Emerging Perspectives on Children in Migratory Circumstances

Selected Proceedings of the Working Group on Childhood and Migration June 2008 Conference

Edited by

Rachel R. Reynolds

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Drexel
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Philadelphia, PA: Drexel University Department of Culture & Communication
and Drexel University College of Arts and Sciences

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About this Volume

This e-book is an experiment by which we are trying to increase worldwide access to scholarship on migration and childhood. As far as one has internet access, its material is free and the articles are accessible in two formats (html and adobe). We find it a troubling irony that many of the children affected by migration come from areas where scholars struggle to find the infrastructure resources—computers, software, bandwidth, journal subscriptions, and affordable communication channels—to easily access and share scholarly work about the social changes wrought by migration in sending and receiving societies. Unfortunately, our June 2008 conference had to be held near our scholarly "homes," which limited the number of overseas participants and those outside of G-8 countries, although we did provide several scholarships for scholars from South America and the Caribbean. Despite the difficulty of the times, we hope that future collaborations will arise to help bridge these gaps and reduce these ironies.

The pieces you see in this e-book provide rich data from the lives of migrant children and sometimes their families. **Chantal Tetreault**'s piece among transnational Algerian teen girls in Paris and **Kendall King**'s study in Ecuador are linguistic in focus, bringing up the ways that performance in language is part of the practice of immigrant experience (Tetreault) and highlighting how regard for globalization and attention to language are deeply intertwined for immigrant communities (King). Most of the pieces provide in depth points of view from child migrant perspectives—data that is often difficult to obtain and portray sensitively. Child-centered data

is exceptionally valuable in helping us to grasp the micro-forces by which childhood is changing through migration and how children experience or activate agency under trying conditions. **Laure Bjawi-Levine** among Palestinians in Jordan, **Lauren Heidbrink** among Spanish speakers in immigration detention in the U.S., and **Jill White** among Mexican children in U.S. labor and schooling environments demonstrate ways in which children's self-understanding is constrained by state and economy in ways that determine a marked life course. **Kanwal Mand**'s also deeply child-centered analysis shows us how migrant childhoods can be notably shaped and sometimes constrained largely by urban housing and schooling environments, in this case for Pakistani second-generation children in London. **Cati Coe**'s interviews with informants in Ghana, and **Catríona Ní Laoire**'s study on return Irish migrants examine strains across the generations that affect the emotional management of families and individuals to handle the spatial and temporal challenges of migration. And finally, **Michelle Moran-Taylor** provides a rich analysis of the gendered and socioeconomic strategies that families use to negotiate the challenge of child-rearing in the home area when families are geographically separated, drawing especially on data from Guatemala.

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ABOUT THE WORKING GROUP ON CHILDHOOD AND MIGRATION

The Working Group on Childhood and Migration was started in 2005 by a group of people who were researching issues related to children and migration—both children who were migrating and children who were left in the home area by migrating parents. We asked a series of questions that spanned our work in various parts of the world: How were children being affected by migration? What did we find that was similar and how did people respond differently across our research sites? And what might we say to the public or policymakers about what to do to improve the lives of children affected by migration? The group grew rapidly between 2005 and 2009, both in the number of members who came from universities and organizations all around the world and also in the scope of activities. Those on the Working Group's Advisory Board were Deborah Boehm, Cati Coe, Joanna Dreby, Julia Meredith Hess, Heather Rae-Espinoza, and Rachel Reynolds. All of us brought different perspectives and skills to our common work, and together we edited the conference volume you see before you.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP

Building on the rapidly growing network, we pulled together a small anthropological workshop on Children and Migration funded by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research in January 2008 from which comes the book *Everyday Ruptures: Children and Migration in Global Perspective.* Cati Coe, Rachel R. Reynolds, Deborah A. Boehm, Julia Meredith Hess, Heather Rae-Espinoza and Rachel R. Reynolds (Eds.). Nashville, KY: Vanderbilt University Press. 2011.

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Finding Respect in France*

Muslim French Teens Interpreting Transcultural Values

Chantal Tetreault

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The March 2004 ban on Muslim headscarves and other "ostensible" signs of religious expression in French schools demonstrated the centrality of Muslim youth, and particularly Muslim girls, to contemporary deliberations about French identity and national community (Bowen, 2007:7). In its description of the law's intended effects, the Commission on *Laïcité* (or "Secularism") claimed to protect supposedly passive Muslim girls from the coercive effects of the headscarf, constructing them as victims of their own religious culture, a stereotype that widely circulates in France and the West generally. Yet girls and boys who simultaneously occupy Muslim and French social identities challenge such stereotypes by actively interpreting these identities in their communicative practices.

In this chapter, I explore how transnational ideologies derived from North African culture are transformed in local expressions of identity among French adolescents of primarily Algerian descent living in a *cité* (a low-income housing project). My goal here and generally in my research on teenagers of Algerian descent living on the outskirts of Paris is to give voice to girls and boys growing up at the intersection of Arab Muslim and secular French cultures. In my analysis, I examine how the local identity practices of Muslim French teens articulate with North African ideologies of identity, but in contradictory, rather than wholly consistent, ways. For example, teens routinely articulate conservative ideologies pertaining to generation and gender derivative of North African cultural beliefs, but also routinely challenge these ideologies in interactions with their peers.

Many of the communicative practices I observed in my study are *transcultural* in that they combine multiple cultural and linguistic referents in ways that simultaneously structure and destabilize adolescents' social identities as both Arab-Muslim and French. Teens of North African descent growing up in French *cités* navigate between the cultural positioning of their Arabic-speaking immigrant parents and their

French-speaking, French-born peers. One way they negotiate multiple identity positionings is through innovative language practices that translate their transnational experiences into transcultural forms.

Specifically, in speech events that I term "parental name calling," adolescents irreverently use the first name of a peer's parent in a public setting and thereby subvert a name taboo—the avoidance of given names in personal address—that is widely prescribed across North Africa and that is practiced by their parents. Parental name calling is a form of transcultural expression because it combines a cultural reference to polite North African forms of address (the avoidance of personal names) with an irreverent undoing of that practice whereby French teens mock each other and their immigrant parents. By choosing the term "name calling" I purposefully evoke the ambivalent duality of (1) a very literal "name-calling" in which adolescents call out each other's parents' first names and (2) the more common usage of the term, that is, the practice of teasing and bullying among young people. Rather than use profanities or specific insults, however, adolescents call out the first name of a peer's parent in a public setting as a deliberate provocation, which in itself is intended to insult or tease.

Apart from the public voicing of a parent's name, parental name calling is not a formulaic or codified speech event, but rather takes different forms depending upon the speakers and the context at hand. In the simplest form of parental name calling that I observed during roughly two years of fieldwork (conducted from 1999 to 2000 and in 2006), grade school children under the age of ten years shouted the first names of one another's parents back and forth. Adolescents, however, crafted more elaborate verbal contexts in which to embed the names of their peers' parents and often did so with a mixture of humor and insult. In certain cases, adolescent girls mockingly referred to one another directly by their mothers' names. The teasing, playful quality of parental name calling among adolescents also extended to the practice of embedding personal names into innovative linguistic contexts. For instance, in one lengthy performance that I recorded in 2000,

two teenaged girls and one boy used a classic 1980s French rock song by Daniel Balavoine, entitled "*Le Chanteur*" ("The Singer"), to embed one another's parents' names. Mimicking the song's original verse, "I introduce myself, my name is Henri" ("*Je me présente, je m'appelle Henri*"), adolescents embedded the names of their peers' mothers into the "Henri" slot, using revised lyrics replete with sexual and scatological innuendo.

Tracing the origins of cultural borrowing among youth is increasingly complex since, as Bucholtz (2002:542) puts it, "many of the resources of present-day *bricoleurs* are in a certain sense self-appropriations—borrowings and adaptations of one's own cultural background to create new youth styles," but at the same time, many of the "traditions" adopted by youth depend upon creative reinterpretations of the past and so involve "a kind of neotraditionalism in which elements of the heritage culture are selectively appropriated and resignified." With regard to communicative practices among French adolescents of North African descent, both innovative and traditionalizing patterns of cultural production are occurring simultaneously. Adolescents selectively appropriate and adapt a communicative form from their own background (in this case, a name taboo) and transform it into a means to express their social positioning as simultaneously young, Arab, and French.

ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXTS FOR PARENTAL NAME CALLING

This chapter is part of a larger ethnographic project on language practices and social identity among adolescents of primarily Algerian descent in Chemin de l'Ile, a neighborhood located west of Paris in Nanterre. Central to France's industrial boom in the 1950s and 1960s, Nanterre has had a long history of immigration generally and of Algerian immigration in particular. Male Algerian workers, among them several grandfathers of adolescents in this study, were recruited by factories in Nanterre and lived in *bidonvilles* ("shantytowns"), located about a mile away from Chemin de l'Ile. This neighborhood is

today dominated by clusters of low-income housing projects called *cités*.

The intertwined histories of North African migration and public housing have produced new French subjects through shared experiences of community in diaspora as well as through experiences of racial and spatial marginalization. Second- and third- generation descendants of North African immigrants today call themselves *les rebeus*, phonetically altering the sounds in *arabe* "Arab" in a type of slang called *verlan*.[1] Just as these new French subjects have created a label for themselves that reflects their French and Arab cultural origins, *les rebeus* have combined working-class French and North African cultural and linguistic practices to create emergent communicative practices.

In the case of parental name calling, transnational North African norms for respectful address constitute a central linguistic and cultural influence. By engaging in parental name calling, adolescents both foreground and subvert a North African cultural value, that is, the avoidance of personal names. Norms of respect prescribe avoiding speaking the first name of a non-relative, and sometimes of a relative as well, particularly if that person is older than the speaker or not of the same gender. Euphemisms help North African Arabic speakers circumvent given names such as the common expression "How's the house?" (*Kaifa dar?*), which a man might use to ask another non-kin male about his wife. These practices point to the ways that respectful forms of address are codified in relation to cultural norms regarding gender, age, and sexual propriety.

Following these rules for politeness, speakers avoid indiscreet reference to non-kin that might offend cultural sensibilities. In parental name calling,

however, teens intentionally do the exact opposite, that is, they publicly voice the name of a peer's parent in order to playfully tease, incite anger, or exercise social control. In this regard, parental name calling constitutes a particularly important way for adolescents to articulate cultural ties to both their immigrant origins and their emergent French adolescent subculture. Through this communicative practice, French adolescents of North African descent construct their peer group both in relation to cultural ideals of *le respect* and in contrast to those ideals.

In parental name calling, publicly voicing a peer's parent's name is often combined with other insults, both ritual and personal. This potential slippage between ritual and personal insult is always present in parental name calling, an ambiguity that allows adolescents to achieve two seemingly contradictory but highly valued interactional goals, often in quick succession. The "target" of parental name calling may interpret the speech event as personal insult, a response that allows the vindication of his or her parent's "respect" (*le respect*) through denial, counter-attack, and even physical aggression.

The relative unpredictability of form and interpretation of parental name calling means that these speech events are highly dynamic interactions that are situated between ritual and personal insult and between serious and playful conflict.[2] More frequently, however, parental name calling is interpreted in my data as an opportunity to collaboratively engage in ritual insults and solidarity with a peer, resulting in cultural and generational opposition to parents. Nevertheless, the possible ambivalent interactional outcomes for parental name calling demonstrate adolescents' simultaneous desires to, on the one hand, exhibit what they refer to as *le respect* for their immigrant parents and, on the other

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[1]   *Verlan* refers to French slang that is composed by inverting the syllables or sounds of words; indeed, the term *verlan* derives from *l'envers*, which means "inverted'. *Verlan* did not originate in *cités* and is a very old French word game that can be verified as a form of spoken jargon as early as the late 19th century, although evidence of it as a literary device exists as early as the 12th century (Lefkowitz 1991:50-51). Currently, however, its use is popularly depicted as emblematic of young people living in *cités*.

[2]   The act of calling out a peer's parent's personal name in public constitutes a breach of deference and thus is regularly considered impolite. However, parental name calling can either emerge as a playful, formulaic, and structured performance, thus resembling ritual insult, or as a serious confrontation in which participants answer with "denial, excuse, or mitigation," thus resembling personal insult (Labov 1972:152).

hand, engage in performances that build social intimacy with their French-born peers.

Le respect is a set of behaviors that my teenaged consultants construct as commensurate with proper cultural and religious practices derivative of North African and Muslim beliefs. At the same time, the set of moral discourses that constitute *le respect* in Chemin de l'Ile and in other *cités* is central to the experience of being Muslim and Arab within the diasporic context of France. That is, *le respect* is not just a reproduction of Arab-Muslim values that are imported wholesale from North Africa but a set of moral discourses and practices that emerge in France, particularly in the stigmatized spaces of French *cités*. For example, despite their interpretation of *le respect* as a Muslim-Arab value, teens exclusively expressed this notion in French, not Arabic, even though they used other Arabic loan words when speaking French with their peers.

Generally, *le respect* refers to behavioral expectations that apply to both adolescent girls and boys, though again in ways contingent upon local gender ideologies. For adolescents of both genders, maintaining *le respect* dictates refraining from illicit behaviors such as dating, smoking, drinking alcohol, and using drugs, particularly within view of older relatives and adults of one's parents' or grandparents' generation. In Chemin de l'Ile, *le respect* involves a higher level of social constraint for girls, since they are expected by their parents and peers to attain respect by presenting a public image that they are sexually unavailable and inactive.

In contrast to the social power of granting respect to another, ideological discourses circulated in Chemin de l'Ile construct girls' and women's power as the ability to attain the respect of others, a power that is largely tied to the way that they control their own reputations by limiting time spent with non-kin men. Some strategies that girls and young women used to gain respect in Chemin de l'Ile included limiting time in outdoor public spaces within the neighborhood and avoiding or appearing to avoid dating. For example, one young woman of eighteen explained to me that she had decided to attend high school in another *cité* several neighborhoods away because that

afforded her more social freedom and an increased ability to control her reputation. By limiting access to observations of her behavior in her own *cité,* she was largely able to prevent the circulation of damaging rumors about her. Moreover, her parents were pleased to have her attend the other high school because it was academically superior to the local school.

Similarly, adolescents in Chemin de l'Ile practice strategic measures in relation to dating. Although the majority of adolescents that I encountered were starting to date between the ages of fourteen to sixteen, information about whom they were dating was highly controlled, especially in relation to parents. Thus adolescents reinterpret the behavioral code *le respect* in ambivalent ways. By covertly dating, they undermine the intention of *le respect*, that is, to prevent premarital romantic relationships, and yet refrain from overtly contradicting their parents' wishes. Adolescents thereby engage in a combination of resistance and accommodation to their parents' morality and both reproduce and subvert normative notions of *le respect*. Adolescents' complicated relationship to *le respect* is evidence of the ways that they are crafting their own emergent French teenaged morality, which simultaneously converges with and diverges from that of their parents.

One forum in which adolescents articulate their complex relationship to *le respect* is in performances of parental name calling. For instance, in the example below, Mabrouka evokes *le respect* as a set of behavioral expectations for Djamila's mother, Zahra. At the same time, through her use of familiar reference for Djamila's mother and in her description of Zahra's supposedly disrespectful behavior, Mabrouka herself flouts cultural expectations for the respect of her elders. Thus, even as she is prescribing respectful behavior for Djamila's mother, Mabrouka is subverting these behavioral norms herself. The contradictions inherent in Mabrouka's performance demonstrate that parental name calling is a way in which these adolescents may discursively reproduce conservative cultural norms at the same time that they challenge these ideas in practice.

LE RESPECT AND LE FOULARD

One evening I was sitting in a playground with several girls near a group of apartments when another girl, Djamila, age fifteen, walked up to chat. Upon seeing her approach, Mabrouka (age fourteen) immediately reported to Djamila that her mother had burned something in her kitchen and the smoke had traveled all the way to the playground. Mabrouka then rendered a bodily pantomime of Djamila's mother, who had supposedly used a *foulard* (headscarf), to shake the smoke out of her kitchen. While she leaned forward and waved her arms up and down, Mabrouka added a verbal caption for the unflattering image she had created for Djamila's mother, whose first name was Zahra: *"Zahra avec son foulard en train de le secouer"* ("Zahra with her headscarf, shaking it out").

Djamila said nothing but was visibly upset by Mabrouka's account. Mabrouka apparently interpreted her look as an accusation of wrongdoing, for she responded: *"Ne t'inquiètes pas"* ("Don't worry"). Rather than accept Mabrouka's mitigation of the seriousness of her teasing, Djamila said to the rest of us, "Mabrouka always does this kind of thing to me, so that I'll worry and everything" (*"Elle me fait toujours ce genre de truc, Mabrouka, pour que je m'inquiète et tout"*). With no resolution or further commentary, the girls' discussion about the event ended there in cold silence.

In spite of the lack of interpretation embedded within the interaction itself, ethnographic knowledge provides some clues as to why Djamila would think Mabrouka's story was cause for "worry." Mabrouka's performance of Djamila's mother was a means to depict her as behaving in socially inappropriately ways and hence to call her respectability into question. In addition to Zahra's unseemly encroachment into public space by hanging out the window and spreading smoke throughout the neighborhood, her supposed use of a *foulard* is particularly troubling to notions of *le respect*. A *foulard* (*hijab* in Arabic) is a personal item of women's clothing that among many Muslims symbolizes women's modesty before God (Abu-Lughod, 1986:108). It is quite surprising then, that Zahra would use a headscarf to shake away smoke, rather than a kitchen towel (*torchon*).

Mabrouka's choice of wording is particularly notable since Djamila's mother did not, in fact, wear a headscarf, a point that Mabrouka may have been trying to highlight, since her own mother did. In this performance of parental name calling, Mabrouka draws upon religious symbolism in order to depict Djamila's mother as acting in gender-inappropriate ways.

In addition to religious symbolism, Mabrouka's performance of Djamila's mother seems to draw upon symbolism common to French anti-immigrant rhetoric, a trope common to everyday interactions among these teens.[3] The accusation that Zahra allowed her burned cooking to infiltrate public space recalls the infamous 1991 speech by the then-mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac that the "French worker" (read "ethnically French male citizen") living in *cités* found it difficult to cope with "the sound and the smell" of his immigrant neighbors (*Le Monde* 1991). Such highly negative depictions of supposedly typical immigrant behavior circulate in public discourses in Chemin de l'Ile and elsewhere in France.[4] This exchange demonstrates how children of immigrants appropriate these discourses for their own in-group purposes as French teens. In so doing, they create unflattering depictions of one another's parents that draw upon ideals of *le respect* from transnational Algerian cultural models as well as upon bourgeois French notions of "appropriate" public behavior.[5]

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3 For example, the French adolescents of primarily Algerian descent in my study routinely referred to recently arrived North African immigrants derisively as *les clandés*, after *les clandestines* or "illegals" regardless of their immigration status. In these ways, French adolescents of North African background distinguish themselves from immigrants and build cultural and social references of their own.

4 However, in a demonstration of the power of discourse and its ambivalence, this particular highly negative slogan was subsequently reassigned a pro-immigrant political meaning when the multiethnic music group *Zebda* produced a CD of the same name: *Le bruit et l'odeur* ("The noise and the smell").

5 At the time that the above-mentioned music recording was made, school children across France participated in a national education project to teach students "civility" and the behaviors of "good neighbors', undoubtedly a response to the perception that "new' French citizens were not learning and adopting unwritten codes of *la politesse* ("politeness").

CONCLUSION

In performances of parental name calling, adolescents express ambivalent stances toward *le respect*. By using the first name of a peer's parent in public and in an irreverent manner, adolescents subvert norms for respectful behavior toward adults based upon a name taboo. Thus, adolescents foreground the cultural code of behavior they call *le respect* even as they transform this code through its reinterpretation in interactional practice. The ambivalent expressions of *le respect* in parental name calling demonstrate how these French teens reinterpret North African ideologies of generation and gender through transcultural identity practices.

The instances of parental name calling addressed in this chapter demonstrate the centrality that kin constructions can play in adolescents' performances of personal and group identity. Performances of parental name calling indicate that French adolescents of Algerian descent experience and express peer identity as highly relational to their parents' generation. In these heteroglossic performances, teens position each other as daughters and sons, thereby elaborating personal adolescent identities in relation to parents and older kin. Specifically, in parental name calling, personal names and other information about parents and kin are used to evoke these absent persons as foils for the present adolescent self, and these absent adults serve, in turn, as foils for the peer group.

Moreover, in the context of adolescent identity in this immigrant community, evoking a peer's familial origins is comparable to evoking a peer's cultural origins. As I have demonstrated, in these performances of parental name calling, adolescents' collaborative construction of symbolic mothers and fathers create a complicated indexical web that entangles self and other, child and parent, peer and adult, as well as French-born citizen and North African immigrant. In these multiple ways, the elaboration of their French adolescent peer group and their shared transcultural identity are achieved simultaneously in interaction and are mutually informing. Specifically, the practice of parental name calling exemplifies the ambivalent positioning of these adolescents

to the neo-traditionalist value of *le respect*. In these performances adolescents negotiate their own emergent youthful code of "respectful" behavior that both reinforces and transgresses cultural norms regarding gender and generation.

Due to the highly central role that Muslim adolescents currently play in popular imaginings of French nationhood, youth who simultaneously embody and enact Muslim and French social identities are frequently subject to the representations and interpretations of outside commentators. This chapter has demonstrated that careful attention to interactional practices can help us understand how such adolescents, living in immigrant communities, represent and interpret their own social situation within peer discourse as they negotiate both cultural continuity and change.

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Negotiating Home and School
Bangladeshi Children in London

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INTRODUCTION

The literature on second-generation South Asians living in Britain has historically positioned them as "caught between two cultures." Contemporary research, however, focuses on how identities are contingent and contextual due to the dynamics of gender, ethnicity, age, and place (Baumann, 1996; Alexander, 2002). And yet, the concerns addressed in this more recent literature—for example marriage, musical productions, gangs—are pertinent mainly to young people and adults, with the result that little is known about issues that are directly relevant to children's experiences. Instead, where there is a focus on the children of migrants, it tends to be upon them as markers of integration and often hones in on their educational performance (Crozier & Davis, 2007).

Through a series of case studies, this article explores the intersection between home and school as social and physical spaces through which children understand, play, and negotiate their identities. The children were approximately ten years old and of Bangladeshi heritage. With the exception of a few,

all the children were born in London and involved in travel to and from Sylhet, a northeastern district of Bangladesh. These children are part of families and communities that are generally on the move; although as British school children, at this stage in the life course, their lives are highly localized, with the routines of home and school forming a large part of their lives in London (Mand, 2010). I argue that children's identities are contextual and embedded according to the ways in which places—in particular, home and school—are constructed and experienced. A key finding of the research is that children think home is in Bangladesh and London simultaneously. (Mand, 2010; Gardner & Mand, 2012, see also Zeitlyn, 2010). In this article, however, I refer to home as the site that is the context of children's daily lives in Britain. Broadly speaking, as Olwig and Gullov (2003: 3) highlight, home and school are sites within which children are "placed" and these are "defined by adult moral values about a cherished past and a desirable future, clothed in commonsense notions about children's best interests." Both home and school are

marked by hierarchies between adult and child (parent-child and teacher-child, respectively), while inequities also exist between children at school in terms of who is the "most popular," perceived to be "smart," been to Bangladesh, and so on.

A common outlook amongst policy interventionists and their critics is that they perceive home and school as distinct bounded spheres. The distinction between home and school is central for understanding educational policy and how both parents and community advocates, on the one hand, and schools, social workers, and psychologists, on the other, understand the needs and problems of Bengali transnational children. South Asian children's experiences of transnationalism have been marginal to academic accounts of transnationalism. Meanwhile, in the context of schools and local educational authorities, children's transnationalism is perceived as problematic particularly when children are absent from school during term time. Some of the teachers implied that travel to Bangladesh for extended periods meant they "forgot" what they learned in school and this impacted their "English." The local educational authority operate a strict policy against school absenteeism whereby on their return children can and do lose their place in the school. Children's transnational mobility feeds into policy assumptions that attribute Bangladeshi children's "failure" to achieve particular standards in schools on account of cultural differences between home and school; in other words, the values of "home" based on ethnicity and culture are seen as being incommensurate with those of schools. The notion that "cultural difference" is why children underperform fails to account for the ways in which Bangladeshi parents felt unable to "play a direct role in their children's education" and instead "saw their role, rather, as providing a supportive home and family background and as giving encouragement" (Crozier & Davies, 2007: 303; Gillies, 2007; Edwards, 2002). At public forums, community workers, parents, and the like have adamantly contested the ideas that the "failure" of Bangladeshi children at school is attributable to parents' "culture".[1] Characterizing

children's failure on account of a "cultural difference" leads to policy interventions that seek to collapse the boundary between home and school in order to promote partnership and maximize educational achievement. Such interventions have been critiqued for positioning children as passive members of society and as adults in the making,[2] and, as a result, children's agency and negotiations between home and school are negated (Edwards, et al., 2002). In its stead, critics of these policy interventions propose that the specificities of class, gender, and ethnic positions lead to a diversity of children's experiences of the home-school division, noting that there is a sharper boundary between home and school amongst ethnic minority families (Edwards, 2002).

The majority of Bangladeshi children saw clear differences in their lives at home and at school. At home, in London, they are often expected to and do activities like caring for their siblings and performing domestic tasks, and these activities are influenced by ideals based on gendered norms (Mand, 2010). For example, girls spoke about the amount of housework with which they were charged and, while complaining that their brothers didn't "do as much," girls rationalized the situation on account of gender norms within the house that are related to being Bangladeshi. Furthermore, when girls spoke about home they often referred to practices such as "being respectful" as part of their selfhood to be influenced by wanting to be good Muslims.[3]

The children's illustrations, diaries, and interview accounts give a clear indication that school is something they enjoyed and, contrary to expectation, holidays were boring in contrast to the stimulation provided by school (Mand, 2010). While not all learning that occurs in school was seen as enjoyable (in

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1   Panel comment at Brick Lane Circle meetings (www.bricklanecircle.org).

2   By contrast another model (and one which is closely associated with childhood studies) focuses on the child's perspective, takes into consideration their experience, and examines issues of autonomy and independence. A third model refers to children as active agents who nonetheless operate in structures that they negotiate (Edwards, 2002).

3   It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss religion and socialization. My intention here is to highlight the "home" as a site where children are taught particular values of respect and expectations that are linked to cultural and religious practices.

particular the morning lessons of literacy and numeracy) children stressed informal learning that occurred through drama, sports, and art workshops as a key reason why school was "fun." Alongside having to meet targets pertaining to core subjects, Victoria School, like others in Britain, stresses informal learning situations, which includes taking school trips as a key way through which children's achievements can be bolstered and learning accelerated (for a fuller discussion on the policy surrounding informal learning, see Zeitlyn, 2010).

I argue, however, that while there may be different ideologies that inform sociability within different spaces, the case studies illustrate how the ideas and practices within these spaces are dynamic. Furthermore, children are active agents who are involved in carving out spaces and creating meaning relevant to their gender and stage in the life course.

BACKGROUND

The discussion here draws from a wider research project funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council under the "Diasporas, Migration, and Identities" program. The research is concerned with understanding the experiences of British-born children of Bangladeshi heritage and their location within transnational networks and diasporic spaces. I began working with seven-year-old children (school year three) in 2006 at an East London primary school, although the bulk of the research activities took place when they were about ten years old (school year five). One of the aims was to bring to the fore children's voices, given the absence in migration research within the United Kingdom of South Asian children's experiences and role in diasporic communities. Hence, I did not seek to write an ethnography about the school; rather, my focus on home and school takes its departure point from children's representations presented during participatory activities.

From the onset, I viewed childhood as a category that is relational and variable in meanings across place and time. Hence, childhood is not a universal category in which children pass through a series of predefined developmental "stages." While there remains a tendency in international policy and pedagogic practice of assuming that children are everywhere the same, such a stance fails to account for the unique experiences of children who are of migrant backgrounds. The children of this research are part of families where ideas of what it means to be a child is influenced by ideals and practices of Sylhet, or what is imagined or recalled to be the case. Writing about the "West," James argues that ideas about "the home" and "the family" have come to intermesh with "the child" historically, resulting in the placement of children on a "twin dependency" based on their nature, that needs controlling, and their need for nurture (James, 1998:142). These ideas differ among the Bangladeshi, as children as well as adults are perceived less as individuals but more as part of collectivities like families, although this does not necessary result in a "twin dependency" (James, 1998). Rather, in the Bangladeshi context, "beyond the stage of infancy, distinctions in entitlements and types and levels of responsibility are usually made according to a child's size, gender and competence, commonly expressed in how much they 'understand'"(Haider, 2008: 51–52; quoting Blanchet, 1996: 48). "Understanding" is not limited to physical maturity and/or biological age but instead is related to a child's management of social circumstances and gender identity (Blanchet, 1996). It is not my intention to suggest that ideas of childhood are fixed to a particular locality but rather to draw attention to the ways in which children can be positioned in a particular way according to the setting. Ideas of what it means to be a child can and do vary across generations—in the "home" setting as well as at school (Gardner & Mand, 2012).

Living within walking distance of Victoria School, the children's school day begins at 8.50 AM and ends at 3.30 PM Their accompanied journeys back home may involve going to the local park, shops, the homes of relatives or attending "Arabic/Koran" lessons. Some 98 percent of children in year five at Victoria School were born in the London borough and are of Bangladeshi heritage. Other ethnicities within the class group included Somalian, White British, and

FIGURE 1. Picture taken by a child of the view from his bedroom on the thirteenth floor of a block of flats in Tower Hamlets.

African Caribbean. The parents or grandparents of the Bangladeshi children arrived in large numbers from Sylhet around the time of the industrial boom in the 1960s. Following the end of the industrial boom, many Bangladeshis moved to Tower Hamlets, and today census figures indicate that one-third (33 percent) of the population in Tower Hamlets is Bengali. In particular areas of the borough the percentage of Bengali rises to 45 percent, amongst whom 74 percent are children under the age of seventeen (Dench, et al., 2006: 57). Living in Tower Hamlets, these children are part of an ethnic minority community who are living in poverty, a situation exacerbated by high unemployment rates and poor housing in the poorest borough in England. For these British-born children of Bangladeshi heritage, the immediate locality is marked by social and economic contrasts. For example, while they live in overcrowded high rise blocks of flats, their view is of the opulent buildings that house the financial heart of London.

What follows are a set of case studies that differently illustrate the intersection between home and school as experienced by children during their daily lives in London. In the first case study, I focus on Mad Max's[4] "play" in the school playground, the space in which I (first) undertook participatory activities with children: playing games, running around, and talking to them informally in smaller groups. This case study illustrates the playground as a space within which children perform emerging identities

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4   The children chose their own pseudonyms.

that they present in the classroom and at home, away from "adult" eyes. This is not to say that the playground is beyond school rules, although it is notable that children are able to behave in a different manner in the playground than the classroom.

My second case study focuses on tensions that arise when children wish to attend trips organized by the school and the necessity of getting parental consent to go. In this section, we hear from Reema, who is reflecting back as an adult, about wanting to go to Paris at the age of eight on a school trip. The account illustrates the ways in which children are involved in translating the values of one sphere (school) to families. In doing so I wish to draw attention to the active ways children negotiate their sense of self by altering relations to the social position they occupy within household hierarchies.

Finally, in a third example, I turn to Kylie's account of wearing a headscarf in and out of school. The headscarf is an important symbol for Muslim gendered identity and the implications of wearing these are increasingly politicized in Europe. For example, the wearing of a headscarf in French and British schools has resulted in debate within academia and in the public sphere in relation to the ideals of "freedom" and secularism (Molokotos Leiderman, 2000). In the narrative given by Kylie, we can begin to address whether children are "caught between cultures" or are active agents as they maneuver between spheres. I approach these questions through the discussion I had with Kylie about when she wears or does not wear the head scarf, revealing the multiplicity of positions children occupy and their understanding of norms associated with home and school. Let us turn now to the case studies beginning with Mad Max.

CASE STUDIES
Mad Max and His Declaration of Love
On the board covering up a derelict outbuilding in the school playground, Mad Max wrote in black marker his initials and those of his playground girlfriend: "T and M 100%". He called out to me across the noisy

FIGURE 2. Mad Max's graffiti on a school building.

playground and asked me to take a picture. When I asked Mad Max if I could show the picture to other people he said, "Yes—but don't show it to my mum." Mad Max, like many of his peers in the playground, was involved in playing with and performing a gendered identity that increasingly involved being interested in the opposite sex. The performances of these identities are linked to gendered norms of behavior. However, while Mad Max took on the bold step of writing about his "love" on the wall, the apple of his eye publicly refuted such interest although she was never physically far from him and often engaged in whispered plots with other girls in how to trip Mad Max and so forth. Even through Mad Max was eventually reprimanded by the headmaster for defacing school property, at the time he was less concerned with rebellious vandalism and more with what his love interest signified and the interpretation his mother might make. Mad Max knew that his mother would disapprove of the activity and the sentiments. Indeed, Mad Max's mother, like many others, expressed a disdain for television channels like MTV because she found the morality dubious, particularly in terms of the sexualized content of programs. This is not to say that these families rebut all engagement with the media—children are exposed to a host of images and messages. On the whole, however, children spoke of being allowed to watch only specific channels such as Bengali "S channel," Bangla TV, other Asian channels, and Disney.

When they are in class, children's movement within the school space is heavily monitored and centered around discipline and learning. In contrast, out in the playground and during rainy days, when classrooms took on the qualities of open play spaces at play time, children's activities are unstructured. This expectation—or culture—of unstructured and structured activity was in place even though that year the school playground was renovated to include a football pitch, swings, climbing frames and sheltered areas. The boundaries of the playground were literally transferred to indoor classrooms as they became spaces for children to relate to one another in play. Play times were central to forging relationships since, despite living in close proximity to one another, the majority of children who spent time together in school did not do so out of school. Exceptions were children related to one another, siblings, and cousins from extended networks, while some children noted friendships with neighboring families. The space of the playground is a grey area between the rigid boundaries between home and school and one that enables children to experiment with emerging identity, like the one symbolized by Mad Max's graffiti.

Away from the school playground, there were limited opportunities for children to interact and "play" outside the control of their families: independent roaming around streets for these children was limited. Although some children spoke about playing outdoors in communal areas allocated to their blocks of flats, most said that they were not allowed outside. The parents further confirmed this, stating that their estates were dangerous and they were concerned about their children's safety. Nevertheless, children did speak of being mobile in the company of their families, notably older siblings, and most children were keen observers and were knowledgeable of what was going on in the street. The ideal of keeping children away from "danger"—namely crime and drugs—however well-intentioned by parents and the school context, remains difficult given the deprived urban environment that forms the context of these children's daily lives. A dramatic example of this was an incident involving the older brother of an ex-pupil. The action took place during one lunch break: a young

Bangladeshi boy climbed up the metal gates of the schoolyard while being pursued by the police and sniffer dogs. "It was drugs, that's what they get him for," said one child. "Yeah, did you see him trying to climb up the school walls?" perked up another. "The police, man, they were going for him." This episode reveals that, although children's lives are highly regulated and they remain for the large part within the care of adults, be it their family members or school staff, they are nevertheless members of the community and exposed to elements deemed inappropriate.

Peterson argues that what is considered suitable for children is closely related to the ways in which childhood is constructed within families and "its place in the larger universe" (Peterson 2005: 180). Keeping children away from negative influences suggests that, for the parents of Bangladeshi children, childhood is a time when they need to be instructed and protected from particular influences. Many parents told me that they feared the influence of the "streets," especially drugs and television stations such as MTV that they perceived as morally dubious. Nevertheless children are mobile both locally and transnationally and are involved in different sites of belonging: Mad Max's graffiti incident indicates how experimentation with gender and gender relations outside the aegis of family and official school activities is inevitable. Moreover, on account of being school children in an inner city neighborhood, they can observe, have access to, and be inspired by different stimuli. This is often the substance of their conversations in the school playground.

Traverse the Familiar to the Unfamiliar

In this section, I explore the intersection between home and school through the lens of school trips. Trips are organized and instigated by schools and are associated with a particular version of educating the child based on cross-cultural exchanges. School trips can range from day trips to local museums right through to trips involving a journey and temporary residence away from home. For some children, gaining permission for these trips is an anxious time as parents can and do refuse to give permission and sometimes object to the school ideal behind such trips. When handing out consent forms, knowing that some parents will be wary of such activities, teachers encourage children to explain the purpose of the trip and at times literally translate the value of attending such trips. As we shall see in Reema's case, children are involved in a process of negotiation in their homes on behalf of their schools based on their desire to take the school trip. For children, being able to voice what is unspoken in these exchanges is difficult, and, for this purpose, I have resorted to using the voice of Reema, who is the thirty-year-old mother of one of the children at school whom I interviewed. In the extract below, she is reflecting on her position as a member of a migrant family and being the eldest of eight children in the 1980s.

REEMA: I remember this very clearly, when we had trips like going away on field trips and stuff like that my parents were against it. Being a, being a Muslim, no way, they weren't having any of it. Even the school spoke to them and everything, and, erm, I just pleaded with them [her parents] I really wanted to go because all the other kids are going as well and I don't want to be left out. I think somewhere along the line you have to come to that extreme in order for them to let me go. . . . But they weren't like that, "no way," so I had my ways of battling it

KANWAL: And what did you do?

REEMA: I'd say to them, like I said, I'd explain to them why, "I'm going to be the left out child." And I suppose being the oldest, having other siblings, the cost as well, parents being on low income and everything, and everything mattered, every penny counted at that time, so I said it's not going to cost much, a few quid for like pocket money. I remember we went to Kent or something like that, one of those areas, I did end up going but it was to the level [that] I had to plead to them. [She said to her parents] "it was something that everyone was looking forward to". . . . [Telling me] I wanted to be part of the group, it's never nice for anyone to be left out and neglected sort of thing.

KANWAL: Yeah.

REEMA: I remember, yeah, that's the (adopting a parental tone) "only last time we're going to let you go." We were doing a project about France and Paris and all that, and we went on another trip, for about three or four days to Paris accommodated and all of that and when that came and we had to work. We were going to go and visit a school and they were going to give us something and in exchange and we were going to give them something from London.

[There then followed a discussion on being allowed to go only once on a school trip]

REEMA: You know, so there was all of that building up, again, and I remember, this is so funny, yeah, I remember this is so funny I went into the corner, the only place I could have my space and I prayed and hoped, "you know if Allah has that power, to make me and go to that trip." I remember, it was just so funny now looking back at it, how pathetic I was, but, I remember, the fact that my parents had said that it was the last trip you're going to and you're not going,

*   *   *

The idea of going on a school trip was exciting for Reema. At the same time, there existed the real possibility of exclusion because of her family background. The school trip is based on an ideal of learning, outside the classroom/school, whereby children are exposed to avenues of cultural capital that in turn are expected to feed into their education (Edwards, 2002; Zeitlyn, 2010). In contrast, Bangladeshi parents' ideas about what is valuable to learn differs from school cultures that are embedded in western liberal conceptions of personhood (Edwards, 2002). This, as we see in Reema's experience, can and does present conflict for children of Bangladeshi heritage who want to attend trips. In order to be able to do so they are involved in a process of negotiation between home and school. These spheres differ in the notion of what it means to be a child, in notions of autonomy, and in activities perceived to be educational. Expressing her frustration, Reema recalled her pleas

to parents and to Allah, naming these, as an adult, as "pathetic," highlighting the powerlessness she felt in such a situation. Her narrative draws attention to the power of institutions such as schools and of families in the lives of children and to the strategies children use to negotiate between them. Children are involved in the negotiations between the ideals of home and school while also seeking to carve a space for themselves.

While we may be able to suggest that Bangladeshi parents place a different onus on education than the school does (Zeitlyn, 2010), it is worth underscoring the dynamic nature of Bangladeshi families whereby Reema's experience of schooling in Britain results in intergenerational changes in experiences of education. Her account also indicates the necessity of understanding children's positions within household hierarchy (she was the oldest of eight siblings) and household economics given her parents were newly arrived migrants who were struggling financially and living in an overcrowded flat—facts that influenced the decision-making regarding school trips. She points to her parents' lack of knowledge about British schooling—and by extension school trips—given their rural background and limited experience of life in Britain. In contrast, as a parent of a ten-year old son, Reema is well-versed with the expectations of British schooling and can identify with the wishes of her child. Reema thought it a valuable and necessary component of her children's education to go on school trips. Nonetheless, as a child, not being able to go on a trip is recalled as being "left out" and experienced as an exclusion.

Intersecting Identities
Over the two years I spent at Victoria School, where the majority of children are Bangladeshi, the numbers of girls wearing a head scarf to school increased. Wearing a headscarf can and does mean different things, and the age at which girls start the practice varies. With the exception of one child, all girls who wore a headscarf said that it was something their mothers also did in public. The wearing of headscarves is a female practice, and it was notable that, although boys are also able to wear skullcaps, they

never did (an exception being a seven-year-old Bangladeshi boy during Eid). Outside of school, however, boys from the school who are on route to the Madrassa wear skullcaps. Children spoke about the importance of "being good," not questioning authority, listening to parents, how "Allah watches," and what with the day of judgment one better be careful. Religious values and practices were clearly a part of children's lives.

Below is Kylie's response to my question about when she started to wear a head scarf.

KYLIE: Well, erm, I started in, it stared in year three [ages seven to eight]. Muslim people when they're older or when they're an adult they start wearing scarf and that's like a way of saying that you're a Muslim. When I was in year three my mum asked me question of "do you want to wear a scarf" and first I thinking, I was thinking of saying yes or no and then when I started year three I said to my mum "actually I do want to wear a scarf from now on." So I started in year three my other friend she started in reception [class age five]. Wearing a scarf is really important, sometimes I don't wear a scarf, I have to wear a scarf or sometimes I don't wear a scarf but there has to be a reason. . . there can't be no reason. Sometimes I don't wear no scarf cause there's PE or I don't wear a scarf cause we're going on a trip, definitely when I go on trips I don't wear a scarf.

KANWAL: Why's that?

KYLIE: Erm, it's because I think it's different from school cause school is er, for some reason I wear scarf when I go to school but I don't wear a scarf when I go out, I don't know why. . . .

KANWAL: You mean school trips or out with your family?

KYLIE: Out with my family. I don't know why I don't wear a scarf but I just wait till school because you know when you're at school you're individual and show the way you are and the way I am. I like to wear scarf and I do have to wear scarf so everyone's different in a way and I've made a decision of, decision of wearing a scarf from the rest, I don't know why that's different

when I go out on school trips, it's like I feel that it's not school so I shouldn't be wearing a scarf.

KANWAL: So when you're out on a school trip, like when you went, if you went to London zoo on a school trip you wouldn't wear a scarf.

KYLIE: I didn't wear a scarf.

KANWAL: But if you went to London Zoo with your mum would you wear a scarf?

KYLIE: If it was a school trip?

KANWAL: No, just you and your mum and your family?

KYLIE: No I wouldn't wear a scarf. I wouldn't wear a scarf, it's only in school when I'm staying in school.

*   *   *

As we note from Kylie's narrative, the distinctions between home and school are destabilized through the practice of wearing a headscarf. Although one readily associates the school as a public space and hence wearing a scarf, it is interesting to note that visiting a very public arena like the London Zoo with her family is not a place where she would wear a scarf.

To begin with, Kylie draws attention to different markers of age. In the British educational context, stages in children's lives are marked by numerical age; at home, these are marked by religious observation. Kylie stresses an element of choice given by her mother, who was brought up in Britain and also wears a headscarf. The onus on choice is remarkable in her account, bringing about a distinction that was not apparent to the interviewer at first. When she speaks about reasons not to wear a scarf, Kylie refers to the school context. Hence, practical reasons such as doing PE and trips are put forward as times and areas when not to wear a scarf. Indeed, a discarded scarf at the edges of the playground was a common sight as girls running around discard their scarves to keep cool.

Kylie's account about wearing a scarf further destabilizes and reinterprets the ideological distinctions concerning home and school when she tells me that since she is an individual in school she chooses to represent this by wearing a headscarf. Kylie is

revealing her understanding of the dominant discourse of schools as arenas where individualism is valued. In the act of wearing a headscarf just in school, as opposed to out of school with her family, she is reinterpreting the liberal notions of individualism that underpin the ethos of British schools (Edwards 2002). The headscarf is a symbol of a collective Muslim identity for Kylie. At the same time, the broader public discourse on Islam and the issue of headscarves associates the veil (headscarf) to be associated with religious values that are associated with "home" culture. In the case of Kylie, the headscarf becomes a marker of her very British individuality.

CONCLUSION

Kylie's explanation of where and when she wears a headscarf underlines children's experiences of cultural translation and innovation as they actively reinterpret ideals that are associated with the particular spheres of home and school. Reema's account demonstrates some of the tensions that can and do arise in relation to engaging with the expectations of home and school. In this case, the interface between home and school, through the practice of taking trips, can and does result in children being under significant stress as they seek parental permission. This case study illustrates the influences that institutions have upon children.

At the same time, institutions contain multiple spaces, the more informal of which allow children to perform experimental identities, neither of the school nor of the home. By focusing closely on children's place-making, we found home and school are places that position children in different ways as well as being arenas within which children experiment with, perform, and reflect their multiple identities. Although, overall, we noted that children maneuver between home and school somewhat seamlessly, the intersection between home and school is at times experienced as a site of conflict. This is not to say that children are in some pathological condition of being caught between two cultures; rather, it is the construction of these two spheres by families and by public discourses as distinct, with diametrical

ideologies, that positions children in particular ways. Children's "straddling," translation, and innovations at the interface of home and school arise from their social locations in household hierarchies and the wider socio-economic context of the family. Furthermore, although home is an important site of identification, children are also involved in other sites, based on their engagements in and out of school, in which they seek to fit in and belong. Finally, although distinctions between home and school abound in the literature, our children indicate that such distinctions are open to reinterpretations. Their experiences question the representation of home and school as spheres in public and policy discourses that are culturally incommensurable. Instead, an exploration of home and school reveals the "culturally complex position" children hold and negotiate (Olwig & Gullov, 2003:226).

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Those Who Stay and the Social Costs of Migration

Caretakers and Children in Eastern Guatemala

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Although in past years the overwhelming majority of migrants heading to the United States were unaccompanied males, leaving their wives and children behind, increasingly females emigrate too. This newer migratory trend is especially true after passage of U.S. immigration policies such as Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) in 1986 (Donato, et al., 2008). Purportedly, IRCA's intent was to control undocumented immigration, but instead it encouraged and changed the demographics to incorporate more women crossing the border clandestinely than in previous years (Donato, et al., 2008). In Latin America, and mirroring other sending countries around the world, female migration is virtually equal to that of males (Zlotnik, 2003; Donato, et al, 2006). As Ehrenreich and Hochschild point out (2009:50), "this is the female underside of globalization," a population movement that has spurred from economically poorer countries to more affluent countries because females in the North "are no longer able or willing to do women's work of the North." Importantly, because of the concentration of capital in core areas of the global economy those in peripheral areas increasingly must migrate to survive and to avoid falling even deeper into grinding poverty (Sassen, 1998).

In her compelling story of a Honduran boy's harrowing journey in search of his migrant mother in the United States, Nazario (2006) observes that divorce and separation are becoming more common in Latin

America. This situation produces more single mothers who are pressured to leave their children and head to the North. In the case of eastern Guatemala, this has led to an increase in the feminization of migrants to the United States (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). Rather than paying attention to those who leave their home countries—a focus much explored in past migration work—I concentrate on those who stay, particularly caretakers and children. While those who leave and migrate experience multiple changes in their journeys and everyday lives abroad, those who stay contend with many transformations during these family separations. This article examines how migration affects transnational migrant families. Specifically, I touch on intergenerational relations between parents and caregivers, parents and children, and caregivers and children. Such an emphasis considers the social costs of transnational migration and how these unfold at the local level, and, in turn, allows us to better understand what happens at home. By social costs, I refer to the hidden, intangible, and more subjective outcomes of migration that are difficult to examine with conventional yardsticks, yet impinge on the restructuring of transnational migrant households.

The Guatemalan case highlighted here sheds light on the transnational migration experience in other parts of Latin America. The question then becomes: What are the forces that precipitate these transformations and put pressure on families to migrate in the first place? The uneven development of capitalism can be accounted for as one of the leading culprits behind the rise of families affected by transnational migration processes (Schiller, et al., 1992:5). Like many other countries in the western hemisphere, Guatemala had a long history of U.S.-supported authoritarian regimes during the Cold War Era, as well as an unequal distribution of wealth, land, and income. This led to a great deal of political turbulence and economic upheaval. For nearly four decades (1960s–1990s) the country endured a conflict between guerillas and the state that led to deep-seated wounds and long-festering resentment even within migrant-sending communities (Jonas, 2000; North & Simmons, 1999). Since signing the Peace Accords in 1996, economic conditions have continued

to decline and an escalation of social violence has propelled thousands—Guatemalans from all backgrounds and regions— to emigrate.

Consequently, Guatemala's economy, as in other Latin American countries with significant emigration, has turned from a "breakfast economy" (exporting cash products such as coffee, bananas, and sugar) to a remittance-based economy (exporting cheap labor) (Moran-Taylor, 2009). Although large numbers of Guatemalans emigrate and many reside in urban and rural areas scattered across the United States, there is little research examining this outward movement. The 2000 U.S. census counts 480,665 foreign-born Guatemalans, yet other estimates indicate that, out of a population of nearly 14 million, over one million Guatemalans reside in the United States (U.S. Census, 2000; Migration Policy Institute, 2006). The monies that migrants earn, save, and send back home are an important tangible outcome of international migration. These remittances also play a vital role in the maintenance of transnational migrant families. By the end of 2008, the flow of monetary remittances to Guatemala sent from expatriates amounted to nearly four billion U.S. dollars (Banco de Guatemala, 2008). Clearly, these funds are key for the economies of sending countries, and much scholarly and policy work attends to this topic, but less understood are the ramifications for those who stay and the social costs of this migration.

METHODS

In this article, I draw from a larger study on transnational migration processes. In my larger project I examine and compare return migration and remittances along with their effects on gender, class, and ethnicity in two regionally and ethnically distinct sending communities, Maya & Ladino. This article is based on ethnographic fieldwork that I conducted in Guatemala from 1999 to 2001 and during short visits between 2003 and 2006. Elsewhere, I provide a more detailed account of my methods and data (see Moran-Taylor, 2008a). While doing fieldwork in eastern Guatemala, a place with a mostly (non-indigenous) Ladino population, locals repeatedly spoke about

family relations, particularly among parents, caretakers, and youth. Throughout my work I sought to delve further into a topic that is significant to those involved and affected by migration and globalization processes. The central issues addressed here, then, derive from research driven by the very concerns of the "studied" population.

NORTHBOUND GUATEMALAN MIGRATORY TRENDS

The first migratory flows of Guatemalans to the United States date back to the 1960s. As political turmoil increased and economic prospects declined, many Guatemalans emigrated to the United States, Canada, and Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s. Economic conditions acutely deteriorated during the Neoliberal era and led to much restructuring and change in the composition and class structures in Latin America (Portes & Hoffman, 2003). Migratory flows intensified from this period onward. Other macro-level determinants that strongly accelerated out-migration include the lack of adequate development strategies, steep unemployment rates, high inflation, devaluation of the national currency, a "dollarized" economy, and more recently, an escalation of social violence due to drug trafficking and gang activity (Moran-Taylor, 2008b). Importantly, the economic impact of social violence, in addition to its links to poverty, inequality, and exclusion, result in great development constraints (Moser & McIlwaine, 2005). And as Mexican drug cartels move more aggressively into Guatemala and gangs gone transnational become increasingly involved in the region, urban violence and its pervasive impunity to prosecution plague the country's stability and economy and further spur out-migration.

In addition to structural factors, dimensions at the local level that are interrelated with economics and poverty impel emigration too. Some driving factors are heavily gendered—women marginalized in their communities or women fleeing their husband's abuse—and often remain unspoken. Gender-based domestic violence is widespread, yet it mostly remains a private family matter. In fact, given the

sensitivity of the topic, I often found cash remittances a less-difficult issue to address than domestic violence. (And in Guatemala—a place where *narco* [drug] money can easily be conflated with *migra* money [remittances]— cash remittances can indeed loom as a very sensitive topic). Although husbands abandoning wives is not new in Guatemala, increasingly commonplace is spousal abandonment: males migrating to the United States and forming another family there. For many women facing such estrangements and left with the sole responsibility to nurture and raise the children, out-migration becomes a viable option (Moran-Taylor, 2008a).

MIGRATION AND TRANSNATIONAL FAMILIES

Several studies show the interactions of transnational migrant families. Many of these studies look at migrant mothers and/or migrant fathers and how they maintain transnational relations and communication across borders. The key role that caretakers play in migration, however, remains overlooked. Typically kin of migrant parents, caretakers are those who stay and care and raise the children left behind when parents migrate. In this article, I frame my discussion within the literature that explores transnational families (i.e., families who are affected by the need for transnational migration). An emphasis on caretakers—their views and experiences—reveals the divergent social practices and relations that arise due to international migration and globalization processes and how these shape peoples' everyday lives. Moreover, the dynamics of Latin American families and the gendered and intergenerational implications of transnational processes on these have not been so thoroughly addressed (see, however, Soto, 1987; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 1997; Thorne, Orellana, Lam & Chee, 2003; Pribilsky, 2004; Dreby, 2006; Sanchéz Molina, 2008; Schmalzbauer, 2008). The Guatemalan case builds on this work by attending to caretakers and children to reveal the kinds of intergenerational relations that develop in migrant families. In doing so, it enhances our understandings of how transnational families are

reconfigured and considers the social costs that impact this household restructuring.

THE SOCIAL COSTS OF MIGRATION

Intergenerational Relations
Between Parents and Caregivers

Whereas some migrant mothers and fathers leave for prolonged amounts of time with the idea of returning, others have or express no such intentions, while others emigrate and abandon their children. For the most part, U.S.-bound Guatemalan parents who migrate for a long period stay connected in multiple ways with loved ones at home. While the living arrangements that migrant parents set up for their children come with certain financial obligations, these do not always pan out for those who stay. Some parents do not sustain close ties and neglect their financial obligations. A case in point is Miriam, a mother of two young children. (To maintain confidentiality, throughout, I use pseudonyms instead of actual names.) She emigrated to Los Angeles and placed her children in two different households—a strategy to make her migration more successful since she lacked the economic resources to support two children under one living arrangement. While abroad, however, she failed to remit any money. Miriam also failed to maintain any physical or emotional connection with her children during her long absence. In this case, the caretakers resented the mother's migration and even felt exploited. A different story unfolds for those who stay in touch emotionally and financially. For instance, if migrant mothers fail to return after a long period, caretakers do not believe that she has forsaken her family; they recognize that the return may not be possible due to economic constraints. Given Guatemala's steep unemployment, those at home realize that migrant parents may need to stay abroad longer than initially intended (Moran-Taylor, 2008a).

Intergenerational Relations
Between Parents and Children

When migrant parents stay physically separated from their kin for long periods of time, their children are more disposed to *develop* other feelings. Luz, for example, lives and works in Los Angeles and has left five youngsters behind with her elderly mother. Whenever she remits money to them, their most urgent concern is not how their mother is faring. Rather, they become more preoccupied by how much money she sends. This is a sensitive topic and one that seems to dominate telephone communications. The topic of remittances becomes even more salient if the mother is unable to remit part of her earnings. Plainly, for children who have migrant parents abroad who send remittances, money is replacing intimacy (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). This situation parallels the Filipino case that Parreñas (2005) observes: when mothers migrate, sending remittances becomes a common, even if commodified, tactic for engendering intimacy.

Migration-related changes may result in positive and negative sociocultural outcomes for children in Guatemala when parents emigrate. My data reveals that migration adversely affects young males at home when they become involved in gangs, juvenile delinquency, drugs, and alcohol. Undoubtedly, growing unemployment rates and lack of economic resources affect young people, but these factors alone cannot entirely explain the gamut of transformations. The role of U.S.-bound migration is linked to these changes too. When parents are abroad, children with caretakers experience less pressure to behave well. These outcomes mirror what parents fear their children will be drawn to if raised abroad (see also Thorne, et al., 2001).

The social costs of migration are more deleterious, however, among girls. Since caretakers do not always have a vigilant eye, many adolescent girls become promiscuous, resulting in a growing trend of unwed mothers. Recently, for example, Guatemala's mainstream newspaper reported a 2.5 percent growth in adolescent pregnancies, especially among girls from poor areas with little schooling and even among girls as young as ten (*Prensa Libre*, 2009). Not only do these outcomes lead to deeper poverty, but they also constrain the socioeconomic development of the country. Moreover, for many girls, becoming romantically involved with (non-familial) returnees is often

viewed as a way out of their home community and a path to going abroad (Moran-Taylor, 2008a).

The social costs of U.S.-bound migration are also present in the realm of schooling. In terms of the adverse effects, my interviews revealed that school performance radically declined, particularly after parents first leave. A retired principal mentioned, for example, that there were many disciplinary problems in schools and youngsters simply do not want to study as much when parents remain abroad. Similarly, Kandel and Massey (2002) found this pattern in Mexico where a culture of migration has formed and discouraged good educational performance. Conversely, migration may positively affect schooling. In her work among Honduran transnational families, Schmalzbauer (2008) observes that education is one of the most celebrated areas in which families invest their monies earned from backbreaking jobs in the North. The support is received with utmost gratitude from the children and helps maintain parent-child relations.

In the Guatemalan case, migration can afford those who remit monies the opportunity to enroll their offspring in private rather than public schools. This grants children a better education and offers family members a tacit display of their greater social status within the community. Remittances also afford girls greater access to formal education, which is crucial because they receive few opportunities for basic education. In turn, this outcome gradually brings about changes in women's traditional gender roles and status. And for children in nearby villages these funds allow for a continuation from primary to secondary school (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). For some, this extended schooling allows them to learn a skill at a vocational school and to secure better pay as an accountant, teacher, or secretary. For others with greater aspirations and a high school diploma, it may even make it possible to attend university. Clearly, this is human capital that provides young people with greater social mobility and allows them to climb out of the harsh economic reality that defines their lives in the rigid structures enveloping Guatemalan society.

Intergenerational Relations Between Caretakers and Children

When Guatemalan mothers and fathers venture to the North, typically the children stay with the maternal grandmother. Such a scenario is depicted in the beginning scenes of *La Misma Luna* (*Under the Same Moon*) (Riggen, et al., 2007), an extraordinary film that shows how Carlitos, a nine-year old Mexican boy, lives with his maternal grandmother because his mother migrated to Los Angeles, California. After his caring *abue* (grandmother) suddenly dies, Carlitos feels compelled to leave and search for his mother who has been away for nearly four years. And in Nazario's (2006) brilliant book, *Enrique's Journey*, Enrique, a young Honduran boy, is left under the care of his maternal grandmother. Recent research among Mexican transnational families nicely illustrates this pattern too when addressing the differences in emotional responses to separation between mothers and fathers while apart from children left with caretakers (e.g., Dreby, 2006).

For Guatemalan caretakers who care for children from their childhood to their teen years, regulating and coordinating their behavior becomes even more of an onerous task as they grow older. In particular, the behavior of boys becomes problematic as they grow older and view joining a local gang or spending their parents' money on alcohol and expensive consumer goods as an outlet for their rebellion (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). The differing disciplinary tactics employed by parents and caretakers may also aggravate social relations. Whereas caretakers may implement more severe tactics, returnee parents tend to be more lax. This looser attitude develops among migrant parents because of U.S. rhetoric advocating children's rights and the divergent disciplinary perspectives embraced abroad. The greater awareness of child abuse and the increased scope of state intervention permitted by U.S. also contribute to changing the attitudes of migrant parents. To illustrate, Armando and his aging mother were left in charge of his sister's offspring. After six years away from home, the migrant mother returned. Tensions arose between the returnee and her relatives due to divergent parenting styles and practices that each embraced: the

mother was less willing to reprimand her children for misbehaving. Social relations in transnational migrant households take a toll when, after several years abroad, parents send for their offspring (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). Certainly, the emotional wear and tear that caretakers often experience may strain social relations and even fragment families.

CONCLUSION

The social obstacles and current U.S. immigration policies that many migrants from developing countries encounter along with the consequences of globalization have led to an increase in transnational families (Parreñas, 2005). Importantly, caretakers sustain transnational families enabling migrant parents to go, stay, and work abroad for lengthy periods because they are taking care of the parents' offspring. Equally significant, caregivers buttress the social reproduction processes when parents emigrate and caregivers occasionally even shoulder the financial burden. In other words, caretakers help reproduce the next generation of migrant workers—a generation that already lives in a culture of migration (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). While migration helps those who stay behind survive, it also functions as a strategy to move up the rigid hierarchical structures in Guatemalan society, particularly among migrant families who use their hard-won earnings to better their children's education. However, with the flagging economy in the United States, migrants' financial obligations at home have dwindled considerably. In turn, cash remittances to Guatemala (like Mexico) have considerably diminished—a dire situation for caretakers with scarce economic resources and one that will affect many children left behind. By paying attention to the social aspects rather than economic consequences of migration, my research provides a glimpse of outcomes that are less visible and more subjective, yet significant for those who stay—caretakers and children.

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"My heart is Palestinian, my passport is Jordanian"

Ambivalence, Identity and Children's Rights among Palestinian Refugee Camp Children

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"My heart is Palestinian, my passport is Jordanian," answered M'hamed, an eleven-year-old, as I was asking a group of Palestinian camp refugee children and adolescents in Jordan what their nationality was. Khaled, a twelve-year-old boy, also a *mukhayy-amji* (refugee camp dweller), said "I am a Palestinian refugee with a Jordanian passport." Others from the group offered similar replies, which were remarkable in that these youth[1] were able to express in a cogent fashion the complex status of Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

This article[2] is based on data collected in two Palestinian refugee camps Al-Whidat and Al-Emir Hassan camps, in Amman during fieldwork conducted in 2004–2005. It explores how, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, children and adolescents fashion their identities according to surrounding discourses they hear in the refugee camp, namely discourses of nationalism—Palestinian as well as Jordanian—and of children's rights. I examine how children internalize values conveyed through the various messages they receive and how they prefer certain discourses over others. Finally, I show how children are shaped by children's rights discourse, acquiring a new vocabulary to express themselves, hence becoming agents of change.

1 My use of the words "youth, children, and adolescents" or "children" invariably describes female and male individuals nine to eighteen years old.

2 An earlier version of this article appeared in "Children's Rights Discourse and Identity Ambivalence in Palestinian Refugee Camps," *Jerusalem Quarterly*. 37, 75-85.

In Palestinian refugee camps, children and adolescents represent the majority of the population. Large families are the norm. During the two Intifada,[3] or uprisings, against Israeli rule, Palestinian children made history by occupying center stage nationally and internationally. *La guerre des pierres* (Mansour, 1989), or the war of the stones, as the first Intifada came to be called, mobilized children and adolescents. Images of children throwing stones at Israeli tanks have stayed in the collective memory. For many, children with slingshots became emblematic of children's power and agency in the Palestinian revolt against Israeli oppression. Children of the Intifada, agents of resistance, readily became iconic heroes among their community and peers.

Western anthropology has generally not been much interested in children and childhood, with a few exceptions, including studies focusing on "children at risk" (Fernea, 1995; Stephens, 1995; Scheper-Hughes & Sargent, 1998; Boyden, 1990, 2004; Chatty & Hundt, 2005; Hart, 2008). Earlier anthropology had explored childhood and adolescence mostly in relation to personality formation (Mead, 2001; Kardiner, 1939; Benedict, 1946; LeVine, 1973). Palestinian children have been studied mainly in connection to psychological repercussions of violence and trauma (Baker, 1991; Khamis, 2005) and international legal issues (Veerman, 1992; Alston, 1994). In child psychology, children were initially viewed as part of the cycle of life, in a broad monolithic approach (Piaget, 1954; Ariès, 1962). But in more recent social studies of childhood, the child is no longer seen as a universal category, but rather circumscribed by her culture and recognized as a full agent (Bartlett et al., 1999). British sociologists and their followers (Willis, 1977; Prout & James, 1990; Jenks, 1996; Jans, 2004) suggest the child is a social actor constructing, as well as being constructed by, her circumstances—hence an actor to understand in relation to class, gender, and ethnicity. Such increasing interest in the ways in which children interact with society has arisen not only among social science researchers, activists, and international organizations, but also within communities.

The child has emerged not only as being an agent but also has acquired new rights. These new rights are part of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) that, although problematic in several respects, has been largely ratified and gradually reached many countries and many cultures. While children's rights have not necessarily been recognized in everyday policy and practice, discourses of children are now widespread. Notably, children's rights discourse has resulted in children being recognized as full human beings.

Drawing from these new perspectives, I start this article by showing how young Palestinian camp refugees in Jordan make sense of their unusual national identity—refugee and citizen—having beforehand highlighted the specific historic context of their predicament. I then analyze how the children's rights education they receive at school has affected their perceptions of selfhood. I conclude by recognizing the destabilizing character of the dilemma about their national identity, which is matched by their hope for social change that the discourse of children's rights brings forth. My study aims to contribute to a nascent literature on children as agents of social change. It urges anthropologists—activists and public anthropologists—to take a stand and conduct more research oriented on children, particularly children who are victims of long-term conflict.

The experience of young Palestinian camp refugees in Jordan, who are sheltered from military violence, is different from that of Palestinian children in the West Bank, Gaza, or inside Israel. These children and adolescents, however, share a common history, a sense of imagined community (Anderson, 1983) and a strong Palestinian identity shaped by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The young heroes of the two Intifada have inevitably influenced their peers from the refugee camps in Jordan.

HISTORICAL PROCESSES

The intertwined Jordanian and Palestinian histories, both largely circumscribed by their colonial past,

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3   The first lasted from 1987 to 1993; the second began in September 2000 and is ongoing.

are rife with division, expulsion, migration, nation building, and the politics of assimilation. Not surprisingly, identity in Jordan presents many complexities, which have been well documented (Brand, 1995; Layne, 1994; Massad, 2001; Nasser, 2005). Among the young *mukhayyammjieh* that I met, the context in which they construct their identity is largely influenced by historical circumstances and the uniqueness of the space of the camps.

In his work on nations and nationalism, Gellner (1983) conceived of nationalism as engendering nations and not the other way around. In Jordan though, the nation was constructed before nationalism was born. Transjordan, as a state, preceded the birth of Transjordan, as a nation. First, a principality headed by Emir Abdallah, great grandfather of the actual king, it was originally established by the British in 1921 after the collapse and dismantling of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I. Other Arab provinces in the Middle East—formerly under Ottoman rule—had followed suit by shifting their allegiance to two powerful colonial empires sharing their influence in the region—the French and the British—who, upon signing the Sykes–Picot Agreement in 1916, divided the Middle East between them. Palestine became ruled by British Mandate from 1917 to 1948, while Jordan gained its independence in 1946. However, for the next two years—from 1948 to 1950—Jordan, renamed the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, would include Palestine. Such tightly intertwined histories of Jordan and Palestine would remain a determinant factor in the lives of Palestinians and Jordanians.

There have been multiple exodus of Palestinian refugees: first, 1948, marking the birth of Israel, then the Israeli-Arab war in 1967 that included the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, followed by another confrontation in 1973. Over one million Palestinian refugees have fled their homeland to Jordan. Soon the new nation-state of Jordan[4] would include two major, powerful, rival ethnic groups, Jordanians and Palestinians, holding their own diverging loyalties. On the one hand, Jordanians of local tribal origin—Bedouin for a large part—while they keep their allegiance to the tribe, have become unquestionably new citizens of Jordan. On the other hand, Palestinians[5]—who pledge their allegiances to Palestine—have become citizens "with-conditions" in Jordan. Although such limitations are not officially recognized, they may include in some cases a two-year passport that does not guarantee full permanent citizenship. The short-term traveling document intensifies the transient condition of camp refugees, who strive for security and protection in their yearning for full recognition as Jordanians.

The United Nations established ten refugee camps in Jordan and forty-eight others in Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and Gaza for a native Palestinian population fleeing their homeland. Over the last six decades, the camp refugee population has been waiting for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that would put an end to their predicament so they could return to Palestine. Since the beginning of the *Nakba*, or disaster, Jordan harbored the largest portion of the Palestinian refugee community. *Al Nakba,* the disaster, is the phrase Palestinians have used to refer to their exodus from Palestine at the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Initially an estimated 100,000 Palestinian refugees fled to Jordan. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which has provided assistance to the Palestinian refugees since 1950 defines registered refugees as such: Palestine refugees are people whose normal place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. The refugee population has since grown—with several waves of refugees following occupation, war, or expulsions related to sporadic border wars and other forms of conflict—to be 1.9 million refugees. The majority, about 80 percent, are an integrated part of Jordanian society and only a portion (20 percent, about 338,000) live in camps. It is that latter group of Palestinians on which I focus here.

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4   The population of Jordan is 5.1 million. Last 2004 Census.

5   Exact figures of both groups are not available as the country seeks to present a unified image of its population. There is no official census data on Jordanians of Palestinian descent in Jordan; by most estimates—more than 3 to 4.5 million—it is between 50-70 percent of the population of the country.

To nearly all Palestinian refugees in Jordan, the most important policy established in 1949 by the Hashemite monarchy has been their granting of Jordanian citizenship. This measure, however, carries limitations for several among them: namely for refugees from Gaza; for those who remained in the West Bank after the Israeli occupation in 1967 and later came to Jordan; and for children of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians, who are not eligible for Jordanian citizenship through matrilineal descent. This climate of exceptions has fostered inequality, competition, and politics between the two main ethnic groups, Palestinian-Jordanians and native Jordanians. Basher, a Palestinian-Jordanian working for a nongovernmental organization (NGO), describes the situation. "Today, Bedouins [read: "native Jordanians of tribal descent"] feel threatened by Palestinians who outnumber them. Bedouins are afraid they could lose their privileges to Palestinians."

Jordanian society includes a core of old traditional tribal families who operate through a system of affiliations, loyalties, and political influence. Many occupy coveted positions in the Jordanian government and army. Outsiders and critics of this clannish group, including Palestinians, resent the powerful network they own in the country. The privileges to which Basher appears to refer are the stronghold that Jordanians of tribal descent exercise in the public sector in a country where the state is the largest employer; and to *wasta,* the push that a culturally established way of communicating, including nepotism, favoritism, and clientelism, provides in many transactions between people of some influence. Knowing the right person, using personal connections when getting a job, or obtaining a passport or other red tape annoyance helps to ensure a successful outcome. *Wasta* plays a significant role in tight traditional societies in the Middle East where blood lineage, reputation, and honor are important values that reinforce the social fabric. Although several Palestinian-Jordanians serve in the army, according to Palestinian accounts, they represent only 10 percent and rarely come from the *mukhayyam*, or refugee camp (Massad, 2001). It is the dream of many young *mukhayyamjieh* to be enrolled in the army, because of the job security it offers compared to the precarious character of life in the camp.

The many shifts and ruptures in Jordanian history just mentioned over a relatively short period of time—only a few decades—have elicited subsequent changes in rules and laws concerning refugee status and citizenship among Palestinian refugees. These changes depend upon when (before 1948 or 1967) and where (which bank of the Jordan River, west or east) they were born. They have raised the question of who is Palestinian or Jordanian and created significant divisions—class notwithstanding—among Palestinians living in the Hashemite Kingdom. Palestinians have usually occupied the private sector where many have thrived. They are generally assimilated, intermarrying with Jordanians and forming a network of old bourgeois families, which has kin ramifications in neighboring Palestine. This bourgeois Jordanian-Palestinian group usually look down upon camp refugees as lazy and poor and guilty of producing a culture of poverty. The best example of Jordanian-Palestinian fusion is represented by the ruling monarchs, the King and Queen of Jordan, respectively Jordanian and Palestinian.

DIVIDING LINES AMONG PALESTINIAN CAMP REFUGEES

Given the large flux of Palestinian refugees to Jordan, the Jordanian state established a special government agency, the Jordanian Department of Palestinian Affairs (DPA), which administers and controls the refugee camps along with UNRWA, which provides housing, education and healthcare. Referring to organized spaces, such as hospitals and prisons (or refugee camps for that matter), Foucault (1977) calls "dividing practices" several processes of power in operation. They are at play when these institutions seek to control space according to their own agenda.

Within the camp, these dividing practices are tangible as they determine membership and exclusion through a system of registration cards of various colors that differentiate refugees from displaced persons depending on historic dates. In addition, although a majority of Palestinian refugee camp

dwellers hold Jordanian citizenship, the picture is more complicated as both the UN categories of refugees and Jordanian policies of citizenship have created a divide between the camp populations according to the benefits granted, resulting in feelings of being discriminated against because of unequal and inferior standing. In another study of refugees and nation, Malkki (1995) explores categories of refugees and national identity inside and outside Hutu refugee camps in Tanzania, finding that refugees living inside the camp were more attached to the notion of homeland and nation than those living outside.

For young Palestinian camp refugees born in a context of fragmentation, specific spaces of the camps of Al-Wihdat and Al-Emir Hassan are indeed central to their cultural experience. For four generations the camp has epitomized the pain of the *Nakba* and the loss of land. Their hardships have generated resentment born of long exile. This is characterized by feelings of loss of dignity; the traumatic experience of the abrupt social change from *fellah,* small peasant, to urban proletarian; the enduring suffering and liminality of the refugee condition; and the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These camps are not only a habitat for refugees, but more important, they are a bastion of Palestinian memory and identity. Although not fenced in, boundaries delimit two distinct worlds in the eyes of camp refugees: Jordanians outside and Palestinians inside. Accordingly, the children expressed their perceptions of these different spheres in a binary, especially of poor inside and rich outside. Their black-and-white view sounded like a class issue in that it excluded the large majority of the well assimilated Palestinian population who live "outside" the camp.

Outside the camp, the grass is greener, as Zohra, a twelve-year-old camp girl, indicated: "Jordanians have better water than we do in the camp." While for Furat, a fifteen-year-old camp boy, "Jordanians can go to university and we cannot." His remark points to a deep concern of many young camp people about their education, as only a very small percentage of camp refugee children (UNRWA education stops after tenth grade) make it to college—only 1 percent according to a UNRWA teacher. He observed that going

to college today was harder than before for young people as UNRWA funding had decreased over the years even while the refugee population increased.

For many camp dwellers and their children, the perceived temporary quality of the refugee camp defines core Palestinian camp refugee principles: the right of return, the will to go back, and a declared resistance to permanent exile and oblivion. By remaining a paradoxically lived-in virtual homeland, a home away from home, the *mukhayyam* has helped marginalize the refugees who view it as an embodiment of the Palestinian opposition. It is understood as a bulwark against the outside: from Jordan that stigmatizes them as *mukhayyamjieh*, and excludes them, and from Israel, which rejects them.

MAKING SENSE: PARADOXES, AMBIVALENT LOYALTIES AND POLITICS OF ASSIMILATION

In such a context of social and political instability and fast-changing historical circumstances, how do children shaped by the Palestinian refugee camp predicament make sense of their complex historico-political environment and national identity? Psychologists working with children in conflict zones have observed they develop a sense of their country's political history (Cole, 1986). Similarly, Palestinian children develop their personality in relation to nationalism (Garbarino, et al., 1991). Adolescents, especially, build their identity in close relation to the Palestinian nationalist struggle surrounding them.

How do Palestinian refugee camp children internalize the values of their society? How do they become socialized in Palestinian refugee camp culture? Family narratives and everyday life in the camp reinforce Palestinian identity. The memory of the Palestinian *Nakba,* disaster, has been carried through four generations of refugees and is present in the minds and voices of parents as much as children. Living in the space of the refugee camp is in itself highly symbolic of the Palestinian struggle, as refugees would frequently claim. A marker of Palestinian identity also includes holding specific ID cards. Notably, the

Arabic term *Hawiyya*[6] means both identity and identity card. For camp dwellers, however, *Hawiyya*, the identity card, has primarily been connected to their UN refugee status and hence their welfare. To an outsider, such an interesting notion of identity in which the subject is one with a card can be viewed as "ultramodern."

In addition, the lasting presence on the ground and crucial support of UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency, the agency in charge of Palestinian refugees, as well as Palestinian teachers in the UN schools, are reassuring landmarks of Palestinian culture and identity. Moreover, ubiquitous news reports of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on television concur in reinforcing Palestinian identity and claims of injustice.

Palestinians—inside and outside the camp—held conflicting views on Jordan. Refugee camp dwellers expressed feelings of exclusion, a resentment partly fueled by the government's projected national cultural identity, which is Bedouin-Jordanian. Camp refugees pointed out time and again in our conversations that the Jordanian minority was favored by government policies and complained about the dominance of the Jordanian group. Interestingly, the camp refugee lens appeared to focus exclusively on the Palestinian-Jordanian dyad, disregarding other Jordanians belonging to ethnic groups such as Circassians, Syrians, Kurds, Chechens, or Armenians, who remained consistently absent from our conversations. As small minority groups (together they represent about 3–5 percent of Jordan's population), they may not be considered powerful competitors by camp refugees.

The legal situation of Palestinian camp refugees as mentioned above—simultaneously refugees and citizens of Jordan—is paradoxical. While Jordanian citizenship brings them a legal status and recognition, it also carries tensions when it intersects with their refugee status and Palestinian loyalty.

Several dividing categories have constituted a formative aspect of the quotidian life of the members of the refugee camp community, including children,

who have developed accordingly flexible and ambiguous identities. Children often expressed a lack of Jordanian nationalism, describing Jordan as merely a place of citizenship: "my passport is Jordanian." A passport is only a piece of paper, a travel document carrying no effect; it is not a part of the body, like the heart that belongs to Palestine. Several children I interviewed were familiar with the concept of a passport, as their father or a member of the family worked abroad. Although a passport may not be a marker of citizenship as is H*awiyya*, the ID card, both are crucial for camp refugees. The ID card brings economic help, and the passport, freedom to travel. Freedom to travel is extremely limited for camp refugees and their children, considering that attending a funeral of a family member in the West Bank is problematic. Moreover, some children were using either term for passport and citizenship illustrating what Massad (2001:18) calls the "juridical discourse." He argues that in Jordan "the law produces juridical national subjects," or put differently, national identity is a product of the law.

The official government discourse, however, has been one of unity and assimilation heralding the government slogan "Jordan First" through a widely advertised national campaign. Palestinian children inside the camps have been influenced accordingly by the discourse of Jordanian nationalism through the Jordanian curriculum that UN schools follow. Jordan seeks to project an image that encompasses its various ethnic groups by ignoring difference and overlooking any underlying issues of identity at play. Its colonial legacy has largely contributed to fostering additional loyalties among "all" Jordanians, regardless of their ethnic descent. Thus, while Bedouins and Palestinians have their respective ethnic allegiances, as previously noted, other minorities living in Jordan, Circassians, Armenians, or Chechens, also have allegiance to their own respective ethnic group.

The "Jordan First" campaign, a campaign deemed to foster unity, has unveiled salient issues of identity and tensions among Palestinian camp refugees, who sharply reacted by saying that "Jordan First" were empty words and that the reality was a far cry from the official discourse. Abu Khaled, a camp refugee

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6   *Dhatiya* also means identity from *dhat*, self, and *al-ana*, means the ego.

parent, compared Jordanian national identity to a *saber*, a cactus pear, with nothing inside. Although many in the camps shared his views on Jordanian identity as an empty shell, the campaign did enable camp refugees to define and reaffirm their Palestinian identity against the "others," the Jordanians.

At a larger level, Jordan's stability is perceived by the international community as crucial in a region of high volatility. While the measures of assimilation adopted by the government are deemed necessary to build a stronger nation-state, they are framed by broader international political and economic processes. Such measures are consistent with the government's projected image of Jordan as a country at the forefront of the Arab world on issues of democracy, human rights, women, children, and social development. Thus, in order to tackle these issues, the Jordanian government has facilitated the implementation of many education programs, such as the one on children's rights, with the help of UNICEF and international and local NGOs.

CONSTRUCTING AND BEING CONSTRUCTED: INFLUENCE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ON SELFHOOD

In the UN schools of the two camps where I worked, children's rights had been integrated into the curriculum, especially in social studies, religion, and Arabic. In addition, UNICEF and local NGOs organized separate workshops for parents and children. They provided parents with counseling and helped them adjust to new parenting practices surrounding the children's rights principles. Similarly children's workshops taught young people how to improve their social skills and self-awareness when dealing with taboos, including bodily anatomy, sexuality, or female reproduction. Children and their parents became socialized into the discourse of children's rights, which carries more credibility as local teachers include examples and quotations from the Qur'an and the hadith (the record of exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad).

Thus programs based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child model for the most part have become locally adapted by NGO workers and Palestinian teachers and purport new concepts of childhood and children. These concepts were conceived in Western terms and episteme through the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and they are translated from English into Arabic. As a result, educators and students construct new meanings and understandings that, though somewhat confusing, they are able to negotiate by keeping or rejecting what is compatible with their culture.

Urban's study (2001) about discourse circulation, especially his concept of accelerative discourse, helps us ask questions about why and how children's rights discourse may have been favored and accepted inside refugee camps and why it has spread faster than Jordanian nationalist discourse. If the message of newness and novelty of a new discourse, like children's rights, becomes credible because it includes aspects from the past, as Urban suggests, children's rights discourse has become accepted by camp refugee children because it is deemed to come from the Qur'an. As a result, the "progressive" aspect of rights in its global UN dimension becomes more easily accepted.

In the refugee camps, children's rights education programs taught by UNRWA Palestinian teachers have exercised a strong influence on children's sense of autonomous self in a cultural environment that usually emphasizes collectivity over individualism. Children's rights discourse gives children a vocabulary to talk about themselves. Notably, such vocabulary is channeled by the English language. Here the issue of language is important to my discussion. I argue that the English language of the children's rights project creates power and subjection by becoming a vehicle of new ideas that filter newly acquired concepts such as identity, self, or citizen. Asad (1993) similarly contends of historical projects in colonial settings translated from one site to the other or from one agent to the other. Thus, a dialectical relationship between English and Arabic has stemmed from the teachings and perceptions of children's rights and has become embedded in the localization of the UN discourse of children's rights.[7]

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7   I do not intend to describe the problems of the UN Convention of the Child model in relation to local cultures. I do not dismiss them, but they fall beyond the scope of this article.

Hakim, a ten-year-old boy, said "I am happy and feel strong to know that I have rights."[8] The awareness of having rights allows such feelings. Children's rights teach children to think about themselves as individuals and encourage them to become agents of social change. Sahar, a nine-grader girl, told me "children's rights teach me to depend on myself." The sense of independence characterizes the modern individual.

Anissa, a twelve-year-old girl, declared, "my rights will shape my personality." True, children may not fully understand the concepts they are uttering, but their remarks demonstrate the influence of children's rights to help define themselves. Rights are empowering children in ways that are distinct from child agency as it has operated in the past. Their responses are strongly influenced by the programs of rights education that use various methods of empowerment.

Thus, a local NGO was also offering a special program to show children ways to protect themselves from domestic violence and abuse. Children were taught not to fall victims to their parents' abuse and to speak out. "They feel empowered knowing there are ways to take action," explains Abla, a social worker for the NGO. "They learn skills to help them manage their anger, boost their self-esteem and protect themselves." She encourages "self discovery" by teaching camp children expressive art like painting, drawing, or drama. "Most children are not aware of themselves and their inner feelings. Those programs teach them to identify and express those feelings," she says.

Another scheme of empowerment is the children's parliament. It is an initiative of the Jordanian Women's Union, which is also supported by UNICEF. Established in 1996 as a model parliament for children and adolescents, it promotes children's rights and democratic practices as well as gender equality by having equal representation of boys and girls, including children with special needs.

The thirteen–to-eighteen-year-old adolescents who participate are elected for two years and are able to communicate their concerns to the Jordanian government. The parliament aims to create a group of Jordanian children (including children from the Palestinian refugee camps) who actively support the promotion of children's rights while they are children and who commit to doing so as adults. Several children's parliaments have been established in the main governorates (administrative regions) of the country.

Peer-to-peer learning is another method used in some UNRWA classes to develop peer relationships and to empower students to share their knowledge. But the most spectacular example of an empowerment method is the Human Rights Day Celebration organized by UNRWA that I attended during my fieldwork. It was a cultural performance in which Palestinian children and adolescents from the refugee camps acted on stage in short plays embodying human rights and children's rights; children sitting in the audience with their parents and teachers wore UNRWA T-shirts and caps reading "Human Rights Jordan."

Children rights discourse plays a mediating role in refugee camp society as it shapes young minds and subsequent sentiments—between parents and children and between the government and Palestinian refugees. These revolutionary shifts in perceptions of selfhood involve the entire extended family as well. The new ideas about children represent a significant move from the traditional perceptions of the camp family, where children more often than not were subject to strict patriarchal authority (Sait, 2004). Inevitably, the changes are not taking place without struggles and ambivalence on the part of parents. I have no first-hand evidence of familial conflicts happening in my presence. Parents and children alike would report disagreements and children would report being hit by their father—mainly—when interviewed separately. Domestic violence is an issue addressed seriously by Jordanian family policies, which contain measures to protect women and children.

Even while there is increased recognition of domestic violence, Palestinian camp refugee parents see such government initiatives as restricting their

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8   Interview data from refugee camp dwellers was collected in Arabic; from UNRWA workers and officials in English and Arabic. I was often helped with translations, as I speak Tunsi Arabic, a North African dialect of the Arabic language that is different from standard Arabic.

parental control. These parents are reluctant to let go of their parental control, and yet, at the same time, they look up to their children and vest them with strong hopes of saving the nation. The long exile has tightened traditional family hierarchical structures of control on which they have relied for survival (Sirhan, 1975).

Umm Mahmood, a local NGO worker in Jabal Nasser camp involved in children's rights education programs, explained how important it was "to raise the awareness of the youth in the camp." She defined awareness as "a sense of who one is." For Ossama, a fifteen-year-old boy from the same refugee camp, "children's rights give children a role in society." Children's rights discourse allows youngsters to be not only self-reflective, but also socially engaged. Although rights are not laws, they confer upon individuals a sense of entitlement to justice. While children and adolescents defer to their elders, they are aware at the same time of the heavy national responsibility for change they carry as Palestinian refugees. Not surprisingly, many boys projected themselves as future liberators, by wanting to become pilots—the model being the Israeli pilot—and saviors of their people by becoming doctors to heal the victims.

When I asked camp children and adolescents how they perceived themselves as individuals, they answered by talking about *karamah*, or dignity, and related it to children's rights. And when I asked what was meant by dignity, Ahmed, a fourteen-year-old boy, explained "it is to know your own value," which I interpreted as self-esteem. For Furat, a fifteen-year-old boy, it was "not feeling like a second-class citizen in Jordan." When describing their understanding of children's rights other young people invoked honor,[9] a strong value in the Middle East. Thus, adapted within local present-day and historical contexts, children's rights appear to be perceived as a discourse of power and honor.

In contrast, other young camp people expressed frustration and pain at "having no rights at all in the Middle East and not being valued as full individuals" and reported feelings of exclusion. Data shows that

a sense of self has been developed through several structural sources, including children's rights education programs. It further reveals that self identity presents less tension at home for young boys than for girls, as several girls reported.[10]

CONCLUSION

Concepts like citizenship and nationality which stem from state and nation, are complex and have often been conflated (Gellner, 1983); I conflated them when I asked a group of Palestinian camp refugee children and adolescents in Jordan their "nationality." The ambivalent identity they expressed, as M'hamed conveyed at the beginning of this article, reflects the problematic character of selfhood and identity in contemporary Palestinian society.

The entangled histories of Palestine and Jordan have engendered entangled identities. This article highlights the dilemma young camp refugees face: on the one hand, they yearn to be assimilated into Jordan while resisting and denying such assimilation, and on the other hand, they remain loyal to Palestine. My research shows that their dilemma is articulated through a newly acquired sense of selfhood that children's rights' discourse helps develop.

Children's rights provide Palestinian camp refugee children with a space in which they perceive themselves in ways different than those they have learned from their family and the Palestinian community. This was evident during interviews at home where children, surrounded by their parents and older aunts and uncles, were considerably less outspoken than at school. At home, among the extended family, the young ones were not given space to speak out, as age is a marker of authority, and those not in authority are expected to remain silent.

Rights education also helps them negotiate ambivalence with respect to their identity. The newly acquired discourse contributes to synthesizing the discourses of Jordanian and Palestinian nationalism and providing children with empowering tools such as confidence and awareness that they can use in their claims of inclusion in the ruling group. Furat

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9   There are two words for honor in Arabic. The honor of a man is *sharaf* and that of a woman is *ard*.

10   For more on this, see Bjawi-Levine (2007).

and his friends would claim children's rights as a synonym for self-esteem, the right to be and feel Jordanian and Palestinian at the same time, the right to their ambivalence. With children's rights, children explained their honor was restored and that they could aspire to equality with the dominant group, the Jordanians.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is indeed a central feature for youngsters who, unlike their peers in Palestine, live outside the combat zone but who watch it on television and constantly hear about it. While they are safely protected from fire (Jordan is not usually a combat zone), they are also unable to directly participate in collective action as they would in a place such as Gaza. Their complex position gives way to deep feelings of frustration. They are not able to resist as their peers in the Intifada or as the older generation of refugees, male and female, who had been involved in the Palestinian resistance of the 1970s. Mahmood, a twelve-year-old refugee boy, said "If I had rights, I would be able to go and fight for my country. But here in Jordan I cannot do anything. What are rights for?"

The oscillating movement between nationalistic emotions at the core of their Palestinian identity ("my heart is Palestinian") and the anxiety of being validated as citizens in their Jordaninan identity is destabilizing for young camp refugees. Further, children may find some aspects of children's rights discourse abstract and hard to grasp, which simply adds more confusion. In examining the relationship of Palestinian children and the discourse of children's rights, one may wonder about the merits of such rights. What about children in Palestine—as in Gaza—who are at the front line of armed conflict and fall victim to blatant violations of their rights, or the camp refugee children in Jordan who are indirect victims of ongoing violence? Despite the grim socioeconomic conditions of the camp and the limited social upward mobility, most camp children praise the challenging power and potential agency for social transformation that children's rights provides them, as they carry hope, which is a promise for change.

While children's rights programs affect children and their families in a complex manner, they also purport (as development programs often do) less-desirable effects (see Brown & Bjawi-Levine, 2002; Ferguson, 1990; Escobar, 1995). Ultimately, camp refugee youth in Jordan find themselves in a bind. Their strong feelings of national identity are of the "wrong" kind: Palestinian instead of Jordanian. Although Jordanian assimilation is officially encouraged and part of a national project like "Jordan First," from a camp refugee child perspective it has failed to produce true equality between Palestinians and Jordanians. After six decades of residence in Jordan and despite Jordanian assimilation policies, Palestinian identity remains deeply rooted in the camps, as the children quoted here express.

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The Differences in Emotion
among Parents and Children in
Ghanaian Transnational Families

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Transnational migration can generate strong emotions on the part of migrants and their families. These emotions are not only about desire for a new life and longing for one's homeland, but also about love and longing when families are separated by the migration process. While much of the literature has emphasized the emotional pain among migrants and their families to highlight the costs of globalization (e.g., Parrenas, 2004, 1997; Schmalzbauer, 2004), this paper develops the claim that the emotional pain expressed by children and parents in transnational families differs because of their varied positionality and sense of agency. In doing so, it draws on research which shows how emotional pain—for instance, among children with absent parents—is contingent on factors besides a migrant parent's physical absence, such as the meaning that the child makes of

the separation (Suárez-Orozco, et al., 2002). Families are constructed differently in different communities, such that the physical presence of a parent in a child's life may be more or less significant or a marker of good parenting. Based on interviews with children of migrant mothers in the Caribbean, Karen Fog Olwig argued that it is not the absence of the mother in the household that causes pain for children but the mother's absence in the form of lack of remittances and visits, because the household is itself conceived of as a transnational and geographically dispersed unit. "None of the life stories [with children] gives the impression that the parents' physical absence in and of itself had been experienced as traumatic or problematic. It is apparent, however, that this absence was only acceptable so long as the parents maintained a strong economic and social presence in

the home through regular remittances and periodic visits" (1999: 279). Traditions of family life among transnational families may differ in the extent to which geographic proximity or motherly presence is significant. As a result, the extent to which transnational migration is in tension with those ideologies, and results in emotional pain, will also differ. It is also important to note that though change can lead to emotional pain, emotional pain does not in itself signal social change. Social change may create new benefits for some, and costs for others. Someone may also experience emotional pain in a situation that is relatively stable.

Furthermore, while scholars may sometimes discuss "family ideology" in general, as if all family members shared a similar family ideology, different people in the family, having different roles and lived experiences, may have different understandings of the family unit. Margery Wolf (1972) showed how men and women have different concepts of the family in Taiwan, in which the meaningful unit for women is the uterine family, whereas for men it is the patrilineal family. Similarly, in my conversations with parents and children in Ghanaian transnational families, parents and children had different notions of an idealized parent-child relationship. Parents focused on a dyadic bond with each child. Some talked about children as an investment that would support them when they are old, goals for which a relationship with each child makes sense (a dyadic relationship). Young people, on the other hand, included siblings within their definition of a family that could be scattered by migration, signaling the important role older siblings have played in raising younger ones in Ghana. Furthermore, parents focused on a goal-oriented process of "correction," requiring their active engagement in the process of socializing their children. The character of a child was taken as an indication of the quality of the parent's strategy and reflected on the parent's reputation within his or her community. Children, on the other hand, tended to focus their desires on a set of practices oriented around an ongoing process of "care," which encompassed emotional components like love, communication, and closeness as well as the material provision

of clothing, food, and school fees. These differences in family ideology affected how parents and children expressed emotional suffering in their conversations with me.

A sense of agency based on social position also played a role. Depicting themselves as agents with responsibility and goals for their children, parents found themselves torn and uncertain because none of the options they faced seemed without risk. Despite the ways that immigration regimes constrained their own migrations and separated them from their families, Ghanaian parents depicted themselves as strongly agentive, faced with a series of choices and potential strategies. The children, on the other hand, expressed more straightforward pain than emotional conflict, because their ideals were more clearly in disjuncture with the reality of their lives. They did not express action-oriented goals like their parents, but rather longings for a situation that others could bring into being.

I have been conducting participant observation in a Ghanaian church in a major East Coast city since 2004, and through contacts through the church, I interviewed parents and young people who came to the U.S. as teenagers. Another set of interviews came through a visit to Ghana in the summer of 2005, when I visited the children and families of four parents I had interviewed in the U.S.. I also conducted focus group interviews with a total of forty-two students in three secondary schools and one private school in a town of approximately 9,000 people and a city of just more than a million. I also visited twenty-nine of those students' guardians, with whom I had relatively short (half-hour), informal, untaped conversations. I then interviewed those children's parents who were living in the U.S. (one was in Canada) in fall 2005. Most interviews were in Twi. Material directly reflected in this paper includes quotations and stories from interviews with thirty-five parents and conversations with fifty-two children, whether in focus group discussions or interviews. The period of parents' residence in the U.S. ranged from one to thirty-five years, with an average stay of ten years. Fourteen (or forty percent) were raising their children in Ghana; another fourteen were raising their

children in the U.S.; and the remainder had children in both places. The most common occupations of parents in Ghana were teachers, government workers, and traders; in the U.S., they tended to work in the health care field. The majority (sixty-three percent) had resided in a major city prior to migration, but only a minority was highly educated (only twenty percent had received a university degree in Ghana).

"Children" in this paper are not children in the sense of being under the age of eighteen. Rather, they are children in the sense of their unmarried and childless status, corresponding to the local understanding of childhood or youth in Ghana. The ages of my "child" informants range from nine to twenty-five. Of the fifty-two children interviewed, twenty-two were boys and thirty were girls, with an average age of fifteen years. Thirty of them had only one parent abroad (in two-thirds of the cases, this parent was the father); the rest had both parents abroad; twenty-two of these thirty children were living with the non-migrant parent. Along with non-migrant parents, grandmothers and aunts were common caregivers.

It is important to note that migration has long been a facet of West African life. The fluidity and openness of West African familial and political arrangements reveal the logic of "wealth-in-people," a very different model than is normative in the U.S. People, rather than property, are valued as a route to wealth and power. Furthermore, traditions of fostering, in which children are taken care of by a person other than their mother, are widespread in West Africa, including in the areas of Ghana I studied, and are not simply resorted to in crisis situations, such as the neglect or death of a parent. International migration, while long a route to status and wealth among Ghanaians, increased rapidly since the mid-1990s. Statistician K. A. Twum-Baah (2005) estimates that with a population of 21 million Ghanaians resident in Ghana, another 1.5 million are outside the country, although the European Union's estimate is twice that figure at three million.

In my conversations with Ghanaian transnational migrants and their children, I found that parents and children expressed different kinds of emotions. The parents felt more goal conflict and uncertainty than did children. Depicting themselves as agents with responsibility and goals for their children, they found themselves torn and uncertain because none of the options they faced seemed without risk. As an example, Vida told this story about the time she was taking her baby back to Ghana to live with her parents:

> One time, I went to take my shower, and I came in. I put him on bed—I took him for his prep—I put him on bed. I was looking into his eyes. . . . It was just a quiet time for me, nobody was there, it was just me and the baby. And I was just looking. You know, I was sad at that short time. I'm like, you know what, I brought this life into this earth, and now all his responsibilities are on me. If I make bad decisions, guess what. I'm going to ruin his life. It was just my private moment. And I was crying, you know—not that I have a plan to hurt him, but he's a big responsibility. He doesn't need anybody but you. He didn't ask to be here, but he's here. . . . And this came into my mind like, this little thing, his life depends on me. Whatever I do, it's either going to make him good or make him bad. So it's up to me to make good decisions to give him the best I can.

Her narrative of this moment shows how responsible Vida felt for her small baby, her third child. Seeing his helplessness, she felt that he was completely dependent on her for his life and his future. The sense of responsibility was a little overwhelming, particularly since Vida was not quite sure of the right path to take to accomplish her goals of caring for her baby boy and "making him good." The emotion was a dyadic one, between her and her baby; "my private moment," she said.

This expression of uncertainty surprised me, because in my many conversations with Vida, she had portrayed her situation without emotion and provided justifications for what she was doing—working in the U.S. while her three children lived with her parents in Ghana—to demonstrate it was the best option for all involved. In their interviews with me, generally, parents did not talk in depth about their feelings of missing their children, but instead talked about how those feelings were subsumed to other concerns. For instance, in her conversations with me also, Vida very quickly made the transition from

talking about missing her children to thinking about their character. She said,

> I miss them in person. I can call them three times a week. . . . You are there in a way. That helps me cope with them being over there. I have to take them home [to Ghana], because of the nature of my—this thing [work as a live-in health aide]. . . . So far so good. They are well-mannered.

She used her children's character as the marker of whether the path she took to raise them was working or not. The parents I talked with shared goals for their children and had similar terms by which they evaluated those goals. Their goal was to produce a hard-working and obedient child who was respectful toward his or her elders. In order to accomplish these goals, adults felt responsible for training their children. This is an active, engaged process on the part of the parent, in which the child's character reflects on the parent's reputation. While these goals of transnational migrants are similar to those expressed by Ghanaian parents who do not migrate, transnational migrants face a set of contradictory choices which make accomplishing these goals for their children more difficult than for non-migrant parents. They seemed to agree that Ghana is a better place to raise a child of good character, an interpretation that supported raising their children in Ghana during key periods of child development or when a child began going "wayward." However, many felt ambivalence about having someone other than a parent raise a child, because of the fear that a grandmother or other relative in Ghana would "pamper" the child, perhaps influenced by the flow of remittances, and thus ruin the child's character. This was a fraught process, in which parents felt the uncertainty and risk of accomplishing these goals. My data supports the literature on transnational migration which suggests that transnational migrant mothers are more affected in their parenting role than transnational migrant fathers; in the case of Ghanaian transnational migrants, mothers seemed more full of doubts and ambivalence than fathers, although there were certainly some fathers who expressed as much concern as the typical mother did.

The children were more likely than their migrant parents to express straightforward sadness or longing, presenting an image of a family unity and togetherness that had been scattered or separated. Furthermore, children seem to be as concerned about their siblings' presence and absence as about their parents'. In a set of siblings, parents may bring over a few children at a time because of visa issues or decide that one is ready to come to the U.S. but that another should finish school in Ghana, or that the youngest should be with her parents and the older siblings can stay with other relatives. Or siblings may have different citizenship status, because if a man migrates and his wife then follows, as is a common pattern, they may then bear children who have citizenship in the receiving country, while the older children, born before the parents' migration, do not. Seventeen-year-old Addo's brothers and sisters are with his mother in Germany, and he lives with his aunt and cousins. He complained, "Sometimes I feel lonely."

Many of the children of migrant parents articulated a discourse that was focused on an ongoing process of care, based on both the provision of material resources and love. I have explored age-related differences among children in their expectations regarding transnational migration in other work (Coe, 2012); here, I highlight the intergenerational differences. While one might expect material resources to be provided more effectively by an absent migrant parent who was sending home remittances and gifts, the lack of material resources was an idiom of complaint that children could use. The key indicators of material care were food, clothing, and money, and the term they tended to use was "cater," meaning providing for. Sixteen-year-old Dinah said, "As for me, I don't have any problem with them staying in the U.S., but most people complain, because as for their parents, they don't cater them. They go there and that's all. They never hear from them again." Some explained this lack of material care by complaining that their caregivers were diverting the remittances for purposes other than their care. Fifteen-year-old Akua echoed this thought, "One of my friends, her mom went and her dad went; they left her with the

mom's sister, and [she] always maltreats the girl. When they bring her clothes or money, instead of using it to cater for her, they use it for their children. Oh—it was bad." Whereas parents worried that care-givers would pamper children, often the children's discourse claimed caregivers neglected children. Thirteen-year-old Beatrice said that she wanted to live together with her father and mother (both in the U.S.). When I asked her why, she replied, "Maybe if I live with my mother, I will be more comfortable than living with someone else. Because if I live with my mother, my mother will do what I like for me." Many of the students in the focus group at the same school complained about not getting all the money that their parents sent back and said that they felt sad and materially deprived.

The children's discourse of care and the parental discourse of character and correction have implica-tions for what we might call family ideology: the sense of what is right or normative in terms of fam-ily living arrangements. The parents and children I interviewed seemed to hold as a social norm a nu-clear family living arrangement, in which parents live with all their children in one place. This social norm, however, can be altered appropriately in different circumstances, according to the logic of these dis-courses. The discourse of care generated by children much more strongly supports a notion of living with one's parents and siblings, whereas the discourse of correction and character creates more ambivalence for parents. Parents feel that while they may be the best ones at correcting their children, they need to travel overseas to materially provide for them. Rais-ing their children in the U.S. is difficult because of the lack of support in meeting the parents' goals of socialization, including perceived constraints around physical punishment, different norms for young people's behavior, and the need for parents to work long hours, leaving children unsupervised. This was not just felt by those who sent their children back to Ghana, although it was perhaps expressed more strongly by them; rather, parents with children with them in the U.S. hoped that they would be able to instill their values in their children despite their environment.

These discourses have implications for feeling-states and the ways that different family members navigate the complex emotional terrain generated by the disconnect between the conditions caused by transnational migration—the scattered family—and the ideals of family life of those who migrate. Be-cause of the somewhat differing ideals that parents and children have for family relationships, the chil-dren described in this paper were more expressive of emotional pain, in which their reality clearly did not match their desire, while parents highlighted the management of their emotions, particularly around missing their children, and switched rapidly from the expression of emotion to goals like character train-ing, which they hoped could be accomplished in this transnational situation. The children thus expressed much more certainty about the definition of the situ-ation. Parents, on the other hand, narrated the riski-ness of their strategies, uncertain which parenting strategy would work best in producing a respectful child, and their emotional expressions around living in a risk society were generally stronger than about missing their children.

Both parents and children experienced structural constraints in achieving their ideals, and this resulted in the expression of different kinds of emotional pain. The parents, who saw themselves as agents with much responsibility, experienced the riskiness and uncertainty of multiple choices across different contexts—each of which had its pros and cons and none of which was clearly the right path—as they strove to attain the ideal of the successful migrant by Ghanaian standards. Children openly expressed sadness using the language of complaint and lament, in which they were powerless and their situation was in the hands of others, whether parents or caregiv-ers. Transnational migration thus creates different structures of feelings in actors in different positions and we should take these into account as we seek to understand the effects of these processes and ar-rangements on persons and families.

Although Ghanaian parents and children express different kinds of pain, they seem to be closer to Caribbean families in the normalization of separa-tion and migration, in comparison to transnational

families from Latin and Central America and Southeast Asia. The variations are less explained by differences in migration trajectories and immigration regimes than in differences in family ideology. In Ghana, family ideologies about how care can be expressed through the reciprocal exchange of material goods have been forged through a long history of internal and regional migration and mobility (Coe, 2011; Tetteh, 2008).

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Recasting the Agency of Unaccompanied Youth

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Early law in the United States did not recognize children as individual rights holders independent of their parents. The law considered children as wage-earning assets of their fathers, in which "their services, earnings and the like became the property of their paternal masters in exchange for life and maintenance" (Woodhouse, 1992: 1037). The nineteenth century was marked by, what Stanley Cohen has termed a profound "moral panic" concerning gangs of children overstepping the confines of childhood and threatening "societal values and interests" particularly among new immigrant communities (Cohen, 1972: 9; Pearson, 1985: 63; Davin, 1990). In the late nineteenth century, Progressive Era reformers fundamentally altered the relationship between the state, the family,

and the child—no longer did a father wield absolute possession and control over his child, and the state began to monitor the community's social investment in the child. Reformers sought to "save" children from the violence of factories and the street through cumpulsory education, welfare reforms, and specialized juvenile courts. Seeking to protect and provide for this inherently vulnerable population, the court began to emphasize children's rights, which "operated both as standards for parental behavior and as limitations on parental power. Parental failure to live up to these standards violated children's rights and justified community intervention" (Woodhouse, 1992: 1052, cited in Thronson, 2002: 979). Under the rubric of the "best interests of the child," the legal principle that still prevails in contemporary juvenile courts, the state can intervene directly in family life in order to assure appropriate therapeutic interventions for children. Moreover, these historical reforms marked a shift in allegiance that remains with us today—a child's "highest duty was no longer obedience to parents, but preparation for citizenship" (Woodhouse, 1992: 1051).

Despite discarded notions of children as property, contemporary U.S. immigration law still frames immigrant children as objects, recognizing the identity of a child only inasmuch as that child is a derivative of the actions, legal status, and presence of his or her parent(s). The presumption is that adults are the decision-makers and providers for children. The social position of the child as inferior or somehow exclusively dependent stands in marked contrast to the integral roles children often assume in familial decision-making processes, as well as the decisions they make as individual social actors. Nonetheless, to succeed best at obtaining legality under the practices of immigration law, children must be presented as variables or liminal figures within adult-defined worlds. Because children are not seen as autonomous individuals from birth, but as beings that families must socialize into mature adults, children do not maintain an independent relationship to the state (Schneider, 1968). And yet, as Glenn convincingly argues, independence is a "key ideological concept anchoring citizenship" manifested in rights such as property ownership and voting (Glenn, 2002: 27). At the same time, the family becomes the mediator of the state's investment in the child as a future citizen. Because of this presumed dependence, children must rely on their parents as proxies before the law, which restricts their access to the state (Jans, 2004; Leiter, et al., 2006; O'Neil, 1997; Thronson, 2002). Consequently, the legal identity of the "unaccompanied alien child"[1] is both contingent and dependent: an impossible subject who cannot exist in juridical accounts of personhood due to his illegal presence in the United States and his paradoxical position as an alone but dependent minor. Just as Mae Ngai (2004: 4) argues, a migrant's illegality is "simultaneously a social reality and a legal impossibility—a subject barred from citizenship and without rights."

Countering the perception of children as dependent citizens, this article argues that recent changes in immigration law once again shift the relationship between the state, the family, and the child, positioning the state at odds with lived kinship structures and forcing youth to choose between the state and existing kinship ties. In viewing children as undeveloped in their autonomy and thereby dependent upon an adult (be it parents or the state *in loco parentis*), immigration law does not allow space for thoughtful consideration of a child's agency. In contrast, I argue that a discussion of agency becomes central in the narratives of migrant youth in the ways they cross physical, social and metaphoric borders and reside in overlapping spaces of impossibility—be it social invisibility, illegality, or independence. A unidirectional approach to the study of the law's impact on the lives of youth negates the significant contributions youth make as social actors. Youth negotiate complex networks of actors and institutions that may aid them in evading deportation, earning income, and contributing to household economies in the United States and in their home countries (Ayotte, 2000; Coutin, 2005; Menjivar, 2001). By examining their everyday interactions and confrontations with these networks, I consider how youth shape the very laws that govern their everyday lives.

The nature of agency I discuss above will be examined through the case study presented here. Over an eighteen-month period, I traced the circulation of Julio through three geographic locales—in his hometown in El Salvador, in a federal shelter for unaccompanied children in Texas, and at an uncle's home in Maryland—in an effort to understand how unaccompanied migrant children negotiate their often conflicting identities as child, family member, boyfriend/girlfriend, student, migrant, economic agent, victim of violence, at-risk youth, perceived perpetrator of violence, and/or juvenile delinquent. This article is a small segment of my doctoral research with migrant

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1   The U.S. legal code defines "unaccompanied alien children" as "illegal aliens" under the age of eighteen who come to the United States without authorization or overstay their visas and are without a parent or legal guardian. Although many children outside of their country of origin are without their parents or legal guardians, they may be accompanied by customary care providers, extended family, family friends, community members, or entrusted to smugglers throughout the duration of their journey. Internationally, the more prevalent term is "separated children" which, in many ways, more accurately reflects the temporary or contingent nature of travel or living arrangements of many children. In my research, I choose to enlist the juridical term "unaccompanied child" because it is a critical intersection between migrant youth, their families, and U.S. law. The legal category, constructed though it may be, becomes a useful site of inquiry into the ways the law attempts to identify and to shape the capabilities and rights of children and their relationships to extended kinship networks both in the United States and abroad.

children in which I explore the network of actors and institutions that emerge when unaccompanied children migrate clandestinely from Central America and Mexico to the United States. This multisited ethnography, spanning from Maryland to the sister cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez to El Salvador to Illinois, asks how the juridical category of "unaccompanied alien child" recasts relationships between the state, youth, and their families. I trace the coherence of this category through the complex and not always legible decisions of immigration officials, consular officials, practices of shelter social workers, attorneys, and activists and the narratives of migrant children and their families.

JULIO'S (IN)VISIBILITY

When I first met Julio, a lanky youth of fifteen, he was dressed in a neon blue sweat shirt with matching pants and black, plastic flipflops provided to him by the federal shelter where he resided. In the El Paso heat of early summer, Julio incessantly wiped the sweat from his brow onto his right sleeve. The shelter's director explained that the florescent-colored clothing—red, blue, yellow, and green—allowed staff to easily identify children who attempted to escape the federal shelter where they were detained. The sandals were also standard-issue flip-flops thought to deter fast-footed children from getting very far along the gravel road connecting the shelter to the highway. The shelter is one of thirty-six federal shelters (at the time) in which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) subcontracts nongovernmental organizations to provide housing and social services to unaccompanied or trafficked children apprehended by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), formerly known as Immigration and Naturalization Services.

At the time, the convoluted network of four government departments, fifteen federal government agencies, and myriad nongovernmental organizations involved in the care and custody of apprehended unaccompanied children (Bhabha & Schmidt, 2006) was indecipherable to Julio. In his mounting

frustration with his "captivity" at the shelter, Julio remarked, "I am ashamed that I got caught. I made my decision, had everything organized, had my plan, and now what? I am trapped here in this place. My debt is increasing as I sit here wasting my time learning geography. They must think I'm stupid. I walked their geography."[2]

While in his hometown of Santa Ines, El Salvador, Julio's reputation as a talented student and responsible worker had brought him school awards for excellence and stable employment as a dishwasher and as an occasional carpenter; but it also brought him to the attention of the Joker. The Joker was the local *Mara Salvatrucha* (also known as MS-13) gang leader, whose first contact with Julio was to demand the new tennis shoes that Julio purchased with his earnings. Later, demands came for his girlfriend and his participation in gang activities. Each threat was met with Julio's firm and sometimes-belligerent refusals, refusals that belied how scared he really was. "I am not interested in your *babosada*,"[3] he told them. On three occasions, several gang members beat Julio, with the Joker directing each blow. They would wait for Julio outside of school, his place of work, and even church on Sundays. At times, Julio left through an alternate door, climbed a fence behind the school, or ran to escape these confrontations, but often this occurred without success. "It was hard to hide from them," Julio remarked on his efforts to avoid gang members in his community. "I am taller than most people in my town. It is kind of hard for me to blend in."

Julio typically contributed to his family's food and schooling expenses for six younger siblings. His two elder sisters had limited capacity to contribute to the household's needs, while Julio's stepfather's intermittent employment as a truck driver varied with

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2 I conducted all interviews in either Spanish or English. Translations are my own, highlighting in some instances Spanish words of particular force or interest. While detained, children receive daily instruction in the English language. At the time of my initial interview with Julio, one of the shelter teachers was introducing the geography of Central America and Mexico to detainees. In later conversations with Julio, he would detail with great specificity the route he traveled from El Salvador to the United States. Hence, he literally "walked their geography."

3 Stupidity or crap.

the demand for timber from neighboring Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. When not working, his stepfather also had corresponding bouts of heavy drinking and verbal and physical abuse. After a particularly brutal beating in which the Joker and three of his fellow gang members broke Julio's arm, Julio stopped attending school and work, only leaving the house once in six weeks to remove his cast. "I tried to become invisible," he explained. He slept most of the day or watched Hollywood films on a small television set in the living room, able for the most part to avoid the gaze of his stepfather who, fortunately, was working during this period and away from the home for several weeks at a time. Gang members would regularly pass his home and yell threats through the windows. On one occasion, the Joker knocked on the door. When Julio's mother answered, she said Julio had left for the United States—a decision Julio had been contemplating for several months. Julio recalled this period of hiding: "There was nothing for me there. I could not work; I could not study; I could not protect my mom from my stepfather or even myself. I had to hide to survive; that is no way to live."

After six weeks of retreat, Julio and his mother began discussing his journey to the United States. She had located a distant uncle of Julio's who had moved eight years previously to Silver Spring, Maryland, and she called on Julio's behalf requesting help. Julio's uncle agreed to secure him employment and provide him a place to live if he could get to Maryland on his own. Julio borrowed US$6000 from a local police officer for whom he had done some carpentry work but who could not provide him protection from the MS-13's recruitment apparatus. The police officer introduced Julio to his brother, a broker for *coyotes* who smuggled migrants through Guatemala and Mexico into the United States. Julio's $3000 down payment assured him passage to the U.S.-Mexico border, or so he thought.

SPACES OF LIMINALITY, INVISIBILITY AND MOVEMENT INTO THE JURIDICAL SPACE

His departure from Santa Ines marked Julio's entrance into a liminal period of transit, whereby he was devoid of the protection of the police, the gang, his family, and the Salvadoran and U.S. governments. He journeyed for three weeks—by bus through Guatemala, by car and by train through Mexico, and eventually by foot into the United States. The success of Julio's journey was predicated upon his hiding his physical presence—in ditches along the road, on top of trains, in the back of vans—as well as his language. He rarely spoke for fear of passersby detecting his Salvadoran accent and vocabulary. "I imagined I was a superhero in a comic book, you know, who had the power to make himself invisible. No one could see me. I never spoke. It is like I wasn't even there. Besides, it all seems like a bad nightmare now. I try not to think about it. It never really happened." Julio entered another dimension, be it liminal or science fictional, to absent himself while in transit (Coutin, 2005). Susan Coutin (2005: 195) analyzes how "clandestinity" is a public secret, a known social reality in which unauthorized migrants must be "absent from the spaces they occupy." For unauthorized migrants arriving in the United States, the law becomes a mechanism by which the state may *absent* those that are present through the prohibition of unauthorized entrance or through the denial of certain rights and services. The state may also physically absent, via detention or deportation, those that are unlawfully living within national borders (Coutin, 2005: 196).

Upon crossing the territorial boundary between the United States and Mexico, Julio also entered into a new juridical space (Ngai, 2004: 6). Julio shifts his principal legal identity from a citizen of El Salvador to an *illegal alien* with limited access to rights and services in the United States. As Ngai argues, however, the boundary between citizen and *illegal* is soft, where forms of illegality are ironically recognized by the state in some circumstances. "[I]llegal alienage is not a natural or fixed condition but the product of positive law; it is contingent and at times unstable.

The line between legal and illegal status can be crossed in both directions" (Ngai, 2004: 6). Under some conditions, such as Temporary Protected Status or certain types of visas, an individual can transform his illegal status to legal, just as an individual with legal status in the United States can lose his status through committing certain crimes (Ngai, 2004: 6). Kitty Calavita (1998) adds that not only does the law create illegality, but in the case of Spanish immigration law, it actively "regularizes and 'irregularizes' people, by making it all but impossible to retain legal status over time . . . the boundaries between legal and illegal populations are porous and in constant flux, as people routinely move in and out of legal status" (Calavita, 1998: 531).

Within three days of crossing the border by foot near McAllen, Texas, Border Patrol agents apprehended Julio en route to Houston. They interrogated him for two hours and held him for eight days in a small cell with six other migrants. Eventually, because of his age and his presence without a legal guardian, Julio was transferred to an ORR shelter for unaccompanied children. Analogous to the legal space of airports, ORR shelters are simultaneously located within and outside of national territories. Unaccompanied children are held betwixt and between in federal shelters that are geographically within United States territory but without access to the rights and services afforded to citizens (Turner, 1967). Unaccompanied children are confined to federal shelters much longer than their counterparts in the domestic child welfare system because they lack the proper documentation to enter into national spaces.

IN LOCO PARENTIS

The state defines and positions unaccompanied youth largely through the law, whether by legislating citizenship, labor, or eligibility for government programs (Garcia, 2006; Hagan, 1994; Orellana, et al., 2001). It is important to note that immigration law does not provide any child-specific accomodations customary in family and juvenile courts for citizens. Unaccompanied children do not have a right to state-funded attorneys but must secure and pay for their own representation during immigration proceedings;

unlike children in state courts, there is no "best-interest" legal standard taking into acount the safety and well-being of the child in immigration law; yet the rules of evidence remain the same for children and adults, forcing children to meet the same burdens of evidence and testimony as adults.

Recent shifts in immigration law for unaccompanied children have begun to guarantee some measure of legal relief for minors through the introduction of Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) status. SIJ is a step in immigration law towards the identification of unaccompanied minors by permitting undocumented children to stand before the law as primary petitioners in cases of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. While SIJ has existed since the early 1990s, advocates have increasingly utilized this tool in the last five years. While in many ways it is consistent with immigration law's view that children are necessarily dependent, SIJ does open a critical window through which advocates have begun to push for expanded rights of children and a more nuanced perspective on migrant children. It is the only provision within immigration law that considers the best interests of the child, creating a unique hybrid of state courts and federal immigration law, which provides certain undocumented children with an avenue to citizenship. The mechanism of the best-interest standard with the SIJ petition is one of the only ways by which the voice of the child figures into immigration proceedings. Children claiming SIJ, however, must legally sever kinship ties and become dependents of the state.

In order to remain in the United States, the most viable legal option for Julio was to petition for a Special Immigrant Juvenile Visa in which Julio had to detail how his father abandoned him at a young age, the abuse he and his siblings received at the hands of his stepfather and that his mother could not or chose not to protect him. In effect, Julio had to publicly claim that he was "abused, neglected, or abandoned" by his family—a claim that, according to Julio, was not only emotionally inaccurate but also undermined his personal and financial commitment to his mother and siblings. "I just can't say those bad things abut my family to a room of people, to a judge. You just do not do that. They are my family." According to Julio's

former employer in Santa Ines, the physical abuse was public knowledge but something not discussed or addressed publicly. He said, "It [domestic violence] happens. We know it happens but it is a family affair. Julio never said anything to me, but I knew what was going on. We all knew."

The Special Immigrant Juvenile status is a form of legal relief that embraces the traditional binaries in which a child can either exist as part of a family or as wholly independent. If a child is seen as independent or abandoned by his family, the state affixes itself as the parent of the child victim. With SIJ, Julio forfeits any right to petition for his mother or siblings to immigrate. Further, since an SIJ recipient is "no longer the 'child' of an abusive parent, the CIS [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services] may assert that he or she no longer has any sibling relationship with brothers and sisters" (Kinoshita & Brady, 2005: 9). As such, SIJ suffers from a legal *aconsanguinity* in which "immigration policies nullify legal legitimacy of some kinship ties" (Coutin, 2000: 32–3; De Genova, 2002: 427).[4] In Julio's situation, the state exists at odds with his actual family structure, legislating the space of the family by forcing him to choose between the state (and partial citizenship) and existing kinship ties.

A QUESTION OF AGENCY

Anthropologists have traced the emergence of multiple youth identities shaped by social and political forces, yet there is a distinct neglect of how youth shape these same processes. What do youth do with this "agency"? How do youth interpret, navigate, shape, and re-invent relationships and customs, and how are youth shaped by them? How do youth conceive of their social worlds, and what can adults learn from these perspectives? Prout (2005) claims that, although the empirical research on child agency is robust, there is minimal literature that moves beyond description. This speaks to how discussions of youth agency are consistently unidirectional—youth respond to or work against social structures, instead of actively shaping these same processes through their everyday interactions. For example, while focusing on the "agency" of youth as they assimilate global capitalism, transnational processes, and local culture, the anthropology of youth disproportionately centers on consumer practices and popular culture, such as the consumption of romance novels (Christian-Smith, 1987), fashion (Talbot, 1995), and clothing styles (Dimitriadis, 2001; Gondola, 1999). While these studies attempt to contextualize the lives of youth by focusing on how globalization and modernity shape cultural practices of youth in local contexts (Dirlik, 2001; Soja, 1989), few ethnographies allow for a mutually constitutive framework in which youth both incorporate global forces into local practices and influence the ways in which these forces are constituted and circulated beyond consumer preferences and practices. This essay seeks to challenge this analytic approach through the incorporation of the law as exemplary of the interdependence of the lives of youth such as Julio, especially at the center of global phenomena such as migration.

The quickly growing network of Office of Refugee Resettlement shelters for unaccompanied children might suggest that the law has begun to recognize the social agency of an entrepreneurial youth who orchestrates his or her own transnational journey, although the bureaucratic processes and institutional practices are predicated exclusively on children as undeveloped and dependent upon adults. More frequently, the law and lawlike processes frame agency in terms of delinquency, perhaps a contributing factor in why gang-based asylum claims, that Julio might also have pursued, have limited success. As Julio's *pro bono* attorney remarked: "In immigration court, child abuse is more palatable than gangs." Another advocate specializing in gang-based asylum claims concurs: "If you have a client who comes into the courtroom with muscles, visible tattoos or even just a bad attitude, you will have an extremely difficult time convincing the judge

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4   Although a child granted SIJ could apply for a sibling, she must first become a naturalized U.S. citizen, which requires a five-year waiting period following his or her adjustment of status to a Legal Permanent Resident, and must be over the age of 21 before she can apply for her sibling(s) to immigrate to the United States. Currently, there is a ten-year backlog for sibling petitions of U.S. citizens. Immigration law is very clear that a child granted SIJ cannot petition for her parent, stating "no natural parent of prior adoptive parent of any alien provided special immigrant status under this subparagraph shall thereafter, by virtue of such parentage be accorded any right, privilege, or status under this chapter" [INA 101 § 27 (J) (iii)(II)].

that your client is sufficiently sympathetic and deserving of asylum. However irrelevant to your legal claim, your client must play into a more sympathetic image of the victim—docile, quiet, and sufficiently fearful." In contrast to his state-issued sweat suits and sandals, which marked Julio as a prisoner, Julio's attorney also sought to physically and symbolically dress him as a sympathetic child victim, worthy of the court's sympathies.

In tandem with an analysis of the ways legal and lawlike processes position migrant youth at the intersection of the family and the state comes an imperative to also focus on how youth like Julio negotiate, evade, and at times resist this normative positioning in their everyday interactions. While the law attempts to restrict or to deny the agency of children, the presence of unaccompanied children has spawned specialized governmental and nongovernmental programs, the emergence of "children's judges" and "children's attorneys," "children's dockets" for detained children, legal theories on child-specific persecution claims and has even generated new laws. By reading agency back into the law, we may see how the law functions in the daily lives of youth. Analyzing youth discourses on, confrontations with, or perceptions of the law will not only validate youth as important social actors warranting serious academic study but also will demonstrate how the law is interdependent with social subjects.

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Ecuadorian Youth, International Migration, and Quichua Language Shift*

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While thousands of studies have examined the language practices of migrants in their new contexts of work and education, little attention has been paid to the language learning and usage patterns among the much larger numbers of individuals who remain at home in places affected by migration. As such, a largely unasked question is how migration affects language competencies, preferences, and practices of those children and other family members who remain in their home communities.

This article addresses this gap by examining language, cultural change, and migration among Indigenous Ecuadorians and draws from a broader project which explores how transmigration (Schiller, et al., 1992) is experienced by those who do not leave; how long-term separations are framed by family and friends; and, in particular, how these shifts are linked with changing conceptions of what it means to be a good child or a good parent. This article does so by analyzing the experiences of highland Indigenous communities of Ecuador—focusing on one Quichua group in particular, the Saraguros, after migration swept the country on an unprecedented scale in the late 1990s (Bacacela, 2003; Gratton, 2007; Jokisch, n.d.).

CONTEXT AND RESEARCH APPROACH

Julio: *No hay nadie . . . los borrachos [se] quedan.*
[There's nobody . . . the drunks are left.]
—Joking quip by former Saraguro community leader who works in Indigenous education in Quito; August 2006

Ecuador is a small South American nation-state of about thirteen million people. Roughly one-third of the country self-identifies as Indigenous. Quichua is

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the most widely spoken of Ecuador's thirteen Indigenous languages (King & Hornberger, 2004). Within Ecuador, Saraguros are an Indigenous group numbering about 20,000.

Prior to 1990, few Saraguros—and indeed, relatively few Ecuadorians—had ever crossed national borders for work. For Saraguros, international transmigration began in the early to mid 1990s, with the best estimates putting the total number residing in the United States at around 200 people (Belote & Belote, 2005). By 2005, there were at least 1,000 Saraguros in Spain and the United States (Belote & Belote, 2005). Others put the estimate much higher, calculating that upwards of 5,000 Saraguros have moved to Spain or other European destinations (Bacacela, 2003). Within Spain, Ecuadorians are the third largest immigrant group (following Romania and Morocco); the official estimate is 414,000 legally registered Ecuadorian residents (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2009). While both Ecuador and Spain lack precise numbers of documented and undocumented migrants, it is clear that over the course of a decade thousands of Saraguros left their traditional territory of the southern Andes.

Although Quichua competency levels vary by community, Saraguros, overall, are engaged in language shift toward Spanish, with Spanish-Quichua bilingualism declining rapidly. This process has been ongoing for more than three decades, and varied revitalization programs have been under discussion, under development, or underway since at least the early 1990s (Haboud, 2003; King, 2001). Nevertheless, most Saraguros under the age of fifty are now Spanish dominant, and most under the age of thirty are Spanish monolingual.

Saraguro identity is locally rooted in the southern Andes. Concomitantly, Saraguros have long engaged in short-term, cyclical migration within Ecuador to cultivate lands for cattle pasture, to work as day laborers in mines, or to pursue education or employment in urban centers (Belote & Belote, 2005; Macas, et al., 2003). Saraguro existence traditionally was characterized by the dual approach of small-scale subsistence farming on land near Saraguro coupled with income-generating activities beyond the region

(Belote, 2002; Vacacela, 2002). To some extent then, international migration is an extension of a well-established adaptive strategy dating back at least a hundred years. While Saraguro transmigration in some respects is a globalized twist on a long-standing local practice, it is also part of a pronounced trend that swept Ecuador in the 1990s, which Jokisch and Pribilsky (2002) describe as the "panic to leave." In two years alone (1999 and 2000), more than a quarter of a million Ecuadorians emigrated.

Within this context, audio-recorded interviews and ethnographic observations were conducted in six Saraguro communities in August 2006. These included twenty-six formal interviews, including visits to friends, former colleagues, and godchildren and their families, drawing heavily on contacts made in 1994 and 1995 while the author lived in two Saraguro communities (King, 2001).

Across the international research literature, migration—and in particular, country-internal, rural-to-urban migration—is often linked with shift away from an Indigenous language and towards a language of wider communication (e.g., Dorian, 1981; Kulick, 1992). Much of this work suggests that rural-to-urban migration corresponds to individuals' devaluation of their ethnic identity and, subsequently, a move away from their native language. While this dynamic is at play among some Indigenous Ecuadorians, the data here suggest that migration's impact on Indigenous language maintenance is both more insidious and less direct. In short: most Saraguros continue to discuss Indigenous language and identity in positive terms and do not explicitly frame linguistic or cultural loss favorably. Nevertheless, international migration has led to shifts in how childhood and parenthood are constructed and enacted, including how children spend their time, how they relate to their elders, and how they envision their futures. As discussed below, these changes have profoundly affected Quichua language learning opportunities.

INDIGENOUS ECUADORIANS WENT GLOBAL/GLOBALIZATION CAME TO INDIGENOUS ECUADOR

MARÍA: *Así es Kendalita. Estamos muy cambiados por la migración. Los jóvenes están afectados mucho mucho mucho.* [That's the way it is Kendalita. We are very changed because of migration. The youth are affected very very very much.]

MARIO: *La globalización.* [Globalization.]

KENDALL: *¿La qué?* [What?]

MARIO: *La globalización.* [Globalization.]

—Family conversation with Mario and Maria, a married couple from the community of Tambopamba; August 2006)

By 2006, most Saraguros saw migration as something of a mixed bag (see also Foxen, 2007; Moran-Taylor, 2008b). Remittances sent by migrants abroad kept many families afloat throughout the economic crises and allowed for increased consumption of material goods as well as improved access to health care and education. Nevertheless, many Saraguros were quick to cite a long list of social ills they attributed to emigration. These included (but were not limited to):

- Increased rates of teen pregnancy and lower marital rates;
- Diminished use of indigenous clothing and preference for western-style garments;
- Economic inflation in general and in particular inflated land prices;
- Decreased participation in traditional community work parties (*mingas*);
- Decreased interest among young in agricultural work and artisan crafts;
- Increased traffic and pollution that come with cars in communities;
- Depression and loneliness;
- Greater focus on wages, cash earnings, material goods, and conspicuous consumption;
- Lack of adolescent discipline and the rise of gangs and associated criminal activity;
- Construction of non-traditional large, concrete houses and associated zoning conflicts;
- Social isolation and greater social class divisions;
- Increase in debts and foreclosures;
- Alcohol and drug abuse;
- Lack of respect for elders and erosion of norms of respect.

No doubt many of these social problems have intensified as the result of emigration, and many, such as increased teenage pregnancy, gang activity, and declining respect for elders, have been noted in other Latin American migratory contexts (e.g., Foxen, 2007; Moran-Taylor, 2008a; 2008b). However, not every item on this list of perceived social problems is the direct result of emigration. For instance, the decline in Quichua language use in Saraguro and elsewhere in Ecuador began well before large-scale emigration was under way (King, 2001; Haboud, 2006). Nevertheless, there is a widespread perception that a whole host of social problems is due to the influx of cash to the region and the departure of so many. Within everyday conversations, migration has become the catch-all explanation for nearly every social ill.

Emigration looms large as a causal explanation for such a wide range of social problems because all Saraguros live in the shadow of transmigration and experience it daily. All of the roughly 150 Saraguros with whom I met during fieldwork had at least one immediate family member who was working abroad. Most people had multiple family members and innumerable friends who had emigrated. Talk of who was planning to go, who had left or had arrived, and who had sent what to whom dominated many conversations. Keeping tabs and keeping in touch has been made much easier by the proliferation of cell phones and high-speed internet connections in Saraguro and in much of Ecuador.

Despite these advances in communication technology, as others have documented, transmigrant relationships are always uneven, and communication is less than perfect (Mahler, 2001; Pribilsky, 2004). For migrants abroad, phone calls, letters, text messages, emails, and other exchanges with family in Ecuador are fit into long workdays, arduous commutes, housekeeping tasks, and social and cultural activities. In turn, for those who are left behind in Saraguro, life is far less busy, and the anticipation of a letter, phone

call, email, package, or wire transfer is woven into the emotion and activity of everyday life. Many days in Saraguro are constructed around, for instance, a trip to town to see if money has been wired or to check if email has arrived. Another example: Sundays, the day when Saraguros used to walk to town to attend church, shop, and socialize, are now more often defined as time when one waits at home for phone calls from loved ones abroad.

As Pribilsky (2004) describes for other highland Ecuadorians in New York, migrants' lives abroad often revolve around immediate social and economic concerns and basic survival; in contrast, family members remaining in Ecuador "could easily spend much of their time tending to issues related to their husbands' absences" (327). Likewise, in many ways, Saraguro migration was experienced more intensively by those who did *not* migrate (see also Foxen, 2007). And while adults with spouses or parents abroad felt this absence acutely, migration cast an even longer shadow for children.

MIGRATION AND CHANGING CONCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF CHILDHOOD

Rosa: *No hay control de nada. Será por la migración. Será por la televisión. Será por el estudio. Estamos muy perdidos ya. Mucho, mucho, mucho. Hay un cambio en todo.* [Nothing is under control. It may be because of migration. It may be because of the television. It may be because of education. We are already quite lost. A lot, a lot, a lot. There is a change in everything.] —Rosa, a mother of four from the community of Tambopamba; August 2006

In Saraguro and elsewhere in the Andes, education is widely touted as a cure for social problems and as a key step in economic advancement for both the individual and the nation (e.g., Luykx, 1999). Why then does Rosa, a mother of four boys, link formal education with life in Saraguro being out of control? To begin to answer this question, it is important to consider how transmigration has accelerated the adaptation of nontraditional or "modern" constructions of

childhood and parenthood in Saraguro and elsewhere in Ecuador.

Although children in Saraguro have always been loved, they have also served as important sources of labor and long have played an integral role in the economic survival of the family (Belote & Belote, 1984). While education is viewed as important, most parents expected their children to work before and after school in the home and in the fields. Thus, children were engaged in a reciprocal relationship within their immediate family: they were provided for materially, but also expected to assist in household maintenance. As such, children in Saraguro traditionally have been treated as and understood to be economic assets within the family economy (Belote & Belote, 1984: 41).

Migration has played an important role in the undoing of this social equation. In short, children are no longer *economic* assets but essentially *emotional* assets (Zelizer, 1994). Children do not contribute collectively to family livelihood, but are instead serve as a motivating factor for migration and family separation. Most Saraguros explain that they or others like them have migrated *por los niños,* "for the children." By this they mean that they have traveled abroad to work in order to provide financially for their children, to improve their children's material lives, and to offer them what they perceive to be greater opportunities for future life success. While many parents do achieve these aims to some extent, the migration of one or both parents undoes many aspects of the reciprocal economic relationship outlined above. The diffuse forces of globalization, and migration in particular, seem to have stepped up a change observed in the 1980s in Saraguro (Belote & Belote, 1984). By 2006, very few children were productive participants in their families' economies. Time once spent working with family around the house and fields is now passed attending school or hanging around town—two domains where Spanish dominates.

This shift is also enmeshed with changing residential configurations in the wake of parental migration. When one Saraguro parent migrates, children typically reside with the remaining parent. When both parents migrate, children are left under the care of extended family, most often a grandmother or an

aunt. In such cases, parents send remittances to caregivers, who often give all or a portion directly to the child. Migration thus introduces cash into children's lives and relationships and alters how and where children spend much of their time. Migration also highlights the emotional ties between parents and children and makes this interpersonal relationship more salient. Indeed, separation from loved ones (and from children in particular) is routinely described as the hardest aspect of life abroad (Belote & Belote, 2005).

For nearly all children, having one or both parents abroad means much greater autonomy and freedom (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). Teens were well aware of the stress caused by such independence and often described it as a lack of "respect" amongst teens for adults (see also Foxen, 2007).

José: *Pero siempre [se] quedan con familiares. No sé.* [But (the children/teens) always stay with relatives. I don't know.]

Manuel: *Salen a los bailes de noches. Pues regresan al otro día. Así en esa forma falta respeto no tratando de respeto. . . . Las personas dejan a los hijos acá. No respetan a los abuelitos. Ya no es como los papás. Hacen lo que quieren.* [They go out to the dances at night. And well, (they) return the following day. In that way, they lack respect, and are not treating (grandparents) with respect. . . . The people that leave their children here. (The children) do not respect the grandparents. It's not like their parents. They do what they want.]

José: *Mandan plata. Llevan la vida muy mala algunos.* [(The parents) send money. (The children) lead a very bad life some of them.]
               —Group conversation with teenage boys from community of Tambopamba; August 2006

Saraguro adults were also quick to note that financial improvements in children's lives were not without emotional or personal costs.

Juana: *Mucho mucho peor va. ¿Cómo va a ser para los niños? Debe ser bastante duro y es por eso que . . . que los chicos ahora doce trece años beben. Beben,*

¿Por qué? Porque no hay control de los padres... . . . . Eso es lo que dicen, y otra que tienen dinero en mano. [It is getting a lot worse. How is it going to be for the children? It's going be pretty tough and for that reason . . . the teenagers now drink (at) twelve, thirteen years of age. They drink. Why? Because there is no control from the parents. . . . That's what they say, and other (people say) that (it's because) they have money in their hands.]
               —Juana, mother of two young boys, who lives adjacent to town; August 2006

As these quotations demonstrate, there is a widespread sense that the cash brought into the local economy through emigration has entailed a tradeoff in terms of family separation and its effect on children. At a deeper level, for many families, transmigration has meant shifting conceptions of parenthood, childhood, and family obligation. When parents leave to seek employment abroad, family-based agricultural work diminishes in importance, and both children and parents are released from their traditional reciprocal, labor-based relationship. Parents send cash home to children; children, in turn, are expected to study in preparation for nonagricultural professional positions. This shift in parental roles and relationships is the crux of the loss and concern voiced in Rosa's quote above. From her vantage point as a middle-aged woman, many of the children surrounding her seemed "out of control." They no longer spent time in the fields working with parents or grandparents; they had pocket change and hours of free time, both of which were unimaginable in her youth. And most troublesome for Rosa and for many parents of her generation, children and teens seem brazen, free, and often disrespectful of their elders, all of which have implications for Quichua language shift.

QUICHUA FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION

These changing conceptions of childhood and parenthood and corresponding shifts in values and behaviors significantly affect Indigenous language

maintenance and revitalization in Saraguro and elsewhere. As Fishman (1990) has argued, a critical stage of all efforts to reverse language shift (RLS) is the (re)establishment of intergenerational transmission, wherein the language serves as the routine language of informal, spoken interaction between and within familial generations. Even under optimal conditions, reinstatement of intergenerational transmission is an ambitious and only rarely achieved goal (Romaine, 2007), and despite decades of efforts, there is little evidence of movement in this direction within Saraguro. Most adults of child-bearing age have limited-to-minimal Quichua language competency. And many families are no longer in regular, day-to-day, face-to-face contact to sustain contact across generations.

Given that so many children now reside with their grandparents (who are much more likely to be fluent in Quichua than the parental generation), one optimistic scenario would be that this domestic arrangement might facilitate acquisition and use of Quichua by children, a possibility raised by national education officials and community activists. However, parents and teachers within Saraguro routinely note that interaction between grandparents and children in Quichua is rare.

This is at least in part because children in many transmigrant homes far outnumber the adults; it is not unheard of for eight to ten children to live under one roof (cf. Bacacela, 2003; Belote & Belote, 2005). Many grandparents or older aunts and uncles—being at less than full physical strength—seem to have limited control over their charges and at times are overwhelmed by the sheer number of children and the responsibility of care. Sorting out caretaker responsibility is complicated by the fact that children often move back and forth between two or more homes (e.g., between maternal and paternal grandparents). As noted above, in the past *respeto* (respect) for elders was paramount. By 2006, many Saraguros noted that this had declined sharply. In terms of language practices, this means that rather than grandparents socializing children into ways of speaking Quichua, grandchildren are socializing their elders to use Spanish.

At a more basic level, if children are no longer working in the fields or tending to tasks at home—they have few opportunities to engage regularly or meaningfully with their elders in *any* language. Equally significant, if parents have left their communities to earn wages outside of the country, it is hardly realistic to expect children to value traditional agricultural, cultural, or linguistic practices (Foxen, 2007). Quichua is still strongly associated with agricultural and "traditional" Indigenous practices. While most Saraguros value their ethnic identity and exhort the importance of maintaining traditional cultural practices, they themselves have made different choices. Together these factors mean a greater reliance on schools and formal education for transmitting Quichua as a second language.

EDUCATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY, QUICHUA AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, AND ENGLISH

Appropriate national educational language policies to support Indigenous language education and maintenance in Ecuador have been in place for roughly two decades (Constitución Política de la República del Ecuador, 1998; 2008). The 1988 Constitution explicitly recognized the multilingual and multicultural nature of the country and provided the legal opening for expanded Indigenous rights. Ecuador's Indigenous groups, or *nacionalidades*, were granted specific rights, including the right to social and economic development without loss of their identity, culture, or territory and the right to culturally appropriate education. To this end, Article 84 of the 1988 Constitution established that support, development, and reinforcement of Indigenous people's communities would be recognized and guaranteed; further, Indigenous traditional ways of life and social organization, including the exercise of authority and law, would be preserved and developed. Article 346 (1988 version) also guaranteed bilingual intercultural education based on use of each nationality's native language as the principle means of education. The most recent October 2008 constitution reinforces rights to bilingual intercultural education and emphasizes the

need to spread bilingualism and interculturality to non-Indigenous schools. Regarding the use of Indigenous languages, the 2008 constitution (Article 2) recognizes Quechua and Shuar as official languages of intercultural relations (Constitución Política de la República del Ecuador, 2008). In Saraguro, this policy support for Quichua has meant that as the language moved further away from everyday communication within and across generations, it has become more institutionalized in formal school systems. Indeed, when Quichua was raised as a topic during interviews and conversations during fieldwork, it was nearly always discussed in the context of formal education.

Quichua language revitalization in Saraguro—and in many other places—has always relied heavily on school programs (Hornberger & King, 1996, 2000; see also Hornberger, 2008). The increased reliance on school-based efforts to instruct Quichua is in step not only with declining adult proficiency levels, but also with the greater emphasis on teacher education and certification in the region. For instance, all Indigenous schools in the region are part of the national system of intercultural bilingual schools. To be employed as a teacher within the system, one must be certified as "bilingual," which means passing a written and oral exam in Quichua. With few exceptions, Quichua competency and usage for both children and adults has been relegated to a school subject and institutional domain.

Even with this limited role, however, Quichua faces competition from another language, English, which is invariably linked by Saraguros with external emigration. For Saraguros, the prominence of migration reinforces the perceived need not only for Spanish but also increasingly for English. During informal conversations with Saraguros, English was raised as a topic of conversation much more frequently (and with more passion and urgency) than was Quichua. Overall, Quichua was described as a school subject, and as something that was needed for local employment as a teacher; English, in turn, was framed as the language one would need and use for communication, for work abroad, and for "real" purposes such as those related to technology (Moran-Taylor, 2008b). In Ecuador, as elsewhere in Latin America,

the learning of English has come to symbolize realized dreams of migration, job and educational opportunities, and "entering the global market with its 'imagined' great advantages" (Niño-Murcia, 2003: 130; see also Haboud, 2001). For most, Quichua and other Indigenous languages play only a minor role in this envisioned life abroad.

CONCLUSION

This analysis of transmigration and Quichua language offers two lessons. First, the data from the Saraguro case demonstrates how Quichua language learning and potential revitalization is intimately linked with changing conceptions of childhood and parenthood among Saraguros, a point that has not been much developed in the literature on language shift (King, et al., 2008). Most Saraguros still view Indigenous Saraguro identity favorably and explicitly frame the Quichua language as a critical component of their Indigenous ethnic identity. Nevertheless, long-term, international migration has resulted in shifts in how childhood and parenthood are constructed and enacted, most notably in how children spend their time, how they relate to their elders, and how they envision their future, all of which critically affect language choices and language usage patterns.

Second, this article has shown how even progressive language policy to support an Indigenous language such as Quichua can be simply overwhelmed by large-scale global forces. The data here remind us of the importance of conceptualizing migration as a phenomenon that primarily affects not only the host country, but also the communities that send the migrants in profound ways. Indeed, one could reasonably argue that the impact of migration on Ecuadorian communities has been far greater than any economic, social, or cultural effect on the United States or on Spain. Ecuador's Indigenous organizations maintain that the current laws and policies—which they had a major hand in shaping—are well crafted and work to promote respect for their linguistic and cultural rights.

Lastly, this article has underlined the challenges to advances in Indigenous language planning. The

data here illustrate how global developments are much more powerful forces than whatever governmental language policy is put into place. Whether or not this official policy meets its explicitly stated goals and whether Quichua and other Indigenous languages maintain a foothold in the republic depends to great measure *not* on the creation of future additional national language policies, but rather on how the local human ecology and micro-constructed language policy and supporting language practices change in relation to migration and other global phenomena.

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No Soy Niño: Explaining Low Educational Achievement among Mexican-Origin Youth

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Latino youth have had the lowest academic achievement levels by ethnic/racial group in the United States since at least the 1960s (Anderson & Johnson 1971, Heller 1966). Because higher levels of formal schooling are associated with higher salaries, more prestigious jobs, better health care, and more active participation in civic life, the lack of educational achievement among Hispanics causes concern among social scientists and policy makers who worry that low graduation rates will consign the growing Hispanic population within the United States to perpetual poverty as a kind of permanent underclass (Mehan, et al., 1994). Despite such concerns, there has been little success in improving national educational attainment for Latinos (Secada et al., 1998, Perreira, et al., 2006, Schick & Schick, 1991).

The explanations for low achievement among Hispanics/Latinos have become much more sophisticated than the openly racist explanations of the

1950s and the more covertly racist explanations offered by culture of poverty theorists in the 1960s and 1970s. Whereas in 1966 Gordon and Wilkerson could suggest that Mexicans do not value education because they are unable to plan for the future, recent years have seen the publication of nuanced arguments of the complex interplay of culture and structure, positioning, marginality, subtractive pedagogies, and institutionalized discrimination (Ainslie, 2002, Delgado-Gaitan, 2001; Orellana, et al., 2002, Valenzuela, 1999). Much of the work on Hispanic dropout and low educational achievement, including my own (White, 2009), has detailed a large number of economic, psychological, familial, social structural, and political factors that intertwine to affect school attendance and performance. Teenaged Latinos are embedded in a plurality of complex and politicized systems.

This paper will argue that in addition to the many structural impediments to obtaining a formal education in the United States, Latino adolescents are caught between the ways in which life phases are constructed across multiple cultures in the United States. Very little attention has been given to how diverse groups of Latinos conceptualize the life course and how developmental ethnotheories (see Harkness & Super, 1983 for discussion of parental ethnotheories) may affect the choices youth and their parents make about schooling. When is one considered to be an adult? Does one's family and local society recognize and allow for the transitional phase of adolescence? How does one negotiate a developmental pathway through multiple cultures' definitions of adulthood and childhood? And further, what role should scholars and activists play in the theoretical construction of each of these life phases and the assignation of an individual to one or the other?

School-age youth who do not attend school are still often pathologized in the professional literature that professes to understand them (e.g. Honawar, 2004). By this I mean it is suggested that it is the students' own deficiencies of character that cause them to drop out or fail at school. Or they are ignored completely, as when only those attending school are surveyed about the reasons youth drop out (Steinberg, 1994). At times non-attendees are summarized and dismissed from further analysis with statements such as, "they have to work." But in mainstream American culture, people who "have to work" are, almost by definition, adults. As adults, people who work are assumed to be able to take care of themselves. They are not expected to be in need of special services and outreach simply by the designation of their life stage. An agreement that youth aged twelve to seventeen are adults is one that suits the purposes of budget-strapped school districts, employers who hire young Mexicans (often "under the table" for substandard wages), *and* the young people themselves, who would prefer to see themselves as independent and invulnerable or as responsible contributors to their families and society. However, it is a conclusion we must question in a society that simultaneously argues for the reduced culpability and responsibility

of "children" who are seventeen to 25-years old . . . *if* they are upper-middle-class, and are ethnically white (Davis, 2009; Seate, 2009; Ungar, 2007).[1]

In my fieldwork I sought to understand what prevented new immigrant youth from attending school in a city in the southeastern United States. I found the answers to be complex; each person had his or her own set of intricately woven structural, cultural, and psychological factors. In this paper I want to draw attention to the practices used by these youth to construct and perform their own identities, and to the discursive practices used by others to create a developmental schema in which 13 to 17 year olds are constructed as adults.

I found that the identity of "adult" played a significant role in the decision not to attend school for many of the participants in my research. They associated working and putting others' needs first with being adults, and going to school with being children. Going to work gave them a sense of value that school was unable to provide; for many of them, the ability to earn wages that they could contribute to their families was such a strong incentive and such a notable source of pride that it was difficult for them to imagine trading it for what they perceived as the small rewards of schooling. However, their participation in the world of work and their assumption of adult status made them more vulnerable to numerous types of abuse and exploitation.

THE STUDY

This paper grew out of data I collected in 2001-2002 as part of an ethnographic study in the Central Southern U.S. which examined the lives of teenagers of Mexican origin. The research consisted of participant-observation in many different contexts, teaching ESL classes, interviews with over 120 adults, focus groups with middle and high school students,

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1 As I was finishing my fieldwork, three white, male students broke into and stole books worth nearly a million dollars from the library of the private university they attended. There were many newspaper articles and letters to the editor about the incident, the large majority expressing the opinion that "boys will be boys" and that the perpetrators of this felony should not be punished at all.

and informal interviews with about thirty teens in the community, some of whom did attend school. I was able to develop deeper relationships with fourteen teens who did not attend school, and it is on those fourteen that the study is focused. The study was designed to understand why these youth were not attending school, what they were doing instead, and what, if anything, might make formal schooling a desirable or possible option for them.

PROVIDING FOR THE FAMILY

Nearly all of the participants had strong identities in their families, and most of the young men subscribed to a cultural ideology of *machismo* which they defined as a man's duty to provide for, protect, and defend his family. In the past, machismo has been constructed primarily as male privilege and power (Browner, 1986; Escandon, 1987; Lewis 1959; Pesquera, 1993). As such, it has been given as an explanation for why Mexican and Mexican-origin girls were prevented from attending school and why their brothers received more support for academic endeavors (Heller, 1966; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1996; Segura, 1993). However, the males and females I spoke to seemed to have adopted a definition of machismo more in keeping with Guttman's (2006) findings in Mexico City where the focus has shifted away from male "rights" and toward male "responsibilities." It has therefore lost some of its power to discriminate based on gender. For example, all but one of the teen participants of both genders indicated when interviewed that it was "equally important" for girls and boys to receive an education.

This change in the definition or emphasis of *machismo* is yet another indicator of the importance of the progression through the life course to these young people. Rather than highlighting the difference between men and women, these teens are using the concept to focus on the difference between men and boys. Each of them was eager to establish their identification with the former by demonstrating that they were no longer *niños* (boys). In many cases that included leaving the world of school (associated with children and childhood) in order to enter the world

of work (associated not only with adults but with the benefits of being able to contribute funds to the family—another marker of adulthood).

Seventeen-year old Ricardo told me that if he had remained in Mexico, he would have tried to enroll in university. When asked how he felt about having to abandon those plans, he explained that he was doing what was best for the family. Ricardo was working as a custodian in one of the local factories. He had made friends there with some men in their twenties and thirties, and they had a lot of fun working together, listening to music and joking around. His pay was almost eight dollars an hour (in 2001), which seemed a fortune to him.

He turned over all of his pay to his parents, but looked forward to being able to buy music CDs, and even a car when the family was more economically secure. One afternoon he candidly told me that one of the reasons he was glad he was no longer in school was that his parents treated him like an adult. He no longer had a curfew, and was allowed to go out on the street after dark. He had even gone dancing a couple of times with his friends from work. When his family first arrived in the United States, all of the teenage children shared the household chores, but since he and his fifteen-year old brother began working for wages, they no longer had to do any cooking or cleaning. When the two brothers went to work, it had the effect of creating a traditional division of labor in their household; their single sister did nearly all of the housework, laundry and cooking while the men of the family and their mother worked outside the home for wages. Nevertheless, all members of the family professed to believe that men and women were equal and should have equal opportunities to work and to earn an education, even if this did not translate into practice. Additional evidence that the transition to full gender equality had not been made can be seen in younger brother Eduardo's willingness to think of his older sister as a "girl."

As an adult, Ricardo was consulted about the family's future, and he agreed that it would be best for him to give up school and go to work. His identity within the family, as eldest brother and trusted son, requires him to make—and repays him for making

—personal sacrifice for the good of the whole. His current reward is being treated with respect and appreciation by the other members of the family. This adult-like status made up, in his eyes, for having to let go of his dreams of university.

Ricardo's thirteen-year-old brother, Eduardo, was similarly influenced. Eduardo stopped attending school before the family left Mexico, when he was eleven years old, and he never enrolled in school in the United States. Shortly after the family arrived in the U.S., he worked first on a farm and then was hired to work on the production line at a factory, work which he professed to love. The English lessons I gave the family in their home provide a telling example of Eduardo's identity as an adult: whenever we were reviewing the terms for girl/boy, man/woman, Eduardo refused to apply the term "boy" to himself. Although he willingly applied the word "girl" to his fourteen-year old sister, he adamantly clung to the label "man" for himself and his brother.

Another interviewee, Manuel, came to the U.S. with his uncle and a group of four of his friends when he was fourteen. Their shared goal was to earn money to send back home, since employment was difficult to find in the Southern Mexico region near the Guatemalan border where he was born. His uncle helped them find their first agricultural jobs in Texas, Tennessee, and Kentucky. After they had been in the South for a couple of months, his uncle left town one day and Manuel had not seen him again. About a year after his uncle's disappearance, the rest of his group of friends who had emigrated together all left to return home. He has lived with varying groups of older men in a number of apartments over the last four years, holding many different kinds of jobs, such as a laborer on vegetable and tobacco farms and on the line at three different factories. He currently works seventy hours a week at two low-paying jobs: as a prep-cook in an Italian restaurant, and as a housekeeper at a hotel.

Since migrating, Manuel had been sending money home for his mother to save for three years, with the thought that they thought that they might be able to open a family business in Mexico. Tragically, the early death of his sixteen-year-old sister altered those plans. The family decided together to put all of their savings toward her funeral.

At the time of the study, Manuel did not see what good schooling would do for him, beyond increasing his English fluency. When he was younger, school was so far removed from his perceived possibilities that he never even thought of attending. Manuel was very much thinking of himself as an adult already. When I asked him to describe all he knew about the school system in the United States, he said he had sometimes seen school buses full of children, an indication of the great chasm he perceived between himself and the institution of public schooling. He was on his way to one of his two jobs, while cute little children were on their way to school. When I asked him if he might have gone to school had someone informed him of the possibilities, especially that he could learn English there for free, he said, "Yes! Of course [I would have gone had I known]. Well, maybe. If someone else could pay the rent, I would have." Even in his retrospective fantasies, Manuel realized that the practical realities of paying the rent would have precluded his attendance at school.

In each of the cases so far, a male youth and his family were in agreement that childhood, as a life phase, was over for that individual. These youth had moved into the beginning of their adult lives with the support of their family members by entering the labor force, contributing wages to the support and maintenance of the family, and exercising some of the rights or privileges granted to adults. The construction of human development from childhood to adult—with no or little adolescence—as seen in the cases of Ricardo, Eduardo, and Manuel is typical of working class families in Mexico and among working-class Mexican immigrants to the United States (Bulcroft, et al., 1996). These young men were not conflicted in any way about their choices; they and their parents were in complete agreement that what mattered were a son's obedience, respect, and love for his family. All of them also believed that education is extremely valuable. In each case, these young men believed it was their duty to make sacrifices so that their own sons and daughters or brothers and sisters would have opportunities to pursue advanced

educational pathways. These families were making plans for multiple generations of their families as they unfolded. They were operating from a model in which it was taken for granted that the family would work together all their lives, that children would continue to owe obedience and respect to their parents well into their own adulthood, and that the family was and should be the arbiter of its own fate. This is a model that is clearly in conflict with the models held by school administrators, truant officers, and even some other immigrant families.

Fifteen-year-old Berto, for example, immigrated with his parents and a large extended family and was immediately enrolled in elementary school. By the time I met him, he had been attending school in the United States for ten years. His parents were concerned about the kind of man their son would become, and when. Although both parents valued the skills schooling might bring, his mother worried those skills might come at the expense of Berto's *Mexicanidad* (Mexican-ness) and his Christianity. Berto's father preferred he quit school and get started at a job so that he could begin to contribute to the family's financial well being, and so that he would begin to learn the lessons that would make him successful as a man.

His father told me, "What Berto needs to learn is how to take care of a family. He needs to learn how to go to work even when he doesn't want to, how to treat a boss well even when he hates him. He must learn to budget his money, to save. These are things that are important for a man." I saw this father push his son to "be a man" on several occasions, which created tension between the parents. Berto's father ordered him to drive the family car to pick up the younger children from school, even though Berto was only fifteen and not permitted to drive under state law. "In Mexico he would have been driving everywhere by now. You can't keep them children forever," he said to his wife when she protested.

The conflict between going to school and being a man is hinted at here, but Berto was still going to school at the time of the study. He later dropped out. His dropping out was preceded by weeks of stomach aches in the morning before school. He

said these had nothing to do with his classwork or his peers. After some probing, he revealed that his main preoccupation was his inability to compete with the other young people at his predominantly white, upper-middle-class high school. His family could not consume conspiciously; they could not afford to keep him in the brand name jeans, sneakers and T-shirts his peers were updating regularly. Berto felt he could not be a "good teenager." Another participant who started out well in school but ended up leaving is Marta.

Marta was thirteen, almost fourteen, when I met her. Marta presents another case where an identity within the world of school had been established, but was then overcome by a stronger identity within her family which pushed her toward adulthood. Marta came to the United States two years before I met her. Her father had been promised a job by his brother, who had settled in the area with his family two years earlier. In Mexico, Marta had been living with her father and stepmother, who had been having a number of marital and financial problems. Marta herself did not get along with her stepmother, and so they decided to send her north with her father. Upon their arrival in the United States, her father's job fell through. He turned to doing day labor, and occasionally traveling out of state to work on various construction and agricultural projects. In the meantime, Marta was left behind to live with her uncle and to attend school.

Marta, in her own words, was a "so-so" student, but she had always enjoyed school. She was very personable, and had many friends at school of many types. She had developed plans of going to college to become a teacher herself. When I asked why she thought education was so important, she said, "To be someone. To get a good job, not in the fields or cleaning something. Like a lawyer or a teacher or a secretary, maybe. To wear nice clothes and go to an office . . ." She said that she hates working outside, but her worst fear was that she would end up cleaning hotels for a living.

And indeed, that is what her father arranged for her to do. He did not want her to return to school after the summer, when she turned fourteen. He felt

that fourteen was old enough to be working, and he wanted Marta to begin to contribute to the family income. After some initial resistance and attempts to have others intercede for her, Marta went to work cleaning hotel rooms full-time after her fourteenth birthday. After several months she seemed not only resolved but content and pleased at the money she was making and the way she was now treated by her father and the rest of her family. She reveled in the freedoms she was granted along with the responsibilities.

Her need to appear "adult-like" at work convinced her father to allow her to wear cosmetics and "revealing" clothing that he otherwise would not have permitted. Living at her uncle's house with her father often away meant that Marta was frequently left alone in the apartment. She also had the excuse of walking to and from work at varying hours of the day and night. These circumstances together gave Marta many opportunities to meet with boys, of which she took full advantage. Marta's life changed a great deal during my fieldwork. At thirteen she had no interest in "boys"; by the end of her fourteenth year, she was adeptly sneaking several older men in and out of her uncle's apartment and was no longer interested in being interviewed about her thoughts and feelings.

TO WORK IS TO BE OF VALUE

This handful of examples is representative, not only of the other youth I got to know well, but also of the larger community of Mexican-origin teens and adults in the city where I did my research. The most common refrain I heard from migrants of all ages was, "We came here to work." The strong work ethic of Mexican migrants was mentioned to me over and over again by people in the social services, schools, and clinics, as well as employers and the migrants themselves. Most of my adult ESL students worked at least two jobs, and a few had three. Being someone who works was almost equivalent to being a person with value. For example, when I asked a student of mine if his roommates were nice people, he said, "Oh yes, they all work." Women who praised their

husbands sometimes did so simply by saying, "He is a good husband. He always works."

During the focus group discussions I had with mostly Mexican ESL students in middle and high school, the majority of them said they would be leaving school when they completed middle school, rather than going on to high school or would "sign themselves out" when they turned sixteen. When I asked them why, the main reason they gave was their desire to go to work. When I continued to probe, some said, "To help my family." Others explained, "To get respect." "To be someone." These answers indicate that working, for many of these youth, is not so much about earning money as it is about becoming a person of value. The role of worker is a role to which many young people aspire, and they often do not see values transferring from school to work. School is not preparing them for the jobs they believe they are going to have, and that is particularly true if they leave school before they earn a diploma.

Becoming a person of value, therefore, provides one very strong motivation to young people to claim adult status and reject the label of "child" or even "teenager" or "adolescent." Being an adult, as we have seen in the above vignettes, is a kind of passport, not only to work, but to the freedoms, respect, dignity and appreciation that come with being an economic contributor to the family.

The decisions we make, as researchers and writers, about how to refer to the people we study have ramifications in the real world. My first inclination was to respond to the maturity of the young people with whom I worked by not referring to them as children or teenagers. Many of them practiced adult identities; in some cases, they truly shouldered adult responsibilities and did not have the option of claiming "childhood" as a reason to not fulfill those responsibilities. Why not refer to them as young adults, I thought to myself? More recently I wondered why it is that governmental and corporate agencies are allowing individuals in their teens to claim this kind of independence. Moreover, by identifying teens—some as young as thirteen—as adults in my work, was I being complicit in the exploitation of extremely vulnerable populations? What responsibility do we

have, as scholars and activists, to ensure that our own discursive practices do no harm to the young people with whom we do research?

I have highlighted here the way that the transition to adulthood is constructed in some Mexican immigrant families. This includes an emphasis on obedience, respect, and duty to the family, the lack of a transitional adolescent phase for most, and the association of work with value. I have also shown that the families in this study were willing to confer adult status on those who met the requirements of their ethnotheory of development regardless of the child's chronological age. But this construction of the life course is not widely shared or even understood by the majority of politicians, teachers, principals, employers, or others in "mainstream" American culture. American school systems use a construction of childhood/adolescence/adulthood that sees children as innocent, vulnerable and in need of the state's protection. The world of education and human development, from which school systems take their cues, has increasingly extended childhood such that it has now added a life phase called "emerging adulthood" to encompass the period of attendance at college in the early twenties when youth are not expected to be fully responsible or fully adult (Arnett, 2006; Henig, 2010).

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) restricts the kind of work that juveniles (defined as those under the age of 18 by federal law) can do. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, "Child labor provisions under FLSA are designed to protect the educational opportunities of youth and prohibit their employment in jobs that are detrimental to their health and safety. FLSA restricts the hours that youth under 16 years of age can work and lists hazardous occupations too dangerous for young workers to perform" (http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/youthlabor/index. htm). Most states further regulate juvenile labor. These laws are a clear recognition that in our culture, children are vulnerable and in need of the protective gaze of their elders. We must ask ourselves therefore, why have so many diverse groups decided that it is acceptable for Mexican-origin children to engage in full time work, even though that means they will be

out of school, and in many cases, will be engaged in labor that will have negative effects on their long-term health?

WHAT KIND OF WORK?

Part of the answer must lie in an examination of the labor in which these youth and their parents are engaged (see also White, 2009). There are no sectors of the American economy that do not contain a significant number of Mexican immigrants, but nearly all of those immigrants fill the bottom half of the pay scales (Borjas, 1995; Zuñiga, 2001). While employers are almost unanimous in their praise of Mexican-origin workers and their preference for hiring them, their motivations for doing so are not always straightforward. Many have told reporters and researchers that they prefer to hire Mexicans because of their work ethic, honesty, and loyalty. But it also seems that some are hiring immigrants because they are more easily exploitable; that is particularly true for those who hire undocumented workers, and triply true of those who hire undocumented minors.

Reports of the exploitation and mistreatment of workers, particularly those without documentation, routinely appear in regional newspapers (Associated Press, 1994; Benson, 2008; Carter, 2002; Honeycutt, 1998; Honeycutt, 2000; Tagami, 2001). These stories tell of unsafe working conditions, safety gear not provided, workers paid less than half the minimum wage, and the provision of mandatory housing that would not be judged fit for animals to live in. The leader of one Hispanic assistance program told me that, while many organizations are focused on helping migrants find jobs, the biggest problem is helping people who are already employed protect themselves from exploitation. He recounted several stories in which undocumented Mexicans were hired for an agreed-upon wage, worked the contract period, and then were not paid. Unscrupulous employers know that those without documentation have no legal recourse; all they can do is spread the word and warn others not to work for that employer. Those who are newly arrived in the country or newly arrived at a point in the life course where they are able to earn

wages for the family may be especially vulnerable to the unprincipled. Empirical data could be collected in the future to explore the degrees to which inexperience, willingness to obey those who are older, propensity for risk taking and other potentially development-related behaviors contribute to higher rates of injury in children and teens.

The head nurse at the community health clinic spoke to me about teens she had treated who had lost fingers while working on local factory lines, whose lungs were damaged from breathing chemicals that should have been filtered with safety masks, and many other health problems that resulted from the work in which Mexican-origin youth were engaged. Since most of these young people were employed unlawfully, they felt unable to seek legal redress for damages done to them on the job. Most felt too shy or troubled even to ask their employers to pay for a visit to a doctor or emergency room for work related injuries.

The unavoidable conclusion is that it makes good economic sense for local industries to take advantage of the large, inexpensive labor pool the teens of Mexican-origin create. It is not only the employers who benefit, however.

CONSTRUCTED FOR WHOM?

Since Ariès (1962) landmark book, it has become *de riguer* to say that childhood is constructed, and constructed variously. In the United States, there are no clear, mutually agreed upon definitions for various life phases. While multiple legal systems (federal, state, and local) make distinctions between minors and those who have achieved the age of majority for purposes of regulating some behaviors (such as the purchase of tobacco and alcohol products), and the determination of guilt and sentencing, childhood, adulthood and adolescence are being constructed in multiple ways by different groups.

In addition to employers, it is also much more convenient for the government if youth of Mexican origin are treated discursively as adults. This is so because, unlike undocumented children, whose deportation or jailing is complex and involves juvenile

detention centers, adults require no special treatment from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. If these youth are categorized as adults, they can be jailed and deported rather than provided with free lunches, health care and educations. Moreover, adults are not required by federal law to be immunized or educated. For example, over the course of my research I watched as the funding for the outreach arm of the federally funded Migrant Education Project in my research area shriveled to nothing. Where there were once two full-time staff persons searching out Mexican adolescents not attending school to inform them of their rights and offer them assistance, now there are none.

It is also easier to use inflammatory rhetoric against Hispanic migrants. For example, a state legislator said that Mexicans "carried disease into" the state and referred to Mexican children as "disease-ridden pests," as part of his argument that immigrant children should not be educated at the state's expense. Although this is not the same as calling children adults, it is part of shifting the weight toward the "risk" side of the compassion/threat balance, between which our public discourse on immigration always hangs.

Moreover, those working in the schools and those educational researchers concerned about why they are not attracting or retaining Hispanic/Latino youth may unwittingly be contributing to the problem by adhering too rigidly to a construction of childhood that does not allow for the maturity, responsibility and the familial duties of their Mexican-origin students. By expecting them to behave like children, those associated with schools may end up pushing youth into the very arena of adulthood they were hoping to help them forestall.

I believe it is extremely important that we avoid language that pathologizes young people for making the choices they make regarding education, and that we must simultaneously avoid language that portrays them as pinballs batted around by structures and processes over which they have no control. However, the easy answer—allowing youth the agency to identify themselves as adults—proves problematic also. I have argued here that we cannot uncritically

adopt the habit of referring to Mexican immigrant youth as adults even if they themselves would prefer it, and even if they are indeed taking on—and handling well—the responsibilities of adulthood. We cannot because as scholars and as activists who are concerned about the long term well-being of these young people, the political, economic, social and discursive stakes are too high. Each needs to be better understood, and it is my hope that others will join in the effort of deciphering them.

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Return Migration and Narratives of Innocent Irish Childhoods

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is based on ongoing research which explores the experiences of children who move to Ireland with their Irish return migrant parent(s).[1] Those in this group have been born and spent part of their childhoods in Britain, the US and elsewhere, and have moved "home" to a country with which they have strong, yet often ambiguous, ties. The paper ex-

plores the interrelation of notions of childhood, identity and place in the narratives of both the parents and the children. I argue that the notion of innocent Irish childhoods permeates their narratives of return migration. In the paper, I reflect on the ways in which both children and parents relate to this notion and on the ways in which it shapes and is shaped by return migration processes.

Previous research reveals that the decision to return among recent Irish return migrants is often explained in terms of a desire to bring up children in Ireland and a belief that Ireland is a good place in which to do so (Ní Laoire, 2008). Their narratives draw on powerful nostalgic discourses of childhood idylls and on the myth of return, in which migrants draw upon selective and idealized memories of their own Irish childhoods in order to represent Ireland as a better environment in which their children can grow up than was available in the destination society.

Their representations of Ireland reproduce a broader "quality of life" narrative in which the return migrants tend to idealize the non-material aspects of life and to deny any economic motivations for either the original emigration or return, despite a large body of research which attests to both the harsh economic conditions which contributed to high emigration in the 1980s (eg, Mac Laughlin, 1994) and the economic boom which facilitated large-scale return in the 1990s/2000s (eg, Jones, 2003).

METHODOLOGY

The research has involved working with families who have moved to Ireland, where at least one parent is Irish, and there is at least one child who took part in that move to Ireland. My methodology involves repeat visits to each family, using participative research techniques with the children and teenagers and interviews with parents. Techniques are adapted to the children's ages, with very young children doing drawing or artwork, and older children and teenagers taking part in a self-directed photography activity. The latter activity involves giving each child a disposable camera with which to document their lives, and using the photographs they take in their own time as a springboard for discussion. So far, I have worked with thirteen families, including twenty-six children or teenagers, all in the Cork-Kerry region in southwest Ireland, including rural and suburban locations, and also including a wide spectrum of social-class positions.

CHILDHOOD, MIGRATION AND PLACE

My research has found that one of the most powerful narratives of return among return migrants is the notion of returning to a 'safe haven', away from the ills of modern urban lifestyles which are experienced elsewhere, involving a certain conflation of the rural with Ireland as a whole. The rural (and Western Ireland) have long held a central place in the Irish national imaginary, having been idealized as epitomizing qualities of authenticity, safety, nurturing, as well as child-like innocence, qualities which have

been transferred to discourses of the nation itself (Nash, 1993). This idealization of the rural and the West has become a central part of the way in which Irishness itself has been understood and constructed, reflected for example in 20th century autobiography (Foster, 2001) and in the commodified Ireland of tourist imagery (O'Connor, 1993; Nash, 1993). It has also been closely bound up with discourses of Irish migration through its role in reproducing romantic and nostalgic notions of migration as exile from an idealized homeland (Miller, 1985). Historic discourses of emigration construct destination societies as places of moral threat to innocent young Irish migrants (Akenson, 1996; Ryan, 2002), while pervasive ideological dualisms associate Ireland with tradition, community and authenticity, in opposition to the modernity and individualism of more urban industrialized societies such as Britain and the U.S. (Duffy, 1995).

The families in this research do emphasize what they see as a less hectic lifestyle in Ireland. For example, Cait[2] here is reflecting the traditional ideological dualism which opposes Ireland to the destination society. She associates Ireland with community values and simple lifestyles while England is constructed in terms of individualism and consumerism. Now a teenager, she talks here about a time when she and her family came on holiday to Ireland before moving there:

> Coming to [this town] on a summer's day and I'd go outside and I used to make friends. You can't do that in England – have your kids running around outside. Lives are a lot more private in England – people don't tell you things because they don't know each other and why bother. Here people have known each other for ever. In England, people are coming and going so much, the aim is to have good job, house, car. Here people want to be happy. (Cait, age fifteen)

This representation of Ireland helps her and her family to justify their migration decision and is a central motif in their narratives of return migration.

I argue that this narrative is permeated by a particular construction of Irish childhood. Concepts of

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2 All first names and surnames have been changed to protect participant anonymity.

childhood as a time of innocence, vulnerability and dependence dominate in Western society (Jenks, 1996), contributing to essentialized notions of ideal innocent childhoods and of the child as in need of protection. As geographers such as Pain (2004) and Valentine (1997) have pointed out, drawing on research in the British context, Western hegemonic ideals of childhood inform assumptions of risk which are articulated through highly spatialized discourses of fear and risk (i.e., ideas of safe and unsafe places). Valentine (1997) and Jones (1997) have explored the ways in which dominant concepts of childhood, innocence and risk intersect with particular dominant notions of rurality, contributing to the production of what Jones (1997) calls "rural childhood idylls"—the powerful idea that the country childhood is characterized by innocence, wildness, play, closeness to nature, safety and freedom. (They critique this notion by pointing to the realities of the dangers of the countryside). Helleiner (1998) highlights the influence of this discourse in Irish society in the 20th century, pointing to a widespread acceptance, reflected in the Irish Constitution's emphasis on the centrality of "the family", that a protected childhood was a necessary foundation for adult Irish citizenship. Irish nationalist discourse of the early 20th century represented childhood as an idealized zone of innocence, connected closely to the celebration of the peasant and nostalgia for older forms of culture (Kiberd, 1995; Ferriter, 2002). This idealization of innocent Irish childhoods connects with powerful discourses of Irishness, migration, and place in the narratives of return migrants in my research, so that return is rationalized with reference to the availability in Ireland of safe and innocent childhoods for their children.

PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S NARRATIVES OF INNOCENT IRISH CHILDHOODS

In this paper, I explore this idea a little further with particular attention to its implications for children of return migrants. First, one of the most prominent narratives among parents is the idea that Ireland is a


FIGURE 1: 'My locality', by Emily, age eight

good place in which to bring up children because of the greater freedom, space, and safety which the children can apparently enjoy there. To what extent does this notion of freedom and safety for children cohere with the realities of their everyday experiences of return migration? Many of them have indeed moved from urbanized environments outside Ireland (such as large towns in the south of England or Boston or New York in the U.S.) to less urbanized or more rural environments or to middle-class suburban areas with plenty of green spaces. Many of the children in my research do play outdoors with neighboring children in these green areas where they are perceived to be safe while also being relatively free from adult supervision. Figure 1 shows one child's representation of her local green.

This notion of greater freedom for the children is very important and is mentioned by many of the participants, including those living in suburban and rural areas, such as this parent, for example:

> And the minute we arrived, all the children were at the door and then we didn't see the children that week. They only came in to be fed and watered and then they were off out again, which is lovely... we actually felt a sense of, that they were safe, and it was just a nice feeling really. (Gill, parent of Sally)

Safety and "niceness" are also related to notions of closeness to nature which is perceived to be more available in Ireland than elsewhere. Images of natural landscapes come up a lot in Sally's photos (Figure 2),
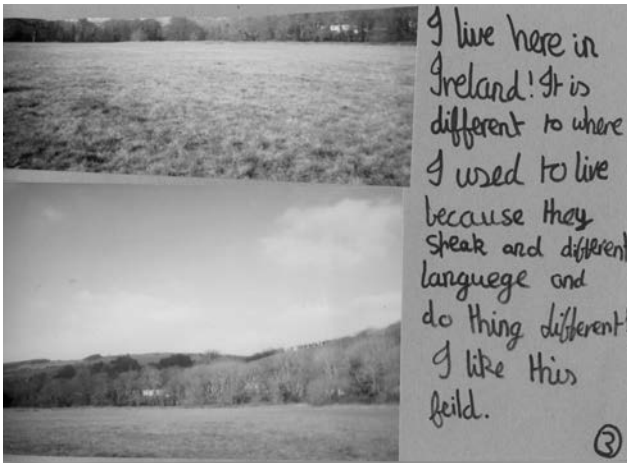
FIGURE 2: Sally, age nine

because she says, that is what she likes about Ireland. She took these photos on day trips with her family, or trips to the local park with her Dad, but her everyday environment is quite different as she lives in a suburban housing estate.

However, research with children and parents reveals narratives which also challenge these notions of safety and freedom. For example, some of the teenagers in the study claim they actually have less spatial freedom in Ireland than they had or would have had in their previous home.

> Oh, don't talk about freedom! Like it's not even my parents' fault, it's not that they say you can't go out, it's almost it's too much of a hassle to try and go out at night because it's just too far and walking up the hill in the dark, it wouldn't be safe... In [country of previous residence], at twelve, I was able to take the public transport and it was safe, yeah, and it's like really kind of a hit... Strange, I'd more freedom when I was twelve than I have now because of the public transport systems... it hit hard. . . . (Emma, age sixteen)"

She is talking about how difficult it is for her to get out on her own because of the lack of public transport in the suburb where she lives. Her concerns are directly related to Ireland's car-dependent environment and extremely poor provision of public transportation. So it could be argued that the issues of spatial confinement which generally affect young people living in rural areas are widespread in Ireland

as a result of its dispersed settlement patterns. The spatial confinement affects these young people who have become accustomed to having more independence, and freedom, in terms of their social interactions and personal development, possibly contributing to isolation.

Children who move to rural areas also raise the issue of lack of things to do. While they may have more space in which to play, there are not necessarily any neighbors to play with, and as they get older, there is a perceived lack of social facilities for young people. In one family, who lived in a small rural town, there was a clear contradiction here between the father's view and the children's. The father told me that there was more to do for the children than where they had lived in England. However, his daughter, Jane, told me:

> There's nothing really fun like. There's a park but that's back by the sports field. That's all we have around here. We don't really have any other things that are fun to do. (Jane, age twelve)

In general, most of the parents, and many of the children, feel that where they live now is safer for children than where they lived previously. As a result, children do have greater spatial freedom. However, parental and children's perceptions of risk do not always coincide, and what may seem to be a very safe and quiet rural area to parents might hold other fears for children. For example, the children in one family talked a lot about an old stone bridge which they like to walk to from their house. However, they added that they do not walk there on their own any more because of their fear of the neighbors' dogs. In addition, what parents perceive as being a nice, quiet and safe place can be perceived by older children and teenagers as dull and boring, as we saw from twelve-year-old Jane above.

Parental constructions of risk shift as children get older and parents become more anxious about their teenagers' growing independence and their potential encounters with alcohol and other perceived moral threats. Some parents find the high degree of spatial freedom which they desired for their children is

less appealing when it involves their teenagers. This concern seems to be associated with a discourse that comes up a number of times among parents, of a certain disapproval of what is seen as a lack of discipline towards children and youth in Ireland and an informality in relation to child/youth/family lifestyles and behaviors, as expressed by this parent:

I just think parents are more on top of their kids in the States; maybe I could be totally wrong there but I just feel that they kind of spend a bit more time with them, and they do more with them, yeah I do, I do. I think here there's an awful lot of they're left to fend for themselves. Maybe it's because they have the freedom, yeah that's well and good, but I think you have to kind of teach them manners and respect and not to be wandering around. (Barbara, parent)

So the space and freedom which is highly valued by parents for their young and pre-teen children is a source of anxiety for them when it comes to their own and others' teenagers. This worry is reflected in a greater emphasis on parental surveillance and supervision in relation to teenagers.

INNOCENT IRISH CHILDHOODS

These notions of freedom, safety, and space and of Ireland as a refuge from the competitiveness and pace of life associated with modernity together rely on a particular dominant notion of the child as an innocent being in need of protection. This perspective becomes spatialized in the families' narratives of return, whereby Ireland is constructed as a place where children can retain their innocence and can be children for longer than elsewhere. There is an idea that children are less sophisticated and more innocent in Ireland as well as less independent. A quote from parent Gill reflects this perspective:

We often talked about coming to live in Ireland and bringing the children up—when we'd visit the cousins in [Ireland] actually. She's got four girls and they're lovely and I used to say "oh it's so nice, the Irish", you know the way they are, the girls were lovely. I said it'd be lovely to bring your children up in Ireland... they're just so polite, well mannered, they're just lovely... very

warm, very open, very close family . . . . It's hard to describe it, it just seems more laidback lifestyle here . . . . It just had a nice pleasant feel about being in Ireland with children and when you meet children you know. (Gill, parent)

Interestingly, this notion does not come up just among parents but also among some of the children. For example, in this quote from Cait, she links freedom and safety with a particular view of childhood and spatializes this idea by arguing that this idealized innocent childhood is more possible in Ireland than in England.

I way prefer life over here, 'cos I've way more freedom, 'cos it's safer [...] I didn't have that much freedom at all [in England] and like my cousins [in England]... they're just completely different to how me and my friends are. I mean... there's still a sense of them that they're a child, whereas I think in a lot of children in England, that's kind of gone, because I think once you go to secondary school, bearing in mind they're a year younger, they're only eleven, twelve going into secondary school, they have to, they're suddenly grownup... You only have your childhood once, so you might as well live it being whoever you want to be and doing whatever you want to do, that's what we do... we're all having fun most of the time . . . . (Cait, age fifteen)

However, of course, the everyday lived realities of return migration can challenge these rose-tinted views of the innocent Irish childhood. The Conway family loved the fact that as soon as they moved to Ireland, the neighboring children were calling round for the children and they could spend all day outdoors with them. However, after a short time, some issues arose involving conflict among the children and it was alleged that the Conway children were being picked on for being 'English,' a common theme which emerged in the research. Accent and perceived nationality are markers of difference in peer networks and are often used to exclude return migrant children, sometimes featuring in instances of bullying.

A number of teenagers talked to me about having been bullied because of their accents or more generally for not being Irish. Interestingly, some of them associate this bullying and exclusion directly with the

notion of childhood innocence, claiming that Irish children are unsophisticated and as a result do not understand how to behave towards those whom they perceive as different. This representation is a way for them of making sense of the obvious contradiction between notions of innocent Irish childhoods and the lived realities of the aggressive and harmful behavior of these 'innocent Irish children'. In this way, they can hold on to the notion of idealized Irish childhoods while explaining away this behavior in a way which also constructs their own identities as more culturally sophisticated. For example, Emma states:

> I'd find some of them kind of immature but... like not in a bad way, not at all, just quite funny. [C: In what way?] Just like their views on things, like they don't realise what they said was completely offensive to someone elseelse . . . . (Emma, age sixteen)

PRODUCTION OF NARRATIVES OF INNOCENT IRISH CHILDHOODS

So what is the ideological and lived context in which the production and reproduction of narratives of innocent Irish childhoods takes place? It surely has its roots in the ways in which Ireland is both imagined and experienced by parents and children prior to migration, but is reproduced and re-worked in the dynamics of engagement between parents and children, and through the living out of experiences of return migration.

Intergenerational dynamics

One dynamic which has emerged from this study of parental and children's narratives is the ways in which the narratives both mirror and at times contradict each other. What struck me while doing the research was how closely parents' and their own children's narratives would mirror each other at times. It seems that parents strongly shape their children's narratives by shaping their expectations, values, and even their memories. For example, when asked to talk about the best things about moving to Ireland,

David (age thirteen) at first found it difficult to answer but then seemed to remember the standard response:

> Em... probably [silence]... being closer to family I guess. I can't really say anything else. Or, it's a bit better here as well because it's not as polluted, there's more space, like we have a garden and there's a lot more fields. (David, age thirteen, moved to Ireland at age twelve)

Children tend to learn and repeat standard family responses to particular questions or issues. It is only through spending time with children and young people that alternative perspectives emerge from the children which contradict these standard narratives. This difference highlights the importance of using the kinds of participative techniques with children which allow these non-standardized or non-learned narratives to emerge.

Parental memories of innocent Irish childhoods

It follows, therefore, that a very significant element of the production of these narratives of innocent Irish childhoods comes from the ways in which parents remember their own childhoods. For the Irish-born parents in the research, very often their own Irish childhoods are remembered selectively— with an element of romanticization, as with Kate below who remembers an idyllic rural childhood (while glossing over the admitted boredom). She goes on to say that she and her husband wanted the same type of childhood for their own children.

> It was a farm, so..! We didn't get television till I was about ten, so before that we just played outside a lot, and did all the farm work—there was turf and there was hay to be cut in summertime and the animals to be fed and that. So basically we led a very happy family life. We used to get bored because we were miles from any other kids, you know just farming... but you know we had a nice quiet life growing up really.
>
> [And later in the same interview:]
>
> We both grew up on farms and I suppose we wanted the children to have the same. (Kate, parent)

These narratives therefore play a big role in decision-making around return migration, contributing to parents' decisions to move back, ostensibly to allow their children to have a particular type of childhood. Parents reproduce the narratives when they talk about the freedom and safety that their children enjoy now that they have moved back, and the children themselves reproduce them in conversations about living in Ireland.

Imagined Ireland

The influence of parents on the children's narratives is intertwined with other more widely available representations of Ireland on which they can draw. The commodified and romanticized Ireland of tourist promotion and dominant diasporic discourses does emerge in the children's narratives. Here Cait refers to her pre-migration imaginings of Ireland, even using the term "fairytale", and states that the reality did live up to this idealization.

> I used to think Ireland was so cool, like a fairytale, so unbusy...
>
> *C: Did Ireland live up to your expectations?*
>
> Yes. Because the field behind our house had hay bales—like a dream! And tractors and all the cows! I never lived in a place where there were cows and tractors. People really did go to school on tractors. When I moved over here first, it was like a fairytale! So people do actually own pet cows. And the roads. It was so novel! (Cait, age fifteen).

It is striking how frequently stereotypical commoditized representations of Ireland do recur among the children, although simultaneously they also produce other representations of their own everyday lives in Ireland which would not be out of place in any modern Western family setting.

CONCLUSIONS: THE INTERRELATION OF NOTIONS OF CHILDHOOD, IDENTITY AND PLACE

On the one hand, ideologies of 'tradition versus modernity' and global constructs of Ireland as a pre-modern and safe haven from modernity, contribute to narratives of return migration as a return to a rural idyll. These ideologies about Ireland intersect with contemporary hegemonic Western discourses of childhood, involving notions of innocence and vulnerability, contributing to the production of narratives of innocent Irish childhoods.

These are reproduced and reworked within return migrant families through intergenerational dynamics and lived experiences of return migration. Through these narratives, parents are in part telling a particular return migration story—a story of successful migrants returning to Ireland for a better quality of life for their children.

However, lived experiences also challenge idealized notions of Ireland and of Irish childhoods. Counter-narratives emerge in conversations with both children and parents. The greater spatial freedom and sense of community of children's lifestyles in Ireland, together with the perception of innocence associated with these aspects of life, are undermined by the lived reality of what is seen from another perspective as lack of parental protection and discipline over children and lack of tolerance towards difference.

Lived experiences of return migration challenge narratives of innocent and free Irish childhoods for both parents and children, which means the narratives are adjusted and adapted but are still used to justify the return move, by both parents and children alike. These notions not only shape return migration by providing justifications for it which ostensibly have children's needs at their core, but they also influence future return migrations by becoming part of the folklore of return among diasporic networks. Children's and their parents' lived experiences of migration sometimes generate counter-narratives but also, surprisingly, result in the initial narratives' reproduction and fortification. Looking at family migration experiences in this way reveals the contradictions in common migration success stories and highlights the importance of research which probes these narratives and allows counter-narratives to emerge.

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