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Experiential Education, Museums, and Student Teachers' Intercultural Learning

Reflections on the Scandinavian Romani Exhibition

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IN THIS CHAPTER, WE REVISIT the concept of experiential education to reflect upon the potential of museums in supporting intercultural learning for student teachers. Drawing on theory and our own experiences as teacher educators researching and teaching diversity-related topics in a master's course for student teachers at a university college in Norway, we discuss how we envision the integration of museums into teaching and learning with specific reference to the Scandinavian Romani exhibition as a case study. Furthermore, by anchoring our discussion in Paulo Freire's concept of problem-posing education, we reflect upon how an experiential engagement with this exhibition may create a learning space that awakens student teachers' critical consciousness and provides opportunities for self-reflection. We are interested in how the Romani exhibition can become a creative space for student teachers to enhance their intercultural learning by developing a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of Norway's national minorities and Indigenous community in relation to cultural and linguistic diversity.

A growing body of research has explored the possibilities for emphatic development, personal and social transformation in museums from a pedagogical perspective. In a review of research on museums as avenues for learning for children, Andre et al. (2017) found that theories of constructivism, particularly sociocultural perspectives on learning, have been highly influential when museums develop programs, exhibitions, and learning models for

children. As noted by Andre et al. (2017), views from both within and outside the field of museology have espoused a conceptual change on the function of museums, from “places of education to places for learning” (p. 48). From viewing museums as sites for the consumption of content information and pre-produced knowledge, often immersed in entertainment, a shift toward experiential opportunities has emerged so as to facilitate an interactive and potentially transformative engagement with the exhibitions. According to Andre et al. (2017), such a shift extends Vygotsky’s concept of learning as a socially mediated process that “take[s] place in a cultural context through social interactions that are mediated by language and other cultural symbol systems” (p. 54).

Although strategies and activities employed in museums tend to be well-grounded in sociocultural and interpretative approaches, we argue that an experiential-critical theoretical lens remains necessary as we reflect upon student teachers’ intercultural learning in museums. In a parallel, sociocultural and experiential perspectives on learning acknowledge the significance of context, situatedness, personal experience, and social interaction for the construction of knowledge. Both within a sociocultural and experiential approach to learning, human understanding is historically and culturally mediated, produced, and closely related to social processes. Hence, they are overlapping perspectives in the sense that they not only share a common epistemology but also challenge the reductive notion that knowledge exists independently and is obtained through “objective” observations of the world. However, as we elaborate in a subsequent section, experiential learning is linked more strongly to critical processes of learning where students are encouraged to explore and identify their own biases and prejudices when interacting with people of different social and economic positions (Bryant et al., 2015; Dodman et al., 2022).

This chapter is organized as follows. First, we describe the master’s course at our institution in Norway in terms of its pedagogical design, learning objectives, assessment practices, and the student body. We also propose how the museum-based experiential component fits into the course. We then present some key concepts on intercultural learning and how the co-construction of (intercultural) knowledge may be fostered in the context of teaching and learning in higher education. With a focus on neoliberalism, we subsequently discuss some of the challenges teacher educators may encounter when integrating museums into teaching and learning. Next, we juxtapose experiential learning and problem-posing education to demonstrate their combined potential for the development of critical thinking when learning about diversity. We proceed to trace the history of the Roma peoples in Norway and the ways in which the exhibition *Latjo Drom* embodies the multiple experiences and stories of this minority group in the country. We conclude the chapter by linking theory and practice.

This chapter takes a reflective, conceptual, and interdisciplinary orientation. It is guided by the following question: How may learning about diversity in a museum contribute to the development of student teachers' critical thinking and intercultural knowledge from an experiential learning perspective? This chapter should be seen as a product of our joint and ongoing discussions about the affordances and challenges of integrating museums into teaching and learning. As we continue to reevaluate our teaching practices and course design at our institution, we approach this chapter as a space for reflection through which we may arrive at one of many possibilities for enhancing teacher education and pedagogy through knowledge of self and the other in an increasingly diverse world. We use *other* to refer to the politically minoritized—in contrast to the standard “other”—and to emphasize the centrality of identity in our discussion.

The Master's Course in Differentiated Learning

“Differentiated Learning from a Didactic Perspective” (DLDP henceforth) is our own translation for 2MIT4005 (Norwegian: *Tilpasset opplæring i et didaktisk perspektiv*). DLDP is a mandatory course offered in the first year of a two-year teacher education program at the master's level at our institution, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (INN). The Master in Differentiated Learning aims to prepare students to teach in schools and kindergartens, and consists of coursework and a research-based thesis. The master's program focuses on diversity and the individual student, drawing on theories of critical, inclusive, and special needs education. The curriculum of the master's program takes into consideration the provisions set in the Norwegian Education Act, which states that all students have the right to differentiated instruction based on their special abilities or challenges, in addition to cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity.

The learning outcomes for DLDP are categorized broadly into three interconnected areas: knowledge, skills, and general competence. In here, we provide only a brief summary of the outcomes. In the first area, the course is designed to offer students opportunities to gain in-depth knowledge of the role and functioning of schools and to demonstrate such knowledge through decision-making and reflection upon their current and future teaching practices. Additionally, students are expected to develop theoretical and practical knowledge of differentiated instructional methods, along with analytical skills to identify and address systemic educational issues through differentiated instruction. In the area of skills, critical and analytical skills are prioritized for the improvement of school culture, teaching and learning, and the well-being of students. In the third area (i.e., general competence), the course focuses

on equipping students to work with cultural and linguistic diversity in light of teaching ethics and to reflect on appropriate methods for planning, implementing, and leading development projects more broadly.

The course curriculum offers social, sociocultural, multicultural, and multilingual perspectives on differentiated learning. We aim to support students in the development of knowledge not only to identify the socio-academic conditions needed to help support student learning and identity enactment but also to intervene when necessary. Teaching methods include lectures, interactive seminars, and independent study, all of which are facilitated in-person and online. Throughout the course, students complete written and oral assignments (three in total) and a take-home exam for which students select a topic of interest for exploration. A typical student group includes students at different professional stages, such as first-time, preservice student teachers and those with teaching experience from a variety of contexts. As such, the age variance is significant and conducive to discussions in which experiences are shared between students, and between students and teacher educators. Lastly, the students bring important insights into the course based on their diverse profiles, as in being a first-generation Norwegian, plurilingual with Norwegian as an additional language, and/or a racial or ethnic minority.

In our view, the inclusion of a museum as a site of learning for the course would help meet different learning outcomes simultaneously. At a foundational level, conceptualizing a museum as a pedagogical space can provide students an exposure to a cultural experience that would be otherwise difficult to foster within the physical constraints of a classroom. More specifically, exhibitions meant to offer a glimpse into the lived experiences of linguistic and ethnic minorities, as is the case with *Latjo Drom*, support students to enhance their understanding of diversity from a multimodal, minority, and historical perspective. In other words, we are interested in the potential to develop students' ability to approach matters of diversity from multiple and intercultural perspectives, and their ability to reflect on—and potentially revise—their own knowledge of *the other*, through which the potential to confront cultural stereotypes and facile narratives may be explored. In short, the *Latjo Drom* provides an opportunity to contextualize topics learned in the course in relation to identity, diversity, and pedagogy.

Intercultural Learning

Intercultural learning is often referred to as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support the ability of learners to both understand cultural complexity and interact with people from different cultures (Horst, 2006; Lane, 2012). The concept of intercultural learning can thus be

understood in a descriptive and normative way (Lane, 2012). In a descriptive sense, intercultural learning describes the cognitive and social processes of learning when people engage in interaction with the purpose of understanding more of oneself and others. When used in a normative, or prescriptive sense, intercultural learning is a call for learners to intentionally understand and confront the mechanisms behind cultural stereotypes and personal prejudices, to improve their cultural knowledge and awareness, and to explore and value different practices, beliefs, and ways of life. Hence, through a normative lens, intercultural learning advances the need to engage with cultural and linguistic diversity in ways that enhance and cultivate a better, deepened understanding of cultural differences.

Accordingly, the concept of intercultural learning marks a critical distance toward the systematic devaluation of language and culture that many minoritized people have experienced in schools and societies across the Nordic context. Historically, in Norway, Sweden, and Finland, the Sámi population was subject to strong assimilation (Andreassen & Olsen, 2018). Moreover, as part of nation-building processes from the 1850s, other minoritized groups and communities, such as the Romani, the Kven, and the Forest Finns, were disparaged by colonial power. Not only were these groups excluded from the national narratives but also forcefully assimilated into what was idealized as a culturally and linguistically homogenous population (Moen, 2009; Niemi, 2003).

In contemporary society, the tendency to devalue students' diverse cultures and languages is illustrated in the various neo-conservative and right-wing discourses on immigration that continues to haunt the Nordic and European countries. Within such discourses, immigrant students' heritage cultures and languages are often constructed as impediments to learning the majority language and as hindrances to integration into the new country of residence (Skrefsrud, 2018). As a result, students and their families are seen as culturally, linguistically, and socially deprived and in need of repair (Baker & Wright, 2017). To make up for immigrant students' low academic achievements, compensatory measures are then applied, often ignoring the value of the students' existing knowledge, skills, and abilities. Moreover, the responsibility for poor academic performance is placed upon the affected individuals or communities, overlooking the larger cultural and socioeconomic structures in which they are embedded that contribute to their marginalization in multiple domains (Baker & Wright, 2017). In contrast to such a deficit-informed construction of cultural differences, the concept of intercultural learning advocates a resource-oriented approach to diversity where differences are seen not as challenges to be "handled," but as assets and opportunities for the educational development of all. More specifically, engaging in processes of intercultural learning would imply developing what

Nussbaum (1997) has framed as certain abilities of the individual, which overall also reflects an openness toward the value of differences. Nussbaum (1997) discusses different facets of intercultural learning with reference to intra-personal and interpersonal development, which we highlight below.

First, Nussbaum (1997) suggests that intercultural learning involves being an intelligent reader of another person's story: to develop an empathic, narrative imagination of what the other person's experiences, wishes, and aspirations might be. Second, engaging in intercultural learning would mean to see oneself not only as a member of a specific community but also as someone interrelated with other human beings through mutual responsibilities and concerns (Nussbaum, 1997). Intercultural learning thus implies "a call to our imaginations to venture beyond narrow group loyalties and to consider the reality of distant lives" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 10). Third, Nussbaum (1997) emphasizes how intercultural learning implies a self-critical awareness where the learner carefully examines oneself and one's own traditions. For Nussbaum (1997), this means accepting "no belief as authoritative simply because it has been handed down by tradition or become familiar through habit" (p. 9).

Inspired by Levinas (1987), we affirm that a critical self-reflexivity toward one's own taken-for-granted practices would include the ability to refrain from reducing the cultural stranger to a mirror for self-awareness and self-development. In taking student teachers to an exhibition such as *Latjo Drom*, an important part of self-reflexivity would imply to develop a critical understanding of how such exhibitions can promote what Bhabha (1994) framed as "the colonizers' demand for narrative" (p. 98). As noted by Bhabha, the absence of marginalized voices in the mainstream may be seen as a problem since the powerful majority is excluded from hearing the voices from the margins. Without "access" to these voices, the majority is unable to gain knowledge about the minority, which becomes a missed opportunity for the majority to learn about the *other* and itself (see also Skreftsrud, 2021). Yet, the "lack of access" to diverse voices results from the very social system which the majority has put into place over decades and therefore cannot be understood as a problem with the minority *per se*.

As Said (2003) notes, however, the desire to appropriate the *other* for the same purpose is a replication of colonial mistakes upon the "East" in which the "West" invented and objectified the cultural stranger in order to better understand itself. Within the concept of intercultural learning, we are thus urged to keep in mind not only the familiarities but also the otherness of the people we aim to understand. Learning to understand also means avoiding reducing any other to a mirror by the learner. As such, intercultural learning implies developing a critical awareness that fosters an openness toward others, respect for differences, and active tolerance toward diversity as an integrated part of today's schools and society. Enhancing student teachers'

intercultural learning should therefore nurture their ability to recognize the value of diversity in the classroom, to provide opportunities for all students' academic achievements, and to create spaces for participation and belonging.

Museums as Spaces for Teaching and Learning: An Evolving Challenge

Museums have been traditionally conceptualized as public spaces for the arts in ways that seek to inform and educate the population. Although "museum" is a term employed broadly, museums are categorized into genres, such as historical, arts, or scientific, among others, that are also based on a target audience (e.g., a children's museum). Considering their multifaceted and evolving ontology, museums fulfill multiple purposes. Regardless of category or genre, however, museums can be positioned essentially as educational institutions (Hein, 2005). Two central reasons support such a perspective: first, a museum has an impact on the visitor, and second, a visitor engages in meaning-making as they come into contact with an exhibition. In this sense, learning takes place in museums as visitors actively (re)construct knowledge. This perspective endorses a constructivist epistemological framework (Hein, 1998) in which knowledge is individually and collectively created, or in other words, constructed interpersonally (through interaction) and intra-personally (through reflection). Constructivism is a key component of modern theories of learning in which knowledge construction relies on social interaction, problem-based learning, and reflection (e.g., Skrefsrud, 2022).

Reflections on *what museums are for* have traversed decades of critical scholarship in arts education. Nearly 20 years ago, Rice and Yenawine (2002) had already argued that a museum could "no longer claim to be a neutral backdrop for the display of art, because it is understood instead to be a highly complex institution that participates in the social construction of culture and in the legitimization of power" (p. 290). Critical perspectives on the arts enable us to (re)ignite and affirm a political role for museums preoccupied with "offering solutions to social, economic, and cultural problems plaguing society today" (Kundu & Kalin, 2015, p. 40). For Fleming (2013), the crux of managing a museum for social justice is found in an organizational culture, or personality, "that actively nourishes the social justice agenda" (p. 77). For a museum to develop and maintain such a culture, structural and individual changes are necessary internally *in tandem* with the outside, that is, from matters of staffing to consultation with the surrounding communities and the integration of social issues that affect the locale. This may include anti-discrimination training for employees, free admission to events for community members, and the prioritization of initiatives grounded in social justice, both locally and globally (Fleming, 2013).

Included in the idea of the surrounding community are educators affiliated with institutions of higher education. In fact, defending the role of museums as one grounded in social justice has direct implications for teacher educators whose praxis involves museums as sites of teaching and learning. However, as teacher educators work to foster a critical learning experience for students about and within museums, they must maneuver an increasingly and conflictingly neoliberal configuration of the arts. Neoliberal visions have embedded museums into a transaction market wherein visitors exercise control, often through payment, of when, what, and how to engage with the arts. As such, museums become a part of the running economy, responding to the interests of customers, whose individual investments potentially determine the survival of these very spaces. Put differently, “under the neoliberal regime, the art museum visitor is considered a consumer seeking maximum customer satisfaction in the use value of their ‘free time’” (Kundu & Kalin, 2015, p. 42). This prominent issue is also entangled in current neoliberal models of higher education where students are transformed into customers (Tavares, 2022a, 2022b), which makes the work of (teacher) educators even more complex when we assert that museums are also educational institutions.

The neoliberal orientation on the arts amplifies the recreational purpose of museums at the expense of its potential for social justice. Kundu and Kalin (2015) called for a more careful attention toward “how exhibitions can be framed educationally to support modes of looking that direct thought as to one’s responsibilities in relation to society and others in a sustained manner” (p. 49). This ethical call rejects the neoliberal experience of engagement characterized by consumption, demand, and selectivity by opting in or out of social issues based on personal “interest.” Educators play a role in this pressing context as they undertake the intricate task of inspiring students to think beyond the expected reaction to or the easy interpretation of a particular object or exhibit. The work of (teacher) educators also entails equipping students to tend to the visceral differently, or to feeling beyond—and in some cases, against—entertainment. Encouraging critical engagement is an undertaking that depends on raising awareness in the students of the very function of museums in the first place. These are important reflections for teacher educators when we consider that museums should have a positive and transformative impact on our society today.

Experiential Learning and Problem-Posing Education: Some Insights

Experiential learning, as a systematized theory to describe and analyze how people learn, has been around for several decades. The conceptual pillars that

support experiential learning theory originate from an eclectic collection of contemporary educational perspectives, beginning at least in the 1920s with John Dewey's works, gaining traction progressively through other notable educational philosophers such as Jean Piaget and Paulo Freire. Kolb (1984) defined learning from an experiential learning theoretical standpoint as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 41). Today, experiential learning has received growing attention in higher education as applied and critical perspectives on education continue to confront "traditional" teaching and learning models. For centuries, the university has been singularized as the locus of learning through timed and structured teaching inserted in uneven teacher-learner relations. Such a model of education reflects what Freire termed as the banking system of education, in which learners are made passive to receive encyclopedic information from an authority figure (Freire, 2018).

If learning is tied to experience, then its actualization need not be confined to a particular institution. However, the naturalistic character of learning does not necessarily result in *learning* in the sense conceived of in experiential learning theory. This is what Kolb (1984) argued when he explained that "the simple perception of experience alone is not sufficient for learning; something must be done with it" (p. 42). Experiential learning theory proposes a cycle for how learning occurs, which consists of the following components: concrete learning, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Concrete learning takes place when the individual engages in a new experience (or reinterprets a past experience) through the senses and emotions. Reflective observation entails any activity through which the experience is elaborated upon (e.g., thinking, discussing, writing). Here, the individual makes "connections across experiences . . . but without necessarily integrating theories or concepts" (Petkus, 2000, p. 64). The individual reaches this level in abstract conceptualization, when he or she forms or revises ideas as a result of observation.

The last stage, active experimentation, is viewed as the *doing* phase of experiential learning. The individual applies the knowledge acquired up until then to test, validate, or modify their understanding of the experience. Yet, because the individual encounters the experience again throughout life, the learning cycle begins again, wherein their knowledge may be revised. Since experiential learning theory focuses on learning through hands-on experiences, trial and error, and critical reflection, it has played an important role in guiding the formal training of teachers in teacher education programs. Of particular interest here is the relationship between experiential learning and learning about diversity in ways that prepare teachers to understand, build on, and integrate knowledge of diversity into their own practice. Experiential learning has been linked to helping teacher educators and student teachers to

recognize and confront their own biases and prejudices when working with students in different social and economic positions (Bryant et al., 2015). Some teacher education programs have made it mandatory for student teachers to engage in credit-bearing, community-based experiential learning placements given the meaningful contribution that experiential learning makes to students' learning about diversity and different cultural groups through real life involvement (Harfitt & Chow, 2018).

Research in education has exemplified the experiential learning cycle of knowledge (re)construction extensively across the disciplines. Dodman et al. (2022) discussed the relevance and potential of experiential learning in a Portuguese language and literature course in Toronto, where the Lusophone community is considered a minority. The authors embedded experiential learning opportunities in the curriculum for students of a Lusophone heritage background to build upon their knowledge of their diasporic heritage in context. Part of this initiative included visits to galleries which preserved artifacts of the immigration and settlement experiences of Portuguese immigrants, some escaping Portugal's last dictatorship. Pedagogical opportunities for critical reflection, through discussion and writing, were available throughout the course. Other opportunities involved guest speakers and texts written by Portuguese immigrants. Dodman et al. (2022) drew attention to how such experiential engagements helped develop a critical consciousness in students in relation to their ethnic group as a minority in Canada. By the end of the course, students demonstrated a more contextualized, complex, and empathic understanding of the sociological issues which have impacted their community in the Greater Toronto Area.

Thinking critically and feeling empathically are core values of education for today's increasingly interconnected and diverse world. Freire was critical of how traditional (or banking) education works to numb students' abilities to reach and experience criticality and empathy not only as the outcomes but also as processes of learning in schools. Education that excludes students' lived experiences from teaching and learning reinforces what Freire saw as "a dichotomy between human beings and the world: a person is merely *in* the world, not *with* the world or with others; the individual is a spectator, not re-creator" (Freire, 2018, p. 120, italics in original). Being *with* the world meant being an active participant in the world, one who contributes to their individual sociocultural development and to the historical trajectory of the world in consequential, experiential, and conscious ways. Banking education dismisses the students' role in their own education as the student is thought to possess "an empty 'mind' passively open to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside" (Freire, 2018, p. 120). If knowledge is considered static and readily available, then personal experience becomes dispensable and inessential for learning.

Problem-posing education was Freire's proposed remedy to overcome the issues embedded in banking education, and consequently, banking education itself. First and foremost, Freire maintained that education is inherently political because it serves the interests of the elites by prescribing a curriculum that does not reflect the students' lived experiences. As such, students who have been disenfranchised will not experience emancipation if they learn to memorize and repeat information that has nothing politically transformative or liberatory in it. Students are made to sit and answer questions whose answers have already been formulated by the teacher (Freire, 1970). Knowledge is thus "deposited" by the teacher, rather than co-constructed by students in collaboration with other students and teachers. Indeed, the authoritarian role of the teacher is a primary mechanism through which banking education is preserved. The teacher does not empower students—rather, they contribute to silencing students and erasing their lived experience from the curriculum so as to avoid having to confront a system of education that operates on oppression.

Although problem-posing education and experiential learning diverge conceptually in some domains, they coincide in others that support active student learning. Both emphasize the context as indispensable for learning to have an impact on students. Context is multifactorial as it includes the social, cultural, and political terrains upon which education is founded, and is problematized in dialogic interactions between students and teachers (Shor & Freire, 1987; Tavares, 2023). The participatory character of problem-posing education and experiential learning challenges the traditional role played by students in their own education in which they are made passive and problematic. Furthermore, the affective dimension is central for teaching and learning within both perspectives. The hands-on experience evokes a range of emotions in the students, which are invited into teaching and learning for the purposes of (self)understanding. Lastly, problem-posing education and experiential learning depend on critical reflection at various stages of the learning process (Freire, 2018; Kolb, 1984). Reflection leads to agency which, in turn, can result in social change.

Roma Peoples in Norway

In 1999, the Norwegian government considered the Tater-Romani people an official minority in the country. This move followed from a long period, at least since the mid-1800s, of tough assimilation and control measures imposed by the Norwegian government, which Falck (2021) described as unacceptable by today's standards, since such measures included several human rights violations. Indeed, the history of the Romani people in Norway,

who have lived in the country since the sixteenth century, is one characterized by discrimination and prejudice. The arrival and settlement of people of Romani ancestry in Norway have taken place within different migration periods. In the first migration period, roughly around the 1500s, Tater-Romani peoples travelled and established themselves in regions of northern and western Europe. In the second migration period, which began around the 1800s, the Roma peoples who fled Romania and settled in Norway arrived in the mid-1800s. The immigrants from this period are called Norwegian Roma (Pedersen, 2016). The third migration is the most recent, beginning in the 2000s and motivated by war, political changes, and growing racism and discrimination in the Balkans (Falck, 2021).

The arrival of Romani people to Norway in the first migration period was met with harsh measures. Falck (2021) explained that the measures implemented by the Norwegian authorities in 1687 declared that the “Tater/Romani people were to be arrested, their property was to be seized, their leaders were to be executed and all the rest were to leave the territory” (para. 7). Such measures remained in place until 1845 (Liégeois, 2007), but the new arrivals from the second migration period triggered the implementation of further discriminatory measures by the authorities. An investigation by a committee appointed by the Norwegian authorities reviewed the policies in place toward the Tater-Romani people from 1850 to the present day (Norges Offentlige Utredninger [NOU], 2015). The former policies allowed the Christian organization called “Norwegian Mission,” established in 1897, to remove Roma children from their parents if these were considered unfit, which was often easily justified on the basis of the migratory character of the Roma people. The report indicated that about 1,500 children were taken away and placed in either orphanages or foster care. Falck (2021) added that “many of the children were neglected and exposed to physical and psychological abuse” (para. 9).

Another policy targeting the Roma people stemmed from the Vagrant Act of 1900. Falck (2021) explained that “Tater/Romani families were prohibited from speaking their language, wearing traditional clothes, and practicing traditional handicrafts” (para. 10). For a long time, the authorities threatened to take the children away, which therefore ensured compliancy from the families, who were also “not permitted to receive visits from relatives” (para. 10). The “Norwegian Mission” operated the Svanviken labor colony, where 990 Tater-Romani people were kept under close monitoring. This colony ran from 1908 to 1989 (NOU, 2015). Among other measures, The Sterilization Act, implemented in 1934, granted the authorities the decision to forcibly sterilize those considered “unfit” for parenthood or those with “defect genes” (NOU, 2015). Drawing on the report by NOU (2015), Falck (2021) specified that about 40% of the women were sterilized at Svanviken during 1950–1970. “The

youngest Tater/Romani girl was only 14 years old when she was sterilized at the end of the 1940s,” pointed Falck (2021). These were not the only measures in place. The strict regulation of trading goods was another one (Kaveh, 2016).

Today, the number of Romani people in Norway is poorly documented. Statistics estimate about 10,000 based on a report prepared by the European Council for Human Rights (NOU, 2015). Some organizations have been established specifically by and for the Tarter-Romani people in Norway, which reflects some of the change in the relationship between this minority group and the Norwegian government over the years, particularly since the official apology given by the Norwegian government in the late 1990s and the implementation of socioeconomic initiatives for the Tarter-Romani people. Despite this progress, discrimination toward Tarter-Romani people in Norwegian society is still significant (Lauritzen, 2022). Pedersen (2016) argued “that stereotypization and objectification of Roma is widespread and deep-rooted among Norwegians, and that Roma in Norway are not only a muted group . . . but are in fact excluded from the Norwegian imagined community and national narrative” (p. v). A survey from 2017 indicated that the Norwegian respondents would opt to maintain the most social distance to Roma people, broadly speaking, which was significant in comparison to other ethnic groups, in matters such as having an ethnic other as a neighbor (Hoffman & Moe, 2017).

Recent studies have confirmed similar attitudes. Falck (2021) reported that “it is safe to conclude that the treatment of the Roma minority in Norway today falls short of the non-discrimination ideals” given her findings (p. 378). As Falck (2021) has rightly stated, social attitudes can take a long time to change, despite the interventions made by the government in terms of policy related to anti-discrimination. Indeed, social attitudes toward minorities are difficult to change, especially with the prevalence of stereotypes in the media, which other research has also found to be the case for Roma peoples in Norway (e.g., Adolfsson, 2014). Considering this historical context and the political work that lays ahead, teacher education programs are also arenas where such social attitudes may be challenged through critical perspectives.

Latjo Drom: Telling Multiple Stories

The exhibition *Latjo Drom—The Romani/Travellers' Culture and History* is located at the Glomdal Museum in Elverum, Norway, which is frequently used as a site for teaching and learning by teacher educators and student teachers at INN University. The Glomdal Museum was founded in 1911 as a folk museum for the purpose of exhibiting the rural cultures of the local region of Østerdalen and Solør. Since the 1990s, the museum has been a

pioneer in including local minority cultures in the exhibitions, such as the life and history of Forrest Finns and Southern Sámi people, thereby displaying some of the multicultural history of the region (Kalsås, 2015). On the background of these experiences, the Glomdal Museum was asked by the Norwegian Government to take on special responsibility in preserving fundamental components of the language, traditions, and cultural heritage of the Romani people, resulting in the exhibition *Latjo Drom*, which opened in 2006 and remains on display in the museum.

Latjo Drom—meaning to wish someone a safe and enjoyable journey in the Romani language—was produced in close cooperation between Glomdal and representatives from the two largest Romani organizations in Norway: *Taternes Landsforening* and *Landsorganisasjonen for Romanifolket* (Glomdalsmuseet, 2022). As such, the exhibition is an example of what Fouseki (2010) framed as a “shared ownership” (p. 180) between museum professionals and community members. According to Fouseki (2010), the ideal of shared ownership stands in contrast to a praxis of consultation which often has been approached as a “tick-box” exercise by curators aiming to justify requirements for funding and participant involvement. Because museums are encouraged to be agents of social inclusion, Fouseki (2010) argued that community consultancy should be replaced with “active negotiation and engagement that is aimed at shared power and ownership” (p. 180). However, although *Latjo Drom* was developed through a collaborative relationship between the museum and the Romani organizations, the exhibition still raised several controversial issues (Kalsås, 2015). The controversies had to do with content, representativity, and ownership to the exhibition. One controversy revolved around who should be the formal owners of the exhibition: the Romani community or the museum. Nevertheless, the controversies around the exhibition seem to have declined in recent years, not least due to the broad engagement and involvement by members of the Romani community itself.

The exhibition is divided into several sections, displaying the rich diversity of Romani people’s culture and history. Visitors to *Latjo Drom* can see artifacts such as handicraft, clothing, and even larger items such as a boat, a caravan, and a car, reflecting various experiences of the different Norwegian Romani communities in the period between 1950 and the 1970s. Moreover, the exhibition comes together through different modalities: pictures, texts, films, and examples of Romani music, both traditional Romani folk songs and contemporary examples of artists building upon their Romani background in compositions and performances.

The first section of the exhibition—“Origin”—tells stories of the Romani people’s language and mixed backgrounds within the context of their migration and travelling. In other sections, artifacts that help present the travelling way of life are displayed, portraying possibilities for how mobility has

been adapted and integrated through generations by Romani communities. Here, the visitor can learn about the ways in which the culture of “being on the move” is incorporated into Romani language, handicraft, artifacts, and knowledge. The final part of the exhibition tells a darker story by presenting sad and horrific examples of how Romani people were treated by the majority society, including lobotomy, forced sterilization, and forced relocations of Romani children into foster homes. Pictures and films from Svanviken labor colony depict the severe measures implemented by the Norwegian Government which sought to pursue the Romani people to abandon their travelling way of life and resign instead to a permanent residence, one aligned with the ideal of the Norwegian independent farmer. This section also consists of personal narratives illustrating what it meant for individuals to have their cultural traditions and lifestyles eradicated by authorities. “Johan,” who fell victim to the national regulation of travelling people’s use of horses introduced by the Norwegian authorities in 1951 to prevent the Romani people from traveling, shared his experiences of exclusion and outsidersness:

Instead of using the beautiful horse, we had to pull the carriage ourselves or use bicycles. It felt like a humiliation, as if we were no longer worth anything. Taking away the horse was the same as asking you farmers to become fishermen. Most of what I had learned from my father was related to the horse. After all, we were primarily horsemen. (Glomdalsmuseet, 2022)

Although the assimilation was harsh and the authorities were rather “successful” in their measures of having the Romani adapt to the majority society and renounce their culture, the exhibition ends by restoring hope for the Romani to survive as a minority group today. The Romani organizations have opportunities to inform visitors about their activities. Additionally, four persons of a Romani background are portrayed in the exhibition. They share their perspectives on how Romani traditions, cultures, and languages can be transferred to and revitalized in younger generations. In this section, the visitor is invited to reflect together with the four persons, or in other words, to attempt to think from the *other’s* perspective, by drawing on their experiences and impressions from the exhibition. By the end of the exhibition, visitors have the chance to rethink a contemporary Romani identity and understand what it means to live as a national minority within the Norwegian majority society.

Our Reflections: Linking Theory to Practice

In this section, we revisit the guiding question of the chapter as we attempt to draw links between theory and practice specifically for the course in focus.

Museums have been a part of school-based teaching and learning for some decades. The inclusion of museums into teaching and learning has typically consisted of site visits led by the instructor. However, we have reflected on the growing challenges surrounding the inclusion of museums in formal education against neoliberal forces that commodify diversity and undermine the social justice purpose of the arts. In appropriating diversity for entertainment and revenue, neoliberalism obstructs educational efforts to promote intercultural learning in museums. This issue is important for the Norwegian context when we consider that primary and secondary school curricula have traditionally offered superficial and stereotyped content on Norway's minoritized communities (e.g., Eriksen, 2018). As such, opportunities for intercultural learning, both within and outside the classroom, become essential given their potential to support learners to critically understand cultural complexity (Lane, 2012).

Within this context, we have proposed that experiential education emerges to help improve and strengthen students' understandings of cultural diversity within their repertoire of knowledge and experience. Before we can draw on experiential education to promote the construction of knowledge about the *other*, we must first avoid "depositing" knowledge in the students. As Freire (2018) argued, teaching within the banking system of education would mean creating a false sense of discovery in the students by leading them to information that would have been pre-selected by us, educators, based on our own experiences with and objectives for the subject matter. Such a pedagogy defeats not only the essence of experiential education but also the goals of the course—a point which we return to shortly. Indeed, the first cycle of experiential learning entails engaging in a new experience through the senses and emotions. In the banking system of education, the senses and emotions students experience are numbed and delegitimized because students' roles are dehumanized to that of passive recipients of (irrelevant) information.

Latjo Drom is constructed in a manner that can evoke a number of emotions in the visitor. Through imagery, text, sound, and artifacts, the visitor engages with the exhibition through the senses, not discretely but rather simultaneously. Of course, we cannot anticipate how students might emotionally respond to the content presented in the exhibition. Still, we argue that the exhibition offers plenty of *opportunities* which, at least in theory, facilitate concrete learning, the initial phase of learning that involves the senses and emotions (Kolb, 1984). The next phase of learning is reflective observation, wherein students expand on the experience through activities that require reflection. The course design of DLDP affords us, teacher educators, diverse possibilities for how to foster reflection in the students. Group discussions are one example as they remain a prominent avenue for meaning-making in the course given their collaborative and engaging nature. We could contextualize

group discussion by posing the following questions: What did you learn from the exhibition? How did you respond to the exhibition—what did you feel? How does your experience compare to that of your peers?

In a similar vein, DLDP offers formal opportunities within which students' reflections on their experiences can intersect with the theories and concepts learned in the course. It is particularly important that students be able to critically engage with the multiple perspectives presented in the course. For instance, in one of the written assignments, students may be asked: In what ways may *Latjo Drom* reflect key concepts learned in the course with respect to diversity, multiculturalism, or minoritization? In what ways may *Latjo Drom* challenge theories and concepts introduced in the course? Can you propose any gaps in the theories and concepts? It is at this point when we aim to promote abstract conceptualization: the phase in which students formulate new understandings or revise their previously held ideas in consideration of their academic training. Given the broad scope of DLDP, both general concepts in the literature (e.g., multiculturalism, diversity, immigration) and context-specific points (e.g., the Romani peoples of Norway, Norwegian society, intergroup relations) may be emphasized.

Active experimentation is the last phase of the learning cycle, though the learning cycle may occur again when students come across the same experience in the future. As the name suggests, this phase involves an activity through which the knowledge acquired is applied through some kind of engagement that can (dis)confirm what students have learned. While in this reflection we are not interested in “measuring” how much students would have learned, we recognize the importance of contextualized forms of what Freire (2018) called critical awareness or critical consciousness. This would include a (better) understanding of historical processes and their impact on the social realities of oppressed groups as well as an understanding of human agency as something natural of the individual, but that can be suppressed in the individual by majority groups. One of the goals of critical pedagogy is to restore, activate, and nurture this sense of agency in the individual. Departing from this understanding, it is important that students come to see the *other* as a cultural agent in context rather than a passive cultural figure.

We also hope that learning in the Glomdal Museum would contribute to strengthening students' intercultural knowledge in meaningful ways. Intercultural knowledge within the active experimentation phase would possibly entail a critical understanding of how and why the *other* is socially constructed as such by the majority group. In this case, we are interested in students' development of (inter)cultural knowledge of the Roma peoples of Norway in a manner that can challenge their preconceptions of that same group and help them identify where such preconceptions originate from, which includes stereotypes and narratives that have unfavorably informed

the social construction of this group in Norway (Falck, 2021; Pedersen, 2016). Equally, or perhaps more important, would be students' abilities to act upon their own knowledge to not only identify but also confront mechanisms that maintain the social and cultural inferiorization of minoritized groups within schools. This is a goal of the DLDP course in itself: to equip students with critical and analytical skills for the betterment of the school culture and pedagogy.

Yet, intercultural knowledge cannot be only about better understanding the *other* but also about the self, and the relationship between the two. On the individual level, intercultural knowledge should call into question the dichotomy of "us/them" by reconceptualizing the students' view of self as a member of a broader, interconnected society—one that has always been characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity. Intercultural knowledge has the potential to ignite and cultivate empathy toward the *other* (Dodman et al., 2022). It is our hope that students should be able to put themselves in the place of others, to imagine the life experiences of other people, and to learn from the other as a result of their intercultural learning experiences at the Glomdal Museum. A focus on the shared humanity, rather than on the differences for a superficial comparison of cultural practices, is a characteristic of intercultural knowledge. Finally, it is essential that this intercultural learning experience can lead students to critically examine their own cultures (Nussbaum, 1997).

To conclude, we have reflected on the relevance of museums for teaching and learning about diversity in a Norwegian teacher education program. We have underscored the importance that experiential education with a critical orientation would hold within a course on differentiated instruction for potentially supporting students in their development of intercultural knowledge. We have adopted a view of museums as educational spaces wherein visitors—in our case, students—can learn about themselves and the *other* in emotionally engaging, thought-provoking, and creative ways from multiple perspectives. Against the neoliberal capture of the arts, we insist on the centrality of promoting opportunities for critical reflection so that we, student teachers and teacher educators, can come to revisit our understanding of diversity by re- and co-constructing knowledge following an (envisioned) visit to *Latjo Drom*. It is through experiential and critical opportunities such as this one that we hope to continue to better prepare future teachers in not only an increasingly diverse but also polarized world.

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