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# DECOLONISING CURRICULUM

Reading group 2

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# DECOLONISING CURRICULUM KNOWLEDGE: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

- <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-13623-8>

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# DECOLONISING PARTICIPATORY METHODS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Reflections from a Participatory Arts based project with Afrocolombian and indigenous young people.

Kustatscher et al (2022)

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# PROBLEMATISING PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGIES

- Risk of subsuming of PM into global knowledge politics and research relations
  - Relationships and methods on the ground
  - Positionalities of those involved
  - Preservation of emancipatory potential – working within particular structures of power
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# CRITICISM OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

- May reinforce power hierarchies
- Take exclusionary forms
- (Cooke and Kothari, 2001)
  - New tyranny of participation in international development.
  - Gender bias, reinforce patriarchal structures



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# DECOLONISATION OF CHILDHOOD AND CHILDREN' PARTICIPATION

- Liberating children from the burden of dominant models of childhood which regulate and stigmatise the and narrate their life course (Burman, 2020).
  - Ideas about childhood influence how participatory processes are conceived.
  - Participation through educational institutions – good. Street children?
  - Issue of which children: very young children not included; marginalised children not included in projects that are not about that topic or disabled children not included in research that is not about disability.
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# THE PROJECT

- Deconstructing collective memories and imagining alternative futures with young people in choco through music and arts.
  - In areas greatly affected by armed conflict and violence
  - Afrocolombian and indigenous populations.
  - Aim of project: respond to priorities set by young people: tensions within and between neighbouring barrios, violence and armed gangs; fear and mistrust.
  - Developed in participatory workshops
  - Shifted online due to Covid
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# ISSUES

- Funding – Uk Government developmental budget- Global challenges Research Fund
- Funding requirements may reproduce structural inequalities – epistemological biases.
- Dominance of writing as preferred form of academic output.
- Children produced music and vision for gastro-social enterprise celebrating their heritage
  - Potential of music to transform lives

Going online meant non-participation for some groups

Ethics of decolonisation in research projects – how people relate to each other and how benefits of research are shared – such concerns not usually part of ethical reviews

Need to attend to wellbeing, care, safeguarding were key issues for research team. Traditional research ethics can be more about protecting the researcher than the researched?

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# Arts based methods

- Pros – flexibility- allows children to express themselves easily

# What does decolonisation means to childhood studies?

- 1) involving children in knowledge generation
- 2) critically interrogate and liberate children from dominant models of childhood
- 3) make visible and challenge colonial histories and power relations
  
- Decolonising participatory methods requires ongoing questioning of our complicity – particularly those from majority groups.
- ‘There is no global social justice without global cognitive justice (De Sousa Santos, 2007)

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# DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM IN HYBRID SPACES: MUSLIM SCHOOLING IN RUSSIA

## KAMIL NASIBULLOV AND NATALIYA KOPYLOVA

- Applying decolonising lens to education in Russia
  - Controversy – is social situation in Russia postcolonial, i.e. preserving colonial relations?
  - Internal colonisation – emerged during Russian Empire, retained in the Soviet Union and continued into post-Soviet era (Etkind et al., 2012)
  - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001h44k>
  - Decolonisation of post-Soviet education – focus on ethnography and indigenous people.
  - Soviet Union – centralisation and standardisation of education, post-Soviet – pluralisation, new methods, new schools, weaker control
  - Current tendency – de-centralisation of education, standardisation of examination system
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# POST-SOVIET EDUCATION

- Promoting regional and ethnic identity.
  - However, Russian school textbooks portray Russians as the main characters in Russian history, focused on a civilising mission while representatives of other indigenous peoples are presented as passive participants in historical processes.
  - Decolonisation of regional education – right for education in native language, including developing new resources with the focus on indigenous languages, history and culture by indigenous authors.
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# RUSSIAN EDUCATION AFTER 2000

- Increased centralisation, unified education space – new education standards – removing ethnic component – focus on developing Russian civic identity – to avoid ethnic separatism.
  - State unified exam – based on British and French system – can only be passed in Russian.
  - In 2018 – education in native languages became optional, which led to reduction of regional component in the curriculum
  - Current national project – standardised quality education across all regions of Russian federation, focus on individual child's needs, digital education, high social mobility, patriotic education, based on research and supplementary education, accessibility.
  - [https://smotrim.ru/brand/68098?utm\\_source=internal&utm\\_medium=main2-movies&utm\\_campaign=filter-documentaries2](https://smotrim.ru/brand/68098?utm_source=internal&utm_medium=main2-movies&utm_campaign=filter-documentaries2)
  - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abakan>
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# THE CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TATARSTAN

- Tatarstan – after Golden Horde, Kazan Khanat – powerful state, Muslim religion, became part of Russian empire, allowed to practice Islamic faith
  - Currently populated by Tatars – follow Sunni Islam (53%) and Russians. Became autonomous republic in 1920s. Tatar – official language, protected by constitution.
  - In 1990ies - national Tatar pedagogy were built on works of the late 19th and early twentieth century Tatar educators. ‘Decolonial’ reforms to revive the Tatar culture.
  - As a result of education reforms and introduction of unified examination - fewer hours allocated to teaching Tatar at schools and more than 200 Tatar-medium schools closed in the period 2013–2017 (Suleymanova, 2020)
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# TATAR-MEDIUM SCHOOLS AS ADVOCATES FOR PLURALISM

- Third spaces for multi-ethnic urban settings
  - Minority schools maintaining the balance between assimilation and demands for accommodations; coloniser and colonised, discrimination and resistance
  - Tatar-medium school as a hybrid space - power struggle in relation to school curricula and practices.
  - Moral upbringing (nравственное воспитание ) a central idea in Tatar-medium schools, based on Tatar intellectuals and prominent Islamic scholars.
  - Textbooks written by Tatar scholars and public figures with alternative perspectives on historical events and local culture and peoples.
  - supports cultural pluralism, considers the interests of all communities and not just ethnic minorities.
  - Tatar-medium schools as favourable places for the education of Muslims - the pluralist approach to education occurring in hybrid spaces within the Russian educational context – decolonial perspective.
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# LIMITATIONS OF EDUCATION REFORM OF 2012

- <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/nov/28/community-languages-uk-young-attitudes>
  - <https://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2022/01/ofsted-slams-islamic-schools-over-safeguarding-curriculum-failures>
  - <https://muslimskeptic.com/2022/07/07/uk-takes-action-islamic-schools/>
  - Secular nature of education limits religious communities
  - Muslim parents prefer tartar medium schools due to stricter discipline and Islamic values of respect, tolerance and responsibility, improving behaviour outside the school, wearing hijab, preference for halal food.
  - At the same time there are concerns of radicalisation, fine balance between teaching language and religion.
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