Nationalism and diversity in schools

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(Re)constructing nationalisms in schools in the context of diverse globalised societies


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Introduction

Schools are key battlegrounds between competing ideas of national identity, belonging and nationalism on four key, interconnected grounds. First, in many societies, there is an increasing ethnic diversity of students, associated with global migration, globalization and past waves of migration. Second, schools are sites wherein competing ideas of national identity are habitually circulated in non-conscious and non-deliberate ways. Third, deliberate attempts are made to ‘teach’ children specific ideas of nationalisms which can be more or less inclusive or exclusive via formal curricula. Fourth, schools are arena wherein attempts are made to teach children and young people to be more accepting and tolerant of difference. As Mitchell (2003) and others (Arnott and Ozga 2010; Kotowski 2013; Kong 2013) have argued, schools remain key sites where national belonging and identity and specific types of nationalism are taught. Clearly, there is a tension between "the two roles of the educational system as, on the one hand, a mediator of the dominant culture, commemoration of imagined nationality and, on the other hand, a promoter of democracy, multiculturalism and ethnic and cultural divergence" (Hjerm 2001:38). Given the importance of schools as sites of the reproduction of different and sometimes competing ideas of nationalism and national identity, the study of nationalism in schools is crucial.
Nationalism can be viewed as a ‘chaotic concept’ (Sayer 1982) being ascribed a host of apparently incompatible meanings within lay, academic and political discourses, ranging from exclusionary and homogenous (primordial) interpretations to inclusionary and heterogeneous and (progressive) accounts (Mavroudi 2010). These accounts make diverse political claims and are powerful acts. According to Mavroudi (2010: 219-220):

nationalism and national identity have become regarded as ways in which states are able to control and manipulate belonging within defined boundaries, which are located within and across territorial state borders... Nationalism, despite its potential for unity, liberation and collectivity, has a tendency towards purity and homogeneity.

In this chapter, rather than establishing a true or correct version of nationalism, we argue that different nationalism(s) and senses of national belonging are contextual, performed and become via a particular coming together of specific things, people and ideas in particular places. Therefore, specific nationalisms are socially constructed and situated in particular times, spaces and places. Notwithstanding this dynamism, not all nationalisms are equal, and some versions are more influential within media or public discourses or adopted within specific political arenas, such as educational policy. It is this sense of the heterogeneity of different ideas of nationalism, national identity and belonging which pervades the chapter, and we explore how these compete and are reproduced in specific ways as educational policies are enacted within the specific spaces of schools.
Specifically, we are interested in the ways in which different groups can belong to or be excluded from specific nationalisms. As Antonsich (2010: 650) emphasises: "every politics of belonging involves two opposite sides: the side that claims belonging and the side that has the power of ‘granting’ belonging". Although framed as different and competing ideas of nationalism (to which groups and individuals variously belong or from which they are disavowed), the chapter explores both sides of this belonging within schools. We would suggest, however, that Antonsich’s concept of belonging evokes a rather dualistic concept of power and that, as performed and practiced in particular socio-spatial contexts, the power to seek belonging and to belong, or to not belong, to a specific set of nationalisms is more nuanced, messy and complex.

Our focus is on different and competing nationalisms, as, despite the growing importance of the concept of post-nationalism (Soysal 1998), nationalism and national identity are still very powerful discourses (Brubaker 2004; Calhoun 2007). We view nationalism as socially constructed and 'imagined' (Anderson 1993) in specific, often banal ways (Billig 1995), and we argue that both elite (or top-down) and non-elite (or bottom-up) understandings of nationalism (Kassielas Wiltgren 2013) or what Pryke (2003) calls 'micro-nationalism' are important in the ways that nationalism is performed and expressed. In particular, we are interested in exploring the perceived ‘challenge’ to traditional, primordial notions of nationalism that emerges from the move towards ‘super-diverse’ societies (Vertovec 2007, 2011).
In this chapter we examine these issues through a discussion of schools and the ways in which schools impose and teach top-down nationalisms and how young people and adults in schools as social agents negotiate, from below, diverse individual and collective identities and nationalisms in schools, via a critical synthesis of existing literature. We are not aiming for a comparative and exhaustive examination of this literature; rather, we are using this literature to highlight different relevant case studies from a variety of contexts, but mainly within Europe and the USA, which shed light on nationalism and schooling in diverse societies. To conclude the chapter, we identify the need for research to address a key gap in the existing literature, which has yet to fully explore how schools are lived, socio-spaces, wherein people (both children and adults) perform nationalism in specific ways. More thought needs to be given to how children and adults’ specific subjectivities and personal histories/trajectories, migration histories, ethnic identity, and whether they are recent migrants or established ethnic minority groups, influence their nationalisms, national identities and belongings. How this intersects with other ‘axes of power’ (Butler, 1990), such as class, gender, religion, and so on is also of interest.

The chapter has two key sections. The next section focuses on top-down constructions of nationalism, and the instilling of national values and inclusion of migrants and ethnic minorities via formal curricula. We then examine nationalisms that emerge from everyday practices through a discussion of the agency of young people in school spaces. Crucial to this discussion is a conceptualisation of schools as porous spaces; connected to local communities and families, and to other places within and across national borders. Schools are also institutional spaces in which specific, and sometimes contradictory ideas of the national are (re)produced via the formal curricula which are however, open to be interpreted
slightly differently in particular contexts. We wish to stress that our approach in this chapter is exploratory rather than comprehensive and aims to identify key themes to raise ideas for further research exploration. It does not intend to be a comprehensive review of schooling and nationalism in different countries and contexts.

**The promotion of top-down nationalism and the politics of belonging in schools**

The increased diversity of school student populations has prompted some to question how migrants can be included into societies and the nation, raising questions about what it means to be part of a 'nation' in an age of diversity. Schooling plays a significant role in how children and teachers negotiate national belonging and (re)produce different nationalisms, thereby potentially influencing how diversity is dealt with in the context of increasing migration and enhanced "nationalist intolerance" (Triandafyllidou and Kouki 2013).

Nationalism can be constructed in both exclusive and inclusive ways (Mavroudi 2010). However, there can be a stark difference between reflective considerations of the ethnic, religious and racial differences and exclusive ideals of nationalism (Scourfield and Davies, 2005), and attempts to encourage acceptance and inclusion of diversity can conflict with endeavours to promote a cohesive, inclusive nationalism. This may especially become an issue with increased immigration, when such differences may be more likely to be constructed in negative, Othering ways, and the complex feelings of home and belonging diasporic and transnational migrants mean they do not fit neatly into 'the national' (Mavroudi 2010).

**The promotion of diversity in schools**

Schools are often the forefront of endeavours to produce more tolerant and accepting future societies (Hjerm 2001; Wilson, 2013), and this may (re)produce a heterogeneous and
inclusive nationalism. Indeed, much emphasis is placed on the possibilities of young people, by being educated together, becoming more tolerant of difference and creating more cohesive future societies (Minello and Barban, 2012). These points are evident in education policy documents in many contexts, such as the UK (e.g. Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2009). Underpinning attempts to enhance the belonging and inclusion of children in schools are different ideas about the place of migrants and ethnic and religious minorities within particular national contexts, and how this is influenced by the often heterogeneous national identities of first and later generation migrant children in their families.

Schooling can therefore encourage inclusion through a politics of belonging, via the formal curriculum as well as the informal curriculum, which teaches children appropriate social skills, and through which cultural dispositions are taught in non-deliberate ways (Reynolds 2008). However, the approach of a country to migrants, nationalism, citizenship and the 'politics of belonging' will influence how schools approach not only with diversity, migrant and ethnic minority children but also how they attempt to teach all children to be 'national' through formal, informal and ‘hidden’ curricula.

In societies pursuing an approach which celebrates cultural diversity, inclusion is often promoted as ways for ethnic minority and migrant groups to retain elements of culture and religion, to help deal with potential host country hostility (Abbas 2007), and to promote national belonging. However, in the process, policies aimed at encouraging cultural diversity has resulted in putting cultures in boxes and rewarding specific cultural and religious groups as a way to 'keep the peace' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992). Such governmental views of cultural identities can be seen as static as it puts them in opposition to the national, which is seen as different and needing to 'accommodate' and tolerate these
differences rather than genuinely include them within the nation (Joppke 2004). This approach to nationalism seems to be one that highlights the importance of cultural and religious diversity, but in reality is one which also promotes the ideals and rhetoric of 'mono-cultural' nationalism. It is these contradictory messages and attempts to create 'the national' which have influenced schools and the ways in which nationalism is negotiated within them.

The worrying rise of the far-right and those who are anti-immigrants and pro national homogeneity is a reminder of how potentially exclusionary nationalism can be, and at the same time, of the need to create counter, inclusive nationalisms as a deliberate political strategy. It also seems that this need has trickled down into education policy in Western societies, who have used schools to try to manage diversity, and at the same time, maintain shared and cohesive national identities. However, for the most part, these sometimes conflicting and contradictory impulses have not been part of a shared and deliberate attempt to produce a cohesive curriculum, but are tied to diverse political agendas manifesting themselves via different strands of the curriculum.

This approach arguably privileges and solidifies certain group identities and does not necessarily aid communication and interaction between different groups (Valentine and Sadgrove 2013). Kiwan (2011) for example, stresses how the UK government has focused on ‘Britishness’ and "'shared values’ through examining ‘identities and diversity in the UK’" (Ajegbo et al., 2007, cited in Kiwan 2011: 270). She demonstrates how a government's position on nationalism and citizenship influences the education of its children, and how it
seeks to educate newcomers to that society. Even in England, one could argue that much education about meanings of the nation are implicitly about integrating migrants and ethnic minorities into the national, and reaffirming to non-migrant/ethnic majority children what it means to be British: to have shared values, despite being framed in diversity rhetoric (Kiwan 2011).

The UK government has used school education to help create diverse and tolerant societies (Reynolds 2008) via Personal Social and Health Education and more conscious endeavours to (re)produce a hegemonic and homogenous sense of British identity in the History Curriculum (Haydn 2012). Dwyer and Paritus (2012) have also highlighted how faith schools have been used to try and highlight the importance of religious diversity, as ways to help create what they call 'community cohesion'. On the one hand, they stress that faith schools are a sign that religious diversity is being promoted; on the other, these schools also have to be seen to be inclusive and help create nationalism, two seemingly different agendas. It is this contradictory role, of both recognising diversity, but also promoting nationalism which can create problems.

This has been aptly demonstrated in the UK by highly politicised debates over the Islamicisation of state schools in Birmingham and the extent to which Islam is tolerated in the attempt to ensure 'British values' are promoted.¹ Fuelled by documents outlining ‘Operation Trojan Horse’, apparently setting out a blue-print for how conservative Muslim groups have taken over the governing bodies of schools with a high proportion of Muslim

¹ See: http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jul/22/schools-face-curbs-extremism-birmingham-trojan-horse-affair
students, changing staff and school policies towards conservative Islamic rules and practices, and how this could be applied in Bradford, the origin of these documents cannot be verified, but many believe it was forged to highlight events to media and the public. It would seem that at the least schools were following conservative Islamic approaches, such as gender segregation, although many also had seen huge improvements in results, despite being in extremely deprived areas. This brings to light the conflicts that can occur when the views of a minority group stand in stark contrast to hegemonic views of the nation. In these cases, it would seem, tolerance and acceptance of a diversity of cultural approaches are not permitted. It also emphasises that it is not always only top-down nationalisms that can be exclusive, with bottom-up nationalisms or cultural identities being inclusive. The events in Birmingham have given succour to attempts to promote Britishness in schools, and clearly have also fuelled negative media and public representations of Islam. However, they also demonstrate a very real conflict over competing cultural identities and nationalisms in schools.

*Implicitly exclusionary nationalisms in schools*

Despite some specific attempt to encourage young people to be tolerant or accepting of difference, in many, even more progressive contexts, relationships between schooling, nationalism and migration are strongly linked to educating children to be citizens of that country first and foremost. Ideals of nationalism and national identity are often framed relatively exclusively. Even if school education policy values the ethnic diversity, they often do so at best in a manner that tolerates difference as long as it doesn't threaten Us and at worst in a manner that excludes Others. It is often in deploying ideas of the national and promoting specific nationalisms that the homogenous, exclusionary ideals are teased out,
often in ways which are not consciously at odds with promoting inclusion of ethnic and religious diversity, but which exclude migrants and ethnic diversity implicitly.

Exclusive visions of nationalism are frequently deployed in contexts that are actively building a national identity in the face of some perceived threat. Wales and Scotland, for instance, which are drawing upon nationalism in the face of perceived longstanding English cultural imperialisms are good examples of this. In the context of Scotland, Arnott and Ozga, (2010: 342) point out that "education ... has played a particularly strong role historically in the shaping and support of national identity (see Scourfield and Davies 2005 for the example of Wales). Therefore, even in counties which appear to follow more inclusive approaches to the nation, conflicts arise of different accounts of nationalism, and changes in government can be associated with shifts in the types of policy promoted. This has recently been evidenced in England, where education policy has taken a recent turn towards a homogenous/exclusionary sense of the national, under the leadership of former Education Secretary Michael Gove. Specifically within his planned changes to the national curriculum for 7-11/11-14 year olds, Gove wanted to focus on British national history and promote an understanding of the development of the nation in young children, engendering greater pride in the nation and a monolithic view of nationalism (Haydn 2012; DfE 2013). However, the emphasis on English national history and nationalism was toned down following an outcry by academics, teachers and activists, demonstrating just how political curricula are (Mansell 2013). However, schools have been compelled to promote so called 'British values'. Clearly, there is often a conflict between a perceived need to promote nationalism for unity, political and democratic purposes but at the same time, promote acceptance of difference in diverse societies (Arnott and Ozga 2010: 343).
States such as the USA, also "oscillate between the two poles of assimilation and diversity" according to Kotowski (2013: 300). Nonetheless, he claims that textbooks (ibid: 300, 302) "constitute one of the few points of crystallization for a quasi-official formulation of national identities or imaginaries...It can therefore be said that in the United States, nation-centric narratives have survived in the curriculum, even though the ‘politics of diversity’ have undoubtedly changed the overall tone of the instructional materials". Kotowski (2013) acknowledges that the curricula and textbooks have presented America as a country of immigration; however, this has occurred within a rhetoric of 'US exceptionalism' and a pervasion of strong cultural boundaries (ibid.). This highlights the way in which states try to instil national belonging in its students even as they pay lip service to diversity.

Another relevant example is Greece; Zervas (2013) demonstrates this by exploring the role that the teaching of Greek history in schools has played in creating and shaping modern Greek national belonging in narrow, potentially exclusionary ways. According to Faas (2011), Greek textbooks are generally ethno-centric and teachers have an expectation that migrant students should assimilate (see also, Motti-Stefanidi et al. 2008) into the Greek nation; this has meant that issues of cultural and religious diversity are not overly addressed and curricula strongly focuses on the teaching of 'national topics' (Faas 2011). However, this has led to difficulties in addressing the country’s current status as a country of immigration as opposed to emigration, leading to 'nationalist intolerance' (Triandafyllidou and Kouki 2013; Antonopoulos 2006).
Although perhaps an exceptional and certainly contested case, Israel and the Palestinian Territories have had to negotiate both diversity and more narrowly defined top-down nationalism in education and therefore provide some useful examples. Despite its rhetoric of national Jewish unity, Israel is a country dealing with a diverse Jewish and non-Jewish population. As a country of Jewish immigration, an indigenous non Jewish, Arab population and newer non Jews and non Arab migrant workers (and more recently asylum seekers from Africa), Israel has changed from being a country that negated the cultural differences and origins of its returning Jewish diaspora and expected assimilation. It now constructs itself as a Western neoliberal state dealing with globalisation and diversity. However, it maintains a commitment to a Jewish-based nationalism, which is exclusionary for non-Jews. This need to maintain and stress Jewish-based nationalism has resulted in a separate education system for Jews and Arabs. Jewish schools are spaces in which top-down nationalism is stressed as part of a strategy of creating and maintaining shared collective Jewish memories and identities, which negate the Other. As Sion (2013: 5) argues, the curriculum in Jewish schools is based strictly on primordial particularistic principles that obstruct the possibility for alternative narratives”, whilst the "curriculum in Arab schools has been sanitized of any national content". Peled-Elhanan (2013) goes further and states that Israeli textbooks contain racist and dehumanised portraits of Palestinians. A controversial 2013 US state department funded academic report into Jewish and Palestinian textbooks in Israel and the Palestinian Territories respectively found that although both construct negative images of the Other, 49% of texts dealing with Palestinians in Israeli state-issued schoolbooks were negative, in government-funded Orthodox Jewish schools this was 73% and in Palestinian textbooks it was 84%.²

Both formal and informal education has had an important role to play in creating national identity and nationalism for both Jews and Palestinians, in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in diaspora (see e.g. Mavroudi 2007; Blumer 2011). It seems that education has unfortunately been used to further separation between Palestinians and Israeli Jews through exclusionary and narrow conceptions of national belonging that deal with, and construct, the Other in negative ways. As regards schooling in the Palestinian Territories, although one might argue that Palestinians, being stateless and in a weaker position, need to construct national unity for political and self-determination purposes, it does not seem helpful if they promote extreme versions of national belonging to their young people through schooling and textbooks (see e.g. Mueller 2012 on Hamas, nationalism and education). However, a note of caution is stressed by Murray (2008) who highlights that the difficulties in creating Palestinian textbooks not only reflects the contested and restrictive nation-building that Palestinians face in the region, but also the unwelcome influence of outside influences. It seems that both Jewish and Palestinian (in the West Bank and Gaza) curricula have had to grapple with creating separation and division through competing, rather than inclusive nationalisms in education. An exception to this has been where Jews and Palestinians are taught together in so-called bi-national schools, where narratives of shared identities and communicating with the Other are more common (Hughes 2007).

To conclude this section, it seems that marrying nationalism and diversity in school spaces is difficult because a focus on inclusion and collective, shared national identities often ignores or negates the complex, multiple feelings of home that students, teachers and parents/other family members may have.
Children and adults contesting top-down nationalism at school?

According to Banks (2004: 123), "there is a wide gap between the democratic ideals in Western nations and the daily experiences of students in schools". This suggests that there is a need to closely examine the experiences of young people in schools, how they construct and contest nationalism and how they negotiate identity, the politics of belonging and inclusion within schools. Schools provide examples of spaces where young people can resist normative values, build alternative religious identities (see e.g. Valins 2003) but may also experience inclusion as well as exclusion because of factors such as their identity, racism, and religious discrimination (see, for example, work by Spicer 2008 on refugee children in Scotland). Holt (2007) also points to the importance of exploring experiences within school spaces to better understand the perceptions and realities of inclusion and exclusion of marginalised groups. Quantitative research has demonstrated that many ethnic minority children under-perform relatively within education (Strand 2011), and this can have impacts upon participation in the higher education and labour market status (Stevenson and Willott 2007). Holt et al.’s (2013) study of young people’s embodied social capital suggests that children’s sociality and informal curricula might be an important mediator in access to and success in formal aspects of schooling. Therefore belonging and inclusion within school is crucial for young people.

However, the particular impacts of migration on both accompanied and unaccompanied children and their specific experiences of migration have often been ignored. Research has demonstrated that young people's perspectives and agency are important and insightful since they have different experiences and understandings than adults might expect (van Blerk and
Ansell 2006; O’Connell Davidson and Farrow 2007; Spicer 2008; Valentine et al. 2009; Bushin and White 2010). These issues feed into wider debates about the importance of considering young people as agents (Holloway and Valentine 2000), which have recently been further refined to emphasise a need to explore more the ways in which agency is socio-spatially situated, structured and constrained (Holt 2011).

Formal and informal curricula can and do play a role in trying to mould children’s perceptions of Others and national belonging (Motti-Stefanidi et al 2008). In the Greek part of Cyprus, research by Spyrou (2011) shows teachers attempting to instil national values and Othering by explaining history and the relationship with Turkey in ways which prioritise Greek perspectives. Although children may try and contest this top-down nationalism, it is hard to do so in the formal space of the classroom, given the hierarchical relationship between children and adults; this demonstrates the powerful role that school spaces and teachers have in instilling national belonging. Indeed Zembylas (2011) highlights the problematic racialised and ethnicised processes of exclusion and Othering that take place in ‘multicultural schools’ (so-called because a minority of Turkish Cypriot children attend) and stresses that unless there are profound changes in the ways in which the curricula and teachers handle issues of Othering and promote more narrow exclusionary notions nationalism, racism and intolerance will be (re)produced. By contrast, in research on Irish schools, Devine et al (2008) highlight how the prevalence of racism, Othering and negative constructions of difference among young people, need to be more effectively negotiated and challenged within school by teachers and other actors.
A fascinating case study into two schools in the UK provides evidence of this. Faas (2008) demonstrates that in a school where the student body experienced conflict over identity and difference even though the school ethos was to celebrate the diversity and difference of its mostly working class students, they tended to resort to more narrow interpretations of national identity and Othering. However, in a more middle-class school which also celebrated difference, but also promoted inclusion and similarity in what Faas (2008) calls 'inclusive multiculturalism', students seemed to create more inclusive and tolerant notions of nationalism. It should be noted that differences in the composition of the schools, and the fact that the first school was more ethnically mixed may have played a role. Therefore, perceptions of nationalism are not given, but highly dependent on factors such as class, type of school, student mix, the role of teachers and curricula and perhaps most importantly, young people themselves and the influences they face outside of school. Children and young people may be seen as constrained in some ways as a result of their 'baggage' and structural factors beyond their control but they are also active agents, carving out their own versions of both personal and shared nationalism. Therefore, as Spyrou (2011) points out, it is important to note that children do contest nationalism even in such power-laden spaces as classrooms and that teachers do not necessarily reject children's alternative understandings of nationalism in these spaces (see also Scourfield and Davies 2005 in a Welsh context; Mansouri and Trembath 2005; Purdie and Wilss 2007 in Australia). Synthesising the findings of all these studies, it seems that, perhaps that even if top-down attempts to instil national cohesion are exclusionary for some, young people and teachers can respond favourably to diversity and display agency in the process. It is possible for children and young people to challenge and change teachers’ ideas of nationalism (Spyrou 2011).
Exclusive nationalisms do not only emerge from the state. In the UK, Blackredge and Creese (2009) have explored supplementary schools attended by many ethnic-minority children outside of formal school hours. They demonstrated that children who are part of a diasporic community, which reproduces a national identity tied to an original homeland, can resist attempts by teachers from the same diaspora tying learning their ‘home’ language to a sense of nationalism tied to their homeland. In the same way, research on diasporic children and young migrants in schools has highlighted the complex identity processes that children have to negotiate whilst dealing with school and domestic spaces, with sometimes competing nationalisms (Dwyer 1999).

Identity construction is seen as a malleable, dynamic process, one that is even more complex for migrants and those in diaspora (Dwyer 1999; Vertovec 2001; Blunt 2007; Mavroudi 2007a). Some researchers within the field of geographies of children and youth have investigated the ways in which young migrants construct and negotiate their identities differently in a variety of contexts (e.g. Bushin and White 2010; Tyrrell et al. 2013; Valentine et al. 2009). There is much scope for further examination of young people’s experiences specifically within schools spaces, given schools’ pivotal role in policies towards constructing variously inclusive or exclusive national identities.

For educational systems and schools to attempt to promote national unity and citizenship, such diverse and complicated identity formation processes need to be accounted for. This can be difficult and challenging, according to Rhamie et al (2012), whose research focuses
on the new spaces and identities that children in diverse secondary schools create. This is because they found that young people negotiate their individual and collective identities in complex, contradictory and dynamic as well as gendered and racialised ways. Similarly, in a Swedish context, Kasselias Wiltgren (2013) found that young people in schools are happy to use national and religious symbols (like scarves and bracelets) as markers of difference and as ways to display their national, religious and mixed identities. In other places like the Palestinian Territories and in Palestinian refugee camps, work has also focused on how children construct national identity in specific locations (Habashi 2008) and spaces like schools using symbols such as the olive tree and the image of Palestine as the 'mother' (McLaughlin 2006). Such processes of nation-building and imagining in children may be perceived by communities as even more important for those who are stateless and actively involved in self-determination and therefore, for such groups teaching children that they are part of a nation within schools and communities may be seen as paramount in order to create shared identities (see, for example, Mavroudi 2007a on the Palestinian diaspora and how parents try to teach their children to be Palestinian).

This section has demonstrated that although young people can and do manage to resist top-down versions of nationalism, and to negotiate their own complex national and multiple identities, they are still limited and constrained by factors beyond their control. This stresses the importance of ensuring that the national messages and visions young receive from those in positions of power, such as at school, and their parents are inclusive and that it is within school spaces in particular where they spend so much time, that have the potential to help create inclusive nationalisms. However, despite the research presented here on children's perceptions of nationalism, as Spyrou (2010: 539) points out: “The role of nationalism in
producing powerful senses of belonging among school children is certainly an under-researched topic especially as it manifests itself in daily social practice rather than through the analysis of textbooks and curriculum guides”.

Although there is some research about young people’s experiences of nationalism within the context of increasing ethnic diversity within school spaces, there is much more research required. It is imperative that young people's experiences of national belonging and inclusion are explored in different schools and school micro-spaces, since schools and the spaces within them are “specific moments in time and space; located within, dissected by, and comprising, a unique combination of myriad social process that operate at a variety of intersecting scales” (Holt 2004a: 233). Within these specific school spaces, everyday practices reproduce particular ideas about migration, ethnic origin and tolerance/intolerance of migrants and ethnic minorities and their diverse backgrounds and differences. Although these practices are also connected to broader education policies, these issues are also influenced by the specific socio-spatial context of the school and school spaces and the experiences and histories of the individual agents within the school (adults and children). Hence education policy and practice are interpreted in specific ways within the specific spatial contexts of individual school and within-school spaces. Within these specific school spaces, everyday practices reproduce particular ideas about migration, ethnic identity and tolerance/intolerance of Others with diverse backgrounds and differences. Furthermore, it is not only school spaces but also particular disciplines that may impact on students’ (and teachers’) negotiations of belonging and integration (Flintoff et al 2008), so that there is a need for more research into how young people respond to the teaching of specific disciplines and how this is related to factors such as gender and ethnicity (HEA 2008).
Although children actively negotiate nationalism, their ideas of nationalism and national identity are tied to how they are taught formally about nationalism, the more informal ways they may encounter nationalism in other spaces like the home, and informal cultures of the school (see also Valentine and Sadgrove 2012; Wilson 2014). Importantly, more nuanced accounts are required which explore how young people’s and adults diverse histories, trajectories and backgrounds, including factors such as socio-economic positioning or ‘class’, gender, religion, and so on, along with ethnicity, influence the nationalisms they deploy. We suggest that a focus on nationalisms specifically are important, as it is visions of nationalism and national identity and belonging that taken-for-granted assumptions about who does or does not belong are revealed.

**Conclusions: Moving towards inclusive nationalisms in schools?**

Using a variety of case studies, examples, and a brief discussion of the literature on schooling and nationalism, this chapter has emphasised that schools are important sites for the (re)production of national belonging, which can be both tied to regressive and more progressive politics of culture, place and identity making in which diversity is negotiated. We have demonstrated the need to construct and research schools as porous, malleable spaces connected to global processes and policy initiatives, but also as specific moments wherein the people, places and things come together in specific ways to (re)produce and potentially contest different versions of nationalism, which are variously homogenous and exclusionary or heterogeneous and inclusionary in the context of increasingly diverse societies. Furthermore, we have outlined the importance of examining top-down and bottom-up understandings of nationalism, to explore how schools are key sites of
contestation between different ideas of the nation and the national and spaces where diversity, inclusion, belonging and identity are negotiated and performed. Schools need to be viewed as dynamic spaces, linked to the national through state involvement, but also to other national, transnational, diasporic and international spaces through migration and globalisation. As a result, young people within schools are influenced by different understandings of nationalism emerging from homes, communities, popular media and formal and informal curricula. Teachers and education policy makers need to be better equipped to deal with increasingly diverse school spaces and students in positive ways that genuinely celebrate difference. There is a need for more research into how schools and policy-makers can do this, as well as how young people and teachers construct school spaces and identities through transnational, diasporic and international lens, and how in turn such school spaces can become more inclusive. This is important if schools are to succeed as shared spaces where difference is celebrated, but also included as the norm, and where national belonging is not positioned as an alternative or Other to diversity, and so that racism, prejudice and xenophobia is combated. It is essential to listen to what young people feel about diversity, belonging and nationalism, in order to try and ensure that they do feel included, regardless of their background. As Reynolds (2008: 28) stresses: "A wider exploration of inclusion experiences across more schools as well as research among non-migrant students ...would be invaluable".

It is telling that a key new book about Transnationalism and Childhood (Tyrrell et al 2013) only glancingly mentions school level education as a mediator of children’s experiences. This suggests that transnational migrant children’s experiences of schooling need much further unpicking, particularly within Western contexts. Emerging research has begun to
suggest that socio-spatial location of schools and other aspects of identity of the young people in schools, such as class, gender, and ethnicity influence how nationalism is interpreted, performed and lived. Further research exploring how nationalism is (re)produced in different school contexts by a variety of actors (both younger and older) variously positioned along a host of axes of difference are required to further understand how schools can act as mediators in (re)producing a more progressive and inclusive sense of national identities.

If one views nationalism as socially constructed, contingent, situated and malleable, diversity should not be seen as a threat, but an opportunity to move forward and create 'inclusive nationalism' (Mavroudi 2010). According to Murray (2008: 39), "education is the story that society tells about itself. What we teach our children is who we are, or who we want to be". Thus, the role of schools is to promote an inclusive, hopeful, and better society, ready to combat ever-present (and in some contexts increasing) xenophobia, prejudice and racism. Worryingly, in many counties, such endeavours are increasingly hampered rather than aided by aspects of education policy and formal curricula that (re)produce regressive and exclusionary senses of a homogenous national identity. However, education policy is not imposed; it is enacted by actors in specific spatial contexts, providing space for more inclusionary interpretations in everyday school spaces.

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