

Learning History and Cultural Tradition of Marginalized Communities: The Case of the “Museum in a Suitcase”

Dr. Dalya Markovich
Beit Berl College, Israel

Abstract

Museum in a Suitcase is a mobile museum dedicated to the voice and tradition of the Ethiopian Jewish community in Israel, whose culture and stories are barely heard. By using critical pedagogy, the “Museum” seeks to empower the students of the Ethiopian community and reexamine the social positions of underprivileged groups in the Israeli society. This innovative pedagogical practice was examined using ethnographic fieldwork in 4 workshops that took place in a 4th grade class in an underprivileged school in Israel that includes students of Ethiopian origin. The findings suggest that the educational process the students underwent brought on a positive change in the ways in which the Jewish Ethiopian culture was presented. However, its perception as peripheral and secondary to the hegemonic culture remained unchanged. It seems that the pedagogical praxis embedded in the mobile museum reflected and reproduced the Jewish Ethiopian culture peripheral status. In other word, the mobile museum exposed the existence of a gap between the assumptions of critical pedagogy and the results it yields, and therefore necessitate further research that will examine in depth both the complex ethno-class contexts in which this educational model seeks to operate, and its ideological-educational assumptions.

Keywords: Art education, History, Mobile museum; Underprivileged group; Critical pedagogy