From tolerance work to pedagogies of unease: affective investments in Danish antiracist education

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ABSTRACT
Antiracist pedagogies have long been conceptualized and developed by scholars, public intellectuals, teachers and pedagogues in Danish education contexts. By analysing Danish knowledge production on antiracist education from the 1980s to the present, this article traces changing understandings of race and racism in Danish education, as well as accounts for different affective tensions and investments at stake in antiracist pedagogical practice and thinking. We show how the discourse of antiracism as ‘tolerance work’ prevalent in the 1980s and 1990s evolved into an antiracist pedagogy centred on ‘creating good and positive atmospheres’, and how, from the 2000s onward, feelings of unease, embarrassment and anxiety about addressing race have become integrated in antiracist education research and practice. While the first approach towards antiracist education dwells with and use positive and joyous feelings, the second wave addresses a more uncomfortable register of affects. By analysing how different affective intensities have historically been associated with antiracist pedagogies in Denmark, we show how they are inextricable from education policies and politics.

Introduction
In recent years, international and Nordic research has pointed to affects, senses, feelings and moods as pertinent factors for critical antiracist pedagogies (Dernikos et al., 2020; Eriksen, 2020; Harlap & Riese, 2021; Khawaja, forthcoming; Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013; Matias & Allen, 2013; Svendsen, 2014; Zembylas & McGlynn, 2012). This scholarship posits that simply bringing the topic of racism into classroom discussions is inadequate. According to this scholarship, in order to understand how race is affectively experienced, antiracist education should be approached as affective work or ‘atmospheric work’ (Ahmed, 2014). These affective atmospheres or moods can emerge, for instance, when students experience racially charged humour as either funny or offensive (Præstmann-Hansen, 2009; Vertelyte, 2019); when white teachers or majority students are offended by being called racist; when being a minority student, to paraphrase Du Bois, 1985, “feels like being a problem”; or when minority students’ experiences of racial and ethnic exclusion are met with scepticism.

Based on the argument that race is an affectively embodied encounter and investment (Zembylas & McGlynn, 2012), this scholarship has pointed to the necessity of including feelings and affects in antiracist education pedagogical thought and practice. It requires paying attention to how affective intensities such as discomfort, frustration, hopelessness, disgust, shame, and envy, among others, figure in everyday schooling experiences when issues of race and racism are at stake, and how, in turn, these tensions can serve as constructive tools for antiracist pedagogy (Grosland, 2019; Zembylas, 2020). Such affective tensions can, according to Zembylas, create pedagogical spaces that “free students and teachers from affective investments in racial oppressions” (Zembylas, 2015, p. 147), as they allow for attending “to the production of pedagogical spaces and practices that create ways of living differently, that is, ways that do not repeat expected (i.e. normalized) racialized affects” (Zembylas, 2015, p. 146).

Yet there is a scarcity of research on how different affects utilized in antiracist pedagogies – such as unease, shame or discomfort – have altered through time. Moreover, the ways in which different affective intensities are embedded with knowledge production on antiracist education remain unexamined. Such a research emphasis could inform understandings of affects and moods as not free-floating, context-free signifiers, but as situated in particular socio-political settings (Burkitt, 2014; Frevert, 2011). In other words, if affective intensities are historically, culturally and politically situated ‘structures of feeling’ (Williams, 1977), then we need to develop an empirically-
In this article, we explore how race, racism, and antiracism are conceptualized within an affective knowledge production on antiracist education. We therefore examine how these concepts become associated with particular affective tensions, and how and what different affective investments are proposed for reflecting upon and handling them in pedagogical practice. More specifically, we show how joyous affects as in the discourse of tolerance most prominent in the 1980s and 1990s established conditions of possibility for a pedagogy of ‘creating good and inclusive atmospheres’, and how, from the late 2000s onward, uncomfortable affects like moods of unease and feelings of embarrassment about race were incorporated into the knowledge production thereby adding to a new line in the vocabulary with which to discuss institutional racialization.

The context for antiracist education in Denmark

Danish knowledge production on antiracist education emerged in tandem with a politics of migrant integration in Denmark. Since the early 1970s, Danish public schools have invested in strategies to adapt education policy to rapidly changing national demographics. In response to the immigration of so-called ‘guest workers’ from the late 1960s and early 1990s, as well as waves of refugee immigration from the 1980s onward, integration became a state policy and central mandate across education, urban, social and cultural affairs (Rytter, 2019). Since then, children of migrant families have become ‘an object of and a specific problem for education’ (Buchardt, 2019, p. 283), as well as targets of Danish welfare statecraft (Øland et al., 2019). Particularly, Muslim minority students have been at the centre of education policymaking and discourse, such as school distribution policies in relation to Danish so-called ‘ghetto laws’ (Jacobsen, 2012); policies for bilingual education; and Danish PISA surveys, to name a few (Egelund et al., 2011).

Specifically due to the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the Danish Mohammed cartoon controversy in 2005, scholars have argued that a ‘cultural incompatibility’ discourse about migrants – and particularly about Muslims in Denmark – has become a form of racialization in which culture is invoked as a marker of difference ostensibly incompatible with ‘Danishness’ and Danish values (Hervik, 2006, 2011; Khawaja, 2010; Yilmaz, 2016). To conceptualize these forms of exclusion, scholars and public intellectuals introduced internationally developed concepts such as ‘new racism’ and ‘cultural racism’ to describe the shifting manner in which race and racialization can be produced, based on different markers of religion or culture, and in addition to phenotypical markers (Hervik, 2011). Accordingly, research in education
has shown how processes of othering, racialization and exclusion have been inscribed in education policymaking and everyday schooling practices. Education policy and schools as welfare institutions have sought to ensure racial-ethnic minority youth participation in Danish society and access to shared values of ‘Danishness’ (Gitz-Johansen, 2006; Kofod, 1994; Moldenhawer, 2002). Scholars have shown how over time, categories used in school to refer to migrant children have included ‘children of foreign workers’, ‘immigrant pupils’, ‘refugee children’, ‘foreign language pupils’, ‘bilingual pupils’, ‘ethnic minority pupils’, ‘descendants’, ‘2nd generation immigrants’ (Padovan-Özdemir, 2019, p. 96) and recently ‘third generation immigrants and pupils’ (Gilliam, 2018). These categories, however, are not value-neutral; rather they mark the racialized positioning of minoritized students as homogenous groups whose presumed shared culture is deemed incompatible with the Danish state’s cultural values and ways of being.

Despite the recommendations of the Council of Europe to promote diversity and antiracist education, antiracist pedagogy in Denmark has never been officially codified in educational legislation, nor have racial experiences been measured as part of national student well-being studies. Yet despite the fact that antiracist pedagogies have not figured in Danish state educational policy, Danish schools have nonetheless explored their potentials. As described above, Danish scholars, public intellectuals, teachers and pedagogues have developed antiracist pedagogies specifically related to the question of integration of migrant children and youth. Individual teachers and non-governmental organizations have also pursued pilot projects in antiracist pedagogy. In this way, the body of knowledge on antiracist education in Denmark has developed in relation to the overall research on race and racialization, education policies and public activism.

In an overview on antiracist education in Norwegian and French contexts, Frédérique Brossard Børhaug (2009) posits that antiracist pedagogies essentially deal with broad ethical questions of how human beings should relate to one another, as well as these pedagogies suggest variety of hands-on pedagogical activities and strategies. Such strategies may involve leadership decisions about school staff, education policy concerning curricula, or everyday student and teacher encounters, among other things. Brenda J. McMahon points out the normative predispositions of antiracist education, positing that “Educational legislation, policies and procedures as well as curricular resources are written and presented from within particular locations, belief systems and moral stances” (McMahon, 2003, p. 259). In this way, knowledge production on antiracist education necessarily adopts a prescriptive stance on antiracist practice as well as a normative approach to research. Thus, to mark this interchangeability of practice and research in antiracist pedagogy, in the article we use the term ‘antiracist education knowledge production’ instead of ‘antiracist education scholarship’.

The body of knowledge on antiracist education in Denmark draws from antiracist education guidelines developed in an Anglo-Saxon scholarly tradition (Cole, 1998; May, 1999; Niemonen, 2007). This particular tradition emerged in response to the development of global racial inequalities and as a critique of the multicultural take on education in particular (Banks, 2013; Cole, 1998; Gillborn, 2005; May, 1999; Niemonen, 2007). Antiracist education proponents have criticized multicultural education pedagogy for essentializing culture as a resource, celebrating certain cultures while exoticizing and tokenizing others, which in turn casts ethnic racial minorities as in need of help (Troyna, 1993). Instead, antiracist education emphasized structural and institutional forms of inequality while treating racism as a system of oppression. As such, antiracist education may be grasped as a broad set of pedagogical practices that aim to challenge existing racialized structures by essentially reconsidering how structural racism informs institutional life.

Unlike in Anglo-Saxon contexts in which antiracist and multicultural education – particularly in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s – were largely contested as ‘oppositional and antagonistic forms’ (Modood & May, 2001), in Denmark, antiracist education knowledge production developed in relation to frameworks such as intercultural pedagogy and a discourse of cultural encounter (Horst, 2006). The discourse of ‘cultural encounter’ (Galal & Hvenegård-Lassen, 2020) (in Danish can be used as kulturnøde or kultursammenstået) in particular was used to reframe cultural difference from a pedagogical problem to an asset and resource. Such a pedagogy would accommodate minority students’ cultural integration whilst improving cultural competencies of majority students. Tracing this approach to ‘immigrant pupils’ in pedagogical repertoires from the early 1970s to 2013, Marta Padovan-Özdemir considers the cultural encounter to be a pedagogical prism casting immigrant pupils as “underrepresented in the school culture of the majority and a potential disintegrative danger to the classroom community, or as holding cultural resources valuable to the curriculum and the competitive power of the Danish nation-state” (2019, p. 147).

While during the 1980s and 1990s antiracist education was commonly glossed under the signs of ‘cultural counter’ and ‘intercultural pedagogy’, from the 2000s onward debates concerning the distinct features of antiracist education and multicultural or
intercultural education have framed scholarly discussions (Buchardt et al., 2006; Kampmann, 2006). Lately, education scholarship has theorized antiracist education within frameworks such as for instance, ‘feminist new-materialist pedagogies for a justice to come’ (Juelskjær, 2020), ‘norm-critical pedagogies’ (Skadegård & Ahrong, 2020), ‘intercultural didactics and communication’ (Jensen, 2015) and ‘corporate social responsibility’ (Brøndum et al., 2020).

Work of tolerance against hostilities of racism

Within the literature on antiracism and antiracist education, one can trace from the 1980s onward how the issues of race and racism were positioned in public and pedagogical debates as mounting threats to Danish democracy and tolerance. In antiracist education literature, racism was understood as something that can be resisted through pedagogies supporting ‘cultural encounters’ and tolerance as affective interventions for creating positive and pleasant atmospheres in Danish classrooms.

In the 1980s, the body of knowledge on antiracist education developed as a response to documentations of racism as a growing threat to Danish democracy. Already during the 1970s, racism was actively discussed in various public organizations and NGOs as an emergent threat to Danish society and democracy. The dangers of racism, for example, were pointed out by migrant organizations, such as IFD (Indvandrernes Fællesråd i Denmark – Immigrant Association in Denmark), which engaged in debates on obligatory mother tongue education and Danish as a second language. IFD argued that failing to provide children with the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue is a “ticking bomb for racism” (as quoted in Buchardt, 2016, p. 51). Other non-governmental organizations were also active in pointing to the threats of racism. For example, ‘Kirkernes Raceprogram’ (The Church Program to Combat Racism), established, supported and published material discussing the state of racism in Denmark and other European countries, highlighting economic reasons for and consequences of racism and calling for collective antiracist action and pedagogies.5

While in the 1970s racism was referred to as a ‘ticking bomb’ by the 1980s it had become an everyday feature of migrants’ lives. News media have been increasingly reporting more and more instances of racism, not least related to the actions of Grønjakkerne (literal translation: Green Jackets) – a neo Nazi youth group active from the beginning of the 1980s (Li, forthcoming). In 1986, associate professor Jacques Blum and journalist Lene Frøslev (1986) published a book called ‘Racisme på dansk’ (Racism in Danish), which payed attention to racism among young people. While Blum and Frøslev account for the dangers of racism and their effects on migrants in Denmark, they affectively conceptualize racism as first and foremost a moral threat to Danish democracy. In the conclusion of the book, the authors call for collective action and moral civil responsibility: “It is necessary to fight prejudice, discrimination and racism. Not only for the sake of immigrants, but for Danes as well. The prevalence of racist tendencies goes hand in hand with the shift towards authoritarian society – resulting in the abolition of democracy6 (Blum & Frøslev, 1986, p. 94).

Similar affective claims that racism is a danger to Danish democracy and moral appeals to tolerance are echoed in other material discussing racism. For example, in Ole Hammer’s report (1986) Handbook against racism, published by non-governmental activist organization Mellemfolkliget Samvirke the author and publishers call for antiracist action summoning readers to join the civil movement against racism and to not “keep sitting with one’s hand on the lap or turning one’s back to the problems” (p. 6). Discussing the causes of racism in Danish society, the report offers affective explanations, such as anxiety and fear of the unknown (pp. 8–9). It further ventures that the solution to antiracism is tolerance, achievable only when a society – namely Danish society – is ready to face affects like anxiety and fear by taking civic responsibility against racism and daring to talk about it: “We must restrain for the anxiety and insecurity that are creating reluctance towards immigrants and refugees. And we must do it in solidarity – immigrants and Danes together. We must make all the people responsible for racist actions” (Hammer, 1986, pp. 3–4). Hammer adds that “it is not dangerous to talk about racism. We will not become bigger racists because of that” (1986, p. 7).

Education scholars and practitioners began to discuss antiracist education in response to the threats of racism in the 1980s highlighted by the aforementioned work, as well as the UNESCO and Council of Europe’s resolution on intercultural education (Buchardt, 2016, p. 104). Intercultural pedagogies and education came to be discussed in education journals: for example, Intercultural education became the special topic of LUFETema – a journal published by the Danish teachers association (LUFET–Tema, 1985); Antiracist pedagogy was the title for the special issue for Dansk Pædagogisk tidsskrift (Danish Journal of Pedagogy) (“Antiracistisk Pædagogik, 1987); and a special issue titled Racisme og fordømme i Danmark? (Racism and Prejudice in Denmark?) () was published in 1993.

In these publications on antiracist education and intercultural pedagogies, racism is attributed to Danish education policies, particularly regarding the ostensible assets of bilingualism and the importance
of mother tongue education. The special issue dedicated to antiracist pedagogy ("Antiracistisk Pædagogik, 1987) in particular discusses policies for mother tongue language education and Danish as a second language. The authors further stress the importance of a Danish education that "reflect(s) society’s cultural complexity" and where ‘children from different social and cultural environments can recognize themselves in the content of lessons" (Clausen & Horst, 1987, p. 97). The issue of language was also directly linked to racism. For example, in a discussion of mother tongue education in the book *Minoritet, sprog og racisme* (Minorities, Language and Racism), Skutnabb-Kangas at al proposes the concepts of *lingvicism* and *ethnicism* to describe ideologies and structures used to "legitimize, implement and reproduce an unequal distribution of the world’s power and resources among different groups, but with biological arguments now replaced by cultural and linguistic arguments" (Skutnabb-Kangas et al., 1990, p. 181).

The most extensive practice-oriented work in the 1980s on antiracist education was conducted by anthropologist and education professional Inger M. Clausen. Drawing from the Anglo-Saxon tradition on antiracist education and fieldwork in a London school (1986a), in 1986 Clausen published the book *Den fleerkulturelle skole – om interkulturel, antiracistisk undervisning* (Multicultural school – about intercultural, antiracist education) (Clausen, 1986b). In Clausen’s book, racism is understood as something one can learn and therefore unlearn through antiracist education. For example, Clausen’s proposals are structured according to different age groups: children aged 6–10, 9–13 and 13–17; the last age group being the least impressionable: “It can be difficult to change this group’s negative attitudes and ethnic stereotypes in relation to immigrants” (Clausen, 1986b, p. 49). In other words, racism and antiracism are framed here as matters of one’s psychosocial and emotional development.

Clausen (1986b) suggests pedagogical tools and interventions (with a progressive bent) such as experience-based teaching, multicultural curricula, role playing and discussion of racism in class as well as among teachers, students and parents. Yet despite her detailed proposals for antiracist education tools, Clausen’s approach is limited to the psychosocial issue of individual tolerance. To be an antiracist is to be ‘tolerant’, ‘solidary’ and ‘emphatic’; affects which are understood as beneficial to understanding not only cultures of ‘others’, but also ‘our own culture’ (Clausen, 1986b, pp. 10–19). This kind of tolerance, according to Clausen, is a matter of evoking positive emotions and feelings towards students’ cultural differences, and the teachers’ task is then to bring “positive and accepting feelings” (p. 24) into antiracist teaching in order to create an “antiracist atmosphere” (p. 31) in the classroom and in school more broadly.

Across the knowledge production on antiracist education in the 1980s, tolerance of cultural differences is positioned not only as a positively valued affect but as an antiracist tool in itself. This position is exemplified in a pedagogy that frames cultural difference as an asset, while tolerance becomes an affective intervention for creating (collective) positive and pleasant atmospheres in Danish classrooms. An argument for antiracist education is then built on the claim that racism is detrimental to society, and as such to be antiracist is to act in solidarity with migrants and refugees and support the aspiration for a tolerant and pleasant (feeling of) society. Yet in the antiracist body of knowledge discussed above, students’ actual experiences are missing. Recent research addresses this lacuna. For example, based on oral history interviews with adults who entered the Danish education system as ‘newcomer’ children in the 1970s, and attended school in the 1970s and 1980s, Li and Buchardt (forthcoming) show how migrant students adopted ‘affective practices of feeling strange’, marking affectively charged experiences of exclusion and racialized hierarchy.

**Antiracist education as a struggle with (racialized) unease**

While in the 1980s, scholars, activists and journalists characterized racism as a danger to Danish democracy, from the 2000s onward one can note increased scepticism over whether race and racism are relevant to the Danish context. Especially since the Prophet Mohammed cartoon controversy, which entrenched freedom of speech as a core Danish value, efforts to thematize race and racism as objects of ethnographic research have been reduced to arguments of identity politics and political correctness (Danbolt & Myong, 2018). Critical scholars have noted how such denial and scepticism of racism and the concept of race have made it difficult to bring race to the forefront of Danish scholarship. For example, in her PhD-dissertation on transnational adoption, Lene Myong Petersen (2009) describes a visceral response to writing and talking about race:

“I have practiced saying the word in Danish. It is as if my body resists the enunciation of r-a-c-e. The word just will not really rise up my throat and come out of my mouth. I have always found it easier to say race in English or write it down, even if I have to fight off an urge to place it in inverted commas. ‘Race’ feels safer. As though I do not really mean it. The inverted commas become buffers, cushioning the blow. ‘Race’ does not sting as much as race. Because there is something about race that generates great discomfort
and resistance, both in a Danish and a broader European context.” (Myong-Petersen, 2009, p. 25)

Due to uncomfortable feelings stirred up by talking about race and racism such as those described above, antiracist education scholarship has challenged pedagogies that take a ‘colour-blind’ approach or deny the existence of racism altogether. For example, Jan Kampmann’s (2006) text Multikulturalisme, antiracisme, kritisk multikulturalism(Multiculturalism, anti-racism, critical multiculturalism) sets up a theoretical framework for antiracist education, drawing on scholarship from Anglo-Saxon countries, that argues for a research agenda which challenges the implicit and colour-blind approaches used in Danish schooling contexts. Kampmann acknowledges the Danish context as a particular challenge for antiracist interventions due to a widespread use of colour-blind approaches to race and racism. Instead, Kampmann argues, schools should deploy antiracist pedagogies in ways that help reveal often tacit processes of racialization. Such an approach requires systematic interventions as well as an understanding that: “systematic discrimination, which is not only attributable to individual or personal prejudices that can be addressed by a single professional, but [which is the result of] institutionally rooted practices” (2006, p. 139).

As several of the PhD students from the mid-2000s argue, antiracist pedagogy does not require engagement with the concept of systemic racism on a grand scale, but rather an understanding that the school as an institution plays a role in the construction and reconstruction of these processes and their affective outcomes. For example, Thomas Gitz-Johansen (2006) identifies Danish schools as institutions responsible for the exclusion of minority children who offer only strategies of compensation rather than change. Dorthe Staunæs (2003b) retools the concept of intersectionality by showing how ethnic-racialized and gendered boundary figures challenge the white male normativities of a Danish school. Jette Kofoed (2004) examines how ‘appropriate’ student subjectivities (related to nation and race) are repeatedly constructed through children’s everyday rituals, for instance, in daily selection for a soccer team and punishment at the principal’s office. Laura Gilliam (2006) demonstrates how a troublemaker is ethnic-racialized and gendered; Mette Buchardt (2008, 2014) examines how Muslimness came to be pedagogized into the problem of education; and Oland (2009, 2012) shows how racist discourses are enlisted in progressive Danish pedagogy, among others. While in the bulk of this research, neither curriculum nor didactics were thematized explicitly, it nonetheless laid the ground for understanding processes of othering and racialization as pedagogical and organizational challenges in antiracist education. The problems of race and racism emerge through institutional, material and discursive processes, rather than binary cultures or autonomous individuals. This research emphasis moves away from tolerance work which aims to combat racist hostilities and towards discussing ways in which racism and processes of racialization are systematically produced within and as effects of institutional structures and norms.

This research also points out how uncomfortable feelings and unease in relation to race and racism (often intertwined with sexism) were part of everyday school environments and practices. More specifically, this unease derives from the perception that racializing race in academic or everyday parlance is to frame race as an essentially biological category. For example, in the PhD dissertation Etnicitet, køn og skoleliv (Ethnicity, Gender and School Life), Staunæs (2003a) noted:

“When presenting my analyses to adults with an ethnic minority background, they have sometimes been offended by my use of the term ‘ethnically racialized bodily signifiers’ and the very fact that I thematize the surface of the body. From their perspective, this is a new way of biologizing difference that they would rather avoid. But in my fieldwork among children and young people, skin, hair and eye color is often a prominent part of their self-image and in their categorization of others” (Staunæs, 2003a, p. 161)

Feelings of discomfort also proved to be reflexively apparent in research on antiracist education. Such unease travelled from the classroom, playground and school corridors to the researcher, who felt trapped and used when disseminating the findings. Conducting research as a white and Danish connoted body was described by Staunæs as struggling in an aporia between given but not-fitting positions as ‘either halal-hippie or racist’ (Staunæs, 2003a).

This discomfort also proved to be apparent through action-based research on antiracist pedagogies and didactics in school classrooms. Based on studies set in three different classrooms in a Copenhagen area school, Buchardt and Fabrin (2010) explore the ways in which teachers experiment with intercultural pedagogies and what happens when they are implemented in the classroom. This work constitutes the first empirical research on antiracist education. The authors point out that when cultural difference is targeted in intercultural pedagogies, it tends to become racialized as a framework for sorting that difference as incompatible and hierarchical. Moreover, Buchardt and Fabrin show how teachers and pedagogues often feel lost and perplexed when handling matters of race and racism in teaching-schooling practice. For example, based on classroom observations, the authors note how teachers tend to steer class discussions away from issues of racism, or characterize them as irrelevant to here and now realities, for example, by relegating them to other countries or other parts of...
Denmark (2012, pp. 64–65). According to the authors, racism and racialized students’ experiences: ”were only allowed indirect access to the educational space, but were conspicuous by their absence in the form of students’ utterances and the way teachers and students address the topic” (Buchardt & Fabrin, 2012, p. 85).

**A differentiated affective vocabulary: concluding remarks**

Matters of race, racism and racialization have been part of Danish history since the invention of race in tandem with colonialism, chattel slavery, modern science, and laws on vagrancy and migration. However, knowledge of these issues – particularly in education research – seems to fluctuate over time; morphing from a pervasive, affective matter of democracy in danger to an ‘elephant in the room’ (Hvenegård-Lassen and Staunæs, 2021) when the relevance of race in a Danish context is questioned.

The article traced different affective tensions and investments in Danish knowledge production on antiracist education. It showed how racialized hostilities and a discourse of tolerance prevalent in the 1980s and 1990s evolved into a pedagogy of ‘tolerance work’ for ‘creating good atmospheres’, and how, from the 2000s onward, feelings of unease about race hindered antiracist education knowledge production. While during the 1980s and 1990s, affective investment in antiracist pedagogies as tolerance work entered public and pedagogical debates as a response to tensions over the concept of racism as a threat to Danish democracy; in the 2000s onward, the mere fact of placing race and racism at the centre of research and pedagogy has figured as a ‘threat’ to ‘positive classroom atmospheres’ specifically, and the Danish value of freedom of speech at large (Vertelytė & Hervik, 2018).

By showing how affective tensions have informed affective pedagogical investments in antiracist education and how they have evolved over time, this article shows how understandings of race and racism are closely connected to affective tensions and investments in knowledge production surrounding these matters. These affective intensities, however, are not just abstract, free-floating signifiers. Rather, they materialize in particular pedagogical strategies, be it ‘tolerance work’ for positive atmospheres or deconstructions of discomfort and anxiety in classroom discussions about race.

This analysis showed how affective investments and tensions have continuously evolved in research and educational practices regarding racism and antiracism. Simultaneously, Danish research continues to show how processes of racialization play a significant role in Danish schooling contexts (; Gilliam, 2006; Jaffe-Walter, 2016; Lagermann, 2015a, 2015b; Vertelyte, 2019), as well as how antiracist education is gaining new ground in Nordic contexts more broadly. Scholars are moreover discussing antiracist education in broad terms: from the decolonial critique of education (Eriksen & Svendsen, 2020) to issues of antiracist education in higher education (Alemanji & Seikkula, 2017), as well as with the development of antiracist workshops and digital technologies for antiracism (Alemanji & Mafi, 2018).

Antiracist education in Denmark has also increasingly been on the agenda of different activist groups (BLM, Marronage, DEKONSTRUER, SOS Racism and Mino Denmark, among others). For such groups and practitioners, taking into account the political and institutional issues of racism and racialization entails recognizing peoples’ everyday, lived experiences of racialization and racism. It is a matter of taking minority experiences seriously, but also of being attuned to the power relations and affective tensions at stake in knowledge production on antiracism and racialization. Such discussions have encouraged researchers to address their affective investments in researcher positionalities, which may include feelings of blame, shame, embarrassment, anger or disappointment (Khawaja, forthcoming). Yet, we need more research to understand how affective experiences emerge in school contexts, and how they figure into antiracist educational practices. If education are to deal with racialized exclusion and work towards equal futures for children and young people, then everyday affective experiences through which students and educators learn about, teach about and manage race and racialization should be systematically analysed and used to advance antiracist education scholarship and practice.

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**Notes**

1. Here ‘migrant children’ are referred to as children of ‘foreign workers’ and refugees that came to Denmark in 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Foreign workers from Turkey, former Yugoslavia, Pakistan (among others) and refugees from Iran, Palestine, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Somalia (among others) (Buchardt, 2016).

2. In 2005 September Denmark’s daily newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published 12 cartoons, picturing and ridiculing prophet Mohammed, claiming that it poses the critique for freedom of speech and self-censorship. Researchers, however, showed the exclusionary and racialized nature of the cartoons (Hervik, 2011).

3. ‘Fremmedsprogede’ children was first used as an official category in 1975. Students from Greenland and
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