

The Curriculum Journal

Call for papers

Decolonial & anti-racist perspectives in teacher training & education curricula in the UK

A forthcoming special issue of the *Curriculum Journal* guest edited by Haira Gandolfi and Elizabeth Rushton

CONTEXT

In recent times, schools and universities have started to engage with decolonial and anti-racist perspectives in their curricula in an attempt to critically explore both the subject stories and the voices that their curricula make visible and invisible (Gandolfi, 2021; Leibowitz, 2017; Moncrieffe et al., 2020; Manathunga, 2018). The work of bringing anti-racist and decolonial perspectives into disciplines, school subjects, and general educational practices is not, however, without difficulty or challenge (Le Grange, 2020; Moncrieffe et al., 2020); and curriculum-making in the context of teacher education has a particular opportunity to support teachers in sharing best practices and ways of working and thinking, especially when in partnership between universities and schools, as outlined by recent experiences in the Global North (Brown, 2013; Domínguez, 2019; 2021; Kerr & Andreotti, 2018) and in the Global South (Borelli et al., 2020; Costa et al., 2020; Khoja-Moolji, 2017).

This special issue of the *Curriculum Journal* will bring together papers which individually and collectively explore decolonial and anti-racist perspectives in

teacher training and education curricula in the UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales). In so doing, the issue will seek to provide a space for those working in and across schools and higher education (HE) in a Global North context to explore the challenges and opportunities encountered when trainee teachers, mentors, experienced teachers, and teacher educators seek to engage with anti-racist and decolonial approaches to their curricula and practices.

While the field of ‘decolonial studies’ seems to have entered the debates in the mainstream Global North academia more recently, it has been part of Indigenous and Global South scholarship for decades, culminating in the collective works, for instance, of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (2013) in South Asia; Franz Fanon in the Caribbean (1986); Anibal Quijano (2007), and Walter Dignolo and Catherine Walsh (2018) in Latin America; and Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) in Africa. And although ‘decolonial studies’ developed into diverse frameworks as a result of the different historical, sociocultural and academic legacies of colonialism across the Global South – such as the focus on Marxist critical theory in Latin American scholarship, and the cultural studies lens often seen in early postcolonial South Asian works – it focuses on exploring and deconstructing the social, racial, economic, and epistemological

legacies of colony-coloniser/imperialist relationships to colonised communities (de Sousa Santos, 2018). It aims to address the 'insularity of historical narratives and historiographical traditions emanating from Europe' around knowledge production, epistemology, and ontology (Bhambra, 2014, p. 115) and, more generally, to foster the reflexive understanding and deconstruction of social, cultural, racial, historical, and epistemic elements behind these colonial relationships and their sociocultural legacies (Le Grange, 2016).

Within this scholarship around colonial relationships and their sociocultural legacies, we also find education: educational ideas and schools have been a core element of colonial projects around the world (Fallace, 2015; Hall, 2008; Simpson, 2007), having been used as an instrument of physical control of colonised communities – such as residential schools in Canada (Woolford & Gacek, 2016) – of epistemic oppression and injustice (de Sousa Santos, 2018) and of racialisation (Grosfoguel, 2004). Grounded on this legacy of colonial projects to the formation of their educational systems (including school funding, curricula, teacher education programme and general views and purposes of schooling), educators in the Global South have been engaging with reflections around the possibilities of decolonial thinking to the transformation of their educational systems through critical deconstruction of these legacies, and construction of new approaches to notions of school, pedagogy and curriculum that foster the emancipation of these colonised communities, such as seen in the works of Freire (1972), Le Grange (2016), Vargas-Cetina (1998), Manathunga (2018), among others. And given the relevance of teachers to both to the process of colonisation (Mackenzie, 1993) and to the emancipation of their students (Freire, 1972; hooks, 2014), teacher educators in the Global South (see for example Borelli et al., 2020; Costa et al., 2020; Khoja-Moolji, 2017) have also been engaging with questions around what kind of teacher and, consequently, teacher education, would be needed for this decolonial (and anti-racist) educational project.

While these links between decolonial studies and the field of education have become more prominent in the Global North in recent years with the 'Rhodes must fall' and 'decolonise the curriculum' movements (Begum & Saini, 2019; Moncrieffe et al., 2020), several anti-racist education frameworks have already been developed in Global North countries – like the US (Ladson-Billings; Brown, 2013) and Canada (for example, Battiste, 2008) – to support

the educational experiences of marginalised groups, such as First Nations and Black communities, with aims similar to those of decolonial perspectives on education emerging from the Global South. In addition, scholars in the Global North (Ideland, 2018; Moncrieffe et al., 2020) have also started to engage with more general reflections on the possible relevance of these decolonial and anti-racist discussions around education emerging from the Global South to their own educational systems, including to teacher education (Domínguez, 2019; 2021; Kerr & Andreotti, 2018).

As guest editors and teacher educators working in the UK, we believe these reflections to be imperative to reflecting on the purposes, aims and practices of education in a Global North country that had a central position in historical processes of colonisation of different communities. In this special issue we seek, therefore, not only to explore experiences of teachers and educators attempting to engage with these questions around decolonisation and anti-racist practices in the UK, but also to promote a wider reflection on the role of teachers, teacher educators and teacher education programmes in supporting the emancipation of marginalised communities – both inside and outside the Global North – through decolonial and anti-racist work. As argued by Quijano (2007) and Mignolo and Walsh (2018), 'coloniality' is present not only in the colonised communities: it also pervades the colonisers' contemporary reality, in the form of persisting colonial legacies to how we – in the Global North – think about, work and establish sociocultural relationships with traditionally marginalised communities through, for instance, educational research, curriculum development, schooling practices, teacher education and international consultancy with roots in colonial logic (Domínguez, 2021). As a result, while we do not pretend that discussing teacher education in the UK will necessarily support the decolonial struggles of communities in the Global South, we argue that a critical engagement with these legacies by Global North educators is vital to avoid (neo)colonialism in/through education (Dompere, 2020; Gyamera & Burke, 2018; Spivak, 2013), and to promote more humanising, anti-colonial and anti-racist practices among these teachers and their own students in the Global North.

As a result, this special issue will seek to explore a wide range of experiences and questions around teacher education and decolonial and anti-racist perspectives in the UK, including the following.

- What are the possible roles of trainees, teachers, mentors and/or teacher educators in processes of decolonial and anti-racist curriculum-making?
- What is the knowledge base needed to support trainees, teachers, mentors and/or teacher educators in processes of decolonial and anti-racist curriculum-making?
- How can teachers, schools and university educators develop anti-racist and decolonising approaches to curricula and educational practices in partnership?
- What can we learn from the different educational contexts in initial teacher education and training (ITTE) and continuing professional development (CPD) across the UK when thinking about decolonial and anti-racist perspectives?
- What are the challenges and opportunities of cross-curricula approaches in this area in the ITTE curricula in the UK?

In order to address the questions above, this special issue will draw from a range of spaces within ITTE and CPD programmes in the UK, including varied school subjects and disciplines (such as science, humanities), different student age groups (primary, secondary and HE settings) and the contrasting national policy approaches to teacher training and education across the UK. We particularly encourage papers from authorial teams that include those from both university and school settings so as to foreground university–school partnership models. We also particularly welcome contributions from generally underrepresented groups in the UK school and HE sectors, such as Black and Asian teachers and academics, and from Global South authors currently working in the UK who bring Southern knowledge and experiences of education and educational scholarship to our ITTE and CPD programmes.

We believe that this focus on decolonial and anti-racist perspectives in ITTE curricula and practices in the UK will provide a space in which to share diverse voices, contributions and cross-curricula perspectives from primary and/or secondary contexts, including empirical initiatives as well as those that consider teachers' and teacher educators' own professional development and/or identities.

Articles selected for publication in this issue are also expected to be grounded in robust – yet diverse, as is the nature of this field – theoretical frameworks that consider the different scholarly international contributions to this topic emerging from different traditions of decolonial studies and anti-racist

education such as those briefly outlined above. Articles published in this issue will, then, not simply describe empirical experiences (such as in the case of 'evaluation studies'). Rather, and more importantly, they will engage with the question of what strong theoretical frameworks in this area – most of them developed in the past decades and centuries by Global South, Indigenous and other underrepresented scholars in the international landscape – can bring to the education of teachers in the Global North, such as those in the UK. As a result, we strongly encourage potential authorial teams to consider, engage with and/or expand some of the themes we raise above when preparing their complete submission to this open call.

TIMELINE & PUBLICATION PROCESS

- Abstracts received by: 17 January 2022
- Abstract authors notified of decisions by: 1 February 2022
- First draft of full papers submitted: by 19 April 2022
- Reviewing complete, authors notified of revisions: 1 September 2022
- Revised papers received: 15 November 2022
- Publication: March 2023

Initial abstract proposals should be 250–500 words in length and be submitted, by the deadline of 17 January 2022, directly to the guest editors of this special issue: Dr Haira Gandolfi (University of Cambridge, heg38@cam.ac.uk) and Dr Elizabeth Rushton (King's College London, Elizabeth.rushton@kcl.ac.uk).

The guest editors will then invite authors of selected abstracts to submit their full papers for double-blind peer-review by 19 April 2022. These full papers should normally be between 6,000 and 8,000 words, excluding tables, references, captions, footnotes and endnotes. Further guidelines on the production and submission of complete manuscripts can be found at bera-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/14693704.

All full papers submitted to this call should follow the *Curriculum Journal's* general guidelines for authors, and will be subjected to double-blind peer-review following the journal's usual procedure. Between eight and ten full papers submitted to this call which best fit this special issue will be selected for publication.

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