

Editorial: The Mission of Integration

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1. Genealogy

'I set out from a problem expressed in the terms current today and I try to work out its genealogy. Genealogy means that I begin my analysis from a question posed in the present', (Foucault, in Garland, 2014, p. 367).

The papers featured in this special edition set out from 'a problem in the present', the problem of a civic nationalist agenda in UK government education policy and practice which has redefined the relationship between educators and students through the requirements of the Prevent Duty and fundamental British values. To work out its genealogy, we set out a brief chronological outline of what we characterise as the civic nationalist agenda in UK education policy and practice before we turn to the critical perspectives offered by the papers in this special edition.

The geopolitical transformations that took place in the wake of the 9/11 al Qaeda attacks have been marked by the end of multiculturalism in many western democracies and the emergence of a defensive, exclusionary politics of national identity. Political debates have pivoted around the incompatibility of Islam with democratic values and widespread anxiety about refugees and asylum seekers, 'bearers of alien customs' (Virdee and McGeever, 2018, p.7) crossing the borders of the 'Western citadel' (Beck, 2002, p.49). In Europe and the UK, the immigration debate has led to the introduction of citizenship tests, language and civic

values exams and other tests of naturalization and compatibility with Western liberal values.

In the UK this hardening of national discourse has shaped educational policy and practice effectively making education a securitized site of the domestic war on terror. Since Tony Blair's premiership (1997-2007), UK government policy making has focussed on shared national values and community cohesion to address the problems of communities characterised as living 'parallel lives' (Cantle, 2001). In his 2011 Munich speech Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron argued for 'muscular liberalism' in place of the 'passive tolerance' of multiculturalism (Cameron, Gov.uk, 2011). This policy discourse portrays the UK as under attack by fundamentalist unreason, but from a critical perspective it translates as the racialization of Islam and governmental disavowal of pluralism. The role of the State has shifted from 'care taker' to 'traffic cop' (Goldberg in Kapoor et al, 2013). The message conveyed by shared national values is integrationist, 'become one of us', your crime is 'not to be like us' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013, p. 208). In 2012 the introduction of fundamental British values as a requirement of the regulatory framework of the Teachers' Professional Standards (DfE, 2014) and the imposition of the Prevent duty (2015) on teachers to give due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism altered the relationship between teachers and students, so that teachers have become, in law, the de facto instruments of state security. From January 2015 schools could be graded as 'inadequate' if inspectors found weaknesses in

their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) provision, 'so that pupils are intolerant of others and/or reject any of the core values fundamental to life in modern Britain'. By July 2015, to be graded 'outstanding' by Ofsted, schools had to demonstrate that the 'promotion of fundamental British values [is] at the heart of the school's work'.

Significantly there has been no public democratic debate about what makes fundamental British values British or indeed what Britishness is. Instead, the definition was taken from government counter terrorist legislation which also defines extremism as opposition to fundamental British values (HM Government, 2015). These developments are part of a wider civic nationalist (Ignatieff, 1993) turn in education policy that opposes those who adhere to state sanctioned civic values to those who are positioned as suspect because of cultural difference. Despite the spike in reports of racial and religious hate crime in the period leading up to the UK government's referendum to leave the European Union, the civic nationalist turn has showed no signs of relenting as the following examples taken from the speeches of OfSTED Chief, Amanda Spielman demonstrate.

In 2018 Spielman, stated that young people in Britain are vulnerable to exploitation by extremists and therefore require the teaching of British values, because, 'if we leave these topics to the likes of the EDL and BNP on the one hand and Islamists on the other, then the mission of integration will fail' (Spielman, in Weale, 2018). In her 2019 speech at the Wellington Festival of Education, she reiterated this message stating that 'it is so important that all these values are taught, understood and lived' and that 'school is how and where we make sure that every young British citizen ends up with the same level of understanding' (Spielman, 2019).

The new civic nationalism is marked by contradiction, on the one hand espousing religious tolerance and on the other requiring OfSTED inspectors to question female Muslim primary school children about the Muslim veil. It is a paradoxical liberalism that operates through Spielman's warning

that religious minorities cannot expect 'cultural entitlements' (Weale, 2018). In practice, these policy developments amount to an intensification of the State's gaze upon non-Christian, primarily Muslim students and faith schools that it seeks to discipline and regulate.

2. A Critical Juncture

As we write this editorial we find ourselves at a critical juncture in politics and education. The true extent of structural racial and class inequalities in the UK have been revealed in the COVID pandemic by a disproportionately high number of deaths and hospitalizations amongst ethnic minority communities as reported by the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2020). Similarly, the Black Lives Matter movement and the anti-racist activism that followed the murder of George Floyd in the US by a member of the police has also thrust racial politics into the forefront of British political life and yet the Government's response to these racial crisis events has been to affirm its commitment to civic nationalism, through an authoritarian turn best exemplified by the DfE guidance published in September 2020 on how to 'Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum' (DfE, 2020). As a policy artefact, the document demonstrates the contradictions in government and liberal discourse. The guidance states that curricula must include 'LGBT content', but it also rules out involvement from any external agencies who might demonstrate, 'a publicly stated desire to abolish or overthrow...capitalism' (DfE, 2020). A few weeks before the document was published the government had added the environmentalist pressure group Extinction Rebellion to its list of extremist ideologies to be reported to the Prevent programme, although this prohibition was withdrawn, the context of the guidance was characterised as a culture war by its critics (Busby, 2020).

The irony that lies in the contradictions between government equalities and diversity rhetoric and the reality of racial injustice is demonstrated by attacks on critical race theory by senior ministers, including

the equalities minister Kemi Badenoch. In October 2020, Badenoch stated that teachers who presented the idea of white privilege as a fact to their students were breaking the law, describing critical race theory (CRT) as, ‘an ideology that sees my blackness as victimhood and their whiteness as oppression’ (Badenoch in Weale, 2020). In response to the government proscription of certain resources and views, including CRT, leading academics at the UCL IoE wrote a letter to the Guardian newspaper expressing their concerns (Weale, 2020).

The UCL letter captures the concerns of progressive educators at a time of national and international crisis, and begs the question, how has the national state education system arrived at a position where teachers’ professional status, autonomy and agency have been so reduced and a narrow, prescriptive Initial Teacher Training (ITT) curriculum threatens to undermine the foundations of initial teacher education, the integrity of progressive research focussed higher education provision, academic freedom and the subjectivities of pre service and in service teachers?

3. Critical Perspectives

The papers in this collection offer a critical counter narrative to the integrationist government discourse of the past two decades. Some of the papers take a critical genealogical backwards glance to reveal the power effects of British values and the Prevent agenda on teachers when they were first introduced, others take us to the heart of the problem in the present and raise critical questions about how this discourse might be troubled, adapted or reappropriated by educators and students. Importantly, what all the papers do is bring new empirical data and new insights to the academy which continue to trouble and interrogate the incorrigible ‘them- and- us binaries’ mobilized by the mission of integration in education, thus providing the basis for further research and critical debate. In the themed research papers Bryan and Revell, Farrell, Habib and Jerome et al draw from empirical material including

interviews with teachers and students to offer fresh insights into enactments of Prevent and British values in educational sites and settings.

a. Themed Research Papers

In the first article Hazel Bryan and Lynne Revell present an original empirical research study of the relationship between education leadership styles and the enactment of fundamental British values. Their study is unique and an important contribution to policy literature on educational leadership, as it captures the voices and the dilemmas experienced by school leaders at a time when the policy was first introduced, and practitioners were unsure about how it would impact. The data is rich, drawing from interviews with senior leaders in forty-one primary schools and nineteen secondary settings. Bryan and Revell examine the teachers’ responses through the lens of leadership theory. The data reveals teachers ‘grappling’ with the policy, as the section on counterfactual scenarios demonstrates, indicating that the senior leaders prioritised the reputation of their school and relationships with parents and governors in relation to teacher behaviour in scenarios where teachers might be deemed to be undermining fundamental British values.

In the second paper, Francis Farrell offers an original application of Deleuze and Guattari’s theories of racism as a critical methodological framework for analysis of fundamental British values. Drawing from Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the White Man face, their image for hegemonic whiteness, Farrell argues that the British values discourse is an assimilatory device that works to identify those it has marked as racial deviants to reintegrate them through the soft disciplinary techniques the state has at its disposal such as Channel, the multi-agency programme, required under the Prevent duty, which identifies and supports individuals considered to be ‘at risk’ (Home Office, 2019). Farrell illustrates these processes at work with reference to empirical data that demonstrates the performative function of British values policy as it transforms racialised student subjects into ‘ones to watch’. This paper offers researchers another methodological tool to

interrogate civic nationalist education policy and it concludes by calling for both new theoretical and activist associations between anti-racist educators and students.

Sadia Habib's paper is a highly original study that addresses a major gap in the literature on fundamental British values, by taking a focus on identity and belonging in the cultural heritage sector. Drawing from her experience working with young people in British museums as a museum educator, Habib focusses on the need to create safe spaces for young people from diverse ethnic and class backgrounds to disentangle the connections between colonialism and the museum as a cultural site. Drawing from her experiences as the 'Our Shared Cultural Heritage' Project Coordinator at Manchester Museum, Habib makes a compelling case for the museum as the space where young people can interrogate ideas of nation to trouble hegemonic constructions of Britishness and reclaim agency. Habib utilizes Critical Pedagogy, offering educators a valuable model for a transformative, democratic alternative to the narrow, disciplinary contours of the British values discourse.

In the next paper, Lee Jerome, Anna Liddle and Helen Young address the critical problem of the present day posed by the capacity of fundamental British values policy enactments to alienate and marginalise minority students. Jerome, Liddle and Young draw from their highly innovative curriculum project, the 'Deliberative Classroom' to engage students in a critical and deliberative discussion of fundamental British values as political concepts, particularly when examined in relation to everyday politics. Deliberative discussion and exploratory talk rather than competitive debate form the basis of this approach. Jerome et al draw from fascinating empirical data collected in their observations conducted for the deliberative classroom project. They found that the young people in one of the secondary school settings they were researching, Avon school, were able to engage in civic rather than civic nationalist debate about the topic of religious freedom. This paper is a potent example of how

researchers working in collaboration with students and teachers can reclaim and recalibrate the British values discourse to create the potentials for classrooms that recognise agency and reflect Nodding's principles of care about and for others (Noddings, 2002). There is much for educators and teacher educators to take forward into their own practice from this innovative and original paper.

In the final paper in the themed research pieces, Heather Smith, provides a critical overview of government and government agencies' statutory and regulatory policy documents concerned with fundamental British values and Prevent. Smith uses the critical concept of racist nativism as her lens to show that education policy cannot be disaggregated from relations of dominance and subordination in society. Fundamental British values, in this analysis, constructs a discourse of exclusionary 'non-nativeness' and a racialised hierarchy that positions Muslims and other minorities, their culture and beliefs, as deficit, alien and 'not quite as good' as British values. Smith offers a detailed analysis of guidance on EAL (English as an additional language) teaching to argue that speakers of languages other than English are positioned as deficit, revealing the deeply embedded and normalised discourse of British superiority mobilized at all levels of civic nationalist education policy making. Smith's paper provides researchers and students with a valuable and critical methodological tool with which to problematise British values in education and is another original contribution to methodology featured in this special edition.

b. Themed Think Pieces

In the next section, themed think pieces offer reflexive and theoretical perspectives on fundamental British values and the civic nationalist policy, providing researchers and students with provocations and prompts to guide their investigations of fundamental British values in education.

In the first piece, 'My Religion is Important', Karamat Iqbal draws from his own experiences and

research in Birmingham, the land of the Trojan horse, to reaffirm the importance of religiously literate dialogue between religious communities in a context where religion has become racialised and conflated with extremism.

Jane McDonnell's paper is a much-needed critical literature review surveying the theoretical and methodological approaches currently available to researchers. McDonnell concludes her review with reflections on the value of radical democracy in the classroom. In many respects her conclusions resonate with the theory and methods developed in Jerome et al's deliberative classroom, as both approaches advocate for an approach to democratic education that draws from experiences of democracy in everyday life.

In the last of the think pieces, Umit Yildiz draws from his own experiences as an anti-racist activist in a paper that looks critically at the development of the shared values discourse through an anti-racist analysis that situates British values within a long-established tradition of colonialism. In many respects, Yildiz's paper is the most appropriate discussion piece to close this special issue. Yildiz reminds readers of the role of activism and resistance in the anti-racist education project and he highlights what is becoming a feature of both research into and the enactment of British values policy in recent years- acceptance and normalisation of fundamental British values in policy and practice. Referring to the work of academics who argue that fundamental British values can provide a platform for the discussion of equalities issues, Yildiz underlines the dangerous discriminatory effects of even the subtlest attempts to reinterpret fundamental British values.

4. Conclusion

We began this editorial with Foucault's conceptualisation of genealogy. Genealogy was, for Foucault, a way of using texts, artefacts and other historical materials to trace the troublesome associations and lineages that produce the problems we face in the present. Foucault's method aimed to trouble what so easily becomes taken for granted, by

revealing the normalising and disciplinary practices concealed by discourse. It is our aspiration that the papers in this issue will inform practice, theory and methodology and energise debates to problematise the increasingly 'taken for granted' and normalised requirements of Prevent and fundamental British values.

Education in a liberal plural democracy should be supporting students' critical capacities and political agency. Ironically, as papers in this collection have shown, the contradictory messages of fundamental British values policy run the risk of undermining this core educational and democratic goal. To return to Foucault, this is the task of critical scholarship, to unmask the effects of power as it operates obscurely, invisibly through the working of policies that appear neutral, independent and benign (Foucault, in Chomsky and Foucault, 2006).

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