

# **Abjection, Inclusion and Migrant Children: How good intentions can perpetuate discrimination**

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Exploring Cosmopolitanism and a Cosmopolitan  
Curriculum we arrive to Abjection



## Abyección, Cospolitismo, Inclusión y Migración: Cómo las buenas intenciones reafirman la discriminación

Seminar

November 11th, 18th, and 15th,  
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Abjection, Cosmopolitanism, Inclusion and Migration:  
How Good Intentions Reaffirm Discrimination

### Articles to read

- Nyers, Peter (2003). [Abject Cosmopolitanism: the politics of protection in the anti-deportation movement](#). *Third World Quarterly*, Vol 24, No 6, pp 1069-1093.
- Popkewitz, Thomas. S. (2009). [The double gestures of cosmopolitanism, globalization, and comparative studies of education](#). In R. Cowen & A. M. Kazamias (Eds.), *International Handbook of Comparative Education*, 379–395. Springer Science.
- Genova, Nicholas de (2010). [The Queer Politics of Migration: Reflections on “Illegality” and Incurability](#). *Studies in Social Justice*, 4 (2), 101-126.
- Babana, Feyzi; Rygielb, Kim (2017). [Living, with others: fostering radical cosmopolitanism through citizenship politics in Berlin](#). *Ethics & Global politics*, 10 (1), 98–116.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/16544951.2017.1391650>
- Cano Abadía, Mònica (2017). [Vulnerabilidad posthumana cosmopolita. Desplazamientos críticos para una justicia global](#). *Astrolabio: revista internacional de filosofía*, 19, 269-279.

- A genuinely critical scholarship of migration must in fact be addressed to the task not merely of describing but also theorizing—and critiquing—actual struggles, the real social relations of unresolved antagonism and open-ended struggles that continuously constitute social life.



- In front of the last survey question:
- Child's comment: I don't ask my friends about their nationality, or from where they come from;
- I play with them because they are nice.

- Abjection describes a degraded, wretched and displaced condition.

'Abjection', as Nikolas Rose (1999) declares, "is an act of force".

Rose (1999) states: "Abjection is a matter of the energies, the practices, the works of division that act upon persons and collectivities such that some ways of being, some forms of existence are cast into a zone of shame, disgrace or debasement, rendered beyond the limits of the liveable, denied the warrant of tolerability, accorded purely a negative value." ( p 253.)

- Abjection is an especially apt interpretive frame through which **to appreciate the complexities of the migrant condition**, precisely because migrants are always-already within the space of the state and can never really be entirely expelled.
- Julia Kristeva has depicted the specificity of the concept of the abject as **“something rejected from which one does not part.”**

## Abjection, cosmopolitanism, and schooling

- Popkewitz (2008) points out the importance of paying attention to the "double gestures of pedagogy as processes of abjection" (p. 20).

- If abjection is related to isolation and exclusion of people qualities outside of spaces of inclusion, research carried out in schools in Catalonia where MiCreate project is been carried out reveals:
- -Defining schools attended by migrant children as 'high complexity' means configuring them with a stigma of abjection, insofar as this denomination defines a dispositive (in Foucault's terms) that is linked "to the recognition given to excluded groups for their insertion" (Popkewitz, 2008, p. 21).
- -In the school's narrative and in the methodological perspective adopted by MiCreate, the category of 'migrant children' is used to delineate a group of individuals whose social status is not entirely 'part of': it is acceptable for inclusion but is nevertheless excluded.

- -In educational policies and school practices, the migrant child, in the host school, "inhabits the interstices" between the need for resources and intervention programmes considered as "special" (host classrooms, support staff, adapted teaching strategies,...) to allow access and equality and, at the same time, is considered "as different and as the Other, who remains outside" due to his condition and quality of life (Popkewitz, 2008, p. 21).

- -Finally, expressions such as **empowerment, integration, multiculturalism, interculturalism, problem solving, collaboration** are part of "abjection processes".
- "They function as gestures of hope for an inclusive society" that will be achieved through pedagogical innovations and reforms. However, says Popkewitz 2008, p. 21), "the very formulation of such hope is a reflection of the fears of a part of society about the dangers and dangerous populations that threaten the desired future" that is oriented towards universalist cosmopolitanism from which migrants are excluded.

# Conclusions

- Abjection is a way of reflecting on the complex set of relationships of inclusion and exclusion that affect migrant children.
- Educational policies and school practices incorporate certain qualities of life and people. But they also simultaneously exclude them.
- Thinking about cosmopolitanism as a process of abjection allows us to think differently about migrant children schooling and practices and research focused on the child-centred approach.
- Finally, we rescue Judith Butler's (1993) proposal that invites us to challenge what is seen and done without questioning - for example, the child-centred approach- and as something natural to generate subjects and regulate their behaviour.



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Thank you!!!