Between "What I Am" and "What I Am Not": Asians and Asian Americans in Contention and Conversation

by Heekyong Teresa Pyon, Yan Cao, and Huey-li Li

In the age of globalization, "Asian" and "Asian American" have emerged as popular terms to refer to a diverse populace originating in many different parts of the vast continent of Asia. As recent Asian arrivals in the United States, we have gradually come to accept the terms "Asian" and "Asian American," as our group identity in spite of our different national origins and cultural upbringings. However, we continue to engage in a mutual interrogation with the dominant culture that endorses individuality as a key value, yet imposes group identities on its marginal constituencies. While the multicultural education movement has raised awareness of the complexity and diversity of racial and ethnic identity formation, the educational experiences of Asians and Asian Americans remain under-explored. More specifically, in spite of this greater awareness of diversity, there is a persistent inclination to overgeneralization and ethnic stereotyping of Asians as a group.

Our aim is to examine "the complex processes of identity formation among Asians in America" by means of a narrative self-inquiry that explores the formation our own multilayered identities. We do this by telling a story of becoming Asians and/or Asian Americans. We start with Heekyong Teresa Pyon's narrative of becoming an "in-between generation Korean American." Next, Yan Cao undertakes a critical inquiry into her identity formation during a cross-cultural academic journey in the U.S. Finally, Huey-li Li recollects and reflects on her struggle with the labels of "Asian" and "Asian American" in shaping her political identity in the academy. Through the stories that we tell, we hope to explicate the intersection between individual identities and group identities and affinities in order to stimulate cross-cultural dialogues and conversation about coexistence, reconciliation, recognition, and multiculturalism.

Korean, American, and Korean-American: Looking for a 1.5 Generation Identity—by Heekyong Teresa Pyon

My first nephew, Joshua, was born in the U.S. four and a half years ago. Since his parents came to the US when they were in middle school, Joshua became the first official "second-generation Korean-American" in my family. Joshua's first language is Korean, which is the main language at home. He speaks mostly Korean with his family, but lately, as he entered his day care program and started learning English, he is using more English words in his conversation with others.

My mother, who lives three hours away from him and cannot speak much English, is worried that Joshua will lose his Korean when he grows older. She says to Joshua, "Joshua. You must speak Korean even when you grow up because you are a Korean. You need to speak Korean so that you can talk with me even when you are older."

Just the other day, my mother visited Joshua, and again she told Joshua that he needs to speak Korean when he grows up. This time, however, Joshua gave my mother an unexpected answer. "Grandma. There is an older brother in my church. He speaks little Korean and a lot of English. I think I am going to be like him later, and I am going to be an American when I grow up." Surprised, my mother told him, "No, Joshua, you are still a Korean even when you grow up." "No," insisted little Joshua, "I am going to be an American!"

Unlike my nephew, I was certain that I would never become an American when I was new to the country. I came when I was a high school sophomore. I still remember the first day that I walked into an American high school. The buildings looked so big and foreign, they scared me. The image of the American that I held was of someone with white skin and perfect English fluency. It took me a while to understand the great racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity among Americans.

Soon, I noticed that there was a group of Asian students, who, although they were Asian looking, spoke perfect English without any accent and mostly associated with white students. Then I learned about the term "Asian American," and more particularly, "Korean-American." Korean-Americans were very different from me in many ways. I learned that they were either born in the U.S. or immigrated to the U.S. when they were very young. Most of them could not speak Korean or at least they did not speak Korean at school. They did not seem to care much about Korean students like me who could not speak English well and did not have the same dress code as the American students. In school, I was glad to see the Korean American students—rare Asian faces in a mostly white school; but at the same time, I felt even more distant from them than other American students because though they looked like me, they were very different from me. So I learned that there are Americans and there are Asian Americans—two groups of which I felt I could never be a part. The people in each group were so different from me—there was no way that I could be like them. Therefore, there was no identity crisis for me at the time: I was simply a Korean.

It is interesting that I started questioning my Korean identity when I met other Korean students from Korea. I was starting my graduate program in Seattle at the time, and for the ten years before that, I had never doubted my identity as a Korean. However, my strong Korean identity started falling apart as I got to know my new friends. As I studied and spent time with these Korean students, I realized that there were some differences between us. Though I could communicate with them perfectly and shared Korean culture with them, I sensed that I was not exactly the same as they were.

Somehow I felt that I was not Korean enough when I was with them because I did not have the memories they shared and the

experiences they had in Korea. For the ten years that I had lived in America I had stored up different sets of memories and experiences. I appreciated my friendship with my Korean friends very much, but at the same time, I felt confused about who I was whenever I noticed the subtle differences between us.

The realization of difference came as a shock to me. I felt that my sense of identity was completely crumbling away, because I had been thinking of myself as a Korean, but now I had to reconsider myself as someone other than simply a Korean. I asked: "Then, who am I?" For the first time, I reflected upon my changing identity. Though I could not see it, I had gradually become someone different from who I thought I was before, and I could not define who I was anymore. I was not an American, I was not a Korean-American and now I was not even a Korean.

For the next two years, I struggled with this loss of identity, but I could not come up with a clear answer. After a while, I tried to ignore the question entirely and to avoid any situation that made me think about my identity. Finally, a moment of decision arrived. I was sitting in my cultural psychology seminar one afternoon. My professor, who had visited and stayed in Japan for a year, was giving a lecture on culture and different pedagogies. Something he said stirred me to think about my identity again. I was not listening to my professor any more; all I could do was to puzzle over the question, "Who am I?" I could not let go of that question any longer. I was staring at my notebook for the longest time as if I was taking a final exam and needed to put down the right answer.

Slowly, I wrote down the word "Korean-American." I had to accept my Korean American identity, which I had been denying for a long time. I was, in fact, a Korean living in the US and I had become an American whether I had been consciously aware of it or not. I finally accepted my new identity. However, I was not really writing the word. I could not write the word "Korean-American" with solid strokes. Instead, I marked hundreds of dots to write up the word "Korean-American." I could not express myself in any other way. I was a Korean-American, but I was still not a solid Korean-American; I was a Korean-American with the dots.

Once I had accepted this new dotted Korean-American identity I began to think of myself as a 1.5-generation Korean-American. I remember how I disliked the idea of 1.5 when I was first introduced to the term because it was not one or two, but "in-between"—a decimal point; not even a whole number. But I had now acknowledged that I was one of the "in-between-generation of Korean-Americans." Although 1.5-generation Korean-Americans are defined in various ways, in general, they are understood as the bilingual and bicultural Korean-Americans who are between the first- and second-generation immigrants (Koh, 1994, p.45).

Because they are bilingual and bicultural, the 1.5-generation Korean-Americans are often viewed as the "bridge builders" who can connect the first generation Korean immigrants with mainstream America (e.g. Park, 1999). At the same time, however, because they are not quite first or second generation, many of them feel that they are "neither 'Korean,' 'American,' nor 'Korean-American,' while at the same time all three" (Park, 1999, p.142). It was this ironic duality of being neither and being all that confused me the most and eventually created a new challenge for me.

Ever since I accepted my new 1.5 identity, I have tried to view myself as both Korean *and* American. However, I often face situations where I am not quite *both* Korean and American but *neither.* For example, although I usually communicate in Korean when I am with Korean graduate students at school, they do not perceive me as a Korean because they know that I am a U.S. citizen and that I have been living in the U.S. for a while. From time to time, I hear remarks such as "….but you are an American." This remark, which is correct, reinforces the fact that I am different and no longer a Korean in the eyes of other Koreans in spite of the sense of Korean-ness that is a big part of me.

At the same time, I am not really perceived as an American, either. A fellow graduate student in my department told me the other day that from now on, he would call me "Oregon," because he thought that I was an international student for the previous four years and felt bad that he asked me if I was going home to Korea for the break. He said he would call me Oregon so that he would remember that I am from there.

Because there are many graduate students from Korea in my college, it was perfectly natural for him to think that I was an international student. At the same time, I also wondered if I would ever be considered an American by mainstream society. Whatever made him think that I was Korean and not American, whether it was my Korean culture, my accent, or my appearance, my Korean-ness is a part of me and will stay in me. Similarly, whatever made Korean students think of me as an American—my legal status, my Americanized attitude, or my lifestyle choices—are also part of me. If I want to be both Korean *and* American, am I wanting too much? Am I supposed to choose one or the other? As Park (1999) observes, I often find myself situated as "the other" by both groups—being sometimes both and sometimes neither.

This feeling of being "the other" leads me to the next question: how much of my identity is my personal choice and how much of it is shaped by the society? If I choose to be a Korean *and* an American, will I be perceived as both by others? Does it matter to me? If I call myself a 1.5-generation Korean-American, but I am viewed as neither, then what does it make me? Who am I becoming?

I think about my nephew, Joshua who believes that he will one day become an American who speaks a lot of English and less Korean. Will he become an American as he wishes? In this country where Asian Americans are often viewed as "perpetual foreigners" rather than Americans, (Danico, 2004, p.10) will my nephew be seen as American if he chooses to be? Or will his yellow skin be a barrier for others to consider him an American? How will he face a stranger coming up to him and saying—"Hey, your English is so good, where are you from?" (Chon, 1995)—as my roommate, who is a Taiwanese American born in Virginia, often experiences. If Joshua, as he told my mother, speaks little Korean and does not know enough Korean culture, will he be considered a Korean? Will his identity be shaped solely by his choice, or will it be constructed and determined by what others in society see him to be? The fol-

lowing excerpt from Alex Hull, a Korean-American who came to the US at the age of eleven and went to a mostly white high school, brings out this issue more clearly:

> Then in my junior year, I ran for student body president, and the issue of race came out openly in the election debate. There were three candidates: one white female, one white male, and me. . . . I thought I was the most popular of the candidates. After my speech, during the question and answer session, one student stood up and said, "Alex, do you perceive any racial tension in this school?" My supervisor tried to protect me and said, "You don't have to answer that." Until that moment, I thought I was white, because my buddies were white and they treated me like I was white. I didn't think I was perceived as a minority, an Asian, or someone different from them. At that moment, it all clicked: maybe I am Asian. (Kim & Yu, 1996, p.224)

Goodson and Sikes (2001) argue that the wider cultural milieu in which we grow up provides "the script for the way we story our lives" (p.77). They state that the way individuals view and structure their life stories is developed from their social and cultural surroundings. In this sense, when we hear a person's story, it is not just that particular individual's voice that we hear but also "the wider cultural imperatives" (p.77). There are bigger institutional influences and ideologies that shape our own thinking and the way we perceive ourselves and our lives (Denzin, 2002). Meditating on this point, I ask myself how my identity was shaped and influenced by the wider society, and I think about the role school played in this process since it was one of the major sites of my social interaction.

I ask why I thought that I had to be one or the other and did not think that I could be *both* Korean and American early on. Why did I assume that I could not be a part of others who are different from me, and why did I think that I was so different from them? Was it something that I learned in school or was it something that I did not learn in school that made me think in such a way? What if I had a chance to talk about these issues with my teachers and my classmates rather than handling them all by myself? If I had those opportunities, could I have learned that difference does not need to be the reason for separation? Why does school, as it was for me and for Hull, have to be a place where we experience isolation and conflict rather than inclusion and appreciation of differences?

I think about what will happen to Joshua when he goes to school. I wonder what he will learn and experience as he grows up as a Korean and an American. I hope the story he tells us about his identity is different from mine. I hope Joshua will not have to struggle to define who he is when he sees the differences between himself and his classmates. I hope he learns to appreciate who he is as he is, and that he can joyfully share his unique experiences with his friends. Will he be able to tell us a different story? I know this is a very complex and exceedingly difficult question, and there is no easy answer. But again I hope, when Joshua goes to school, he finds school to be a place where he and his friends can communicate their experiences, frustrations, and confusions, and freely discuss what it means to be different from one another and how to deal with those differences among themselves. Then, at least, Joshua may not have to feel that he is alone and has to deal with this heavy task all by himself as I did. Perhaps, that may be one small thing that can be done in order to hear a different story from Joshua and his friends.

Self as a Stranger: An International Student's Academic Journey—by Yan Cao

Like many international students, I have come to realize that overcoming language barriers is a formidable task in my cross-cultural, academic journey. Even today, I vividly remember my feeling of dizzy confusion when I attended my first seminar. I had so many questions about the issues and topics that my professors and classmates brought up in discussion. Yet, very few of them made efforts to provide me with background information. Most of my American-born professors and classmates seemed to assume that everyone, including international students like me, should possess the requisite prior knowledge to engage in the issues under discussion. I felt left behind all the time. However, my inner frustration and feelings of dissatisfaction motivated me to make progress in understanding what was going on. As I strove to improve my proficiency in English, I also endeavored to participate more actively in the discussion. However, I remained as a spectator for most of the time. To me, the seminar was like an exciting basketball game in which my professors and classmates eagerly passed the ball from one person to another. I wanted to touch and play with the ball, but no one passed the ball to me. As a benched player, I could not help but wonder why my "native-born" professors and classmates showed no hesitation in hogging the ball, and keeping it away from me.

Gradually, I learned to contribute my own educational viewpoints in the seminar. In seminar discussions concerning comparative and international education, I found that some professors and students showed a tendency to over-generalize about various educational systems in Asia. In particular, they appeared to regard the Japanese education as the epitome of the educational systems of Asian countries. Nevertheless, my presence in the seminar did influence my professors and classmates more or less to recognize the existence of a Chinese educational system. But their perception of Chinese education not only appeared to dwell on the rural education of the 1970s but also reflected the cold war ideology. It was a struggle for me to attempt to call their attention to the specific geographical, historical, economic, and political contexts of the Chinese educational practices under discussion.

As a female international student from China, I care about issues related to Asian American women. Unfortunately, multicultural education courses I took, to a large extent, included few Asian or Asian American's academic works, especially those of Asian American women. Most reading materials were skewed in the direction of the educational experiences of European Americans, African Americans, Native Americans, and Latino Americans. The contribution of Asian immigrants and the historically unjust treatment of them were marginally dealt with in the readings. I was

especially surprised that some professors and classmates had never learned about the Chinese mass immigration to America during the1840s and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Neither topic was brought up in any discussion until I mentioned them.

To some of my professors and classmates, I am still merely one of the "Asians" or "Asian Americans," even though they have known me for years. On one occasion, I was mistaken for another Chinese woman in the same department, and on another occasion for someone else they met before. Chinese names appear to many Americans to be indistinguishable. An important personal letter was once sent to another Chinese person in a different department. Occasionally, some colleagues have shown interest in my origins—in whether I came from Beijing or Shanghai. Unfortunately, after I had told them that I did not come from either of these two famous metropolitan cities, they had no further interest in knowing more about my home city—even though I was more than eager to tell them about it.

Beyond the academy, the images of Chinese women as portrayed in Hollywood and Disney cartoons seem to influence how my American-born classmates, students, and friends perceive Chinese women. In these movies and cartoons, the imaginary Chinese women can be divided into two categories: the ultra feminine and the agile woman warrior. The sexy, simple-minded, beautiful, cute, passive, and fragile concubine played by a famous Chinese actress, Li Gong, in the movie *Raise the Red Lantern* represents one such ultra feminine Chinese woman. After viewing this movie, one of my American friends even asked me whether Chinese women still bound their feet! On the other hand, the image of Ziyi Zhang in the movie *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and the image of a female killer played by Lucy Liu (Yuling Liu) in the movie *Kill Bill* shaped the popular perception of the Chinese woman as an agile warrior. Remarkably, these two polarized images brood over Chinese women's "bodies" rather than their minds. The idea that Chinese women might possess agile minds is not an image in the popular mind. As the co-chair of a regional conference, I received numerous conference proposals with the salutation of "Mr." If they were unsure of my gender, they could have chosen "To Whom It May Concern." I do understand that cultural and linguistic barriers can easily contribute to misidentifying a person's gender, but I cannot help question why it seems to be "acceptable" or "legitimate" to assign a male gender to any person with a Chinese name.

In addition to the problematic stereotypes conveyed in the popular media about Chinese women, it is not uncommon to perceive Chinese students, particularly women students, as a silent group, especially in U.S. graduate school settings. Belenky (1993) points out that the silent knower often is thought of as "deaf and dumb, little ability to think, survives by obedience to powerful, punitive authority and little awareness of power of language for sharing thoughts, insights, and so on" (p. 395). However, Patrocinio P. Schweickart (1993), a Philippine feminist, argues that silence is highly valued in her culture and related to the symbol of wisdom and respect. She goes on to claim that her silence in classroom settings does not indicate a lack of intellectual engagement. Similarly, from a Confucian standpoint, an educated person should be a good listener in order to show respect to others. Nevertheless, despite the advocacy of "internationalizing" higher education in the U.S., I have yet to see evidence of any pedagogical changes that could facilitate more inclusive participation from "silent" Asian students.

In brief, self-estrangement seems to sum up my cross-cultural academic journey. I view my self-identity in conflict with images of group membership that have been assigned to me or imposed on me, and these have led to bewilderment and discontent. I do not, however, intend to tell my story as one of protest. Rather, I hope that my story will illuminate the hidden or null curriculum that impedes the establishment of more inclusive multicultural learning communities.

In Between Asians and Asian Americans—by Huey-li Li

As a late baby boomer growing up in Taiwan and pursuing a teaching career in the U.S., I find identity formation is forever unsettled. Like Heekyong, my ethnic identity differs from that of my parents. Under Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan, my parents' proficiency in Japanese was comparable to the native Japanese speakers. However, while my parents were proud to speak Japanese without an accent, they never identified themselves as Japanese. At the same time, they also refused to claim their Chinese ethnicity despite their full knowledge of their ethnic roots in mainland China. To them, the Chinese were the outsiders who moved to Taiwan after 1949. More specifically, although they never made efforts to claim Taiwanese identity, it was very clear that they considered Kuomintang (KMT), the ruling party in Taiwan from 1945 to 2000, as another colonial power. In contrast, my experiences of formal schooling in Taiwan as prescribed by the ruling party compelled me to become a patriotic Chinese who was supposed to endorse the official anti-Communist ideology and a commitment to re-claiming Chinese civilization, which had been under attack by Western imperialism since the Opium Wars. As a zealous patriot, I made efforts to speak Mandarin without a Taiwanese accent and chose to major in the Chinese classics when most college students in Taiwan were proud to read books written in English. Yet, after teaching for four years at a Taiwanese parochial high school geared to prepare students for the College Entrance Exam, my patriotism ironically did not stop me from eventually reading English texts and pursuing graduate degrees in the U.S. I had launched myself on a journey that distracted me from further study of the Chinese classics.

When I came to the U.S., I found, like Yan Cao, that the cultural and linguistic barriers were an ongoing challenge in my cross-cultural journey. I took note of the irony in the coexistence of a pervasive prejudice against non-native English speakers and an unbounded sympathy for English-challenged international students. When participating in seminars or making presentations, I felt compelled to call my audience's attention to my accent. Often, I started my talk with apologetic statements such as "As you may notice, I speak English with a strong but charming accent. My accent might have reminded you of Henry Kissinger…." Hearing laughter

from my peers, I then felt released to "talk." On the one hand, my heightened sensitivity to my accent revealed my genuine desire to "master" English in order to communicate with my audience. On the other hand, I seemed to claim a special right to talk and to oblige my classmates to listen. At the same time, I could not help but become aware of the differentiated attitudes toward non-native English speakers with different accents. More than once, I heard native English speakers praising the accents of my colleagues/friends from Europe, Australia, and New Zealand while paying no special attention the accents of my Asian colleagues/friends from India, Singapore, Japan, and Korea.

Gradually, I became more aware of the unspoken divide between Europe and Asia and came to accept the label of "Asian" as my ethnic affinity. Still, I often joke about the fact that "Asians" only exist outside Asia, even though I am fully aware that "Asia," originally a geographical regional designator, has been converted into a political, cultural, or even genetic denominator identifying a diverse group of peoples from other smaller groups. I especially lament that like Columbus who discovered "India" in America, I discovered myself as an Asian in the US academy.

As an Asian studying and teaching in the sheltered academy, I more or less have transformed myself into an imposter who wants to speak and write like native English speakers/writers. I even voluntarily enrolled in speech therapy sessions in order to reduce my not-so-charming Asian accent. During one therapy session, my therapist in training took note of my linguistic habit of omitting the distinctions between the singular and the plural. She then showed me one photo of one car in juxtaposition to a photo of two cars to instruct me to attend to the differences between one car and two cars. While I found her therapeutic efforts to be amusing, my imposter's ambition eventually turned into missionary zeal to convert my American-born students into multicultural educators. As a matter of fact, I frequently relate the aforementioned case to illustrate how professional educators must develop multicultural pedagogical competence in a culturally and linguistically diverse society.

As an Asian, I used to feel obligated to respect the U.S. foreign policy. Yet, after living in the U.S. for over twenty years, I find that I can no longer be a diplomatic spectator and must speak out when my conscience cannot accept troubling foreign policies. Notably, while Asians in America may find the label of foreigners acceptable, U. S. born Asian Americans branded as "forever foreigners" cannot help but lament their subjection to an eternal xenophobic gaze. When watching the film *Joy Luck Club*, I questioned why a Chinese American woman, in confronting racial prejudice against Asians during the Viet Nam War had to object, "But, I am an American!" I even made a snappy comment that in making the claim to be "an American" she implied that non-Americans deserve racial discrimination. My resistance to the temptation to claim Americanness for myself also led me to question many Asian Americans' efforts to re-claim their silenced historical contributions to the building of the U.S.—the re-appropriation of Asian's contributions in rail road building, gold mining, and military service. From my standpoint, the commemoration of early Asian Americans' struggles does not necessarily raise awareness of the historical exploitation of Asian coolies, sailors, and settlers. Rather, it somehow suggests that Asian American's entitlement to their presumably "inalienably rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is based on their contributions to building the U. S.

In summary, my identity has changed from "Chinese" to "Asian," and from "Asian" to "something between Asian and Asian American." Undoubtedly, my chameleon-like ability to form new identities is adaptable and varies according to the context. Echoing Paul Gilroy's effort to locate the "black essence" through "routes" rather than "roots," I will continue to reflect upon my changing identity and anticipate emerging identities to come (Gilroy, 1993).

Conclusion

We are a group of Asian and/or Asian American women academics who are eager to clarify who we are and who we are not, both individually and collectively. We hope that our stories point to the fact that Asians and Asian Americans are active participants in the process of forming and thinking through our identities. However, to a considerable degree, our experience of the processes of identity formation and our negotiation with mainstream culture show that we are not "equal partners in cultural production" (Said, 1993). The dialectic interplay between racialization and diversification especially indicates that Asians and Asian Americans are not fully in control of their identity formation. In analyzing the hegemonic force of dominant culture, Edward Said (1984) notes that while marginalized groups are given "the permission to narrate," their voices can be easily dismissed. While we recognize the hegemonic forces of the dominant culture, we playfully question: Does one need "the permission to narrate"? Who is in the position to give permission? Our telling stories originated from our yearning for sharing our experiences of becoming "Asians" and "Asian Americans." Unreservedly, we render ourselves permission to present and to listen to Asians' and Asian Americans' cultural, educational, and political narratives.

We hope that our stories bring to light that we are not "objectified" victims doomed to accept "designated" identities without negotiation or resistance. Lisa Lowe (1999) points out that "heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity" capture the distinguished characteristics of Asian Americans' identity formation. Our destabilized and shifting individual and collective identities reflect what Kathy Ferguson (1993) terms "mobile subjectivities." With our "mobile subjectivities," we tend to endorse flexible "standpoints of a sort, places to stand and from which to act" (p. x). At the same time, we agree with Wimal Dissanayake (1996) that "Human agency, so far being the product of atomistic and isolated persons, can be the outcome of a group-centered ethos and orientation" (p. xiv). We are also aware that such "a group-centered ethos and orientation" renders individual privileges invisible. After all, our aim in pursuing academic degrees is based on our strategic calculations to access symbolic resources in the academy. Thus, our narratives by no means aim at what Rey Chow (1993) calls "self-subalternization." In other words, we do not intend to elevate our "marginalized"

ethnic identity while disregarding our class privilege that permit us to find a niche in higher education. Instead, we simply want to call attention to the fact that the construction and consumption of otherness have disciplinary effects on determining marginalized groups' educational experiences.

Furthermore, the dominant liberal democratic model of multicultural education focuses on political inclusion of marginalized groups, with the underlying belief that political inclusion will pave the way for the reconstruction of oppressive social institutions and cultural practices. To a certain degree, such political inclusion stresses equal representation and recognition of all individuals rather than groups. Multicultural education also embraces generalized ethnic group affiliations such as Asians and Asian Americans. By addressing the intersections between individual identities and group identities and affinities, we hope that our narratives offer a pointed critique of the liberal democratic model of multicultural education. Multicultural education is not a celebration of marginality. Nor should multicultural education endorse cultural hybridization without undertaking a critical and reflective inquiry into the complexity of identity formation.

In conclusion, our narrative inquiry into our shifting identity formation reveals that globalization does not necessarily result in a singular unified cultural formation. Nor does globalization foster a coherent singular identity formation. Hence, any pedagogical attempt to shape identity formation must attend to the variation of human agencies as they encounter contradictory economic, cultural, and ideological forces.

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