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Editorial

Securitizing education, but from what?

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1 SCHOOL AND THE DECIVILISING PROCESS

The famous thesis of the civilising process put forward by Norbert Elias, according to which our societies would be traversed by a continuous process characterised by the consolidation of modern states monopolising legitimate physical violence on the one hand, and by the growing self-control of impulses in society on the other (Elias, 1978/1982 [1939]) has been the subject of much discussion, particularly since the 1980s, when there was a decline in physical violence of various kinds, to the point that some people have seen in it a – or more accurately several – decivilising processes (Mennel, 1990). Considered to varying degrees in different countries as a kind of "sanctuary" where pupils must be kept away from the tensions of society in order to develop schools are obviously not spared from the violence of the world around them. Schools can be the scene of specific forms of violence, ranging from various forms of harassment between pupils, but also between pupils and adults, to mass killings (Newman et al., 2005), of which the United States has the record, but not the exclusive right. School violence became a public problem in the 1990s and an electoral issue in the mid-2000s (Lelièvre, 2023). It was also at this time that academic research intensified, with the publication of numerous articles and review books analysing both the phenomenon itself from a national or international perspective (Debarbieux & La Borderie, 2006) and the way in which it is dealt with by the media and the judicial system (McCabe & Martin, 2005).

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To this demand to make schools safe from within has gradually been added a second one, consisting in making schools contribute to safety outside themselves. It was primarily the terrorist attacks carried out by young people who had been educated in the society affected that helped to fuel the idea that schools had a crucial role to play in preventing these phenomena. But with different temporalities and forms in different countries, the school institution was also called upon to contribute to the fight against different forms of violence: racist, anti-Semitic, sexist, LGBTQI+phobic, and so forth. In a way, whereas in the 19th century the school became compulsory with the task of inculcating national identity and attachment to the homeland in addition to curricular knowledge (Gellner, 1983), at the beginning of the 21st century it seems to be enjoined to inculcate values of liberal tolerance in order to prevent any form of radicalisation, starting with Islamist terrorism, the priority target of de-radicalisation policies currently being implemented in many countries, even though far-right violence of a nationalist and xenophobic nature is no less deadly. Without denying the interest of such educational measures, some analysts of these de-radicalisation policies nonetheless point out their bias: they focus on the psychological and cognitive dimensions while obscuring the very social roots of radicalisation (Galonier, Lacroix & Marzouki, 2022). The aim of this issue is therefore not only to distance ourselves from the new attempts to moralise schools in the name of security, but also to examine the latter and the way in which they are implemented in practice, through several national case studies which obviously cannot claim to be exhaustive.

2 THE RISE OF SECURITISED EDUCATION

The securitization of contemporary societies in response to terrorism and perceived terrorist threat, is profound and far reaching. Once the preserve of the security forces alone, the purpose of, and vehicles for, securitization have shifted and expanded in recent years. As a consequence, waves of security-related policies have been, and are being, developed. This, of course, brings with it new policy actors into the securitization field. One group to have been identified as having particular securitization value are teachers, and educators more widely. With intensive and unparalleled opportunity for engagement with young people, teachers have been positioned in new and rather different ways; civic education, and personal, social and health education (PSHE) in particular, have emerged as sites of possibilities as well as tensions. Some argue that the securitization of education is necessary to prevent young people from becoming radicalised, or to identify young people at risk of radicalisation. Others, though, regard the relationship between education and securitisation as ominous, drawing out the compromise to the integrity of the teacher as one who both builds trusting relationships yet keeps pupils under surveillance in the quotidian spaces in school, emphasising the anti-democratic potential of this uncomfortable dual role. A perspective that resists this binary argument proposes that rather than the practices and terminology of security permeating into education policies and practices, the opposite is in fact taking place, where the language and practices of education are permeating into security policy (Cottee, 2017).

Education and the processes of schooling are now firmly situated within a securitization context. At a performative level, schools and other educational institutions 'make' security; the architectural, material and technical security mechanisms are now well established devices. At a conceptual level, ontological and generic aspects of security and risk, including political extremism, preventing violent extremism (pve) and radicalisation have long been considered from multidimensional political-pedagogical perspectives. At a discursive level, programs of security are consistently narrated and legitimized, and homologies between homeland policies and threat evaluations take place with and within schools. And from a pedagogical perspective, the ongoing negotiation of relationships of trust between student, teacher and parents remains a focus for schools.

It is now ten years since the requirement to promote fundamental British values inside and outside of school was made a statutory requirement for teachers in England in response to, amongst other things, the 'homegrown bombers' in the attacks in London in 2005. In France, in a quite different context where the principle of secularism ("laïcité") in school as well as in the entire public space has been fiercely debated since the 1905 law that introduced it (Baubérot, 2012), a "moral and civic education" course was reintroduced in the summer of 2013 for all pupils throughout the period of compulsory schooling (Kahn, 2015), not without provoking lively debate, and above all not without preventing the attacks on Charlie Hebdo or the Bataclan in 2015 or the murder followed by the beheading of the history-geography teacher Samuel Paty in October 2020 as he left the secondary school where he was teaching, for having shown his pupils caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad during a "moral and civic education" lesson. These attacks have further strengthened the demand for security in schools and the emphasis on so-called republican values, starting with secularism (Lorcerie & Moignard, 2017). In Germany, in recent years, the rise of extremist attitudes has led to a sharp increase in political crimes and violent attacks against refugees, LGBTQ persons and other minorities. In 2020 alone, a total of 23,604 right-wing extremist crimes have been registered. The trigger for a policy change towards a further securitisation of the civic education field were the extremist attacks in Halle and in Hanau 19 February 2020 (nine young people with an immigrant background were murdered) and the murder of the Christian democrat politician Walter Lübcke in 2019 (an advocate of refugees' humanitarian rights). In response to these events, the Federal Government set up a high-level Cabinet Committee on Combating Right-Wing Extremism and Racism in May 2020. Main objectives are the pooling of resources, a better reporting and coherent policing to addressing the challenges of radicalization and democratic alienation. The government coalition then proposed a law for the protection of democracy ("Wehrhafte-Demokratie-Gesetz") which included 89 measures covering all types and domains of deradicalization policies. The aim of the basket-law was (Federal Government, Report of the Cabinet Committee, BMI/Bundesregierung 2021, 7):

1. Creating greater awareness of racism as a phenomenon in society as a whole and improving state structures in the area of combating right-wing extremism and racism;

strengthening cooperation between security authorities, the judiciary, state and civil society organisations and improving the empirical basis;

2. Expansion and strengthening of prevention against right-wing extremism and racism, anti-Semitism, Muslimophobia and all other forms of group-related hostility in regular structures in all areas of society, including on the net; further development of political education and democracy work;

3. Expand support for victims of racist discrimination and their social environment; effectively protect victims and improve sustainable structures to combat racism;

4. Recognition and appreciation of a diverse and equal opportunity society and strengthening equal participation opportunities for people with an immigration background.

The law could not be passed before the federal elections, and it is now newly presented by the SPD-Green-FDP coalition as a "Demokratiefördergesetz" (democracy promotion act) suggesting far-reaching transformations, which blur the boundaries between counter-extremism and civic education. Civic education professionals are increasingly concerned and question whether the new regime truly benefits the goals of strengthening democracy and civil society, as the governance of the measures takes little account of the interests and specific orientation of civil society stakeholders. On the contrary, they are apparently to be subjected to a new regime of political control that corresponds more to the modus operandi of security agencies than to work in the field of education (Widmeier 2021).

These examples highlight the relationship between education and securitization, where policies, education practices, pedagogy and values are in play.

3 SOME CHALLENGES FOR (SOCIAL SCIENCES) EDUCATION

The current trend towards making education more secure raises a number of questions, both for educators and researchers, but also for society as a whole. Among the latter, we can first of all ask how this new injunction is apprehended in concrete terms in different countries: what are the threats considered and their supposed roots? And who are the promoters and what is the time frame? In other words, how has this public problem been constructed (Gusfield, 1981) at both international and national levels?

Secondly, we can ask ourselves how these demands are concretely translated into the teaching programes. Do they permeate the curricula of the various disciplines that may be concerned or are they the subject of specific teaching? What is the concrete content to be transmitted to pupils in terms of values and knowledge? And what teaching methods are prescribed, if any? Finally, what training, if any, do the teachers receive?

Finally, any education social scientist knows that there is always a certain gap between the prescribed curriculum and the actual curriculum, and it is therefore appropriate, and probably the first thing to do, to also question the reception by teachers of this new mission

and the practices that they implement in practice, not forgetting their reception by the pupils themselves.

On this question, as on many others, international comparison is particularly valuable in that it makes it possible to denaturalise what often appears to be obvious in a given national context, whether it be values or teaching practices or the underlying citizenship models and conceptions of what a securitized vision of school and teaching the social may entail (Sampermans, Reichert & Claes, 2021).

4 SECURITIZING SOCIETY, SCHOOL OR STUDENTS?

In the first article of this issue, Martin M. Sjøen focuses on teachers and their perceptions of security policies in Norway, a country that despite its level of economic and social development has been deeply affected by the attacks committed by Anders Breivik, a radicalised far-right youth, in Oslo and Utøya, which left a total of 77 dead and 151 injured on 22 July 2011, but also by the departure of many young people to join the ranks of ISIS in Syria, and where more than 40 official documents relating to the prevention of extremism and terrorism were published during the 2010 decade, as the author recalls.

From the fifteen or so interviews conducted with educators who recount their educational experiences, the important idea emerges first of all that the policies of securitisation of education paradoxically run the risk of fuelling a culture of fear within schools, both for pupils and staff. The author takes up the distinction between two forms of trust, calculative and relational, in order to show how pedagogical actions aimed at strengthening each of them could, however, help to mitigate this side effect and suggests that social science teaching that promotes an understanding of the complexity of the social world seems to be a privileged way to do so.

The text by Katja Vallinkoski and her co-authors moves eastwards, but still in Northern Europe as it is based on the Finnish case. After a critical review of the literature on education for the prevention of violent radicalisation and extremism (VRE), the authors present the results of an online survey of about 1150 educators on their perceptions and experiences of VRE-related behaviour among their students. The data show significant proportions of educators who report facing ideologically and morally difficult situations in their work, and a significant number of them display extremist characteristics. But their responses also show that there is some confusion among them in distinguishing ERV behaviour from other types of hostile behaviour by pupils, particularly those from minority backgrounds. From these findings, the authors conclude that there is a need for better training of educators in their country - but the point is certainly valid everywhere else - not only to help them better analyse their students' speech and behaviour to identify those that might be part of a radicalisation process, but also to encourage them to carry out a self-analysis that would allow them to uncover their own prejudices and how they might play into such tensions.

Still in Finland, the article by Kathlyn Elliott and her co-authors focuses on a dimension that often remains in the blind spot of radical violence prevention policies elsewhere. Adopting a theoretical perspective based on a comprehensive literature review, the authors first show that traditional policies in this area have a number of biases that make them counterproductive, starting with the targeting of members of minority populations, but also leaving the gender issue aside and focusing on individual rather than community factors. However, as several studies have already shown, the inclusion of women and non-binary people in such schemes contributes significantly to a calmer school climate. Recalling that teachers did not ask to be enlisted as street-level bureaucrats in these safety nets, the authors also point to the role of the school curriculum, which can contribute as much to indoctrination as to nurturing positive feelings such as tolerance. However, while various studies have suggested what such curricula should consist of, much less has been done to study the pedagogical practices to be implemented to accompany them. Experiences with alternative pedagogies have shown that methods are at least as important in creating a school atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect that is as horizontal as possible. From this point of view, according to the authors, the policies for the prevention of extreme violence (PVE-E) implemented in Finland have the merit of not being a simple addition but of infusing all teaching in a cross-cutting manner, starting with the planning of lessons and ending with teaching practices and evaluation. Above all, these policies are not primarily aimed at combating terrorism, but rather at providing students with the opportunity to experience situations in which they can develop self-esteem and critical thinking skills in order to resist the propaganda of extremist actors. However, these potentialities are largely reserved for pupils from majority groups due to a hidden curriculum that continues to promote a certain national ethnocentrism. Stressing in turn the role of teachers' prejudices due in particular to their social positions of class, gender and race, the authors finally promote, drawing inspiration in particular from the Canadian model, an education impregnated with intersectional feminism, in which particular attention will be paid to the empowerment of actors, especially educators, by involving them in action-research mechanisms. It is also a question of decolonising education by renewing the link between the subjects dealt with and the colonial past, rather than dealing with the past as a whole.

Finally, the last article in the dossier, written by Cristiano da Neves Bodart and Welkson Pires, takes us to a Brazil that seems to have passed, where the far right was still in power under the presidency of Jair Bolsonaro. The authors begin with a brief review of the early history of sociology teaching in Brazilian high schools, showing how it was instrumentalised by the far-right government as a means of securing against supposedly 'communist' ideas - by which they mean any criticism of their ultraconservative moral and ultra-liberal economic ideology. Based on an extensive review of the literature, including their own work, and an analysis of the changes in the curricula and official texts during the period in question, as well as the testimonies of sociology teachers collected at the same time, the authors highlight the reasons for a veritable reining in of teachers, notably

through practices of censorship and intimidation coming from the government as well as from certain students and their families and school heads who were in line with the latter's ideology, in spite of the guarantees offered by the Constitution. In doing so, the authors also highlight the ambivalent nature of social science education, which can serve both to fuel and to combat prejudice and extremist ideologies and related violence, depending on the content and practices associated with its implementation. Beyond that, their analysis reminds us that although the far right and Jair Bolsonaro were driven out of power with the re-election of Lula Da Silva last October, it is far from having disappeared from society, and from schools, as the attempted coup in Brasilia on 8 January sadly reminded us. This case is a reminder, if needed, that our societies must probably first secure themselves against themselves, but that education is only one instrument among others, which cannot replace real social policies.

As this JSSE-issue is focused on securitization and securitized regimes of civic education in the educational systems of Europe, an important aspect is the question of the relationship between teachers and learners under the conditions of the new framing of school as a place of uncertainty, violence and risk. A dramatic event in this context is the murder of the French history and civics teacher Samuel Paty, which made the worst fears of an escalation of the security threat come true and contributed to an intense debate in civic education, educational policy, but also fueling the controversies about deradicalization. The enormous potential for politicization of this tragic event is obvious, and immediately after a phase of mourning and honouring the French colleague, the case was instrumentalized, not infrequently in connection with an unclear presentation of the situation and the course of events. The journal thus wants to contribute to an empathetic and professional debate by presenting the tragic event of a murder of Samuel Paty as a special country report. We aim at laying a basis for a debate around different readings of the event, which will enrich the scientific conversation not only on the issue of radicalization, but also on the problems of pedagogical, professional and political reaction to it. Therefore, the article contextualizes the situation depicting the current development of a model of defensive republicanism oriented towards ideals of security, which is today embodied by so many projects of civic and moral education around the globe. In conclusion, the French tragedy serves as a reminder of the complex social, digital, and political factors that contribute to the escalation of violence. But, as social scientists and educators, it is also important for us to study and understand the resources and power of education and the people working in the field, such as Samuel Paty, in order to develop effective strategies for including, attracting and encouraging humans to express themselves as citizens.

The Open Call section of this issue gathers papers on various topics in civic and social science education.

A central aim of civics and citizenship education is to develop a better analysis of students' willingness and abilities to participate democratically in, and have an impact on,

society. In their article “Agency, arena and relativity—critical aspects of students’ civic reasoning about power” Malin Tväråna and Ann-Sofie Jägerskog examine conceptions of power of Swedish upper secondary students of SSE (SSE [Swedish samhällskunskap) (n=155) . They show the potential and the limits of the development conceptual social scientific knowledge and of critical analytic skills when it comes to issues of power and agency of young people in contemporary societies.

Isabelle Muschaweck, David Falkenstein, Detlef Kanwischer and Tim Engartner regard digital literacy and social science literacy as two side of the same coin and make proposals how to integrate both. In Social Science Education under Digital Conditions – The Role of Creativity in Media Practices on Social Networks, they discuss approaches from geography, political and media education which highlight the connection between the digital world and social science education in form of case studies on the construction of space through social media and on the reconfiguration of social movements and political participation by digital media. Against this background, they outline how social science education can “foster digitally literate citizens” through “creative, social, situated practice.” They distinguish their concept of literacy from digital competence as a more comprehensive approach that encompasses the ability “to participate in the digital society responsibly and sovereignly” and to “critically evaluating one’s digital surroundings.”

Understanding “literacy as a social and situated practice” is a starting point of Pantea Rinnemaa’s paper Adolescents’ learning of civics in linguistically diverse classrooms: A thematic literature review. The review focuses on qualitative research on second language students in bilingual, linguistically diverse civics classes and “the interrelation of literacy development and civics learning” related to literacy abilities, disciplinary literacy abilities, prior knowledge and content-area knowledge. One of the findings is that teachers operate between two poles of strategies with which they try to cope with the challenges. Some exclude authentic texts or simplify texts in terms of contents and thus lower the level of content-area learning in favour of easier linguistic accessibility. Others provide “instructions about the structure and linguistic characteristics of texts”, choose topics related to real societal life, make use of bilingual teaching resources and offer opportunities of literacy activities which directly contribute to curriculum objectives.

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