

HERITAGE IN HISTORY EDUCATION

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HERITAGE IN HISTORY EDUCATION

Edited by Anu Kannike, Mare Oja,
Tiiu Kreegipuu and Andres Andresen

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FOREWORD

Mare Oja, Andres Andresen, Tiiu Kreegipuu

The purpose of this publication is to support history teachers and teacher educators in universities in the conceptualisation and treatment of cultural heritage topics in history education.

A rapidly changing world challenges education. History teaching is expected to explain the causes of today's social manifestations, crises and conflicts, as well as to protect democratic values by balancing emotions and denying a clear and exclusive narrative. History should not only record, but also analyse and resist false information and distortion, and promote the value of historical culture for society. History education is expected to be inclusive, consider cultural differences, and recognise diverse identities (Council of Europe 2018). As a result of studying history, students should possess knowledge about the past both of their home country and the world. They should know about cultural heritage, different value systems, the ability to relate past events to each other and to the present, and to understand the reasons for different interpretations of historical events (Estonian National Curriculum of Basic School and Senior Secondary School 2011/2023. Appendix 6).

Local examples that are familiar to students help them notice different (cultural) influences and to make connections, and understand how local history relates to broader regional or global processes. Student interest in learning about the past grows when the material being taught is personally meaningful, and related to their own knowledge and experiences.

Through heritage education, one learns about history and culture with the support of diverse authentic sources, and these provide a more nuanced insight into the past than textbooks. The heritage education approach is intended to strengthen the students' critical

understanding of history and culture. It not only aims to increase their appreciation for artistic achievements, technological genius, and social and economic contributions of representatives of diverse groups but calls for critical reflection in such shared understandings. Heritage education nourishes a sense of continuity and connectedness with historical and cultural experience, encourages citizens who critically negotiate their historical and cultural experiences in planning for the future, and fosters stewardship towards the legacies of local, regional, national, transnational, and global heritage. Heritage in history education helps the younger generation to understand and reflect on the past, traditions, values and attitudes, and the complexity of identities.

Cultural heritage surrounds us in towns and cities, natural landscapes and archaeological sites. It includes literature, art and monuments, crafts learned from ancestors, stories told, the food we eat and the films in which we recognise ourselves. The value of heritage for society can be cultural, artistic, historical, archaeological or anthropological.

On the other hand, cultural heritage can be ideologically and politically misused; hence, it can also be approached from the perspective of memory wars and conflicts encompassing topics about contested memorial sites. As cultural heritage shapes our everyday lives, the chapters in this volume reflect critically on what heritage is and how it changes over time, how different conceptions of historical knowledge legitimise certain groups and ways of thinking and delegitimise others and how different power relationships and environments influence our understanding.

This collection is based on paper presented at the “Heritage in History Education” conference of the Society of History Didactics (ISHD) held at Tallinn University on 23–25 August 2023. The aim of the conference was to discuss the relationship between history and heritage education. What democratic goals does cultural heritage help to fulfil in history education? For what purpose has cultural heritage been used in history education (e.g. identity building, social

cohesion etc.)? What is the position of heritage in the national curriculum? To what extent is heritage included in the narratives presented in history textbooks? What opportunities are there to include heritage in history education? How have power relations influenced the meaning and interpretation of cultural heritage and how has this changed over time? How have controversial topics been addressed? How has history been used and abused in the memory politics of different countries? What is the role of ideology in shaping memory politics?

This collection contains 15 articles based on conference presentations, divided between three thematic blocks: I. Critical Heritage and Identity; II. From Contested Heritage to Memory Wars; and III. Heritage in History Education: Opportunities and Challenges.

In part I. Critical Heritage and Identity, the contributors discuss different cases of the interpretation and use of cultural heritage.

In the article “Heritage, Discourse and Identity: An Approach to Fostering Critical Heritage Awareness through Historical Literacy”, Katja Gorbahn introduces the research framework for analysing the complex relationship between heritage, discourse and identity using the example of the 2014 German TV series *Deutschland-Saga*. Gorbahn emphasises that heritage education should focus on developing critical heritage awareness and historical thinking skills in students.

In the article “The German Corner (Deutsches Eck) in Koblenz: An example of critical heritage and history education”, Christian Grieshaber analyses the problem of the meaning of memorials, using the example of a monument to Kaiser Wilhelm I. A faithful replica of the equestrian monument destroyed in World War II was erected in 1992 and immediately triggered a local debate on the historical legitimacy of such an anti-democracy monument. Today, the monument has become part of the identity of the city of Koblenz. The case is a good example for instigating discussion about the meaning of monuments and their changing significance over time in the context of history education. The author offers

examples of how to conduct discussions about the monument in lessons outside the classroom.

In the article “The shadows of the past – a challenge for heritage education”, Markus Furrer explains how the *shadows of the past* find their way into history lessons. A paradigm shift in Swiss history education took place in the 21st century, when the country’s success story was replaced by the theme of crises and social problems, including the implementation of coercive measures in the welfare regime. The challenge for history education and teachers is how to teach history by developing a critical understanding of the past, rather than focusing on strengthening national identity. The article focuses on the topics of rethinking history and historical memory in the context of history education.

In the article “Geschichtsvereine – guardians of cultural heritage”, Wolfgang Hasberg analyses two German historical associations, with which he himself is closely connected, using a historical-cultural framework. Instead of the concept of cultural heritage, the author relies on the concept of historical culture proposed by Jörn Rüsen. This concept draws attention to agents of historical culture, Geschichtsvereine (historical associations, societies), which arose in the 19th century to preserve cultural heritage mainly in Germany and still exist today. Hasberg believes that the study of these institutions of historical culture would make an important contribution to history didactics; for example, by opening up the reasons and explaining the motives that make different people engage in history.

The second part of the book – From Contested Heritage to Memory Wars – takes the reader to the wide-ranging theme of crises and conflicts, including the ideological and political misuse of cultural heritage, which in one way or another can present a grave danger to democracy.

Piotr Podemski examines the public debate on the legacy of Pope John Paul II in Poland. While the Polish pope enjoyed almost universal acclaim among Poles during his lifetime, later discourse has

brought up completely new aspects to consider. The current political dispute between the conservative and liberal camps, radicalised as it is, seems to be irreconcilable on some of these issues, such as the Pope's handling of paedophilia scandals in the Church.

Another tragic episode of Jewish-Arab relations in Israel and its place in Israeli historical consciousness is introduced by Nimrod Tal. The Kfar Qassim massacre of 1956, the murder of 49 Arab civilians committed by the Israel Border Police, has played an important role in the heated debate about the meaning of history in Israel for decades. Previously, this debate has focused mainly on the conflict between Jewish and Palestinian narratives, failing to include the necessary nuances regarding historical consciousness, which this article now provides.

Elisabeth Erdmann unfolds the detailed story of the monument to the "Potato Man", Francis Drake, in Offenburg, from its erection in 1853 to its destruction in 1939 and the resulting fallout. Initially hailed as the one who allegedly brought the potato from America to Europe, and subsequently condemned as a British pirate by the Nazi regime, Drake and his monument provide insights for handling similar controversial cases.

Part III – Heritage in History Education: Opportunities and Challenges – introduces concepts and practices of teaching with heritage or about different types of tangible and intangible heritage in history education.

Susanne Popp examines the complexity of using primary text sources in the classroom. Using the example of a case study from Germany, she discusses the conflicts that history teachers might face when dealing with historical texts that may be discriminatory and insulting. She concludes that finding a balance between two important principles – following the authenticity of the historical document, and the need to follow anti-discrimination policies – must be found and the *difficult* sources should not be avoided but rather taken as highly valuable learning opportunities from our heritage.

Words and texts can carry strong ideological messages and the same can be said of material and visual heritage objects, as Nikola Butkovicova shows in her article about the controversial concept of Czechoslovakism through the phenomenon of building and re-building a monument to general Štefánik, one of the leading figures in the process of forming the state of Czechoslovakia in 1918. This monument mirrors the history of the mutual coexistence of the Czech and Slovak nations, their common state and the national and ideological controversies around them. The author comes to the conclusion that through discussing the case of a particular monument in the classroom, the students can connect the significance of a historical personality and the memorial within the public sphere surrounding that person, learn about national identity and values and also develop their analytical and critical thinking skills.

Some historical documents also have a similar significance to that of a monument, manifesting important moments and values in the history of a people or a state. Angelos Palikidis and Stella Mavrou study how the Lausanne Treaty (1923) and the respective Population Exchange of two million people between Greece and Turkey are handled in Greek and Turkish contemporary history curricula and textbooks. The master narratives in Greek and Turkish textbooks are contradictory, both merely serving the monolithic national policies in each state. Besides dominating the narratives, these events are parts of heritage, as they reflect strong public perceptions supporting diverse national and religious identities, which should also be supported through history teaching.

The values of democratic regimes are also a part of heritage treated in the curriculum as objects of history to be preserved and transmitted. Professors Sylvain Doussot and Nadine Fink show that values should not be conveyed directly but need to be demystified. They illustrate this argument with two cases (the representation of justice in a museum, and the incomplete treatment of Athenian democracy in a Swiss school textbook) demonstrating that the

values of contemporary democracies are redefined in ongoing battles and should also be treated as evolving and plural concepts. Historians need to distance themselves from the conceptual and mental framework of the present and, as a case study with students proved, add different perspectives and explanations about the past in history classes to help re-conceptualise values from a historical perspective and develop critical skills.

In his article “School history and the moral exemplar: human heritage as a forgotten element of history education. A view from the UK”, Terry Haydn discusses the use of human heritage and the place of morals and values in history education. Comparing the policies and practices in presenting morals and values in history teaching in the UK (e.g. the presentation of historical persons who have contributed to the common good), the article shows how this can benefit from the inclusion of a moral and ethical dimension.

A conventional way to bring heritage into history education involves museums. Tiitu Kreegipuu’s article “Museums as mediators of scientific heritage and school history education” introduces different practices in museums to bring heritage closer to students. Besides traditional methods like the Object-Based Learning approach in museums, the objects (rather replicas than authentic historical objects) can be used to form teaching sets and sent to schools. Those museum-in-a-box projects have turned out to be of great benefit in developing the students’ historical skills and helping them connect to tangible and intangible heritage.

Heritage surrounds us not just in museums, but it is present in the construction of the collective historical and cultural imaginary, as the last article introducing the preliminary results of a Spanish research project about iconic elements and the construction of critical citizenship in primary education shows. The authors, Diego Miguel-Revilla, Jorge Ortuño-Molina, Esther López-Torres and Sebastián Molina-Puche, aim to analyse the ideas and preconceptions of students, teachers and trainee teachers across Spain in order to identify the dominant iconic elements in history education that are

transmitted through schools, while also paying attention to the way identity building is influenced by non-formal and informal learning. The preliminary results of this ongoing project have already indicated some iconic elements from cultural heritage that are predominant in the collective historical and cultural consciousness.

INTRODUCTION

TEACHING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN HISTORY EDUCATION: GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS

Mare Oja

Principle 10: High quality history, heritage and citizenship education uses the “history around us” as a powerful way to convey a vivid understanding of the past and embraces heritage as a unique access to this past through its tangible and intangible legacies. (EuroClio Manifesto 2013)

The historical and cultural heritage located in the public space prompts an exchange of ideas about who owns the past. The meanings of monuments, symbols and historical figures, which have long been the foundations of national identity, are being questioned and re-evaluated. Street names and commemorative practices are being changed to reflect current societal understandings and values. There is an effort towards multiplicity, inclusion and diversity of meanings. Therefore, it is important to discuss examples of cultural heritage in history education so that young people develop a critical understanding of the dynamic nature of heritage. At the same time, heritage helps make sense of past circumstances and brings distant times closer to students through well-known examples from their homeland.

This introduction explains what cultural heritage is, which examples we can use in history education, which of the goals of history education can be supported through heritage education, what we must consider when teaching, and which methods are suitable for connecting cultural heritage with history education.

History education has various tasks to perform, including expanding student knowledge and developing critical thinking skills to help students understand what happened in the past and explain what is happening in the world today based on this. Multiperspectivity, cultural sensitivity, identity, empathy, and source criticism appear as keywords in the description of the history syllabus. It suggests that students acquire knowledge of the past and the cultural heritage of their hometown and the world, as well as different value systems, to orient themselves in the cultural space through history education (PRÖK/GRÖK 2011/2023. Lisa 6. Ainevaldkond “Sotsiaaalained”). The principle of moving from closer to further in education assumes that through examples familiar to the student (from near their home) it is easier for the younger generation to understand and critically think about their past, traditions, values and mentality, to discover its diversity and the complexity of identity (Cultural Heritage and Education. European Commission), thus supporting the general goals of history education. Heritage education develops an understanding of the continuity and connectedness of historical and cultural experience, supports dialogue between different cultures and generations, facilitates a discussion of differences and similarities, promotes an appreciation of cultural diversity and the understanding that heritage is our common wealth (Europe’s cultural heritage. Toolkit for teachers 2018), which also has social importance and value. At the same time, learning about heritage promotes the protection of local, regional and national heritage (Cultural Heritage and Education. European Commission), which is also an aim of history education. The study of heritage values history as a living source, supports our understanding of historical concepts, teaches us to look at world history from multiple perspectives and contributes to the formation of the three pillars of history education: history, memory and identity (Magro *et al.* 2014: 34–40). Examples of heritage help make the study of history come alive and helps us perceive the past.

1. What is cultural heritage? What examples can we use in history education?

The meaning of cultural heritage is understood differently. A simple definition would be – cultural heritage is what a group of people considers to be a common, historically inherited cultural historical basis (Euroopa kultuuripärandi aasta 2018).

Cultural heritage is not limited to memorials – monuments and collections of artefacts. It also consists of expressions inherited from our ancestors, such as oral traditions, performing arts, customs, rituals, celebrations, knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe, and the knowledge and skills of traditional crafts that individuals, groups, and communities value to shape the present with the future in mind to form social, cultural and political identity.

Some scholars argue that all heritage is intangible (Smith 2006). Although material and spiritual cultural heritage are usually seen as distinct, in the case of heritage, the material and spiritual are always intertwined, which is also important to emphasise in history education. Spiritual understandings and traditions are associated with material monuments, while spiritual heritage includes certain types of crafts, such as making folk costumes, or distinctive foods, such as the preparation and eating of *kama* known in the Estonian tradition, the output of which is material.

Tangible cultural heritage means objects and places created by man or by the interaction of man and nature, which have historical and aesthetic time and cultural value; for example, buildings, objects, archives, clothing, works of art, books, machines, historical cities, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, monuments, ethnological objects, landscapes and much more that reflect local traditions and social developments and are important bearers of historical memory and local identity (Euroopa kultuuripärandiaasta 2018).

Intangible cultural heritage refers to forms of expression and cultural spaces that people value, such as celebrations, knowledge,

skills, customs and practices passed down from generation to generation that are relevant and still followed in the present day, such as language, lifestyle, myth, belief, ritual, values, oral traditions, the performing arts, and traditional crafts (Eesti Rahvakultuuri Keskus, Eesti vaimse kultuuripärandi nimistu). Intellectual cultural heritage lives within the people who use this knowledge and these skills on a daily basis and pass them on to others. One example is following holiday customs: sending greeting cards, setting the party table and decorating the home, preparing food and drinks, dressing appropriately or playing music with family and friends. Intangible cultural heritage gives communities a sense of identity and continuity. It can be unique, like *Seto Leelo*¹ or a regional dialect, or widespread, like going to pick berries or celebrating Midsummer.

The spiritual tradition of a culturally united group is folklore, which may manifest itself in spiritual creations (music, stories, anecdotes, etc.), spoken expressions (idioms, sayings) and activities (games, customs, holidays). Native cultures have rituals to invoke good or ward off evil. But a folk song can also be just a pastime or entertainment. The purpose of the song may change over time; for example, magical acts may have become children's games. In Estonia's oldest musical stratum, there are phenomena that lie on the border between song, on the one hand, and speech, nature sounds, crying, and other sounds, on the other. Many of these types

¹ Song has a central place in traditional Seto culture. Seto leelo is a Seto polyphonic universal folk song. Seto leelo is believed to be at least 2,000 years old and has survived to this day as a living oral song tradition. The most important thing about a song is the lyrics. Old songs tell about people and circumstances of the past, and you can find myths and beliefs going back thousands of years. The words of work and ritual songs have been passed down from generation to generation and are sung in certain ways (e.g., herding, field, swing or wedding songs). The Seto song tradition is still alive today – new lyrics are constantly being created, and anyone can create new lyrics for any party or event. Seto leelo tunes do not belong to specific words, but many lyrics are sung to the same tune. In 2009, UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Committee included the Seto leelo on the representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. What is seto leelo: <https://laul.setomaa.ee/leelo/mis-on-seto-leelo> (11.11.2024).

of songs – shouts, spells, cries, etc. – are known in quite similar forms in different nations (Särg, Ilmjärv 2009).

In addition to material and spiritual cultural heritage, digital cultural heritage is also distinguished, and can be divided into: 1) digitally created, and 2) digitised cultural heritage, including texts, images, videos and recordings. In an increasingly digital society, more and more culture is born and spread digitally. Europeana, the online environment of the European Union, contains European art, literature, films and music from thousands of cultural institutions (<https://www.europeana.eu/et>). Many countries have also made the materials of their state or national archives digitally available to the population; for example, the Estonian National Archives (<https://www.ra.ee/>). The National Archives also distributes its materials to history teachers through the Archives School created for this purpose (<https://www.ra.ee/arhiivikool/>). Another rich source for history teachers is the Estonian Public Broadcasting Archives (<https://arhiiv.err.ee/>). Estonian teachers can use *e-Koolikott* (*e-Koolikott*) for electronic museum classes (*e-Tund*), which enliven and enrich the history lessons of schools located further from the centre. eTravel, Google Maps and other e-environments, audio and virtual museum classes provide the opportunity to visit cultural values or historical places far from home without leaving the classroom.

The development and use of augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) is one of the fastest-growing fields of informal education, especially when using mobile devices, place-based and museum learning (Wright-Maley *et al.* 2018: 603–630). GPS devices can be used to find places and objects. Augmented reality and interactive storytelling (ARIS) will also soon be part of history education. QR codes and apps help us reach archival sources or items we are looking for. Mobile applications are being used in different countries, such as the Estonian initiative Discovery Trail (*Avastusrada* developed at Tallinn University), where routes are entered for both tourism and educational purposes. The application guides the walker from point to point and shares information about each

point. Cultural, historical and educational material is available via examples of cultural objects from all Estonian counties and the cities of Tallinn and Tartu in digital form (<https://e-koolikott.ee/et/oppematerialer/33836-Eesti-kultuurilooline-oppematerialer>).

2. The importance of cultural heritage in history education

In the framework of compulsory basic education, culture reaches every learner if examples are integrated into their learning. It widens their access to culture. The purpose of the heritage educational approach in history education is, in addition to expanding student knowledge and developing skills, to form a respectful attitude to various artistic achievements, scientific and technological, and social and economic contributions. At the same time, cultural topics help consolidate and apply what has been learned, make teaching livelier and emphasise its significance.

Cultural heritage broadens our understanding of historical knowledge and its construction in different environments. Through the study of history, it is possible to analyse examples of cultural heritage in the temporal dimension. For society, the value of heritage can be different, be it cultural, artistic, historical, archaeological or anthropological.

The official narrative can strongly influence the meaning of historic sites. This requires that teachers support the development of historical awareness in students in order to understand how the past is (re)presented and used and what its effects are, to whom this message is directed, and most importantly, what is left out (Seixas, Clark 2004: 146–171).

Heritage in history teaching helps introduce students to specific vocabulary, increases their motivation and interest in learning through the meaningfulness of what is learned, and contributes to integration between subjects. Examples from the student's home place contribute to the formation of the student's identity and