Barba, 1912; Elias, 1914; Gamper, 1911; Graham, 1913). Esta disciplina se muestra

en la obediencia absoluta hacia el capitán del equipo. El fútbol es esfuerzo, sacrificio, resistencia, fuerza,... y se convierte en una disciplina que disciplina que proporciona el dominio de sí mismo (*Self-government*) (Almeida, 2003). Pero además, el fútbol también era visionado como un poderoso medio coercitivo en las aventuras de la sexualidad, como así lo mencionaba el principal artífice de este deporte en Barcelona: El fútbol aparta a “la juventud de la creciente vorágine de las pasiones, a que predispone la vida agitada y agobiosa de las grandes urbes modernas” (Gamper, 1914, p. 13).

Pero no nos engañemos, el fútbol de entonces era muy rudo y violento, prácticamente se jugaba sin conocimiento del reglamento y sin preparación física y técnica. Esto comportaba un juego a *cañonazos* o *pelotazos*, con todo tipo de puntapiés, golpes y cargas al contrario. Las disputas por el balón se convertían en verdaderos campos de batalla (Torrebadella-Flix y Nomdedeu-Rull, 2015). De aquí surgían los consejos a los jóvenes, de prepararse físicamente antes de practicar este violento deporte (Sanz, 1913). Dadas estas características del juego, se apreciaba en el fútbol un vigoroso ejercicio atlético y viril, perfectamente adecuado para la preparación militar y patriótica (Barba, 1912).

José Elias (1907, 11), el apóstol del olimpismo catalán, también vinculaba la educación física y el deporte a la seducción luchadora: “Si la vida es una lucha, hay que luchar, y en último término vencer: he aquí nuestro ideal”. Así se entiende que Elias (1911, p. 29) tomase los “deportes para regenerar nuestra raza y ponerla al nivel de las más fuertes del mundo, para poder luchar con ellas en todos los terrenos de la actividad humana”. También eran elocuentes las retóricas utilizadas, en alusiones a la Guerra franco-prusiana, para enardecer el patriotismo:

Recordar la gran epopeya del imperio, la guerra del 70, después de la cual el gran Bismark decía delante de los maestros alemanes:— Vosotros habéis ganado la guerra, haciendo ciudadanos fuertes y valientes, gracias a los sports enseñados a los escolares,—y mucho más tener presente las enseñanzas de aquella lucha, cuando el general Molke afirmaba por otra parte, que la educación integral del pueblo alemán y no las armas le habían dado la victoria. (Elias, 1913, p. 3)

Elias es también conocido por publicar *Foot-ball asociación* (1914), el primer libro monográfico del fútbol español (Torrebadella-Flix y Nomdedeu-Rull, 2015). En él aparecía este deporte como el mejor medio de educación física de la juventud y se idealizaba como “el medio más eficaz para la regeneración de nuestra raza” (Elias, 1914, p. 19). Este *sportsmen* barcelonés mencionaba que en el fútbol se encontraba el “origen de la supremacía actual de los británicos, nacida de la revolución que en los sistemas de enseñanza introdujo el gran Thomas Arnold” (Elias, 1914, p. 25).



Imagen 2. *La Hormiga de Oro* (13 de mayo de 1911, p. 301). Pie de Foto: “De “foot-ball”. Primer “team” del “Sporting Club Estudiantil” establecido en Colegio Calasancio de Barcelona”.

En la imagen 2 se muestran públicamente los alumnos del primer team Sporting Club Estudiantil del Colegio de Calasancio de las escuelas pías de Barcelona –Colegio de San Antón– (Florena, 1992). Posan con elegantes vestidos deportivos (seguramente colores encarnado y azul), en la perfecta y clásica alineación futbolística de la época (un portero, dos defensas, tres

medios y cinco delanteros). Se trata de una foto de estudio, su coste es elevado y solo está alcance de las clases acomodadas. En el centro está su propio balón oficial; es un elemento recreativo de lujo y no está al alcance de la mayoría de las familias. En aquella época un balón valía entre 18 y 20 pesetas (Anuncio: *El Mundo Deportivo*, 16 de mayo de 1912, p. 4); un precio que contrastaba mucho, cuando el sueldo medio semanal de un obrero podía rondar las 3, 25 pesetas (Soto, 1989).

Es de suponer que la foto surge de la propia voluntad de los muchachos. Es una decisión que toman ellos con el objeto implícito que contiene la foto de estudio: la de eternizar un momento para el recuerdo. Se trata probablemente del primer equipo de fútbol de su vida. La foto representa un acontecimiento importante al ser la primera asociación (empresa) o proyecto compartido, lo cual tiene para los jóvenes un singular valor simbólico. Todavía es más el valor que seguramente tenía para sus tutores, que podían ver, en una concepción arnoldiana, un significativo ejemplo educativo de preparación para la vida (Ferrer, 2012): “Una asociación deportiva es una sociedad en pequeño: un equipo de balompié, un diminuto ejército” (Valserra, 1944, p. 247).

Este tipo de foto es muy característica en los equipos de la época, que siempre aparecen con la misma posición de alineación. En la foto solamente se muestran once jugadores, no sabemos si falta el resto del equipo (los reservas). La alineación representa la disciplina del fútbol de la época. Uno de ellos debe ser el capitán. En el terreno de juego, cada jugador tiene su posición, que debe asegurar y no debe perder bajo ningún pretexto. Todos los jugadores se comprometen a la obediencia del capitán, que es quien dirige el juego. Esta alineación también simboliza el orden y la norma que se establece en la sociedad, en la que cada individuo tiene un puesto asignado.

Possiblemente por la mente de estos jóvenes se recreaba el sueño de llegar a ser algún día uno de los populares futbolistas, como los que nutrían los grandes equipos que existían en Barcelona.

En la contradicción hermenéutica y el giro visual, apreciamos como esta imagen puede reducirse hasta encontrar los signos de una arcaica estructura masculina engendrada desde la violencia. Los once jugadores de fútbol son la antigua decuria romana, diez soldados con su decurión (el capitán); la misma organización, como cita Foucault (2012), que fue adoptada en los

colegios jesuitas para acrecentar la obediencia y competitividad entre los alumnos:

Cada uno de estos grupos, con su decurión, estaba colocado en un campo, el romano o el cartaginés; a cada decuria le correspondía una decuria contraria. La forma general era la de la guerra y la rivalidad; el trabajo, el aprendizaje, la clasificación se efectuaban bajo la forma de torneo, por medio de enfrentamiento de los dos ejércitos; la prestación de cada alumno estaba inscrita en ese duelo general; aseguraba por su parte la victoria o las derrotas de un campo y a los alumnos se les asignaba un lugar que correspondía a la función de cada uno y a su valor como combatiente en el grupo unitario de su decuria. (*Foucault, 2012, p. 169*)

Dicha organización es también la que más tarde adoptó Thomas Arnold en el colegio de Rugby instalando su particular sistema de prefectos, el cual “fue vital para el desarrollo inicial del foot-ball” en Inglaterra (*Dunning, 2003, p. 112*).

Por lo tanto, como cita Miguel Vicente (*2004*), no podemos hablar de la construcción social del deporte y de nuestros cuerpos sin conocer y valorar su impacto histórico en el proceso de los regímenes escolares de la infancia y la adolescencia.

El deporte escolar o infantil es la base de la pirámide deportiva contemporánea y blanco económico de capitalismo neoliberal. Desde hace decenios, la educación de la infancia es estimulada a través de dispositivos disciplinarios de carácter competitivo. La mayoría de los juegos corporales suelen tener una componente agonística simbólica importante, que opera como dispositivo y determina conductas. El poder simbólico del deporte escolar, siguiendo a Bourdieu (*2001*), se presenta como un poder invisible que se cultiva con la complicidad de todos, tanto los que lo sufren como los que lo ejercen. Se trata aquí de la ficción de los manipulados valores del deporte, o de “las beaticas virtudes moralizadoras y normalizadoras” (*Vicente, 2010, p. 83*). Unos valores, que constituidos bajo el mito del deporte educativo, construyen subjetividades y manipulan conciencias colectivas. Tanto es así, que hoy asistimos a una educación física deportivizada (a una escuela deportivizada y una sociedad deportivizada), en

donde el deporte ha determinado, en gran parte, la ideología docente de la materia.

Es a partir de 1919, tras la experiencia de la Gran Guerra, cuando el deporte se reinventa políticamente y entra en la esfera de las contiendas nacionales (Torrebadella, 2016a). En palabras Hobsbawm (2000, p. 152), el deporte “se transformó en una inacabable sucesión de encuentros de gladiadores protagonizados por personas y equipos que simbolizan estados-nación, lo cual forma hoy día parte de la vida mundial”. A partir de entonces fue cuando en el ejército español movilizó las prácticas deportivas y en especial la del fútbol, que se presentaba como el mejor deporte de preparación para la guerra (Torrebadella-Flix y Olivera-Betrán, 2016).

El deporte se encuadra perfectamente en la proposición de Clausewitz (1984, p. 58): “la guerra es la mera continuación de la política por otros medios”. Así, y partiendo de la inversión de esta proposición que hace Foucault (2003, p. 24): “la política es la continuación de la guerra por otros medios”, por lo que declaramos su continuidad admitiendo, que es lo mismo que decir, que el deporte no es más que una política de “guerra”, con otros medios. Y siguiendo la tesis de Foucault (2003, p. 24), si el “poder es la guerra, es la guerra proseguida por otros medios”, también es admisible citar que el deporte es un poder (político y de guerra) proseguido con otros medios. Guerra, política, deporte y poder entran de pleno en el paradigma del proceso civilizador de Norbert Elias (2010). El deporte es entonces un poder, un militarismo invisible; “una especie de guerra silenciosa” (Foucault, 2003, p. 25), que también llega hasta nuestros días; es una sociabilización de la violencia o un juego, “que instruyen a los niños en una cultura sádica donde el matar está bien” (Giroux, 2013, p. 69).

Benjamin (2001, p. 29) percibía el militarismo como “el impulso de utilizar de forma generalizada la violencia como medio para los fines del Estado”. Con este enfoque benjamíniano, podemos ver en muchas imágenes del deporte la sociabilización inconsciente de la guerra. El deporte serio, como citaba George Orwell, tras ver en 1945 unos partidos de fútbol entre el Dynamo de Moscú y equipos ingleses: “Esta relacionado con el odio, celos, jactancia, desprecio de todas las reglas y placer sádico en contemplar la violencia: en otras palabras es una guerra sin disparos” (Pritchard, 2015, p. 77). El fútbol es la genuina metáfora de la guerra y, desde sus ancestros, la esencia no ha cambiado. No existe un fútbol (deporte) civilizado y no tiene

que ver nada con la invención del *fair-play*. El deporte civilizado es un mito, una construcción burguesa presa hoy del neoliberalismo más depredador y de la barbarie deportiva (Perelman, 2014, p. 192).

Iconotexto para el pie de la imagen: “Un recuerdo para la posteridad”, “A las órdenes mi capitán”, “Dispuestos para el combate”, “Esperando al enemigo”, “Los nuevos gladiadores”, “La decuria romana”.

Conclusiones

Las imágenes aquí presentadas desvelan lo connatural de la época, las formas consentidas y civilizadas de educar la violencia en los regímenes disciplinarios de la escolaridad. Ambas fotografías capturan *lo invisible*: los dispositivos de la masculinidad, la残酷, la dominación, las desigualdades y la opresión; modos de una obediencia y disciplina, el clasismo de un poder social que ordena y vigila que todo permanezca como se ha concebido y que nada altere el orden. Se trata de una educación que debe conceptualizarse en la coyuntura clasista y los subterfugios que utilizan la élites para construir divisiones y distancias sobre la población subalterna.

Tanto los batallones infantiles como el fútbol conformaron el conjunto de prácticas físicas de dominación de la época (Exploradores de España, gimnasia sueca, Festivales gimnásticos y otros deportes que también pertenecen a este campo). Ambas prácticas fueron dispositivos socializados e institucionalizados, pensados para el *buen encauzamiento* de la juventud y la militarización social. Pero estos jóvenes de las fotografías no eran los escogidos para ir a la guerra, paradójicamente fueron los más débiles, que también eran los más pobres. Los niños sanos, robustos y cultivados jugaban a la guerra con sus armas de *juguete* o con el balón. En cambio, los niños enfermizos, débiles y sin estudios trabajaban como adultos en la industria fabril. No es nada extraño, que este clasismo visionado por la infancia *en peligro y peligrosa* engendrase odio y violencias simbólicas hacia los *niños de papa*.

Por otro lado, el poder disciplinario de la educación física, el de los batallones infantiles y el del fútbol, cooperaron también en el cúmulo de los dispositivos biopolíticos utilizados para acrecentar la masculinidad, la cohesión social, la “españolización” y para impostar una idealización del Estado-nacional. En este constructo subyacía el implícito acuerdo de los

intereses (políticos y económicos) entre el poder militar, la monarquía, la iglesia y las clases acomodadas.

Finalmente visualizar que estas formas pretéritas de educación física (batallones infantiles y fútbol “a cañonazos”), hoy nos darían escalofríos. También destacar aquí, que en la educación en general, y especialmente en la educación física, el proceso de civilización de Elias (2010) se ha hecho palmario, pero con ello no debemos pensar que hayan desaparecido los modos de ejercer el saber/poder y el de otras formas, aparentemente no violentas, de una militarización simbólica de la infancia y la juventud.

Recuperar estas imágenes para (re)historiar la educación del siglo XX es contribuir a la memoria del presente y reformular una nueva historia de aquellas sombras que la oficialidad a negado a la colectividad. Dar voz a las imágenes es hacer visibles las *invisibilidades* de un pasado políticamente silenciado.

A través de este estudio hemos adelantado en la preservación de la memoria histórica individual y colectiva de la educación física. Reconocemos que no son habituales los análisis que se adentren en los arriesgados giros de-constructivos de las imágenes, es por eso que esperamos que la presente aportación estimule este tipo de enfoques.

Para terminar, solamente nos queda por añadir que ya han desaparecido las embarazosas barreras que hace apenas unos años privaban el acceso a las imágenes. Hoy el uso de las imágenes es toda una posibilidad con la infinidad de repositorios y hemerotecas con fondos digitalizados y, por eso, ya es más fácil iniciar la recuperación de una memoria visual de la educación física escolar. En adelante, el localizar, registrar e indizar las imágenes históricas, con el objetivo de su inmediato uso para estudiarlas y valorarlas, puede ser una tarea muy estimulante.

Notas

¹ *Sabadell Federal*, 30 de mayo de 1914 y 15 de junio de 1915. (fragmentos traducidos del catalán)

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Women in Culture: an intersectional anthology for gender and women's studies

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Reviews (I)

Kime Scott, B., E. Cayleff, S., Donadey A. & Lara, I. (eds.) (2017). *Women in culture: an intersectional anthology for gender and women's studies*. Malden (EUA): John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

La primera reedición de *Women in culture* podría parecer, después de diecisiete años, una obra obsoleta desde un punto de vista científico. Lejos de ello, los trabajos aportan reflexiones y propuestas de futuro, la mayoría de los cuales, aún hoy, están de absoluta vigencia. Sus más de quinientas páginas, revisadas y ampliadas, fruto del trabajo de cien autoras procedentes de diferentes áreas y opiniones, contienen setenta y ocho trabajos divididos en diez bloques.

Esta publicación, disponible en formato impreso y digital, está dirigida tanto a investigadoras profesionales como a personas no especializadas interesadas en crear un mundo más justo. El capítulo introductorio, así como el *glossary* y el *timeline*, facilitan y ayudan a asentar conceptos teóricos. Del mismo modo, ilustraciones y versos amenizan y detienen la lectura, otorgándole a ésta una idiosincrasia propia.

¿Cómo ha evolucionado el pensamiento y la teoría feminista? ¿Qué es la interseccionalidad? ¿Cuáles son las reivindicaciones del feminismo postcolonial y transnacional? ¿Qué es el sistema sexo-género? ¿Cómo se manifiestan la violencia y la opresión? ¿Cómo son concebidas socialmente las masculinidades? ¿Qué papel juega la religión, la cultura y el lenguaje? Éstas son algunas de las cuestiones que se formulan a lo largo de la obra y que al finalizar podremos responder y rebatir a partir de la construcción de nuestro propio discurso.

En las humanidades y las ciencias sociales en general, y en la teoría feminista en particular, los conceptos suelen generar polémica al ser utilizados, por las diferentes corrientes epistemológicas, con objetivos diferentes. El debate, alejándose de posibles dogmatismos, ayuda a que evolucionen los significados y a que se acuñen nuevas palabras. Por ejemplo, el término *intersectionality*, imprescindible a lo largo de la lectura, surgió con fuerza en la teoría feminista y en los *women's studies* a partir de los años ochenta del siglo pasado. El origen de este término debe remontarse a las reivindicaciones de las mujeres negras, como bell hooks o Carole Boyce Davies, en cuanto al sistema establecido y su relación con las clases sociales, el racismo y el sexism.

También, la distinción entre *sex and gender*, inspirada en la obra *El segundo sexo* de Simone de Beauvoir, irrumpió con fuerza en diferentes trabajos de este volumen. Esta distinción fue aprovechada por las corrientes feministas de los años setentas para demostrar que las desigualdades entre hombres y mujeres no tenían fundamentos naturales, sino que estaban basadas en discursos culturales. Sin embargo, a partir de finales de los ochentas, el sistema *sex and gender* fue cuestionado con el argumento que mantenía la dualidad binaria entre masculino y femenino, sin dejar espacio a otras opciones.

De hecho, creer que existe un sólo feminismo es tan incorrecto como pensar que existe una sola categoría de mujer. Aquello concebido como normativo, ya sea a partir de un lenguaje textual o corporal, no es más que un canon preestablecido por un grupo autoritario como, por ejemplo, el *western feminism*. Establecer estereotipos y extrapolarlos a otro espacio y/o tiempo, como han criticado el *postcolonial* y el *transnational feminism*, genera desigualdad. Debe ser ineludible, por tanto, entender cada realidad para poder abordarla con objetividad y criterio.

Mirar desde ópticas diferentes, repensar lo comúnmente aceptado y cuestionar lo tradicionalmente asumido, es necesario para cambiar todo aquello que nos rodea. Los feminismos —en plural— han contribuido de manera decisiva a ello, reconociendo y retornando a las mujeres el protagonismo que tuvieron, tienen y tendrán. Y es que, tal y como se desprende de esta obra, la historiografía y la filología, como otras muchas disciplinas, han sesgado y ocultado, durante siglos, lo acaecido en la historia

y la literatura. Rescatar una parte de esa memoria, individual y/o colectiva se convierte en una tarea primordial.

La presente recopilación, lejos de querer evadir el debate y la confrontación crítica, reconoce la necesidad de poner en discusión la teoría feminista, para poder identificar las problemáticas que subyugan a las mujeres de todo el mundo. Subvertir el simbolismo dominante, desde una u otra posición, constituye el eje central de los múltiples trabajos que continúan haciendo de esta obra una herramienta de transformación social.

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Gender and Migration

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Reviews (II)

Caroline B. Brettel (2016). *Gender and migration*. Cambridge: Politiy Press.

In this book, Caroline Brettel adopts a gender perspective to study international migrations from many countries to the United States, from 1965 to our days. In the introduction, she presents the approach that combines Migrations with Gender Studies, describing each of the stages that consolidate it as we know it nowadays: interdisciplinary and fundamental to explain the migration phenomenon in all its complexity.

The book is organized in four chapters. In the first one, "The Gendered Demography of US Immigration History", distinguishes by gender the migrations that arrived in the USA between 1812 and 2012, and analyzes each case considering the countries of origin and the reasons to migrate. The author presents a comparison between these figures and those of other countries of destination and confronts her study with other scholars' research. Thus, it shows that by considering the cultural characteristics of the country of origin we'll have a better comprehension of the migration phenomenon. At the same time, this can help us understand why the migrations of a given country are mostly male, female or egalitarian.

In the second chapter, "The Gendering of Law, Policy, Citizenship, and Political Practice," reconstructs the legal framework of migrations to the United States from the mid-nineteenth century to the present and points out differences in the application of laws between men and women. It shows that migration policies reflect the way migrants are socially constructed by the

state and offer a gender, class and race bias that leads to inequalities. Brettel offers a complete review on several studies that support these claims: families with mixed legal status, the case of anchor babies, the discrimination against Arab migrant men from 9/11 and the cultural bias of asylum and refugee migration policies. These cases postulate many challenges and require to be approached from a human rights perspective. At the same time, they show us the impact that the legislation and the policies from both sending and receiving countries have on the migratory process.

The third chapter, "Gendered Labor Markets", starts off from the idea that the labor demand shapes the migratory flows. For this reason, the study of migration must analyze labor markets and do so from a gender perspective, since there is a segmentation of labor offers for men and women. The author presents different examples to show how migrant workers must develop strategies that allow them to reinvent themselves in the new workplace, reorganizing their time to accomplish with both domestic and professionals tasks. This leads to many changes and cultural conflicts that the author presents and analyzes carefully.

Finally, the fourth chapter, "Gender and the Immigrant Family," argues that family and gender relations are impacted by geographical mobility and by living and working in a society culturally different to one's own. In this context, gender roles within the family are renegotiated. The author presents particular cases as examples, such as overexploited Korean women, differences in parenting styles between Italian natives and migrants, the so called parachute kids or honor killings as a result of an irreconcilable cultural shock.

All these cases show us that the gender relations for migrant families are fluid and are in constant process of transformation, both in the countries of origin and in the host countries. At the end of the chapter the author presents another interesting approach: the one that analyzes the flows of remittances from a gender perspective.

On the conclusion, the author encourages to approach the research in relation to gender and migration from a more interdisciplinary and comparative perspective, to offer a complete theoretical view and to establish relations between the existing studies. She also suggests some lines of research, among which we highlight "the intersections and gender

differences between the second generation of immigrants," since it undoubtedly has a direct impact on education.

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