



## The Black Intellectual Tradition and the Great Conversation

with Dr. Kathryn Smith, Dr. Angel Parham, Danielle Bennette Dukes, Michael Hornbaker

Panel 6: The Place of Local Culture within the Curriculum

### Outline:

#### The Place of Local Culture within the Curriculum

- **Dr. Kathryn Smith (02:00):** What have been some of your experiences with this question of the local community and culture and the larger works that classical education has us read?
  - **Danielle Bennette Dukes:** One of our duties as parents and educators is to anchor them in who they are as related to God, others, neighbor, family, and place.
    - We can create a reading list that will help us in that anchoring process.
  - **Dr. Angel Parham:** What is central about classical education is tradition. Part of this is coming to terms with the place that one calls home.
    - Depending on the place, there may be a direct ties into some of the classics that we read.
  - **Dr. Kathryn Smith:** I wonder also if there is something important about the physicality and geography of local stories and poems, and the tradition that is local and is sometimes even a spoken tradition.
  - **Danielle Bennette Dukes:** How did we get here? Why are we here? We can see this in the geography.
  - **Michael Hornbaker:** The recognition of the physical imprint that the geography has upon the buildings and landscape where our students live.
  - **Dr. Angel Parham:** We are kind of artificially divided by national lines, but the geography really does tell the story.
  - **Danielle Bennette Dukes:** When you are rooted in who you are and in your place, you're more readily able to see the grace and beauty of another place and another people.
  - **Dr. Kathryn Smith:** Hospitality was this command of God to take in the other, and to ask how can we make you comfortable. Hospitality



is really enjoyed when you are in an authentic place that shares your foods and music.

- **Dr. Kathryn Smith (13:35):** I wonder if the stories themselves have a role in that unconscious formation that is not just verbal, but physical (even in terms of colors and how they perceive the flora and fauna). I am wondering if the stories themselves build up an imaginative landscape that is part of the ordering and rootedness to place. How do the stories interact with the unconscious formation?
  - **Danielle Bennette Dukes:** There are times of sorrow, joy, and beauty. Sometimes the story will point to the fact that you will survive. Dignity does persist. We can learn from the stories around us. There is even an anchoring in the sacramental life in the Rosary.
  - **Michael Hornbaker:** We can invite students to participate and carry the memory of those places. You carry the sorrow and the hope of healing. Otherwise, the bench is there, but the story is lost.
  - **Dr. Angel Parham:** Sometimes we have to recover stories that may have been lost.
  - **Dr. Kathryn Smith:** Memory is a kind of eternity. The sense of embodied grace is shared in story.
  - **Michael Hornbaker:** We turn to the natural world as the example of healing and sustaining power that is available.
  - **Danielle Bennette Dukes:** There is a story to every single place. Remembering and going beyond yourself will help you to see that place.
- **Dr. Kathryn Smith (20:35):** Where do we see the dynamic of all of that meeting in curriculum? How can we embody that in the curriculum?
  - **Dr. Angel Parham:** Finding the local resources (old maps) is helpful. Look at the old maps from the earliest settlers and then superimpose the new maps on that.
  - **Dr. Kathryn Smith:** The maps tells you so much about the hopes of the mappers.
  - **Danielle Bennette Dukes:** We can search for the ethos of our cities by how it is developed. You are a participant in the story that you're reading.
  - **Dr. Kathryn Smith:** How do we show children to grow that love of place?
  - **Michael Hornbaker:** There is a patience required of the teachers. Have students walk. **This brings them back to the human scale of what they can attend to and observe.**
  - **Danielle Bennette Dukes:** You don't have to be the expert; you can have a guide. When we walk in a place and look at the layers, we can deal with current events in a more enlightened way. We want our students to not just react, but know how to think through and turn over things.



- **Dr. Angel Parham:** It is a concern to forget what used to be there, and why it used to be there, and how it came to be something different. The new generation doesn't get the story, and the memory is gone. As classical educators, we want to cultivate that memory and that attention.
- **Michael Hornbaker:** When we love God and love our neighbor because in that we find our chief responsibilities.