Kristin Gregers Eriksen

"We usually don't talk that way about Europe..."
- Interrupting the coloniality of Norwegian citizenship education

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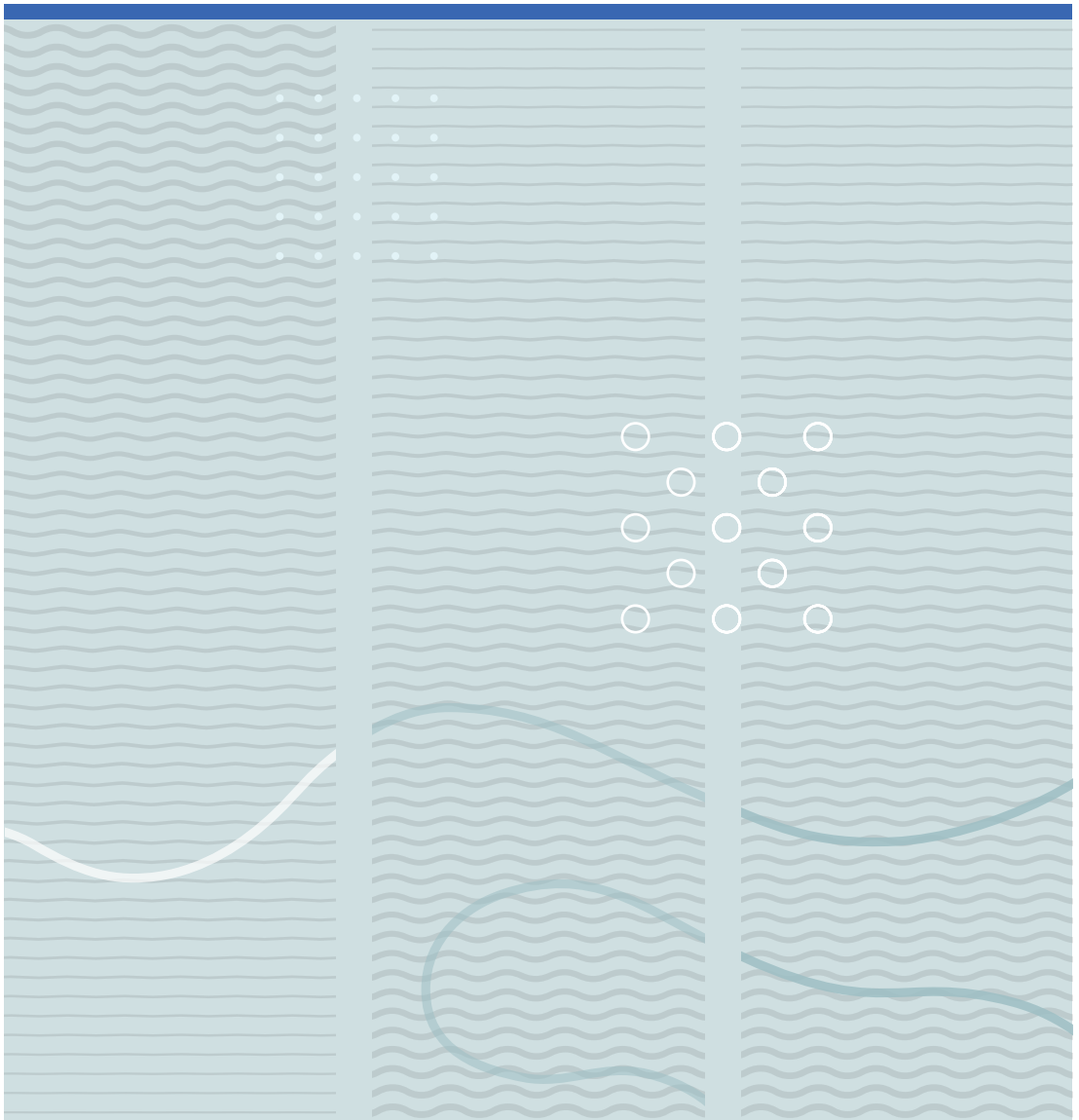Kristin Gregers Eriksen

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A PhD dissertation in
**Pedagogical resources and learning processes
in kindergarten and school**

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Abstract

Keywords: *Citizenship education, Classroom studies, Coloniality, Racism, Whiteness, National exceptionalism*

In this study, I explore the coloniality of Norwegian citizenship education, emphasizing knowledge production and discourses in primary school classrooms. I investigate the social justice of knowledge production and explore the possibilities, complexities, and risks of critical interruptions to hegemonic epistemological frameworks. The emphasis on coloniality engages analyses of how historical colonialism installed enduring epistemological and material structures that continue to inform our current ways of thinking and being. Coloniality encompass a system where the white majority represents the invisible norm, acting as the bearer of the alleged universal rationality. The significance of coloniality for citizenship education is related both to locating the possible limitations posed by colonial frameworks of knowledge to the potential for fostering critical thinking, and the reproduction of racialization and othering through educational discourses. The purpose of this study is to contribute knowledge that can enable anti-racist, decolonizing, and critical citizenship education practice.

This is an article-based dissertation, comprised of four scientific articles and a "kappe", or extended abstract. The kappe provides a literature mapping of citizenship education research focused on the Nordic countries and particularly Norway; an account for decoloniality as a political, methodological and epistemological concept; an overview of methods and materials; critical reflections related to the research as knowledge production, and ethics; synthesis of the main results from the articles, and a discussion of implications arising from the research for decolonizing citizenship education in primary schools as well as teacher education.

The methodology in this study is Colonial discourse analysis, focusing on relations between knowledge production and power, and identifying hegemonic, ahistorical, and Eurocentric institutionalized discursive structures. To do this, I apply a combination of methods allowing me to explore discourses from different modalities of discursive

practice, hereunder textbooks, classroom conversations, and students' and teachers´ meaning-making. The first modality is accessed through critical discourse analysis of textbooks, and the other modalities are approached through ethnography, including participant observation of classroom interactions and conversations, semi-structured interviews with students and teachers, and teaching interventions. The methodological orientation in this study is concerned with mobilizing knowledge to challenge and interrupt current modes of thinking, rather than offering a universal representation of citizenship education in Norway.

Through the analyses offered by the four articles, this study contributes knowledge on a topic that is little explored in the Norwegian context, yet holds potentially serious consequences for citizenship education in terms of social justice and critical thinking. Overall, the articles reveal that the imaginary of national exceptionalism and the affective equilibrium of whiteness are deeply embedded within educational discourses, manifested in the production of knowledge, and national and social identities and subjectivities in the classrooms. Coloniality, as it appears in and through primary school citizenship education in this study, thus serves to (re)produce social and racial inequality and epistemic injustice, despite good intentions. This injustice particularly manifests in discursive practices that construct whiteness as an unmarked norm constituted upon the racialized others, upholding white hegemony. The analysis illustrates how coloniality may absolve educational institutions of their ethical and pedagogical responsibilities to disrupt unjust and unsustainable social relations, and obstruct critical conversations about processes that systemically reproduce discursive and political inequalities. The results of this study implicate the need for a decolonizing citizenship education that includes the following: Pluralizing curriculum and teaching materials; engaging with epistemology and fostering knowledge about the politics and historicity of knowledge production; explicitly engaging colonial history, and positioning racialized and indigenous groups as the protagonists of these narratives; including and experimenting with post-abyssal pedagogies, such as affective approaches and practicing conversation and listening; engaging a critical self-reflexivity that is relational; explicitly deconstructing and

dismantling national exceptionalism and whiteness; reconceptualizing racism and culture, and engaging in prefigurative practices toward desirable futures.

List of articles

Article 1

Eriksen, K.G. (2018a). Teaching about the other in primary level social studies: The Sami in Norwegian textbooks. *Journal Of Social Science Education*, *17*(2), 57-67. https://doi.org/10.4119/UNIBI/jsse-v17-i2-1697.

Article 2

Eriksen, K.G. (2018b). Education for sustainable development and narratives of Nordic exceptionalism: The contributions of decolonialism. *Nordidactica*, *8*(4), 21-42.

Article 3

Eriksen, K.G. (2020a). Discomforting Presence in the Classroom – the Affective Technologies of Race, Racism and Whiteness. *Whiteness and Education*, *5*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23793406.2020.1812110.

Article 4

Eriksen, K.G. & Stein, S. (under review). Good intentions, colonial relations: Interrupting the white emotional equilibrium of Norwegian citizenship education.

Abbreviations

ARS   Antirasistisk senter [The Norwegian Centre Against Racism]

CDA   Critical discourse analysis

CoE   Council of Europe

ESD   Education for Sustainable Development

GCE   Global Citizenship Education

GENE   Global Education Network Europe

IEA   International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement

ICCS   International Civic and Citizenship Education Study

KD   Kunnskapsdepartementet [The Norwegian Ministry of Education]

NESH   Den nasjonale forskningsetiske komité for samfunnsvitenskap og humaniora [The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities]

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

NSD   Norsk senter for forskningsdata [Norwegian Centre for Research Data]

OECD   Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SAIH   Studentenes og akademikernes internasjonale hjelpefond [Norwegian Students` and Academics` International Assistance Fund]

SOAS   The School of Oriental & African Studies

UDIR   Utdanningsdirektoratet [The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training]

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1 Introduction

In a seventh-grade social studies class, the students are exploring the topic of slavery. In a clever way, the teacher connects the historical process of European slave trade from the 1500s to the present, making a distant historical past relevant. The presence of slavery is brought closer to the everyday lives of students through the use of examples from the global textile industry, with possible implications for the clothes the students wear. However, the textbook steers the focus of the conversation in a somewhat different direction. Information about the transatlantic slave trade is provided in a chapter titled *The great explorers*. This story of European colonialism as a major achievement of "great" white men has proven tenacious in educational narratives in Norway as well as globally (Mikander, 2015). This narrative is rarely questioned, but treated simply as a case of providing *the* facts of World history. As the teacher tells her students, "today we are going to learn about the Europeans who discovered the world." The construction of a racialized system of forced labor that uprooted millions of people from their homes, depriving them of their homelands and depleting their resources while relegating them to immense suffering and dehumanization, appears as a mere footnote in the story of "great adventurers" and their alleged achievements. The coming of modernity, Western science, and industrialization made possible by these processes is presented as the trajectory of human development toward infinite progress. What remains unacknowledged is how these processes installed prevailing Eurocentric modes of economic and epistemological domination, based on ontological deprivation, with a refusal to acknowledge the full humanity of non-Europeans, or more precisely, non-whites (Santos, 2018). At one point during the class, the main narrative is interrupted, as a student raises her hand and asks: "But, who discovered Norway, then?" The teacher hesitates, clearly surprised by the question, and answers, "I don't think anyone really discovered Norway; it is more that different people have been living here for thousands of years. We don't usually talk that way about Europe."

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This study explores the coloniality of Norwegian citizenship education, emphasizing knowledge production and discourses in primary school classrooms. This is not necessarily an expected focus when talking about citizenship education, or even Norwegian society in general. As shown through the above classroom dialogue, the very concept of colonialism is rarely used in the educational context. At best, it is treated as past historical events involving other European countries—never "us", in terms of the Norwegian national community (Keskinen et al., 2019). On a fundamental level, the common view that "Norway never had colonies" is simply not true. The dual kingdom of Denmark–Norway colonized areas in what is today Ghana, South-Eastern India, and the Caribbean Islands of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix beginning in the 17th century, and Norwegian ship merchants acquired large fortunes from slave-based trade (Eidsvik, 2012; Kjerland & Berthelsen, 2015). Even more pressing is the way this idea of Norway's particular innocence, or *national exceptionalism* when discussing colonialism, upholds a sanctioned ignorance (Spivak, 1999) of the way the Norwegian state colonized parts of *Sápmi[1]*, the ancestral homeland of the indigenous Sami. The discursive structures of national exceptionalism (Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012a; Stein, 2018) uphold the reproduction of coloniality through a particular way of imagining the nation-state, purposefully dismissing certain events, or even reframing them within the imaginary of the nation-state and its subjects as inherently good. When the Ministry of Education passed a new core curriculum in 2017, emphasis was placed on Sami perspectives. However, the word colonialism is not present at all in the curriculum for primary and secondary schools (The Norwegian Ministry of Education (KD), 2019). This part of history is left in the past through a continuous ritual of apologizing, that is, remembering *in a particular way* (Santos, 2018).

One could, of course, ask why colonialism should be included in the curriculum. After all, is it not just a minor aspect of the successful history of modernity, one that a successful, liberal democracy must distance itself from? The consequences of the lack of a conversation on colonialism in Norway were illustrated through a heated debate in the

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[1] Sápmi stretches across what is today known as Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Northwestern Russia.

media around the time I started this study—a debate in which I also participated (Eriksen, 2017). The Minister of Finance at the time, Siv Jensen, dressed up in what she described as an "Indian costume" for an official government party, posting her image in social media. She wore a festive outfit loosely inspired by the stereotypical image of American First Nations. The Sami Parliament and its President explained in the media that they felt her costume was disrespectful and disregarded the rights of indigenous peoples, with explicit references to colonialism (Elvevold, 2017). What was striking about this case, however, was the massive response from the Norwegian public as well as intellectuals and politicians to this criticism. The problem was reframed as the right of the majority to practice their freedom of speech and not be accused of offending a minority (Aurdal, 2017). The public official working with the Minister encouraged the Sami President to "have more twinkle in her eye" (Elvevold, 2017). For me, this inability of the majority to acknowledge the perspective of the Sami and their own colonial complicity (Keskinen, 2009), whether intentional or not, is a clear example of the need for a thorough conversation on colonialism in Norway. As I argued in my response in a Norwegian newspaper, this is fundamentally a question of empathy rather than political correctness—of accepting the perspective of the other in spite of your inability to understand (Eriksen, 2017). I became aware of my own blindness in an encounter with a Sami student teacher, who reacted emotionally to my class on the history of racism toward the Sami. He felt dehumanized by my representations. It it hit me hard that my class produced the opposite reaction from what I had intended. I wanted to display this history in all its brutality in order to foster anti-racism, but I was unable to imagine how this might feel for someone directly implicated through their family relations, identity, and body. The affective teaching I received from this student about how our social identities position us differently and the significance of experience for what we can properly know was crucially important to my interest in coloniality, although I did not posit a conceptual apparatus to formulate it in those terms at the time.

Assessing the objectivity of knowledge is fundamentally a question of whose knowledge, agenda, and lives are positioned as the norm. As Harding (2015) points out, this is about accepting that, from where the other stands, things look different. My experience and

subsequent recognition that this simple but fundamental insight about human relationality is so difficult to grasp and sparks so much resistance made me curious—and it still continuous to intrigue me. Why was it so difficult for the large majority supporting the Minister to accept the critique from the Sami community? Surely, the example illustrates the need for the Norwegian population to be educated on the basic history of the colonization of Sápmi. However, it is clear that what is at stake here is not simply a matter of "sorting out the facts." Even when offered the proper information about colonialism and cultural appropriation from the Sami President, the majority seemed unable to process it as "true" knowledge. As Quijano (2000) described, colonialism did not end with historical colonialism based on territorial occupation; rather, enduring power and knowledge structures were installed. Coloniality is thus "a full dependence of the models of thinking, making, and interpreting the world based on the norms created and imposed by/in Western modernity" (Tlostanova et al., 2019, p. 290). This is the understanding of coloniality that I apply in this research, as structuring modern epistemology and ontology, normalizing them as universal, and deeming all others to be inferior. Thinking with coloniality, the blindness of the majority was not a matter of what they did not see but rather of what they *could not see* because of how they have earned to perceive the world.

Coloniality encompasses a system where the white majority represents the invisible norm, acting as the bearer of the alleged universal rationality and morality. Within this logic, the perspective of the Sami protestors is positioned as emotionally contaminated and irrational. In this framework, "we," that is, the Norwegian national community, conceptualized as a homogenous white unity, are seen as inherently democratic and as protecting fundamental individual freedoms, such as the freedom of speech. Meanwhile, "they," the Sami, as the indigenous minority, are participating in unnecessary problematization, disturbing this imagined pure, universal state of liberal democracy. As Shotwell (2016) observed, "Whiteness is a problem of being shaped to think that other people are the problem"(p. 38). As the white colonial mind has constructed a reality in which its ontological safety and comfort is predicated upon a lack of safety of others, it has never had to realize itself and its complicity (Matias, 2016).

1.1 "What is this all doing in a nice field like education?"

To borrow a phrase from critical race theorist Ladson-Billings (1998) that I find fitting, particularly in light of some of the reactions I get from peers when starting these types of conversations, what is this all doing in a nice field like education? And, more specifically, what is the possible significance of examining coloniality from and within the context of Norwegian citizenship education? Returning to the example from the class on slavery and European "explorers," at least two vital aspects with implications for citizenship education, knowledge production, and social justice are on display. First, when the student challenges the narrative of the lesson by asking the excellent question of who discovered Norway, the teacher's response is as elusive as it is accurate: "We do not usually talk that way about Europe." That is exactly the way colonial epistemology works; the European, white perspective is the naturalized norm of knowledge. As both the teacher and the textbook affirm, the idea makes the notion that Europeans "discovered the world" logically possible, making thousands of years of indigenous history invisible. Faced with the complexity and unfamiliarity of the student's question, the teacher lacks tools for answering in an open, reflective way. It is simply not the way we talk. The opportunity to learn and to expand thinking related to the situation is lost. This represents a paradox in citizenship education. Because fostering democratic relations fundamentally requires recognizing plurality as the normal state (Biseth, 2014), the common quest for "true" and unambiguous knowledge and unified community in classrooms seems like a contradiction. From a colonial perspective, this epistemological monoculture is accompanied by an ontological monoculture, where racist structures installed with colonialism and slavery are still at work, rendering certain bodies invisible as full human beings (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Listening to the above-mentioned classroom dialogue, I could not help but wonder how students not socially positioned as white—or male— experienced the class. White male Europeans were presented as the protagonists of world history and were positioned as defining and telling the story. The rest of the world's population was only present as unspecific, nameless others devoid of agency.

1.2   Aims and objectives of the research

When initiating the research, I found the seeming discrepancy between the national and official imaginary of being democratic and inherently good and the unnamed othering and selective exclusion of certain knowledge and perspectives in classrooms to be especially intriguing. Why is it that, in spite of the ambition of citizenship education to enable democracy, diversity, and equality, it still reproduces violent discourses and racist and colonial structures of knowledge (Gorski, 2008; Røthing & Svendsen, 2011; Svendsen, 2014b)? Why is it so apparently difficult to sit with the ambivalence of uncomfortable knowledge (Boler & Zembylas, 2003; Osler & Lindquist, 2016; Shotwell, 2016), such as acknowledging the existence of, and one's possible complicity in, colonialism and structural racism? Inspired by these questions, the aim of this research is to map the workings of, and possible interruptions to, the coloniality of knowledge. In order to achieve this aim, I intend to 1) investigate the social justice of knowledge production in current citizenship education in Norway and 2) explore the possibilities, complexities, and risks of critical interruptions to current epistemological frameworks.

I position myself with an internationally growing number of researchers, intellectuals, and activists engaging in decolonial critique, committed to transforming education towards more just endeavors by explicitly exposing and resisting coloniality in the pedagogical praxis of researching, writing and teaching (Andreotti, 2011c; Andreotti et al., 2015; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Sandoval, 2000; Santos, 2018; Zembylas, 2019b).[2] The legacy of decolonial critiques is highly indebted to indigenous thinkers. However, researchers engaging in these critiques, regardless of their background, share the notion that tackling coloniality through education is necessary to promote anti-racist, anti-sexist, socially just education (Teasley & Butler, 2020). In citizenship education globally, discursive orientations often seem to be framed by the common metanarrative of the modern/colonial imaginary, naturalizing the European viewpoint and racist and capitalist social relations, even if engaging in radical critiques (Pashby et al., 2020).

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[2] This is not an exhaustive list. It refers to a selection of works that are central inspirations for this study.

Decolonial critiques identify European colonization and slavery in the 15th century as the epistemological and ontological genesis of modernity, inserting an enduring racial/colonial division of the world between white/European-descended subjects and others (Mignolo, 2005; Stein, 2016), in other words, coloniality (Quijano, 2000). Coloniality can thus be understood both as the dark side, or the hidden face of, modernity, and the very condition for its possibility (Mignolo, 2012).[3] This hidden face of modernity's "shine" is exemplified in the Norwegian context by how race is considered taboo and refuted as an analytical concept, despite being performative in social relations and structures (Bangstad, 2015; Gullestad, 2004), and how national exceptionalism elevates the nation-state above critique (Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012a). Notably, exceptionalism is manifested by the coproduction of Norwegianness and whiteness through constructions of inherent "goodness" (Myrdahl, 2014). In educational discourses, the workings of whiteness are generally obscured by the application of seemingly benevolent terms such as cultural diversity (Fylkesnes, 2019), colorblindness (Harlap & Riese, 2014), and diversity (Westrheim & Hagatun, 2015). Thus, an objective of this study is to identify coloniality, race, and whiteness in citizenship education discourses. I seek to contribute to developing pedagogical tools to access and understand the dark sides of liberal, modern ideals in citizenship education.

1.2.1 Research questions

I have developed two overarching research questions that reflect the dual objectives of this study of contextualizing and deepening the above-described criticism of the case of Norway and contributing to possible interruptions to coloniality. The research questions are:

1) *What discourses about the Norwegian democracy, citizenship, and national and social identities are constructed within primary-level citizenship education?*

2) *How can decolonial perspectives contribute to ethical and just epistemological and pedagogical approaches to citizenship education?*

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[3] This is also why the terms from this perspective are applied as the duplex modern/colonial.

Research question 1 partly fills the role of gap-spotting (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013), addressing an area that has not been the subject of much research. As I further elaborate on in Chapter 2, although the number of publications related to citizenship education in Norway is growing, little has been written regarding primary schools. The significance of looking at discourses is related to how coloniality can be understood as continuously reproduced through particular discursive and disciplinary practices. The choice to emphasize national and social identities was partly influenced by my interest in the paradoxical role of citizenship education in fostering both socialization and subjectification (cf. Biesta, 2009), that is, inserting individuals into existing socio-political orders and promoting agency. From a colonial perspective, these are interrelated, as the discourses of national exceptionalism are part of the process through which the ideal national subject is "produced" (Stein, 2018; Thobani, 2007). In whiteness studies, subject formation is theorized in the way in which the white gaze forms subjectivation[4] processes of the colonized through colonial discourse (Fanon, 2008; Yancy, 2008). To put it in other terms, research question 1 reflects an interest in who are—or are given access to be— part of the greater "we" constructed in the classroom. Even though the question is descriptive, the methodological approach is still inherently critical. I am interested in the intersections of knowledge and power and of institutions and ideas. Hence, I explore research question 1 applying *colonial discourse analysis* (Andreotti, 2011a; Loomba, 2005). This approach is further described in Chapter 5.

Research question 2 puts emphasizes what the decolonial critique does in relation to citizenship education. The relevance of decolonial perspectives for educational transformation lies in the ability to construct new knowledge and deepen reflexivity by questioning and reframing the questions that are deemed relevant to begin with. In this way, a purpose of this study is to identify interesting questions in order to stimulate new, critical conversations in the field of citizenship education, paying attention to

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[4] The concepts of subjectification and subjectivation refer to the same fundamental phenomenon of (the constant process of) becoming a subject, although they might be described in quite different ways and based on differing philosophical or psychological perspectives. I choose to denote the terms corresponding to the way they are applied by the authors. Accordingly, I apply "subjectification" when referring to Biesta and "subjectivation" when referring to Fanon.

perspectives currently missing from the discussion (Andreotti, 2014). Methodologically, this approach is inspired by the Sociology of absences (Santos, 2018), and particularly by uncovering how the invisibility of non-European perspectives and epistemic violence is actively produced in education through colonial discourses (Teasley & Butler, 2020).

As the research design is dynamic and emerging, so are the research questions. The decolonial researcher is not committed to a specific method, discipline, or technique but rather is personally committed to the work and the possible implications for social justice (Santos, 2018). Following a reflexive methodological approach, research questions can be considered as "navigational tools that can help a researcher map possible directions but also to inquire about the unexpected" (Agee, 2009, p. 432). Hence, I view the research questions as tools that helped me navigate the compass of social justice and decoloniality, which were necessarily flexible enough to access what was not anticipated. I further discuss the emerging research focus in Section 4.2.

1.3 Outline of the dissertation

This dissertation is comprised of four scientific articles. The document you are currently reading is called "kappe" in Norwegian and is commonly described in English as "synopsis," "extended introduction," or "extended abstract." In my view, none of these concepts are fully satisfactory, as the "kappe" has a purpose in itself and adds something to the dissertation (Fekjær, 2017). The purpose of this kappe is to account more thoroughly for the context and methodological considerations than is possible in the format of articles in order to make the research process more transparent, highlight reflexivity, and establish coherence (Krumsvik, 2016). This kappe provides critical reflections related to myself as a researcher, the challenges encountered throughout the process, and implications arising from the research.

This kappe is comprised of seven chapters. I opened this first chapter with a classroom event, as I want to emphasize the importance of what is occurring in classrooms as a fundamental feature of this research. Chapter 2 provides an introduction to scholarship countering coloniality in citizenship education as well as a more thorough literature

mapping of relevant research on citizenship education in the Norwegian context. In Chapter 3, I account for the central concepts and perspectives in my operationalization of the decolonial critique, with an emphasis on the particularity of the Norwegian context and its implications for decoloniality as an academic, political, and epistemological project. I account for methodology, including issues of positionality, ethics, and reflexivity, in Chapter 4, and then move on to the practicalities of concrete methods, materials, and the research process in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, I shed light on the shared context of the articles and tie together their overall contribution to the research questions. I then discuss the implications of the research for a decolonial citizenship education in Chapter 7. The articles are referred to as Articles 1, 2, 3, and 4 throughout the kappe:

- Article 1: Eriksen, K.G. (2018a). Teaching about the other in primary level social studies: The Sami in Norwegian textbooks. *Journal Of Social Science Education*, *17*(2), 57-67. https://doi.org/10.4119/UNIBI/jsse-v17-i2-1697.

- Article 2: Eriksen, K.G. (2018b). Education for sustainable development and narratives of Nordic exceptionalism: The contributions of decolonialism. *Nordidactica*, *8*(4), 21-42.

- Article 3: Eriksen, K.G. (2020a). Discomforting Presence in the Classroom – the Affective Technologies of Race, Racism and Whiteness. *Whiteness and Education*, *5*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23793406.2020.1812110.

- Article 4: Eriksen, K.G. & Stein, S. (under review). Good intentions, colonial relations: Interrupting the white emotional equilibrium of Norwegian citizenship education.

2 Global citizenship education and the case of Norway: Context, background, and mapping the literature

The aim of this chapter is to establish the context and further explain the rationale for and positioning of the research. First, I discuss research concerning countering coloniality in citizenship education, including examples of empirical research from the Nordic region. Second, I describe the historical, ideological, and political context of citizenship education in Norway, setting the stage for a more substantial review of Norwegian citizenship education research. Through mappings of relevant literature, I seek to identify absences and assumptions that form the background for the exploration, problematization, and analysis provided by my research (cf. Stein, 2016). Towards the end of the chapter, I reflect on the contributions of this study.

2.1 Mapping the literature

The purpose of reviewing literature in the context of this research is related to organizing or integrating the literature as such as well as critiquing and interrupting the current research field and existing discussions (Charmaz et al., 2018; Creswell, 2015). In this sense, the aim of the literature mapping is relevance more than comprehensiveness (Maxwell, 2006). The mapping of literature throughout this study has taken on three shapes. First, it was a general, explorative review from the outset, mainly focused on the Norwegian national context with the intention of identifying gaps and defining and actualizing my research topic. Second, engaging with existing, mainly international literature has been a matter of ongoing reflexivity throughout the research process, continuously shaping my perspectives (Charmaz et al., 2018). Third, I performed more systematic literature mappings toward the end of the process to help shape reflexivity around the positionality of and possible contributions of my work. Although I did apply approaches informed by traditional comprehensive structured review techniques, such as developing explicit inclusion and inclusion criteria and conducting systematic searches in large academic databases, I describe my engagement with the literature overall as mapping. Mapping implies that the process of reviewing and categorizing literature is

performative, selective, and situated and that the intention is to support reflexive discussions (Pashby et al., 2020; Suša, 2019) rather than to summarize what has been said. Additionally, the mapping is shaped by reflections on what conceptual and theoretical conversations I want the research to contribute to.

2.2 Citizenship education and current international debates

The current curricular content and practice of citizenship education is, in both a national and an international perspective, varied and contested. The interest in the field has been increasing exponentially, as demonstrated by the growth of scholarship since the 1970s (Arthur et al., 2008). Of particular relevance for my research are debates on the conceptualization of the political community and the citizen embedded in different visions of citizenship education. As citizenship is commonly defined as "an institution mediating rights between the subjects of politics and the polity to which these subjects belong" (Isin & Nyers, 2014, p. 1), this implies the necessity of constructing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion related to both defining the subject (i.e., the citizen) and the scope of the polity. Citizenship education not only concerns the fostering of well-functioning citizens, but also represents key spaces for identity construction and subjectification. Universal conceptions of citizenship in traditional national educational systems based on liberal humanism have proven to produce othering, second-class citizens, and racism due to the concealment of social structures and injustices (Banks, 2008; Tyson & Park, 2008). Such critiques have led to the reconceptualization of citizenship education through the concept of multicultural citizenship, where the ideal balance of unity and diversity is believed to enable diverse groups to be structurally included in and feel allegiance to the nation-state (Banks, 2001, 2009). Within this tradition, there has also been an increasing emphasis on the role of power structures, as conceptualized in critical multicultural citizenship education (May & Sleeter, 2010; McLaren & Giroux, 1997; Sleeter & Flores Carmona, 2017). Recent critiques have also emphasized how escalated globalization, increased migration, and acknowledgement of transnational identities and multiple belongings make forms of citizenship education that emphasize and privilege national citizenship outdated (Osler, 2011; Suárez-Orozco &

Michikyan, 2016). Although encompassing a variety of perspectives, the underlying premise of most critiques is the unquestioned logic of liberal universalism and that broader conceptualizations of citizenship will ensure inclusion of all people into the *demos* (i.e., the "the people" of the democratic community). Such approaches seldom consider whether the system was already broken, that is, if the modern nation-state actually produced the violence from the outset (Suša, 2019). This is where decolonial critiques contribute to changing the conversation.

2.3 Countering coloniality through citizenship education

This study builds on scholarship and research showing that countering coloniality through education is an essential and imperative undertaking for education to become transformative and socially just. This approach includes a diversity of strategies, referring to themselves as anti-colonial, postcolonial, or decolonial, both drawing on and criticizing critical pedagogy (Teasley & Butler, 2020). In the following, I refer to these perspectives as decolonial critiques (cf. Stein, 2016) of education. Although inspired by European critical social theory (i.e., the Frankfurt School) and Foucauldian post-structuralism, decolonial critiques share a criticism of the systematic exclusion of and epistemic violence toward the subaltern others that is inherent in Western critical and post-structuralist theory (Mohanty, 2003; Spivak, 1988). In this sense, decolonial critiques of education are also highly indebted to the works of indigenous social movements and scholars analyzing racism and epistemological violence inherent in the Western colonial systems of research and education (Battiste, 2016; Dei, 2011; Smith, 2010). Additionally, decolonial critiques of education also commonly draw on radical and intersectional feminism, critical race theory, and anti-racist scholars (Ahmed, 2000, 2012; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Fanon, 2008; Harding, 2015; hooks, 1995; Lugones, 2010). All of these strands have influenced this research. In particular, I draw on critiques of mainstream educational systems in the Global North, decentering white subjectivities and addressing epistemological limitations of Eurocentrism (Amsler et al., 2020; Andreotti, 2016; Andreotti & Souza, 2012; Gorski, 2008; Martin et al., 2017; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Stein, 2016; Zembylas, 2018a; Zembylas, 2019b).

Mapping international literature on citizenship education and decolonial perspectives is susceptible to several challenges. First, as argued by Tuck and Yang (2012), decolonization is commonly adopted in superficial terms, evading the calls for political, economic, and material justice that are inherent to the concept. It may therefore be mentioned often in works that do not engage thoroughly with the concept. Second, due to the norm that scholars addressing global citizenship write in English to make the work globally accessible, the field raises critiques of Western bias while also reproducing the same structures (Yemini et al., 2019). Third, much of the important work on decolonizing education indeed takes place outside the scope of academic institutions, or what Santos (2018) describes as the "subversity," According to Santos, much of the work is with emerging and new practices, what he calls the sociology of emergences. For the colonizer, understood as the Global North, there is a need to engage a pedagogy based on the Sociology of absences, making visible colonial separations and fictions of universalism. This is particularly relevant for the Norwegian context, where, although there is a distinct Sami curriculum [5], the notion of universal, public education is hegemonic and strong (I return to this in Section 2.5).

As Pashby and Sund argue (2020), while there is substantive scholarship and theoretical work in the field of decolonial critiques of citizenship education, empirical research is scarce, particularly in relation to classroom practice. Meanwhile, decoloniality is always present in both analytics and praxis, as delinking from modernity involves both undoing and redoing (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Discussions on the coloniality of citizenship education commonly position themselves in relation to Global citizenship education (GCE) (see, e.g., Andreotti, 2011c; Schultz, 2018; Sund & Pashby, 2020), and this is also the main reason why I position my work internationally in this way. GCE emerged in the late 1990s inspired from the area of development education and the concept of the global citizen. This conceptualization of the global citizen was important for those critical

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[5] Since 1989, the Norwegian Core curriculum has come in two juridical equal versions: the Norwegian (mainstream) and the Sami. Schools within Sápmi can apply either the Sami or the mainstream curriculum. Sami students outside Sápmi are entitled to education in the Sami language. Sami perspectives should be included in all subjects in the mainstream school as well. In addition, the Sami parliament and Sami scholars are participants in the development of the mainstream curriculum.

of economic and neoliberal globalization and nation-state violence, seeking solidarity across borders (Peters et al., 2008; Schultz, 2018). GCE is commonly presented as a more transformative, social justice-oriented approach to citizenship education compared to the traditional approaches (Davids, 2018; Davies, 2006; Suša, 2019). According to Pashby (2012), as an ideal, GCE "encourages students to adopt a critical understanding of globalization, to reflect how they and their nations are implicated in local and global problems and to engage in intercultural perspectives" (p. 9). Indeed, much scholarship within GCE still reproduces educational thinking that reinforces ethnocentric, ahistorical, and depoliticized approaches (Andreotti & Souza, 2012). Inherent to decolonial approaches to GCE is the critique of the global imaginary as a manifestation of modern/colonial cultural supremacy, that is, worlding the West as world (Spivak, 1990).

2.4 Nordic research on coloniality in education

Scholars commonly point out the similarities across the Nordic countries in terms of the active and sanctioned denial of race, racism, and coloniality (Keskinen et al., 2019; Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012a). Works exploring discourses of national exceptionalism are found in Norway (Gullestad, 2004), Sweden (Hübinette, 2012), Finland (Rastas, 2012), Denmark (Petterson, 2012), and Iceland (Loftsdóttir, 2014). According to Rastas (2012), the significance of the analyses of national exceptionalism in different countries lies in taking a transnational and comparative approach. She also situates the European scholarship within Goldbergs' (2006) analysis of racial Europeanization, constructing racism as a problem that exists "everywhere else." Based on concerns related to relevance, scale, and contextualization—and also because relevant research in the Norwegian context is scarce—I map the relevant empirical literature to the Nordic context. The scope of this chapter does not allow for a comprehensive review of research on citizenship in the Nordic region, and thus I focus on research explicitly concerned with encountering coloniality and/or racism in education. After briefly accounting for relevant research in the Nordic countries, I review research on citizenship education in Norway.

Over the past ten years, a few cross-Nordic anthologies have shed light on the continuation of the countries' colonial processes (Keskinen, 2009); the influence of

colonialism on the formations of national identities and others in Nordic countries (Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012b); the active forgetting of coloniality and willfully innocent white, Nordic self-understanding illustrated by studies of African diasporas and legacies of imperialism in Nordic countries (McEachrane, 2014a); and how national identities in the Nordic region have developed historically based on notions of cultural and racial homogeneity (Keskinen et al., 2019). Loftsdóttir (2019) sheds light on the continued embeddedness of coloniality in everyday aspirations and identities in Northern Europe through the case of economic crisis in Iceland, arguing that European discourses continue to be based on racialized ideas of what are considered civilized people. In general, few of the works examining colonialism in the Nordics are positioned in education, although there is a large body of research on related topics of citizenship and inclusion in education. As Pashby et al. (2020) point out in their international meta-review on typologies of GCE, within critical and decolonial approaches there is a tendency to either focus on systemic, historical, and ongoing racial violence without considering environmental sustainability or to consider unsustainability while ignoring ongoing systemic racism. This tension is also notable in the Nordic context, where the related research tends to be concerned either with the reproduction of racist discourses through education or with education for sustainable development.

Among the most substantive works explicitly engaging with the ongoing coloniality in citizenship education in the Nordic context is the doctoral study of Mikander (2016a). Based on a critical discourse analysis of 76 textbooks in history, geography, and social studies for grade 5–9 in Finland, Mikander illustrates how the West is depicted as superior in several ways. She locates an absence in the textbook discourses of engagement with violence as enacted by Western countries, and an association with democracy and human rights as essentially Western (Mikander, 2015). Mikander also points out the discursive naturalization of global inequality, and her work sheds light on how hegemony can work to make ideological claims "common sense." She argues that citizenship education in Finland should engage with critical perspectives and approaches from GCE. She further explains that such engagement promotes critical literacy by providing students with space to reflect on their own context and assumptions, understand the contextual and

historical character of knowledge production, and learn to challenge hegemonic knowledge (Mikander, 2016b; Mikander & Zilliacus, 2016).

Ideland and Malmberg (2014) analyze discourses on sustainable development in Swedish textbooks for primary and secondary schools. They apply theoretical tools from critical race theory and whiteness studies, arguing that the textbook discourses construct imaginaries of "us" and "them," that is, the exceptional Swedish citizens and the racial other representing the Global South. Through a system of binaries, which they describe as an "Otherness machinery," Ideland and Malmberg (2014) argue that discourses of exceptionalism structure education for sustainable development as a colonial project, based on the notion of a common world belonging exclusively to "us." Similarly, Hillbur et al. (2016) examine Swedish curricula spanning back to 1962, arguing that the Swedish school produces the discursive ideal of an eco-certified citizen through requirements related to individualized, scientific, rational thinking skills and personal skills reflecting traditional family values and democratic participation and benevolence. Ideland (2016) discusses how educational discourses on action competence and emotional skills in environmental education (re)produce hierarchies of race and social class and thus fabricate desirable subjectivities embedded in the wider ideals of the national self-image. In a related manner, Dahlstedt and Nordvall (2010) conduct a document analysis of initiatives for exporting the Swedish educational model abroad. They argue that, through this "export," exceptional national self-images are reproduced in contrast to the others represented by the Global South. Exploring the construction and reconstruction of colonial discourse in the classroom and practice and among teachers, the joint study of Sund and Pashby (2018, 2020) of teachers in England, Sweden, and Finland explores teachers' thinking and practices related to global perspectives in citizenship and environmental education. Based on classroom observations and workshops with teachers, they argue that, although teachers in the Nordics, in particular, may provide a pluralistic, democratic space for discussing political issues in the classroom, these discussions often reinforce consolidate a humanistic and uncomplicated Eurocentric analysis reproducing colonial narratives. Accordingly, the authors argue that teachers

need to engage with and interrupt historical and epistemological patterns in concrete pedagogical practices in order to challenge coloniality (Sund & Pashby, 2018, 2020).

In studies of racism and antiracism in education, the study by Alemanji (2016) on Finnish education stands out as an example of applying a thorough colonial theoretical framework. Alemanji asks a rhetorical question about anti-racist education in Finland: "Is there such a thing?" Based on a variety of learning materials, such as textbooks, children's books, and apps, in addition to interviews with mothers of immigrant children, Alemanji (2016) identifies discourses of Finnish exceptionalism that create and sustain the idea of whiteness as superior, enabling the denial of racism. The researcher argues that antiracism must be given more space in formal education, as the more commonly applied concepts of "intercultural" and "multicultural" might obscure power relations. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in Swedish upper secondary schools, Rosvall and Öhrn (2014) find that teachers respond to racist discourse with silence or recenter discussions as neutral or value-free, teaching "objective facts." In a study based on interviews with 27 Swedish high school teachers, Arneback and Englund (2019) further discuss the Swedish curricular mandate for teachers to challenge racism in education through democratic dialogue. The authors argue that white teachers in particular may react to racism with a kind of listening silence, and they should develop a more collective anti-racist effort through deliberation and cooperation with their colleagues. In an ethnographic study of anti-racist workshops in Finnish upper-secondary schools initiated by a non-governmental organization (NGO) (Alemanji & Mafi, 2018), the researchers argue that anti-racist education could reinforce racialization when it fails to critically examine power structures.

Of particular relevance for this study, although not explicitly concerned with citizenship education, is the ethnographic research by Rastas (2005, 2009) on young children's articulation of racial difference in everyday life. Through interviews with children under 12 who had an immigrant parent or were adopted from other countries, Rastas found that the children experience racism in their everyday lives, notably through continuously having their belonging in Finland questioned. Furthermore, the research sheds light on how significant adults in the children's lives commonly ignore or fail to acknowledge the

children's experiences as actual racism. Rastas connects this to how the narrow understandings of racism in Finnish society as restricted to extreme events make it impossible for the children to formulate their experiences with everyday racism. In a theoretical paper based on the ethnographic studies of racism as well as textual representations of Africans in Finland, Rastas (2012) argues that her work reveals articulations of Finnish exceptionalism, avoiding moral responsibilities toward those not included in the national "us".

In an editorial in a special issue concerning "education in the multicultural Nordic countries," Horst and Pihl (2010) argue that there is no distinct "Nordic response" to multiculturalism and diversity. However, the reviewed research seems to point out an absence of focus on colonialism or the ability to "see" racism. There is a call across national contexts for a stronger focus on power relations, marginalization, and social justice in Nordic educational research (Mikander et al., 2018; Westrheim & Hagatun, 2015). It is here that this study is intended to contribute.

2.5 Citizenship education in Norway

The Norwegian Education Act states that the overall goal of all education is to "promote democracy, equality and a scientific way of thinking" (The Education Act, 1998, §1.1). During this research, a reform of the national core curriculum was in process. With the reform, democracy and citizenship are positioned as one of three cross-cutting topics[6] to permeate all education in Norway (KD, 2019). However, when I started this research in 2017, citizenship education was not a major focus in research and policy (Børhaug et al., 2015). A possible explanation for this is that the exceptionalist imaginary of Norway leads to the idea of being superior in citizenship education as well. This is reflected in media coverage of the *International Civic and Citizenship Education Study* (ICCS), in which Norwegian students generally do well (Huang et al., 2017), and which is often treated as proof that citizenship education in Norway is well covered (Biseth, 2014; Børhaug et al., 2015). Solhaug (2011) argues that the emphasis on the ICCS can be understood as part

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[6] The other two topics are Sustainable development, and Public health and life skills

of an overall tendency in Norwegian education toward new public management, representing a focus on standards and "output control." He maintains that, although ideals of egalitarianism and equity are present in the Norwegian discourses on citizenship education, the hegemony of economic values remains strong across the political spectrum and is firmly institutionally embedded through such systems of testing and accountability. In a similar vein, scholars argue that, from the late 1980s, the education system in Norway has shifted toward neoliberalism and globalization, influenced by international initiatives from The Organization of Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). Accountability-based models of educational governance and emphasis on economic competitiveness and teaching to the test have gained prominence, leaving less room for "soft" citizenship skills (Børhaug et al., 2015; Hovdenak & Stray, 2015; Imsen et al., 2017; Telhaug et al., 2006).

The Norwegian education system is embedded in the social-democratic construction of the welfare state known as the *Nordic model*. Education holds a central role within the Nordic model, as compulsory education is "considered to be an extension of the state's duty to provide equality of opportunity for all members of society" (Antikainen, 2006, p. 251). The Nordic model is based on the idea of stimulating economic growth and social solidarity by fostering equality. However, this equality is often discursively produced through the notion of sameness, denoting the integration of members of society into a national community devoid of cultural, racial, or social inequalities (Gullestad, 2002). This idea of the culturally homogenous nation-state as a vehicle for social cohesion, belonging, and equality has been central to the Norwegian self-image from the early 1800s. It played a lead role in legitimizing harsh and racist policies toward the national minorities[7] and the Sami, especially in school policy, including a system of residential schools and the prohibition to apply and learn minority languages, in the name of Norwegianification (Engen, 2014; Minde, 2003). Critical research has shed light on how, in spite of changes in the official policy, this ideology still manifests in educational institutions in Norway

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[7] The legally defined national minorities in Norway include the Romani/Tater, Kven/Norwegian Finns, Forest Finns, Roma, and Jews. Today, they are subject to group rights through the Council of Europe *Framework Convention for the Protection of National* Minorities (1998).

today. Notably, this is manifest in visions of colorblindness framed by abstract liberalist notions such as equal opportunity and individual choice, which are unable to address structural inequalities (Dowling, 2017; Harlap & Riese, 2014; Pihl, 2010; Røthing, 2015). Developed in the aftermath of World War II, the Nordic model has indeed facilitated free comprehensive education and formally equal access to higher education for all, with a core curriculum emphasizing equality, inclusion, nation-building, and democratic deliberation (Imsen et al., 2017). However, it also fosters a system in which inequalities might be invisibilized and depoliticized under the imaginary of an alleged homogenous national identity as a means for realizing loyalty to the nation (Osler & Lybæk, 2014), obscuring the reality that whiteness works as the norm for "true" Norwegians (Fylkesnes, 2019). This is underlined by a study reporting young people's experiences with racism, asserting that around one-fourth of minority students experience racism regularly in their schooling (The Norwegian Centre against Racism (ARS), 2017).

2.5.1 Coloniality and racism in Norwegian citizenship education

In 2011, KD published a report with recommendations for how schools can work more systematically against racism (KD, 2011). The report was titled "It can happen again." Although the title referred to the Holocaust and implied an awareness that we can never guarantee that such atrocities will not occur, it was actualized most horrifically only a few months later. On July 22, 2011, a right-wing extremist carried out a dual terrorist attack at the Norwegian government and the summer camp of the youth division of the Norwegian Labor party on Utøya. [8] According to Myrdahl (2014), the immediate aftermath of the massacre reinforced the discourse of Norway as an exceptionally tolerant democracy. As Myrdahl argues, the presumption that whiteness is a prerequisite

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[8] In his carefully planned attack, the young white Norwegian man Anders Behring Breivik acted alone. He first set off a car bomb near a government building, killing eight people, before travelling to the summer camp of the youth division of the Norwegian Labor Party on the island Utøya disguised as a police officer, killing 69 people, mainly children. In connection with the attacks, Breivik published a 1518-page "manifest." Breivik based his views on an array of mixed ideological concepts, such as militant far-right ideology, ultra-nationalism, Islamophobia, anti-feminism (promoting violence toward anyone representing his conceptualization of the political left), and Muslims. The stated aim of the attacks was to weaken the Norwegian social democracy and remove politicians supporting multiculturalism.

for being Norwegian was both interrupted and re-established during this period. The vision of a national community *not* based on whiteness was undermined by the refusal to acknowledge how national belonging is racially constructed. Moreover, the aftermath provided an opportunity to reconstruct the white Norwegian as inherently good. This may appear paradoxical considering the whiteness of the terrorist, but it reflects how whiteness works as a technology of affect, establishing an emotionally embedded self-identity as non-racist (Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013). The attacks were generally little discussed in schools, even though children expressed a need to discuss it (Jørgensen et al., 2015; Von der Lippe & Anker, 2015).

When the plans for a new national core curriculum were announced shortly after the terrorist attacks, this was understood as a strengthening of the democratic mandate of Norwegian schools (Stray & Sætra, 2015). The current Minister of Education, Torbjørn Røe Isaksen, explained that the renewed focus on democracy and citizenship was a "reply to a society that is going to become more diverse, and where the threats against democracy are increasing in terms of more extremism and radicalization" (Ertesvåg, 2016, *my translation*). This implicit association between multiculturalism, in Norway generally understood as represented by immigrant others, and radicalization seemed somewhat paradoxical in light of the recent terror attack, where the perpetrator's hatred was fueled by an explicit *opposition to* multiculturalism. In particular, educational efforts to prevent violence and radicalization implicitly target the other, commonly represented by Muslims in Norway, as is the case in Europe in general (Osler, 2017). Moreover, this framing of citizenship education as a response to demographic changes due to immigration reflects a general tendency in European research and policy, where the prescribed outcome is social cohesion and acceptance of minorities into the unquestioned community of the nation-state (Goren & Yemini, 2017). However, this might often be approached in a depoliticized way, which was also the case with the draft of the new national subject curriculum[9] in 2018. I was among several teachers and

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[9] While the core curriculum states the overriding principles and values for primary and secondary education, the subject curriculum states the specific content and learning outcomes for each subject.

scholars arguing for the need to include explicit references to racism during the public hearing (Eriksen, 2018c). Although racism was eventually mentioned in the curriculum for social studies, this was restricted to making suggestions regarding how racism can be prevented (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR), 2020). The core curriculum does not mention racism, structural injustice, or inequality (KD, 2019). Rather, it conceptualizes democratic community through "diversity."

2.6 Status of research on Norwegian citizenship education

Research on citizenship education in Norway is generally limited, although it is rapidly increasing in volume. At the time I started the research, the most extensive democratic mandate in the core curriculum was for the subject of social studies (UDIR, 2013). Because my empirical work was also done within social studies, I concentrated the literature mapping on that subject. However, this was slightly complicated by the fact that citizenship education is part of the overall mandate of Norwegian schools, and thus relevant research might also be found within research focused on other subjects, or more generally, in topical research. I have included research from other subjects I judged relevant for the analytical perspectives in my research or where I consider my work to be explicitly complementary or in opposition to specific works. Much relevant literature is published in the Norwegian language and is not accessible through larger, international databases. Searches were performed in IDUNN, the online database for Norway's largest academic publishing house, Universitetsforlaget, and in NORART, which provides access to a large number of Nordic academic works. Additional searches were also conducted in the search engine for Oria developed for Norwegian libraries and Google Scholar. In addition, I was assisted by review articles providing an overview of research and discourses in the field (Biseth et al.,(in press); Fylkesnes, 2019; Solhaug et al., 2020; Pihl et al., 2018; Solhaug, 2013). I included peer-reviewed articles and doctoral theses published after 2006. I choose this time span due to considerations of relevance and scope but also because the last educational reform before the current one took place in 2006.

2.6.1 Overall topics and tendencies

Stray (2010) performed a discourse analysis of national educational policy and curriculum, finding that conceptualizations of democracy and citizenship education are vague, unclear, and contradictory, and the topics are downplayed in favor of basic skills. Stray argues that this can be seen in relation to the common view that high achievements in international tests on democratic competencies legitimize less emphasis on citizenship education in policy and practice. In a similar vein, in her study of the role of democracy in education in Scandinavian countries, Biseth (2012) find that Norwegian schools are understood as democratic arenas *per se*. Based on interviews with school leaders, teachers, and students, she argues that democracy is commonly taken for granted by educational practitioners and that students' ability to engage in actual democratic participation is limited. Mathé (2019) investigates how upper secondary school students understand democracy, describing how citizenship education, although varied, is primarily concerned with voter participation. Mathé maintains that citizenship education should expand the understanding of democratic participation for students. This also resonates with studies of student councils as part of democratic education in Norway. Although student councils have long been an integrated part of education in Norway— and most students in Norway report having taken part in school democracy (Huang et al., 2017)—research indicates that these institutions have the form of a pseudo-democracy without actual influence. Based on interviews with teachers and students at five upper secondary schools in Norway, Børhaug (2007) argues that these institutions do not qualify as democratic participation and could be more accurately described as voter preparation. In a more recent study on student councils, Borge (2016) finds a positive statistical connection between voting in mock elections at school and students' willingness to vote in national elections later in life. However, she argues that democratic education should emphasize students as present democratic participants rather than simply as future voters.

The ICCS is a large-scale, comparative international study of citizenship education organized by the *International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement* (IEA). It was last conducted in Norway in 2016. The empirical material consists of

responses to a knowledge test and a survey of 6271 students in ninth grade from 148 Norwegian secondary schools as well as responses from 2010 teachers and 142 principals. Analyses of material from the ICCS represent a substantial part of the research describing itself as citizenship education research in Norway. One of the central findings in ICCS 2016 was that Norwegian youths score among the best of the countries included top countries included in terms of democratic knowledge, and students display a high level of trust in political institutions (Huang et al., 2017). In their study based on survey answers and focus group interviews with teachers, Stray and Sætra (2019) argue that teachers emphasize critical thinking and knowledge in their understanding of citizenship education, but there is little emphasis on participation. Teachers commonly see the purpose of citizenship education as helping students to become "rationally autonomous" citizens. Related studies from the ICCS investigate other student motivations for political participation (Ødegård & Svagård, 2018) as well as students' attitudes toward civil rights and minorities (Hegna et al., 2019).

A tendency in the reviewed literature is a conceptualization of citizenship education as embedded in an individualized and somewhat instrumental view of the role of education, teaching, and learning. Considerable emphasis is given to students' individual skills and knowledge or teachers' traits and their understandings and stated practices of citizenship education. As supported by Børhaug's (2010) review of policy, curriculum, and research, substantial emphasis has been placed on political socialization and preparedness of students as future voters. In a more recent review of policy documents on the new curriculum, Børhaug (2017) further argues that the new curriculum points toward a depoliticized and individual conceptualization of citizenship. He exemplifies this by critically showing how global cooperation in addressing large-scale problems is associated with interactive and communicative skills rather than the political and economic structures of power or conflicts of interest. However, there is also a call in the research on citizenship education for deeper engagement with student participation and the classroom as a community of learning and democratic interaction not limited to voter participation or individual skills (cf. Biseth et al., 2018; Børhaug, 2007; Hegna et al., 2019; Mathe, 2019; Solhaug, 2013). There is a related strand of research exploring classroom

conversations, particularly discussions on controversial issues, which are an emerging focus in the field. Based on observations of religious education classes and discussions with students and teachers in secondary schools, Iversen (2012a) explores the interface between the nationally oriented core curriculum and how it is operationalized and negotiated in practice in ethnically and religiously diverse student groups. Iversen (2016) introduces the concept "communities of disagreement" as a pedagogical organizational strategy for classrooms. This is inspired by radical democracy and the conceptualization of the community as political rather than cultural or ethno-national. This concept has had a great impact on the conceptualization of citizenship education in Norway. The core curriculum describes "handling disagreement" as a key aspect of citizenship education (KD, 2019).

A related body of research argues that controversial issues can be an important part of learning in citizenship education, as seen from the empirical context of teachers and teaching strategies in social studies (Stray & Sætra, 2016; Sætra, 2020) and the related subject Christianity, religion, knowledge of life, and ethics (Anker & Von der Lippe, 2016; Von der Lippe & Anker, 2015). The structures and organization of classroom discussions, and particularly an open or tolerant climate for discussion, are emphasized as key elements of "good practice" (Sætra, 2020) and are related to high formal achievements in ICCS (Huang & Biseth, 2016). Toft (2019, 2020) offers a critical contribution to the interest in controversial issues as a strategy for citizenship education. In his doctoral study based on fieldwork studying religious education in Norwegian upper secondary schools, Toft argues that education focused on controversial issues that are prominent in media coverage on Islam might reinforce an image of the extreme as normal in representations of Islam and Muslims. Another critical contribution here is made by Biseth and Lyden (2018). Based on an analysis of survey responses from 150 teacher educators, the authors find that teacher educators promoted democratic participation among teacher students and emphasized student discussions. However, they report shallow engagement with social justice, as appearing as an ideal, but not reflected in their stated practices.

Overall, there seems to be little association between citizenship education and issues of racism, whiteness, and coloniality in the research, and conceptualizations of citizenship and community in the classroom are rarely explored in relation to power structures. However, in her comparative study of Scandinavian schools, Biseth (2010) argues that there is a lack of general awareness and recognition of racism among teachers and school leaders as a counter-democratic quality, a lack of association of students' acts or statements as racism, and a conceptualization of racism as individual misbehavior. As I will return to below, Iversen (2012b) also discusses the relationship between national identity, religion, and whiteness among students. Overall, the general absence of coloniality in the literature positioning itself as citizenship education made it necessary for me to look more strategically for research thematizing these topics in education in Norway. In addition to mapping the work explicitly positioning itself as citizenship education and/or social studies, I also conducted more strategic searches, using the keywords "race," "racism," "whiteness," "colonialism," and "global." Of the research that did engage explicitly with citizenship education and/or social studies, textbook studies proved to be the most common avenue for engaging with more explicitly critical perspectives and inquiring about national imaginary. In addition, race, whiteness, and national identity are, to a certain extent, thematized in ethnographic studies in schools. I will turn to these strands of research below.

2.6.2 Coloniality and racism and Norwegian citizenship education research

In the context of Norwegian citizenship education, social studies textbooks have been a common site for discourse analysis emphasizing national imaginary. In a comprehensive study combining textbook analysis and interviews with teachers and students in secondary and upper secondary schools, Midtbøen et al. (2014) find that, to the extent racism is mentioned at all, it is commonly associated with extreme or marginal events or people—and generally outside of the Norwegian context—or connected to events in the past, such as the Holocaust and Apartheid. Accompanying the analysis with student interviews, the study also sheds light on the discrepancy between the common idea of schools as color-blind and racialized students' reports of everyday racism. Røthing and

Svendsen (2011) analyze how exceptionalism is reinforced through the way in which Norwegian and Eurocentric norms of sexuality are portrayed in textbooks as superior compared to other countries. A handful of analyses of textbooks have also highlighted the reproduction of stereotypical images of the Sami (Askeland, 2015; Kvande, 2015; Mortensen-Buan, 2017; Olsen, 2017). Based on an analysis of all social studies textbooks updated after the curriculum reform in 2006, Børhaug (2014) argues that, although the textbooks encourage critical thinking, they do so selectively, meaning that criticism is directed at institutions in other countries or less powerful groups. Similar results are reported in a more recent textbook study, describing the approach to democracy as Eurocentric and devoid of critical perspectives, despite the fact that critical thinking is an ideal in citizenship education (Lorentzen & Røthing, 2017).

Several scholarly and theoretical articles provide comprehensive critiques of national imaginaries and the limitations of the national character of citizenship education, including a more specific problematization of the dismissal of race and racism as relevant concepts (Harlap & Riese, 2014; Osler, 2015; Osler & Lindquist, 2016; Røthing, 2015; Westrheim & Hagatun, 2015). In their analysis of curriculum and policy documents, Osler and Lybæk (2014) argue that the curriculum reinforces the construction of an imagined homogenous Norwegian "we," notably embedded in the discursive connection between national values and Christianity, enabling exclusion. In her analysis of the implementation of a Sami curriculum as part of the Norwegian core curriculum from 1997 and onwards, Gjerpe (2017) rhetorically asks whether this stated commitment is merely symbolic, as her analysis shows that the formalization has probably led to less emphasis on Sami knowledge. A similar conclusion is drawn from an analysis of teacher education policy and curriculum (Olsen et al., 2017). This also resonates with the findings in Lile's (2011) doctoral study. Through surveys and interviews with ninth-grade students and teachers in 15 schools across Norway, Lile finds that students did not learn what they were legally entitled to learn about Sami culture and history according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Symbolic commitment is also a pertinent description of the way colonialism appears in studies on citizenship education in Norway. It is striking that, in much of the literature, the state-led racism toward the Sami and the national minorities

during the 19th and 20th centuries is frequently mentioned in the literature as something appalling, but it is not often discussed or investigated in depth.

The critical analyses of textbook and policy discourses referred to above are not substantially accompanied by classroom or ethnographic studies, with a few exceptions. Based on conversations in kindergartens and first-grade classrooms in two large cities in Norway, Aukrust and Rydland (2009) find that what they describe as "ethnic diversity" was frequently topicalized among the children in situations of alliance building and conflict. They also report that children often addressed this topic in ambiguous ways, but often through humor (Aukrust & Rydland, 2009). Although the research demonstrates that skin color and phenotypes are common and involve power structures in social interactions among younger children, the teachers were reluctant to thematize these issues. In an ethnographic study in a Norwegian school covering grades 5–10, Rysst (2012) reports that, although the hegemonic discourse among students, parents, and teachers describes the school as colorblind, children frequently refer to themselves and others in terms of skin color and phenotypical traits. Rysst identifies a hierarchy in which white is considered superior. She describes the observed dynamics as an abstraction of ways of talking, interacting, and constructing hierarchies in social contexts in which children have diverse skin colors and backgrounds.

In her doctoral research, Svendsen (2014a) explores the cultural configurations of sexuality and race in Norwegian education through postcolonial and affective analysis of textbooks and classroom interaction. She argues that the denial of race as a relevant concept in Norwegian education hinders efforts to prevent racism among young people. Similarly, in his fieldwork in secondary schools, Iversen (2012b) connects the formation of Norwegianness to religion and shows that the opportunity to keep religion private was reserved for whites. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in three upper secondary schools, Chinga-Ramirez (2015, 2017) argue that the construction of the ideal or "normal" student embedded in white, middle-class standards influences teaching as well as social interaction in schools, leaving racialized students with a diligent and foreign self-image. The production of social inequality in the education system through discourses on

normalcy embedded in ethnic categorizations—notably, the discursive link between whiteness and smartness—is also powerfully described by Pihl (2010). In her studies of Norwegian special needs education, she highlights how this leads to the disproportionate placement of racialized students. During the process of my study, a closely related doctoral research project was conducted in secondary school, focused on discourses constructed in and through lessons. In her ethnographic study of history and social research, Jore (2018, 2019) argues that the discursive structures of Norwegian Exceptionalism hinder critical classroom discussions on Norway's colonial history. Along with the studies reviewed above, this sheds light on the presence and persistence of boundaries and structures of race, racism, and exclusion in Norwegian schools, although they are seldom explicitly acknowledged.

As part of her doctoral thesis, Fylkesnes (2019) conducted a systematic review of studies of whiteness in Norway. As hardly any of the studies were focused on education, she performed cross-disciplinary searches. Only 17 studies (after the year 2004) mention whiteness, of which 10 use the concept as a central theoretical framework for analysis (Fylkesnes, 2019). These studies span disciplines including feminist research, kindergarten research, nursing, religious studies, cultural studies, migration studies, media studies, and physical teacher education. A handful of studies highlight whiteness as a site of power, constructing boundaries and marking the racial other in teacher education (Dowling, 2017; Nilsen et al., 2017) and among kindergarten teachers (Andersen, 2015; Rossholt, 2010). The scarcity of focus in research illuminates the general absence of discussions of whiteness in the Norwegian context. Although colonial legacy is frequently mentioned as a historical background for understanding the present symptoms of race as a power structure in Norway, few studies deal explicitly with ongoing coloniality as both a material and epistemological structure. An important exception is the abovementioned study of Fylkesnes (2019), who describes how the legacy of colonialism produces hidden racialized discursive patterns that constitute otherness and reinforce the centrality of whiteness to the Norwegian self-image. Accordingly, she argues for the need for educators to connect current discourses to colonial history to dismantle prevailing racist structures.

2.6.3 Norwegian citizenship education and the global imaginary

In a review of research on social studies education in Norway, Børhaug et al. (2015) call for more global perspectives, as the subject is highly dominated by methodological nationalism. Although a shift toward the inclusion of more globally oriented perspectives in the curriculum reforms can be to the beginning of the 21st century (Børhaug, 2010; Telhaug & Mediås, 2003), these perspectives appear selective and are primarily constructed within a modern/colonial worldview. A striking example is the curriculum for social studies at the time I started the research, which featured a learning outcome conceptualizing colonialism as "trips of discovery and exploration made by Europeans" (UDIR, 2013). Børhaug (2014) argues that, although critical perspectives are articulated and appear as a pedagogical ideal in textbooks, the criticism is selective and systematically directed at issues that do not challenge core national political and legal institutions. Examples are economic policy, non-voters, human rights violations and totalitarian regimes in other parts of the world, and historical racism. In a doctoral study of human rights education in upper secondary schools, Vesterdal (2016) argues that human rights education is a component of national identity and nation branding.

GCE initiatives in Norway, as in the broader European context, have mostly been initiated by either local NGOs engaged in North–South relations or by international organizations, such as the Council of Europe (CoE). In a report reviewing "Global education" in Norway, global education is conceptualized as learning about and encouraging solidarity towards the Global South and public information and knowledge related to the Norwegian development efforts abroad (Global Education Network Europe (GENE), 2009). This conceptualization is still susceptible to imperialism, where the global citizen, understood as a citizen of the North, is produced as a subject with the ability to act in the name of a kind of cultural politics of benevolence (Jefferess, 2012). The global becomes a political space that does not represent universal human interests but rather a local and parochial interest based in the North (Shiva, 1998). Based on interviews with students in primary schools engaging in solidarity work for the Global South, Børhaug and Bakken (2009) find that students' motivations for solidarity work were predominantly based on fulling a self-image as being good. This reflects what Andreotti (2016) calls an ethics of care embedded

in exceptionalism, which becomes unintelligible through coloniality. Analyzing student texts on sustainable development in upper secondary schools, Sæther (2017) argues that, while students see themselves as citizens and agents for making a difference, they do not connect their ways of living, consuming, and acting to global solidarity or aspects such as the global distribution of labor. In the CoE (2010) *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*, the terms global and international are reserved for issues related to international cooperation between states, and the vision of citizenship education does not seemingly challenge the individualist orientation. In the new core curriculum, the term global is mentioned three times, in relation to either sustainable development or international economic cooperation (KD, 2019). The underlying white paper states that "as an adult, the student should master life in the world both as citizen and global citizen (White paper 28 (2015-2016), p. 21, *my translation*). As the analysis above illustrates, engaging the global without dismantling the modern/colonial structuring logic might lead to the reproduction of an imperialist global imaginary, continuing the racialized ordering of humanity (Stein, 2016). Overall, except for a few studies referred to above, there seems to be little interest in the concept of global citizenship in current research.

2.6.4 Locating tendencies, gaps, and absences

From the above review, several tendencies and absences can be pointed out. Most significantly, with the exception of the study on schools fundraising for the Global South (Børhaug & Bakken, 2009), none of the studies approach citizenship education from the level of primary school. This is paradoxical because of the fact that the current curriculum at the time most of the studies were conducted stated that students should be able to "participate in democratic processes" in grade 4 (UDIR, 2013). One explanation for this might be the dominance of conceptualizations of citizenship education as political preparedness, and thus it is considered more relevant when students approach the age of formal voting. If this is the case, it also reflects a shallow and limited understanding of citizenship as socialization into political systems rather than as interrelated with the formation of identity and subjectivity, where the years in primary school are formative.

More specifically related to the focus of this research is the fact that children in Norwegian primary schools experience racism (ARS, 2017), and research on Norwegian youths shows that the experience of racism during childhood has negative effects on their outlook on the future (Frøyland & Gjerustad, 2012). Methodologically, the research on citizenship education spans a variety of methods, ranging from interviews, large-scale surveys, and discourse analysis of policy and textbooks. In general, examinations of the lived realities of students and teachers are scarce.

There is little engagement in critical discussions regarding what citizenship education should be (Børhaug, 2010; Børhaug et al., 2015; Solhaug et al., 2020), which can also be seen in the abovementioned political context of neoliberalism. At the same time, there is a clear tendency in the literature to call for more critical perspectives (cf. Solhaug et al. 2020; Lorentzen & Røthing, 2017). However, what this criticality should be and how it can be developed or explored in practice remains largely uninvestigated. Despite a growing body of literature criticizing the evasiveness concerning racism in Norwegian education, discourses of colorblindness, the sanctioned ignorance of colonial history, and whiteness seem tenacious. Although previous ethnographic studies provide insight into the social interactions and identity formations of youths, such studies seldom focus explicitly on education and knowledge production in classrooms. Few studies have explored how nationally exceptionalist discourses are actually (re)produced and negotiated in classroom practice, with the exception of Svendsen (2014a) and Jore (2018, 2019). To the best of my knowledge, there are no previous explorations of ongoing coloniality in classrooms in Norwegian primary school citizenship education.

2.7   Positioning the research

As demonstrated by the above mappings of scholarship and research, there is a need for research exploring, interrupting, and deconstructing the coloniality of citizenship education. In Norway, this research focus is currently close to absent. As argued by Pashby et al. (2020), the lack of engagement with the limits of the modern/colonial framework may lead to a simple reproduction of narrow imaginaries of social justice and transformation. The above mapping highlights the need to approach coloniality from the

perspective of and practice in classrooms as well as the significance of acknowledging the importance of knowledge production and curricular content, which are often given less attention in current approaches to citizenship education. My research is positioned in relation to the debate mentioned above, as it provides a critique of the naturalization of the nation-state and depoliticization of citizenship in the case of Norway. Inspired by the Sociology of absences, I aim to contribute to a radical diagnosis of colonial social relations (Santos, 2018). From different starting points, Articles 1 and 2 point out how the naturalization of the nation-state as providing the naturalized boundaries of community and belonging through hegemonic, colonial discourses may restrict a more pluralistic and transformative citizenship education. Articles 3 and 4 tie this in a more explicit way to the role of education in fostering national and social identities, particularly the influence of racial categorizations in constructing and controlling the affective equilibrium of citizenship subjectivities in the classroom.

I aim to influence the focus of and debates on Norwegian citizenship education toward greater acknowledgement of coloniality. The research represents one of several possible ways of responding to the call for more critical perspectives in citizenship education. I hope to contribute to the debates on GCE and decolonization on an international scale and shed light on the colonial structures and absences from the perspective of empirical exploration and the particular geopolitics of Norway. An additional contribution of the study is initiating conversations on decoloniality in Norway that transgress the boundaries of citizenship education.

3   Decolonial critique – Concepts and perspectives

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce and explain the theoretical perspectives and concepts central to this research and contextualize decoloniality in relation to the case of Norway. As Tlostanova et al. (2019) point out, there is a need to account for the particular colonialism in the Nordic region in order to understand its local colonial construction of raceand intersectionality. Of specific significance to this research are the contributions of decolonial critiques to "examinations of the 'modern subject' and the attendant racial hierarchization of humanity" (Stein, 2016, p. 40). In this chapter, I provide a short overview of the central arguments in and main features across the theoretical perspectives I apply in my particular operationalization of the decolonial critique, hereunder the modernity/coloniality school, critical whiteness studies, and postcolonialism. I also consider some challenges and limitations of these perspectives. During the period of the research, the sanctioned ignorance of coloniality of racism in Norway was both challenged and reinforced through the debates on initiatives for decolonizing higher education and a broader awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement in the wake of the police murder of George Floyd, an African American man, in the US in May 2020. Thus, in this chapter I also contextualize the research in relation to these debates, as they influenced the direction of my research.

3.1   What is decolonization? [10]

Decolonization is simultaneously a political imperative and demand, a series of epistemological questions, and a question of material and economic structures related to access and representation in higher education and academia (Sandset & Bangstad, 2019). The concept has taken on different meanings, but it generally involves deconstruction of dominant, Eurocentric forms of knowledge production as well as pluralization of epistemology by acknowledging knowledge from the Global South [11], particularly

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[10] Parts of the content in sections 3.1 and 3.2 overlap with the text of a published article (Eriksen & Svendsen, 2020) written during the period of (and inspired by) this study. This article was an editorial in a special issue on decolonial options in *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education*.

[11] In this work, I apply the terms Global North and Global South much in the way they are explained by Santos (2018), that is, not simply as geographical terms but rather as epistemological and geopolitical ones:

indigenous peoples, made invisible by coloniality (Zembylas, 2018b). The decolonial analysis helps highlight the connection between epistemology and social and material justice. Santos (2007, 2018) describes modern epistemology as a system of separation, where social reality is divided into the realms of the visible side of the line, represented by the Global North, and the other side of the line, the Global South. This divide between "true" and othered knowledge, or non-abyssal and abyssal knowledge, is rooted in ontological differences, the coloniality of being, positioning certain subjects as liminal and representing the borders of being as such (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). In Article 2, I illustrate how this plays out in a clip from the movie *Before the Flood* used in one of the classes I observed. In the clip, American actor Leonardo DiCaprio is positioned to represent universal rationality in meeting with Indian environmental activist Sunita Narain, deeming her insights "not feasible." The narrative places Narain in the abyss, unable to provide "true" knowledge from the perspective of DiCaprio, representing the white Western male who has the ability to provide care for and save the Global South, represented by Narain. The teacher plays onto this dynamic in the following classroom discussion by applying the terms "idealist" and "realist" in the categorization of different knowledges and depicting Norway as a protagonist in providing aid and superior technology to the allegedly backwards Global South.

Santos applies the terms *Sociology of absences* and *Sociology of emergences* to distinguish what he describes as the two, interrelated processes of decolonizing epistemology. While the sociology of absences is concerned with identifying the ways ongoing colonialism produce exclusions, and in particular "the ways and means through which the abyssal line produces nonexistence, radical invisibility, and irrelevance"

"Given the uneven development of capitalism and the persistence of Western-centric colonialism, the epistemological South and the geographical South partly overlap, particularly as regards those countries that were subjected to historical colonialism. Bu the overlap is only partial, not only because the epistemologies of the North also flourish in the geographical South, but also because the epistemological South is also to be found in the geographical North in many of the struggles waged there against capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy" (p. 1). In epistemological terms, what is here referred to as the Global North partly overlaps with the term "Western." As this term is more commonly applied in the literature I engage with, I also apply the concept Western to denote the institutions and the ontological and epistemological structures constructed in and with modernity in (primarily) the Global North.

(Santos, 2018, p. 25), the sociology of emergences "concerns the symbolic, analytical, and political valorization of the ways of being and knowing made present on the other side of the abyssal line by the Sociology of absences" (p. 26). This is not simply a question of whose knowledge counts but rather what counts as knowledge: "differences in identifying, validating or hierarchizing the relations between Western-based scientific knowledge and other knowledges derived from practices, rationalities or cultural universes" (Santos, 2004, cited in Robertson, 2006, p. 7). The current research primarily contributes to the Sociology of absences, addressing the colonial exclusions and claims for universalism as they are manifested and reproduced in discursive practice in Norwegian citizenship education. However, the aim in doing this is to denaturalize its mechanisms of oppression in order to locate potentialities and possibilities for the decolonial pedagogical and social transformation of the sociology of emergences.

Decoloniality is understood and applied in this research as both an analytic and critique of modernity/coloniality and a type of praxis (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Sund & Pashby, 2020). Decoloniality is conceptualized as an option, that is:

> not a static condition, an individual attribute, or a lineal point of arrival and enlightenment. Instead, decoloniality seeks to make visible, open up, and advance radically distinct perspectives and positionalities that displace Western rationality as the only framework and possibility of existence, analysis, and thought. (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 17)

For this process of "opening up," decolonial critiques apply tools from different theoretical strands that, while varied, share an opposition to coloniality. The term coloniality, as first introduced by Latin American scholar Quijano (2000), represents the foundation of the research tradition known as modernity/coloniality studies. Coloniality, shorthand for the coloniality of power, is concerned with the power structures established with and through colonialism, continuously defining culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Exploring colonial structures highlights a geopolitics of power and knowledge, where the ongoing racial division of the world

between white/European descendants and others and the related ideological constructions of Eurocentrism, universalism, and ahistoricism manifest in globalization, division of labor, and racism within and across states. In this dark side of modernity, coloniality is constitutive of modernity: "Modernity as a discourse and as a practice would not be possible without coloniality, and coloniality continues to be an inevitable outcome of modern discourses" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 244).

In this research, I also apply theoretical tools that are associated with postcolonialism. Post- and decolonial analyses share the contestation of the colonial world and knowledge production established with and through European colonialism and an emphasis on understanding the emergence of modernity in the historical contexts of colonialism, imperialism, and slavery. It has been suggested as a distinction that postcolonial critiques focus more on agents of colonial cultures, while the world-system critiques of the modernity/coloniality school emphasize structures of capital accumulation and injustice (Bhambra, 2014; Grosfoguel, 2008). Many of the same scholars have informed both strands of research and thinking. Of notable relevance for this research are Frantz Fanon and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and postcolonial research often poses decolonization as its central political aim. However, with the concept of coloniality, the decolonial perspective pulls the time horizon on modernity backwards to the fifteenth century, providing an opportunity to discuss the more profound ongoing realities of colonialism "after" the event (Bhambra, 2014; Teasley & Butler, 2020). Additionally, decolonial thinkers may criticize postcolonialism for providing critiques of modernity from within (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2016), unable to dismantle the abyssal line (Santos, 2018). Although postcolonial perspectives are applied in this study for the purpose of denouncing colonial discourses and subjectivities, particularly in the analysis of the othering of Sami perspectives and history in textbooks (Article 1), this research is committed to the decolonial notion of moving beyond the reform of modern/colonial frameworks of being and knowing (Andreotti et al., 2015), at least as a vision.

Importantly, decolonial critiques do not try to represent the West in monolithic terms or dismiss internal diversity and complexity within the Global North as much as the Global

South. Heterogeneity does not in itself alter the overall impact of colonial power (Stein et al., 2020), although its manifestations are always local and particular. As Maldonado-Torres (2007) argues, European colonization of America did not have only local significance; rather, it installed a model of power framed by global capitalism and a modern identity structured by the idea of race, presenting itself as universal and global. Indeed, as the decolonial critique is a direct answer to the colonial oversimplification of so-called non-Western knowledge (Alcoff, 2007), this is also a way of speaking back to the colonizer through the premises initially set for this conversation (Said, 1995; Stein et al., 2020). Here, decolonial critiques highlight the importance of examining the geopolitics of knowledge construction (Grosfoguel, 2002). This entails a critique of the fact that most analyses of Europe are oriented toward endogenous explanations of who Europeans are, without considering how this self-understanding is premised upon the colonial other, eliding its own particularity through claims of universality (Bhambra, 2014). Furthermore, decolonial critiques may draw from different critical traditions in order to recontextualize knowledge in non-Eurocentric and non-colonial ways. In this sense, decolonial critiques share the critique of modernity and racism, sexism, colonialism, and capitalism with many critical theories. However, decoloniality distinguishes itself from related critical traditions by offering an engagement with the colonial foundations that fundamentally calls not only for reform but for system change and alternatives. Modernity has taken on a role of "the house of epistemology" (Mignolo, 2006, cited in Alcoff, 2007, p. 83); that is, its walls symbolizes the boundaries of what is possible to know, or what can be valued as knowledge. In this allegory, decolonial critique symbolizes the efforts to deconstruct these walls, such as racial hierarchies and the naturalization of the nation-state as the primary basis of belonging, and decolonial options represent the not-yet-defined otherwise or alternatives (Stein et al., 2017).

Coloniality can be traced in educational practice and research through the reproduction of knowledge that continues to justify European supremacy, rendering subjectivities of people considered as other backwards, inferior, or non-existent. Such racialized hierarchies are inscribed into the nation-state and constructions of the modern subject through conceptualizations and ideals related to citizenship identities. National and racial

homogeneity is sustained through modernity and imposed on citizens through repression, domination, and restriction (Goldberg, 2002). I explore these dynamics in both Articles 3 and 4, highlighting how inclusion in the category of the Norwegian citizen is presented as a desired social position and a gesture of benevolence, but conditional upon whiteness. For racialized students, the position of being *truly* Norwegian is not accessible. In Article 3, the hierarchy of access to being Norwegian mirrors the dynamic described by Maldonado-Torres (2007): "the 'lighter' one's skin is, the closer to full humanity one is, and vice versa" (p. 244). In the Norwegian context, this is also related to the enduring historical construction of the Nordic white race as the norm (Kyllingstad, 2012). The discursive presence of whiteness was central to how students conceptualized Norwegianness, as reflected in Article 3. Being *fully* Norwegian was constructed in opposition to being a *visible* Muslim through, for example, the use of the hijab, as exemplified in Article 4.

My interest in the modern subject and epistemology shapes my representation of a field that is undoubtedly complex and diverse. This choice of focus is also related to the particularities of coloniality in the Norwegian context, as I will return to in Section 3.2.1., and the significance of subjectivation and epistemology for citizenship education. This is also the reason that my main theoretical tools for engaging a decolonial critique are found, in addition to the framework from modernity/coloniality studies and postcolonialism described above, in critical and affective whiteness studies.

3.1.1 Race, racism, and whiteness

The approach to whiteness in this research is inspired by critical whiteness studies and corresponding critical whiteness pedagogy. Such perspectives position whiteness at the center of the problem of racism and emphasize the need to deconstruct whiteness and help whites "see" race as a social construct (Applebaum, 2016; Matias & Mackey, 2016). I also argue for the need to integrate a colonial perspective in analyses of whiteness as well as the significance, particularly in education, of understanding whiteness as affective. A decolonial perspective on the concepts and articulations of categories such as race and whiteness (as well as gender and sexuality) is not restricted to a raced (or gendered)

reading of social relations and practices within modernity/coloniality. It also implies examining the emergence of the categories within coloniality (Lugones, 2010). As Matias (2016) describes, white supremacy enacted through structural racism is "like colonization in that it has an overarching oppressive state of coloniality that impacts the relationships and social positions of racial colonizers and the racially colonized" (p. 163). Whiteness is "more than a skin color" (Dankertsen, 2019, p. 110). It is also a structurally privileged place from which people look at themselves, others, and society (Frankenberg, 1993), supported by the hegemony of material practices and institutions (Leonardo, 2010) and taken-for-granted privileges (McIntosh, 2004). This is accompanied by everyday ways of life, which maintain this system of hierarchical, race-based social relations as "normal" (Sleeter, 2011), positioning white as the unmarked norm of subjectivity (Dyer, 1997).

The notion of everyday racism is central to this research (Essed, 1991, 2008), denoting the micro-injustices that become naturalized and normalized through everyday practices as manifestations of systemic inequality. This idea, as Essed explains, is helpful for understanding racism as a process "involving the continuous, often unconscious, exercise of power predicated in taking for granted the privileging of whiteness, the universality of Western criteria of human progress, and the primacy of European (derived) cultures" (2008, p. 204). Essed further notes that, although everyday racism concerns mundane practices, it is not racism of a more humane kind. Racism as such implies dehumanization. This is vital when approaching everyday racism from the perspective of school children. As I discuss in Article 1, drawing on Fanon's (2002) psychoanalytical perspectives on race, when children are exposed to stereotypical and dehumanizing narratives about their affinity group, their sense of self and worth can be affected. In Article 3, I exemplify this through the students Sophie and Sarah, who in different ways are forced to negotiate their rights to define their own identities.

As this research is concerned with classroom discourses and social practices, whiteness is particularly relevant in terms of its performativity and power with regard to subjectivities and social relations. Whiteness studies and other theoretical research strands engaging the social and structural workings of race often suggest how race does

not really exist, not least because of the risk of reifying the very racial categorizations it seeks to dismantle. The significance of taking a decolonial perspective on whiteness here is also related to avoiding the common binary position of either looking at the "problems" of the subjugated other as the point of departure for liberation or simply turning the gaze toward the oppressor. Instead, focus is steered toward the dynamics and relations producing hierarchies and differences. Although race is certainly a social construction that was "invented" by and through the history of race biology and eugenics, I also regard it as epistemically salient and ontologically real in the material and lived sense (Alcoff, 2006; Dankertsen, 2019). Whiteness could here be described as an ongoing and unfinished history, which "orientates bodies in specific directions, affecting how they 'take up' space" (Ahmed, 2007, p. 172). Hence, whiteness appears in this research through concepts that shed light on its performativity and relational aspects. This is evident in Article 3, where I describe the white gaze (Yancy, 2008) and how the racial other as represented by racialized students becomes existent through the colonial gaze that traps non-white bodies in the white imagination (Fanon, 2008). In Article 4, I elaborate on how the notion of white innocence influences how white student teachers navigate classroom conversations to protecting white emotions and the fear of being "found out" as racist. This white innocence allows whiteness to coexist within exceptionalist self-images of the nation and its subjects as inherently benevolent and non-racist (DiAngelo, 2010; Wekker, 2016). As Essed (2008) notes, a recurring form of everyday racism is the privileging of reality through denying the existence of racism, hence positioning the racialized individual who calls out experienced racism as irrational. This is a central feature of how everyday racism has been described in Norway (Joof, 2018; Sibeko, 2019).

Insights from psychoanalysis indicate that our attachments to the modern/colonial imaginary and its by-products, such as nationalism, exceptionalism, and consumerism, are not cognitive but libidinal or affectively embedded (Andreotti, 2015; Kapoor, 2004). The learned desires related to the "shine" of modernity are not necessarily conscious. As Ahmed (2004) writes, it is the emotional reading of love and hate that works to bind the imagined white subject and nation together. These emotions are not merely individual

psychological states; they are relational. They exist between bodies and as effects on social relations and structures and bind subjects together. Here, they might make up a particular affective economy, where the construction of hierarchies between "us" and "them," the nations' others (i.e., non-whites and immigrants), constitute the affective boundaries of the nation-state (Ahmed, 2004). Through exceptionalist discourse, subjects who posit the traits of the imagined true citizens are positioned as exalted subjects, inherently good, and as providing inclusion and tolerance toward the other (Thobani, 2007). Such exaltation fosters an ontological security through conceptualizations of nationality (Andreotti, 2016). This also sheds light on the resistance and discomfort of whites of being "found out" as complicit in racism and coloniality and the affective self-technologies governing their possible reactions toward such knowledge. In educational settings, white discomfort may manifest as the demand for "safe spaces" when engaging in dialogues implying race, with a failure to recognize how this concept overlooks the fact that the classroom, in racial terms, is never safe for the racial other (Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Zembylas, 2018a). Leonardo and Porter (2010) argue that research must analyze how whiteness is manifested as an affective technology in educational praxis. Inspired by this, I illustrate that the classroom is never a level playing field in dialogues on race and national identity through the examples of student conversations in Article 3. In Article 4, I further explore the workings of white emotional equilibrium in classrooms and show how colonial discourses safeguarding white emotions act as barriers to self-reflexivity and the acknowledgement of race and racism in classroom conversations.

3.2 International calls for decolonizing education

The concept of decolonization is related to the verb decolonize and the associated anti-colonial and anti-racist political movements initiated by students and marginalized and indigenous groups worldwide. The conversation on decoloniality in education hence brings together political and academic efforts. Importantly, the concept is indebted to the work of indigenous groups and their resistance to colonialism, which is as old as colonialism itself (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018), as well as to current social movements highlighting the persistence of colonial structures. In recent years, student movements in

many countries have called for the decolonization of higher education institutions. These initiatives include the *Rhodes must fall*-campaign in South Africa, the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)-based *Decolonising our minds society*, and the *Students and Academics International Assistance Fund* (SAIH) campaign for the decolonization of universities in Norway. The student movement for decolonizing the university calls for an end to epistemic privilege and white hegemony concerning curricula as well as equal access to education without fees (Bhambra et al., 2018), often emphasizing the acknowledgment of indigenous knowledge. The movement is part of a project built intellectually over decades by scholars who have been concerned with the consistency of colonial power relations in the modern world. The decolonial project involves a conversation between current social movements and the legacy of anti-racist, radical feminist, and anticolonial scholarship (Andreotti et al., 2015; Grosfoguel, 2002; Lugones, 2010; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mbembe, 2016; Mignolo, 2012; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Quijano, 2000; Sandoval, 2000; Santos, 2015; Smith, 2010).

3.2.1 Decolonial invitations and resistance in the Norwegian context

Decoloniality was a relatively new and unexplored theoretical perspective in the field of education in Norway when I started this study. One explanation for this is related to the general sanctioned ignorance of and resistance toward acknowledging Norway as a country with a colonial history, as epitomized by Nordic exceptionalism. The imaginary of the nation-state as benevolent and elevated above critique is a modern/colonial ideological construction that has been described in different national contexts (Rastas, 2012; Stein, 2018; Suša, 2016). Exceptionalism is here seen as:

> A complex set of self-constitutive discursive practices, policies, self-perceptions and assumptions that simultaneously affirm and construct an imaginary of society and its nationals as morally, ethically and culturally superior by exalting both the nationals' and the nation-state's inherent character as already good global citizens. (Suša, 2016, p. 5)

The particularities of the Nordic context relate to how the countries portray themselves and how they are also internationally perceived as exceptionally homogenous in relation to culture (Ryymin, 2019), an idea more related to ideologies than to existing conditions (Keskinen et al., 2019; Sandset, 2014). Exceptionalism also involves a self-image of being peripheral in relation to European colonialism and contemporary processes of imperialist globalization while simultaneously claiming to represent globally leading forces and champions of democracy and sustainability.

As discussed in the introduction, the concept of colonialism is generally avoided when describing the relationship between the indigenous Sami and the government during the Norwegianification [12] policies in the 19th and 20th centuries. As Dankertsen (2019) observes, while other colonized people can describe colonialism as an event with a clear beginning, the colonization of Sápmi was a more gradual process. This does not imply that it was not in fact colonialism, or that these processes were radically different from the more internationally well-known stories of settler colonialism in the areas today known as the US, Australia, or Canada. Norwegianification included measures such as residential schools for Sami children, policies restricting and prohibiting the use of the Sami language, forced participation of Sami individuals as objects in experimental eugenics research, legal policies that prevented non-Norwegian-speaking inhabitants from land ownership, and de facto settlement by the Norwegian government on land inhabited by the Sami (Minde, 2003; Ravna, 2011). Tuck and Yang (2012) describe settler colonialism as a process where "settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain" (p. 5). A key strategy of the Norwegian government in the colonization of Sápmi was to stimulate "proper" Norwegians to settle in the areas of Sápmi in order to claim

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[12] Norwegianification, translated from Norwegian *fornorsking* and literally meaning "making Norwegian," is the common name for policies enacted by the Norwegian state in the name of fostering cultural and national homogeneity, notably in the early 19th century. These policies affected minority groups in different ways. While the erosion of livelihoods and education policies affected the indigenous Sami and Kven/Norwegian Finn minority harshly, family life interventions, such as forced adoption and sterilization, targeted the traveler (Roma and Romani/Tater) minorities. At times, the Roma and Jews were also outlawed from entering the country, leading to horrible consequences during World War II.

these areas as Norwegian land. As described in governmental documents from the 18th and 19th centuries, Sápmi was considered a colony by the Norwegian state (Pedersen, 2019), and the Sami who had been living there for centuries were not acknowledged as subjects with land rights and were, in practice, deprived of their full humanity. This legacy of racism and colonial land theft continues to have significance for Saami livelihoods today (E. Fjellheim, 2020; S. Fjellheim, 2020; Hansen, 2015; Midtbøen & Lidèn, 2016).

Although these relations are largely described in research focusing on the Nordics as a common region, I still primarily apply the concept *of national* exceptionalism throughout this work. The main reason for this is to shed light on the epistemic violence enabled by and embedded in the nation-state as a modern construction. Moreover, this emphasizes commonalities and enables comparisons across nation-states as inherently modern/colonial constructs as well as the particularities and contexts of each country (Rastas, 2012). In the case of Norway, there is a particular narrative concerning the construction of Norway as a victim of, rather than an agent in, colonization (Gullestad, 2006; Kennedy-Macfoy, 2014), and hence it is allegedly even slightly superior to and exceptional in relation to the other Nordic countries (Fylkesnes, 2019). This narrative is based on the fact that Norway was in a formal union with Denmark in the period from 1380 to 1814. However, this was not a case of colonization but a formal agreement on equal participation by the two kingdoms. Importantly, understanding coloniality as a concept is not restricted to the details of historical colonialism. It also refers to the overall production of Europe as an epistemological and economical global center and the processes through which colonial imaginaries and practices are naturalized as part of national self-identity (Mulinari et al., 2016).

In the summer of 2018, the organization SAIH adopted a resolution calling for decolonization of higher education, with the goals of critically revisiting curricula and teaching practices in order to strengthen academic rigour and diversity and questioning the exceptionality of Western academia. This sparked harsh and partly tendentious criticisms from a number of Norwegian academics, who claimed that the criticism posed a threat to science and was a dangerous attack on the alleged universal concept of

scientific objectivism, representing a threat to academic and educational quality (Saugstad et al., 2018; Wig, 2018). This line of criticism largely reflects international debates on the threat of decoloniality to the hegemony of Western rationality, which is commonly misconceptualized as an attack on the value of anything Western (Stein et al., 2020). As SAIH explained, this criticism was both surprising and paradoxical: "decolonial perspectives could in our opinion open up for a chance to critically revisit curricula and teaching practices, and strengthen academia as a consequence"(Høiskar, 2020, p. 156). SAIH was highly discredited and described with various dubious terms, including political correctness, anti-science, populism, and propaganda, far from the actual intentions and practices. Consequently, the debate also led to several universities withdrawing their financial support for SAIH. This can partly be understood as a reaction to the threats to positionalities in academia posed by decolonial critiques. However, the particular response in the Norwegian case must also be understood in the specific context of Norway, and notably as what anthropologist Bangstad has described as *The racism that dares not speak its name* (2015).

A major critique of decolonization in Norway is the idea that decolonization, as well as associated concepts such as racism, whiteness, and coloniality, are uncritically imported concepts from the US without relevance in Norway (Brekke, 2020)[13], particularly from what right-wing-oriented commentators refer to as US identity politics (Sandset & Bangstad, 2019). This criticism is somewhat paradoxical. While it allegedly warns against the import of concepts from the US, it also engages in a line of criticism that mirrors the discussions in North America (Stein et al., 2020). As pointed out by Loftsdóttir (2020), an important feature of populist discourse today is that it draws on transnational discourses while claiming to be national. Admittedly, reflexivity and criticality are vital when concepts travel across contexts, but the metaphor of travelling when discussing theoretical concepts does not describe a linear path between two unrelated poles. It always involves "complex, uneven and contradictory relations of mutual transformation"

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[13] This is one of several examples. However, the contributions in this debate are mostly only available in the Norwegian language in Norwegian national media and journals.

(Bal, 2002; Neumann & Nünning, 2012, p. 6). This line of criticism also displays the larger epistemic ignorance (Kuokkanen, 2011) of the longstanding history of anti- and decolonial movements in the Nordic countries. Important examples that are little known to the public include the resistance to colonialism and racism led by Elsa Laula Renberg and Karin Stenberg in Sweden and Norway in the early 20th century (Svendsen, (in press)), and anti-racist organizations established in the 1970s led by youths with African backgrounds (Tisdel, 2020a). Decolonial scholarship from Sami scholars includes writings on research methodology, higher education, and land rights (E. Fjellheim, 2020; S. Fjellheim, 2020; Kuokkanen, (in press); Kuokkanen, 2011; Porsanger, 2004).

The framing of the discussion in this way must also be understood in relation to how the lack of academic or public debates on colonial legacies has made possible the refusal of race and racism as valid analytical categories in the Norwegian context (Bangstad, 2017; Mulinari et al., 2016). Questioning whether racism *really* exists seems to be a recurring part of the conversation whenever racism is actualized in the Norwegian media, as recently seen in reporting of the anti-racist protests following the police murder of George Floyd. Although this spurred a massive series of public testimonies in the media on experiences of racism in Norway, there was also a substantial rhetorical discussion on whether racism in Norway is *really* racism. There was a general skepticism toward knowledge and research on the topic and a reframing of the problems in light of liberal freedom of speech. Norway is no exception to the current rise of right-wing populism and the associated claims of security threats posed by racialized minorities (Keskinen et al., 2019). However, a substantial review of the media debate also revealed that many personal stories about experiences of everyday racism played a central part in somewhat moving the conversation toward greater acknowledgement (Retriever, 2020). Education was again described as a crucial arena for fighting racism (Kvaale-Conateh, 2020; Lillo-Stenberg, 2020), reminding me of the relevance of research on this topic.

The taboo concerning race and racism in Norway has been documented by numerous studies on public debate and political and policy discourses (Bangstad, 2015, 2017; Gullestad, 2002, 2004; Helland, 2014; McEachrane, 2014c; Myrdahl, 2010) as well as in

educational discourse, practice, and textbooks (Harlap & Riese, 2014; Midtbøen et al., 2014; Osler & Lindquist, 2016; Røthing, 2015; Svendsen, 2014b; Westrheim & Hagatun, 2015). In part, this taboo has been related to the particular ideology of Norwegian egalitarianism as "equality as sameness" and the underlying idea that social cohesion in the nation-state depends upon not only being equal but also being the same, highlighting the ethnification of national identity (Gullestad, 2002). This is closely related to the legacy of the image of the Nordic race as white, which I will return to below. Additionally, this refusal of race has also been related to the dominant conceptualizations of racism as restricted to the biological racism of 19th and 20th century race science and atrocities such as the Holocaust, Apartheid, and the racist assimilation policies toward the Sami and national minorities in Norway. In this sense, racism is constructed as a historically past and non-sensical phenomenon. When race is understood as a strictly biological and historical phenomenon rather than as a social construction and category, there is no vocabulary left to address ongoing racist discrimination (McEachrane, 2014c). Hence, I find it appropriate to describe the denials of race, whiteness, and colonial history in Norway as a form of sanctioned ignorance. These denials cannot be adequately described as a lack of knowledge. Rather, they represent a purposeful sanctioning, preventing particularly uncomfortable types of analysis from being made relevant. This is more a description of institutionalized ways of thinking about the world than of individual hatred, but there is agency in the omission (Spivak, 1999). As Santos (2018) explains, the abyssal line is actively produced as the manifestation of the colonial production of invisibility.

As pointed out by Loftsdóttir and Jensen (2012a), whiteness is particularly interesting in a Nordic context, as limited research has been done on racial identity in relation to whiteness in the region. The undisputed whiteness of "true" Norwegians is a taken-for-granted and unspoken element in the construction of the Norwegian self-image (Kyllingstad, 2012), illustrated, for example, by the use of the term "ethnic Norwegian" as a synonym for white (Osler & Lindquist, 2016). Despite the self-understanding of being a bystander in the construction of racial hierarchies, Nordic researchers in fact led in the development of racial biology in the 19th century (Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012a). The alleged Nordic race was constructed as a master race at the top of a hierarchy, portrayed

as white and superior, while the Sami was described as a primitive and exotic race of Asian origin, in contrast to whiteness. Here, racialization was not only about skin color but also a hierarchical categorization of being civilized and hence deserving of being regarded as full citizens (Dankertsen, 2019; Kyllingstad, 2012, 2017). In this way, whiteness is also inscribed in the concept of liberal democracy in Norway. As liberal democracies are built upon the equal rights of their members in virtue of human dignity, this is also inscribed in a colonial and racial tradition, where dignity is reserved for a nationally confined people, and nationhood is understood in terms of race, ethnicity, and culture—in the Nordic context, the idea of the white, superior race (Lundström & Teitelbaum, 2017; McEachrane, 2014b, 2014c). The Norwegian national imaginary upholds the myth of Norway once being culturally and ethnically homogenous and then gradually becoming more heterogeneous through overseas immigration (Ryymin, 2019). Although this myth is currently being challenged by recognition of the history of the Sami and the national minorities, notably by the establishment of a Truth and Recognition Committee[14], race remains opaque in understanding these matters. As Sandset (2014) states, the common phrase "to be fully Norwegian" is based on a visual component, that is, skin color, influencing both self-definition and categorization by others. The denial of this makes it difficult to approach the complexities of the positionalities and structures of racial inequality in Norway today. Dankertsen (2019) argues that, although the Sami people often see themselves and are seen as physically white, the idea that being Sami has to do with physiognomy and "looking" Sami persists and influences Sami identities. Based on a student conversation in Article 3, I demonstrate how the students associated being Sami with phenotypes considered to have less value. In the powerful narration of South Sami scholar Fjellheim (2020), the author describes how her family was questioned about their claim of being Sami because they were perceived as too "Norwegian-looking."

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[14] The Committee was established by the Norwegian parliament in 2019 and has a mandate to "lay the groundwork for the recognition of the experiences of the Sami and Kvens/Norwegian Finns while this policy was being enforced by the Norwegian authorities, and the consequences these experiences have had for them as groups and individuals." For more information, see https://uit.no/kommisjonen_en.

These examples shed light on the importance of whiteness for understanding the hierarchies of identity and belonging in Norway.

3.3 Critiques, limitations, and challenges of decoloniality

Decolonial critiques are faced with criticism from vastly different perspectives. First, as Tuck and Yang (2012) point out, decolonization may be applied in a shallow or tokenistic way, representing what they describe as multicultural moves to innocence. Although this is not an argument against engaging in a decolonial critique, it is a reminder to attend continuously to axiology concerns, particularly when positioned as a white, majority researcher. I acknowledge this risk and see it as the greatest threat to the decolonial project in terms of losing direction in the efforts to achieve increased social justice. Thus, I devote substantial space in this kappe to discussing questions regarding reflexivity, researcher positionality, and ethics in Chapter 4. Second, there is what Stein et al. (2020) describe as "the vitriolic backlash of right-wing groups who warn that decolonial critiques are nefarious efforts to eradicate white, Western ways of life" (p. 1). This may seem like a description of a rather extremist perspective, but related, less radical varieties of this criticism often occupy a substantial space in public debates, as in the debates on racism and whiteness in Norway described above. An example of this is how the call for more diverse literature in university reading lists has been perceived as an overall threat to academic freedom and a disqualification of white men (Sandset & Bangstad, 2019). This is based on the presumption that, by critiquing hegemonies, one automatically seeks to invert them (Ahmed, 2012). The decolonial perspective calls for the acknowledgement of an ecology of knowledges (Santos, 2007) and a more open, nuanced, and critical approach to knowledge (Amadór et al., 2020).

Third, there are the responses, questions, and critiques from fellow researchers in the field, working from different viewpoints. A major such criticism is that decolonial critiques run the risk of reproducing the essentialisms they seek to interrupt (Vickers, 2019). The analyses of coloniality may indeed appear pervasive, and if not engaged reflexively and contextually, they run the risk of transcending the realities they are set to describe. However, as Patel (2014) explains, "These implications do not mean that anyone's social

location relative to colonization is fixed by virtue of birthplace or social identity, but rather at every juncture there is constant opportunity and responsibility to identify and counter the genealogies of coloniality" (p. 358). Hence, acknowledging complicities may represent a starting point for agency rather than determinism.

Decolonial critiques also challenge common ways of doing educational research, encouraging the field to "pause far more frequently in its seemingly unrelenting quest for data and publications"(Patel, 2014, p. 358) to avoid simply regenerating itself as a colonizing enterprise. The resistance to providing definite answers presents challenges in accounting for the concrete contributions to citizenship education as a field of practice. As I have experienced as a teacher, textbook author, and teacher educator, education is all about making practical choices. Jefferess (2012) explains that calls for system change might leave us apathetic, giving the impression that the only plausible solution is not to act at all. Here, I see the notion of *system hospicing* as fruitful: "The willingness to learn enough form the (re)current mistakes of the current system in order to make different mistakes in caring for the arrival of something new" (Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 28). This vision entails balancing the critique calling for system change—or even something else that is not yet defined—and the need for harm reduction here and now. In this research, I aim to contribute with theorizing from and with praxis (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018), something which also requires patience to sit and learn from the analysis without offering hasty solutions. I seek to explore new possibilities for socially just and decolonial citizenship education conceptually and theoretically, pointing toward possible tools for thinking and practicing rather than new truths. This entails keeping an eye on the roots of current challenges while attending to the immediate effects of injustices I return to the implications of the research for practice in Chapter 7.

4 Methodological reflections

The main question to be covered in this chapter is "how did I come to know what I know from the research?" This research began from the premise that methodology and theory are "irreducibly entangled" (Culhane, 2017a, p. 17). To provide an image of the researcher I aspire, I borrow the notion from Santos (2018) of the scientist as a "craftsperson," resorting to methodologies creatively rather than mechanically. This demands good knowledge of the techniques and respect for the tools, which are "crucial to avoid repeating what has already been done and to produce instead new pieces, unique to a certain extent, which reflect the personality and emotional investment of the craftsperson" (pp. 147–148). At the heart of the decolonial project is the provision of a political, ethical, and epistemic instrument for "transforming the world by transforming the way people see it, feel it and act in it" (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 131), which includes myself. The analytical lens is not detached from me as researcher, as ways of knowing cannot be seen as separate from ways of seeing (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Accounting for the ways of knowing in the study brings high demands for reflexivity regarding positionality, self, personal investments, ethics, and relationality.

In this chapter, I intend to make visible wider assumptions embedded in the study about knowledge production, ethics, and the role of research and the researcher in and for society, informing and justifying my methodological choices. I will then describe the concrete practical realities of the research design, methods, and material in Chapter 5.

4.1 Reflexivity as a methodological strategy

My understanding and application of the concept of "critique" in this study is indebted to critical theory and its emancipatory interest in knowledge through exposing and disrupting unjust social forces (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018), acknowledging that "critical work begins with interrogating legacies that have created and defined the categories we are trained to think and work with" (Culhane, 2017b, p. 58). Connecting this to the Sociology of absences, I am especially concerned with making visible that which has been obscured by hegemonic discourses embedded in coloniality (Santos, 2018). I hold that

research that is openly value based is neither more nor less ideological than research that claims value-neutrality; rather, it is a question of the extent to which intentionalities are displayed and accounted for (Harding, 2015; Lather, 1986). I follow Santos' (2015) notion that the production of knowledge in a study such as this is always partial, situated, and insufficient and should not be considered knowledge-as-a-representation-of-reality but rather knowledge-as-an-intervention-in-reality (p. 201). I explicitly aim for the research to have social and political effects (Culhane, 2017a). My methodological orientation is thus not concerned with offering an alleged universal or authentic representation of citizenship education in Norway but rather with mobilizing knowledge in order to challenge and interrupt current modes of thinking.

In this research, I argue for the importance of self-reflexivity in educational processes. This also demands hyper-reflexivity related to myself as a knowledge producer. What underlies my investment in conducting this research? What are my ethical responsibilities, and to what or whom am I accountable? In what ways, or based on which guidelines, can I consider the quality of the knowledge produced? In asking these questions, I position myself along with a large community of researchers working from a range of different perspectives, applying reflexivity as methodological strategy. Reflexivity can be understood as "reflections on many levels" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 10). It is not restricted to the isolated act of reflecting upon a single issue; rather, it describes the methodological approach. Reflexivity is related to questioning not only the researcher and the study but also the field itself as science (Bourdieu, 2001). Decolonial reflexivity requires what Mignolo (2012) describes as "border thinking," which aims to erase the distinction between knower and known, between an alleged "hybrid" object and a "pure" subject or knower, perceived as uncontaminated by the matters described (p. 18). Hence, reflexivity entails accounting for oneself as a researcher and as self. Pillow (2015) calls for a "reflexivity of reflexivity," acknowledging the necessity of reflexivity to be not only interpretative but also genealogical, including "scrutiny on the processes and ideologies embedded in reflexivity" (p. 428). This also emphasizes the importance of accounting for theoretical investments, that is, to "name them out loud" (Pillow, 2015; Țîștea, 2020). Upholding the critical intent of reflexivity is necessarily

discomforting; it demands that I stay with the trouble and accept complicity, complexity, and my own embeddedness in and with what I study (Haraway, 2016; Shotwell, 2016). In this way, my self-reflexive account, especially as a white researcher, is an intrinsic part of the exploration of coloniality. How am I personally shaped by and invested in the structures of coloniality, and what are my interests in interrupting them? Before I move on to further discuss my positionality, I will describe some of the decisive moments in which coloniality emerged as the core focus of this research. Importantly, these moments manifested through a kind of sensory knowledge (Culhane, 2017b), not explicitly accessed by the words spoken. This directed me toward the insight that "that which appears absent can indeed be a seething presence" (Gordon, 1997, p. 17, cited in Moretti, 2017, p. 103).

4.2 Encountering coloniality and refining the focus of the study

I acknowledge that researchers exploring the same texts, classroom situations, and conversations as me could legitimately produce radically different interpretations related to the overall topic of citizenship education (Andreotti, 2011b). Stating this awareness is not the same as claiming that there are no truths or realities, however, or that we cannot talk about the advance of knowledge. Rather, it is an acknowledgement that these truths are always discursively located. Importantly, the study started out exploratively. I did not initially design the research from a decolonial stance, and the significance of coloniality as a key concept emerged in the interplay between literature, explorations in the field, and reflexivity.

Initially engaging with perspectives from critical pedagogy and post-structuralism helped me to understand, locate, and describe the historical and socio-cultural contexts of the knowledge constructed and reproduced in and through discursive practice in citizenship education. Article 1, in which I explore how colonial history informs the Norwegian national imaginary and the construction of social and national identities through a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of textbooks was important for understanding the reproduction of othering of the Sami people. It helped locate the discursive power enabling ongoing epistemic violence in spite of the good intentions of textbooks, teachers, and curriculum

documents. This made me wonder why, even in democratically organized classrooms, racialized students have to deal with the fact that all images of people with whom they can identify are constructed in the context of inferiority or pity (Ideland & Malmberg, 2014). Why is it that the minoritized students are forced to take on the emotional burden of convincing their peers that they have the right to belong on their own terms in the community of the nation-state (Ahmed, 2012)? I found great inspiration in the words of Andreotti (2011c): "the complexity of global citizenship education cannot be captured by any single approach. My intention is to emphasize that walking (and pushing) the edges of a theory's limits is part of a researcher's ethical responsibility" (p. 381). This feels like a fitting description of my process of exploring tools from critical and post-structural theoretical perspectives. I felt that, as I pushed the edges of these theories and reached what I felt to be the limits of criticality, there was in a sense no "way out," no alternatives available. This dilemma in critical research is of course well known: the voluminous amount of such research does not necessarily result in the solution of real-world social problems (Carspecken, 2005). Hence, there was certainly something to be learned said from my experiences that could not be fully grasped through the analytical tools these perspectives provided.

I was especially faced with the structures of coloniality in my work with Article 2. I followed a seventh grade class over a duration of several weeks in their social studies project focused on consumption and pollution, and more specifically on the role of Norway in global politics regarding climate change and development. I was struck by how well the teacher, Paul, was organizing the classes in line with the ideals of deliberative democratic dialogue and how concerned he appeared to be with getting the students involved and engaged in the topics. Thus, I realized that if my research focus and methodological approach had been different, I would have analyzed the processes in this classroom radically differently, even if was still performing my research under the premise of "citizenship education." I also realized that, in spite of the learning strategies emphasizing the students as active participants in the classroom, not much learning was taking place in the sense of transformation. Through conversations about the role of Norway in the global arena related to the challenges of sustainability and global

distributional injustice, the students displayed the ability to pose challenging questions. These "beginnings" and initiatives, the radical openness that was visible in some of the students' questioning of the curriculum, were not able to lead to a real negotiation of meaning and knowledge. The strong discursive presence and power of coloniality seemingly defined the edges and limitations of the conversation (i.e., the abyssal line), resulting in absences in terms of perspectives on global economic inequalities and racism. Coloniality appeared both through how the power of the colonial discursive construction of national exceptionalism did not enable any real critical engagement by the students with the main narratives of the conversations and how the Global South could not possibly be logically approached in a non-orientalist sense. The Eurocentric dominance did not mainly manifest in the absence of the Global South but rather through the colonial geopolitics of knowledge, positioning everything non-Western as deviant or lacking in relation to an alleged "spaceless" neutral position. This appeared to me to be more than providing the right knowledge or fostering the right attitudes. Rather, it involved ways of seeing and knowing. I found the concept of *epistemic blindness* (Maldonado-Torres, 2004, p. 30) especially helpful in understanding the impossible presence of this tacit knowledge. It describes how the modern/colonial belief in neutrality produces blindness in relation to non-European ways of thinking and being, resulting in the reproduction of coloniality. This blindness leads to the vanishing of everything outside the modern/colonial worldview—on the other side of the abyssal line (Santos, 2018),— rendering it non-existent. This explains, for example, how India could be depicted as backwards in relation to the US, even though the US emits much higher amounts of CO_2 per capita and is far less innovative in terms of renewable energy sources. As Santos (2018) explains, the abyssal line is not fixed, but heavily policed. In Paul's class as well as in several other instances, the productive power of the colonial discourses and notable national exceptionalism appeared as such bases of control in the way they structured conversations. Such experiences with the *something* that was there in the form of a structural presence governing knowledge production aroused my curiosity about coloniality, inspiring further explorations.

Situations such as the one I experienced in Paul's classroom resulted in discomfort and doubt for me. Was it fair to focus on the "problems" since there was a lot of good news from the classroom in terms of citizenship education? What implications would my interpretation hold for future practice and for the affected persons? During the course of the study, I also received important criticism from peers on my work as to the ethical considerations of exposing students or teachers, such as Paul or Sarah and Sophie's fellow students, as potential (re)producers of racist discourse. This criticism led me to reflect more thoroughly on purpose and ethics in my research. However, the corresponding discomfort of also dealing with my own white positionality, made me realize the place from which this critique could possibly be constructed. It also led me to discover what the universalist concept of ethical conduct operating in this space concealed and whose interests it protected, and what violences it allowed for. Importantly, although I acknowledge that it might easily be read that way, my analysis does not imply individual guilt or responsibility and is structural in focus. As Foucault explains, it is discourse, not the subjects who speak it, that produces knowledge. Subjects are operating within the limits of the discursive formation of a particular time and culture (Hall, 2008). The decolonial perspective proposes the acknowledgement of everyone's complicities and investments in coercive and repressive belief systems (Andreotti, 2011c). This study is primarily concerned with the violence and reductions coloniality imposes on everyone, although it hits people in radically different ways depending on their social position and geopolitical location. Merely referring to structures is of course too simple; reproduction of discourses cannot to be seen as separated from Paul's production of self-imagery in relation to the affective work of whiteness and exceptionalism. In classrooms in the Global North, such as the Norwegian classrooms, perspectives of the Global South are often intangible or deliberately overlooked when they become too uncomfortable. Paul did explain to me that his concern for students led him to want to protect them from "troubling information." However, the choice to overlook uncomfortable truths can also be seen as a matter of white privilege (DiAngelo, 2018).

One could, of course, ask what does it matter how we talk about the other in classrooms? Santos (2018) reminds us that the knowledge produced also holds implications for social

justice, nationally and globally. Further, as psychoanalytical perspectives on decoloniality and whiteness have powerfully displayed, epistemic violence has the power to influence the self-image of the colonized subject in devastating ways (Ahmed, 2000; Fanon, 2008; Yancy, 2008). The significance of exposing coloniality hit me affectively in my encounters with racialized students, as I sought to see the lessons from their perspectives. Santos' abyssal line not only explains how certain types of knowledge are placed in the abyss but also how this invisibilizes the humanity of subjects. As the Global South is understood here as racially defined, the Global North and South are present in the classroom in terms of the students' racial positionalities. Subjects positioned in the colonial abyss might be prevented from representing the world on their own terms. In the meetings with the students Sarah and Sophie described in Article 3, this became evident, not least through how they were forced to do the emotional work of being the containers for otherness, representing the navigation of boundaries of inclusion as national subjects (Ahmed, 2012). These encounters led me to realize that, although coloniality sheds light on the inadequacies in knowledge production and the quality of knowledge communicated in the classroom, we must not lose sight of the actual human beings for whom coloniality is a very real part of their everyday lived realities.

In the coming sections, I will account more in depth for the interplays of concerns for ethics, positionality, and rigor at play in my study.

4.3 Reflections on myself as a knowledge producer

Conducting research within the context of Norwegian teacher education research obliges me to follow the ethical guidelines of *The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees on Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Theology* (NESH, 2016) as well as local institutional guidelines following from them. This study was also reported to the *Norwegian Centre for Research Data* (NSD) according to the requirements at the start of this research (see Appendix 4). These procedural guidelines provided me with checklists that were practically helpful in modifying my "moral compass" along the way, and I revisited them continuously during the process. I also contacted NESH by phone and had the valuable opportunity to receive advice on some

of the dilemmas and challenges I encountered. Although I do think that such guidelines have value, not least to enable an ongoing conversation and reflexivity concerning research ethics within and across academic communities, I also realized the risks with treating ethics as an external tool applied to the research as a checklist. The concept of universalist ethics might result in the illusion of ethical practice that could be catastrophic for the voices or perspectives othered by or through research processes (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). In addition to procedures and guidelines, I therefore believe that research ethics must be treated in a "continuous process of becoming" (Francett-Hermes & Pennanen, 2019, p. 125). Ethical challenges emerging from the study demonstrate that reflexivity is non-prescriptive. I will return to this in Section 5.6, discussing some of the "ethically important moments" (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) occurring in the study. In the coming sections, I aim to illuminate the underlying intentionalities and investments in my work and account for interrelations between ethics, positionality, and the rigor of the research. Committing to an ethical practice that avoids the construction of power over the other(s) actualizes the Foucauldian telos of "willingness to disassemble the self"(Cannella & Lincoln, 2018, p. 91). I therefore start by accounting for my positionality.

4.3.1 Whiteness, complicity, and complexity

Growing up as a middle-class, white person in the Norwegian context means that I have been influenced by and benefitted from the privileges provided me as white through the workings of the colonial structures. This puts me in a paradoxical position: through my research, I explicitly aim at dismantling what I, in a sense, *cannot not want* (Spivak, 1994). Conducting research on social justice as a white researcher might feed on the socialized desires to "feel good, look good and be seen as doing good" (Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 29) and re-inscribe structures of privilege. Such learned desires of being good and lack of experience in seeing oneself as a racially situated being also leads to a risk of the research turning into self-righteous paternalism. This might involve taking space from "those who are most immediately affected by colonial and racial violence in order to advance one's own career and other personal interests" (Stein, 2016, p. 18). I therefore think the genealogical work on my own whiteness is necessary for ensuring quality, accountability,

and ethicality in my research. Being silent about my whiteness would mean partaking in the sanctioned ignorance in society of whiteness as an unmarked norm (Francett-Hermes & Pennanen, 2019). I contend based on standpoint theory that "If we promiscuously argue for standpoints, objectivity will be strengthened" (Harding, 2015; TallBear, 2014). In important ways, accounting for one's standpoint in the research process is also about discovering, constructing, and reconstructing the self (Lincoln et al., 2018). For me, the path taken in this study has been paved with becomings in several aspects of the word.

As Foucault has explained, ethical work is the process of constituting your own moral being and transforming yourself into an ethical being through the historical and critical examination of the constitution of the self. Subjectivation entails self-criticism, or caring for yourself (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018; Foucault, 1986). Thus, what is methodologically required of me in accounting for the self is not narrating my life history but rather engaging in analyses of the social and historical structures that condition my reflexivity (Pillow, 2015). I encountered with my own whiteness in a very direct way through the research process, and notably through the encounters with racialized students. In spite of my engagement with the literature related to coloniality and racism, the presence of race, racism, and whiteness in some of the classroom conversations hit me affectively through a feeling of surprised discomfort. Being confronted emotionally with what I knew cognitively was, for me, a rare and powerful encounter with my own white fragility and resistance to "seeing" racism (DiAngelo, 2018). I realized that the same fragility was at play with my colleagues as they criticized my exposure of racism and the possible "shaming" of teachers and students. It took me a while to realize that what is at stake here is not the distribution of guilt; rather, the complexity of and complicity in the constitutive situation of our lives affects us differently. Rather than something we should try to avoid, it can be seen as a place to begin in the dismantling of unsustainable and unjust social structures and habits of being (Shotwell, 2016): they have to be named properly in order to be interrupted. We do not choose our historical and social situatedness, but we can still take responsibility for and acknowledge that history and oppose the colonial practice of forgetting and ignorance that is available for whites (Mills, 2007; Spivak, 1999). This is where the experience of becoming a researcher, as a white

person speaking from a decolonial stance, involves unlearning. Speaking of unlearning in the decolonial sense involves becoming comfortable with uncertainty, letting go of epistemic authority, minimizing the urge for quick solutions, and accepting the plurality of knowledge (Jimmy et al., 2019; Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012).

Moving into decolonial critique in this study has at times led to doubt regarding the question of whether this study can in fact be described as a decolonial project at all. Who do I really speak for, and with what investments? Although troubling, such doubt can be approached as a reflexive tool, a way of becoming more aware of the limitations of the research (Fylkesnes, 2019). My doubt led me to seek out racialized and indigenous discussion partners through the process through the choice of literature, conference conversations, and research groups. I spent five months as a visitor of the *Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures collective* [15] based at the University of British Colombia, Canada, during spring and summer 2019. I was invited as a guest to the Blood/Kainai Blackfoot reserve in Alberta, where I witnessed ceremonies of the yearly Sun Dance. [16] This stay was part of a course on education and land and food systems organized by one of my hosts, Vanessa Andreotti. This experience improved my understanding of the importance of experience for knowledge and helped me sit with the ambivalence related to ways of knowing that I do not necessarily understand. It made me realize what I cannot see as a majoritarian subject and thus the limitations of this research.

Some of the spaces of decolonial and indigenous research and activism that I visited also tenaciously actualized social and racial binaries, such as those between white and black/person of color and insider and outsider to indigenous groups and communities. These borders affected me strongly, especially because I had discovered my indigenous ancestry in the initial part of the research.. My late grandfather, who grew up in

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[15] For more information, see https://decolonialfutures.net/.

[16] The Sun Dance is a ceremony traditionally practiced by Indigenous peoples of what is today known as the US and Canada, primarily those of the Plains cultures. The Sun Dance is a ceremony of renewal and reconciliation that centers the land as a source of life and medicine. It was banned by the European colonizers and has played a vital part in reclaiming land and identity since the late 20th century.

Northeastern Finnmark (i.e., the Northern-most part of Sápmi), was very close to me. He used to tell me stories about his childhood, but they always bore a sense of mythicality. He never shared details about his ancestry. I found information about his fathers' Sami family and his mothers' Kven ancestry in databases of the Norwegian official digital archives[17]. None of our living relatives knew about this, and their reactions varied from distanced curiosity to fully embracing Sami as an identity. For me, this also led to an existential struggle with whether I should still consider myself as a researcher as completely an "outsider," "non-indigenous," and "white." I experienced how this information held vastly different contextual meanings. In some situations, sharing this information was tantamount to being perceived as the Sami in the room; I felt that this was all people around me found notable about who I am. At other times, I was seen as the white researcher trying to take advantage of alleged indigeneity, which is nothing more than a historical coincidence. Engaging with the literature on indigenous methodologies, I felt the urge to clarify my positionality in categorical terms and discover my "pure self" in order to qualify my research.

Eventually, I realized that the desire to define and classify myself according to given categories is reflective of the modern colonial desire for purity (Shotwell, 2016). Accepting my ambivalence about my own positionality and self was also the most crucial step in coming to terms with myself as a knowledge producer. The aims of my research to improve social justice must always start from the perspectives of the oppressed. This is not a question of who I am but rather a methodological question of where the research question is asked from. I found it helpful to think with "strong objectivity," as theorized by Harding (2015), when I encountered common allegations related to the possible lack of objectivity of my research. As Harding writes, "Strong objectivity is indeed 'real objectivity': it is more competent to achieve such fairness goals than the version of objectivity that is linked to a value-free ideal" (p. 33). Decolonization calls for alliance and

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[17] The Norwegian Digital Archives present national archive documents in digital form, free to use and open to all. The archive contains People Counts of the 19th and 20th centuries. This registration was also used as a control mechanism toward minorities, and hence ethnicity was categorized and registered. It is therefore not without ambiguity that I entered the archive for information on my ancestry. See www.digitalarkivet.no/en.

solidarity. It is more important to know which side of the decolonizing struggle you are on and what risks you are ready to accept than to focus on social identity naturalized by dominant relations (Santos, 2018). From this, I take that, although decolonization must be guided by marginalized perspectives, it is a democratizing path toward conviviality.

4.3.2 Ethical responsibilities: Having, claiming, and holding space

Questions about accountability in research collapse the commonly perceived boundary between ethics and concepts of good knowledge, as follows from this question: to whom or from what perspective can the knowledge be considered "good," or to what or whose interests do I see myself accountable? Often, the dominant concern of research ethics is protecting the researcher or research institution from accusations of mistreatment (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). I was also influenced by this perspective in acknowledging that my initial reaction to the critique I received on the dilemmas with possibly exposing racism through my work was focused on safeguarding my reputation and qualification as a researcher. Such demands placed on me through academic performativity require a logic of individualism (Francett-Hermes & Pennanen, 2019). However, this might obscure interests embedded in conceptualizations of universal research ethics that legitimize privilege. Being moved to state my intentions more explicitly through the encounter with critiques, I realized how the initial judgment of the ethical considerations at play mainly safeguarded white interests. During the process, a major ethical consideration presented itself rather through how I cannot let the racialized students continue to bear the burden of containing diversity, or represent the problem of inequality, in an allegedly otherwise democratic classroom (Ahmed, 2012). This also illustrates how looking at things from the perspective of the oppressed can provide better knowledge on the issue, in this case with regard to the democratic and socially just character of the classroom.

Based on the above reflection, this research was also a process of realizing the significance of relational ethics, which involve being responsible to, while avoiding the construction of, the other (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). This also demands awareness of how the very act of conducting research in the academy is a privilege of having space, and that relationality is also related to whom or what interests I hold or provide space

for. There are three specific aspects of ethical relationality at play in my study that need to be accounted for. These include the role of the educational researcher in collaboration with the professionals (i.e., teachers), the role of the white researcher claiming to speak from a space of oppression, and the relationship to the racialized students. I will address the latter in my discussion of situational ethics in Section 5.6.

Regarding the first aspect, working with the teacher profession, I found helpful insights in indigenous research methodologies. Engaging with research ethics from indigenous studies provides a range of conceptualizations of relationship and reciprocity, often described as "giving back" or "being an ally" (Jimmy et al., 2019; Kuokkanen, 2011; Smith, 2010). Although these insights come from researchers working with (or themselves being part of) indigenous communities, I think they offer important information to me as a researcher based in teacher education, working with and for the field of education. Holding a position in the university, I do have a certain definitional power toward the teacher profession. The school curriculum should be shaped by the lived challenges that teachers and students face in their everyday lives (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). However, it did not feel quite right to see this as a matter of me giving back to teachers. The writings of TallBear (2014) taught me that the idea of giving back presupposes an imperialist logic of an asymmetrical relationship that is non-democratic and suggested moving away from the idea of giving back and towards the notion of "standing with." This movement well describes the process I experienced with my positionality struggles and increased reflexivity, representing a movement from aspiring to knowledge about (subject–object knowledge) to knowledge with (subject–subject knowledge). This also requires participants to take an active role in designing the inquiry (Lincoln et al., 2018). My reflections concerning my encounter with Paul in particular inspired me to collaborate with a group of teacher students in designing, conducting, and reflecting on lessons in the work with Articles 3 and 4—a method that was not initially planned. This was done as a part of the teacher students' coursework for their specialization in social studies, and in this way it also represented a learning opportunity for them. I realized how I could approach the research more as a "relationship-building process, a professional networking process with colleagues" (TallBear, 2017, p. 80) and engage with

opportunities for common learning and knowledge as co-creation (Culhane, 2017a). Although this relationship was by no means devoid of power relations, I did experience that my reflexive process led me to strengthen my relational accountability and the notion of "knowing with".

With regard to the second aspect, it is important to point out that it is not the role of the white scholar to speak for marginalized, racialized, or indigenous populations (Stein, 2016), and I realize that I run the risk of taking space from minoritized scholars or perspectives with my research when claiming to speak from the position of injustice. Especially after the work with my first Article 1, I was ambivalent about the potential of the work to reproduce privilege. What was my place in making judgements about the quality of education on Sami matters? For whom do I speak when writing this article and taking up space in a field with talented Sami researchers? These doubts led me to contact and cooperate with a research group on indigeneity, citizenship, and education organized by the *Centre for Sami Studies* at the Arctic University of Norway in Romssa/Tromsø. My collaboration with them was also my path to the gifts of indigenous methodologies, which I had not yet realized would radically alter my understanding of critical research. My initial interest in Sami education was certainly more or less unconsciously influenced by a colonial-imperialist "will to save" (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). As I learned, ethically responsible indigenous research does not necessarily exclude non-indigenous researchers, but it demands that the methodology is embedded in indigenous philosophies and self-determination (Kovach, 2018; Porsanger, 2004; Smith, 2010). This insight led me to the realization that it is not my place to define Sami pedagogies. At that time, I had not yet discovered my Sami family background. However, this realization did not alter my positionality as an outsider to Sami communities. The Norwegian curriculum places great responsibility on all schools, regardless of geographical location, to teach Sami history and culture (KD, 2019). These obligations should be reflected in teacher education, and I see it as my responsibility to help to safeguard these interests within my field.

4.4 Decoloniality as an option

The aspects accounted for above—reflexivity, positionality, ethics, and relationality—are interwoven threads that form the basis on which we can judge the quality of knowledge from a decolonial perspective. Although the decolonial perspective leads me to challenge traditional conceptions of validity and methodology, it is a common misunderstanding that decoloniality is tantamount to rejecting the possibility of truthfulness as such. Rather, it entails accepting that all knowledge is incomplete, and thus no single perspective should hold a monopoly on rigor (Santos, 2018). We do not simply need new theories or expanded knowledge; we must dissolve the colonial, abyssal lines between epistemologies of the Global North and South (Santos, 2007). This does not entail dismissing the knowledge offered by modernity but rather opening up possibilities for broadening, democratizing, and contextualizing our knowledge and dissolving the fictions of universality. Here, decoloniality does not offer a new paradigm of critical thought but rather is to be understood as an alternative, an option (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). It is in theoretical clarity, relational ethics, and self-reflexivity that I have found the most valuable tools for ensuring the quality and truthfulness of my work. From this perspective, the validation of knowledge criteria is not external to the knowledge they validate and the ethical commitment inherent to the research. This has made me aware of the limitations of the study and the need to be more aware of my relations from the outset in future research.

5 Research methods and material

The research design in this study is flexible and must be understood as an emerging construction. The choice of methods is "pragmatic, strategic and self-reflexive" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 11), allowing for investigation of the questions and ideas encountered along the avenues taken in the research. However, quality depends on accounting thoroughly for the research process as well as the methodological considerations driving and informing the choices of practice. As I focused on methodology in the previous chapter, the objective in this chapter is to provide a systematic overview of the methods and materials applied in the study.

5.1 Constructing the field

A recurring question that I am continuously expected to answer unambiguously is what is your field? The main common feature of the methodological literature in the domains of cultural studies, critical pedagogy, and decoloniality that I judged relevant for my research was the repeating acknowledgement of the difficulty of defining the discipline monolithically. Decolonial research cultivates knowledge production that transgresses traditional boundaries of academic disciplines, united by their common aims of decolonization (Sandoval, 2000; Santos, 2018). This acknowledgment led to frustration in the process—the constant struggle to maintain an overview of relevant research conversations for the study. Which conferences should I attend? What are the best channels for disseminating the research? At the same time, this has helped me develop a sense of academic humility and a very real awareness of the limitations of the study. The words of TallBear (2014) resonate with me when she proclaims the importance of the researcher revising her stakes in knowledge production when aiming at justice and truthfulness: "a multi-disciplinarist or someone eager to challenge disciplinary norms and someone with a varied professional background will see many more opportunities to do this and is more likely to have the skills to carry it off" (p. 2). Multidisciplinary working helps to avoid the "fetishism of method and technique" (Santos, 2018, p. 148), being committed to the work and society rather than to a mechanic recipe of a certain method. This is well aligned with decoloniality, which places the problems rather than the objects

into the foreground, and, "by doing so, it leads any investigation through the scholar, intellectual or researcher, into the world, rather than keeping her within the discipline" (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 131). As described in Chapter 2, citizenship education is an interdisciplinary field in which debates are largely shaped by what the perceived problems. The research was thus conducted with a firm reliance on multiple methods, steered by the overarching aims and research questions presented in Chapter 1.

5.2 Colonial discourse analysis

An overarching label for the methodology in this research is *colonial discourse analysis* (Andreotti, 2011a; Loomba, 2005; Stein, 2016). Colonial discourse analysis places the focus on knowledge production and power structures and is especially concerned with identifying hegemonic, Eurocentric institutionalized discourses. This particular approach to discourse is indebted to the legacy of Said (1995). In *Orientalism*, Said (1995) articulated the production of ignorance in disciplinary and popular representations of others under colonial relations through an analysis of how the Orient is created as an other to the West, where European identity is constructed as superior. Colonial discourse studies seek to "offer in-depth analyses of colonial epistemologies, and also connect them to the history of colonial institutions" and to see how "power works through language, literature, culture and the institutions which regulate our daily lives" (Loomba, 2005, p. 45, 51). Schools have been pointed out as key sites for sustaining ideological hegemony and reproducing cultural and economic domination (Gramsci, 1971). The central role of schools in the production of power/knowledge is closely connected to the formation of citizenry and national subjects. As colonial discourse analysis makes it possible to trace "the connections between the visible and the hidden, the dominant and the marginalized" (Loomba, 2005, p. 45), it is a fitting tool when engaging in a Sociology of absences (cf. Section 3.2) and exploring the dark sides of modernity. As I return to in Section 5.3, in my operation of the colonial discourse analysis, I applied principles and tools from CDA (Fairclough, 2010).

The understanding of discourse here is derived from the Foucauldian tradition, which views knowledge and power as indivisible (Foucault, 2002). For Foucault, discourse is a

concept that overcomes the distinction between language and social practice and governs the framework of how and what we can say, think, and act in relation to particular topics at particular historical moments. Discourse is an inherent and inseparable part of the social world, shaping and shaped by the social, encompassing ways of being in the world beyond verbal and written language (Souto-Manning, 2014). In this research, coloniality is seen as the conceptual "logic of reasoning that, through its penetration of social practices, systematically forms its objects" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 306). Discourse never consists of a single statement, text, social action, or source, and the discourse representing the current episteme appears across different sites. When different manifestations are governed by a pattern of enunciation, they belong to the same discursive formation (Foucault, 2002). Thus, when I research inquire about the discursive expressions of coloniality across materials and modalities (i.e., sites), I am concerned with the discursive formation and practice of coloniality.

I apply a combination of methods, allowing me to explore discourses from different modalities of discursive practice (Fairclough, 1992): 1) textbooks, 2) classroom conversations and students' meaning-making, and 3) teachers' meaning-making. The first modality is accessed through an analysis of textbooks and the other modalities are approached through ethnography, including participant observation of classroom interactions and conversations, semi-structured interviews with students in groups, teaching interventions, and semi-structured interviews with teachers, in groups and individually. While Articles 1 and 2 engage explicitly with discourse through written text, represented by textbooks and transcripts from observations and interviews, Articles 3 and 4 illustrates a "turn to affect." The introduction of affect in my work allowed for an analysis of how colonial structures are reproduced on multiple levels of experience beyond language, notably through tracing the performance of the affective economy of the nation-state and whiteness as technologies of the self (Ahmed, 2000, 2004). As I do not see affect as an "excess" to discourse but rather as entwined through social practice (Wetherell, 2013), this development does not imply a turning away from discourse. My attention toward affect was also motivated by my experiences and embodied process of reflexivity through ethnography as a method, and specifically participant observation in

the classroom. I first encountered coloniality as sensory knowledge not directly expressed with words, as described in Section 4.2. Importantly, affect is intersubjective, referring to feelings circulating through relationships (Culhane, 2017b). From a decolonial perspective, this manifests as both individual and collective investments in the alleged securities of modernity (Stein et al., 2020). Affect gave me the ability to analyze the self-technologies and emotional equilibrium of whiteness in the classroom, as described in Articles 3 and 4. Generally, the research is accurately described as a process with several phases, and the overview in Table 1 (below) is constructed in compliance with that logic.

Table 1. Overview of the research process and methods

	Phase 1	**Phase 2**	**Phase 3**	**Phase 4**
Schools (12)	A, B, C	A, B, C, D, E, F	B, C, D, F	F, G, H, I, J, K, L
Methods (Number of textbooks/ participants)	*Exploratory participatory observations* Textbook analysis (8)	Participatory observations (A, B, C); Semi-structured interviews with teachers, individuals, and groups (9); Semi-structured interviews with students in groups (19)	Teaching intervention 1	Teaching intervention 2; Semi-structured interviews with teachers, individuals, and groups (21)
Articles	*1 Teaching about the Other in Primary Level Social studies: The Sami in Norwegian Textbooks*	*2 Education for Sustainable Development and Narratives of Nordic Exceptionalism: The Contributions of Decolonialism*	*3 Discomforting Presence in the Classroom—The Affective Technologies of Race, Racism and Whiteness*	*4 Good intentions, colonial relations: interrupting the white emotional equilibrium of Norwegian citizenship education*

5.3 Participants and materials

The total number of schools included in the research was 12 (A–L), but the extent of their participation varied. Because an important principle of the research was not to unnecessarily inconvenience the teachers or students, practical considerations indicated that not all the schools could arrange for observations, teacher interviews, student interviews, and teaching interventions. The participant schools in phases 2 and 3 were

chosen mainly based on interest from teachers responding to an open call distributed through email. At schools C and E, student teachers were in teaching placement in the class during the research, and they participated in the interviews with class teachers. Before phase 4, I contacted the schools in the sample and asked if they would allow the students to perform lessons on racism, discrimination, and the history of the Romani/Tater people, which they all agreed to with great enthusiasm. All student teachers as well as the responsible teachers in the participant schools took part in the interviews. My teacher educator colleague, who was the current teacher for the student teachers in social studies, also took part in the observations and interviews. The number of teachers and teacher students interviewed was 31.

Table 2. Number of teachers interviewed[18]

	Phase 2 (10)		Phase 4 (21)
School A	1 teacher	School G	1 teacher, 1 student teacher, 1 teacher educator*
School B		School H	3 teacher, 1 student teacher, 1 teacher educator
School C	1 teacher	School I	1 teacher, 1 student teacher, 1 teacher educator
School D	1 teacher, 3 student teachers	School J	4 student teachers, 1 teacher educator
School E	1 teacher, 2 student teachers	School K	3 student teachers, 1 teacher, 1 teacher educator
School F	1 teacher	School F	3 student teachers
		School L	1 student teacher, 1 teacher educator

*The teacher educator is the same person in all interviews and is therefore only counted as one individual

The total number of students interviewed was 19. The students were interviewed in groups of 3–6, and they were recruited based on their stated wish to participate. Most likely, and also according to the teachers, most of the students interviewed thus had a special interest and high formal achievements in social studies. All interviews were conducted with informed and written consent, which were received from all the

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[18] Note that Tables 2 and 3 and Figure 1, which together provide an overview of the phases, methods, and participants in the study, refer to the same school by the same letter. However, in the tables included in articles 2, 3, and 4, the schools might appear under different letter headings than they do in this kappe.

participating students and their parents. Figure 1 (below) provides an overview of the students interviewed. Information and consent letters are included in the Appendix (Appendix 5-10). There are individual versions for each phase/method in the research.

Figure 1. Number of students interviewed
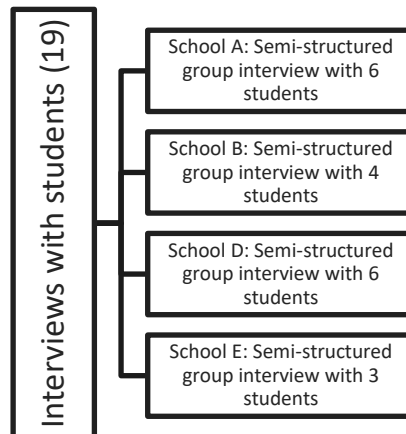
During the first phase, I conducted participatory observations of social studies classes in grades 5–7 at three different schools. This level is known as "middle school," with students from 10 to 13 years of age. From the outset, I wanted to observe classes at all levels of primary school (i.e., grades 1–7), but only teachers in grades 5–7 agreed to participate. There might be several reasons for this, a central one being that because the core curriculum for social studies at the time was organized with the initial learning outcomes described after level 4, not all schools offered the subject at the lowest levels. In addition, schools and teachers experience considerable pressure to participate in research and politically initiated processes of organizational development and curricular reforms (Duesund & Aamaas, 2017).

All the schools I visited had two or three classes per week in social studies. At two of the schools, I visited the same class for several periods during the entire 2017–2018 school year. There were several reasons for visiting some classes for a longer time. First, it was important for me to establish a good relationship with the teacher and students and to ensure that my presence in class was as unintrusive as possible. Second, social studies is a subject encompassing a wide variety of topics, not all of which were relevant to my

study. During my initial observations, I observed lessons on different topics, such as maps, landscape and topography, the Viking era, the European renaissance, the Norwegian electoral system and political parties, Sami culture and history, colonialism, and sustainable development. Thus, I realized the need to be more particular about which topics I wanted to observe in order to make the amount of data manageable and relevant to my research aims.

As the Norwegian state abstains from doing statistics on the racial or ethnic backgrounds of its residents, I cannot provide an overview of the students and classes included in the study in this regard. Commonly, discourses on the "multicultural Norway" indicate the number of persons with immigrant backgrounds, referring to individuals that have immigrated in addition to children born of at least one foreign-born parent. At present, the total amount of immigrants in Norway based on this definition, is 17 per cent (Statistics Norway, 2018). Of course, the racial and ethnic grammar is much more complex than these numbers indicate, overlooking for instance the Sami and the national minorities in these immigrations statistic, as well as not being sensitive to different axes of intersectionality and social categories such as gender and class. However, the main reason for not categorizing students and teachers according to such categories is related to the axiological stance of the research. I thematize the students` or teachers` backgrounds or identities in my analysis in the cases it is made relevant by either students or teachers themselves through conversations and discussions. This was particularly the case for Articles 3 and 4, where I describe how racialized students in different ways positioned themselves or were positioned by their co-students and/or teachers as minorities and "objects of conversations" during classroom discussions.

5.4 Analyzing textbooks and locating the "telling case"

Textbook analysis provides the empirical material for Article 1. Within the disciplinary power of schools, the textbook is the most authoritative text for the manifestation of discourse. A recent review of social studies education in Norway confirms that textbooks

still dominate teaching (Solhaug et al., 2020). Textbooks often hold a stronger sense of authority than other books, and since they can be said to represent important expressions of national imaginary at a given time, they are interesting sites for a cultural analysis of the formation and construction of citizenship identities (Lorentzen, 2005; Røthing, 2015). Textbooks, especially in social studies, have been proven to legitimate state and social institutions and colonial imaginaries (Mikander, 2016a). Accordingly, I judged textbooks to be relevant and important for my analysis. I also experienced the central role of the textbook in structuring conversations and organizing work in the classroom during my observations. Hence, analysis of the textbooks and other applied learning materials is also an integrated part of Article 2.

I analyzed a total of eight textbooks, representing the two main series applied in social studies levels 1–4 in Norway at the time. The main reason for this selection was that they were the only books updated according to what was, at the time, the most current revision of the core curriculum. Exploring the level 1–4 curricula and textbooks also allowed me to obtain a background impression of what students in levels 5–7 are supposed to have learned before the period of observations and interviews. In the practical work with the analysis, I developed an adjusted version of the central questions in Fairclough's practical guide to CDA (2001). CDA is concerned with the dialectics between discourse and social practice, engaging a "form of critical social research" that aims at "better understanding how societies work and produce both beneficial and detrimental effects, and how the detrimental effects can be mitigated if not eliminated" (Fairclough, 2003, pp. 202–203). As this work was done before entering the classroom and affectively and cognitively realizing the significance of coloniality, the analysis in Article 1 is based on poststructuralist and postcolonial theory (Fanon, 2002; Keskinen, 2009; Kumashiro, 2002) and does not explicitly engage with coloniality as a concept, although it thoroughly discusses historical colonialism.

An overview of the analyzed books as well as the analytical questions is provided in Article 1. The choice of the particular case for analysis, the portrayal and positioning of the Sami in the construction of Norwegian national imaginary, in relation to the wider aims of this

research, was informed by the concept of a "telling case." The basis for selecting a telling case is its explanatory power, that is, the extent to which it articulates a "connection between the production of knowledge about the self and Other, and their implications in terms of the reproduction of unequal relations of power and possibilities for more ethical social relations" (Andreotti, 2011a, p. 91). This analysis also served as a "telling case" to make previously obscure theoretical relationships apparent for the project, notably through the initial exploration of the discourses of national exceptionalism as a manifestation of coloniality. The case of the Sami citizen was especially "telling" in that it represents an explicit example of the historical events of colonization in the context of Norway. National exceptionalism was also traced in education for sustainable development in Article 2 and in the national white affective economy in Article 4.

The analysis of textbooks only illuminates one feature of knowledge production in education, and important aspects such as the production process and application in the classroom are not covered by my analysis. A predominantly Foucauldian understanding of discourse implies a study of the practical operation of discourse as well; not necessarily the social interaction related to the teaching as such, but the "discourse-in-practice" (Holstein, 2018, p. 398). This aroused my curiosity about the role ofconversations in the classroom. I also realized the significance of common critiques of colonial discourse analysis in promoting a somewhat static model of colonial relations and overlooking self-representations, resistance, and dynamics (Loomba, 2005). When thinking from a Foucaultian perspective, lived experience is already embedded in discursive conventions. However, the discourse-in-practice can be analyzed in parallel with an investigation of how discursive practice is manifested in the dynamics of conversation in everyday life (Holstein, 2018).

5.5 Ethnography

In this research, I understand ethnography as "an embodied practice of learning in the presence of others" and view it as "always partial, as we choose routes through our spaces and specific questions to guide us" (Moretti, 2017, p. 102). The routes taken in my research were influenced by the interplay between my increased reflexivity and

engagement in the field and with literature. Notably, my understanding of my role changed during the process, moving from participant observation toward observant participation (Tedlock, 1991).

5.5.1 Observations in the classroom – How and why?

A common aim in applying participant observation as a method is to gain access to knowledge that participants may have difficulty talking about during interviews (Marshall & Rossmann, 1989). Since this research engages with knowledge that might be tacit, implicit, or unintentional, best described in this context as the hidden curriculum, I judged observations of classroom conversations to be an important strategy for studying knowledge construction processes. Through conversations with teachers, it became visible to me that knowledge construction within the complex social interactions in the classroom was not necessarily congruent with the teachers' stated intentions. Additionally, issues of representation, power relations, and social responsibilities are often highlighted in critical social research (Fine et al., 2003), and the asymmetrical relationship between the researcher and participants demands special consideration. I contend with Kincheloe et al. (2018), who argued that the presumed division in much educational research between knowledge production and practice might serve an important capitalist function by limiting the potential for social change. Conducting research with the explicit goal of informing citizenship education and interacting with teachers and students in their actual daily practices at schools had an important ethical foundation for me, as discussed in Section 4.3.2. Ethnographic knowledge emerges not through detached observation but through co-creation of knowledge in different kinds of exchanges (Culhane, 2017a).

Another purpose of the observations was related to the adjustments of my research focus. The initial phase of observations was mainly exploratory and allowed me to get to know the routines and organization of social studies classes, navigating my own position as a researcher in the classroom. This exploration was as important for adjusting my research questions as well as the practical tools. In this first phase of observations, I spent a considerable amount of time testing different ways of taking notes. I was also

concerned about how my presence in the classroom would influence the students, but as one of the teachers explained, most students in primary schools today are used to having a large number of visitors in class, such as researchers, special educators, social workers, student teachers, and concerned parents. Hence, I was rather surprised by the students' lack of interest in my presence. I presented myself in plenary in all of the classrooms I entered, but my further interaction with the students depended on my own initiative and relationship with the students. The role I developed in this phase, guiding my further observations, can be described as an observer who participates in the social setting, but not a group member (Kawulich, 2012). It felt natural to interact with the students during group discussions. In these situations, my role became more that of an assistant teacher. However, the students positioned me mainly as an outsider, as they mostly approached the teacher with questions. In this sense, it was clear to me that the students did not regard me as a group member. This initial distance between the students and I could have been an obstacle in gaining access to their deeper reflections during the observations. However, during the interviews, I experienced that this positionality also worked as an advantage in that the students appeared freer to be critical toward the classes and teachers, something that was crucial for my research.

For the second phase, when the observations became more structured, I developed an observation guide to organize my notes. I constructed a table allowing me to write detailed transcriptions of whole-group classroom conversations and make additional notes on analytical ideas in a separate column. When students were engaging in small groups or individual work, I was able to shift between taking notes and interacting with students. I spent the time allowed after observation, from five minutes to one hour, going over my notes and adding my own experiences and ideas. This was a crucial part of my reflexive and affective work, as I allowed myself to "open up" to more imaginative, speculative, and unfinished thinking (Elliott, 2017). I also conducted semi-structured interviews with some of the teachers in this second phase, although I found that the more unprompted conversations had greater value as rich material. Spontaneous conversations about my ideas and observations were also important for the credibility of the analysis, particularly discussions of experiences and understandings from the

observations with teachers, which provided them an opportunity to elaborate and explain (Nowell et al., 2017). This was especially important in the work reported in Article 2, where substantial parts of the analysis were devoted to the teacher.

5.5.2 Interviews with students – How and why?

Working as a teacher educator for five years before starting the project, I learned that there is scarce amount of research that emphasizes the student perspective, especially that of younger students. Also, as discussed in Section 4.3.2, in research with explicit transformative goals, collaboration with participants and the implicated groups is key (Dei, 2005). In my research, the main stakeholders are the students, and as part of the study, I discussed with students their motivations and ideas about citizenship education. I have highlighted this in the analysis in Article 2, where I include the students' comments on what and how they want to learn in social studies, especially related to topics with high actuality and media coverage. This material is also an important part of the analysis in Article 3, where the students stated a clear wish for more explicit conversations in the classroom about emotional and controversial topics related to race and racism, expressing the importance to their everyday lives. The interviews were inspired by the idea of "pedagogical research," with the intention of making the research process valuable to the students in the here and now (Starkey et al., 2014). This enables students to contribute to the research process while also providing opportunities for them to develop their thinking about their role in society and formulate political perspectives. I conducted the interviews in groups to create a setting resembling a classroom situation and to allow for the conversation to flow more naturally among the students. A limitation of this setting compared with individual interviews is that certain students may control the conversation due to power relations and structures within the group. However, such issues were also interesting for my research. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to a little over an hour, and the questions included a combination of general questions about the students' motivations, interests, and learning practices in social studies and reflections upon important topics for citizenship education, such as political participation, citizenship, and national identity. Because the students were young, I also used pictures,

examples, and learning strategies to keep them engaged. I have included the interview guide in the Appendix (Appendix 1).

More directly related to the central topics of the research, an important rationale for including student perspectives in the research was my interest in the interrelations between colonial, hegemonic discourses and processes of subjectification in education. This was spurred by my aims to be constructive and to locate potential *possibilities* within citizenship education. Fundamentally, education in the modern nation-state is about the formation of a subject situated in a particular socio-cultural context of meaning. I consider the reflections provided by the students to be major contributions of this research that not only informed my research process but also can help to inform future practice in teacher education.

5.5.3 Teaching interventions: Unexpected avenues and new perspectives

During the second phase, I had an experience that made me reconsider my own position in the research, leading me to realize my role as an observant participant rather than simply a researcher conducting observations (Culhane, 2017a). As part of a lesson focused on the history of the Sami national day, the teacher planned to show a short educational movie from the internet on this topic. However, when the internet connection was suddenly lost, the teacher became visibly insecure; she acknowledged that she did not have the necessary knowledge on the topic to teach it without the visual aid. As I have extensive knowledge about the topic, I intervened and offered to help conduct the lesson. This made me realize that it was much easier to gain access to the students' thoughts in an authentic learning situation in class than in the group interview setting. In the conversation with the teacher after class, she told me that she appreciated the opportunity to gain more insight on Sami history. The decision to design lessons was influenced by this experience. As previously mentioned, topics such as colonialism, racism, marginalization, and citizenship identity may be considered controversial and hence avoided. This contrasts the importance of such topics expressed by most of the teachers who participated in the interventions. Based on this, I designed and conducted lessons in the classrooms for the following phases of the research. This research began

from the perspective that all knowledge construction is already an intervention (Biesta, 2010; Santos, 2015; Suša, 2016). I found the concept "intervention" suitable to signal a change of strategy of inquiry in my research, but it was also valuable in terms of introducing perspectives relevant for coloniality, such as racism.

The first teaching intervention consisted of a lesson on the topic "What does it mean to be Norwegian?" focusing on national identity and culture. This was conducted in a total of six classes in four different schools around the time of the Norwegian national day, a period when discussions on national belonging, culture, and ethnic borders usually flourish in popular media. The teaching interventions involved me entering the classroom as a teacher-researcher (Kincheloe et al., 2018), assisting with conversations on the given topics. The position as a teacher-researcher offered advantages as well as challenges. The openly ideological endeavor of the study entails actively tracking social interactions in which the suspected injustice might come to the fore. In a methodological approach involving teaching interventions, such intimacy with knowledge production poses ethical dilemmas. Relevant examples of this included the following: In what ways should the researcher manage her responsibilities when she finds herself to be co-constructive in educational settings in which racist ideas are allowed to be exposed? How should the researcher deal with the identity struggles of students, actualized by discussions about citizenship identity in the classroom? Some of these issues are further discussed in Section 5.6 as well as in Article 3. While conducting research with implications for the teaching profession, it proved valuable for my understanding of teacher positionality to take the role of an insider in this manner. When the lines between the hermeneutical search for truth and social justice concerns dissolve, demands for critical subjectivity are high (Lincoln & Guba, 2005). The discomfort posed by ethical challenges in practice when researching in the role of teacher added to my reflexivity, leading to a demand to provide constructive knowledge to the field of practice I was researching with and for.

The second phase of teaching interventions consisted of a teaching intervention thematizing citizenship, national identity, and racism. One difference from the first intervention was that this lesson was planned, designed, and conducted in collaboration

with my teacher education colleague and her class of student teachers specializing in social studies. The cooperation with my colleague provided a valuable opportunity to have a partner throughout the research process and enabled peer debriefing (Creswell, 2015). The course of specialization in social studies is organized during the last year of teacher education, and thus the student teachers had already completed all the compulsory subjects and practice required for becoming licensed teachers. The student teachers worked as partners in the teaching interventions in several ways. They were involved in planning and developing the lessons, they conducted the lessons in the role of teachers, and they provided their views on and evaluations of the lessons in the interviews after the classes were finished. This process gave me access to professional perspectives on the lessons other than my own and allowed me to concentrate on observing. This dynamic allowed for a bridging of knowledge between research and teaching, aimed at providing the student teachers with acknowledgement of the importance of their roles and unique knowledge in relation to critical research in the transformation of education (Kincheloe et al., 2018). As part of their course assessment, the student teachers also gave presentations to their peers about their experiences. The students were encouraged to be critical and highlight challenges and pitfalls with the teaching intervention. The experiences from this collaboration made me adopt a slightly more critical stance toward the methods applied in the initial phases, and the ideal of working in collaboration with the practice field shed light on future avenues for research and work in teacher education. A description of the design of the intervention lessons can be found in the Appendix (Appendices 2 and 3).

5.6 Strategies of analysis: Interacting with the material

In flexible and emerging research, there is no clear distinction between constructing the research design, data collection, and analysis. It was exactly these "messy" spaces (Lather, 2007) that in my view provided the most productive moments, strengthening and deepening the analysis. I found the most fitting description of these moments to be *interacting with the material* (Rennstam & Wästerfors, 2015). Although the "material" in qualitative, theory-driven empirical research is not an entity separate from the

"embodied researcher as the instrument" (Culhane, 2017b, p. 49), I still encountered empirical material in the literal, physical sense when gathering some 80 pages of notes and transcribing recordings of 49 interviews. At points feeling overwhelmed by the extent of the material, I received advice to hire assistants to perform the transcriptions. However, this appeared to me as obstructing the process and my reflexivity. As Rennstam and Wästerfors explain (2015), while interacting with the material is about developing strategies to navigate, organize, and sort the material, it is also about *getting to know it*. I initially tried to use the software NVIVO to organize the material, but it forced types of structuring that did not fit the process. Instead, I developed organizational strategies using conceptual or topical labels and a type of coding of the transcripts using colors. While conducting and transcribing the observations, interviews, and teaching interventions, the research process involved the interplay between engaging with the literature and practical work. This period was the time when I most felt the research was happening in the literal sense.

Decolonial critiques imply a seeing and reading "against the grain." Central to the methodological approach of the sociology of absences is uncovering and exploring knowledge that is hidden, tacit, and taken for granted. This type of reading can be described as critical hermeneutics, where researchers "inject critical social theory into the hermeneutical circle to facilitate an understanding of the hidden structures and tacit cultural dynamics that insidiously inscribe social meanings and values" (Kincheloe & Maclaren, 2003, p. 447). The researcher connects everyday interaction and talk with ideological forces and structures, such as, in this case, coloniality. This requires producing thick descriptions of social texts, accounting broadly and in a nuanced way for the context, the complexities in the intentions and agency of the producers, and the depths and structures of the involved meaning (Kincheloe & Maclaren, 2003, p. 444). This is also part of the reason why the use of a "telling case" was considered to be a helpful strategy in Articles 1 and 2. Of course, there were many more examples to explore, but the depth and thickness demanded by the critical hermeneutical readings did not allow for including more breadth in the material. At the same time, reading against the grain is still a particular type of reading, and it is at high risk of becoming cliché. In addition to thick

descriptions, a concrete practical tool I found helpful in addressing this challenge was the search for "breakdowns" (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007) or counter-examples. In Article 1, I highlight examples from textbooks that represent opportunities for power-critical educational conversations in the classroom, or knowledge that challenges existing social structures (Kumashiro, 2002). In Article 2, this counter-hegemonic presence is located within the ability of the students to question the narratives and knowledge they encounter. In Article 4, the highlighted exception of one of the student teachers points toward a more critical practice. I return to a discussion of these matters in Chapter 7.

5.7 Procedural, practical, and situational ethics

As discussed in Section 4.3.2, while research ethics are most often thematized when procedural regulations are breached, the more subtle ethical reflections and choices present in the everyday practice of the research process are not given the same attention. Standardized guidelines have the power to conceptualize the practice of research as such, thus creating the illusion that moral concerns have been addressed and that there is no further need for concern (Cannella & Lincoln, 2007). Indeed, the "ethically important moments" (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) in the everyday can never be foreseen or predicted. I experienced this when I encountered the reproduction of racist knowledge. What was my role and responsibilities as a researcher in those situations? I was strongly and affectively faced with this in my meetings with Sarah, who appears in Article 3. She was a very visible minority in her classroom, from the physical reality of having black skin in a predominantly white group to being the only one wearing a hijab. Her identity also became a topic in the conversations I had with her and her co-students during the interviews. When her co-students unintentionally reproduced race as a social category through their positioning of Sarah at the borders of what a proper Norwegian citizen could possible be, the ethical importance was clear, leading to a dilemma: should I interrupt? Sarah was one of the students I developed a closer relation with during the research, as she was outgoing and interested in my work. During the classes, she appeared to be one of the most engaged students, which is also clear from the conversation in Article 3. Due to the connection I felt with her, it was emotionally difficult

to think of her as the "oppressed," although I noticed that my theoretical perspective inclined me to do so. In the conversation with her co-students, she chose a strategy of strongly opposing their doubt, helping them to realize that she was indeed entitled to claiming a Norwegian identity. In this situation, I chose not to interfere, as I saw that my interference would have positioned Sarah in a victim positionality she did not claim. I found it appropriate to act as an ally and reinforce her statements by confirming, for example, the right of any citizen to aspire to become prime minister. Relational ethics involve being responsive to, while avoiding construction of, the other (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). Importantly, even though my aims inclined me to act in solidarity with Sarah, this also reminded me that her fight against being othered was not mine to define.

In an episode quite similar to Sarah's case, I chose a different strategy. In conversations on Norwegian identity, Sophie, like Sarah, was positioned by her co-students as an outsider, not fully Norwegian. The co-students navigated this difficulty by applying a strategy of care, stating a desire to include her "even though" she had foreign-born parents. In Sophie's case, she seemingly experienced the insistency of her co-students to define her as Norwegian as undermining her own right to define herself, and she was visibly uncomfortable, being on the verge of tears. In order to protect Sophie the best I could, I chose to interfere in the conversation and talk to the students about the right to self-definition. Sophie seemed calmed by my presence and acknowledgement of her perspective. In this case, although I was an outsider, the student group also regarded me as an authority because I was an adult. In this particular situation, the importance of sensitivity when conducting research with children became the major concern. I discussed the situation with the head teacher after class, as she had a close relationship with Sophie, to ensure that Sophie received additional support if needed.

The situations with Sarah and Sophie were in some ways very similar, but my ethical reflection in the particular contexts implied radically different actions from me. They also demonstrate that critical research always involves intervention (Carspecken, 2005), as both reacting and not interfering would have been acts influencing the self-images of Sarah and Sophie, although in quite different ways. The examples also shed light on

challenges related to categorizing "the oppressor" and "the oppressed." Moreover, they illustrate the interrelations between methodology, ethics, and validity. Starting from the nation-state and its disciplinary power in producing borders of national identities through education, the approach in this research can in one sense be understood as a counter-hegemonic strategy of shifting the focus from the commonly researched racialized minorities toward the oppressor (Fylkesnes, 2019). However, this outlook does not escape the risk in critical whiteness studies of reproducing the categories the research aims to deconstruct. From a decolonial perspective, although starting from a radical standpoint epistemological perspective, the aim is to transcend such violent separations between categories. Although coloniality affects humans radically differently, decolonization is a collective vision based on our common stance on the failures of modernity.

6 The articles: Findings and contributions

This chapter presents the contributions of the study through an overview of the main results and inferences presented in the articles. Importantly, each article was written at different stages of the research process, and elucidates the research questions differently. After briefly presenting each article, I present a discussion of the aggregated contributions in relation to the overarching research questions.

6.1 Article 1

The article *Teaching About the Other in Primary Level Social Studies: The Sami in Norwegian Textbooks* (Gregers Eriksen, 2018a) was written quite early in the research process, before entering the classrooms. I applied CDA (Fairclough, 2001, 2010) and elements from multi-modal analysis (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006) to investigate imaginary and narratives concerning the Sami people, culture, and history in level 1–4 social studies textbooks. Previous research on the topic has mainly focused on shedding light on the absence of perspectives on the Sami culture, history, and rights in education (Lile, 2011; Olsen, 2017) or how textbooks and educational discourses convey stereotypical images of the Sami (Askeland, 2015; Mortensen-Buan, 2017). Building from this body of research, I wanted to further explore the conceptualizations of national identity and citizenship, considering what role the portrayal of the Sami plays in the discursive construction of national exceptionalism. I was curious about the extent to which the Sami are included in the larger "we" in the textbooks, as this is significant for how education may be experienced by Sami children. Importantly, most Sami children in Norway live and go to school outside Sápmi (Gjerpe, 2017).The following sub-questions were asked in this article:

- *To what extent and in which ways are the Sami included in the construction of the greater "we" in social studies textbooks for primary schools?*
- *How are the Sami conceptualized through text and images?*
- *How does the portrayal of the Sami inform the production of the Norwegian national imaginary?*

My analysis revealed a discursive pattern, where the Sami are essentialized and actively constructed as other through the structure and content of narratives as well as their representation through images. This othering reinforces Norwegian exceptionalism, notably through the selective presentation of historical events, externalizing colonialization and its continuing consequences. A major topic in primary level social studies textbooks is national holidays. While the history of the Sami national day is historically connected to the Sami resistance to Norwegianification, this connection is not mentioned. Rather, the focus is on festivities, reflecting a form of multicultural education associated with essentialized cultural celebrations (Gorski, 2008). Meanwhile, the fact that Norway was subject to Danish rule [19] in the period 1537–1814 is pointed out. Overall, the portrayal of the Norwegian national day is related to concrete events and persons and resistance to oppression. Norwegian history is presented as progressive and dynamic, representing the "official" narrative. Sami history appears unspecific, leaving the reader uncertain of the distinctions between "then" and "now" and presenting a set of primordial cultural traits. This construction of the other as diffuse and mythical reflects a core aspect of the Orientalist discourse (Said, 1995).

Although there is a visible intention to include Sami history and culture in the textbooks, the portrayal of the Sami appears essentialized and static. Notably, there is a conceptual hegemony of the reindeer-herding Northern Sami, commonly representing the Sami *per se*, obscuring the diversity of culture and geographies. This portrayal may enable identification for some students, but it also results in an experience of exclusion for others, as the category "Sami" is reserved for those with specific traits. The imagery reflects how Sami political organization for political rights, such as visibility in the curriculum, may have also constructed demands for "purity" in discourses concerning ethnicity, providing subject positions that do not correspond to the heterogeneity of lived experience. As Gaski (2008) argues, the reification and essentialization of "official" Sami identity has also been evident in Sami public discourse on identity, an outcome both of

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[19] This is sometimes portrayed in the framework of "colonialism" in narratives of Norwegian national history. However, although arguably the power mainly resided with the Danish king, this was a formal union and cannot properly be described as colonialism materially, politically, or epistemologically.

strategical ethno-politics among some Sami political groups, but also related to external political factors due to the need of conforming to Norwegian expectations of an "authentic" Saminess.

Inspired by the post-structural framework of anti-oppressive education developed by Kumashiro (2002), I argue that the textbooks overall enable teaching *about* the other. This strategy entails a way of portraying minorities, which, while done with good intentions, serves to reinforce and construct a benign and superior "us" through the binary discursive construction of a racialized other and the sanctioned ignorance of colonialism (Spivak, 1999). The analysis in this article primarily sheds light on research question 1, exploring discursive constructions of the Norwegian nation-state and citizenship. I do, however, also uncover opportunities for what Kumashiro (2002) describes as education that challenges power structures in order to promote social change. Notably, one of the textbooks includes brief reflections upon the residential school system and language policies in the 19th and 20th centuries, enabling empathy with the students and possibly challenging their previous understandings. Interestingly, however, there is no clear perpetrator, as the Norwegian state is not mentioned in this context. As I argue further, this might stimulate empathy toward the Sami, but it does not challenge the self-understanding of the majority students or the national exceptionalist imaginary.

The article is published in *Journal of Social Science Education*, an international, open access peer-reviewed journal.

6.2 Article 2

In the article *Education for sustainable development and narratives of Nordic exceptionalism: The contributions of decolonialism* (Eriksen, 2018b), I further explore the construction of national imaginary in and through educational discourse. The case in focus is a series of classes on the role of Norway in international cooperation related to climate change, consumption and sustainable development in a 7th grade classroom. Although this may seem like a leap in topic from Article 1, both articles shed light on the

workings national exceptionalism as a modern/colonial discursive construction. The range of educational topics in my research also reflects how the subject social studies, in which I did all my empirical work, is organized in the Norwegian curriculum. The subject encompass a vast range of topics related to society, history, and geography, but it has historically played a key role in citizenship education and knowledge construction related to the Norwegian nation-state overall (Børhaug, 2010; Lorentzen, 2005). The international image as a champion of aid and sustainability has been pointed out as core to the particularities of the Norwegian exceptionalist imaginary (Browning, 2007). The article asks the following sub-questions:

- *How do the dominant cultural narratives of Norway in the global arena influence social studies teaching about sustainability?*
- *What contributions could decolonial perspectives make to education about sustainability and global social justice?*

In this article, I argue that approaches embedded in technology optimism hold a hegemonic position in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Technology optimism is premised in the modern/colonial notion of progress and the illusory idea that new technology can solve the sustainability challenge while ultimately being premised on unequal global exchange (Knutsson, 2018). My analysis emphasizes how ESD, when conceptualized within a modern/colonial logic, contributes to the reinforcement of differences between "us" and "them," denoting the Global North and South. Hence, current discourses of ESD may serve to sustain rather than change global economic and political systems through upholding a Eurocentric global imaginary. Furthermore, the analysis sheds light on notions of global citizenship. Who is imagined to possibly inhabit the category of "global citizen" and who is only present as a passive object of the intervention of the superior others is based on a racialized hierarchy of humanity (Ideland & Malmberg, 2014).

This article engages in a more substantial way than Article 1 with research question 2, exploring how the contributions of decolonial perspectives in education might provide openings for possible interruptions to hegemonic discourses. I argue that decolonial

perspectives can be tools for disrupting mainstream ESD through the ability to question what is naturalized, foster system-critical thinking, and enable plurality in ways of thinking (Andreotti, 2011c). I apply the concept narrative here to allow for an investigation of how discourses are navigated and produced with students and teachers in order to access "windows to the contradictory and shifting nature of hegemonic discourses, which we tend to take for granted as stable monolithic forces" (Chase, 2011, 422). In my analysis, the possible contradictions are reflected in tensions between how the teacher and textbook convey exceptionalism, while the students pose questions that enable the deconstruction of hegemony. However, as my analysis show, although there are such moments of opportunity in the observations, the uninterrupted modern/colonial discursive formation effectively hinders these opportunities by rendering them unintelligible as knowledge, positioning them instead in the domain of "idealism."

This article is published in the *Nordidactica Journal of Humanities and Social Science Education*, a Nordic didactic, peer-reviewed open access journal aiming to be a venue for research relevant to schools as well as teacher education and academia.

6.3 Article 3

The article *Discomforting presence in the classroom – The affective technologies of race, racism and whiteness* (Eriksen, 2020a) sheds light on the elusive presence of race, racism, and whiteness in the classroom. Empirical examples from teaching intervention 1 and group interviews with students at six schools exemplify how race and racism appear as taboo concepts that cannot be named but nonetheless play central roles in structuring conversations in the classroom as well as the formation of subjectivities and national identities. The overarching research questions are operated in this part of the study through the aims of *examining the potential of an affective lens as analytical tool in approaching citizenship education in Norway* and *discussing how this can be turned into insights for developing anti-racist pedagogical strategies.*

The article highlights the relations between the national exceptionalist imaginary portrayed in Articles 1 and 2 and subjectivation, particularly how the discourses positions

the racialized students as objects for the white gaze (Yancy, 2008). Central among the contributions of this article is how whiteness works as an affective technology of the self, upholding an image of being non-racist and rendering it impossible to "see" racialization (Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013). Affect sheds light on the difficult knowledge and ambiguities of race as intersections of subjectivity, social structures, and emotions. The material displays how the power of an affective economy entrenched in whiteness as an invisible norm forces the racialized students to construct and negotiate their identities premised on their relation to the white majority (Fanon, 2008). Although the examples show how individual students perform this positionality differently, reflecting a repertoire of strategies of resistance, submission, and negotiation, the emotional labor of the racialized students in being the representative of otherness seem unavoidable (Ahmed, 2012). Overall, this article also contributes to the understanding of racialization and racism as it is operative and experienced in the social interactions and conversations of primary school students. The article suggests that, although discussions of racism in the Norwegian context are commonly reserved for explicit acts of violence (Bangstad, 2015), and while education is generally understood as colorblind (Dowling, 2017; Osler & Lindquist, 2016), race is a social and affective reality in primary school classrooms.

I also explore possible avenues for expanding our ways of understanding education for anti-racism and citizenship, emphasizing affect and hence multiple levels of experience and learning. I argue that applying an affective approach provides access to perspectives on race, racism, and whiteness that are often concealed in education for social justice. The approach shifts the focus from who is racist to what race, racism, and whiteness do as affective technologies in social encounters. A major implication is that the common focus on knowledge, attitudes, and values in anti-racist education is insufficient for education that enhances social justice. The work with this article also provided a crucial reflexive turn for me as a researcher, as I affectively encountered my own white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018). The article is published in *Whiteness and Education*, an international peer-reviewed journal aiming at advancing critical understandings of the construction and deployment of whiteness in educational contexts.

6.4 Article 4

Drawing on decolonial perspectives on knowledge production and education, in the article *Good intentions, colonial relations: Interrupting the white emotional equilibrium of Norwegian citizenship education* (Eriksen & Stein, 2020 (under review)), I argue that the prevalence of colonial intellectual and affective economies might result in lost opportunities for (self-) reflexivity among students and teachers. Despite stated intentions toward antiracism, the material in this article shows how potential educational openings for talking about race and racism are foreclosed through the safeguarding of an emotional equilibrium of whiteness (Ahmed, 2007; Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013). Discourses of national exceptionalism naturalize white dominance, masking the ongoing reproduction of colonial structures that render certain people as non-existent. National imaginaries in education may work as invisible structuring grammars of meaning that determine whose perspectives are intelligible. The article display how the workings of coloniality may obstruct the fostering of critical literacies, despite good intentions. An important finding is that, although the teachers express care for their students when confronted with the difficult knowledge of oppression and racism, this care is selective in terms of safeguarding white emotionality.

This article engages most deeply with research question 2, exploring the limits, intersections, tensions, and nuances of the exceptionalist imaginary. The material in this article is derived from observations and interviews during the second teaching intervention (see Section 5.4.3), aiming at exploring a decolonial approach to offer perspectives that challenge existing practices and discourses of citizenship education, and enable imagining or conducting education in other ways. This purpose was operationalized by introducing more explicit engagement with racism, and applying materials and strategies that could enable affective learning. In other words, I here aspired to operationalize what I located as absent in previous articles. However, the intervention was to some extent a "failure", in the sense that the intentions to interrupt coloniality was largely foreclosed. However, this failure still resulted in important insights by locating some of the complexities involved in unravelling coloniality in the practice of citizenship education. The situations displayed how the workings of colonial structures of

relations and discourses safeguarding white emotional equilibrium served as powerful barriers to the deeper self-reflexivity I sought to stimulate. The significance of this article lies especially in pointing towards relevant questions for further gestures towards decolonizing education. To add to reflexivity by analyzing the material through discussions with a colleague from a different national context, I invited Associate Professor Sharon Stein at University of British Colombia[20] to co-write this article. The article is currently under review in an international, open access peer-reviewed journal.

6.5 Synthesis of the findings and contributions of the articles

The accounts described above have shed light on the particular ways in which each of the articles contributed to elucidating the overall research questions. I now move on to describe these contributions aggregated across the study as a whole. I concentrate the following sections mostly on research question 1, as research question 2 points toward a broader discussion of implications and contributions, which I take up in Chapter 7.

6.5.1 Research question 1

The overarching research question 1, as described in Section 1.2.1, is as follows:

What discourses about the Norwegian democracy, citizenship, and national and social identities are constructed within primary level citizenship education?

Exploring this question through a colonial discourse analysis across different sites of discourse in primary school citizenship education, I empirically detected how the discursive formation of National exceptionalism enables the construction and articulation of national identity, citizenship, and the Norwegian democracy in ways that effectively disassociate the Norwegian national community from complicity in historical and systemic injustice. This particularly concerns the sanctioned ignorance of Norway's colonial history (Articles 1 and 2) and the refusal of race, racism, and whiteness as analytically sound and socially relevant concepts (Articles 3 and 4). These findings add to

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[20] Sharon Stein was my supervisor during my stay as an international Ph.D.-student at the University of British Colombia, Vancouver, in spring 2019.

previous research and scholarship from the Norwegian context highlighting such absences (Bangstad, 2015; Fylkesnes, 2019; Gullestad, 2004; Harlap & Riese, 2014; Svendsen, 2014a). The unique contributions from this research include the empirical insights on how these absences unfold in and shape primary school citizenship education and the analysis of how they are actively produced in and through coloniality. The very direct consequence of this analysis, is that knowledge conveyed in primary school citizenship education about Norwegian history and society is often limited and selective. This is exemplified in Article 1, where leaving out the colonization of Sápmi and Sami resistance to oppression is a major omission in the textbooks. As the decolonial analysis highlights, all knowledge is partial, and the challenges of selective knowledge production must also be understood as embedded in colonial power-structures. The absence of colonialism is not incidental, as it appears systematically across the material in this research. Even when I intervened by designing lessons explicitly aimed at discussing Norway's history of oppressing minorities, the concepts "colonialism" and "racism" were seldom used by the teachers (Article 4). The omission of colonialism and the selective and mythical portrayal of the Sami in textbooks (Article 1) is discursively productive: The constructions of a superior and exceptional, Eurocentric national identity and an exalted "us" are constituted upon knowledge about the colonized other as an object of discourse (Loomba, 2005; Said, 1995). This is also ontologically premised upon a colonial, racialized hierarchy of being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). A common feature across the operation of exceptionalist discourse in this research is how the category of human in general is represented by the unmarked white as a norm, while the non-white others are always racially or culturally marked. Importantly, the majority of teachers and students expressed a clear desire and intention to include the racialized students along with varying degrees of explicit anti-racist commitment (Articles 3 and 4), but this did not in any way dismantle the discursive positioning of racialized students as others.

The analysis across the articles generally shed light on how national exceptionalism works not only as a form of nation-branding, informing knowledge about and descriptions of the Norwegian society, but also assists the affective construction of a national and naturalized white "us" constituted through the representation of the racialized, cultural,

or inferior others. National identity is predicated upon a relationship with colonized others that is both cognitive and affective (Ahmed, 2000; Kapoor, 2004). These embodied others are present in the empirical material of this research in the examples of the selective and stereotypical representations of the Sami (Article 1), the portrayal of a backward Global South consisting of nameless, inferior others (Article 2), and the non-white detectible through skin color, language, and visible religious markers, particularly those related to Islam (Articles 3 and 4). As argued by Fylkesnes (2019), within this variety of representations, there are also different experiences and realities reflecting a colonial hierarchy of more or less desired others. However, in this research, I was not as much concerned with unmasking these nuances, as with how they can be understood to represent manifestations of the colonial abyssal line (Santos, 2018), that is how certain groups of people are produced as invisible, inferior or non-existent. In the classroom context, I particularly relate the abyssal line to the access to subjectivication, that is how the ideological basis of teaching contains and enables the subjectivities of students (McLaren, 2017). In citizenship education, this is also interrelated with who is positioned to be an unquestionable part of the community, or free to see herself as a subject in and through educational narratives. All of the articles in this research in various ways show that this is a privilege reserved for white majority students. However, as I return to in Section 7.2, the students positioned as othered navigated the position differently.

The articles demonstrate that, while being Norwegian is positioned as a desired and exalted subjectivity (Thobani, 2007), the inclusion in "Norwegianness" as a category is conditional upon being offered this positionality by the benevolence of the (white) majority. Accordingly, inclusion as "Norwegian" in terms of practical implications differs little from assimilation (Fylkesnes, 2019; Gullestad, 2002). The workings of these "invisible fences" of being a "full" Norwegian citizen are powerfully exemplified in Article 4, especially in the way teachers express the sentiment that it is "ok to be Muslim" as long as it "does not show" physically. In Article 3, skin color is a persistent but unacknowledged barrier to being Norwegian, mirroring former research showing that, despite the discourse of Norwegian colorblindness, skin color is a central feature of the embodied experience of otherness (Rysst, 2012; Sandset, 2014). The consequence of this

are that racialized students are unavoidably perceived to represent embodiments of diversity (Ahmed, 2012). This illustrates how colonial violence is a political process of conquest that has cultural and epistemological implications (Said, 1995). Moreover, these examples highlight how hegemony works to influence the subject formation and self-understanding of the racialized or colonial other (Gramsci, 1971).

Drawing on prior analysis of national exceptionalism, this research does not assume that exceptionalism represents a specific trait of Norwegian national identity. Rather, it is an analytical tool that enables tracing particularities of how the colonial, national imaginary is manifested in the context-specific example of a nation-states (Rastas, 2012; Suša, 2016). Decolonial critiques reveal how these articulations are embedded in a dominant global imaginary, providing for discursive frameworks in which perceptions about global and national social and racial hierarchies are entrenched in the notions of Western and white supremacy (Stein, 2016; Stein, 2018). The findings of this research provide insight on how national exceptionalism plays out in particular ways in the concrete context of Norway, while also adding to the understanding of global colonial imaginaries. The research highlights particularities of the Norwegian case through the tenacious denials of race, racism, and whiteness. I experienced and identified race and racism in the material as what I will describe as an *affectively present absence*: Its tenacity was detectable exactly in the way its absence was actively produced (Santos, 2018) in and through discursive practice, while not explicitly stated with words. The absence of race was visible and experienced by the students in my research as well as by me as a researcher. Both the students´ structured discussions about "what it means to be Norwegian" and their more informal conversations on national and social identities (Articles 3 and 4), displayed their discomfort when encountering race. This materialized their reluctance to mentioning skin color, and repeated statements of repeated statements of "not to be racist, but…." In Article 4, the absence of race and racism was produced in a more direct manner. Because one purpose of teaching intervention 2 was to initiate conversations on racism in Norway, a focus generally welcomed by teachers, the majority of lessons went by without the teachers actually using the words race or racism. I also experienced resistance from many of the teachers in thematizing racism explicitly, based on the notion

of caring for their students. There is an interesting discrepancy in the manifestations of the role of racism in this research with regard to how teachers expressed a desire to protect students from violent knowledge due to their young age, whereas the students' discussions illustrated how racialization was already at work in their interactions, conversations, subjectivities, and lived realities. As mentioned in Article 3, many students also expressed a wish to learn about racism in a way that was meaningful for their everyday lives and experiences. This reflects the observations made by Svendsen (2014b) in secondary schools. While students held understandings of racism associated with everyday racism, teachers reserved the concept for more explicit and violent expressions.

The production of race as absent and the manifestation of the teachers' care and expressed will to protect the students also served to constitute and recenter white hegemony as the invisible norm by safeguarding the affective equilibrium, maintaining white privilege and a benevolent national self-image (Wekker, 2016). In the classrooms, the affective economies tended to punish knowledge that caused *dis*comfort by challenging white innocence, and in particular the self-understanding as inherently non-racist. In different ways, Articles 1, 2, and 4 show how challenges to the conception of the Norwegian nation-state as inherently benign are effectively absolved through gestures such as placing atrocities and complicities in the past (Articles 1 and 4), in far-away geographical contexts (Article 2), or even willingly ignoring them by leaving out the role of the Norwegian state as a perpetrator (Articles 1 and 2). This sheds light on how whiteness materializes in the form of ontological security embedded in the organization of educational institutions, which are structured to protect white subjectivities, while violence is framed as external (Stein et al., 2017). This finding demonstrates how whiteness as a discursive ideology upholds white supremacy through an institutionalized, hidden curriculum that does not "see" race (Matias, 2016). A major contribution to the theorizing of national exceptionalism of this study is thus how it is manifested affectively through the emotional equilibrium and self-technologies of whiteness (Articles 3 and 4).

Based on the colonial discourse analysis, I argue that discourse is central to the material and symbolic processes through which both subjects and objects of knowledge are

(re)produced through ongoing articulations of racial difference. Drawing from the Gramscian conceptualization of hegemony (1971), the research overall sheds light on how colonial discursive formations are naturalized as accepted truths and common sense in the case of Norwegian primary school citizenship education. The decolonial approach locates epistemology as a project of persuasion that works principally through claims to truth and the subordination of non-European modes of knowing (Alcoff, 2007; Mignolo, 2012). This also has implications for how we understand knowledge production and the possibilities of critical thinking in education, which I address next.

6.5.2 Research question 2

Research question 2, as described in Section 1.2.1, is as follows:

> *How can decolonial perspectives contribute to ethical and just epistemological and didactical approaches for citizenship education?*

While the first research question enabled the location of the production of absences through colonial discourse analysis, this second question is concerned with what decolonial lenses enable "seeing," particularly concerning the genealogy of modern/colonial epistemology and how it influences knowledge production in the case of citizenship education. In part, this research question points toward a further discussion of the implications of the research for future citizenship education, as I will return to in Chapter 7. First, however, I will briefly describe how the engagement with the decolonial analytical framework through this research question highlighted the understandings and operationalization of epistemology and knowledge production in the empirical material.

Decolonial understandings of knowledge production emphasize that modern/colonial knowledge production tends to reassert as universal what are in fact situated, partial, and often Eurocentric assumptions about the world, enabling the desire for universalism (Kerr & Andreotti, 2017; Stein, 2016). The understanding of knowledge builds on the Foucauldian power/knowledge conceptualization and insights on how power operates in the delimitation of what passes as truth, situating the hegemony-seeking power-knowledges in the context of coloniality (Alcoff, 2007). Instead of being concerned with

the content of the conversation, coloniality turns our attention toward the terms of the conversation, or the level of enunciation. (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). In the case of education, this entails turning the gaze from curriculum content integration (Banks, 2009) to the structures of how knowledge is produced and what passes as knowledge. A major implication of the hegemony of national exceptionalist discourses described above is that they work to obstruct critical conversations about processes that systemically reproduce discursive and political inequalities by preventing any possibilities of challenging the exceptionalist self-image (Rastas, 2012). The located absences can in this sense be read as examples of lost opportunities for critical thinking, illustrating how the potential for conversations on Norway's colonial history (Article 1), the historicity and politics of global inequality (Article 2), and structural racism (Articles 3 and 4) are lost.

Analyzing how the teachers in this study conceptualized and talked about knowledge revealed tensions and paradoxes. On the one hand, there was a widespread ideal of exploring and portraying phenomena and events in social studies from many sides among the teachers. On the other hand, there was also an almost unanimous understanding of how schools and teachers should communicate knowledge that is "objective" or politically neutral (Articles 2 and 4). Particularly interesting was the conversation with the teacher and student teachers described in Article 2, in which the argument was made that teachers belonging to a minority group culturally, religiously or politically, are less neutral than teachers with more mainstream standpoints. A different but related version of this conceptualization, was how the teacher students in Article 4 expressed the idea of a neutral middle ground of perspectives. It was interesting that addressing structural injustice and racism, notably through the second teaching intervention (Article 4), was associated with a fear of being overtly normative. Indeed, education that challenges the myths of the dominant culture is often seen as political propaganda (Boler & Zembylas, 2003), reserving the assumption of objectivity for majority perspectives (DiAngelo, 2010). These statements from the teachers highlight the important ability of teachers to reflect on their power, but also obscure how certain standpoints are positioned as universal, ahistorical, and apolitical, and how this conceptualization of true knowledge often corresponds with perspectives that legitimize the existing social and political order. This

reflects the point made Børhaug (2014) in his analysis of discourses in social studies textbooks, who argued that they enforce a kind of selective critical thinking, directed at places and events far away. My research sheds light on how such selective critical thinking is also sanctioned and serves to uphold epistemic privilege through the reproduction of coloniality and whiteness (Maldonado-Torres, 2004). The social location of knowledge is accounted for only when the knowledge is associated with what is considered as other in relation to the white, male European standard.

The workings of whiteness illuminate the interrelations between knowledge production, the project of exceptionalist nation-building and the construction of the exalted national subject as "a particular kind of human being, a member of a particular kind of community, and, hence, ontologically and existentially distinct from strangers to this community" (Thobani, 2007, p. 5). These interrelations can be understood as constitutive of an unquestioned methodological nationalism across the empirical material. I analyze this methodological nationalism as a colonial framework of intelligibility, positioning the nation-state as elevated to a place beyond critique (Andreotti, 2016). Reflections on imagining different ways of co-existing are completely absent. As exemplified in Article 2, the ability of students to pose challenging questions provides possible opportunities and openings for what Mignolo (2012) calls "border thinking," that is, the moments in which the modern imaginary cracks, emerging from encounters with difference. Notably, some of the students reacted to the portrayal of the Global South as backwards. However, initiatives from students were generally shut down, particularly by how the teacher responded to their comments. The perspectives were defined either as knowledge in the modern/colonial sense (i.e., realistic) or simply as naive visions (i.e., idealistic). This also reflected the stated desire of the teacher to provide unambiguous knowledge.

6.5.3 Summary

Overall, this research has empirically identified the coloniality of knowledge production in examples from Norwegian primary school citizenship education. Education systems are key sites for the institutionalization and (re)production of the hegemonic discourses in society. The empirical material in this study reveals that the imaginary of national

exceptionalism and the affective equilibrium of whiteness are deeply embedded within educational discourses, manifested in the production of knowledge and national and social identities and subjectivities in the classroom. Coloniality, as it appears in and through primary school citizenship education in my study, thus serves to (re)produce social and racial inequality and epistemic injustice. This particularly manifests in the upholding of white hegemony through discursive practices that construct whiteness as an unmarked norm constituted upon the racialized others as contrast. The analysis illustrates how coloniality may absolve educational institutions of their ethical and pedagogical responsibilities to disrupt unjust and unsustainable social relations and effectively obstruct the critical literacies that citizenship education is allegedly aimed to foster.

In the following and final chapter, I will further discuss some of the findings described above in more depth to highlight the contributions from this research, particularly in relation to research question 2.

7 Contributions and implications

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the main contributions of this study with an emphasis on the implications for citizenship education. I also reflect on the limitations of the research by shedding light on absences in my analysis and pointing toward possible avenues for further exploration.

Engaging in radical and transformative critiques of education might prompt the question, "If not this, then what?" The associated desire for universal and concrete solutions can thus be understood as an expression of the colonial construction feeding on desires of doing, feeling and looking good or the request for immediate resolution (Amsler, 2019; Jefferess, 2012; Patel, 2014; Stein et al., 2020). A central implication from decolonial critiques is an acknowledgement of the complexity of some of the great challenges we encounter in education today and the acceptance of how enabling transformative processes might demand us to stay with the trouble (Haraway, 2016) and allow for a logic of emergence without clear end points (Martin et al., 2017). In a similar vein, this research does not provide clear-cut, universally applicable principles for citizenship education. The main contribution of this study relates to what discursive, affective, and conceptual constellations it could open up, as much as the answers it provides. As Santos (2018) reminds us, "we perceive the world as seemingly complete only because our questions about it are always very limited" (p. 136). In the closing discussion, I highlight the interruptions and questions emerging from this study and discuss the possible vision of citizenship education they point toward.

7.1 Toward a decolonizing citizenship education

The ultimate consequence of the critique in which I have engaged through this study is that the modern/colonial way of living and knowing cannot be reformed because it is inherently extractive, violent, and unsustainable (Andreotti et al., 2015). This consequence calls for a move beyond reform, recognizing that adding epistemologies into the modern/colonial ontological foundation will always be a limited strategy for interrupting colonial habits of being (Ahenakew, 2016; Stein et al., 2020). This limitation

does not mean that reform of mainstream educational institutions is not important. Even if it is ultimately doubtful whether modern institutions can be reformed, we hold the responsibility for making education more ethical and just in the present. The contributions from my research are positioned in this interface, between arguing for something emerging and currently unknown, while providing an actionable critique from within the cracks of the current system. In the closing sections, I revisit and reflect further upon the implications of my research in light of research question 2: *How can decolonial perspectives contribute to ethical and just epistemological and didactical approaches for citizenship education?*

As I write this (2020), a new reform in primary and secondary Norwegian education is being implemented including a new national curriculum. In 2016, the Government published a white paper stating that one of the key ambitions with the reform is to equip students to "master their lives in a democratic and diverse society" (White paper 28 (2015-2016), p. 5). Although social equality is mentioned, the overall conceptualization of democratic competence can be said to reflect an international trend shedding light on an evolving international shift from social inclusion understood as a public responsibility toward a self-disciplinary governance instrument of "self-inclusion" as a citizen obligation (Barsch, 2018). In the core curriculum[21], *democracy and citizenship* are described with the purpose of the school to "stimulate the pupils to become active citizens and give them the competence to participate in developing democracy in Norway" (KD, 2019, p. 2.1). Emphasis on individual skills is also further strengthened through the introduction of *public health and life skills* as a cross-cutting theme for all education, described as "the ability to understand and influence factors that are important for mastering one's own life" (KD, 2019, p. 2.5.1). As previous critiques have highlighted, a strong focus on individual competencies might leave the individual with responsibility for "good citizenship" and depoliticize citizenship (Biesta, 2009; Biesta & Lawy, 2006). Notably, the

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[21] [21] The document *Core curriculum – values and principles for primary and secondary education and training* is part of the curriculum and pursuant to Sections 1–5 of the Education Act. The document elaborates on core values in the objectives clause in the Education Act and overriding principles for primary and secondary education. The core curriculum describes the fundamental approach that shall direct the pedagogical practice in all lower and secondary education and training. For more information, see https://www.udir.no/lk20/overordnet-del/om-overordnet-del/?lang=eng.

introduction of the above-mentioned white paper is divided into two sections where the first emphasizes competencies and knowledge for students concerning diversity and democracy, with referral to social equality as a central value in Norwegian education. The second paragraph highlights education as a form of capital enabling economic and technological development (White paper 28 (2015-2016)). The tension in this policy document resonates with international discourses on citizenship education. Through this research, I have shed light on how the dynamics and discourses of coloniality that (re)produce a supposedly universal liberal modern subject, are premised upon the construction of racialized and indigenous others and thus upholds epistemic and social injustice. Although the official discourse anchors citizenship education in visions of furthering social justice and embracing diversity and sustainable development, it is often thwarted by neoliberal logics and individualism (Pais & Costa, 2020), emphasizing concerns for national security and international economic competiveness. As Gaztambide-Fernandez (2012) argues, we must therefore move social justice critiques beyond individual autonomy and rational consciousness, as these concepts: "reconstitute the individual as the site of social change and are ultimately based on the same conception of knowledge and of the human/'Man' that served as the foundation for justifying slavery, genocide, and wars of conquest" (p. 42). In the following, I outline, based on the results of my study, potential approaches towards a decolonizing citizenship education. A central argument is that a decolonizing approach to citizenship education must be more concerned with what kind of relationality and community we enable in and through education, rather than the production of a particular citizen. Towards the end, I offer some final reflections on the more overarching question posed by decoloniality on what education is *for*.

7.1.1 Challenging coloniality in curriculum and teaching materials

Tuck and Yang (2012) have pointed out that a common challenge to decolonization is that it is often engaged superficially as a kind of move to multicultural innocence, notably by opting for an add-on strategy to diversify curricula and institutions, that is, by simply mentioning the presence of indigenous peoples. Such moves to innocence can also,

according to Ahmed (2012), represent a form of non-performative and symbolic commitment to diversity for educational organizations, keeping colonized people and knowledge in the margins of otherwise unchanged institutions. This situation does not indicate that representation and diversity in curriculum and teaching and learning materials are not important; in fact, I argue that it may have particular importance for primary schools in terms of being the formative years for the construction of one's self-image. A combined reading of the significance of representation with Foucauldian power/knowledge and insights from psychoanalysis sheds light on how power relations also produce and constrain subjectivity through the role of pedagogy in shaping identities, as I argue in Articles 1 and 3. This role has been powerfully described in the decolonial perspective, with Fanon's (2008) account of how colonization performs epistemic violence through the violation of the sense of self (Leonardo & Porter, 2010). A curriculum that provides positive and empowering identification and recognition for all students is therefore essential. This recognition cannot be realized through a kind of checklist, but should rather form an intrinsic part of the reflexive dispositions toward the just character of educational practice and curriculum with teachers. As such, teachers need to encounter decolonial theoretical and analytical tools through teacher education. Although this research indicates a need to develop more such tools, the study can also be regarded as a contribution toward such development by exemplifying and describing possible tools in and through the analysis. Moreover, for teachers to contribute to a pluralizing curriculum in schools, the end to white and colonial dominance in curricula must start in teacher education.

Curricula indicate what counts as worth knowing and who counts as the knowers. However, as the above discussion has shown, it is just as important to foster awareness of what counts as knowledge (Santos, 2018). A diverse curriculum therefore also involves a critical approach toward what is given value as knowledge and includes a plurality of knowledge and perspectives. Instead of a common strategy of eternal add-ons to the content of teachers' knowledge, a central focus in teacher education as well as education in general should thus be *knowledge about and awareness of knowledge production*. This understanding should be grounded in the notion that what is seen as facts is ideologically

derived. It does not entail romanticizing non-Western knowledge, which may play on to an alleged benign multicultural education that reproduces othering through exotification (Gorski, 2008). Importantly, the pluralization of knowledge does not implicate dismissing anything associated with the modern/colonial epistemology, but rather questions the presumed universality of Western knowledge, discerning the gifts and limitations of and engaging ethically with all knowledge systems (Stein et al., 2020). Pluralizing knowledge involves asking questions such as, Where, how, and why is knowledge constructed? What counts as knowledge, and why? Who are considered to be knowledge providers, and who and what knowledge is considered to represent culture? Such questions reflect the notion of border thinking (Mignolo, 2012), as mentioned in Article 2, engaging the construction of the alleged borders of the knowable object and deconstructing the divide between knower (subject) and known (object). Such border thinking thus involves self-reflexivity, asking "What is it that I see and know from this knowledge, and why? What is it that might be invisible to me but visible to someone else?" Stein (2015) argues that this kind of approach allows for citizenship education to move from perceived universality and focus on a consensus toward what she calls an "incommensurable position", where: "existing scripts for thought and action are not outright rejected, but their limitations are illuminated through encounters with and across difference" (p. 247). An interesting pedagogical vision in this context relevant for primary school is the notion of children as curriculum makers (Mikander, 2016a) and knowledge production in the classroom as co-construction. One of the more optimistic and hopeful aspects in this research was the ability of the students to ask challenging questions (Article 2). As I analyzed in Article 2, the absence of a critical outlook on who is portrayed as an actor or passive receiver in the alleged global project of sustainability makes the perspectives on sustainable ways of living situated in the Global South unintelligible as knowledge. Importantly, the realization of a more pluralistic curriculum cannot be undertaken by the individual teacher educator and/or teacher but is also highly dependent upon political influence on policy and curriculum development, as well as the availability and location of economic and material resources. An important example is enabling the development of relevant teaching materials and textbooks with marginalized and indigenous organizations and groups. As

this example emphasizes, cognitive and social justice in education cannot be separated (cf. Santos, 2018).

A second implication from this research concerning curriculum and teaching and learning materials is the importance of the presence and visibility of the history of colonialism as well as explicit engagement with the structures and manifestations of ongoing coloniality (i.e., the conditions that (re)produce colonial encounters) (Wynter, 2003). Although decolonization is global, its operationalization must always be sensitive to the particularities and contexts of each area, state, and the colonial encounters of its territories. The decolonization of education starts from the space of local and specific historicized and contextualized oppressions, struggles, and resistances (Battiste, 2016; Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2012; Santos, 2018), which entails describing colonization in curriculum, textbooks, and learning materials to make visible the histories of subjugation and resistance of minoritized groups. In Norway, this colonization concerns the history of the Sami and national minorities, as part of also understanding the coloniality of the Norwegian state formation and the genealogy of Norwegian whiteness. Related to the perspective in this research that absences are not simply lacking but also discursively productive, it is a major deficiency that the curriculum for primary and secondary schools fails to mention colonization at all (as pointed out in Chapter 1). The elucidation of coloniality and the "dark sides" of history does not simply entail the inclusion of perspectives as mapped onto an unchanged dominant national narrative, but rather approaches history from the perspective of the marginalized and indigenous. Although a substantial body of research points out the absent or stereotypical portrayal of Sami and national minorities in Norwegian textbooks (Midtbøen et al., 2014; Mortensen-Buan, 2017; Olsen, 2017), there is little critical emphasis on the location of enunciation, such as *who is telling the story*. In this research, the textbooks analyzed for Article 1 as well as the observed teaching about Sami history (briefly described in Article 3), displayed how teaching about the Sami history is often devoid of Sami politicians, activists or protagonists. A related finding is how the student teachers when set out to teach the history of the Romani/Tater people in Norway, often downplayed the darker sides and avoided the use of racism as a concept. Another powerful example from outside this

research that sheds light on an absence in the overall body of research, as well as in this particular study, is the recent attention to the largely absent and publicly unknown Black history in Norway provided by a Black history month in 2020 (Tisdel, 2020b).

The third implication from this research for curriculum and teaching materials is the need to actively denaturalize methodological nationalism. As Suša (2019) argues in his mapping of current approaches to GCE, an underlying premise of many of the currently dominant discourses are visions of universalism and recognition embedded in modern, liberal-humanistic subjectivities. Such approaches seldom challenge the nation-state as a construction. Mohanty (2003) argues that citizenship as a concept of subjectivity is associated with modern/colonial conceptions of civility, producing a particular kind of community marked by difference from the imagined other. The hegemony of liberal understandings of citizenship naturalizes the nation-state beyond critique, and obscure the framing of issues from a Western standpoint (Spivak, 1990). The results of this research highlight the need to explicitly engage the national imaginary in and through citizenship education, denaturalizing the nation-state as a given category of belonging. Doing so involves challenging national exceptionalism in ways that are not restricted to the alleged "righting" of historical atrocities but that allow for deeper engagement in questioning the nation-state as the presumptive superior mode of social and political organization. The modern, liberal-democratic concept of inclusion does not escape the construction of the boundaries of the demos, opening little space for a plurality of co-existing (Suša, 2019). Such perspectives are especially relevant in citizenship education in times of complex global challenges of environmental unsustainability and racial, social, and economic injustice, thus highlighting the insufficiency of the modern/colonial order in producing a sustainable and just foundation for co-existence. Denaturalizing methodological nationalism must be assisted by more global perspectives, which seems to be largely absent in Norwegian citizenship education (cf. Chapter 2). However, as highlighted in Article 2, global perspectives and engaging with that which is "other" must include political and colonial sensitivity, to avoid serving the reproduction of an imperialist global imaginary and enduring the racialized ordering of humanity (Stein, 2016).

This research has shed light on how engaging with differences in education, when not engaging with systemic and structural inequality and the education system as products of colonial histories, may, despite good intentions, enable white teachers to avoid the discomfort of facing their own whiteness (Articles 3 and 4). In her comprehensive critical discourse analysis of the workings of whiteness through the discursive usage of meaning-making of "cultural diversity" as a dominant concept in curriculum and policy documents, Fylkesnes (2019) finds that the discursive production of these policies does not necessarily reflect the outcomes the policy-makers intended in terms of promoting democracy and equity, obscuring white privilege. I follow Fylkesnes' suggestion that policymakers could benefit from understanding how discursive manifestations of power/knowledge works. However, this understanding could also be assisted by more explicit interruptions to the dominant discursive domain and thus challenge the hegemony of alleged neutral or benevolent terms associated with "culture" and "diversity," with concepts such as racism, sexism, colonialism, relationality, and equity. Understanding discourse as systematically forming the objects of what they speak, which can also be sites of resistance (Foucault, 2002) as language actively *does things*, such explicit interruptions can be productive for what conversations are initiated, as a kind of prefigurative action (Shotwell, 2016).

7.1.2 Engaging postabyssal and alternative pedagogies

As Santos (2018) argues, the sociology of absences is only a part of the process towards the more significant sociology of emergences, recognizing and engaging with other ways of knowing associated with the (epistemological) Global South, and developing postabyssal pedagogies. In this sense, a major limitation of this research is that it does not engage more deeply with such alternative epistemologies or pedagogies. However, I argue that it is the responsibility of mainstream citizenship education to counter coloniality through deconstructing and dismantling historical power relations and epistemic violence that continuously contributes to the reproduction of structural injustice. As Santos (2018) describes, developing alternative pedagogies inside existing institutions is vital to "constructing alternatives to the monocultures of knowledge,

scales, classifications, temporalities, and productivities that are the staple of the epistemologies of the North" (p. 263). Norwegian social studies, as the core of citizenship education, seem to be oriented around traditional classroom education focused on teacher lecturing and working with textbooks, while there is little exploration of alternative learning strategies or spaces outside schools (Huang et al., 2017). A contribution toward alternative pedagogies from the implications of this research is acknowledging the significance of affective approaches to learning, particularly in anti-racist education. As displayed in this research, discourse and affect are entangled as meaning-making and embodied experience are at play simultaneously in constituting events, notably through how racialization is "felt" more than "spoken" in the context of exceptionalist discourse (Articles 3 and 4). This result suggests that the common approach to fighting injustice through exposing ignorance or providing "right" knowledge has major limitations. Several of the teachers in this study expressed a form of care for the students through a desire to protect them from the discomforts of what they considered difficult knowledge, such as the severity of climate change and global inequality (Article 2) and everyday racism (Article 4). Generally, emotions seemed to be considered a challenge to learning, or something empathetically accepted and cared for, but to be overcome. Generally, emotions seemed to be considered a challenge to learning, or something empathetically accepted and cared for, but to be overcome. As described in Article 4, one of the teachers represented an exception to this outlook, embracing the role of emotions. I argue with her that this research points to how affect should rather be considered a possibility for learning, as well as a central part of self-reflexivity. As Matias (2016) explains, the notion that we "must not get emotional" when discussing racism is counterproductive. The supposed uselessness of "unwanted" emotionalities might simultaneously render the wanted emotionalities of love, hope and human connection worthless as well. Hence, acknowledging affect is a necessary part of building a vision of citizenship education built on relationality and human connectivity.

Affective approaches to educational practice can be understood as part of the critique inherent in decolonial perspectives of a neoliberal emphasis of individuals' competences in much education presenting itself as "intercultural," "culturally relevant," or "culturally

sensitive" (Gorski, 2008; Martin et al., 2017). This criticism also points toward the methodological significance of educational research in studying such affective processes in the classroom and discursive practice, not merely looking at language or cognition. Decolonial pedagogy simultaneously draws from and criticize the seminal works of Freire (1973, 1995; 2000). As Zembylas (2019b) argues, while Freire situate liberation in the minds of the oppressed, as a humanist self-critique, decolonial critiques always position liberation in the particularities and relations of ongoing coloniality. Zembylas (2019b) further suggests that for critical pedagogy to be "reinvented" as decolonizing pedagogy, it must gesture towards "modes of affective perspective-taking and affective practices that call subjects into account for their own complicity in perpetuating coloniality" (p. 405). This notion implies a shift in focus from the oppressed other towards structures and relations of injustice, possibly dissolving the binary of oppressor/oppressed (Andreotti, 2016; Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013; Yoon, 2005). Subjects may be positioned differently on the scale of oppressor/oppressed in different contexts. However, as Martin et al. (2017) describe, epistemological decolonization involves a specific focus on confronting whiteness. As they further argue, although a focus on whiteness risks the reproduction of white privilege and self-absorbance, decolonization is not a project that should be taken up only by certain groups, and is rather a space of "fighting" taking place through intersubjectivity. Dismantling of whiteness can be understood as a unifying approach against injustice, towards a shared humanity (cf. Matias, 2016). An interesting perspective here, is the distinction made by Todd (2015) between dialogue and conversation. According to Todd (2015), communication based on conventional deliberative-democratic, dialogical models is often separated from the existing emotions and the consideration of the classroom as already affectively charged. As conversation refers etymologically and conceptually to the notion of "turning about with someone" (p. 60), it also gestures towards a transformation of self. Further, while dialogue often holds as an aim of reaching a consensus, a conversation is open-ended. Conversation, understood as an affectively charged, open-ended encounter rather than a dialogue with an end goal, such as producing "tolerance" or "understanding," is therefore a relevant vision for an affectively based pedagogy.

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The decolonial critique of Freirean critical pedagogy also problematizes the often implicit assumption that revolutionary agency is always present among students and teachers, or that *conscientização*, i.e., the critical awareness of one's social reality, causally leads to greater social justice (Zembylas, 2019b). This research suggests that even when explicitly introducing knowledge about coloniality and racism, it may not lead to learning in the sense of transformation (Article 4), as these opportunities may get lost in the upholding of white emotional equilibrium. The notion of a p*edagogy of discomfort* has been introduced to highlight the importance of critically examining values and self-images, particularly among privileged students, by exploring unacknowledged feelings related to the way we perceive ourselves and others (Boler, 1999; Boler & Zembylas, 2003). I also experiment with this notion in my analysis in Article 3. Of particular interest are the approaches that shed light on how affective attachments related to coloniality are expressed through whiteness (Leonardo, 2010; Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013). Based on this notion, whiteness can be understood pedagogically as white discomfort, i.e., a social and political affect that is part of the production and maintenance of colonial structures and practices and that exists beyond individual subjective responses (Matias, 2016; Matias & Mackey, 2016; Zembylas, 2018). White discomfort should not be understood as an essentialized concept, but rather as being productive in affective, material, and discursive assemblages emerging as events (Zembylas, 2018). An affective approach to whiteness is not concerned with individualized emotions but with the understanding of how experiences are structured by political and social relations. Such an approach involves perspectives such as "Why do I see what I see, and why is this different for someone else?" A concrete, practical implication from this for citizenship education is to shift focus from deliberation understood as competition for the better argument toward practicing listening.

7.1.3 Critical self-reflexivity

When I discuss critical reflexivity, it is vital to first clarify how I understand the concept. The conceptualization of critical self-reflexivity is as such a theoretical and pedagogical contribution from the research. While the concepts of self-reflection and/or critical

thinking are commonly applied in relation to citizenship education, reflexivity is not as frequent. As I discussed in relation to reflexive methodology in Section 4.1, I understand reflexivity as reflection on many levels, involving the genealogy of reflection, which refers to locating underlying epistemologies and ontologies and emphasizing the interdependence of knowledge and power. Self-reflexivity, then, involves drawing attention to our formation of subjectivity and to how the things we say, think, and do, consciously and unconsciously, are "conditioned (but not necessarily determined) by our individual and collective contexts and histories" (Andreotti, 2014, p. 15). Critical self-reflexivity thus involves, but is deeper than, the acts of reflecting upon assumptions, phenomenon, or knowledge. This distinction is fundamental in terms of how the decolonial approach applied here also involves the criticism of modern Cartesian subjectivity and separation between the alleged "subject" and "object" of knowing. This notion of separation might lead to a shallow and instrumentalized operationalization of self-reflection and critical thinking, suggesting provisional solutions to structural challenges without dismantling them (Suša, 2016). Moreover, the necessity of this distinction is also important in the sense of how learning is understood in this research. Learning[22] is the constant process of coming into being, finding yourself altered in the effort to understand, and a relational process that is premised upon the presence of other subjects (Biesta, 2005; Todd, 2003). The conceptualization of critical self-reflexivity implicated by the analysis in this research is reflexivity that is relational, transformative, engaging with affective dimensions, and concerned with how discourses are (re)constructed and operate. For the particularities of the Norwegian context, this conceptualization should be assisted by an explicit engagement with national exceptionalism and, in particular, with how whiteness works. Understanding whiteness in the context of Norwegian education also involves dismantling and denaturalizing

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[22] By applying the concept "learning" while referring to Biesta (2005), I am aware of how his work *Against Learning* heavily criticizes the very concept of learning as it is commonly applied in what he accurately describes as our internationally dominant neo-liberal regime of education. I share his criticism that learning is currently often understood as an economic transaction and I understand the challenges with the commodified "language of learning" (Biesta, 2015). However, this recognition does not necessarily entail discarding the concept as such.

hegemonic notions of culture, as reflected in how cultural diversity frequently appears as an alleged benign formulation of democratic education in Norway (Fylkesnes, 2019).

The curriculum reform taking place in Norway parallel to this study emphasizes critical thinking as a core for education in general and for citizenship education in particular. This emphasis is not new, as the Education Act of 1998 states that "The pupils and apprentices shall learn to think critically and act ethically and with environmental awareness. They shall have joint responsibility and the right to participate" (The Education Act, 1998, §1.1,). In the new national curricula, however, critical thinking is further emphasized, and in the core curriculum connected to reflection: "The competence concept also includes understanding and the ability to reflect and think critically in subjects […] Reflection and critical thinking are part of developing attitudes and ethical judgment" (KD, 2019, p. 2.2). Although critical thinking and reflection are predominantly conceptualized as individual competences, the core curriculum states that critical thinking also relates to an understanding of how knowledge is developed and the limitations of one's own viewpoints, knowledge, and experiences. In this research, a central argument across the articles (especially prominent in Article 4) is how national exceptionalism and the associated affective economy of whiteness might result in lost opportunities for (self-) reflexivity among students and teachers. If critical thinking is to lead to learning in the sense of transformation, it needs to implement a clear political and relational dimension to not remain a depoliticized, individualized commodity. A contribution from this research thus points toward how critical reflexivity can be understood and operationalized from a decolonial perspective.

The relation between the ideological and structural level of discourse and the significance of self-reflexivity lies in how affirmations of exceptionalism are not merely in the self's interest, but rather constitutive of it (Suša, 2016). Lessons from psychoanalysis help shed light on how we may be affectively bound to the pleasures of exceptionalism, even if violent and unjust, because it provides us with stability and belonging, and in a deeper manner, a sense of coherent self (Stein, 2016; Thobani, 2007). The relation between the ideological and structural level of discourse and the significance of self-reflexivity lies in

how affirmations of exceptionalism are not merely in the self's interest, but rather constitutive of it (Suša, 2016). Lessons from psychoanalysis help shed light on how we may be affectively bound to the pleasures of exceptionalism, even if violent and unjust, because it provides us with stability and belonging, and in a deeper manner, a sense of coherent self (Stein, 2016; Thobani, 2007). Such affective constellations are exemplified in my research through how students and teachers may be unconsciously invested in racial structures through the pleasures of white privilege, although simultaneously intending and wanting to be dedicated anti-racists (Articles 3 and 4). The white ignorance of coloniality and racism is commonly, and in this research, described as sanctioned (Spivak, 1999) or willful ignorance (Alcoff, 2006) to underline how ignorance is not simply accidental but also performative and an epistemological political project. When related to the barriers for self-reflexivity, I find it fitting to apply the concept of *needing not to know* from Applebaum (2015), which suggests that whites (i.e., colonizers) not only hold the privilege of not knowing (as, for example, how racism is experienced) and not needing to know but also how white people have a "positive investment in remaining ignorantbecause our very identities as good people rests on our not seeing our racism" (p. 451). These affective investments also imply that any exempt deconstruction of national exceptionalism and whiteness may be experienced as a direct threat to the self-identity of whites as good persons (Suša, 2016). Whiteness often works to deny complicity without the acts being understood by those performing them as denials, as they might masquerade as good intentions or commonsense (Applebaum, 2013). Several such pedagogical and discursive strategies were at play in my material, such as claims of colorblindness (Articles 3 and 4), using distancing strategies (Articles 2 and 3), and ignoring historical narratives that emphasize systemic racism (Article 4). However, as I argue, the implication of this is not to downplay or avoid emotions in the classroom but rather to acknowledge them pedagogically, as being intrinsic to and a necessary part of self-reflexivity and learning.

The particular attention needed to dismantle whiteness involves overcoming the challenge of complicity. Complicity may appear as disempowering, not least for students and in classroom situations, as it is often the case that individuals do not consciously

choose complicity (Zembylas, 2019a). A central question is thus how we as educators can invite students to face their structural complicity in colonial violence and racism while avoiding the common traps of guilt or shame, and instead mobilize a sense of responsibility toward the other not oriented by paternalism or exceptionalism. According to Zembylas (2019a), a central aspect here is unlearning the desire to avoid complicity and to see it instead as an inevitable part of political life, although something we can strategically oppose if we become aware and act by refusing to allow ongoing coloniality. In a similar vein, Matias (2016) argues that dismantling whiteness is not about blaming white people but rather making visible the violence of whiteness and accepting that racism in a deeper sense diminishes quality of life for all. Accepting complicity can be empowering in the realization of how we have the opportunity to oppose this complicity through our actions. Engaging in self-reflexivity in this way might also enable relief through the opportunity to move beyond the pain inherent in the separation and distance from racialized others (Boler, 1999).

The above-described self-reflexivity is central to all levels of citizenship education, not least in teacher education. As this research to a large degree has been concerned with primary schools, this conceptualization also needs particular sensitivity related to the young age of the students. I think it is important to point out that children in primary school both experience and (unconsciously) reproduce racialization. However, parallel to the description in Section 7.1.1 about the formation of self-image and the possible detrimental impacts of coloniality on racialized children, it is also vital to be aware of the challenges related to imposing feelings of guilt and shame on white children. At the primary school level, it may be more appropriate to talk about self-reflexivity as concerning challenging inscribed habits of (in)attention (Boler, 1999), fostering awareness and acceptance toward feelings and reactions in encounters with others, and practicing attentiveness toward structural injustice. The 7th graders in my material were already very aware of what behaviors and attitudes were expected of them and what they were expected to *say*, for example, in relation to racism or sexism. Their conversations and interactions displayed that they were not as attentive to the practical implications of these stated values or how to act on them. A related vision is how primary-

level citizenship education, rather than measurable competencies, could be more concerned with fostering *dispositions* with students. Dispositions, unlike competencies, manifest as a repertoire in complex, contextual, and unpredictable ways, as "individuals can have different dispositions in differing degrees of 'strength', and manifesting at different points in time" (Andreotti et al., 2015, p. 254).

Affective learning and self-reflexivity also involve unlearning, in terms of dismantling the desire for unambiguous knowledge and engaging with complexity. It is important to be aware of how, even if teachers nurture these processes, they will encounter major political and structural obstacles to such visions of learning. As Stein (2015) argues, such unpredictable and potentially slow processes are often unintelligible from education institutions with individualized, progressive outcomes defining learning. In a neo-liberal context, education evolves into a commodity that is understood to suit the pleasures of learners. The limitations posed by these institutional structures were also evident in my experiences as teacher-researcher, as I felt accountable for defining clear "learning outcomes" and making the interventions "fun" for students. This limitation can also be understood as important for the potential of reflexivity I initially intended the interventions to spur and amounts to an interesting insight obtained from this research.

7.1.4 Anti-racist pedagogy and re-conceptualizing race

Disinvestment in whiteness goes hand in hand with making the discomfort in talking about race land racism less violent (Leonardo & Porter, 2010). The common approach to racism as a matter of ignorance to be remedied through knowledge about the other is likely to reconstruct and reinforce exceptionalism through acts of benevolence and inclusion rather than a deconstruction of racist discourse and challenging power structures (Kumashiro, 2002; Suša, 2016). As this research implies, for the Norwegian context, this approach will also require a reconceptualization of racism to be able to properly approach it in and through education. Alemanji (2016) points out in the analysis of anti-racist education in Finland, teaching about racism is often more focused on teaching what race or racism *is*, and I would add who or what *is* racist, than on what race *does*. This approach may leave us trapped in non-constructive circular conversations

discussing whether an event or utterance really *is* racism or making the matter of distancing oneself from racism more important than opposing or dismantling it. In the work with the second teaching intervention (Article 4), I experienced these tensions and fears with the possible proximity of race and racism. On the one hand, all the teachers expressed a positive and welcoming attitude toward thematizing historical racism as well as a sense of humility as to their own possible lack of knowledge and experience in teaching the topic. On the other hand, when engaging in more explicit discussions about the relevance of anti-racist work in their schools, many of the teachers appeared more reluctant and defensive. Despite being clear on the importance of fighting racism, racism was still seen as non-existent in their particular classrooms. Notably, these kinds of arguments were made while explicitly referring to racialized students as the attestation of the non-existence of racism, describing how the "adopted boy, with darker skin" is fully included, and how no one ever talks about how the particular girl is a Muslim because it is "hardly visible." Such statements, which were common across my material but most prominently displayed in Article 4, highlight how racialization is a very present factor of social relations in the classrooms and that the teachers probably have internalized understandings of racism that prevent them from associating such statements with processes of racialization.

It is notable that the students in my research expressed understandings of racism much more aligned with everyday racism (Article 3). A useful tool for bridging the will of countering racism and the taboo concerning race, is therefore to draw attention to racialization and everyday racism. Racialization moves our attention to how racism is not simply about explicitly hateful acts but is embedded in everyday categories, interactions and understandings of the world (Loftsdóttir, 2020). This positioning further allows for understanding race as a floating signifier (Hall, 1997) that is existent through the experiences and social and material consequences of racialization through subjectivation. Race as an idea and construct is dynamic and continuously adapts to shifting historical and social contexts, making it essential that the conceptualization of racism in education is meaningful in relation to the concrete lived realities and subjectivities of students. A conceptualization of racism as structural and everyday should not be misinterpreted as

portraying racism as mundane (Essed, 2008) but should enable a shift in focus from who is racist toward how racialization works in our encounters and interactions. Based on the analysis in this research, it is particularly important to embed the understanding of racism in the Norwegian context in understandings of white privilege, and notably in the privilege to not acknowledge race and racism. As testimonials of experiences with everyday racism in Norway indicate, by talking about such experiences, an individual often also becomes positioned as the problem with or cause of racism (Joof, 2018; Sibeko, 2019). During this research, I wrote an article directed at teachers and schools on recommendations for anti-racist practice and teaching (Eriksen, 2020). Related to this, I participated in online discussions with teachers. An interesting and important dilemma some of the teachers highlighted was how my recommendation to call out racism when it occurs in the classroom potentially framed individual students as racist. Moreover, these teachers feared that this could potentially violate the Education Act (1998, §9a) and the right of the student to a "good psychosocial environment," with "zero tolerance" of harassment. Although this provided me with important reflections and perspectives from the teachers' viewpoints, I also found it interesting how in these reflections, the same right of the racialized students to a "good psychosocial environment" in terms of the absence of racism was made invisible through the normativity of whiteness embedded in the notion of care for students.

As Applebaum (2015) argues, critical attention to whiteness and racism in education might not be possible without understanding the workings and effects of discourse, as discourse is so intimately involved in the construction and reproduction of inequality. As is suggested in former research and evident in my material (Articles 3 and 4), the non-usage of race is discursively productive, as "we talk (about) race when not talking (about) it" (Goldberg, 2006, p. 1). Shifting our reflexivity from language as representation, i.e., what is said, toward discourse enables different questions to be asked and promotes an understanding of how power relations flow through the construction of meaning and knowledge. This shift may decenter the focus towards relationality and political structures, and to questions such as, Who benefits from this perspective or knowledge? What is concealed or unsaid in this utterance? Is something missing from the

conversation, and if so, why? In terms of understanding racism, focusing on the workings of discourse conceptualizes the discussion from the common liberal-universal perspective of "is this racism?" towards "what is it that racism does to our relations and subjectivities?", and "why and how do we see racism differently depending on our positionalities and experiences?" These kinds of questions may lead to a shift in the focus from shame and naming who is racist toward racism as a structural phenomenon that positions us differently but that influences us all. This shift in focus may allow for a shared vision of anti-racism, deconstructing the alleged binaries between oppressors and oppressed and moving the focus to the kind of society and community we want to build together.

7.2 Absences and blind spots

When engaging in an analysis of absences, it is imperative to pay attention also to the possible absences that are produced by the same analysis, as limitations to the research. Discussing my material with peers and colleagues during the research process, intersectionality appeared as a little-explored but important avenue in the analysis. Examining the material further, I found that this was especially relevant for my material in the way racialization is gendered, something which particularly influenced the subjectivities and positionalities of Muslim girls. This aspect can also be extended to a larger discursive pattern across the material and to the extent to which the construction of national exceptionalist imaginary was premised upon the Muslim as representation of the occidental other, thus delineating the boundaries of a "good" and democratic nation. I therefore briefly discuss this discursive positioning of the Muslim as a category below.

When discussing intersectionality, it is important to keep in mind the genealogy of the term and its origin within black feminism and the pointing out of how black women are potentially marginalized and overlooked both within antiracism and feminist movements (Crenshaw et al., 1995). It is vital to understand intersectionality as a fundamentally anti-racist concept. I regard intersectionality as an argument for highlighting racialization in particular because applying it without considering race amounts to the risk of whitestreaming the analysis and subsuming the structural realities of racism into the

cocktail of a depoliticized "diversity." A major reason for paying specific attention to racialization in my research is the general avoidance and silence around racism in the Norwegian context (Bangstad, 2015), and hence the need for "seeing" racialization in this context. However, I could admittedly have paid more attention to how coloniality and oppression manifests in relation to more specific and complex structures of power, and how "colonial modes of human relationality" fabricate "subject positions through intersecting and interlocking discursive regimes of gender, race, class, sexuality, and ability, among others"(Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2012, p. 42).

As argued by Ahmed (2000), the production of national imaginary and demarcations of its limits is important for policing both the nation-state borders and the individuals and groups within these borders. In their analysis of Norwegian social studies textbooks, Røthing and Svendsen (2011) located a conflation between the categories "non-Western" and "Muslim" as the opposition to the Western (i.e., Norwegian) exceptionalist democracy, upholding alleged superior sexual norms as markers of Norwegianness. In Norway, Muslims are often portrayed as representing a unified religious identity overriding other differences, and serving as a common denominator for the cultural other (Jacobsen, 2005). Moreover, Toft (2020) argues how the influence of the media context on the teaching of Islam leads to a revolvement around controversial issues, confirming the "extreme" as normality in the understanding of Islam and Muslims. In my research, the Muslim in a sense represented the ultimate "stranger", as described by Ahmed (2000): "there is a constant redefinition of who ''we'' are through the very necessity of encountering strangers" (p. 101). This positioning as stranger was notably manifested through how the presence of Muslims in the classroom was considered a potential challenge to free and open debate (Article 4). I experienced this positioning in a highly affectively charged manner in a particular event in the research. Observing a class where student teachers discussed prejudice against religious minorities, the student teachers asked their students, "Do you know any religious groups that experience a lot of prejudice in Norway today?" As the students listed all the major world religions, Islam appeared as the exception. My teacher educator colleague who was present with me turned to me and whispered, "Where is the elephant in the room?" This absence was also visible with

how the student teachers prompted more answers from the students, providing hints that could lead them toward Islam. After class, we asked the student teachers about why Islam was not mentioned, and one of them responded: "Well, maybe they did not dare to say it, as many might consider 'Muslim' a bad word." As Ahmed (2000) further remarks, the demarcation of the national body is also shaped by the differentiation of the "strangers" into either familiar, strange, or unassimilable. An associated phenomenon was how the teachers expressed relief with the ability to talk in positive terms about Muslims as far as the religious identity was invisible in terms, shaping them as familiar strangers and being able to offer inclusion.

Several researchers in the Norwegian context have pointed out how Muslim identity often becomes a site of debate and discussion and that Muslim religious identities are seen as a public concern in need of justification. Hence, Muslim youth are often constructed as others through representing religion, while white youth may reserve their religious beliefs for the private sphere (Iversen, 2012; Synnes, 2019; Vassenden & Andersson, 2011). This othering has a particular gendered dimension; as Kassam (2011) describes, the perceived essence of Islam is often inscribed in and defined through the bodies of Muslim women and girls, situating them both as a carrier of tradition and a potential site of modernization. This thought was also evident across my material, where especially the absence of the hijab represented a gatekeeper for being accepted as a part of "us." As briefly mentioned in Article 4, but also featuring across my material, was the relief with the white teachers of Muslim girls that did not wear hijab, associated also with counter-situation of the hyper-visibility of the hijab-wearing girl. While the first case, exemplified by Amal in Article 4, positions the Muslim girl as a symbol of progressive modernity, the second case, exemplified by Sarah in Article 4, positions her as a carrier of tradition and a potential challenge to "our" values. In both cases, the Muslim girl is positioned as an embodiment and object of policing the boundaries of the nation-state.

A related, second limitation in my analysis was that more attention could have been paid to emphasizing how students, and particularly students positioned as othered, negotiated and resisted hegemonic discourses. This also amounts to a methodological

limitation in how gaining access to the complexity of subjectivity formation and boundary work relies on deepening the relationship with the participating students. As I was initially more interested in the educational materials, conversations, and practice, the subjectivity formation and identity work of students and the extent to which this must be understood as interrelated to the (re)production of educational narratives emerged during the research. A deeper engagement with these aspects would have demanded staying with participants for a longer time. This insight therefore points not only toward how I could have designed the research differently but also to avenues for further inquiry.

The envisioning of "worlds to come" and "living in our present a world we want to create, crafting that world through our living" (Shotwell, 2016, p. 165) can be a fruitful strategy for decolonizing and anti-oppressive work in and through education. In my material, there are traces of potential for such work among students. Although I analyze the discomfort and resistance toward talking about race and skin color with the white students as related to white innocence and self-technologies (Article 3), this can also be understood as a way in which the students resist racialization. A particular example that I seem to return to in my reflections and that the co-researchers with whom I discussed the material showed particular interest in is the example of Sarah and her discussions with peers (Article 3). Although Sarah is positioned as the inevitable other inscribed on her body (Ahmed, 2000), she also performs resistance toward the rigid and limited space offered to her through the discursive construction of identity categories. Notably, Sarah engaged this through performing what Lugones (2003) describes as "active subjectivity," resisting oppressive narratives and challenging power by deviating from expectations. As pointed out by Anzaldúa (1987), the significance of paying attention to how people (women) resist hegemonic discourses is based on how identification within boundaries becomes flexible through the agentive work of resisting, enabling the experience of how identity cannot be confined within given boundaries (Ali & Sonn, 2017). Hence, the sites where boundaries are actualized are also potential sites for transformative work. While the failure to highlight these spaces is a limitation of the research, it simultaneously makes visible an interesting path for further research.

Reflection is also needed on the limitations of the possibilities for educational practice as sites of social change, in terms of the structural, political, and material frameworks by which they are confined. Challenging these frameworks is also related to understanding the restricted space in which the teachers can exercise professional judgment. As pointed out among others by Biesta (2015), the professional space for teachers is currently increasingly confined and policed by neoliberal political power, emphasizing economic accountability, and "teaching to the test." As I mention in my final reflections, this research must be read with modesty as regards the massive political work demanded from decoloniality that cannot be undertaken by individual teachers, teacher educators, or students, and the attention needed to the political context in which educational practice and interactions take place.

7.3 Possible avenues for further research

An inevitable pain of finishing this Ph.D. research, as is likely in any reflexive research project, is the realization of what one should and could have done differently. However, as pointed out in the previous section, engaging with the limitations amounts to opportunities for locating avenues for further research.

The major learning related to my reflexive work throughout this project is realizing the significance of dismantling whiteness and engaging decolonization in and through the very construction and operationalization of research, moving toward what Santos (2018) calls non-extractivist methodologies. Decolonization cannot be seen as an outcome of research but should be an intrinsic part of the process. In the case of making education responsive to diverse knowledge systems, "the sites of struggle for recognition, acceptance, and integrations were going to require collaborative, interdisciplinary, participatory, and Indigenous research methodologies to decolonize educational institutions" (Battiste, 2016, p. 111). This requirement speaks both to me personally and as regards my further work as a researcher in two ways: the first relates to conducting research that actively aims to counter coloniality in and through its design, and the second relates to the importance of making and creating space for marginalized and indigenous researchers and teacher educators when and if I have the opportunity. As I

have laid out in Section 4.3.2, the research process provided insights into research in education as a collaborative and collective endeavor between teacher educators, teachers, and students. These insights also implicate the importance of critically examining research methodologies in citizenship education research in light of power relations both in terms of the positionality of teachers and students in relation to teacher educators and researchers, and the wider power structures related to the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and class.

The epistemological violence in textbooks, practice, and discourses located in this research points toward *pedagogical* violence perpetrated against racialized students (Martin et al., 2017), which in this research highlighted how the locus of enunciation, knowledge, and subjectivity is commonly situated in a normalized white privilege. Understanding such pedagogical violence also needs to take into account organizational aspects such as how classrooms are set up and organized, the structure and organization of school days and classes, teaching strategies and methods, and forms of assessment. An important aspect for further inquiry is thus research on the particularities of how this violence is reproduced in specific contexts to assist the development of more socially just pedagogies. This includes shedding light on the structural, material, and organizational aspects of such violence and obtaining more knowledge on how everyday racism is experienced in complex ways by racialized students, as well as students' own ideas, understandings, and reflections on racism and injustice in schools.

A further insight from the decolonial perspective is the insight into how abyssal thinking has constructed hegemonies of what counts as education, marginalizing other ways of being and knowing. This hegemony centers education policy, institutions, and curriculum on white European ways of being and knowing, effectively obstructing other possibilities (Santos, 2007). Interesting avenues for further exploration could thus be research that investigates alternative options of organizing and doing education, asking questions such as, Where might education take place? What counts as pedagogy, and what is learning? The results in this research point toward the relevance of further exploring and developing alternative and postabyssal pedagogies. Avenues for such work can also be

related to including organizations, community-based, indigenous, and everyday knowledge in conventional educational systems (Eriksen & Svendsen, 2020). Such inclusion also actualizes methodological concerns, as it must be undertaken in non-extractivist manners (Santos, 2018). Decolonizing pedagogy fundamentally involves engaging with different, contextually relevant decolonial practices that can provide learnings of and point toward options for interrupting coloniality in education (Stein et al., 2020). Such explorations of alternative practices direct interesting avenues for further research and exploration, both as part of mainstream institutions and in postabyssal spaces. Within mainstream teacher education in the Norwegian context, this research highlights the need for further investigation into how coloniality, whiteness, and racism can be countered while actively engaging decolonial experiments and practices.

7.4 Closing reflections: What is education for?

In the above discussion, I have, through addressing the implications of this research, provided some direction as to what a decolonizing citizenship education could look like, with relevance for both primary school and teacher education. Although this research is undertaken in a Norwegian context, I argue that it is also relevant in a wider international context. I have argued that the implications of this research point toward a decolonizing citizenship education that should include the following:

- Pluralizing curriculum and teaching materials
- Engaging with epistemology and fostering knowledge about the politics and historicity of knowledge production
- Explicitly engaging colonial history, and positioning racialized and indigenous groups as the protagonists of these narratives
- Including and experimenting with post-abyssal pedagogies, such as affective approaches and practicing conversation and listening rather than only dialogue
- Engaging a critical self-reflexivity that is relational
- Explicitly deconstructing and dismantling national exceptionalism and whiteness
- Reconceptualizing racism

- Engaging in prefigurative practices toward futures that are desirable but unpredictable

However, decolonization also highlights the deeper questions of what (and who) education is for. To unpack these nuances further, the distinction made by Todd (2015) between education as an institutionalized practice of schooling and pedagogy as a practice of transformation is informative. As she explains, pedagogy as transformation is about "creating opportunities for one's subjectivity to emerge in ways that allow a response to the world that is meaningful," suggesting that pedagogical spaces can be "inherently critical of center-defined notions of what is supposedly best for all" (Todd, 2015, p. 55). In the perspective of Biesta (2015), institutionalized schooling might become caught up in the language of learning, preventing the opportunity to engage with the key educational questions of content, purpose, and relationships involved in pedagogy, that is, the "for what" of learning. While the above-listed recommendations answer mostly to education as an institutionalized practice of schooling, decolonization also urges a more existential, teleological reflection upon pedagogy and the "for what" of education.

Martin et al. (2017) argue that student teachers are often already socialized into a colonial teacher ontology through their own schooling, focusing teaching on instrumental doing rather than pedagogical purpose. From an indigenous or racialized standpoint, it might be clear to see how the common notion of a "good teacher" is also often tied up with whiteness, while as white, such notions may simply appear as "normal," and thus remain unquestioned (Pete, 2017). Martin et al. (2017) further argue that student teachers are not disposed to question what it means to be a teacher and are more concerned with learning what to do, rather than reflecting upon practice. This notion was evident in my encounters with teachers and student teachers, particularly in relation to teaching interventions 1 and 2 (Articles 3 and 4). As I expected, in the conversations on the interventions to delve into matters of knowledge production, students' different interests in and reactions to the content of the lessons, and issues of social justice and the role of education, the student

teachers generally assessed the lessons in terms of practical aspects, such as whether the digital aids worked or whether their students were able to sit quietly or seemed to enjoy the class. The educational strategies implicated by this research, as described above, demand commitment and effort to develop ethical relations with the other, engaging with discomfort, deconstruction, and self-reflexivity, and letting go of possible comforts of modernity related to easy solutions and universal knowledge. Engaging this commitment in education requires something to which we can willingly commit, to answer the question, *why should we*? And especially those of us protected by the pleasures and comforts of whiteness and exceptionalism hold the privilege of asking, *what is in it for me*?

I argue that at the very depth of the "for what" question is the need for a reconceptualization of modern subjectivities and a radical humanization based on acknowledging interdependence, "refusing political and ethical individualism" (Shotwell, 2016, p. 172). Returning to the Norwegian Core curriculum, I see a potential basis for such a vision in the concept of solidarity. Although this concept has not been prominent in educational discourse recently, solidarity is stated as part of the overall mandate for education and mentioned three times in the Core curriculum. However, when unpacking the contents of the concept, there is a tension between a notion of solidarity closely connected to the idea of a "shared history" and "cultural heritage" gesturing toward ethno-nationalism and a notion of radical plurality:

> Our shared cultural heritage has developed throughout history and must be carried forward by present and future generations. Common reference frameworks are important for each person's sense of belonging in society. This creates solidarity and connects each individual's identity to the greater community and a historical context. A common framework gives and shall give room for diversity, and the pupils must be given insight into how we live together with different perspectives, attitudes, and views of life (KD, 2019, p. 1.2).

I thus argue here that solidarity that is humanizing and socially just must be premised on the latter, i.e., living together with different views of life. Such a vision of solidarity depicts

solidarity as a praxis, a *being* embedded in reciprocity and responsibility toward common humanity (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2012).

This research is undertaken with a firm belief in the power and significance of education. However, the findings and discussion paradoxically indicate that a key to better praxis may lie in *downplaying* the potential of citizenship education in terms of institutionalized schooling as a transformative tool or means for enabling an ideal democracy or producing a certain type of citizen. If conceptualized as a means, citizenship education may continue to evolve into a commodity, fostering competitive individualism rather than reciprocity. On the other hand, we might risk the translation of social challenges into educational challenges, and "a consequence of educationalization is that individual teachers and students are made responsible for the social problem rather than politicians and companies" (Ideland, 2016, p. 97). Rather than approaching citizenship education as a tool or means, I suggest emphasizing citizenship education as the continuous enabling of an emerging space for solidarity and humanization for and with all students.

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Group interview with students

Social studies as subject

a) Use the POST-IT notes, and write individually: What grade (1-6) would you give social studies? Why?
b) What do you usually do in social studies? What is social studies? Imagine that you are explaining to a first grader: Why is social studies a subject in school?
c) (Use the textbook as support) What topics do you like in social studies?
d) Use the POST-IT notes, and write individually: Are there any topics you cannot talk about in social studies? What are reasons for that? Are there any topics you would like to discuss more?

Citizenship and national identity

a) Use the POST-IT and write individually: What does it mean to be Norwegian?
b) What is important for being a good citizen in Norway?
c) Is Norway a good country to live in? Why/why not?
d) Use the POST-IT and write individually: What does it mean to be Sami?
e) Have you learnt anything about Sami culture and history in social studies?

Cases from the news

a) Where do you learn about society, besides social studies? (other subjects, social media, TV, newspapers, parents, friends) How do you know what is true?
b) Discuss the cases. Examples from the childrens` newspaper Aftenposten Junior.

Cases from the news for discussion

Citizenship and identity:

Swedish Sami artist and reindeer herder Jon Henrik Fjallgren. Fjellgran has been bullied for both not being «Sami enough», and not being «Swedish enough»

Citizenship and activism:

Students putting up the «Rainbow-flag» at the local municipal building as the municipality refuse to raise the flag during «Pride»

[Teaching intervention 1. Translated version of the description of the lesson]

About the lesson:

Around May 17th, the Norwegian national day, there are often public debate about what it means to be Norwegian, and attempts to draw boundaries. This purpose with this lesson is for the students to reflect upon how there are many ways of being Norwegian, and about identity and belonging in relation to the nation state.

Suitable for: Level 5-7

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Learning outcomes , KL-06, Level 7	For the teacher	For the student
Social studies	*Discuss social science themes with respect for the viewpoints of others, use relevant terminology from the field and distinguish between opinion and fact *Provide examples of different cultural symbols and give an account of what we mean by the concepts of identity and culture	I practice - Critical thinking, discussion and disagreement - Reflecting upon different ways of being Norwegian
Christianity, religion, philosophies of life and ethics	*Talk about ethnic, religious and ethical minorities in Norway, and reflect on the challenges of multicultural society	I know - What it means to be a minority in a nation state

1) Introduction. Approximately 5-10 minutes

The students work in groups of 3-4 students together. The students use the thinking sheet to reflect upon their ideas of what it means to be Norwegian.
Step 1: All students work individually with one square of the sheet, writing down as many ideas as possible.
Step 2: The students share their ideas with the rest of the group.
Step 3: The students agree on the most important ideas, and write them down in the middle.

Thinking sheet:

Tenkeark: Hva vil det si å være norsk?

Slik gjør dere:

1. Tenk hver for dere. Skriv ned så mange ideer som mulig i hvert deres hjørne.
2. Fortell hverandre hva dere har skrevet.
3. Bli enige om tre ideer dere synes er spesielt gode. Skriv dem ned i det grønne feltet.

Idé 1
Begrunnelse:

Idé 2
Begrunnelse:

Idé 3
Begrunnelse:

2) The Kings' Speech. Approximately 10-15 minutes

Show the clip with the speech of King Harald on the public party in the Queens` Park in Oslo, celebrating 25 years on the throne. Discuss with students in plenary. Examples of questions: How do you feel about the speech? Did you like it or not? Why? Was it something you agreed or disagreed with? Why?

Link to the clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16LwWB0qaVI

3) Odd one out. Approximately 15 minutes

In groups:
Students can first discuss the pictures in the group. The idea with the task is that there are no "right" answers, and to enable the students to discuss and problematize categorizations.

In plenary:
When all groups have discussed possible solutions, they can share with the class. Discuss your suggestions in the class, and discuss whether there were similarities and differences. Examples of questions for discussion: Where do these ideas come from? Why do we have different/ the same ideas? Did you get any new ideas from the other groups?
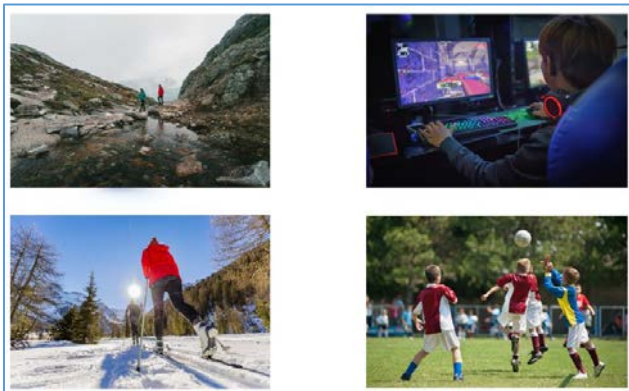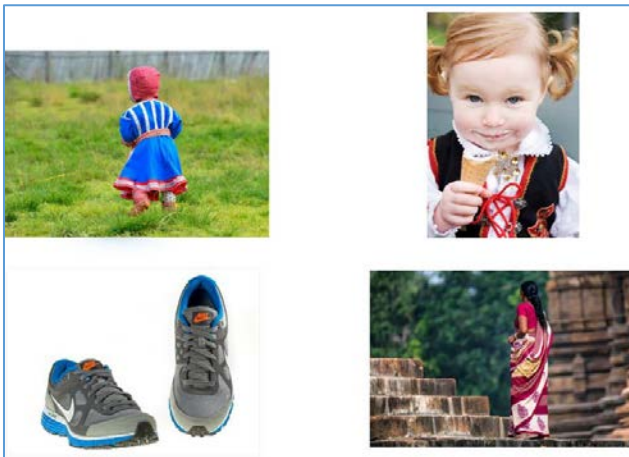
4) Closing reflections. Approximately 10 minutes

In groups:
The students bring back their thinking sheets and evaluate their suggestions. Is there something they would like to change, or add? If so, why?

In plenary:
The students report their experiences with the class. Relevant questions can be whether it was easy to discuss what it means to be Norwegian, or if there were differences in the answers among the groups.

[Teaching intervention 2. Translated version of the lesson description]

About the Lecture:

The first part of the lesson consists of refection tasks thematizing questions of citizenship, minority perspectives and everyday racism. The second part introduces the national minority groups, emphasizing the group Romani/Tater.

Suitable for: Level 5-7

Duration: 120 minutes

Learning outcomes , KL-06, Level 7	For the teacher	For the student
Social studies	*Elaborate on which national minorities exist in Norway and describe the main characteristics of the history and living conditions of these minorities *Provide examples of different cultural symbols and give an account of what we mean by the concepts of identity and culture	I have - Knowledge about the national minorities in Norway - Knowledge about the history of the Romani/tater group in Norway I can - Reflect upon different ways of being Norwegian
Christianity, religion, philosophies of life and ethics	*Talk about ethnic, religious and ethical minorities in Norway, and reflect on the challenges of multicultural society *Discuss racism and how anti-racist work can prevent racism	I know - What it means to be a minority in a nation-state I can - Discuss everyday racism and how it can be experienced

1) **Introduction and discussion. Approximately 25 minutes**

Play the movie from Gorilla Media about children in Denmark being told by politicians that they are not "completely" Danish:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=8&v=e7mqfmZS5xM

Have a brief conversation with the students about their thoughts on the movie. Suggested questions:
- What are your thoughts about what the Danish politicians say?
- What are the children`s answers to the questions about why they are Danish?

- What seems important for the children in answering where they are from?
- What are your thoughts on the children participating in this movie?

Students enter www.menti.com and answer the questions/surveys.
Individual part:
Students answer the questions anonymously:
Where do I come from? What is important about my identity?

Groups, 3-4 students:
Work on the question:
What does it mean to be Norwegian? Find words to describe this.
Log onto menti again, and fill inn 5 keywords in the word cloud (the word cloud is interactively created by the combination of keywords).
The teacher leads a conversation in class about the results from the word cloud.

[Example of result]

2) **Everyday racism, citizenship and belonging. Approximately 25 minutes**

Play the movie about central concepts until it asks you to pause (movie made by Kristin):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXhc7816SPI

Individual part:
The students vote anonymously on menti.
- Is it racism when Amira is asked where she is really from?
- Have you seen or experienced racism?

[Example of result]

Har du sett eller opplevd rasisme?
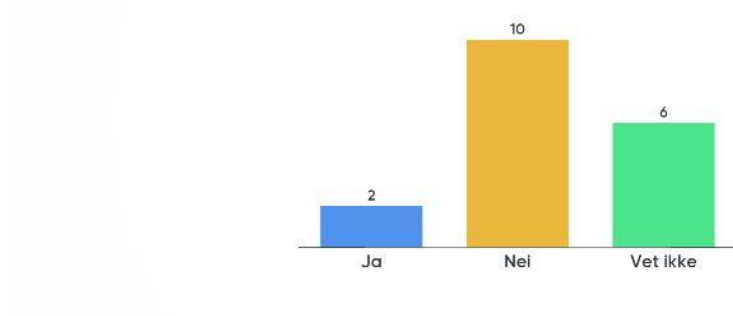
Discussion in class, suggestions for questions:
- Is there anyone who would like to justify his or her answer? Anyone disagreeing?
- Do you think the people asking Amira where she is really from intends to be racist?
- Why can it be racism even though it is not intended to be?
- Why is it described as *everyday racism*?
- Have you, or someone you know, heard something similar to what Amira hears? For example: "You are a good soccer player, even though you are a girl!", or «wow, you are tall to be in the 5th grade!» How do such comments make you feel?

Continue watching the movie.
Talk about the concepts from the movie: Minority, majority, everyday racism, norms.

3) **Introduction about the national minorities and the Romani/tater people. Approximately 20 minutes**

The teacher provides a short introduction about the concept «national minority».

Watch the movie (9 minutes, made by Kristin):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZ6EssJyzpY.
Do a short round of questions and comments following the movie.

4) **«Mysteries». Approximately 25 minutes.**

The mystery is about Trygve, growing up in a Romani/Tater family in the 1950s. The story is based on Trygves` personal account and taken from a large exhibition from the Glomdal museum, that you can visit online (www.latjodrom.no).

In groups, 3-4 students:
The groups are handed pieces of paper with parts of Trygve`s story, as well as pictures. The groups are to connect the parts guided by the key question:
- What happened to Trygve?

When the groups are done, they report to the class.
Suggested questions:
- What happened to Trygve?
- What can be the reasons why this happened?
- What did the Norwegian government do?
- What kind of place was Svanviken?
- What do you think about Trygve`s story?
- Could this have happened today? Why/why not?

5) **Closing reflection. Approximately 10 minutes.**

- Think about what you have learnt about the history of the Romani/Tater. Do you think there are minority groups that are hearing accusations today? Do you have examples?
- How can we fight these kinds of prejudices and racism today?

Individual part: Log on to Menti. Answer the question: What do you think about today`s class? Did you learn something you did not know from before?

Appendix 4

NSD

Kristin Gregers Kristin Gregers
Institutt for kultur, religion og samfunnsfag Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge
Postboks 235
3603 KONGSBERG

Vår dato: 02.02.2017   Vår ref: 51543 / 3 / AGH   Deres dato: Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 12.12.2016. Meldingen gjelder
prosjektet:

51543	*Demokratididaktikk for fremtidens samfunnsfag: Hvordan skape en relevant og inkluderende demokratididaktikk på trinn 1-7?*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Kristin Gregers Kristin Gregers*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er
meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i
personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i
meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt
personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger
kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de
opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et
eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding
etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database,
http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.12.2020, rette en henvendelse angående
status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Kjersti Haugstvedt
                                        Agnete Hessevik

Kontaktperson: Agnete Hessevik tlf: 55 58 27 97
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Erklæring om samtykke til deltakelse i forskningsprosjekt
Jeg er doktorgradsstipendiat ved Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge og skal gjøre et forskningsprosjekt om samfunnsfagdidaktikk. Arbeidstittelen er *Samfunnsfag 1-7 som arena for medborgerskap*. Jeg trenger deltakere for prosjektet til skoleåret 2017-2018.

Hva innebærer deltakelse?
Jeg skal gjøre observasjoner av interaksjonen i klasserommet i samfunnsfag. Det skal ikke innebære noe merarbeid å ha meg tilstede. Forskning i klasserommet er viktig for å utvikle god didaktikk og læremidler for fremtiden, og for å forbedre lærerutdanningen som jeg jobber i. Det vil være interessant for en motivert lærer å være med i forskningsprosjektet. Jeg ønsker også å gjøre noen samtaler med lærer i løpet av perioden. Dette handler om å sikre troverdigheten i observasjonene gjennom å diskutere dem med lærer. Dersom det er rom for det, ønsker jeg også å samtale med elever i gruppe om deres forståelse av seg selv som medborgere. Dette kunne være særlig aktuelt i forbindelse med valget høsten 2017, dersom det er et tema for klassen.

Studien er finansiert gjennom stipendiatstilling ved Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge, og meldt inn til personombudet for forskning ved Norsk senter for forskningsdata, NSD. Veileder på prosjektet er førsteamanuensis Heidi Biseth. Jeg er som forsker underlagt taushetsplikt. Alt som pedagogisk personale og elever forteller blir behandlet konfidensielt. Opplysninger som fremkommer i publisert materiale skal ikke kunne tilbakeføres til det enkelte individ eller skole. Informasjon som kommer frem gjennom intervjuene vil ikke bli utlevert til andre. Datamaterialet anonymiseres og eventuelle lydopptak slettes ved prosjektets slutt i desember 2020. Det er frivillig å delta i undersøkelsen og det er mulig å trekke seg på et hvilket som helst tidspunkt uten å oppgi en grunn.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg dersom det er spørsmål.
Med vennlig hilsen

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Tlf: +47 31 00 95 72/ +47 41 31 86 41

✂--

Jeg har lest informasjonen over og jeg ønsker å delta i undersøkelsen.

_____   _____
    Sted, dato   underskrift

Appendix 6

Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge (HSN)

Samtykkeerklæring til foresatte og elever

Jeg er doktorgradsstipendiat ved Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge og skal gjennomføre en undersøkelse ved ulike skoler i forbindelse med mitt forskningsprosjekt med arbeidstittelen: *Demokratididaktikk for fremtidens samfunnsfag: Hvordan skape en relevant og inkluderende demokratididaktikk på trinn 1-7?*

Formålet med prosjektet mitt er å kartlegge hvordan det demokratiske mandatet til samfunnsfaget ivaretas i didaktisk praksis i skolen, hvordan dette oppfattes av lærere og hvilke oppfatninger elevene har om samfunnsfaget med vekt på demokrati. Datainnsamlingen vil foregå som en kombinasjon mellom observasjon av undervisning, intervju med lærer og samtale med elever i gruppe. Prosjektet har ikke som intensjon å se på elevene spesielt eller gjøre noen form for kartlegging av enkeltelever. Elevperspektivet er interessant som del av et helhetlig blikk på samfunnsfaget i skolen. Jeg vil samtale med noen elever i gruppe med klassekamerater, men det er ikke sikkert alle elevene blir spurt. Jeg har forberedt de fleste spørsmål på forhånd og foresatte og lærer kan kreve å få utlevert plan for samtalen.

Jeg er som forsker underlagt taushetsplikt. Alt pedagogisk personale og elever forteller blir behandlet konfidensielt. Opplysninger som fremkommer i publisert materiale skal ikke kunne tilbakeføres til det enkelte individ eller skole. Informasjon som kommer frem gjennom intervjuene vil ikke bli utlevert til andre. Prosjektet er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste A/S. Datamaterialet anonymiseres og lydbåndopptak slettes ved prosjektets slutt i desember 2020. Det er frivillig å delta i undersøkelsen og det er mulig å trekke seg på et hvilket som helst tidspunkt uten å oppgi en grunn. Jeg vil gjøre mitt ytterste for å gi god og oppdatert informasjon til foresatte og elever underveis. Jeg legger også stor vekt på barns rett til medvirkning. Dersom eleven er 10 år eller eldre ønsker jeg også underskrift av eleven. Yngre elever kan skrive under dersom de har sterkt ønske om det og foresatte anser at de forstår innholdet i skrivet.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg dersom det er spørsmål.
Med vennlig hilsen
Kristin Gregers Eriksen, Doktorgradsstipendiat, Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge
E-post: kristin.eriksen@hbv.no, Tlf: +47 31 00 95 72/ +47 41 31 86 41

✂--
Jeg har lest informasjonen over og jeg ønsker å delta i undersøkelsen.

_____   _____
     Sted, dato   elevens underskrift

Jeg har lest informasjonen over og jeg gir tillatelse til at mitt barn kan delta i undersøkelsen.

_____   _____
     Sted, dato   foresattes underskrift

HSN Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge

Samtykkeerklæring til elever og foresatte – deltakelse i forskningsprosjekt om samfunnsfag i skolen

Jeg er doktorgradsstipendiat ved Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge og holder på med et forskningsprosjekt som har arbeidstittelen: *Samfunnsfag trinn 1-7 som arena for medborgerskap.* Jeg synes det er svært viktig i et forskningsprosjekt som handler om skolens innhold at også elevene blir hørt, og ønsker derfor å snakke med noen elever i gruppe. Spørsmålene handler om hva elevene synes om samfunnsfag, hva de synes er utfordrende, hva som motiverer dem og hvordan de ser på sin egen rolle som samfunnsborgere i Norge.

Samtalen vil foregå i grupper på omtrent 5 elever, og jeg gjør lydopptak av samtalen. Samtalen vil vare i omtrent 30-40 minutter. Det er frivillig å delta, og det er mulig å trekke seg når som helst uten å oppgi en grunn.

Jeg er som forsker underlagt taushetsplikt. Det betyr at jeg ikke kan fortelle noen om hva som blir sagt i samtalen. Alt elever forteller blir derfor behandlet konfidensielt. Samtidig skal jeg formidle resultater fra forskningen, og opplysninger som kommer frem skal ikke kunne tilbakeføres til en enkelt elev eller skole. Prosjektet er meldt inn til Personvernombudet for forskning ved *Norsk senter for forskningsdata A/S*. Datamaterialet gjøres anonymt og lydbåndopptak slettes ved prosjektets slutt i desember 2020.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg dersom du har spørsmål.
Med vennlig hilsen
Kristin Gregers Eriksen
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Tlf.: +47 31 00 95 72/ +47 41 31 86 41
✂--
Jeg har lest informasjonen over og jeg ønsker å delta i undersøkelsen.

_____   _____
Sted, dato   elevens underskrift

Jeg har lest informasjonen over og jeg gir tillatelse til at mitt barn kan delta i undersøkelsen.

_____   _____

Sted, dato   foresattes underskrift

Erklæring om samtykke til deltakelse i forskningssamtale

Jeg er doktorgradsstipendiat ved Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge og holder på med et forskningsprosjekt om samfunnsfagdidaktikk. Arbeidstittelen er *Samfunnsfag 1-7 som arena for medborgerskap*. Målet med dette er å styrke kunnskapen om samfunnsfaget på trinn 1-7, som er lite forsket på. I neste rekke vil det kunne bidra til å styrke lærerutdanningen.

Dette er din forsikring om at det du sier under samtalen vil anonymiseres og behandles konfidensielt.

Studien er finansiert gjennom stipendiatstilling ved Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge, og meldt inn til personombudet for forskning ved Norsk senter for forskningsdata, NSD. Veileder på prosjektet er førsteamanuensis Heidi Biseth. Jeg er som forsker underlagt taushetsplikt. Alt som pedagogisk personale og elever forteller blir behandlet konfidensielt. Opplysninger som fremkommer i publisert materiale skal ikke kunne tilbakeføres til det enkelte individ eller skole. Informasjon som kommer frem gjennom intervjuene vil ikke bli utlevert til andre. Datamaterialet anonymiseres og eventuelle lydopptak slettes ved prosjektets slutt i desember 2020. Det er frivillig å delta i undersøkelsen og det er mulig å trekke seg på et hvilket som helst tidspunkt uten å oppgi en grunn.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg dersom det er spørsmål.
Med vennlig hilsen

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✂---

Jeg har lest informasjonen over og jeg ønsker å delta i undersøkelsen.

_____   _____

   Sted, dato   Underskrift

Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge

Erklæring om samtykke til innsamling av forskningsdata
Jeg jobber ved lærerutdanningen på Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge og forsker på samfunnsfagundervisning. Jeg har avtalt med lærer å prøve ut et undervisningsopplegg om 17.mai. Opplegget varer en skoletime, følger Kunnskapsdepartementets læreplanmål i samfunnsfag og er utviklet i samarbeid med Aschehoug forlag. For å bruke erfaringene fra dette i videre forskningsarbeid, ønsker jeg å
- Ta opptak av elevsamtaler i klasserommet under arbeid med opplegget
- Samle inn notatark som elevene fyller ut i undervisningen

Opptakene og notatarkene blir anonymisert, og slettet ved prosjektets slutt i desember 2020. Studien er meldt inn til personombudet for forskning ved Norsk senter for forskningsdata, NSD. Jeg er som forsker underlagt taushetsplikt. Opplysninger som fremkommer i publisert materiale skal ikke kunne tilbakeføres til den enkelte elev, lærer eller skole. Informasjonen vil ikke bli utlevert til andre.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg dersom du har spørsmål.
Med vennlig hilsen

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Co-author declaration

This form must be signed by the PhD candidate, the principal supervisor (where he/she is a co-author), and the other two most central authors. The corresponding author must be among them.

PhD candidate	Kristin Gregers Eriksen (corresponding author)
Principal supervisor	Heidi Biseth (not involved as author of article)
Authors	Kristin Gregers Eriksen and Sharon Stein
Title	Good intentions, colonial relations: Interrupting the white emotional equilibrium of Norwegian citizenship education
Journal	Under review

The PhD candidate's contribution to the article
1. Formulation/identification of the scientific problem   Primarily done by PhD candidate
2. Planning of the experiments and methodology design, including selection of methods and method development   Primarily done by PhD candidate
3. <u>Involvement</u> in the experimental work   Primarily done by PhD candidate
4. Presentation, interpretation and discussion in a journal article format of obtained data   Co-work of PhD candidate and co-author Sharon Stein

Date	Signature
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01.12.20	*[signature]*

Kristin Gregers Eriksen

Teaching About the Other in Primary Level Social Studies: The Sami in Norwegian Textbooks

- The article discusses the role of textbook discourses in constructing national imaginary.
- Textbooks for primary school are analyzed by applying critical discourse analysis.
- The empirical example is portrayal of the indigenous Sami people in Norway.
- Discourses on history and national days entail an active othering of the Sami.
- The textbooks provide limited opportunities for education that promotes social change.

Purpose: The aim of this article is to discuss to what extent and in what ways the Sami people are included in national imaginary in textbooks. The article sheds critical light on important aspects of democracy, inclusion and multi-culturalism in education through the example of indigenous peoples in Norway. The article also explores what opportunities textbooks provide for promoting anti-oppressive education and pedagogical subjectification.
Method: Social studies textbooks for primary school are analyzed based on critical discourse analysis (CDA) and elements from multi-modal analysis. The analysis focuses on the use of vocabulary and pronouns signaling inclusion and exclusion. Specific attention is paid to the hidden curriculum.
Findings: The Sami are essentialized and actively constructed as the Other through the structure and content of narratives. This corresponds to the strategy described in anti-oppressive education as education for the Other. Externalization of the Sami from the story of the Norwegian national day and in particular, treatment of the discriminatory Norwegianization politics, reinforce the image of Norwegian exceptionalism.
Practical implications: Potential for education that promotes social change and subjectification through disrupting hegemonic discourses are located. Extended knowledge on this implicates further research on the workings of discourse in educational practice.

Keywords:

Textbooks, Sami, Nordic exceptionalism, anti-oppressive education, subjectification

1 Introduction
The aim of this article is to discuss to what extent and in which ways the indigenous Sami population are included in construction of the greater "we" in social studies[1] textbooks for primary schools in Norway. The Sami are the only indigenous people of northwestern Europe, and the ancestral homeland of Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie[2] covers parts of northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and northwestern Russia. After a brutal history of experience-ing state-driven discrimination, the Sami population achieved formal recognition and rights as indigenous group in Norway. Educational policy declares that Sami culture and history is part of the common national heri-tage that should permeate education in all subjects for all pupils (The Norwegian Directory for Education and Training [UDIR], 2017). Paraphrasing Røthing and Svendsen (2011) on the construction of national and eth-nic borders, I focus on how the imagined national community (Andersson, 1983) is informed by images of

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the Sami. I investigate how textbooks construct "Saminess" as well as the role such conceptualization holds for understandings of the Norwegian nation-state. The analysis is grounded in insights from postcolonial theory and specifically the idea of *Nordic exceptionalism* (Eidsvik, 2016; Keskinen, Tuori, Irni, & Mulinari, 2009; Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2016). However, the goal is not solely to shed light on the well-acknowledged and con-tested relationship between education and nationalism but also to explore what opportunities textbook discourses provide for democratic and inclusive edu-cation. These questions are approached by applying strands of critical pedagogy, such as *anti-oppressive pedagogy* (Kumashiro, 2002) and the concept of *subjectification* put forward by Gert Biesta (2005, 2009, 2014). According to Biesta, democratic education de-pends upon the possibility of each individual to "come into presence" as unique subject. This idea presupposes recognition of plurality and difference as the norm, which challenges the inherent methodological nationa-lism of social studies. The significance of these theo-retical frameworks lies especially in their potential for locating agency and enabling social change.

Norway has ratified the International Labour Organization [ILO] convention 169 (ILO, 1989), and the state is declared to be "founded upon the territory of two peoples, the Norwegian and the Sami" (White paper 55, 2000–2001). Norwegian minority politics is inspired by the hierarchic structure put forward by Kymlicka (1995), and the Sami hold extensive formal rights as a

collective. As category, Sami encompass several different groups with distinct self-identities, languages and traditions, acknowledged as a community by their common recognition as indigenous. As the Norwegian state abstains from registering information on the ethnicity of its residents, there are no approved number of the amount of the population identifying as Sami. The official approach to this topic is mainly geographical, and ten Norwegian municipalities with approximately 55.000 inhabitants are defined as "Sami management areas".[3] However, due to urbanization, the majority of pupils with Sami affiliations probably live and go to school outside the Sami management areas (Gjerpe, 2017). The juridical status of the Sami posits a contradictory rhetoric for curriculum policy documents. While they promote integration of minority groups within a common "Norwegianness" with monocultural connotations, they also aim at providing culturally significant recognition to the Sami (Education Act, 1998; UDIR, 2017). Fundamental questions in this context include, what role do minorities have in images of the nation, and who can identify as subject and citizen in educational narratives? The research question guiding this article is hereunder

- To what extent and in which ways are the Sami included in construction of the greater "we" in social studies textbooks for primary schools?

This is further operationalized through the following sub-questions:

- How is the Sami conceptualized through text and images?
- How does the Sami inform production of Norwegian national imaginary?

Choosing textbook discourses as an empirical indicator, some pivotal remarks must be made. This article does not imply that textbooks determine teaching. Schools deal with representations rather than actual social realities, and large discrepancies between these levels might exist (Røthing & Svendsen, 2011). However, research implies that teachers depend more upon textbooks than on ideals of professionalism suggest (Børhaug, 2014). In many cases, textbooks hold a stronger sense of authority than other books and can be said to represent important expressions of national identity (Lorentzen, 2005; Røthing, 2015). The core of the idea of imagined community is that it is conceived in language rather than blood (Andersson, 1983) and thus can be approached through looking at discourses. The educational system is among the most pervasive institutions discursively reproducing hegemonic structures of society and ideas of national identity (Van Dijk, 1998).

2 Theoretical framework: Postcolonialism, subjectification and anti-oppressive pedagogy

The postcolonial perspective focuses on mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, marginalization and relationships between constructions of nation, ethnicity, gender and race. Norwegian nationalism is commonly presented in educational discourse as a positive and liberating force,

thoroughly depicted through symbolic events, such as the enactment of the constitution in 1814 and resistance to the Nazi occupation (Røthing, 2015). The country's national self-image is characterized by the idea of Norway as a peacebuilding, inherently good and humble country that is innocent of imperialism and colonialism (Eidsvik, 2016; Gullestad, 2006). This image epitomizes the manifestations of Nordic exceptionalism, a particular form of nation branding described by Loftsdóttir and Jensen (2016) as expressing two central ideas:

"It can express the idea about the Nordic countries' peripheral status in relation to the broader European colonialism and to the more contemporary processes of globalization. Or it can represent the idea that Nordic self-perception is rooted intrinsically different from the rest of Europe." (p. 2)

This is highly relevant for the case of national imaginary and the Sami in the Norwegian context. The Norwegian self-image as a do-gooder actively overlooks the blatant racism in policies that has been directed at the Sami and other minorities, as well as undermining of race and ethnicity as relevant social categories today. From the early 19th century, the Sami population was subject to assimilationist politics known as *Norwegianification* as they were regarded as a threat to a homogeneous national culture (Niemi, 2017). The Sami gradually lost influence in areas where they had been living for decades. Children were taken from their homes and placed in schools where Sami languages were prohibited, and laws that undermined traditional Sami ways of living were passed. During the 1970s and 1980s, the political climate shifted, and the official Norwegianization politics was discontinued. This change was highly influenced by strong ethno-political mobilization within Sami societies. Although commonly regarded a success story in comparison with indigenous peoples on a global scale, an extensive study of current living conditions indicated that one third of Norwegian Sami still experience discrimination related to ethnic identity, including structural and indirect discrimination (Midtbøen & Lidén, 2015). Today, there is not as much talk about revitalizing Sami culture as about processes of decolonization (Vars, 2017). Thus, the postcolonial perspective applied to the Norwegian context is relevant for exploring and deconstructing knowledge production in relation to more tacit power structures and majority privileges. One of the central ideas in postcolonial studies going back to Edward Said (1994) has been theorizing the construction of the Other, intertwined with Western nationalism and modernity. In the Nordic countries, race biology and epigenetics flourished during the early 20th century. Majority images of the Sami informed construction of an racialized Other of an "Aryan" normative standard still traceable today.

While analyzing textbooks and school policy through postcolonial lenses might serve as important windows for understanding the reproduction of social order, approaching this idea in education entails critique and

transformation of structural oppression (Freire, 1995; Giroux, 1997). Kumashiro (2002) creates a typology of four approaches to an anti-oppressive pedagogy. The two most common are teaching *for* and *about* the Other, spurred by intentions to improve the experiences of Othered students, as well as provide knowledge about minorities for majority students. However, both approaches fail to focus on relations and power structures, and implicitly position the Other as the essential "problem." Oppression is not only about marginalization of the Other but also privileging of the normal. In this context, Kumashiro argues that in order to enable social change, pupils must understand that what society defines as normal is a social construct, and unlearn what is taken as given. This can happen through what he describes as education that is *critical* of privileging and othering, and education that changes students and society: "Changing oppression requires disruptive knowledge, not simply more knowledge" (Kumashiro, 2002, p. 42). This necessary condition of uncertainty and disruption for enabling learning is paralleled in Biesta's idea of education as an arena for democratic subjectivity. Biesta (2005) argues that in order for the pupil to come into presence as a unique being, the teacher must conduct what he describes as *transcendental violence*:

"Coming into presence is, therefore, not necessarily a pleasant and easy process since it is about challenging students, confronting them with otherness and difference and asking them difficult questions. This suggests that, in a sense, there is a violent dimension to education." (p. 63)

This process enables *subjectification*, which Biesta (2009) describes as one of three different but interrelated functions of education. First, education has a central role in *socialization*, passing on current social and cultural values. The role of the Norwegian educational system in constructing and managing national imagery and cultural unity can be understood in this perspective. The second function of education is *qualification*, through advancing students' competences and knowledge for functioning in society and in the labor market. For Biesta, subjectification is the most important part in light of democracy and social change, and he argues that other functions are prioritized in the current neo-liberal educational policy. Subjectification is the way pupils can experience democracy through being subjects, allowing the students to express themselves but also experience resistance. Subjectification as the process by which people come to experience themselves as subjects is also thematized in postcolonial literature through the focus on power and resistance in self-definition and the experience of marginalization (Fanon, 1967; Phoneix, 2009).

3 Background and previous research: The Sami in curriculum and textbooks

Contrary to the central role of education in the policies of Norwegianification, educational policy has over the last decades been central to the efforts by the Norwegian government towards bettering the situation for Sami language, culture and society. However, Gjerpe (2017) raises the pertinent question of whether the visibility of Sami culture and rights in current curriculum documents represent a symbolic commitment without real influence on educational practice. In a study of upper secondary schools, Lile (2011) found that pupils learn little about Sami history and culture and that the quality of teaching is low. A current study of textbooks for secondary school showed that Sami history is highly visible in many social studies textbooks in lower and upper secondary school. Some authors tentatively attempt to relate Norwegianization to experiences with being Sami or other minorities today (Midtbøen, Oruapabou & Røthing, 2017). However, when the books thematize the fight against racism, the suggested "cure" is knowledge. Racism becomes an individualized phenomenon, related to extreme attitudes. Thus, racism and discrimination become a marginal and less relevant aspect of society today. Arguably, racism as a social category is still relevant through current processes of racialization (Røthing, 2015). Textbook authors strive to present texts with which Sami pupils can identify, and the Sami are commonly presented in an essensialized way with a strong presence of stereotypical images (Askeland, 2016; Kolpus, 2015; Mortensen-Buan, 2016). This depiction appears as close to the category of anti-oppressive pedagogy that Kumashiro (2002) describes as education about the Other, exposed to the risk of reconstructing borders of "us" and "them" through presenting dominant narratives, while having intentions of being inclusive and emancipatory. This reflects an assumption in the Norwegian educational policy that knowledge through partial content integration alone will promote respect (Lybæk & Osler, 2014).

4 Methods and empirical material
4.1 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA; Fairclough, 2010; Van Dijk, 1993) is a common and helpful tool in postcolonial exploration to locate how unequal power relations and stereotypical images are constructed and reconstructed through discourse. Education might privilege certain groups and marginalize others, and thus legitimize the social order. This manifests as ideologies that constitute social cognition, bringing about "schematically organized complexes of representations and attitudes with regard to certain aspects of the social world" (Van Dijk, 1993, p. 258). Gramsci describes this as hegemony, which is the ruling consensus in society tacitly justifying the political, social, cultural and economic order. Importantly, he argues that this ideology might influence the minds of the subjugated in such a way that they accept dominance (Gramsci, 1971). Applying the pedagogical philosophy of Biesta (2005, 2009, 2014), this also holds significance related to possibilities for learning and democratic education. A core element in my analysis is the use of vocabulary and pronouns signaling inclusion and exclusion, such as "we/us" and "them." This has to do with locating the subject of discourse, as well as the

construction of national imagery. As Van Dijk and Atienza (2011) argue, the structure of knowledge may be controlled by the overall ideological square that contributes to the negative image of "them" while constructing a humanitarian view of the subject group. Moreover, in line with basic principles of CDA, I pay specific attention to what is not said or implicitly communicated, known as the hidden curriculum (Marshall, 1992). Table 1 presents the battery of analytical questions applied in the analysis. The list of questions is a modified version of Fairclough's (2001) practical guide to CDA.

Table 1. Analytical questions applied in CDA

Analytical questions
• What classification schemes are applied?   • How are the pronouns "we" and "you" used in the text?   • How is agency allocated?   • Does the text presume particular subject positions? If so, which?   • What knowledges do the texts take for granted?   • Are there ideologically significant meaning relations between words (synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy)?   • Which topical connections are made, and which logics do they follow?   • How do the texts conceptualize the Sami?   • Is there a hidden curriculum through the representation and structure of the content?

As the textbooks are made for the initial stages of primary school, the pages generally have more pictures and illustrations than texts. Working with multimodal texts, it is imperative to pay attention also to the visual grammatics. As the research questions focus on conceptualization, the categories of narrative and conceptual representations in Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006) was useful for shedding light on these. They distinguish between narrative and conceptual representations. While the first category represent action, events and transitory processes, the latter is recognized by symbolism related to reification and classification of what something or someone essentially *is*. Another characteristic of pedagogical expository texts are repetition (Van Dijk & Atienza, 2011), and this is interesting for looking at visual as well as textual grammatics. Repetition is connected with the construction of hegemonic visions of society, and socialization into established discourses. In this regard, Andersen (2003) argues that the "official" narrative about the Sami perceptible within popular media and education, creates a ranking of Saminess where the stereotypical Northern Sami is presented as the orthodox Sami. This strengthens the othering of the Sami by obscuring internal diversity within the category, as well as further marginalizing other Sami groups such as the Southern and Lule Sami.

As CDA has a normative agenda in deliberatively addressing social wrongs, it is criticized for choosing texts that fit with the analysis and being too ambitious about the potential for creating social change (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This criticism is important to keep in mind when aspiring to inform education and didactics in a constructive manner. In this regard, the idea of positive discourse analysis within the postcolonial tradition appears inspirational (Askeland, 2016). Inspired by this, I also look for potential didactical opportunities informed by the idea of anti-oppressive and democratic education in discourses providing disruption (Biesta, 2014; Kumashiro, 2002). In applying CDA, acknowledging the role of the researcher in constructing and representing knowledge and meaning is vital. Seeing the research as apolitical or atheoretical is neither possible nor desirable within such an approach. Importantly, the existence of power and privilege often appear invisible especially to those who possess it. Being positioned as a majoritarian subject of the educational discourse as a majority Norwegian, middle-class woman, I might be subjected to what is termed the "double blind" (Comeau, 2015) in Whiteness studies. While making the analysis, I might simultaneously perform the idea of superior rationality and be compliant in constructing the Other. If I abstain, I risk permitting re-production of a possible discriminatory status quo. However, here I stand with Kumashiro (2002) in claiming that in the case of anti-oppressive education, acknowledging and altering the understandings and position of the privileged are as vital as locating the oppressed.

4.2 Empirical material: Social studies textbooks
The initial material for this analysis consisted of eight textbooks in total, and the selection includes the two main series used for social studies level 1-4 in Norway. Each series of textbooks have four separate volumes, one for each level. There is also a third alternative that holds significant market shares, but a choice was made to focus on the two series that has been updated after the curriculum was revised in 2013: *Mylder 1-4* (Haugen, Hægeland, Reiten, Sandberg, & Steinset, 2013) and *Nye Gaia 1-4* (Holm et al., 2015). Social studies is especially interesting in studying inclusion of the Sami. Firstly, it is the subject that is to provide the most extensive knowledge of Sami history and culture. Social studies also holds a special responsibility for fostering democracy in the Norwegian school (UDIR 2013a). Besides a clear absence of research on the lower levels of social studies in the Nordic context, there are also analytical benefits in looking at the primary level. I here draw upon insights by Fanon (1967) and his psychoanalytical approach to postcolonialism and subjectivity. He highlights the tacit unconscious training instilled in the minds of Othered children through the effects of images in cultural representations. Fanon argues that when young children are exposed to stereotypical images and repeated narratives of their affinity group, the children experience a psychopathology where images might become part of their personality. This is not to imply that power and dominance are deterministically imposed on children through textbooks, and a broader analysis of socio-cognitive processes of resistance is needed for a fully-fledged analysis (Van Dijk, 1993). The scope of this article, however, is to focus on the discursive strategies

in textbooks that take part in legitimating dominance, and that might exert power on self-image and subjectivity.

As one of the topics raised in previous analysis of the Sami in Norwegian textbooks has been an absence of the Sami (Olsen, 2017), I initially made an overview of chapters in which the Sami was explicitly mentioned by text or featured by pictures. Not surprisingly, they corresponded almost completely to the learning outcomes explicitly mentioning the Sami. After level four, pupils

should be able to "describe central characteristics of Sami culture and way of life up to the Christianization of the Sami people" and "converse about and explain why 17th of May and 6th of February are celebrated[4]" (UDIR, 2013a). For the second learning outcome, it was necessary to include all chapters dealing with early history as one of the series had a separate chapter on Sami history, while the other had included the Sami sporadically throughout the general historical topics.

Table 2. Overview of textbooks, content and learning outcomes

Textbooks	Content (chapter headlines) Chapters included in the final analysis indicated in bold	Learning outcomes after level 4 (UDIR, 2013a)
Mylder 1 *Mylder 2* *Mylder 3* *Mylder 4* (Haugen, Hægeland, Reiten, Sandberg, & Steinset, 2013)	1: "New at school", "Walking to school", "Here I am", "Families", **"We live here"** 2: "Making decisions", **"The Stone Age"**, "Fjords and mountains", **"National days"**, "Heaven and seas" 3: **"The Bronze Age"**, "Boys and girls", "Run and buy", "Countries far north" 4: "Living together", "Online", **"From stone to iron"**, "Where do you live", "Time and the world", "Sameness and difference"	*Describe the central characteristics of Sami culture and way of life up to the Christianization of the Sami people *Converse about and explain why the 17th of May and the 6th of February are celebrated, and tell others about national days in other countries
Nye Gaia 1 *Nye Gaia 2* *Nye Gaia 3* *Nye Gaia 4* (Holm et al., 2015)	1: "The school", "Family", "Norwegian landscapes" 2: "Families then and now", **"National days"**, "Maps", "Continents" 3: "Children have the right to co-decision", **"The Stone age"**, "Home", "The Nordic", **"Sami history"**, "Boys and girls" 4: **"Bronze Age & Iron Age"**, "Money", "Our World", "Take care of yourself and others", "Historical traces"	

5 Findings and discussion

5.1 Education *about* the Other: What is a Sami?

This approach of teaching about the Other straddles the thin line in multicultural education between attempts to normalize differences and stimulating Othering through the production of stereotypes. The main challenge is that knowledge is always partial. Pupils acquire this partial knowledge inside and outside school, and are influenced by multiple discourses that invisibly structure knowledge. Therefore, non-Sami pupils might have clichéd images of the Sami (if any) when they start school. An interesting question is how the textbooks relate to the question of conceptualization: "What is a Sami?" One of the first chapters in *Mylder 1* is titled "Where we live", presenting different landscapes and geographical areas in Norway. Two pages are dedicated to Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie. This appears as an attempt at culturally sensitive education or teaching for the Other with the intentions of providing identification for Sami children through the text, by including the Sami. The choice is also probably influenced by the focus on absence of the Sami in current curriculum debate. However, although Norway as a whole is presented first, and readers are invited to interact with the information in maps and pictures by identifying their own home place, the Sami are consequently portrayed as "them." This implicitly leaves out the possibility of a Sami reader, through formulations such as "The Samis call their area Sápmi" (Haugen et al., 2013, p. 46). The pupil is asked to draw her home and then make a cross on the map of Norway, answering the question "Where do you live?" Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie is not made visible in the

map, but featured on separate pages. The pages about Sápmi/Sábme/Saepmie are covered with pictures of reindeer herding and people wearing the folk costume *kofte*. Pupils are then invited to color the kofte. Although this illustrate important aspects of Sami culture, there is also a hidden curriculum in the communication of a stereotypical set of common identity markers for what appears as the "authentic" Sami lifestyle. Stordahl (1987) describes how semantic density related to the Sami is made up by associations with reindeer and kofte, serving as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion in the category. This reindeer-herding and kofte-wearing Sami tend to be presented as the Sami *per se*. Importantly, this also reinforces the conceptual hegemony of the Northern Sami. Although no longer commonly an everyday outfit, the kofte is a symbolic marker of geographical and social affinity for many Sami through different designs, colors and woven bands. The koftes portrayed throughout the textbook are exclusively Northern Sami. The use of the term Sápmi/Sábme/ Saepmie is only done in Northern Sami language (Sápmi), although Lule- and Southern Sami are also official Sami languages in Norway. In this way, the chapter exemplifies teaching about the Other in presenting a stereotypical and reductive narrative. On the one hand, this serves to place the Other outside the norm (Kumashiro, 2002). Furthermore, it fails to recognize the Sami as a heterogeneous category. As education *for* the Other, the chapter might offer recognition for some but holds limited opportunities for identification possibly far from the everyday life experiences for many Sami pupils.

Another avenue of the hidden curriculum is the selection and structure of topics in the curriculum and textbooks. Within postcolonial perspectives on education, this idea is exemplified through the ethnocentrism that characterizes much history teaching in the West (Kumashiro, 2002). When studying the competence goals after fourth grade, such externalization of indigenous history is evident. While knowledge of early Norwegian history is covered by several learning outcomes related to historical periodization, such as the Stone Age and the Iron Age, knowledge about early Sami history overall is featured in a separate learning outcome. Through this construction, the Sami are excluded from the image of a common history of the geographical Norway. As the learning outcome states that pupils should be able to "describe central characteristics of Sami culture and way of life up to the Christianization of the Sami people" (UDIR, 2013a), the Sami are positioned as passive objects for the processes of the majoritarian society rather than as actors of historical processes.

The textbook series handles these learning outcomes somewhat differently. *Nye Gaia* presents early Sami history in a separate chapter. This chapter states that "the Samis have been living in Norway for thousands of years" (Holm et al., 2015, p. 68). This presupposes the Norwegian state as a given, and obscures the fact that the Norwegian national state was placed on the ancestral homeland of the Sami, rather than the opposite. The reader is left with the impression that the Sami arrived in Norway at some point in time. The vision of time and place is blurred, leaving the impression that Sami culture existed a long time ago in an unspecified place. Such construction the Other as diffuse, mythical or primordial is a characteristic aspect of Orientalism (Said, 1994). On the contrary, the chapter on early Norwegian history is contextualized within the structures of "official" historical periodization, referring to the end of the Ice Age about 12000 years ago and presenting different theories on the first settlers. The text states, "The Stone Age in Norway lasted more than 8000 years. About 4000 years ago, the Norwegians started producing weapon made of metal. That was the end of the Stone Age" (Holm et al., 2015, p. 22). Here, history is presented as dynamic and progressive, in contrast to the more static image of early Sami culture. The chapter on Sami history is introduced by stating: "The Sami have lived in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia for thousands of years. Today, the Sami in Norway live not only in the north, but throughout the whole country" (Holm et al., 2015, p. 68). There are no specific periodization provided in the chapter, and the history is depicted by temporal descriptions such as "before and now" and "old Sami culture". It is also interesting that although the chapter is titled "Sami history", it includes several paragraphs presenting "Sami culture" in a temporally indefinite manner. This is exemplified by the modern picture of a woman with folk costume integrated several places within the narrative on "old Sami culture". In this, it is not really clear what is "old" and what is contemporary.

In *Mylder 2*, early Norwegian history is featured in an integrated chapter on the Stone Age. The people in the narratives are predominantly described as "the first human beings in our country," avoiding the potential anachronism of applying modern concepts of ethnicity and nationality to pre-modern contexts. It might also lead to children's curiosity about who these first human beings in the country might have been, and enabling identification for all. Thus, while *Nye Gaia* focuses on teaching about the Other through increasing knowledge about Sami history in particular, *Mylder 2* aspires to teach about the Other through opening up narratives that include different identifications in the common history. The examples shed light on the importance of not only the content but also the structure of curriculums. Historical narratives might give the impression of the story being told as objective and impartial, not recognizing history as constructive and interpretative (Paxton, 1999).

5.2 Norwegian exceptionalism and the Other
A more explicit presentation of the Sami people as a group is done through descriptions of national holidays. Both book series have chapters depicting the history and celebration of national days in Norway and other countries. Comparing the portrayals of the Norwegian national day with the Sami peoples' day sheds interesting light on the construction of national imagery. In *Nye Gaia 2*, the two days are presented as follows:

> May 17: May 17 is the Norwegian national day. We celebrate that we got our own constitution. That means that we got our own laws and a parliament. For a long time, Denmark decided over Norway. But in 1814, people in Norway wanted their own constitution. That gave us the right to decide more in our own country […] Henrik Wergeland was a well-known author. He worked for making May 17 a day of celebration. Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson was one of our greatest poets. He wrote the lyrics for our national anthem. (Holm et al., 2015, pp. 30–31)

> February 6: On February 6, the Samis celebrate Sami peoples' day. That is the Sami national day. The day is in memory of the first time Samis from Norway and Sweden gathered to talk about important issues. […] Samis in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia celebrate the Sami people's day on February 6. The day might be celebrated with singing and dancing, and activities for the children. Many meet to eat good food together. (Holm et al., 2015, pp. 32–33)

While the Norwegian national day is described in relation to specific historical events and formal affairs, the presentation of the Sami peoples' day primarily focusses on celebration. Pictures exclusively show people wearing kofte and engaging in festive meals. Although "important issues" are mentioned, they are not specified, and the time and place of the first common Sami meeting (Trondheim, 1917) is not given as with enactment of the Norwegian constitution. The overall epistemic strategy of the knowledge about Sami culture here is that of a typology of a category of people, where

knowledge is represented as attributes of the groups presented as descriptions, taking shape as definitions or examples (cf. Van Dijk & Atienza, 2011). The "words to learn" accompanying the respective texts accentuate this discourse. They give the Norwegian national day a more "official" outlook than the Sami peoples' day. It is also closely related to what Banks (1993) describes as "heroes and holidays," the well-intended focus on highlighting cultural differences through a focus on holidays and celebration, which often reproduces the stereotypical discourses of the dominant culture. Multicultural education in the shape of teaching about the Other might thus unintentionally take on this form of essentializing. Highlighting ethnic identities in the curriculum might paradoxically contribute to a renewed orientalism in spite of good pedagogical intentions.

Table 3. "Words to learn" in *Nye Gaia 1*, "National holidays"

Words to learn May 17	Words to learn February 6	Words to learn July 14 (the French national day)
• National day • Celebrate • Free country • Constitution • Parliament • Author • Poet	• Sami • The Sami peoples day • Important issues	• Date • Protest • Inhabitant • Fireworks

The presentation of the national days and the history of the constitution can be understood on basis of the idea of Norwegian exceptionalism. In the text in *Nye Gaia 2*, Norway is portrayed as a victim rather than a perpetrator of colonialism. The fact that Norway was subject to Danish rule in the period 1537–1814 is pointed out when May 17 is described, while the Norwegianification process is not mentioned when the Sami peoples' day is presented. One could discuss whether children in second grade should become familiar with the dark histories of discrimination and oppression of minorities. However, oppression and resistance are included in the portrayal of May 17, as well as in the paragraph on the French national day later in the same chapter, stating that in 1789, the French "protested against an unfair king who decided almost everything" (Holm et al., 2015, p. 35). The history of the Sami peoples' day is directly connected to resistance against discrimination. In light of the learning outcome covering the ability to explain *why* February 6 is celebrated, it is therefore indispensable to mention the Sami fight for recognition. In this context, the complete exclusion of Norwegianification might serve as a hidden curriculum and an active component in reconstructing the discourse of Norway as a humble and intrinsically good nation. By leaving out the Sami opposition, the text not only misses an important aspect of historical events, but also overlooks a valuable pedagogical opportunity for illustrating the significance of protesting injustice. Additionally, the Sami meeting in 1917 was organized by the Southern Sami woman Else Laula Renberg in a time where women where not fully

recognized as political actors, which is a powerful narrative in teaching for democracy.

5.3 Disruptive narratives? Education that is critical of privileging and Othering

As Kumashiro (2002) argues, fighting oppression through education requires not only education about or for the other but also knowledge about oppression in itself, described as education that is critical of privileging and Othering. In this perspective, it is interesting that *Mylder 2* thematizes oppression of the Sami through explicitly mentioning aspects of Norwegianification:

"The countries where Sápmi is situated, tried to make the Sami people forget their own culture. About a hundred years ago, Samis from all over Sápmi gathered for a big meeting. They discussed what they should do in order to be treated just. The big meeting was held at February 6, 1917. That is why February 6 is the Sami national day." (Haugen et al., 2013, p. 148)

The text is followed by a drawing of children in school, stating that "Sami children were not allowed to speak Sami in school" and asking the reader: "How do you think it feels not to be able to speak your own language?" As Norwegianification processes have not been commonly discussed in the public sphere, including them in the textbook might be described as a break with the traditional role of textbooks as consistent with presupposed knowledge from public discourse (Van Dijk & Atienza, 2011). Thus, it is likely that the presentation of pupils not being able to speak their own language in Norwegian schools represents something radically new for many readers and provides information that stimulates critical disruption or works in the sense of a transcendental violence. This opens up opportunities for challenging the hegemonic discourse and providing a more pluralistic context for teaching.

However, the possibility for disruption also depends upon influencing the ways majority students see themselves, not only the Other (Kumashiro, 2002). Although learning about the Other through stories of oppression is valuable, the ability to act upon injustices relies on input that makes pupils able to reflect on their own positionality (Banks, 1993). The narrative in *Mylder 2* focuses on empathy through asking the question "How would you feel?" This question might stimulate identification with the Other but does not necessarily alter how the majority pupil sees herself. Thus, teaching about oppression does not automatically force a separation from the sense of self for majority pupils. Interestingly, the presentation of Sami oppression is done passively without any clear perpetrator, as the Norwegian state as actor is not explicitly mentioned. The summary of the chapter states, "The Samis were not always respected in the countries in which they lived" (Holm et al., 2013, p. 155). Similar to *Nye Gaia 2*, *Mylder 2* describes the history of the enactment of the Norwegian constitution through the resistance of Norwegians to Danish rule. The point is made that "Norway was not always free" (Holm et al., 2013, p. 155) and that the people mobilized

against this injustice. Norwegians are presented as agents, standing up against the illegitimate force. The mode of structuring the content and narratives here fuels the discourse of Norwegian exceptionalism. The hegemonic discourse here resides in the negative information about the in-group that is not stated.

Learning through disruption is risky, because if we allow pupils to truly react in their own unique ways to the curriculum, we cannot instrumentally predict the outcomes. Critical teaching, in this perspective, should aim for effect rather than a specific understanding in order to entail subjectification. Learning in this perspective is connected to transcendence, offering something completely new or radical. This quite often involves encountering inconvenient truths, or knowledge that we were not aware of or did not want to be aware of, fostering transcendental violence that might lead to change (Biesta, 2005). For enabling subjectification, pupils must meet diverging narratives and resistance toward their own worldviews. In this sense, the examples of Norwegianification politics could offer opportunities for pupils to react. Didactical opportunities might also be found in making use of the hegemonic discourses to challenge pupils' preconceptions. The historical materialism apparent in the idea of hegemony might be overcome by arguing that the discourses can be investigated in order to challenge them (Gramsci, 1971). Where *Mylder 2* has a picture of the all-male assembly deciding on the Constitution in 1814, it asks the reader, "Why were there no women?" (Holm et al., 2015, p. 31). Here, there is an obvious opportunity to include discussion on "Why were there no Sami?" in light of the coming presentation of Norwegianification. The narratives could also simply be opened, inviting exploration of the overall question of why some were left out, and what that means. Education might not only facilitate reproduction of dominant ideologies but also propagate counter-ideologies (Van Dijk, 1998).

6 Summing up: The aims of education

In this article, I have discussed the role of discourses on the Sami in social studies textbooks in constructing the Norwegian national imagery, and the implications for multicultural education. Within the typology of anti-oppressive education posed by Kumashiro (2002), the implicit pedagogy on cultural diversity in the textbooks is mainly placed in the category teaching about, and to a certain extent for, the Other. This corresponds to the qualification function of education, providing pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding that in this case amount to a general cultural literacy (Biesta, 2009). Arguably important for functioning in society, an overt focus on qualification might imply the instrumentalist undertaking of producing certain citizens with pre-defined, measurable skills. This criticism applies well to the common idea of multicultural and anti-oppressive education as pure knowledge integration, reflected in the analysis. Furthermore, the sections on national days in the textbooks reinforce the national imagery of Norwegian exceptionalism, stimulating the educational

function of socialization as inserting newcomers in the existing cultural and political order. Although socialization should not be disqualified as simple indoctrination, it might cause the continuation of not only desirable but also undesirable parts of the national tradition and discourse. As Biesta (2009) argues, "even if socialization is not the explicit aim of educational programmes and practices, it will still function in this way as, for example, has been shown by research on the hidden curriculum" (p. 40). In the previous analysis, it was quite clear that the image of Norwegian exceptionalism is further enforced by the role of the Sami as the Other. This hegemonic construction of the Sami as Other exerts power on the self-understanding of the majority Norwegians and the Sami, pointing to the role of education in subjectification. Subjectification is, in one sense, the opposite of socialization, as it is related to providing agency for the individual to seek independence from the current societal order. In terms of anti-oppressive education, this amounts to education that challenges injustice and might lead to social change. Suggestions for such disruptive education were located in the text that mentioned Norwegianification.

A danger of focusing on structural oppression is the implicit idea that it has the same effect on all people (Kumashiro, 2002) and thus might reinforce the positionality of the Sami as oppressed. Although the school in one perspective might be regarded as a site for epistemic violence for Sami pupils through the construction of themselves as inferior, the consequences for subjectification are not given. Responses to colonialism can be understood as identity-building projects and as a critical self-examination of processes of internalization (Heith, 2016). While Fanon (1967) argued that the colonized only gain recognition by seeing themselves through the images constructed by colonizers, newer postcolonial writings also focus on the dynamics of identity constructions of the subjugated through counter-action and resistance (Phoenix, 2009). The Sami political uprising in Norway led to reinforcement of Sami culture, identity and pride. On the other hand, Mathisen (2001) argues that the relationship between the Sami minority and the ethnic Norwegian majority is by no means equal, and that majority culture still is hegemonic to the extent that it influences the strategies of the minority. In the educational context, the hegemonic discourses work in performing translations between individual experiences and strategies and collective frames of representations. However, a strong focus on socialization into these ideas might paradoxically lead to subjectification through resistance. Thus, a complete analysis of the discourses' role for subjectification would include a wider contextual study and a look to "subjective definitions of the relevant properties of communicative situations that influence text and talk" (Wodak, 2009, p. 14). However, the different perspectives imply we must leave the desire for final knowledge, exposing ourselves to "the wonderful risk of education" (Biesta, 2014).

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Endnotes

[1] The subject social studies is a mandatory part of the core curriculum in Norway and is a compilation of history, geography and various disciplines of social sciences.
[2] Corresponds to the name in the different Sami languages; Northern-/Lule-/Southern Sami.
[3] The Sami management areas includes the following municipalities: Karasjok, Kautokeino, Nesseby, Porsanger, Tana, Kåfjord, Lavangen, Tysfjord, Snåsa and Røyrvik. Not all of them have a Sami majority.
[4] May 17 is the official Norwegian national day, and February 6 is the official Sami peoples' day.

Education for sustainable development and narratives of Nordic exceptionalism: The contributions of decolonialism

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Education for sustainable development and narratives of Nordic exceptionalism: The contributions of decolonialism

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Abstract: This paper argues that approaches embedded in technology optimism hold a hegemonic stance in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Norway. A monolithic focus on technology also leads to a lack of emphasis on the possible contributions of Social Studies. Although sustainable development is commonly understood as having the global goal of "saving the planet," ESD remains situated within a colonial epistemological regime. In spite of its good intentions, ESD may in fact contribute to the construction and reproduction of differences between "Us" and "Them," denoting the Global North and South. The aim of this paper is to explore the contributions of decolonial perspectives in providing possible interruptions of the hegemonic narratives, and fostering transformation. The paper exemplifies how current practices of ESD can serve to sustain rather than change the global economic and political systems. It is argued that decolonial perspectives can be tools for disrupting mainstream ESD.

KEYWORDS: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL STUDIES, DECOLONIAL, NARRATIVE, NORDIC EXCEPTIONALISM

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Introduction

Although there is no clear consensus on exactly what Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) should be, commitment to ESD appears uncontroversial and mainstream around the world. Critical scholars have argued that current approaches to ESD tend to sustain rather than change the status quo of the global political economy, not questioning the hegemonic belief in technology's ability to deliver environmental and social sustainability (Hellberg and Knutsson, 2018, Knutsson, 2018). In a similar vein, the aim of this paper is to shed light on how decolonial perspectives might serve as alternative tools for furthering global social justice and sustainability. Decolonialism exposes and contests the core idea that the world is no longer governed by colonial structures. Applying empirical examples from fieldwork in a seventh-grade classroom, this paper focuses on the content of Social Studies concerning images of Norway in the global arena. The research questions are as follows:

- How do the dominant cultural narratives of Norway in the global arena influence Social Studies teaching about sustainability?

- What contributions could decolonial perspectives make to education about sustainability and global social justice?

While refraining from suggesting a new normative ideal or one-size-fits-all solution, decolonial theory is recommended for its potential to question epistemological universalism, disrupt current practices, and stimulate alternative ways of thinking about global developments (Andreotti, 2011b). In spite of the good intentions of fostering global citizenship, ESD is highly exposed to an "equity deficit" through its reproduction of a Western ideal of life in the identification of who represents the norm and who is in need of change (Ideland and Malmberg, 2014). Such constructions as "Us" and "Them" are reinforced by ideologies of exceptionalism embedded within Western educational systems. The legacy of Social Studies in Norway clearly embodies the inherent tension in democratic education between reproducing the current social order and stimulating emancipation and change (Shor, 1992, Freire, 2000, Englund, 1986). Social Studies has historically held a leading role in the nationalistic endeavor of fostering patriotic citizens, permeated by methodological nationalism (Slagstad, 1998). However, its stated aims highlight "understanding and influencing the global community" (Norwegian directory of education and training, 2013), and sustainable development is emphasized in the curriculum. Even so, besides painting a rather gloomy picture of previous efforts in Norway toward ESD overall, the literature indicates that global social justice is especially neglected (Sinnes and Straume, 2017, Eriksen, 2017).

The following analysis is conducted through a decolonial theoretical lens (Andreotti, 2011b, Andreotti, 2011a, Grosfoguel, 2006, Mignolo, 2005) and methodologically informed by the insights of critical pedagogy (Apple et al., 2009). Although the primary function of these frameworks is to reveal social injustice, their significance also lies in their aspirations to locate spaces of transformation. Hence, the paper discusses the existence of counter-hegemonic narratives. I argue that these perspectives hold significance for highlighting the pedagogical possibilities of decolonial perspectives in Social Studies education. These include their capacity to provoke critical thinking,

challenge epistemological universalism, and revise students' understanding of structures and systems.

The first section of this paper presents a contextual background to the policies of sustainable development in the Norwegian context, emphasizing education. The second section provides an introduction to decolonial theory and indicates some of the particularities when applied in a Norwegian context. After an overview of the research methods applied, results are discussed, structured according to the metanarratives in focus. The section also includes a more general discussion on the implications of the study for didactical challenges within ESD. In the conclusion, the potential of the decolonial theoretical lens to disrupt hegemonic narratives of sustainable development is highlighted, both generally and for the particular context of Social Studies.

Background: ESD and the case of Norway

The UN World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) launched the concept of sustainable development in 1987, led by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland. While Norway was "active and morally pretentious" in international environmental discourse (Lafferty et al., 2007, 186), practical politics at home were restricted to bold formulations in policy documents. Official strategies on sustainable development have mainly followed two avenues. First, the idea that Norway must proceed with its petroleum industry to provide the world with "clean" fossil fuel technology serves arguments for further expansion. Second, a focus on channeling climate politics through aid—encouraging emissions reductions in other countries by "helping" them build new industries and technologies (Straume, 2016). Approaches within education are highly consistent with this overall context. Evaluations show that the influences of the UN Decade of ESD (2005-2014) on school and teaching have been limited (Andresen et al., 2015, Straume, 2016, Laumann, 2007, Sinnes and Straume, 2017). One of the main problems is that "few projects have been concerned with social themes such as inclusion, democracy and social justice" (Andresen et al., 2015, 250). This is further accentuated by the fact that most of the funding and measures are channeled through the Natural Backpack project, led by the Centre for Natural Sciences in Education (Straume, 2016). In line with the recently adopted UNESCO Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (GAP), the ongoing curriculum reform in Norway highlights sustainable development as one of three themes to permeate all compulsory education. However, this shows scant promise of changing the status quo because the policy describes ESD thus: "New technology will, in addition to ethical reflection and judgement related to technology development, be central to the new interdisciplinary topic sustainable development" (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2015, 39). This techno-optimism is highly consistent with the larger international context of ESD, permeated by approaches depending upon and complicit with state, market, and multilateral institutions (Knutsson, 2018).

Sinnes and Straume (2017) argue that technology optimism prevails as the leading discourse in Norwegian educational policy given the new curriculum reform. The discrepancy between a seemingly widespread notion that Social Studies is important for

sustainable development and the prioritizing of natural sciences is evident within research and subject didactics. Although research on ESD in Norway in general is scarce, there is a relatively well-developed didactical tradition of outdoor education and explorative approaches within the natural sciences, providing practical approaches to ESD (Bjønness, 2017, Jordet, 2010, Sinnes, 2015). Within Social Studies didactics, however, the topic is almost absent and mostly mentioned within the geography branch (Sætre, 2016, Birkeland, 2014). One example of a Social Studies approach in Norway provides an interesting study of how students in an upper secondary school participating in a project on taking action for sustainability in their everyday lives see themselves as citizens. A core finding is that the students lack an understanding of global distributional patterns and solidarity (Sæther, 2017). This situation implies an urgent need to move from a collective acknowledgment of the importance of Social Studies to ESD, emphasizing a focus on global structures and inequality, toward looking at what this might mean in teaching practices. This paper is intended as a contribution to this conversation. Notably, it sheds light on the need to see education for sustainability, democracy, and social justice as inseparable.

Theoretical framework: The significance of decolonialism and world-systems perspectives

Decolonial theory offers tools to analyze sustainable development from a structural perspective. This is especially relevant in a study of the role of Norway in a global context. Decolonial perspectives have strong affinities with postcolonialism, but while the latter pay more attention to agents of colonial cultures, decolonialism is indebted to and interlinked with world-systems theory in focusing on understanding global economic inequality and criticizing ongoing structures of capital accumulation (Andreotti, 2011b, Grosfoguel, 2002, Wallerstein, 1974). Through this lens, globalization is understood as continuing colonialism. Colonialism did not end with national autonomy for states in the Global South, as illustrated by the global division of labor and socio-material structures. This also has a clear and visible racialized aspect, in which the colonial idea of the "White man`s burden" is reproduced through the "burden of the fittest" in global cooperation today, explaining global poverty as a lack of attributes in the South that the North has the ability to provide (Andreotti, 2011a). The decolonial perspective offers a historical and systemic approach to understanding global inequalities that challenge the ideals of sustainable development today.

Applying the decolonial lens to the Norwegian context, climate-change mitigation assessments and development policies can be understood through the larger cultural discourse of technology optimism (Arvesen et al., 2011). The idea that developing new technology is the answer per se to sustainable development contrasts with approaches focused on social redistribution or resource pessimism. The "distinct anomaly" (Lafferty et al., 2007) between self-image and reality in Norwegian sustainability policy may also be seen to exemplify *Nordic exceptionalism* as a specific kind of nation branding in the Nordic countries (Browning, 2007). This idea relates to the image of the

Nordic countries as innocent of colonialism despite the fact that their participation in colonial practices and subsequent processes of globalization is well documented (Mikander, 2015, Eidsvik, 2012, Tvedt, 2003). As an example, paying for climate quotas in other countries in order to balance carbon emissions accounts has been described as "carbon colonialism" (Martiniussen, 2013). This underlines the interrelation between technology optimism and the modern Eurocentric belief that the "Third World" needs the assistance of the "First World" to grow economically (Andreotti, 2011a). This ideology of Eurocentrism serves to legitimize a deeply unequal global economic system, where the relative progress of this "center" of the World-system is happening at expense of the "periphery", or the Global South. The ideology is also scripted into hegemonic understandings of modern technology as such. Knutsson (2018) argues that technological progress and global inequality interlace. The idea that new technology can solve the sustainability challenge is illusory because modern technology is ultimately premised on unequal global exchange.

For education, one of the main implications of decolonial thinking is its outlook on knowledge production. The perspective strongly criticizes the Western/masculinist idea that we can produce knowledges that are unpositioned and universalistic. The main ambition here lies not in an allegedly new universalism but rather to unsettle, challenge, and foster diversality and "border thinking" (Andreotti, 2011b, Bhambra, 2014). This resonates well with insights from critical pedagogy. The main criticism of citizenship education in both the Norwegian and international contexts has been the lack of a critical dimension and the failure to focus on social transformation (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004, Lorentzen and Røthing, 2017, Westheimer, 2015). Kumashiro (2002) argues that learning that enables social transformation requires not merely more knowledge, but disruptive knowledge. This involves experiencing one's situatedness as a learner and the relativity of epistemology. For Biesta (2009, 2005, 2014), this is theorized as transcendental violence, the ability of the teacher to enable the student to come into being as a unique individual. It requires being challenged on the knowledge that is taken for granted and thus being disturbed sufficiently to react in and to the world. Biesta argues that for education to be truly democratic, it needs to foster this kind of subjectification for students. Such pedagogical thinking is exposed to the possible risk of paralyzing students with its uncertainty and possible anger or fear, however (Andreotti, 2011b). This paradox is also at the core of current theorizing about ESD, arguing that understanding the magnitude of the global crisis through education can lead to "learned hopelessness" (Sinnes, 2015, Nagel, 2005, Jickling and Wals, 2013). Thus, education has to walk a thin line between apathy and enabling action.

The world-systems perspective central to decolonial thinking has its roots in critical social sciences related to politics, economics, and sociology (Grosfoguel, 2006). In relation to the more specific subject content of Social Studies, the significance of decolonial perspectives lies especially in the challenge it poses to the insularity of historical narratives and historiographical traditions emanating from Europe (Bhambra, 2014), and extending from that, how we understand global social and economic structures today. The old colonial hierarchies of Europeans/non-Europeans can be located in historical narratives and current global distributional structures, as well as the

national identity of Western countries, since "the identity of those nations is predicted on their relationships to the colonized others" (Ahmed, 2000, 10). Thus, decolonial perspectives might also provide new insights into the constructions of national identity at the core of Social Studies content.

Research methods

The phenomena under study in this article are narratives about Norway in a global context, tracked across several scales, such as classroom observations, learning materials applied, and interviews with teachers and pupils. This approach resonates well with critical theory. The "political-intellectual work" these fields aspire to stretches across established academic disciplines (Svendsen, 2014). Rather than engage on a quest for "naïve realism," this paper presents theoretically informed interpretations (Røthing, 2017, Kincheloe et al., 2011). The case in focus is a series of lectures on the topic "Consumption and Pollution" in a seventh-grade Social Studies class in a school in South-Eastern Norway. A semi-structured, in-depth interview with the teacher, "Paul," was conducted immediately after the lectures, enabling elements of stimulated recall (Calderhead, 1981). This triangulation was vital to establishing the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, notably by confronting the teacher with experiences and understandings from the observations (Nowell et al., 2017). As Paul was mentoring three pre-service teachers at the time, they were invited to participate in the interview. Two of them mostly took the role of silent listeners, while one added to the conversation with critical comments. This pre-service teacher is referred to as "pre-service teacher 1." All the students were seventh-graders and thus between the ages of 12 and 13. Gender or other social identity markers are not considered in this context.

The study was conducted in compliance with the national *Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law, and Theology*. Of particular relevance was the importance of "not ascribing irrational or unworthy motives to participants without providing convincing documentation and justification" (NESH. Den nasjonale forskningsetiske komité for samfunnsvitenskap og humaniora, 2016, 22), since I was a clear co-constructor of the narratives told on the basis of Paul's practices and accounts. In this regard, I made an effort to be transparent in my perspectives, for example providing critical follow-up questions while explicitly stating my point of view.

TABLE 1

Overview of empirical material

Observations	Interviews	Learning materials
*Observation notes from five lectures	*Semi-structured interview with one teacher and three preservice-teachers *Focus group interview with six students	*Textbook for Social Studies year 7: *Midgard 7* (Aarre et al., 2008) *Movie *Before the Flood* (DiCaprio and Stevens, 2017)

Narrative analysis

The research questions entail a narrative analysis. This involves a double hermeneutic, applying an interpretivist approach to the construction of meaning by the narrator (Bazeley, 2013, 204). The significance of locating narratives is that it permits an exploration of the way in which meaningful totalities are constructed from scattered events (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). The narratives communicated by the teacher and constructed through classroom interaction and in learning materials can serve as "windows to the contradictory and shifting nature of hegemonic discourses, which we tend to take for granted as stable monolithic forces" (Chase, 2011, 422). Importantly, in narrative analysis, the researcher is both a "story-finder" and a "storyteller" (Johannessen et al., 2010, 215). This places particular limitations on interviews because the narratives told in the context of an interview are always co-constructed (Bazeley, 2013). In this approach, validity is thus related not to the data but to the inferences drawn from them (Creswell and Miller, 2000). What is more, this implies that other stories could have been told from the same encounters. The choice to focus on the two narratives "Technology optimism as Norwegian exceptionalism" and "Eurocentrism and the illusion of universal knowledge" in this paper is informed by the idea of the *telling case*, in which validity is related to the explanatory power of the case to "make previously obscure theoretical relationships apparent" (Andreotti, 2011a, 90). A central part of the analysis was thus also how stories were activated and meaning created through processes in the classroom and the application of learning materials.

Results

This section presents and discusses the results of the study, structured in accordance with the main themes technology optimism and Nordic exceptionalism, the idea of Eurocentric and universal knowledge and the tenaciousness of hegemonic narratives. In the final paragraph, the more overall didactical implications for current thinking on ESD are discussed in relation to reflections made by teachers and students during interviews.

Technology optimism as Norwegian exceptionalism

The series of lectures on sustainable development I observed covered a range of topics structured on the basis of the headlines in the textbook *Midgard 7*, namely, consumption, global warming, pollution of earth and water, and international cooperation (Aarre et al., 2008). However, a repeated issue was the debate over Norway´s petroleum industry. This was probably related to Paul's stated wish to "include current issues, to stimulate societal awareness, to make it clear that the topics we discuss relate to everyday lives." The pupils also brought this up during the group interview, when they explained that they are most motivated for Social Studies when it relates to topical issues, events that "are happening while we are discussing them." In recent years, the petroleum industry has been heavily discussed in Norway, spurred by the suggestion of opening the arctic Northern Norwegian areas to further drilling. Such industrial expansion could lead to new jobs but could also pose a threat to the already vulnerable ecosystems of the area. In bringing up the topic several times, Paul placed it at the center of the plot, as *the question* with regard to Norway's global role in sustainable development, as illustrated by this classroom dialogue:

> *Paul: Is the solution to cut the production of oil? Norway produces a lot … Any opinions? If I was to say that today we stop all production of oil in Norway, some would be celebrating and others would be infuriated. Why? I am saying that I am quitting as of today.*
>
> *Student 1: But that is one of the biggest resources … Then people working on oil platforms would lose their jobs. Although some would be happy if we emit less CO_2.*
>
> *Student 2: But, like, won't we become poor then?*
>
> *Paul: Yes, we would be much poorer. It would have massive consequences for schools and hospitals because where would you cut … Would this mean anything for other countries?*
>
> *Student 3: We are lucky to have a lot of gas …*
>
> *Paul: Yes, many countries do not have that. We send oil and gas in pipes to Germany and Great Britain. If we stop sending oil and gas, they will carry on heating their houses, but they would use coal, which pollutes a lot more than gas does. I do not know, if you were extremely idealist, you could say no more oil and gas, but that would have so many consequences. Other countries would be less environmentally friendly if we cut the oil and gas supplies to them.*

Through this narrative, Paul positions Norway as a central actor in enhancing sustainability in energy consumption by providing neighboring countries with "clean energy." Norway is presented as lucky to have access to vital resources and thus also as having a moral imperative to help others. Some students, as illustrated by the comment of student 3, appear to have already internalized this. The textbook presents a slightly more multi-faceted story. The section "International environmental cooperation" opens with a paragraph called "Rich countries pollute the most." The text states:

> *We who live in the rich parts of the world, emit most CO_2 and other
> greenhouse gases. That is why we also have a particular responsibility to
> reduce our emissions. Simultaneously, we have the economic capacity for
> shielding those who experience the most serious consequences of climate
> change (Aarre et al., 2008, 152).*

This paragraph is complemented by figures on the difference in CO_2 emissions per capita in different countries. Although there is a positioning of an "Us" having the tools to help "the Other," focus is on economic structures rather than some alleged difference in abilities. However, in the following section, Norway is again placed as a major protagonist in global policy, as it states "the Norwegian government has decided to be a leading country in international environmental cooperation" (Aarre et al., 2008, 152). Thus, although the text opens up the possibility for reflection on global injustice, Norway is still featured as a global savior, epitomizing the idea of exceptionalism. This depicts Norway as a value-driven norm entrepreneur for sustainability, placing itself as a role model (Elgström and Delputte, 2016). The idea of the "common world" of a sustainable future is constructed through this national identity, working as a technology of differentiation that separates "Us" from "Them," the countries holding the knowledge and those in need of modernization. In this way, the colonial perspective on the world is stabilized through nation branding (Ideland and Malmberg, 2014). The text provides a further example: "In China, Norway has contributed with knowledge on how to control CO_2 emissions from industry" (Aarre et al., 2008, 152). The progress of China in reducing CO_2 emissions is thus ascribed to Norwegian knowledge. Race is also a clear symbol in this categorization, since the people featured as "saviors" in the pictures are exclusively white. While they are depictured in action, the very few pictures of the "victims" of the Global South feature people at a distance and displaying despair.

When bringing up Norway´s role in global climate policy, Paul appears to be a bit defensive. He applies the terms "idealistic" and "realistic" to the alternatives of phasing out or not phasing out the oil and gas industry, respectively. This is repeated in the interview after class, where Paul says the following:

> *With this topic, I mean, realistically speaking, what you might think ideally is
> one thing … At the same time, I think that it is important that you are critical
> toward ... You know just on this topic … Not that you say that we cut it all just
> now (oil and gas) but that you think two thoughts at the same time, that you
> develop new technology and methods. It would have such huge consequences
> for Norway to decide to stop the entire petroleum industry.*

Paul is reluctant and apparently finds the topic a bit difficult to balance. His way of dealing with the issue can be understood as reflecting the fact that the way in which Norway has built its wealth on the now-dubious petroleum industry can make the topic of sustainable development intricate to cover in-depth in the classroom (Straume, 2016). The Norwegian self-understanding is highly invested in the idea that a strong Norwegian economy will advance global efforts for sustainability through aid and the ability to produce quality oil and gas for other countries. However, the Green Party has introduced counter-narratives to the debate. Moreover, the topic actualizes the challenge of how state-abiding the subject content should be and highlights the relationship

between the socialization and subjectification functions of education (Biesta, 2009). To
what extent should the teacher be open to different opinions about this topic? Should
the teacher simply give the main positions in official policy? When I bring up this
challenge during the interview, Paul is clear that he aims to present his pupils with a
"value neutral" presentation. I tell him that I did not really perceive his story as neutral,
but largely in line with official Norwegian policy. Paul seems a bit discomforted, and
responds thus:

> *No, but, erh ... you have some arguments, then, for the most idealistic, it would
> be to cut all oil and gas right now ... and then the opposite, to be aware of the
> consequences of such an idealistic action, they have to understand what it
> means. And they have to understand that by the fact that it will lead to more
> pollution in other countries that might use coal instead of gas from Norway,
> that it is better, after all, than coal.*

This may be understood as an expression of Norwegian exceptionalist nation
branding (Browning, 2007), whereby Norway is positioned as a key actor in providing
the solution to climate change by its "better" petroleum technology. This also serves as
a justification for continuing to engage in an industry with negative connotations in the
context of climate change—it is simply the most "realistic" solution, reinstating the
image of Norway as a leading force for sustainable development. Within decolonial
critiques of modernity, this idea of being vital to the world`s well-being is characterized
as one of the most definitive tenets of modernity (Maldonado-Torres, 2004, 32). This
is, as Paul illustrates, well intentioned and based on the idea of a universal rationality.
The point here is not to assess normatively whether this recurring story of Norway as a
do-gooder for global energy supply holds true, but rather to illustrate how the monolithic
presentation might counteract the possibility of exploring alternative perspectives. As
Martiniussen (2013) shows, neighboring countries, such as Sweden and Germany have
managed to spur many developments in renewable energies, but it demands political
will to subsidize such technologies. The Norwegian oil industry continues to involve
itself in "dirty" business abroad, such as tar sand and shale oil (Klein, 2014), challenging
ecosystems as well as the lifestyles of local indigenous peoples. Moreover, a survey
indicated that 58 percent of the Norwegian population wants to leave the oil in the North
in the ground (NTB, 2017), signaling a reluctance to expand the petroleum industry.

Eurocentrism and the illusion of universal knowledge

An important insight from decolonial perspectives, is how the idea of the universal
thought is "based on a claim to universality at the same time as it elides its own
particularity, and how this claim is sustained through the exercise of material power in
the world" (Bhambra, 2014). There are at least two implications from this insight for
education. One is the permeation of Eurocentrism through narratives on global matters,
and another is the epistemological notion of the possibility of universal knowledge as
such. The interview with Paul locates some interesting ambiguities on the latter. This is
also the topic that generates the greatest interest from the pre-service teachers. While
agreeing on how Social Studies is a subject "without clear answers", they all emphasize

the importance for the teacher of being "objective." This is explicitly connected to democracy, and how, as Paul says, "you have a lot of power to influence your students in Social Studies, maybe more than in other subjects." A prime example is the consensus on how the teacher should always keep her voting record secret. Paul responds thus:

> *You seek to be a bit like ... value neutral in that we do not push our own view, but try to give both sides.... You know if I was a politician in a political party, I could not do propaganda in religious and ethical teaching, for example. And if I was a member of a kind of special sect, I couldn't show my view. You don't have a right to do that, to use your power as a teacher.*

The negotiation of this topic through the conversation reflects an implicit idea that some people and some knowledges are "more situated" than others are. It affirms the alleged existence of a universal rationality and reduces the epistemologies that are different from the dominant, Eurocentric perspective to "ideas, traditions or beliefs" (Andreotti, 2011a, 111). Lacking an affinity with a minority group, the knowledge communicated is perceived as less situated and more neutral. This also comes to the fore with the continued use of the words "realistic" and "idealistic" in our conversations about the highly political debate on Norwegian oil policy. The danger of uncovered, biased knowledge is also referred to by both Paul and the pre-service teachers as to why critical thinking is especially important in Social Studies. However, the outlook on knowledge communicated here poses the danger of critical thinking becoming synonymous with exclusively applying the terms and approaches located within Western modernity (Maldonado-Torres, 2004). Neutral knowledge then becomes a question of removing possible subjective knowledge acquired from political and religious viewpoints, for instance, to arrive at a relatively "clean" statement. Interestingly, one of the pre-service teachers challenges this position:

> *Pre-service teacher 1: You know, there are some topics that are almost impossible to look at neutrally. However, you can challenge the students, ask them if things could be different. You don't necessarily need to encourage any specific ideas, but ask them to think about it, reflect ...*

With this quote, the pre-service teacher opens up to a reflexivity on difference and diversality, and emphasizes the importance of challenging students, which is central to the idea of subjectification. As she points out, the students should be enabled to think differently. She continues to promote this possible position throughout the conversation, facing resistance from Paul. When we discuss the extent to which the teacher has a responsibility to be state-loyal, the pre-service teacher says the following:

> *Even if something is decided by law, you can still open it up for discussion ... It is always interesting to talk with pupils about given norms in a religion or country, and reflect upon why it is like that in that context and different in another.*

In this perspective, there is the seed of a challenge to the idea of universal truths, operationalizing the apparent didactical ideal of Social Studies as a subject without clear answers. Knowledge and learning in the subject thus become a matter of understanding

structures contextually rather than of making a decision about the "right" answer or solution.

The other aspect of this universalism, the idea of history as a trajectory that departed from a state of nature and culminated in Europe (Andreotti, 2011b), is highlighted by discussions of the global division of labor. This is achieved mainly through the presentation of excerpts from the movie *Before the Flood* (DiCaprio and Stevens, 2017). *Before the Flood* is a documentary depicting American actor Leonardo DiCaprio on a global journey as a UN "Messenger of Peace" to explore the challenges of climate change. Before watching the movie, the class discusses global production chains. Paul initiates an activity in which the students check the labels on their clothes. This spurs a lot of engagement and interest. The class creates a statistical overview, revealing that Turkey, China, and Bangladesh are the most common countries of origin. Paul points out the locations of the countries on a map, explaining transportation routes and implications in terms of emissions. The lecture includes several of the features commonly advocated for ESD, such as creative thinking, a systems approach, and interdisciplinarity (Sinnes, 2015, Sterling, 2009). Paul follows up this activity by looking at the connections between consumption and pollution from the perspectives of the physical climate and of human behavior and social organization:

> *Paul: What is the connection between consumption and pollution when the product is made on the other side of the Earth?*
>
> *Student 1: The products have to be transported a long way. By boat, for instance.*
>
> *Paul: Yes, transport is a major part of the pollution. How can you solve that? You have to have clothes.*
>
> *Student 2: Make factories in many countries …*
>
> *Student 3: But won't that mean more factories, then? Why aren't there more factories in Norway?*
>
> *Student 4: Because it is cheaper in other countries.*
>
> *Paul: That is correct. By why is that? It sounds, strange, doesn't it? That a sweater you buy from Taiwan or Korea is cheaper than one from Norway.*
>
> *Student 1: It is cheaper to produce there than in Norway because Norway is an expensive country.*
>
> *Paul: Yes, and what you pay the workers matters. It is still cheaper to buy something from the other side of the Earth, but it pollutes.*

Paul then asks the students to look at a picture in the textbook illustrating the transportation route of a pair of jogging shoes from China to Norway. The text states: "It is profitable for corporations to produce goods in countries where the workers are not paid so well. When salaries are low, goods become cheaper for us" (Aarre et al., 2008, 141). On the opposite page, there is an illustration of a girl sitting beside her stuffed clothes closet talking on the phone and declaring "I have nothing to wear." The headline is "We consume more." When Paul asks the students what they think about this illustration, the students appear a bit disengaged, so he says, "We know that she

actually has a lot to wear, right? That is how we are, us in the rich parts of the world. That's the way it goes." The conversation continues about the pictures from the textbook:

> *Paul: They pick up clothes down there, then they leave the factories, the factories emit pollution into the air, and that may be why it is cheaper in China: They do not have such regulations about what you can emit. We have that in Norway, a strict legal framework.... So, when the product reaches the store, before you buy it, it has already polluted a lot. And you might not even need the product. Maybe you have a similar one at home ...*

> *Student 1: But doesn't it help, sometimes, to buy the product? I mean, in a way, it has already polluted ...*

> *Paul: Yes, if nobody buys the goods, they won't take in more stock. Yes, it would be a shame if someone were to loose their job in the store too. You know, it becomes a bit negative, this thing with consumption, that it is negative to have new things. A lot of positive stuff is happening as well!*

There is an apparent ambivalence to Paul's way of navigating this topic. Although he wants the students to understand the connections in global production chains, he seems concerned about not giving them a guilty conscience about their lifestyle. The topics are brought closer to lived reality, by focusing on the clothes the students wear. Paul also seeks to balance the topic by introducing conflictual aspects, such as the dilemma between jobs in commerce and the need to counteract overconsumption. There is an externalization of guilt by focusing on poor working relations and rights in the South as the main challenges, rather than consumption or global power structures. The narrative communicates not only that the students should acknowledge that their consumption is not always morally "clean," but also that there is not very much an individual can do about it in her everyday life. However, this is followed in the textbook by the sections on Norway as a champion of international cooperation. The section on global climate agreements is placed under the headline "It works!" (Aarre et al., 2008, 154). Thus, the main message is that Norway has "got it covered." There is a text box with the legend "What can we do to reduce CO_2 emissions?" that includes bullet points such as "We have to buy only the things we really need" and "Do not throw out what others might use" (Aarre et al., 2008, 149). Interestingly, this text box is part of a double-page section focusing on technology development. In the textbook, as well as in Paul's lecture, overconsumption, the global division of labor, and the exploitation of workers in the Global South are presented as possible counter-narratives, but they are not positioned as main topics; rather, they appear as appendices to the main narrative on technology optimism.

Disruptive spaces, border thinking, and the tenaciousness of narratives

During the interview, Paul tells me, clearly impressed, that the suggestion of watching *Before the Flood* was made by one of his students. Involving the students, taking their suggestions seriously, and valuing their contributions are actions that Paul emphasizes in his teaching. In the chosen excerpts from the movie, DiCaprio visits

China and India as examples of countries at different stages of development. While
China is presented as a pioneer in the proposed transition to environmental friendliness,
India provides a contrast, shown as being in need of further development. The part on
India includes a dialogue between DiCaprio and the environmental activist-author
Sunita Narain. Narain is visibly frustrated by American NGOs that want to transmit "the
lessons they have learned" in development to the context of Southern countries while
failing to focus on the changes needed locally:

> *Your consumption has really put a hole in the planet, and I think that's the
> conversation we need to have. Electric consumption by one American at home
> is equivalent to 34 inhabitants of India. Why? Because you are building
> bigger, more, and using much more than before.*

With this comment, Narain steers the narrative toward a different focus, which
emerges as the main and most powerful part of the conversation. She poses an
alternative and challenging outlook, and DiCaprio answers apologetically:

> *DiCaprio: Look ... There's no way I don't agree with you. How can you argue
> with that? ... And I think yes, it's a very difficult argument to present to
> Americans that we need to change our lifestyles. And I want to argue that it
> probably isn't going to happen. So we are depending, if we want to solve the
> climate crisis, that renewables like solar and wind will get cheaper and
> cheaper and cheaper the more money we funnel into them, the more we invest
> in them, and ultimately it will solve that problem.... You're shaking your head
> obviously.*

> *Narain: Let's be real about this. Who will invest and how will you invest in
> it? We are doing more investment in solar today. China is doing much more
> investment in solar today than the US. What is the US doing that the rest of
> the world can learn from? You are a fossil fuel–addicted country, and if you
> are seriously disengaging, that is something we can learn from. We can hold
> this up to our government and say listen if the US can do it, and the US is
> doing it, in spite all their pressures, we can do it as well.*

While DiCaprio rejects Narain`s comment about consumption and lifestyle as non-
realistic, he continues the Eurocentric story of capitalist modernity as savior. Narain
counters by placing the United States in the position of culprit rather than liberator.
Although this apparently represents a break with the leading metanarrative, both in the
movie and in the class, it does not really escape the overarching logic of universalism.
The reason why the United States must rethink its consumption patterns is that countries
such as India want "the same." It reflects what Mignolo (2005) calls the hidden logic of
colonialism, in which modernity is presented as the point of arrival. As he puts it,
"Independence changed the actors but not the script" (Mignolo, 2005, 112). Narain is
depicted as a protagonist, but the script is modernity. Her voice is not really positioned
as rational.

After the somewhat heated discussion between Narain and DiCaprio, Paul stops the
movie to ask the students about their thoughts after being exposed to the gross
inequalities in electricity consumption. Some of the students clearly find the injustice
stirring:

> *Student 1: It is frustrating for India that the US asks it to use less coal, because the people do not do it themselves!*
>
> *Student 2: You know, it is not really right when they say that in that one area of Beijing the people emit more than in the whole of the US, because the US emits more per capita.*

These comments show how the pupils, by their way of responding to the new and somewhat disturbing knowledge (Biesta, 2014), also have the ability to move toward a "space of negotiation and creative opportunity that is always pregnant with (risky) possibilities" (Andreotti, 2011b, 395). This is where the prevailing narratives can be disrupted and new patterns created. By creating a learning atmosphere in which the students feel comfortable putting forward their reactions, Paul opens up the possibility for such "border thinking" and the interruption of dominant ideas (Andreotti, 2011b). Handling such spaces demands that the educator act as a cultural broker, managing the negotiation between discursive systems and allowing for an unpredictable outcome. In this regard, Paul appears a bit discomforted by the frustration of his students and tries to help them sort through their thoughts by providing "facts": "Coal is very cheap, but it pollutes a lot. A poor country like India, you cannot just demand that they move straight to solar energy. Twenty percent of the population lacks electricity; they have to have basic electricity too." Interestingly, in this sense India can, in DiCaprio´s words, be described as "in transition," since 40% of the capacity added to India's electricity grid in the past year has been solar.[1] A second challenge to enabling the space for border thinking is how the school as an institution demands fast and predictable learning outcomes (Andreotti, 2011b), something that also seem to influence the way Paul negotiates the comments from his students. He repeatedly remarks through his lectures that "we have to move on," "we have to look at the learning outcome," and so on, although he clearly values the more open-ended conversations. In this regard, the institutional terms seem to restrict the didactical and professional choices of the teacher.

The last part of the movie excerpt features DiCaprio performing a monologue, reflecting upon what he experienced in the Global South and in a way sealing the issue of North/South relations within modernity:

> *What is the right thing to do? What actions should we be taking? There are over a billion people out there without electricity, and they want lights, they want heat, they want the lifestyle that we have had in the United States for over 100 years. If we are going to solve this problem, we all have a responsibility to set an example. But more than that, help the developing world transition, before it's too late.*

From a decolonial perspective, the quotation expresses the idea of "the burden of the fittest"(Andreotti, 2011a). The West is seen as having a responsibility to help the rest, and "set an example." Alternative modes of mitigating and adapting to climate change are not acknowledged. This is the case for efforts in solar investment as well as the

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[1] For further information, see https://qz.com/1134798/solar-power-accounts-for-nearly-40-of-indias-new-power-generation-capacity/.

example of Indian villages using cow dung for fuel, presented as pity and backward rather than as creative coping strategies. The comment from Narain about focusing on lifestyles is rejected, or even denied as irrational within the modernist logic. DiCaprio wants to acknowledge her view but declares it simply "unrealistic," placing himself in the position of the possessor of truth. The leading storyline is the idea of "transition," implying technology optimism, and that the change should primarily happen in the developing world to provide the same lifestyle that the West has had for a long time. Such references to history as stages of linear development is a common feature of mechanisms of Othering between the Global North and South (Ideland and Malmberg, 2014). Importantly, regardless of any alleged good intentions or benevolent motives, this very idea of the South "catching up" with the material developments of the North is simply illusive. Exploitation of the South and the global unequal exchange embedded in the modern world system is what ultimately makes this technological progress in the North possible from the outset (Knutsson, 2018).

Implications for ESD

The educational practices analyzed here show that narratives constructed through lectures and learning materials can be rather monolithic and claim universalism for themselves. From a pedagogical perspective, the prevalence of technology optimism can also be understood on basis of its appeal as having positive connotations. A recurring theme with Paul in describing the challenges of working with this topic is the need to consider the emotive aspect for the students. He fears the risk of education on climate change and global inequality being marked by overwhelming hopelessness:

> *You know, with this topic, it is important that it does not become too negative; it might be like the world is done tomorrow. So it is important that they have some viewpoints saying that there are possibilities and that they can make some positive contributions.*

An alternative perspective to the fear of fostering apathy when facing difficult information about current affairs is the indifference that comes from the feeling of powerlessness. Within the ideas of disruptive knowledge and transcendental violence is the empowerment of individual students as always making a difference in the world through their subjectification (Biesta, 2014). This is fundamental for education to fulfil its democratic ambitions. In addition, it could be a question of the students' *right* to knowledge. Perspectives on ESD underlining the uncertainty and complexity of sustainable development issues can be regarded as somewhat exaggerated. Doubts about the causes and consequences of climate change are no longer prominent (Alfsen et al., 2013, O'Brien, 2012). With regard to global social justice, the figures are overwhelmingly clear that resources are extremely unevenly distributed (Eriksen, 2017). Offering explanations from decolonial theory could help students understand both how and why the differences between Europe and non-Europeans arise; to understand that they are not natural but the consequences of histories of power, and thus neither inevitable nor unchangeable. The students offer interesting comments on this matter during the group interview, communicating a wish to be "taken seriously." One

says, "I think we should talk more about the serious topics. That we are old enough to know now, about terror, climate change …" The class watches *Supernytt* during lunch at school. *Supernytt* is a news show produced by the state-led TV channel NRK, intended for children aged 7–12. The class also subscribes to the national newspaper for children, *Aftenposten Junior*. Outside school, all the students watch what they call the "real news," and they are all active on social media, following updates from national news media:

> *Student 1: I often watch Supernytt at school, then my dad watches the news in the evening, and I sit down with him and watch. I also read the adult newspapers. I think it is silly with Supernytt, because the news is often delayed. It appears on the real news program long before.*

> *Student 2: The thing with Supernytt is that it is for younger children. There is nothing about war and that kind of thing, because first-graders watch it too. I think we should watch the real news.… I think it is more serious.*

Interestingly, there seems to be a discrepancy between, on the one hand, the way the school and Paul seek to adjust the news to the age group and what might be considered appropriate or safe for children, and on the other hand, the way the pupils relate to media outside school. Their high awareness of global issues, expressed in the interview, is also surprising. The students display their intellectual capacities in questioning some of the core narrative assumptions in the class. The flipside to the argument about the challenge of avoiding the creation of apathy when considering the severity of certain topics could thus be that, especially in times of social media and fake news, the school should take responsibility for discussing and handling the impressions students receive as active consumers of several media sources. The importance of being able to "hold paradoxes and not be overwhelmed by complexity, ambiguity, conflict, uncertainty and difference" (Andreotti, 2011b, 395) is also regarded as central to decolonial educational approaches.

The intention of focusing on decolonial perspectives is not to present them as normative ideals but to argue, along with Andreotti (2011b), that they are challenging perspectives to mainstream ESD. They offer a different take on critical thinking as core foundation in the scientific underpinning of Social Studies. Every theory will offer only a limited and partial perspective, but the significance of these frameworks lies in their relationality and self-reflexivity. Maldonado-Torres (2004) describes the alleged neutrality or universalism of modern knowledge as epistemic blindness, a lack of ability to see non-European ways of thinking and acknowledge the reproduction of the colonial system. A related criticism is the failure of the epistemological paradigm of the West as such in relation to sustainable development due to the false distinction between humans and nature (Kahn, 2010, Svensen et al., 2016). The impact of decolonial perspectives lies in the ability to question what is taken for granted, foster system-critical thinking, and pose the questions "Why is it like this," "Does it have to be like this," and "How could it be different?"

Conclusions

The empirical examples in this study signal that Norwegian exceptionalism and technology optimism are inherent components of ESD as it unfolds in this particular case. While acknowledging the limitations of the empirical material, it is clear that other practices could have evolved in different contexts. However, the decolonial theoretical lens helps to expose the challenges posed by and to normativity in mainstream ESD and to disrupt hegemonic narratives. The narratives on Norwegian exceptionalism and technology optimism discussed in this paper also manifest an inherent challenge of a methodological nationalism that is still traceable in Social Studies. If the undisputed analytical unity of the subject remains the nation-state and Eurocentric history, there is a risk of reinforcing the epistemic blindness of the allegedly universal modernism. This truly reaches its limitations with the ecological destruction of the planet, poverty, and the impossibility of the subsumption of other peoples (Andreotti, 2011b). On the other hand, the analysis also reveals the significance of decolonial perspectives in deconstructing current knowledge, as well as opening up the discourse to diversality and difference. As Grosfoguel writes, "The West has produced a utopian thinking that has not transcended the abstract universals that characterize Eurocentric thinking … The West is at a dead end when it comes to producing new alternatives" (Grosfoguel, 2002, 222). Social Studies could offer this kind of thinking about other socio-material alternatives, but to enable this, it also needs a critical approach to history and the structures influencing and shaping our societies and epistemologies.

Another implication of this analysis concerns the power of narratives and thus the importance of paying attention to them when studying teaching practices. The tenaciousness of the metanarratives appears as an obstacle to social transformation. We have to move beyond the "depoliticized focus on individual skills towards a broader understanding of ideology, culture and political-economies" (Andreotti, 2011b, 393). To do so, we require a critique that pays attention to the fact that global differences in power and wealth are not natural, but the consequences of histories of power. Social Studies is vital for such historical, contextual, and power-critical thinking. Apathy may arise from simply hearing about the gloomy figures of overconsumption and global inequality, but agency may lie in being challenged by disruptive knowledge and imagining something different.

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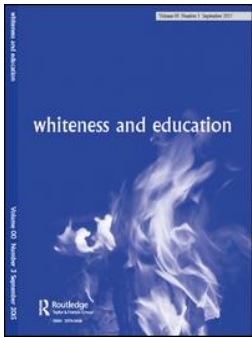
Discomforting presence in the classroom – the affective technologies of race, racism and whiteness

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Discomforting presence in the classroom – the affective technologies of race, racism and whiteness

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ABSTRACT

This article sheds light on the elusive presence of race, racism, and Whiteness in Norwegian primary schools. Empirical examples from observations at six schools exemplify how race and racism appear as taboo concepts, but nonetheless play central roles in structuring conversations in the classroom. I argue that applying an affective theoretical lens provides access to perspectives on race, racism and Whiteness often concealed in education for social justice. This shifts the focus from who is racist, to what race, racism and Whiteness do as affective technologies in social encounters. A major implication is that the common focus on knowledge, attitudes and values in anti-racist education is insufficient for education that enhances social justice. I argue that the insights from affect theory might serve well both as analytical and pedagogical tools in approaching anti-racist education, but also face challenges when confronted with the greater imperative of decolonising education.

Introduction

One in four children with minority backgrounds frequently experience racism in primary schools in Norway according to the Norwegian Centre Against Racism (2017). At the same time, race and racism as concepts remain elusive in public debate (Bangstad 2015; McIntosh 2015), educational research (Osler and Lindquist 2016) and practice (Røthing 2015; Svendsen 2014a). The avoidance of race reflects a Norwegian national imaginary invested in Whiteness, obscured by an ideology of colourblindness and 'equality as sameness' (Gullestad 2002; Svendsen 2014b). Such discursive patterns also channel affect, and negative elements are externalised onto the perceived Other (Ahmed 2000). Affect underlines the role of emotions in the formation of social norms, and the possible ambivalence associated with disrupting hegemonic perceptions, described as *pedagogical discomfort* (Boler 1999; Zembylas and McGlynn 2012). Although Fanon (2002, 1952 [2008]) reminds us that affective understandings of racism are not new, the (re)conceptualisation of race and racism through affect has crucial implications for how we think about anti-racist education. In this article, I illuminate how this is epitomised through ambiguities in how teachers and students externalise race and racism as irrelevant concepts, while they nevertheless work as important facets structuring key affective economies (Ahmed

2004) of citizenship and national identity in classroom discourses. I examine *the potential of an affective lens as an analytical tool in approaching citizenship education in Norway*, and discuss how this can be turned into insights for developing anti-racist pedagogical strategies.

The empirical basis for this article is a small-scale ethnographic study of citizenship identity in primary school social studies education at six schools, where race and racism emerged as central categories structuring conversations. The patterns of appearance included denial of racism while making clearly racist comments, implicit centring of Whiteness within images of Norwegianness, and racist attitudes as a marker of the external boundaries of accepted behaviour. Another layer also appeared through racialised students` navigation of stereotypes in order to position themselves as culturally readable subjects. The intense affective labour displayed through this identity work illustrates how emotions are not located in the subject, but work as sites of power and resistance in particular situations with particular individuals (Boler 1999, 6). In the micro-level interaction that I observed between students, such affective dimensions of Whiteness materialised as fear of losing personal and cultural identities, resentment, distress with ambiguity, and defensive anger. While race in linguistic terms mostly appeared implicit through the enactment of skin colour as a marker of Norwegianness, racism acted as something from which the students expressed a pressing need to distance themselves.

The results of this study demonstrate the common discrepancies between what students seem to know cognitively, and the practices and relations they perform. In the following, I introduce the theoretical lenses that combine insights from theories on affect with Critical Race Theory (CRT), and particularly Whiteness studies. I explain some of the particularities of the Norwegian racial grammar, and the details of data collection and construction, before discussing this material. Finally, I reflect upon opportunities and challenges with applying the idea of a pedagogy of discomfort as a strategy, especially in relation to the greater imperative of decolonising education.

Theoretical and contextual framework

The insight that racism is a systemic condition rather than an individual pathology and that it structures institutions and relationships, is central to CRT (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; Vaught and Castagno 2008). Whiteness works as the 'invisible and inevitable norm'(Solomona et al. 2005, 148). As Leonardo and Zembylas (2013) argue, the white majority can be emotionally invested in maintaining race structures even when allegedly educating against them. Bonilla-Silva (2014) described this colorblind ideology as a 'racism without racists', where racist discourse is recycled without speaking of race. Affect theory helps theorise these matters further. It encompasses a broad variety of approaches that they seek to extend and challenge analyses in considering additional levels of experience and change (Svendsen 2012). It suggests that what is felt in the encounter with emotionally discomforting phenomenon is not mere psychological processes, but embedded in social practices and discourses, not to be thought outside power, history and politics (Zembylas 2014). Applying the works of Fanon (2002, 1952 [2008]), the concept of affect used here is indebted to the entanglement of psychoanalysis and critical social and political theory.

Affective technologies and discomforting pedagogies

A particular affective formation relevant for this study is Whiteness as technology of affect, described as 'a kind of apparatus and technology of affect that produces inequalities, ossifies certain identifications, and prevents new affective connections with Others on the basis of solidarity, caring and justice' (Leonardo and Zembylas 2013, 151). This concept draws on the Foucauldian notion of technology as productive assemblages of knowledge, practices, techniques, and discourses exerting disciplinary power on institutions and bodies. A crucial awareness when working analytically with Whiteness, is the risk of reifying social categories and recentring Whiteness (Ahmed 2007). A major aim with this work is thus to shed light to how Whiteness influences the lived realities of racialised students. Fanon (1952[2008]) explained how the logic of the colonial ideological and discursive structuring works on both the coloniser (white) and the colonised (black), establishing a binary and ontologically hierarchical structural relationship where the two opposites are mutually dependent. George Yancy (2008) explains how such colonial discursive constructions shapes colonised bodies through processes of inscription. Colonial discursive constructions becomes embodied through the lived experience of the colonial or White gaze. The White gaze traps black bodies in the white imagination, and allows for ignorance of racism through a form of learned, embodied seeing where the black is experienced as a non-human Other, an object. In this way, the body becomes a site of affectivity through racialising embodiment (Leonardo and Zembylas 2013). In a similar vein, Matias and DiAngelo (2013) approach the domain of affect and Whiteness through the concept of emo-cognitions, the interplay between cognitions and emotions. Importantly, while these emo-cognitions and their associated behaviours are generated from whites, they implicate people of colour who are forced to navigate them.

The analytical tool of a pedagogy of discomfort inspires a pedagogical strategy inviting students to 'examine constructed self-images in relation to how one has learned to perceive others. Within this [...] a central focus is to recognize how emotions define how and what one chooses to see, and conversely, not to see' (Boler 1999, 176). In traditional anti-racist education, the resistance towards being confronted with discomfort might serve as an obstacle (Boler and Zembylas 2003). However, critical education that aims at shifting racial dialogue is inherently epistemologically violent (Leonardo and Porter 2010). It demands altering the perspectives of Whiteness and revoking invisible privilege, and dissolves the idea of the classroom as 'safe space'. Traditional race dialogue is never safe for students from marginalised backgrounds. Fanon (2002) suggests that the illusion of the safe space must be met by accepting violence, not as physical force, but rather as a liberating violence by which a new humanity is introduced. The lines between violence and non-violence here are not necessarily clear-cut, but entangled in the ontology of the human existential condition. As Todd (2015, 58) explains, violence is predicated upon the human condition. The ethicality of our relations across the radical ontological difference that divides us is dependent upon our acknowledgement of the harm I can do to you. My possible discomfort in this encounter is not bad, but simply necessary for my subjectification and an ethical relation. For the particularities of Whiteness, Matias and Allen (2013) describe how the self-understanding of whites is based on an investment in a kind of sadomasochistic white love out of the fear of ostracism. The investment of whites in a colourblind ideology and self-image produce

psychological defence mechanisms when the meeting with the racialised. Others suggest that their practice is incongruent with their racial idealism. In this manner, engaging discomfort and Whiteness might be theorised as a resource in education, without ever accepting violence as a means or goal.

Norwegian exceptionalism and the Norwegian racial grammar

While much research on race and ethnic belonging has taken place in the context of the US and the UK, Scandinavia and Norway have a different racial grammar (Sandset 2014), partly in light of the phenomenon of 'Europeanization' of race and racism, whereby race is subsumed under the modalities of cultural or religious differences (Goldberg 2006). As Essed (1991) argues, racial concepts are especially hard to recognise in places with strong taboos against discussion of race. This is commensurate with the dominant Norwegian narrative that there is no such thing as 'race': 'Nonetheless there are Norwegians and there are Others, and the demarcation between the two returns again and again to perceptions of phenotype, culture, geography, and religion' (Myrdahl 2010, 6). Categories such as race, religion, language, culture, and values still amount to substantial barriers for acceptance, belonging, and participation in Norwegian society (Friberg and Midtbøen 2017). Historically, the ideological construction of Scandinavia as the historical homeland of the so-called Nordic (white) race, helped stimulate a significant amount of race-biological research on minority populations in the early 1900s. Race and Whiteness became ambiguous albeit important features of ideas of nationhood, and this had significant political implications in terms of assimilationist and racist policies towards the country's minority groups, the Roma, Romani, Jews, Forrest Finns, Kvens and the indigenous Sami (Kyllingstad 2014). This racial grammar, although seldom named, is still evident in the social landscape today, notably by the term 'ethnic Norwegian' as a synonym for white, excluding racialised and indigenous individuals.

As people in Norway generally associate racism with classical, biological racism, and in particular Nazism and the Holocaust (Gullestad 2004), the concept is reserved for discussing anomalous or extreme historical events, or deviant individuals. Race is consistently among the most discomforting topics to both educators and students (Boler 1999, 176), and it stands out in the Norwegian context by the strong and persistent subjugation of its presence. The impossible presence of race and racism is channelled through a form of nation-branding in which the manifestation of colonial knowledge within the Norwegian self-image is actively externalised, described as *Norwegian exceptionalism* (Browning 2007; Loftsdottir and Jensen 2012). While most Norwegians see themselves as victims of Danish 'colonialism', as Norway was in a formal union with Denmark in the period 1380–1814 (Gullestad 2004), the history of Danish-Norwegian maritime involvement in the transatlantic slave trade is assiduously disregarded (McIntosh 2015). The annexation of the Sami ancestral homeland of *Sápmi* by the Norwegian state from around 1500 and onwards is hardly ever recognised as colonisation, and silence is also mostly the case for brutal, discriminatory state policies towards the national minorities Kvens, Jews, Roma, Romani/tater and Forest Finns during the 18th and 19th centuries. Norwegian exceptionalism also manifests itself in education through the absence of the colonial history of Norway and a vocabulary related to concepts such as colonialism in curriculum and practice (Eriksen 2018; Jore 2018). The

avoidance of colonialism is only one facet of the greater issue of the coloniality of education. Coloniality refers not simply to historical colonialism, but also to how the structures of knowing and being that was established with colonialism still prevails in the educational systems of the modern/colonial society today (Mignolo and Walsh 2018). Within this logic, Racism and Whiteness are manifestations of the coloniality of education.

Methods and materials

This study was undertaken as part of a larger research project investigating knowledge production in citizenship education in Norwegian primary schools, with the purpose of exploring manifestations of and possible pedagogical strategies of resistance towards the coloniality of educational discourses. The particular material for this study emerged from small-scale ethnographic fieldwork in Norwegian primary schools. In the first phase, I conducted classroom observations, as well as semi-structured interviews with some of the students. In the second phase, teaching interventions actualised some of the topics related to citizenship, belonging, and national identity. The teaching interventions involved me entering the classroom as 'teacher-researcher' for one or two lessons. Some of the topics were rarely discussed in the classroom, and several teachers expressed a wish for more knowledge. The methodological framework for the teaching interventions was inspired by the idea of a 'pedagogical research process' that 'aims to provide authentic learning experiences' (Starkey et al. 2014, 428).

The empirical material consists of observations of social studies classes in nine Norwegian primary school classrooms at six different schools in mainly urban parts of South-Eastern Norway, during the first half of 2018. The classes were level 5–7, with students aged 10–13 (See overview in Table 1). Classroom dialogues and interviews were recorded and transcribed, and translated into English for use in this article. The students were given fictitious names, and in order to increase anonymity, a student might appear twice under different pseudonyms.

The teaching intervention comprised a one-hour lesson addressing the key question 'What does it mean to be Norwegian?' It was created and conducted in the period around the Norwegian national day on 17th May, as around this time discussions on national identity, cultural diversity, and ethnic borders flourish in popular media. The lesson started with positioning the students as researchers, allowing them to reflect upon the key question with the help of thinking sheets. This was followed by a classroom discussion related to a famous speech by the Norwegian king Harald V. His main message was that there are many ways of being Norwegian, deliberatively aiming to include minority positions related to race, religion, sexual orientation, and gender. In the following

Table 1. Overview of empirical material.

	Classroom observations	Student focus group interview	Teaching interventions
School A	X	5 students	-
School B	X	4 students	1 class
School C	X	-	1 class
School D	X	6 students	3 classes
School E	X	3 students	1 class
School F	X	-	1 class

section, the students worked on classifying and deconstructing concepts, applying the teaching strategy 'Odd one out', where they are to classify concepts and argue for why one does not fit in the given classification. The pedagogical goal is to gain understanding of abstract concepts. Importantly, this strategy presents itself as teaching without clear or factual answers, where conversation in the group is core (Lund 2016).

Considering radical ethics

While the blurring of the roles between researcher and teacher may be an advantage in gaining access to students' perspectives (Starkey et al. 2014), it also poses challenges in the tensions between ethical and epistemological concerns. This became especially clear in the discussions that took an explicitly racist or aggressive turn. This emerged both in how students immediately located co-students of colour as non-Norwegians, as well as instances of offensive joking with cultural symbols such as Sami traditional dress. This situation is paradoxical, as although learning about racism is important, it might increase Othering of minorities. Ethical guidelines actualise the responsibility of not undermining individual human dignity through research (NESH 2016, 13). However, working with the acknowledgement that human dignity is already unequally distributed in the classroom and society, the classroom is not a safe space from the outset. As Cannella and Lincoln (2011) note, within a critical methodological approach, epistemology, ethics, and practice are deeply interconnected, and demand a radical ethics that is already always concerned about power and oppression even as it avoids constructing power as new truth' (81).

The material was produced in interaction with, and highly influenced by, the plan sketched above. My positioning as a white majoritarian teacher-researcher was likely to influence the conversations too, as it was likely to reassure white majoritarian students more than students of colour. It might be argued that the conversations would not have taken the form they did without these conditions. For example, the use of pictures of people associated with different ethnic and racial identities could have forced the students into applying quite specific racial schemata in their conversations. As many of the situations actualised discomforting emotions, this calls for a clarification of ethical concerns. Firstly, one reason for the lesson was that experiences from field observations indicated that the topics were seldom thematised in lessons, as the theoretical framework above argues that it should be. Secondly, although there can be no ethical justification for deliberately producing violence in education, creating non-violent relations depends upon acknowledging the inherent violence of human relations (Todd 2015). In hindsight, a pertinent critique of the lesson design is that it did not allow enough time to unpack the affective aspects of the situations for the students, rather than the choice to actualise discomforting topics as such.

Discussion of results: the impossible presence of race

Norwegianness is, much as national identity elsewhere, commonly seen as defined by citizenship, ancestry, and culture (Hylland Eriksen 2010). These aspects were reflected in the students` initial reflections on what it means to be Norwegian, as depicted in Figure 1. The answers are organised under the categories 'Genealogical', 'Monocultural', 'Liberal Multiculturalist' and 'Affective'. The results were dominated by concepts related to what

Share of answers on "being Norwegian" at the
beginning of the lesson

■Genealogical ■Monocultural ■Liberal Multiculturalist ■Affective
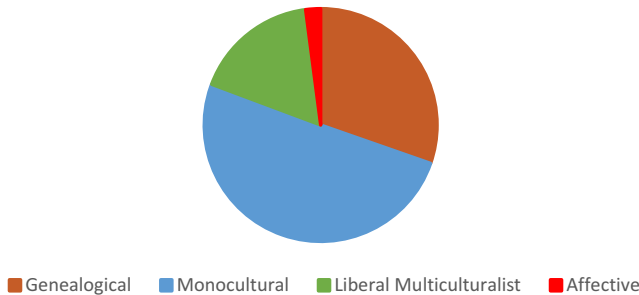
Figure 1. Answers on Norwegianness before the lesson.

I choose to call 'monoculturalism', indicating concepts such as 'Following Norwegian traditions'and engaging in activities commonly associated with essential Norwegian culture such as skiing or hiking. A large proportion of the answers were linked to with a genealogical outlook, in which nationality of parents, place of birth, and physical appearance dominated. A few answers also mentioned formal citizenship and rights, related to a liberal multiculturalist outlook, and affective dimensions such as 'feeling Norwegian'.

The most striking presence in the initial conversations between students was the persistent but somewhat impossible presence of race. Many of the students instantly applied classification schemes related to skin colour or physical appearance, but somewhat implicitly. For example, when the students were asked to write their ideas down on the thinking sheet, they seemed reluctant:

Researcher Do you have any suggestions?

Brian Skin colour. Or, you know, in Norway you are not exactly brown, you know ...

Anna Light skin colour.

David You can tell from the looks. The skin colour is light.

[I ask the students to write their thoughts on the thinking sheets, but they are reluctant. They seem to understand the inappropriateness of talking about skin colour, and their discomfort with making it 'official' by putting it on paper is pressing.]

Researcher If you were to describe being Norwegian to someone in another country, what would you say?

Cecilia Erm ... that you in a way can tell by the looks. Light skin.

Researcher Why don't you write it down?

Cecilia [Bites her nails]. No ... maybe not. It is not exactly appropriate.

Cecilia is evidently discomforted by her encounter with race through the concept of skin colour. Writing down her ideas might for her represent the act of accepting their

presence, and thus engaging in the emotional labour of recognising this part of her worldviews. Her self-image and learnt will not to be racist prevents her from 'seeing' colour. It might also be that because race and racism are such negative terms with the students, it is difficult for Cecilia and her co-students to speak the words. Perhaps by talking about it, the students might fear that they reproduce it. As Bonilla-Silva points out (2014), probing the forbidden concepts within the context of the colourblind discourse, leads to incoherent talk in order to be able to talk about race in a context where it is not supposed to matter, expressed by phenomenon such as self-corrections and long pauses. This is manifested through the response of Cecilia. The significant question here is not whether Cecilia or her co-students *are* racist. Their discussions rather illustrate that they are bearers of a cultural classification scheme that is established at a quite early age, but also emotionally repressed. As Boler and Zembylas (2003) point out, no one escapes internalising dominant cultural values, even though they might take different forms in different individuals. What happens with Cecilia here is an encounter with the self through the exposure of an impossible knowledge that evokes fear. She realises that she needs the language of race to explain the boundaries of being Norwegian. This contradicts the internalisation of attitudes towards racism as morally wrong, and is inconsistent with the Norwegian self-image as inherently anti-racist. As Fanon (1952[2008]) writes, the black person is only black in relation to the white person (90), and thus the acknowledging the presence of race presents Cecilia with her own Whiteness. This is also related to many whites' fear of being found out as racial beings (Leonardo and Porter 2010).

A related approach to the discomfort of talking about racism is a strategy of ridicule. I noticed how some of the students were continuously joking about being racist. Everyday microaggressions related to race, religion or culture in Norwegian classrooms are often conceived as not *really* racist, rather as just joking around or bad behaviour (The Norwegian Centre Against Racism 2017). Thus, it becomes impossible to see racism in everyday conversations. Joking becomes a strategy of underlining that one understands the severity of *real* racism, such as in the following example, where the students are discussing the task 'Odd one out' during the teaching intervention. They are looking at pictures of different clothing, discussing ways of grouping them:

Matthias Just write the shoes, the girl, the hijab-lady … Why did I say hijab-lady? I meant the Arab. It is not racist to say that? You know, the Arab [laughing].

[Mary mumbling about racism in a low tone, obviously frustrated by Matthias` lack of seriousness]

Cedric The shoes, because they are not like cultural dress-ish …

Mary The girl. The little girl, she eats ice-cream.

Brian You know, Matthias, Mary called you racist. [Laughing]

Matthias I am sorry. I am just like sooo racist, you know. Like watch out [Sarcastic tone].

Cedric It is actually very racist to say what you said, as it is a bad word [Arab], at least in Polish!

Matthias Yeah, we are gonna get disciplined by the principal now, as, like, racists [Sarcastic tone].

In the dialogue, racism is reconstructed through Whiteness by downplaying the possibility that racism exists in the classroom. It is thus safe for Matthias to joke around with being racist, as it is conceptually impossible for him to categorise himself as such. By his comments, Matthias tries by his sarcastic tone to show that he understands the severity of racism, and ridicule the possibility of his classroom comments having anything to do with the phenomenon. Through the use of diffuse concepts such as the mixture of 'Arab' and 'Hijab' when talking about a woman wearing a Sari in an Indian context, the Other is constructed as a mythical and diffuse Other without subjectivity. Additionally, the confusion might relate to lack of knowledge of non-Western identities and cultures, as such mirroring the dominance of Western epistemologies. The conversation about the 'Arab' enters what Fanon would term the 'zone of nonbeing' (Fanon 1952 [2008], xii). This zone of non-being is powerfully emphasised by Cedric describing 'Arab' as a 'bad word'. Racism becomes impossible to locate as there is no human victim for it. Importantly, the dialogue also clearly illustrates the students` lack of concepts for talking about Othering and racism. There is opposition to Matthias` joking, such as Mary mumbling that his comments appear racist. However, she seems somewhat disillusioned, or short of tools to challenge Matthias further. Cedric`s reaction also illustrates how he contests Matthias` comments, but his modes of opposition are related to forbidden words. Ambiguity is avoided, and being racist here appears as an absolute in the alleged simple binary of good and bad, not approachable for a deeper discussion.

The ambiguities of the indigenous Sami as a national other

The particularities of the national affective economy present itself in a different way when the students discuss being Sami. Although the Sami are constructed as a racialised Other, the racialisation takes on a different shape than the traditional binary of white and black. Sami researcher Astri Dankertsen (2019) argue that for the Sami, who might pass and be perceived as white by themselves and others, Whiteness is an ambiguous but still very real presence. Although theories of distinct Scandinavian races are abandoned, they still exist in everyday categorisations of Sami individuals as non-white Others, and influence identity processes among the Sami today. According to the efforts for recognition by Sami communities in Norway, Sami culture and history is quite visible in the formal curriculum for mainstream Norwegian schools, presented as part of the shared Norwegian cultural heritage (UDIR 2017). Although practical and lived realities are more ambiguous (Eriksen 2018), the students explain how they have 'learned a lot' about Sami culture and history. When discussing being Sami, the students seem less discomforted by the appearance of a racial vocabulary, although the categorisations pose difficulties:

Alicia I think that girl is Sami, because I have seen that outfit before … [Looking at pictures of different people with Sami identities]

Taylor No, she looks more Aryan than anything else.

Olaf It is a bunad,[1] no?

Taylor She has really pale skin, and they have that in the North.

Olaf Yes, and you know that other guy, he is from one of those spicy countries.

Researcher Do all Sami people have similar skin?

Olaf No, no . . . or, you know . . . But you can tell from their looks, you know.

Taylor Look at Ellinor, she is pale, she is Sami!

　[Laughter]

Alicia That wasn't nice to say, it is not nice to call someone Sami!

Ellinor I am not really Sami, but I think someone in my distant family is.

From the dialogue, it is clear that the students apply a quite extensive racial vocabulary. However, the Sami challenges the students in not fitting the traditional binary racial scheme. Racialisation of the Sami thus creates ambiguity, which might be a major source of discomfort (Boler and Zembylas 2003). The Sami appears as not quite Norwegian, but not a foreigner, often white in the physical sense, but not conceptually white. When I ask the students if there are any Sami students in their school, their immediate and unanimous answer is 'no'. They explain that the Sami 'live up in the North', consistent with traditional historical narratives. The students overlook the fact that due to urbanisation most Sami individuals probably live outside of *Sápmi* today. Prior to the dialogue in which the students discuss what it means to be Sami, the Sami is first introduced as a quite mythical character. The students talk about a concert held at their school by Sami artists performing the traditional musical expression *joik*, something they obviously experienced as 'exotic'. As Marna says: 'They were like uh . . . uh . . . Let`s go far up in the Sami mountain and do joik! They are so extremely superstitious those Samis'. However, the proximity changes with Ellinor`s account of her possible Saminess. It produces obscurity, and the response of her co-students is to safeguard her identity as white. Ellinor expresses the need to distance herself from her possible Sami heritage. Being 'a little bit Sami' becomes affectively impossible:

Ellinor I just have someone in my family . . .

Marna Ellinor said that she was Sami, a little bit Sami . . .

Ellinor [Laughing]. No, I am not. It is not really I who is Sami. But, I think, it is my mom`s cousin who is Sami.

Taylor Should we do a DNA test of you? [Laughing]

However, the students also emphasise their support for an inclusive, multicultural Norwegian society, in which the image of the good citizen is related to respecting each other and protecting minorities. They would surely pass the often-alleged litmus test of anti-racist attitudes. Interestingly, the students in this study expressed a clear wish for racism to be treated more explicitly in their schooling, despite their young ages of 10–13. However, theorising affect here provides access to a deeper layer. Affect sheds light on the difficult knowledge and ambiguities of race as intersections of subjectivity, social structures, and emotions. A person might express herself within the logic of non-racist tolerance and feel committed to such values, while at the same time experiencing a set of affective bodily reactions related to certain Others (Zembylas 2014, 399). This is clear

from Alicia`s position. In spite of her inclusive attitudes, Alicia exposes her emotional resistance towards the idea that Ellinor might be Sami. The students in this way correct themselves through the dialogue; although it is possibly degrading to call someone Sami if they are not *really*, it is not wrong to *be* Sami.

Negotiating race: identity work and embodied otherness

It is a common conception in multicultural education that diversity is a resource, implying that the presence of cultural, religious, or racial minority students in class is a pedagogical asset. Diversity appears as a kind of branding presented as a quality of the school, serving as a containment strategy for troublesome constituents and obscuring oppressive relations (Ahmed 2012). The underlying racial landscapes of the classrooms I entered became tangible through the ways the students positioned themselves and others in discussions. It gave interesting access to how the students are socially coded, and perform their subject positions through modes of resistance, negotiation, and subjugation. A repeated pattern appeared where the students immediately located students in their groups with minority backgrounds. The majority students seemed concerned with including the minority students in the community, assuring them that they are 'just as Norwegian as us', in spite of for example that their parents are foreign-born, they have black skin or a different first language than Norwegian. The minority students often positioned themselves as outsider, commonly applying the term 'foreigner' about themselves. In some cases, these negotiations spurred a lot of emotions, such as in Sophia`s group. Sophia is a 6th grade girl born in Norway from Bosnian-born parents:

Gina But like you, Sophia, you are kind of Norwegian even though your mom and dad are not.

Sophia No, I am from Bosnia! [insistent tone]

Ally Yes, but she means, you are Norwegian in spite of that. You speak Norwegian and everything.

[Sophia is on the verge of tears, approaching the researcher]

Sophia The others try to tell me I am Norwegian, but I am not automatically Norwegian even though I live here! My mom and dad are from Bosnia, my whole family lives there!

Researcher Well, who decides where you are from? Is it the Others?

Sophia No …

Researcher Can it be related to how you feel?

Sophia I feel Bosnian.

The example illustrates how belonging and self-identification is not independent of categorisation by others (Erdal and Strømsø 2018). Sophia is offered the label Norwegian, but at the same time not recognised as 'fully' Norwegian. It seemingly becomes a troubling position for her, as she chooses the more fixed position as 'foreigner'. Sophia`s performance shows how difference is produced and reproduced in everyday interaction through hegemony, which is not only imposed from the outside but

internalised within Sophia's conception of herself (Fanon 2002). Her emotions, under-lined by her pressing tears, reveal affect as the fabric of a coherent identity. Her opposi-tion towards accepting the invitation from her co-students to be included can be seen as a form of resistance; she refuses to give up her right to define herself. The position of the co-students can be understood as influenced by a 'denial/sameness model' (Boler and Zembylas 2003, 110), where the dominant culture is marking its privileged capacity to decide what differences are significant.

Another example more explicitly connected to skin colour is the case of Sarah, a 7th grader who has parents born in Somalia, and is a visible minority by her skin colour as well as by her wearing a hijab. She tells me she has never been to Somalia, but she wants to go, and she feels an emotional connection. Born and raised in Norway, Sarah does not consider Somalia as her country of origin. At the time we spoke, there had recently been a big explosion in the Somalian capital Mogadishu, killing 231 people. Sarah explained how it made her frustrated and sad that no one talks about this in school. She follows news updates from Somalia, and she is reminded of the invisibility of certain parts of the world in Norwegian media. In the conversation in Sarah`s group, her skin colour appears as a key signifier of national boundaries and essence, although her co-students struggle with acknowledging explicitly the need for talking about skin colour in order to make Sarah`s body intelligible within the national community:

Tom If you only have a picture, you cannot tell if someone is Norwegian.

Elsa Or, well ... Sarah, not to be racist, but ... You could start to question Sarah a bit, since she is Muslim and all that.

Sarah How come?

Elsa Because ... Well ... You know it is a bit like you could wonder about you being Norwegian because most people ... [the rest of the students start mumbling in a quiet tone about 'brown skin'] you know she has a different skin colour.

Olaf Yes, and then she has the hijab and a foreign sweater.

Maria But if Sarah would have had hijab and a Marius sweater, then ... Then it would be strange ...

Olaf Or she had been like the world's greatest tourist!

Sarah Yeah, you know, the world`s largest fan of Norway [laughing].

This illustrates the workings of Fanon's (Fanon 1952 [2008]) epidermal schema, in which skin operates as a key signifier of making cultural and racial difference intelligible. As Sarah becomes the object of knowledge, the conversation illustrates how the majority of students position themselves as entitled to gaze at and categorise Sarah. Even tough Sara interrupts the conversation, the student insists on referring to her in third person. Elsa's apology for her ideas shows that she cares for Sarah as her friend, and she seems rather blinded to how Sarah is rendered as Other by the norm of Whiteness. Such encounters might not be overtly racist or even discriminatory, but they 're-inscribe notions of racial and ethnic boundaries which in turn trigger specific ways of thinking about belonging' (Sandset 2014, 14). This reminds us that the classroom is never a level

playing field. Even though the stereotyping in the conversation highlights the power of the majority, stereotypes might create a space for resistance, 'allowing for a form of agency that nevertheless is contained within the very discourse that it opposes' (Sandset 2014, 11). Sarah expresses this type of performative resistance when the students later in the same conversation discuss the requirements for being prime minister in Norway:

Tom Can you be prime minister in Norway if you originally come from a different country?

Researcher All those who are Norwegian citizens can be prime minister.

Sarah So I can be prime minister, then?

Tom Can Sarah be prime minister?

Sarah Then that will happen!

Researcher Yes, but you have to get someone to vote for you.

Tom You can just like kill all the others [laughing]

Sarah But I have all the students in 7th grade here at the school!

Maria Yes, and all your family members in Somalia [laughing].

Olaf They don't have the right to vote, but they would have if they could …

Researcher Is it less chance that Sarah could become prime minister than the rest of you, since you seem a bit surprised?

Maria No, if someone could be prime minister, it is surely Sarah!

Tom I could never manage to be prime minister, I am not like Sarah!

In this case, racial boundaries are expanded and race as social construction is exposed. This is strongly signalled by Sarah`s comment when she sees the possibility of her becoming prime minister, declaring with self-confidence that it 'will happen!'. It repositions Tom, starting out sceptical towards the possibility of a black prime minister, and concluding with how Sarah probably is much better for the job than he is. The conversations that appeared in these performances thus represent possible sites of affective learning, where the minority student is a resource for enabling reflection. Sophie and Sarah show this kind of transcendental capital; their comments challenge their peers' ideas, and help them expand their understanding of Norwegianness and agency. However, the flipside to the ideology of 'diversity as resource' is how the racialised student here is forced to perform boundary work, pushing the edges of conceptualisations. From this perspective Sophia and Sarah can never escape their embodied Otherness, and never choose not to participate in the conceptual and affective labour in the same way as the invisible white majority (Ahmed 2012).

The comfortable deconstruction of race through dialogue

Through the conversations during the teaching intervention, the students seemingly changed their perceptions about Norwegianness and citizenship quite dramatically.

Share of answers on "being Norwegian", after the lesson

■ Genealogical ■ Monocultural ■ Liberal multiculturalist ■ Affective
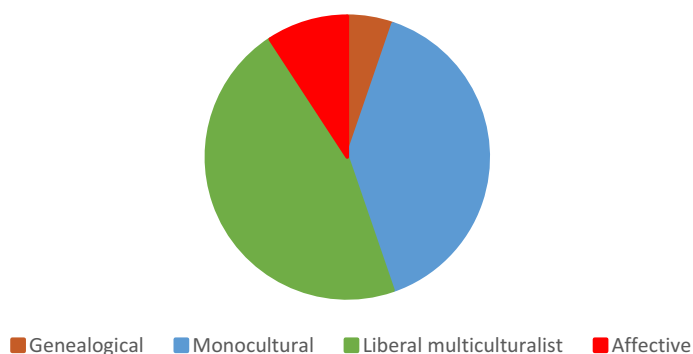
Figure 2. Answers on Norwegianness after class.

Did the lesson radically alter their views? Studying the thinking sheets at the end of lesson, genealogical aspects such as skin colour and place of birth were almost absent, and the proportion of answers related to cultural symbols or traditions had decreased. Proportionally more answers could be placed in the affective category and significantly more in the liberal multiculturalist category.

As illustrated by the results in Figure 2, compared to Figure 1. At first glance, this teaching intervention appears as a success. The goal was for the students to be exposed to their existing ideas, and deconstruct them. There were many examples of these kinds of seemingly deconstructive conversations, such as in the following discussion in a 5th grade classroom:

Allison The woman is the odd one out, because she is not Norwegian, the one in the sari.

Georg How do you know that?

Researcher Do you know that the others are Norwegians?

Allison Well, I think so . . .

Teacher But why do you think that she isn't Norwegian?

Allison Because it looks like if she is wearing Indian clothes . . .

Brian It might be that she has moved from Norway to India, maybe . . .

Researcher Yes, possibly . . . She is wearing a traditional Indian costume called sari.

Laura But the shoes aren't Norwegian either, they are from Germany.

Several students comment on how 'Nike' is not a Norwegian brand although it is widely used in Norway.

[. . .]

Researcher But you guys, could it be that the woman with the sari is Norwegian?

Brian Yes, it might be.

Rachel It might be that she is born in Norway, born and raised in Norway, or have Indian parents, or something like that.

Researcher So we cannot really know, because we haven't asked her. Can you live in Norway and wear a sari?

The class answer spontaneously Yes!

Michael My mom has several. She is from India. She is an expert on how to put it on!

The discourse is clearly modified through this dialogue. However, there is not much emotional labour happening, especially not with the majority. The woman in sari is reconstructed as an object of the conversation, happening at a distance from the majority students` self-perceptions; they are not implicated in the discussion, but positioned as privileged to include the woman in their existing community, to perform the White gaze.

Discomfort does not necessarily function to put students out of their comfort zones, but can work to keep them within through the affective technology of Whiteness. The resistance towards being exposed to the presence of race in their categorisations as well as the possibility of Whiteness as a racial existence, might simply have made the students obscure the impossible presence of race at the end of the lesson, rather than extend their comfort zones. During the process of conversation, the topics discussed were navigated in relation to the logic of the colourblind discourse. As Bonilla-Silva (2014) describes, this is recognised by phenomenon such as semantic manoeuvres and abstract liberal discourse. This was also partly enabled by the comments from the teacher as well as me as researcher, asking the rhetorical question 'Can you live in Norway and wear a Sari?'. In this way, the colourblind rhetoric structured the conversation in a tacit way. The deconstructive conversations were not counterhegemonic or radically re-evaluating the position, privilege, and worldviews of the majority. Rather, the affective technology of Whiteness worked to incline the students to avoid the discomfort of a possible racist presence, the colourblind rhetoric functioning as a psychological defence mechanism. The challenge with the deconstruction happening in the teaching interventions was related to the underlying premise of the idea of safe space, and my fear as teacher-researcher of violating my ethical responsibilities by engaging in a more explicit discussion of Otherness.

Implications, opportunities and challenges for pedagogical strategies

This article is not intended to distribute guilt and shame, but rather to illustrate that knowledge production to a high degree is structured by colonial archives of knowledge, and obscured by the affective technologies of Whiteness, race, and racism. The research displays how the traditional focus on individual knowledge and attitudes in anti-racist education is insufficient. A person may be deeply committed to anti-racist values, but nonetheless be complicit in reproducing structural oppression. The dialogue analysis made me question the workings of my own emotional investments during the teaching intervention. The reflexivity spurred by acting in the role as teacher-researcher helped me gain important insights, not least from the fear and discomfort at play in my own encounters with the students. This is a reminder that if we claim or attempt neutrality,

we practice colonising education. In order to avoid this, we must accept the risk of losing likeability, altering our subjectivities, and be willing to be disliked by the powerful who will continue to resist (Gorski 2008). These are vital insights when reconsidering the role of the so often white teacher.

In this article, I have argued for the importance of pedagogies that invoke emotions in a historicised sense (Boler 1999), shedding light on what race, racism and Whiteness *do* as both affective and structural phenomena influencing bodies and relations in Norwegian classrooms. Both the suggested remedies of increased awareness as well as the need for the white majority to face their discomforting feelings do not necessarily serve to interrogate the wider structures that trigger such feelings in the first place (Zembylas 2018). Thus, the unconsidered embrace of pedagogy of discomfort as a strategy runs at least two fundamental risks: the risks of *individualising* the phenomenon as well as *intellectualising* or pedagogising it at the expense of decolonisation.

Firstly, by focusing on the discomfort of white individuals, the already existing violence of the classroom is overlooked. In the cases of both Sarah and Sophie, it is clear that they are forced to perform an emotional labour that they cannot escape. Difference is situated in their bodies. Whiteness is invisible to those who inhabit it, and although it can be 'discovered' through educational processes, it has a different quality than the minority position. The space of the encounters is organised by the affective technology of Whiteness, and embodied by minoritized students through the presence of the White gaze (Yancy 2008). In other words, the ways in which pedagogy of discomfort might position the discomfort of the white majority and the emotions of the Other as similar phenomena might reinforce the unjust power-relations it aims at dismantling. What is more, discomfort is a quite elusive term, and needs to be clarified through pointing out the historically and politically situated embodied emotions at play in particular encounters between specific individuals and bodies. However, this does not imply that the idea of a pedagogy of discomfort cannot be an expedient starting point, or that approaching the micro-level processes of affective economies is not important. Significantly, it can provide a new framework for considering what amount to safe spaces in the classroom. By acknowledging the violent dimension to education for social justice, and allowing for the majority students to risk loss of their positions through challenging dialogues, the epistemological playing field might be levelled. This perspective is vital in understanding the processes of knowledge production in the classroom: 'The aim of discomfort is to explore beliefs and values; to examine when visual "habits" and emotional selectivity have become rigid and immune to flexibility; and to identify when and how our habits harm ourselves and others' (Boler 1999, 185). This flexibility depends on recognising how emotions influence cognition and learning.

Secondly, decolonisation as a complex but yet inherently binding political project might be superficially adopted into education for social justice (Tuck and Yang 2012, 2). Decolonisation demands a change in the systems of the world that is not yet tangible. It is not an 'and', but an elsewhere. When constructing the affective technologies of Whiteness, race and racism as matters to be treated pedagogically in schools, the very material and political project of decolonising colonial structures and practices both within and beyond the education sector might be overlooked (Zembylas 2018). Acknowledging how decolonialism is a broader political project than transformative education, I argue that it is not necessarily a question of either/or. To sort out these entanglements, the vision of 'system hospicing' might be helpful. Although decolonialism demands radically new

systems and structures, it is a complex process of tensions and paradoxes that cannot serve the modern requirement for immediate resolution and prescriptive action. The idea of system hospicing is about doing the work within the current, dying system in order to clear the space for something new (Andreotti et al. 2015). For anti-racist education, the implications is that although decolonisation postulates the search for pedagogical strategies that enables 'new and more ethical, responsible and responsive ways of seeing, knowing and relating to others in context' (Andreotti 2010, 234), there is a pressing imperative to create more safe and humanising environments for all students in the current classrooms while gesturing towards something new. The role of education in dismantling the complex affective and discursive structures of racial injustices is but one process, not to be mistaken for the broader and highly material political work demanded by decoloniality.

Note

1. Traditional Norwegian dress.

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Good intentions, colonial relations: Interrupting the white emotional equilibrium of Norwegian citizenship education

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Good intentions, colonial relations: Interrupting the white emotional equilibrium of Norwegian citizenship education

Drawing on decolonial perspectives on knowledge production and citizenship education, this article argues that the prevalence of intellectual and affective economies of whiteness might result in lost opportunities for (self-) reflexivity among students and teachers. In particular, in spite of stated intentions towards antiracism, potential educational openings for talking about race and racism might be foreclosed through efforts to maintain the emotional equilibrium of whiteness. In the case of Norwegian citizenship education, the hegemonic social imaginary of national exceptionalism masks the ongoing reproduction of colonial structures that render certain people as non-existent, and naturalize white dominance and epistemic violence. Analyzing the reflections, practices and expressed emotions of Norwegian student teachers, we show how the workings of coloniality may obstruct the critical literacies the educational system aims to foster. We argue that decolonial critiques may offer perspectives that challenge existing practices and discourses of citizenship education, and enable movement towards a more socially just and critical citizenship education. We also locate opportunities for interruptions in our material, and discuss implications for practice that might contribute to denaturalizing coloniality and whiteness.

Keywords: citizenship education; national exceptionalism; decolonial; affect; whiteness

Introduction

The national imaginary of Norway as a global democratic champion has served well to market its image as exceptional both nationally and internationally. *National exceptionalism* (Browning, 2007; Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012; Susa, 2016) is also deeply embedded within the educational system, and manifests in the production of knowledge and social identities. Despite this exalted self-image and stated intentions for education to foster human dignity, equality and solidarity (The Norwegian Ministry of Education (KD), 2019), Norwegian educational institutions continue to support the reproduction of colonial structures that naturalize racism, epistemic violence and exploitative capitalist economic structures (Eriksen, 2018a; Svendsen, 2014a). In this article, we argue that discourses of exceptionalism may

effectively absolve educational institutions of their pedagogical responsibilities to disrupt unjust social relations (Stein, 2018). Social and national imaginaries in education may work as invisible structuring grammars of meaning that determine which and whose perspectives are intelligible (Stein et al., 2019). Imaginaries are here understood as invisible grammars structuring frameworks of meaning (Taylor, 2002). Such imaginaries are also embedded in emotions, and manifest through the affective economy of the nation-state (Ahmed, 2004). Citizenship education that seeks to challenge colonization therefore cannot focus solely on the cognitive dimension of coloniality. In this article, we emphasize the role of affect in reproducing coloniality in education as one small contribution toward wider efforts to decolonize citizenship education.

Discourses of national exceptionalism are not exclusive to Norway, and have been described in, among others, the Canadian (Stein, 2018; Susa, 2016) and Finnish contexts (Honkasalo, 2014; Rastas, 2009). Although this article emphasizes the particularities of the Norwegian context, applying a decolonial lens to national educational discourses also sheds light on global patterns of coloniality. Coloniality describes how epistemologies and power relations produced through and by centuries of European colonialism continue to inform present day society (Quijano, 2000). The particular expressions of national exceptionalism that play out differently in national contexts can be understood as informed by a modern ontology that historically emerged through the unfolding of modernity/coloniality. Decolonial perspectives urge us to move beyond traditional modes of social critique by approaching our current problems not simply as issues of ignorance to be solved with more knowledge or the "right" moral values; they are also problems of denial rooted in desires for and investments in the continuity of a modern/colonial habit of being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Stein et al., 2020). A central element of this habit of being that is emphasized in this article is the affective

economy of whiteness (Ahmed, 2004), and the corresponding assertions of white innocence (DiAngelo, 2010; Shotwell, 2016; Wekker, 2016).

This article draws on interviews and observations of student teachers, and classrooms conversations. However, our intention is not to understand the teachers in terms of individual traits, developmental stages or personal capacity building. Instead, we explore how imaginaries are expressed, constructed, reproduced and/or contested by looking at teachers' classroom practices, reflections and emotions. We argue that decoloniality offers perspectives that may challenge and supplement existing discourses and practices of citizenship education, both nationally and globally, as it 'enables pluralizing possibilities for citizenship education in ways that address ethnocentrism, ahistoricism, depoliticization and paternalism in educational agendas' (Andreotti, 2011b, p. 381). In writing this article, we are inspired by Santos' (2015) description that the production of knowledge in a study such as this is always partial and situated, and should not be considered "knowledge-as-a-representation-of-reality", but rather "knowledge as-an-intervention-in-reality" (p. 201). This approach acknowledges that other researchers with different analytical lenses could have read the material differently. Our methodological orientation is not concerned with offering an alleged authentic representation of citizenship education in Norwegian primary schools as such, but rather with mobilizing knowledge in order to trouble and interrupt current modes of thinking and practice with particular relevance for social justice and the calls for decolonizing citizenship education.

Methods and participants

This article is derived from a larger project exploring citizenship education in Norwegian primary schools. The project was registered by the *Norwegian Centre for Research Data* (NSD) in 2017, and collection of material for this article was carried out in the second half of 2018. Sixteen student teachers specializing in social studies participated in the study, which involved

performing a lesson primarily designed by one of the authors, who is also a teacher educator. The student teachers collaborated in the development of the lesson by participating in a one-hour workshop on the draft for the lesson, and then conducted the lesson(s) as part of their mandatory teaching practice period in grades 5-7 (students aged 10-13). All the student teachers shared their experiences in a seminar after the lessons were conducted. The choice of classroom observations and interviews as research methods was based on the intention of tracing how coloniality and whiteness in citizenship education are reproduced and/or interrupted in teaching practice and with teachers. The research methods also reflect the researcher's desire to enable the student teachers to go beyond good intentions (Gorski, 2008) and engage in reflexive processes about their own practices, i.e. the research was also concerned with the learning of the student teachers. The teacher educator in charge of the social studies teacher education program as well as the mentor teachers at the schools also participated in observation and interviews. Interviews and observations were recorded and transcribed. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian, and the quotes featured in this article are translated into English by the authors.

Table 1. Overview of methods, material and participants

School, grade	Observation	Group interviews (participants)	Oral presentation
School A, grade 5	2 hours	3 student teachers	Group presentation by 3 student teachers
School B, grade 6	2 hours	1 student teacher, 1 mentor teacher, 1 teacher educator	Presentation by student teacher
School C, grade 6	1 hour	3 student teachers, 1 mentor teacher, 1 teacher educator	Group presentation by 3 student teachers
School D, grade 6	2 hours	1 student teacher, 1 mentor teacher, 1 teacher educator	Presentation by student teacher
School E, grade 6	2 hours	4 student teachers, 1 teacher educator	Group presentation by 4 student teachers
School F, grade 6	3 hours	3 student teachers, 1 mentor teacher, 1 teacher educator	Group presentation by 3 student teachers
School G, grade 7	2 hours	1 student teacher, 1 teacher educator	Presentation by student teacher
7 schools	**14 hours observation**	**16 student teachers, 4 mentor teachers, 1 teacher educator**	**7 presentations**

The lesson plan: Teaching citizenship and anti-racism in Norwegian primary schools

The lesson plan centered on topics of citizenship identity, diversity and racism. The lesson was constructed in correspondence with central learning outcomes in the mandatory subject of social studies in the Norwegian core curriculum, emphasizing democracy, identity and culture (The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training (UDIR), 2013). The lesson combined perspectives on current racism and the history of assimilationist state politics towards the national minorities in the 19th and 20th centuries, in particular the Romani/Tater groups.[1] The

[1] The Romani/Tater is an ethnic minority group that has been living in Norway since at least 1500, officially recognized as a national minority and thus subject to the rights in the European Council (CoE) *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*. See https://www.coe.int/en/web/minorities/at-a-glance for more information. We use the dual term Romani/Tater as the group agree on being regarded as one group, but there are internal disputes about their name.

lesson started with showing a short video from a campaign made by the advertising agency *Gorilla Media*[2] in response to policies recently passed by the Danish government. The goal of the new laws was to make the country 'a less attractive destination for refugees', the new policies including targeted cuts in welfare services to immigrants, and regulating the ethnic composition of inhabitants in designated zones to ensure that 'immigrants' will not outnumber 'proper Danes' in any residential areas. This sparked debate on who can be said to be 'fully Danish', and the video was a powerful campaign designed for social media, featuring voices of young Danish children with immigrant parents. Denmark is a neighboring country to Norway, and the policies were upheld as exemplary by the Norwegian government (Piene, 2019). The video was followed by exercises where students were asked to reflect upon their own national identity. The second part of the lesson explored connections between historical legacies through the example of the Romani/Tater, and present-day racism.

The intention of the lesson was to invite educational engagements with racism as a historically and structurally embedded phenomenon, with students and student teachers alike. Part of the exceptionalist national self-image of Norway is related to priding itself in a democratic school system and pedagogical culture, and the Education Act states that the overall goal of education is to promote democracy, equality and scientific thinking (The education Act, 1998, §1.1). Even though these topics are explicitly spelled out in the core curriculum, previous research finds that racism and discrimination are absent in textbooks and teaching practice (Midtbøen et al., 2014). This absence can be understood in light of the elusive presence of racism in the Norwegian public sphere as such. Racism is constructed as a nonsensical and past phenomenon (McEachrane, 2014), and the embeddedness of an imagined white, Nordic race within the affective economy of the nation-state is actively ignored (Myrdahl, 2010). Several scholars have identified a practice of 'color-evasiveness' in

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[2] See the video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=e7mqfmZS5xM.

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the educational system, based on the false presumption that race does not hold power as social category (Annamma et al., 2017; Harlap & Riese, 2014; Svendsen, 2014b). These tendencies to evade engagements with race and racism are also undergirded by the externalization of colonialism as irrelevant for the Norwegian context (Eriksen, 2018b).

The particular design of the lesson was informed by writings on decolonizing education (Andreotti, 2011b; Andreotti et al., 2018; Zembylas, 2018) emphasizing the need to turn the gaze away from the racial/cultural 'Other' and toward systems of power and control and historical and socio-political contexts (Gorski, 2008), i.e. talking explicitly of political issues such as racism rather than the more common approach of celebrating minority cultures. Another important didactical feature was the emphasis on the need for self-reflexivity and involving affect in learning processes, in particular for white students and teachers. The choice to frame the lesson this way was made based on the imperative from decolonial pedagogical thinking of the need to deal explicitly with racism and structural inequality. The participating practice schools and mentor teachers, stating their wish to focus more on these topics and expressing a sense that they lacked sufficient competencies, welcomed the focus.

Theorizing decoloniality as an approach to citizenship education

The methodology in this study was informed by colonial discourse analysis, which "examine[s] processes of knowledge production and their role in the creation and perpetuation of (neo)colonial violences and inequalities" (Andreotti, 2011a, p. 85). Importantly, applying an understanding of race and racism as social constructs with material impacts, and discourse as manifestation and reproduction of the social order (DiAngelo, 2010), we are not interested in the intentionality of teachers, but how discourses and power structures work to secure power. There are in particular three colonial dimensions of relevance to citizenship education that the decolonial lens renders visible. The first concerns the geopolitics of knowledge

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production that frame modern/colonial, Western ways of knowing as universal, while other perspectives and ways of knowing are erased. This erasure of epistemic difference is not an issue of what modern subjects *do not* imagine, but what they *cannot* imagine due to the invisible but powerful ontological underpinnings of an epistemology that upholds the vision of universal knowledge and the white individual as the knowing subject (Santos, 2018). The second dimension relates to ethnocentric perspectives that reproduce modern/colonial patterns of race and inequality. In the affective economy of the nation-state, relations of belonging and entitlement are constituted on the basis of affective positioning (Ahmed, 2004). These patterns also shape the third dimension, which is that the national imaginaries of countries like Norway elevate the nation-state to a place beyond critique and implicitly naturalize the white citizen subject (Eriksen, 2018b). Thus, the analytical framework for this article traced evidence of three interrelated dimensions of coloniality in education: 1) a universalized Western epistemology; 2) modern/colonial structures of race and inequality, and in particular whiteness; and 3) national exceptionalism. Based on this framework, questions were used to read the empirical material, generating a corresponding overview of manifestations and tendencies (see Table 2).

Table 2. Mapping the material

Generative framework	Universalized Western epistemology	Modern/colonial structures of race and inequality	National Exceptionalism
Related questions	- What educational practices and discourses are made possible? - What practices and discourses are made invisible? - What are the main ideas about knowledge and rationality?	- How is racism understood, or avoided? - How is inequality seen as an individualized and/or structural matter? - How is complicity in	- How is the nation-state perceived and presented? - What positions of citizenship identity are available within the national imaginary? - What positions are invalidated?

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			systemic harm acknowledged or avoided?	
Tendencies and presences in the material	- The possibility of neutral knowledge/ knowers - Skepticisms towards alleged normative education - Fear of knowledge "out of control"	- Colorblindness/ Colorevasiveness - Racism perceived as lack of knowledge - Willful and sanctioned ignorance of racism		- Norway as a superior democracy - Being Norwegian as desired identity - Rendering invisible certain individuals, in particular Muslims

Decolonial analysis challenges educational approaches that seek to interrupt racism with more knowledge, which presumes that the root of injustice is lack of information. Yet it is not only at the level of knowledge that coloniality is naturalized in education; it is also reproduced through affective economies. Affective economies emphasize not individualized, psychologized emotions, but rather how political and social structures are embodied in ways that tend to sustain the status quo (Ahmed, 2004; Zembylas, 2018). In the affective economies of modern Western nation-states, the nations' perceived Others play a vital part in configuring the borders of the national community. Framing the Other as a stranger serves to relationally construct and define the boundaries of the nation as well as national subjects (Ahmed, 2000). In educational contexts, affective economies tend to prioritize white emotional equilibrium, and punish anyone that causes *dis*comfort by challenging white innocence, i.e. the denial of racism that safeguards white privilege and the benevolent national self-image (Wekker, 2016). In these instances, the challenging party is framed as the threatening 'cause' of bad feelings (e.g. guilt, anger, defensiveness), and the larger socio-historical context is invisibilized. In this way, 'Whiteness is a problem of being shaped to think that other people are the problem' (Shotwell, 2016, p. 38).

Robin DiAngelo (2010) has pointed out how white moral identity as non-racist is upheld by individualist discourses that allow white people to exempt themselves from the

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presence of race as structural phenomenon. In sum, the modern/colonial approach to education in Western countries like Norway support affective economies that leave us unprepared and unwilling to address complicity in systemic harm (Andreotti et al., 2018). These economies effectively constrain possibilities for countering hegemony in the classroom if not explicitly engaged with (Boler & Zembylas, 2003), and even then, these challenges are often resisted. This makes a decolonial inquiry of citizenship education a necessary intervention, if not always a welcomed one. Hence, our readings of the material present a particular perspective, and the examples were chosen in order to unpack colonial structures. Before reviewing the results, we offer some engagement with the particular ways that the coloniality of education is manifested in Norway.

Coloniality in the Norwegian context

Although decolonial perspectives have not yet been thoroughly discussed in the context of Norwegian education, scholarship on Nordic exceptionalism illustrates some of the interrelations between Western epistemology, modern/colonial structures of race, whiteness and inequality, and the idea of the inherent benevolence of the nation-state. Nordic exceptionalism points towards two different ideas about Nordic societies, including Norway. The first is that of Nordic countries' peripheral status in relation to the broader European colonialism and contemporary globalization (Loftsdóttir & Jensen, 2012). This is despite the fact that the Nordic countries´ participation in colonial practices and exploitative globalization is well documented (Mikander, 2015). For instance, there is widespread denial about colonization of the ancestral homeland of the Sami peoples, *Sápmi/Sabmi/Saebmie*, as well as the Nordic colonial endeavours in Africa and the Americas. These denials have been enabling conditions for the production of the idea of Norway as a homogenous nation-state (Fylkesnes, 2019).

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With a growing number of immigrants appearing in Norway since the 1970s, immigration has appeared as a site of racist discourse. A racialization of difference takes place, whereby equality is perceived as sameness. This 'imagined sameness' has underpinned the ethnification of Norwegian national identity (Gullestad, 2002). Imagined sameness can be understood as an ideology based on racial principles of white Norwegian and Christian superiority, sustained through structural inequities. The ideal of this imagined sameness implies that difference is seen as a threat. This national myth is tied to the rejection of race as a relevant concept. Another aspect of Nordic exceptionalism is the idea that Nordic countries are distinct from the rest of Europe. Nordic exceptionalism frames Nordic countries as global good citizens who are conflict resolution-oriented, benevolent and rational (Browning, 2007). The Norwegian nation is constructed as anti-racist and in solidarity with marginalized populations, nationally and globally (Eriksen, 2018a). Inclusion into the imagined community in Norway is therefore conditional upon 'different' subjects adhering to 'Norwegian, liberal democratic norms', and the imaginary of equality obscures racial injustices that provide or prevent access to the national community (Gullestad, 2002). In educational settings, this construction might obstruct historical and counter-hegemonic thinking that can foster social transformation.

Exploring student teachers` practices, reflections and emotions on anti-racist education

The neutral universal knower

The most striking feature of the conversations with student teachers after the lessons, was their resistance to directly engaging students with content about inequity and politics, or examining their own role in racialized economies of knowledge production and transmission. The student teachers were mostly focused on practical matters, such as whether technical devices worked properly, or to what extent the students were able to sit quietly. However, one

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main concern related to knowledge production that appeared among many of the student teachers was the issue of normativity. As two of the student teachers explained:

> I think that there are several challenges [with normative education]. One is that you risk letting your own view influence the students. Another is that you don't manage to be completely neutral.

> It becomes like a dual-edged sword, because I do not want to be placed on one or the other side, kind of.

This illustrates two typical tendencies in our material among the student teachers´ reflections on knowledge production. Firstly, the perceived ideal for the teacher to be 'objective', understood as neutral. Most of the student teachers considered it a problem that education addressing issues of structural inequality is 'non-neutral' and 'political'. Indeed, education that challenges the myths of the dominant culture is often seen as political propaganda from the majority perspective (Boler & Zembylas, 2003). The assumption of objectivity is generally reserved for white students and teachers, and is largely unavailable to racialized people (DiAngelo, 2010). The second tendency among the teachers was the implication that a neutral middle ground exists. This conceptual framework reflects the workings of Western epistemology (Kerr & Andreotti, 2017), where the practice of knowing is understood as based in abstraction and universalism. Colonial relations are reproduced and mask subordination and epistemic privilege when Western knowledge is posed as the invisible norm (Maldonado-Torres, 2004). Although the student teachers showed a positive attitude towards discussing the topic as well as a stated commitment to promote anti-racism, explicit use of the concepts of race and racism was generally avoided. There was also a stated fear of discussing prejudiced ideas towards certain groups. This can be understood to mirror the general tendency in the Norwegian educational discourse towards thinking that if you acknowledge

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the presence of racialization, you are complicit in producing racism. As one of the student teachers described:

> Talking about the prejudices towards the Romani/Tater population was hard, so I did not want to say it out loud. Well, we did talk about it implicitly. […] I was very afraid that it would be too much negative.

As the history of the Romani/Tater challenges the exceptionalist self-image of Norway, and also because it is traditionally not well covered in textbooks, the student teacher avoided explicit discussion of the atrocities.[3] This way, she evades the discomfort of re-evaluating her own worldviews. The student teacher also adds that because, in her view, there is not much marginalization in Norway today, there is no need to discuss it with the new generation. This reflects a strategy of avoidance, where the expressed anxieties can be understood as embedded in the larger national imaginary at work. Further, the lesson elicited white discomfort, which caused the teacher to avoid explicit engagements with racism. The teacher's whiteness affords her the ability (and the perceived entitlement) to escape the possible discomfort of the topic. This privilege of being able to leave a dialogue if it becomes too arduous is a key facet of the affective economy of whiteness (Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013). For white people, there is a choice of whether or not to face the discomfort of such discussions, whereas racialized and Indigenous peoples do not have this privilege.

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[3] The policies towards the Romani/Tater carried out by the Norwegian Government in the 19th and early 20th centuries included among other measures forced sterilization of women, forced adoption of newborn children, and forced settlement of Romani/Tater families in work camps.

Epistemic erasure: moves to multicultural innocence

Strategies of avoidance appeared in different versions. A common approach among student teachers, was the reconceptualization of differences as benign, as well as a depoliticization of the ways that those differences are produced and engaged. A main strategy for handling the overt racism displayed in the video about Denmark was a reframing of the issues towards celebrating diversity, a common strategy in citizenship and intercultural education as a means of avoiding politics (Markovich, 2018). A mentor teacher posed criticism towards the lesson plan in this regard:

> Yes, this is a small rural school where everybody knows each other. So integration is not an issue here. We have different nations, but that has never been a challenge, always a strength, in our school. There might be bullying, but it is never about that. There are no secrets […] The one boy in that class you saw, he is adopted, the one that is dark. He is really proud of it. Two countries. That is great! He is just really proud. […] A lot of the questions in the lecture were problematizing. That it was like, the students couldn't understand, why is it a problem?

In this perspective, the right remedy for fighting racism is providing sufficient knowledge and the 'right' attitudes. The teacher epitomizes this approach, and describes the school as a place where race is irrelevant. This is a paradox in relation the teacher's need to address the situation of a child that was visibly non-white, and thus automatically embodies Otherness when seen from a white, majority perspective. At the end of the lecture, the students were asked whether they think they should learn about racism at school. They all seemed a bit confused by the question, and reluctantly most showed their thumb down signaling 'no'. When I asked the mentor teacher about this, she explained to me that they probably did not understand the question, as they associated racism with something bad. She expressed a view that thematizing racism was not the preferred strategy at their school:

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> We have a lot of teachers with other minority statuses also, from other countries, so it has
> never been a focus. They are all just integrated into the school. We show respect, we
> work on respect for each other, and each other's opinions and attitudes.

The teachers further explained how the minority teachers and students are included by the school, presupposing a majority that is in the position to provide (or withhold) tolerance towards the minoritized Other. Ahmed identifies "non-performative anti-racism" wherein schools brand themselves by stating their commitments to diversity, without actually bringing about the forms of equity that they purport to be committed to (2012). In this way, whiteness and racism are obscured by a move to multicultural innocence (Tuck & Yang, 2012), and diversity is instrumentalized as a form of school branding. The main point is not, however, whether or not the teacher is right that no one in her school experiences racism, but rather that she has the privilege to engage with racism selectivity. This also illustrates the workings of epistemic erasure: it is difficult to address the realities of racism without acknowledging the ongoing context of European colonialism (DiAngelo, 2010).

Care as a manifestation of white discomfort

The white discomfort expressed by several of the student teachers also typically manifested as a form of care for their students, and an unwillingness to engage them in the difficult work of acknowledging and challenging their assumptions. One of the student teachers was particularly insistent in her efforts towards re-establishing the classroom as a safe space after the video. As the students displayed their emotions through tears and body language, the student teacher seemingly felt the urge to diffuse this. Interestingly, she directed the care especially towards students who's belonging to Norway may be questioned. She wanted to make sure that no one was left 'hurt or thinking that they cannot be Norwegian'. As the lecture started with the video featuring kids in Denmark being questioned as to whether they could consider themselves 'real Danes', this sparked classroom conversations on students`

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identities and the boundaries of being Norwegian. In the conversation after the video, many students mentioned that they had foreign-born parents, and thus they are formally classified as immigrants, or that they had a physical appearance not associated with being Norwegian (i.e. non-white). The student teacher met these comments by insisting on celebrating diversity, responding in ways that repositioned the differences as politically insignificant:

> Then you get the best of two worlds. You have a little advantage there, then!
> How amazing! Imagining having all those wonderful cultural pieces in you.

This type of care has been spelled out in other studies as the apparent relief displayed by teachers when they get the opportunity to talk about minority students in positive terms (Røthing, 2019). When discussing the question 'what does it mean to be a Norwegian', the teacher emphasized answers that focused on feelings. As she told her students, 'if you feel you are Norwegian, you are!'. This 'will to include', avoiding discussion of the structures of exclusion, also manifested in a more insisting manner:

> Student 1: My parents are from Kosovo.
> Student teacher: Do you feel Norwegian?
> Student 1: Yes.
> Student teacher: Right. Then you are Norwegian.
> Student 2: My father is Italian!
> Student teacher: But I bet he feels Norwegian, too!

Although care is fundamental in the relation between student and teacher, the care that is displayed is also a type of care that naturalizes unacknowledged power relations. Through these conversations, student teacher positions being Norwegian as the desired status. There is a clear tension; on one side, she works on expanding possible identifications related to the nation-state. On the other side, she also reproduces the exalted white, Norwegian subject as the given position to which all should aspire. Such approaches are often undertaken with good intentions. However, when teachers fail to denaturalize the presumed neutrality of the white

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positionality, or to address the realities of racial and social hierarchies, this often places

minoritized students in positions where they are perceived to 'embody' diversity (Ahmed,

2012). The privilege of not automatically having one's identity thematized and deconstructed

is reserved for white students. Meanwhile, the realities of racism go unexamined. In

theorizing discomfort in pedagogy, Boler (1999) points out how empathy often works by

reducing the Other to a mirror-identification of oneself, rendering the discomforting Other as

less threatening. The student teacher explains to the students how she has friends with

different backgrounds, languages and traditions, that all are 'as Norwegian as me', in order to

make the differences benign, to both herself and her students.

Conditional inclusion of difference

Throughout the conversations, the idea of an 'ideal' classroom manifested in different ways as

a non-emotional deliberative space. As Sharon Todd (2015) notes, discussions in Western

classrooms often model themselves on parliamentary political processes, not acknowledging

how classrooms are affectively charged (p. 59). This masks the power relations that are

always already present, invisibly centering certain perspectives as natural. Strikingly, many

situations in the classroom positioned the Muslim in the role of the Other. For instance, in one

case the student teachers explained how they had made the necessary precautions for

thematizing the 'difficult' topics by talking with the class teacher before the lecture:

> Student teacher 1: We asked what we can say, and what we ought not to get into in a way.
> […] He said we could just talk about religion, or basically anything.
> Student teacher 2: He did not even think there were any Muslims in the class.

Here, there is an underlying implication that because there were no Muslims in the classroom,

it made the topics easier to navigate. The presence of the Muslim Other would amount to a

contamination to the safe space. This came up as a topic in several conversations. As one of

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the teachers students noted, 'very often you talk about minorities in a way that, minority, that means Muslim'. Many of the teacher students expressed that they did not find it uncomfortable having Muslims in the classroom, as long as they were not too explicitly signaling their identities. Indeed, some discussed the *extent* of practicing Islam:

> Teacher 1: I don't think anyone thinks about Amal in any other ways than being an ordinary girl. I don't think anyone thinks about her having another religion.
> Student teacher: No, I don't think so.
> Teacher 2: No, there are so many degrees of it, also, as whether she eats halal in birthdays, and…
> Teacher 1: No, so there are not so much they may have noticed, really. She doesn't even wear any head scarf.

In this conversation, the mentor and student teachers position the Muslim as the Other to be included, on the condition that the Muslim student does not appear as too different from the majority. This is reflective of the 'invisible fences' described by Gullestad (2002), that inclusion into the Norwegian community is available on selective terms. Further, the fact that the student does not wear a headscarf is mobilized by the teachers as a means to avoid addressing the ways that racial differences structure their classroom dynamics and students' experiences (DiAngelo, 2010).

(Interrupting) White avoidance

Through the conversations described above, there is a common pattern: mentor teachers and student teachers are explicitly committed to anti-racist education and promoting social justice. They have good intentions. However, by upholding the ideals of celebrating diversity, discourses of individuality and value-neutral education, they fail to address underlying power structures and epistemologies that reinforce unjust structures through knowledge production (Gorski, 2008). This was also reinforced by how the student and mentor teachers exhibited

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strategies of avoidance when exposed to the presence of racism. This white avoidance was also accompanied by a sense of care towards students, premised on the well-intended desire to protect them from discomfort.

In most of the cases, emotions in the classroom were framed or treated as something to be avoided, at least if the emotions are difficult or negative. However, one student teacher, Guro, represented an exception:

> Yes, the whole thing was set out by that video and it was a clear way to start, because it spurs emotions, and you get a relation to the topic. […] Because you can see what it does when you awake those emotions, I felt it myself, that wow, it got me thinking.

On the question of whether the topic was difficult, she was the only student teacher replying clearly 'no!'. She explains that she sees the topic as political, but that does not make it more difficult:

> I think that diversity could be a resource but we should be careful in making someone a representative for a minority group. The other thing is that if you are really into that thinking that diversity is a resource it might lead to the color-blindness that teaches us that there are no differences. But there are, and we must face them. People have different privileges.

As the teachers and student teachers were almost exclusively white, it may also explain the fact that racism and whiteness was avoided by most. However, the counter-discourse Guro posed was made possible exactly through her awareness of her emotional investment:

> Everyday racism, that was something we talked a lot about. […] But I have children with a father from Congo, so we are a lot… We experience it all the time. Or not me, but they, that people want to touch their hair, and that is… And it is hard for some people to accept, that when they like ask where my kids are really from, that it is not completely okay. […] But they [the students] are really engaged, you know. So I think it is, it has been a nice entry into a lot of other topics, you know.

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This example illustrates that the affective economy of whiteness is not totalizing, and signals that there are generative opportunities for interruptions for those who wish to engage them. However, it also suggests that to engage this work requires not only intellectual knowledge about systemic racism, but also (self-) reflexivity about one's positionality within that system, as well as the emotional stamina to engage with uncomfortable conversations. For Guro, this was spurred by her personal experiences and investments through having racialized children. She was used to and trained in explicitly dealing with racism and whiteness. This kind of response is of course not an automatic response of all white people with racialized children. Such self-reflexivity is available to all white majority teachers if they actively seek it out and are provided with tools through teacher education.

Implications for denaturalizing the coloniality of citizenship education

The examples given through this article point to some of the complexities involved in unravelling coloniality in the practice of citizenship education. Not least, they display a certain sense of "failure" in our intentions to interrupt coloniality through exposing the student teachers to affective encounters with racism and social injustice. What the situations rather displayed was how the workings of colonial structures of relations and discourses safeguarding white emotional equilibrium worked as powerful barriers to the deeper self-reflexivity we sought to stimulate. Hence, the research process also deepened our own reflexivity concerning the embeddedness and power of colonial structures of being and knowing. To conclude, we discuss some implications from the experiences and analysis offered by the study.

Firstly, it is clear that the coloniality of Norwegian citizenship education cannot be interrupted through knowledge alone. All of the participating teachers were at least somewhat aware of Norwegian historical and contemporary racism and colonization, yet most remained

hesitant to explicitly discuss this with the students. Within an intellectual economy of whiteness, the teachers perceived the introduction of critical perspectives to be too overtly political, which implicitly maintained the presumed neutrality of mainstream approaches presenting Norway as a benevolent and non-racist nation. Teachers also generally failed to address the politics of knowledge itself, expressing hesitancy around engagements that would invite students to relate self-reflexively to questions about where particular ideas come from, or why certain perspectives spur discomfort. It was felt that to engage these questions would introduce unnecessary tensions into what would otherwise be neutral discussions. This approach disavows the idea that *all* knowledges are partial, and allows the majority, white perspective to prevail as unmarked norm disguised as neutrality.

Secondly, beyond the ways that the *intellectual* economy of whiteness regulated what conversations were and were not had, an *affective* economy of whiteness was equally if not more significant in shaping classroom discourse. Most of the student teachers appeared intent to maintain the emotional equilibrium of the classroom, which precluded certain challenging conversations from taking place. Even when the video about Denmark introduced racism, teachers generally oriented discussions towards celebrations of diversity and minimized the role of race. When potential openings for critical discussions about the politics of difference did arise, teachers tended to diffuse them and allay any feelings of discomfort amongst the students. This avoidance was framed as a form of care, which suggests a perception that students would be harmed by being invited to rethink Norwegian exceptionalism, or to question the naturalization of structural inequality or Western epistemic neutrality. Yet, this particular way of caring safeguards white affective equilibrium at the expense of minoritized students, who pay the highest costs for the failure to address the existence of racism in the classroom as well as in society more generally.

We argue that the reproduction of white affective equilibrium resulted in many lost opportunities for (self-) reflexivity among the students and teachers alike. Moments of disequilibrium created by the video, lecture content, or student comments could have been more critically examined in highly educational, if unsettling ways. Indeed, this was evident in the example of Guro's distinct response. For instance, the student teachers might have asked the students to reflect on where their discomfort might be coming from, or what those feelings might teach about collective investments in Norwegian innocence. In the case where the student teacher displayed care through insisting on the Norwegianness of her students, she could have discussed how constructed boundaries, such as of the nation-state, force us to define ourselves in particular ways that privilege the self-image of some over others. That most did not do so is particularly significant given the fact that, at the start of the research, both schools and student teachers expressed enthusiasm about addressing racism. In other words, it is notable that the teachers' stated commitments to addressing racial inequality did not necessarily translate into a commitment to address it in practice, particularly if it raised 'negative' emotions that challenged self-/national images. They effectively prioritized maintaining a sense of individual and collective (national) 'goodness' over the imperative to address enduring forms of colonial violence. This suggests that affective investments in feeling, looking, and being seen as good can override a stated intellectual or moral commitment to equity. Further, within existing intellectual and affective economies, engagement with difficult topics remains optional for those in dominant social positions. As shown through many of the examples, part of the privilege of being white is the option to choose not to "see" race. Our inability to foresee the strength of this denial of race and racism also partly explains why the project did not spark the depth of reflection with the student teachers that we aspired to when designing it. Further, this inability to accurately assess the depth of the problem of the denial of race and racism was likely a product of our own

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whiteness. In order to counter the strength of white resistance, teacher education would need to provide student teachers with more explicit tools for interrupting patterns that reproduce whiteness, privileges, coloniality and structural power. In retrospect, we could have prepared the student teachers better by providing more of these perspectives in advance.

Further, such tools would need to address colonial patterns as they manifest in both intellectual and affective ways, as our findings suggest that simply transmitting more knowledge, in Norway or elsewhere, will not necessarily translate into a transformation in educational practice. This is because coloniality is maintained not only through a lack of knowledge about other ways of knowing or about Norway's complicity in colonial violence, but also through an active investment in the promises and presumed entitlements that are offered to white Norwegian subjects by a supposedly universal Western epistemology, structural racism, and Norwegian (white) National Exceptionalism. In other words, we don't simply have a knowledge problem: 'we have a habit-of-being problem; the problem of whiteness is a problem of what we expect, our ways of being, bodily-ness, and how we understand ourselves as "placed" in time' (Shotwell, 2016, p. 38). To denaturalize this habit-of-being, we need to notice how potential educational openings for talking about race and coloniality are foreclosed through the affective economy of whiteness. However, we also need to ask what lies behind these affects. What are people trying to protect, such that a critique of whiteness, racism, and colonialism is perceived as hurtful or even threatening? We suggest that the continuity of the colonial habit-of-being is challenged in moments that name the existence and harmful impacts of whiteness. Thus, in order to unsettle the coloniality of education, we will need to go beyond addressing how colonial patterns are kept in place at the level of knowing (i.e. the epistemological level), and also look toward the level of being (i.e. the ontological level).

A common critique towards, or even frustration with, decolonial approaches in education is that they offer much in terms of critique, but they do not always provide the immediate solutions the modern/colonial habit-of-being has taught us to desire. Indeed, engaging with decoloniality raises difficult-to-answer questions, such as how we might gesture toward other possibilities for knowing and being that are not yet known, and how we might dislodge the nation-state as the presumptive "natural" mode of social and political organization. While we encourage teacher educators to stay with these questions, we also understand the desire for more instant practical implications. Probably the most crucial and immediate concern that emerged in this study is the need for teachers (especially white teachers) of citizenship education to deepen their capacities to address race and racism in their classrooms, and in themselves. Failure to do so is a detriment to everyone, but particularly to the racialized students in those classrooms. What is more, teachers' learning and self-reflexivity must take into account the multiple dimensions through which race and racism are reproduced, not only the cognitive. Students and student teachers alike must be provided space to explore, sit with and learn from their own affective responses to discussions of race and coloniality. Ultimately, this might also facilitate the deepening of student teachers' capacity to question their inherited social imaginaries and identities without seeking immediate replacements, thus enabling them to hold space for the complexity, complicity and uncertainty that inevitably arise in efforts to interrupt coloniality and move toward the possibility of decolonization.

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