The appeal of heritage in education

Introduction

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The Appeal of
Heritage in Education

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Heritage is often associated with the current tendency of museums to stage a multi-sensory past, using a variety of objects and media in authentic and recreated environments to meet public expectations.[1] The public interest in experiencing the past has also spawned a distinct type of teaching and learning: heritage education. Many schools organize visits to museums and heritage sites to provide students with opportunities to learn about the past and about how people relate to it. Educators argue that students particularly appreciate the sensory experience of entering a medieval castle, handling a historical object, listening to old songs or absorbing historical images of all kinds. All these sources serve as mediators between students and 'the time that is lost forever'.

Let us present a concrete example of what may happen during a school visit to a heritage location. In 2014, about a hundred Dutch students, aged 17 and 18, visited the In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres, Belgium.[2] One of the hardest battles of the First World War was fought in this area. The museum brings the war alive with touch screens, video projections, sound-scapes, personal stories and actors. When looking at a gas mask, some of the students explained to each other the awful death caused by poison gas. They not only discussed the dramatic events of the First World War but also made connections to present-day wars. One student remarked that, in 1914, young people who were willing to fight could be considered naïve. Today, with a couple of clicks on Google, the student continued, you know what

to expect as a soldier in Syria, but youngsters still travel voluntarily to that country to fight. At the cemetery, with the graves of thousands of soldiers who died during the battles around Ypres, the students were asked to be quiet when a moving passage was recited from *Im Westen Nichts Neues*. At the end of their visit, the students listened respectfully to the bugles during the ceremony under the Menin Gate Memorial where the Last Post is played at eight o'clock every evening as a tribute to the soldiers of the British Commonwealth who died during the war.

Museum artefacts, buildings, monuments, traditions, customs, folk stories and other 'heritage' traces can be powerful resources for learning and teaching.[3] The practice of integrating these sources into education, whether under the name of 'heritage education' or history education, needs to be questioned. An encounter with heritage as in the above example raises a variety of questions relating to its presentation and learning activities for students. For example, with what kind of educational objectives do teachers and educators approach artefacts, sites, buildings, stories and customs that are considered heritage? These approaches may range from an unquestioned (national) perspective with a strong moral message and an emphasis on emotional engagement to an explorative stance with various possible perspectives in order to balance emotions. What are the strategies of museums to enable students to 'experience' the past? What are students supposed to learn from active participation in a commemoration? In sum: how do historical artefacts and sites, and the narrations in which they are embedded, mediate and re-mediate the development of students' historical interest, knowledge, competencies and meaning making? Next, there are questions on issues of perception and identity. How are students' perceptions of heritage shaped by their knowledge, individual identity and past experiences? And vice versa: how does the encounter with heritage in education contribute to their identity? How can teachers deal with dissonance between notions of heritage held by particular students or groups of students in multicultural classrooms?

Much has been written about heritage as a social and cultural process in which visitors are considered active participants instead of passive recipients. Despite the scholarly attention paid to heritage practices in the field of history, heritage and museum studies, theoretical and empirical research on teaching and learning with and about heritage is rather scarce. This is remarkable because 'heritage education' is an important topic for at least two reasons. First, students somehow encounter material and immaterial traces of the past in their daily lives or later when they are adults. They are thus participants in the continuous social process of selection and giving meaning to the past in which people in the present form their identities.[4] Second, due to processes of mobility and migration, new artefacts, statues, monuments and museums will be constructed, while existing heritage will be renegotiated. For these

reasons we think it is necessary for history teachers and heritage educators to reflect more on the (future) impact of new perspectives and new heritage. It is likely that the changing variety of cultural groups and memory cultures in several regions in the world will intensify existing memory battles and clashes about heritage, which may result in increasing disparities between what is taught in schools and what is handed down in families and communities.[5]

To sustain this reflection process, we need to address the dynamic and critical view of heritage, as developed by heritage scholars over the past decades. These authors have pointed to the risks of essentialism, conflict and exclusion.[6] Indeed, heritage in its public manifestations is often conducive to sharing feelings and making identities. It is both experience and performance. But what does this mean when heritage is used in educational settings, particularly when sensitive heritage is involved? Recently, scholars in the field of heritage studies discussed how the close relationship between emotions and learning might assist understanding.[7] This raises the question whether it is possible to reconcile heritage activities in which students are emotionally immersed with a disciplinary approach to the past. The application of historical thinking and reasoning skills are now central to history curricula in various countries. Can we combine the heritage type of playful or emotional ways of learning with a critical examination of historical sources, with contextualized thinking, and with critical historical argumentation that recognizes the possibility of different ways of seeing and knowing the past?[8]

This was one of the leading questions of the research programme *Heritage Education, Plurality of Narratives and Shared Historical Knowledge* we conducted from 2009 to 2014 at the Centre for Historical Culture of the Erasmus University of Rotterdam. We investigated how and under which conditions heritage education may contribute to a critical understanding of history and culture, acknowledging a dynamic notion of heritage. We focused on the use of heritage in the Netherlands related to the secondary school subject of history and more particularly on the sensitive histories of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the Second World War / Holocaust. Our assumption was that when sensitive history is involved, the questions we raised above concerning the use of heritage as a resource for teaching and learning become most salient. We explored the disciplinary foundations, goals and approaches of heritage education and analysed how the past is addressed. Our research programme was divided into three projects: 1) disciplinary concepts and attitudes and views of history teachers and heritage professionals; 2) heritage education resources, including exhibitions; and 3) perspectives of students and classroom interaction. Project 2 also explored English heritage resources, as we expected to learn from recent developments in England (UK). Based upon the results of the research programme, we formulated benchmarks for

a dynamic and professional use of heritage as a resource for history teaching and learning.[9]

In June 2013, we arranged an international presentation of some outcomes of our research under the heading 'Tangible Pasts? Questioning Heritage Education' in Rotterdam. We aimed to reflect on the uses of heritage in museums, schools and digital environments by scholars in history, narrative theories, heritage studies and educational sciences, and practitioners from the field of heritage education and school history. We exchanged ideas about the apparent public need to be on the spot, to touch the monumental, and the way museums and heritage institutes stimulate the 'experience trend'. Despite – or perhaps due to – the digitalization and virtualization of historical representations, the yearning for a 'tangible past' remained.[10] The question then is how we can reconcile this tendency with critical historical thinking and reasoning? We also discussed the term 'heritage education' itself, as we had discovered that this term has diverse meanings and connotations – positive and negative ones – in different countries. This book is a direct result of 'Tangible Pasts': that is, the selected contributions have been thoroughly reworked and edited into chapters.

In this volume we approach heritage practices not only through the lens of theories on heritage and history, but we add a history education perspective as well. Particularly, we use theories on historical thinking and consciousness as a main goal of history education. Both in the research programme itself and our presentation of outcomes, the two umbrella concepts of 'historical distance' and 'multiperspectivity' were crucial in theorizing and analysing heritage education practices. Historical distance is an interesting theoretical concept here because it problematizes educational practices exactly where they seem to conflate past and present and ignore or underestimate the time dimension. No less important is the concept of multiperspectivity because acknowledging distance in the dimensions of time and engagement is what supports critical historical thinking and is at the core of the notion of dynamic heritage. However, it has become clear that the concepts of 'authenticity' and 'identity' also supported a better understanding of the appeal of heritage in educational settings.

Several chapters discuss authenticity as museums and other heritage institutes increasingly promise visitors an exciting experience of the past as 'vivid', 'real' and 'nearby', using, for instance, material relics, visual displays and re-enactments. Here questions are raised concerning heritage as inherently authentic or as culturally constructed through time. The concept of identity often pops up because museums and other heritage institutes implicitly or explicitly express or support various identity claims. This is why historical representations are sometimes contested or can be interpreted as biased, evoking resentment, disputes or even violent conflicts. When confronting

students with such representations in educational settings it may be difficult for educators and teachers to avoid the imposition of a 'closed narrative' of the past, with certain meanings.[11] This also goes for meanings that may seem self-evident in democratic societies. With regard to dramatic episodes in history, such as the Trans–Atlantic Slave Trade or the Second World War, it may be clear who is good and who is bad. But how sure can we be when we educate about the past? In many instances heritage education uses authentic or semi-authentic artefacts to evoke emotions and to help students imagine the cruelty of past events in terms of victims and perpetrators.[12] These activities often adopt a modern humanitarian point of view, including a moral message as a given rather than as an issue to be discussed in historical terms. This function of heritage education as a more authentic and personal way of learning about the past, supporting national and other group identities, needs to be questioned when it is to be used more dynamically as a resource for learning to think historically.

The chapters in our volume are arranged into three parts. **Part I** contains theoretical reflections on the relation between the use of heritage in history education, the disciplinary approaches to the past and the concept of historical consciousness by Peter Seixas, Bruce VanSledright and Chiel van den Akker. **Part II** deals with ways in which heritage is unlocked in museums and at historical sites and how they affect what is experienced and learned. Sheila Watson, Alex van Stipriaan, Susan Legêne, Siân Jones and Heleen van Londen address the role played by emotions, experiencing authenticity and identity. Brenda Trofanenko discusses these chapters in an epilogue. **Part III** focuses on teaching and learning about sensitive heritage, with Stephan Klein, Pieter de Bruijn, Geerte Savenije, Tsafrir Goldberg and Alexandra Binnenkade exploring issues of historical distance and multiple perspectives in concrete practices of heritage and history education. Keith Barton reflects on these chapters in a second epilogue.

We continue this introductory chapter with a discussion of the term heritage education approached from a dynamic perspective. Then we introduce the two umbrella concepts of historical distance and multiperspectivity and explain how they are used in the theoretical and empirical chapters in this volume. In doing this, we will also go into the related concepts of authenticity and identity. Finally, we present some conclusions.

Heritage Education: A Dynamic Perspective

'Heritage education' is not a self-evident phenomenon. Inspired by critical heritage studies, we conceive of heritage as a continuous process of construction, conservation, management and interpretation in which people refer to

the past with a view to the future, aiming to construct a historical identity in the present.[13] In 2006, the Council of Europe defined heritage education as a teaching approach based on cultural heritage, incorporating active educational methods, cross-curricular approaches and partnerships between professionals from the fields of education and culture, and employing the widest variety of methods of communication and expression.[14] The Council of Europe emphasized the following aims: to raise young people's awareness of their cultural environment and the necessity of protecting it, and to promote mutual understanding and tolerance. We do not know, however, whether heritage education as it is practised in European countries actually reflects these characteristics and aims. In the Dutch, and to some extent English, context of our research we use the term heritage education to refer to educational practices in which heritage is a primary instructional resource for teaching and learning with the aim to improve students' understanding of history and culture.[15] In our research programme about heritage education we focused on educational trips to museums, memorial centres, historic sites, trails and monuments.

In this research programme, as we explained above, we focused on the following question: under which conditions may heritage education contribute to the critical understanding of history and culture while acknowledging a dynamic notion of heritage? Educators and scholars in the field of history and museum education have long discussed the potential educational value of tangible and intangible remains of the past.[16] These remains are considered rich resources, which not only stimulate interest and the historical imagination, but can also strengthen time consciousness and the ability to think historically.[17] Most teachers will recognize that historical objects and stories can easily trigger students' curiosity and make abstract historical phenomena more concrete and imaginable. But there is more. When historical objects and artefacts are used in museums, for example, even young children can discover differences and similarities between the past and the present, and they can be encouraged to identify aspects of continuity and change in history. Museums and heritage organizations also point to the potential of active, embodied and multi-sensory experiences as ways to provoke thought. Climbing the tower of an old church, participating in hands-on activities or playing a role and dressing up in the traditional garb of people in the past are examples of 'bodily' experiences that can support cognitive processes.[18]

For learning, however, the way in which certain remains of the past are embedded in a narrative to create meaning in the present is significant. Does the narrative sustain an existing form of collective memory or does it use remains of the past more dynamically? In the former case, students will be more or less forced to appropriate particular meanings, whereas in the latter case meaning in the present is part of a negotiation process and is, therefore,

seen as dynamic and subject to development, adaptation or even rejection. Learning about how heritage constitutes personal and collective identities has recently gained more attention in history education literature and history curricula. For instance, one of the key learning objectives of the examination programme in Dutch upper secondary education is an understanding of the changing significance of the past for different groups of people, both in the past and in current society, and a recognition of present motives, values and expectations when people make moral judgments about the past. These objectives are based on a dynamic notion of heritage, in which the meanings of the past are constantly being negotiated and change over time.[19] Other scholars in Germany, Belgium, Denmark and Norway have developed educational methods to approach memory culture related to heritage in history teaching.[20] They describe competencies students should develop in order to be able to de-construct narratives about the past and their meaning in the culture of history and remembrance. Such competencies include the ability to question, analyse, compare and reflect on different forms of remembrance with regard to a particular historical event.

Historical Distance and Multiperspectivity

The journalist who reported on the school trip to Ypres observed that the First World War was 'tangible' and 'nearby' in Ypres. This supposed appeal of heritage brings us to the concepts of historical distance and multiperspectivity. The past can be presented as close and familiar, or as more distant and strange. This is not an either / or issue, however, because experiencing and learning about time is triggered in complex ways by heritage and heritage educational materials. Influenced by other studies, we have defined the concept of historical distance in our research as a configuration of temporality and engagement.[21] Temporality refers to the dual character of time (subjective experienced and objective measurable time) and the temporal approaches to the past (diachronic and synchronic). Engagement alludes to the degree of affection, moral commitment and identification with the past. Every specific configuration of temporality and engagement generates a degree of 'distancing'.[22]

An important, related concept of historical distance is multiperspectivity. The value of a more or less complete 'immersion' in the perspective of a person in the past is a much debated issue by scholars in the field of history education. It is referred to as historical perspective taking or historical empathy and seen as an approach to help students gain a better understanding of past situations and actions. It goes without saying that it is impossible to really step into the shoes of people living a hundred years ago.

Various heritage practices do make it easier, however, to imagine a world of the past with real characters.[23] But the power of heritage to stimulate the imagination is not truly acknowledged when it is not followed up and used to raise historical questions, such as why people acted the way they did or whether people acted differently. It is important to build such questioning into educational practices to enhance historical understanding from multiple perspectives. The different perspectives of soldiers, civilians and doctors, for example, contribute to a richer understanding of the Second World War, resulting in a deeper sense of historical reality.[24] However, because major armed conflicts and genocides such as the Second World War and the atrocities of the Holocaust involve a complex and sensitive past, teachers and educators have to reflect carefully how to deal with 'immersion' regarding the perspectives of victims, bystanders, resistance fighters, collaborators and perpetrators. This also applies to the history of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Teaching from the perspectives of enslaved people, slave-holders, traders and abolitionists in a global context instead of only from a white-national one requires not only knowledge about this past but also about its current sensitivity among some groups of students. In other words, although our viewpoint is that multiperspectivity enhances historical understanding, with respect to these sensitive pasts the use of heritage as a primary source of instruction has a chance to succeed only after careful preparation and evaluation.

As heritage is always someone's heritage, those who present and teach should be aware of potential processes of exclusion. Heritage often sustains 'grand narratives' of nations, and various people may be marginalized in the creation and management of such heritage. So when heritage is used as a resource to learn about the past, it is important to ask what perspectives are included. Multiple perspectives are present not only at the level of historical actors or historical interpretations, but also at the level of attributing meaning owing to the diverse backgrounds of students as readers, visitors and viewers.

Reflections on Heritage and Historical Consciousness

In **Part I**, both Peter Seixas (chapter 1) and Bruce VanSledright (chapter 2) address the question of whether it is possible in an educational setting to reconcile heritage with the application of critical historical thinking. Their (initial) doubt is not surprising. David Lowenthal, in particular, has criticized what he calls the heritage obsession, stressing the uncritical and patriotic aims of heritage in contrast with the distanced intents of the historical discipline.[25] Generally, heritage is unfathomable because it 'appeals to people's senses and emotions'.[26] For instance, with respect to battlefield sites and military war

heritage in museums, local and regional tourist offices tend to emphasize the spectacle of battles and strategic warfare in order to appeal to the public's need to experience the 'real thing'. This kind of heritage marketing of war violence, suffering and death focuses on emotional utilization rather than on exploring the complexities of the past and its layers of meaning. Nor is there room for collaborators, bystanders or war failures.

Over the years, however, educational scholars have emphasized that in order to develop historical understanding, students need to engage in the type of thinking and reasoning that is characteristic for the discipline of history and shaped by the disciplinary conventions for collecting, analysing, presenting and evaluating information about the past. In his chapter, VanSledright discusses the implications of situations in which the nationalistic (emotional) impulse is strong and shapes not only heritage production but also history education. He shows that critical thinking about objects requires sophisticated epistemic beliefs. Yet Peter Seixas considers that reconciliation between heritage education and critical historical thinking is possible, if celebrations of national heritage are open to critique and if history education enables students to deal with the historical complexity in the public realm. Although we have become increasingly aware of our distance from the past and of how those who lived in other periods were 'in a foreign country' where values and beliefs were radically different from our own, Seixas also assumes that the rise of historical consciousness has not undermined our natural relation to the past.[27]

Similar to Seixas, Chiel van den Akker (chapter 3) emphasizes that a sense of loss of the past is a prerequisite for historical consciousness, yet he presents another, more radical view of the role of historical consciousness in the age of new media. Referring to the philosophy of media theorist Wolfgang Ernst, he observes that, whereas museums have traditionally tried to narrate the past, in the age of new media they can also function as an archive, registering and describing objects rather than historicizing and narrating them. New media allow for a more participatory and personalized engagement with sites and artefacts from different times and places displayed side by side. Museums can be considered as an archival space for people to explore out of curiosity. The bond between narrative, collecting, and historical consciousness, which defined the museum for the last two centuries, is thus broken.

Experiencing Heritage and Authenticity

The chapters in **Part II** elaborate issues of historical distance and multiperspectivity in heritage and heritage education practices. The experience of

authenticity and emotions are important aspects of experiencing the past as close and familiar. Siân Jones (chapter 7) shows that authenticity is considered a complex construct in recent studies, as it is not an intrinsic feature of a historical object but is produced and negotiated in specific cultural and historical contexts. She explains that the experience of authenticity creates forms of engagement that are promising for education and can also be the start of higher-order thinking skills, such as historical contextualization and inquiry. According to Jones, heritage objects and related practices and performances have the power to 'bring something of the past into the present' and sustain relations across time and space. Both Siân Jones and Sheila Watson (chapter 4) show how the sense of a nearby past can be related to processes of identification, which are also accompanied by emotional responses. Watson works from the idea that emotions are also culturally conditioned and argues that we need to know more about how emotions affect learning processes in museums.

Several chapters discuss the challenges of including multiple perspectives. Van Stipriaan (chapter 5) reports on the making of an exhibition on the contested past of slavery and its legacy and how to present a balanced and inclusive story. He uses a dynamic notion of identity, by emphasizing that people can consider themselves inheritors of more than one national history, and of local and world history at the same time. Van Stipriaan gives the example of the 'Black & White' exhibition in 2013–2014 at the Tropen Museum in the Netherlands, which presented questions and dilemmas concerning the memory of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and slavery. He shows that the idea of 'black' and 'white' perspectives is complicated and that a questioning approach in a museum exhibition can work well when dealing with contested histories. Susan Legêne (chapter 6) discusses the notions of colonial, shared and world heritage in relation to museum collections. She argues that the metadata of virtual collections of objects, when used in heritage education, should be critically examined as they may hinder multiple perspectives on the colonial past. Museum objects should not only be considered as heritage but also as historical sources in order to understand the mechanisms that turn objects into heritage. Heleen van Londen (chapter 8) addresses archaeological heritage. She explains how historical landscapes and buildings need to be made visible for the public to enable them to learn about history in such a way that the public is made aware of their historical significance. She also shows that there can be a fine line between raising awareness and manipulation. Archaeologists are hardly aware of their role as mediators in the processes of producing meaning and identity creation, because of their focus on the preservation of the archaeological record. Moreover, a critical reflection of heritage education seems lacking in Public Archaeology.

In her epilogue after Part II, Brenda Trofanenko shows that ideas and concepts used in critical heritage studies – and increasingly by scholars in the field of history and history education – such as identity, emotions, authenticity, place, and dissonance, are helpful to better understand the practice and the potential of learning 'through heritage'. She highlights the productive potential of what results from the distinct break between history and heritage and their associated disciplines.

Teaching and Learning about Sensitive Heritage

The authors in **Part III** shed more light on the construction of historical distance and multiperspectivity in heritage education materials and activities and show how learning processes can be affected by students' identity. Stephan Klein (chapter 9) and Pieter de Bruijn (chapter 10) use the concept of historical distance to analyse heritage education materials and activities and museum exhibitions. Klein introduces an analytic framework in which the concept of historical distance is described as a continuum in the dimensions of time, person, imagination, place and engagement. Klein shows that heritage educators and history teachers use various ways of distancing at the same time and illustrates this with an educational project called *The War Nearby*, which uses a local historical environment as the basis for learning about the Holocaust.

Museums also use a variety of strategies that can be analysed using the concept of historical distance. Pieter de Bruijn studied the exhibitions and educational materials of two Second World War museums in England and the Netherlands. He explains that a museum exhibition can enhance temporal or spatial proximity, for example, by using personal stories connected to objects, on the one hand, while educational activities encourage students to take a more detached stance and engage in historical inquiry, on the other. Both Klein and De Bruijn suggest that some historical distance is needed – if not in the displays themselves, then at least in the educational resources and the learning process afterwards – to constrain presentist thinking and enhance the exploration of multiple perspectives and critical inquiry.

How students experience the past and attribute meaning is affected not only by the way in which the past is represented by heritage institutions, but also by the learners' knowledge, identity, current circumstances and past experiences. Students may be inclined to connect certain past events to present-day conflicts or identify with certain individuals in the past because of their own background. In her case study, Geerte Savenije (chapter 11) shows how processes of identification and distancing are at work in a group of Dutch secondary school students of immigrant descent, engaged in a project

that presents traces of the Second World War as Dutch heritage. She claims that it must be taken into account that students have multiple and shifting identities and that there are no self-evident relationships between constructed meanings and identity. The students' discussions provided opportunities for reflecting on criteria that can be used in attributing significance and on the impact of one's ethnic background.

Tsafrir Goldberg (chapter 12) reports the results of a study in which Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Israeli secondary school students investigated and discussed the controversial Israeli war of independence, a focal point of national heritage and commemorated as the 'birth of the nation'. Goldberg shows that, when studying the same narrative, minority and majority students reach different conclusions and maintain different views. Engaging students in the diverse communities' perspectives on heritage, however, can promote intergroup dialogue and mutual understanding. Goldberg compared the effects of a conventional, a critical-disciplinary and an empathetic-narrative approach. In the empathetic approach, there appeared to be a significant increase in the Arab-Israeli participants' interest in the other people's perspective.

In the studies of both Savenije and Goldberg, students were invited to explore and discuss multiple perspectives and to attribute meaning themselves. Alexandra Binnenkade (chapter 13) argues that when memory is sensitive, as with the violence of civil rights movements in the United States or the heritage of the Holocaust, teachers often adopt an educational approach in which they evoke emotions in order to transmit specific values and attitudes to students. However, this may result in a 'duty of emotions' which are not neutral in terms of gender, race, class or politics. Furthermore, Binnenkade argues that multiperspectivity is more than simply presenting sources from different viewpoints in the past. Teachers also need to discern multiple present perspectives on how the past is dealt with and anticipate their effects. When students are stimulated to verbalize how they attribute significance, meanings can be negotiated.

In his epilogue to Part III, Keith Barton questions the possibility and desirability of asking students 'to set aside' their present concerns and identities. He makes a plea for more open-ended learning processes.

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What conclusions can we draw so far? First, the use of heritage in educational settings can serve a variety of implicit and explicit objectives: not only stimulating students to appreciate a particular heritage, to identify with certain historical actors and to appropriate a national 'grand narrative', but also developing students' historical knowledge and understanding of processes of

continuity and change, and cause and consequence. Some objectives even aim at developing students' competency to de-construct such narratives and formulate historical questions based upon their own curiosity. This variety of objectives generates a whole range of heritage education practices, which is also reflected in the practices that are discussed in this volume.

Second, the concepts of historical distance and multiperspectivity help us to analyse and reflect upon heritage education practices and to evaluate their correspondence with a dynamic notion of heritage. In this volume, historical distance and multiperspectivity are related not only to key concepts in history and history education, such as historical consciousness, but also to authenticity and identity. In order to better understand how history and heritage education contribute to historical understanding, it is fruitful to study and theorize on these practices from the disciplines of history, history education and heritage studies.

Third, if heritage professionals, educators and teachers approach heritage from a dynamic perspective, then its use is compatible with the aim to enhance historical understanding and critical historical thinking as conceptualized by scholars in the field of history education. This requires educators to possess knowledge of historical thinking and reasoning and to understand processes of identity formation. The chapters in this volume illustrate the difficulties and opportunities in finding a dynamic interaction between closer and longer distancing, greater and lesser engagement and in making room for exploring multiple perspectives. Several authors consider it important to achieve some balance between proximity and historical distance in order to engage students' historical interests, knowledge and skills, and to offer them opportunities to explore multiple perspectives and attribute and negotiate meanings.

A final conclusion is that, if we do not acknowledge that people apparently have a need to experience the 'real' material traces of the past and a longing to be on the spot 'where it all happened', then we ignore a fascinating and important source of historical interest, which is the starting-point for any kind of historical understanding and consciousness.

Notes

1. This introduction is partly based on the text of the research programme Heritage Education, Plurality of Narratives and Shared Historical Knowledge, funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research, conducted by Maria Grever and Carla van Boxtel (2009–2014). Researchers in this programme were Pieter de Bruijn, Stephan Klein and Geerte Savenije.

2. 'De waanzin van Ieper door puberogen' [The Madness of Ypres through Adolescents' Eyes], *De Limburger*, 18 October 2014.

3. In 2003 UNESCO adopted a convention that recognized intangible cultural heritage as an integral aspect of heritage significance. Intangible heritage was defined as 'The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage' (UNESCO, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage,* 32nd Session of the General Conference, Paris, 29 September–17 October 2003).

4. For this conceptualization of heritage see L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, New York, 2006, 2, 11.

5. E. Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past*, Chicago and London, 2003, 1–10; M. Grever, 'Plurality, Narrative and the Canon', in *Beyond the Canon: History for the Twenty-First Century*, eds M. Grever and S. Stuurman, Basingstoke, 2007, 31–47.

6. J. Tunbridge and G.J. Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*, Chichester, 1996.

7. B. Trofanenko, 'Affective Emotions: The Pedagogical Challenges of Knowing War', *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 36 (2014): 22–39; A. Witcomb, 'Understanding the Role of Affect in Producing a Critical Pedagogy for History Museums', *Museum Management and Curatorship* 28 (2013): 255–271.

8. Historical thinking and reasoning are conceptualized in J. van Drie and C. van Boxtel, 'Historical Reasoning: Towards a Framework for Analysing Students' Reasoning about the Past', *Educational Psychology Review* 20 (2008): 87–110; W. Schreiber et al., *Historisches Denken: Ein Kompetenz-structurmodell*, Neuried, 2006; P. Seixas, *'Scaling Up' the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking: The Vancouver Meetings*, 14–15 February 2008, Vancouver, BC; S. Lévesque, *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-first Century*, Toronto, 2008; P. Seixas and T. Morton, *The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts,* Toronto, 2013.

9. For benchmarks see M. Grever and C. van Boxtel, *Verlangen naar Tastbaar Verleden: Erfgoed, Onderwijs en Historisch besef* [Longing for Tangible Pasts: Heritage, Education and Historical Consciousness], Hilversum, 2014, 116–120. For other recommendations, see P. de Bruijn, 'Bridges to the Past: Historical Distance and Multiperspectivity in English and Dutch Heritage Educational Resources' (PhD dissertation, Erasmus University of Rotterdam, 2014) and G. Savenije, 'Sensitive History under Negotiation: Pupils' Historical Imagination and Attribution of Significance while Engaged in Heritage Projects' (PhD dissertation, Erasmus University of Rotterdam, 2014).

10. See Grever and Van Boxtel, *Verlangen naar Tastbaar Verleden*, 9–19.

11. S. Klein, 'Teaching History in the Netherlands: Teachers' Experiences of a Plurality of Perspectives', *Curriculum Inquiry* 40 (2010): 614–634.

12. See, for example, I. Davies, ed., *Teaching the Holocaust: Educational Dimensions, Principles and Practice*, London, 2000.

13. G.J. Ashworth, B. Graham and J.E. Tunbridge, *Pluralising Pasts: Heritage, Identity and Place in Multicultural Societies*, 2007, 1–5, 54–67; Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 3.

14. L. Branchesi, *Heritage Education for Europe: Assessment and Future Prospects. Summary of the Evaluation Report*, Strasbourg, 2004, 31.

15. M. Grever and C. van Boxtel, 'Introduction: Reflections on Heritage as an Educational Resource', in *Heritage Education: Challenges in Dealing with the Past*, eds C. van Boxtel, S. Klein and E. Snoep, Amsterdam, 2011, 9–13. For a definition related to the enhancement of historical consciousness, see Grever and Van Boxtel, *Verlangen naar Tastbaar Verleden*, 20.

16. For example, in the experience-based educational movement and pleas for local history education. See J.H.B. Plymouth, 'The Teaching of Local History', *History* 69 (1933): 1–10; G.E. Hein, 'John Dewey and Museum Education', *Curator* 47, 4 (2004): 413–427; G. Preston, 'The Value of Local History in the School Curriculum', *Teaching History* 1 (1969): 87–91.

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