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Editorial

Articles

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Revisiting history and its epistemology: Teachers and learners

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Editorial

The idea for this special issue arose from a symposium, titled *History Teachers' Epistemic Considerations*, that the first two editors co-organized on October 13th and 14th in 2022, at Umeå University, in Sweden. Generously funded by the Swedish Research Council (grant number 2018-03787), the symposium sought to explore scholars' various approaches to conceptualizing and investigating key problems that they believe exist regarding history teachers' epistemic beliefs about history and its transmission to students. Particular attention was given to finding ways to reflect and overcome perceived challenges to how teachers believe historical knowledge is constructed, to grasp the way these understandings influence their teaching, and to moreover capture the extent to which teachers' emerging beliefs relate to and result from their interaction and use of the history programs they are mandated to teach. Given the high response to our call, our initial idea of simply co-editing a single volume on this topic turned into both a book and this special issue. The co-edited volume, *Teachers and the Epistemology of History* was published in the

summer of 2024, by Palgrave Macmillan. From a variety of perspectives, the book's contributing authors investigate the underlying processes in the formation, maintenance, and transformation of history teachers' epistemic beliefs and how these understandings intersect with the complex realities of their classroom practice. Through this exploration, some authors tend to problematize the overall way scholars in the field currently approach and examine history's epistemic beliefs, while others seek to refine the potentials of what is already in place and to improve how teachers and learners alike understand history and its construction of knowledge. Since a recent set of insightful articles already existed prior to our symposium in a special issue in *Historical Encounters*, titled *Epistemic Cognition in History Education*, co-edited by Martin Nitsche, Christian Mathis, and D. Kevin O'Neill (2022), we decided to return to the same journal with Martin Nitsche from the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland, to create the present follow-up issue.

Brought together, both Elmersjö's (Umeå University) introduction and Zanazanian's (McGill University) commentary to the co-edited book, along with the editors' note and introduction to Nitsche and his colleagues' special issue, provide a clear overview of the field as well as some of its main emerging tensions. On the one hand, there is this fascination to better assess why teachers and learners are ultimately not able to always think consistently in a preferred manner when teaching and learning history and how we can perhaps better prepare them to do so. On the other hand, there is a form of critical resistance to this perceived obsession with capturing, measuring, and correcting how teachers and learners think about history in epistemological terms, pointing to a growing disillusionment with what is being done and fundamentally taken for granted as "the right thing to do". Through their analysis, Nitsche and his colleagues problematize the field's lack of clarity and indistinct formulation of history's epistemic processes and manifestations among teachers and students, and highlight the disunity in addressing the developmental, multi-dimensional, and contextual features that underlie people's thinking when constructing historical knowledge. The question of fully or adequately accounting for the complexity and fluidity of the procedures underlying history's epistemic cognition consequently arises. In his delineation of the main studies that have been conducted on teachers' epistemic beliefs and consequent questions that remain to be answered, Elmersjö highlights the challenges involved in unravelling the reasons for emerging inconsistencies in teachers' epistemic understandings of history's workings, particularly pointing to problems in capturing when, how, and why teachers – consciously or unconsciously – tend to oscillate between different beliefs. Zanazanian (McGill University), in turn, in his commentary for the same co-edited volume, titled *From the ideal-type historian and its associated conceptions of teaching history to a more embodied and practical life approach*, identifies and questions what he perceives to be the strong overreliance on history-as-discipline for viewing what history as knowledge is and what it can do, as well as the consequent assumption of the existence of a direct influence between epistemic beliefs of (disciplinary) history and its teaching in schools. Instead of wondering why and how we can get teachers and learners to think in a criterialist manner – where they ultimately are expected to be able to adjudicate and select the better argument or perspective regarding a historical issue based on the evidence that is provided or available –, Zanazanian calls for scholars to self-reflexively problematize and account for their (unintentional) preferences and normative assumptions when conducting research; or in other words to better account for their differing positionalities when doing work on teachers' and learners' epistemic beliefs. The aim of this questioning would be to take critical distance from the perceived overreliance on history-as-discipline and to embrace other (non-disciplinary) epistemologies, along with newer thoughts and practices in the teaching and learning of history.

With these main reflections in mind, a clear tension seems to appear between what is currently being done in the field and a desire to branch off into a new direction. Perhaps there will be a middle ground where the status quo will be refined and adapted to changing times. Perhaps two different areas of study will emerge instead. Underlying this tension, as can be seen with the present special issue, and in the preceding work mentioned above, is the great interest in the processes of how historical knowledge is constructed and how this information should be taught. This attention, especially in the field of history education, should not come as a surprise given the

generalized belief of the necessity of promoting students' intellectual development through an understanding of history's disciplinary practice, which, at the very least, is central to many secondary school history curricula in western societies. Because reality is complex and because students need to make sense of this complexity to be able to navigate differing life situations (with a critical mind), the basic idea is that this focus is indeed necessary, especially if one is to readily accept that history's disciplinary features can best help students capture that complexity in the most methodical and rigorous manner. This focus on history-as-discipline, at least in the opinion of Zanazanian, has become so generalized that it is seen as constituting what "real" or "true" history ultimately is, despite the field's democratization and the genuine openness among scholars and teachers to embrace epistemologies of history other than the latter modernist- and Eurocentric-leaning one. This criticism, however, as all three editors agree, does not necessarily preclude history-as-discipline's resilience in overcoming challenges to its own structure and purpose, nor does it deny its flexibility and ability to adapt to changing times. Perhaps in the near future, non-western and non-disciplinary aspects of the construction of historical knowledge will be included in our common mindset and will come to direct both research and educational processes in schools and beyond.

Five main themes thus emerge and speak to this tension across the various papers presented in the present special issue. Of interest, these themes tackle similar questions and pressures on teachers, student teachers, and learners when it comes to the construction and transmission of historical knowledge. Sometimes these themes problematize the whole history teaching project and its reliance on people's penetrating understandings of history as discipline and its criterialist manner for constructing knowledge. Sometimes these themes seek to better understand what is going on to then find ways to improve how things are understood or done.

The first theme refers to better understanding the demands and limits on teachers and their ability to teach history (usually) in its disciplinary format. Given the pressures from the field and the school cultures teachers belong to, an examination of their practical wisdom or approach to these requirements is called for, with suggestions of looking at the bigger picture in which teachers and learners function. Reliance on understandings of how historical knowledge works to then focus on the transmission of what results is not enough. The second theme looks at different ways in which teacher educators can help teachers in the field and student teachers to better understand history's disciplinary workings to then enable them to better implement the knowledge they gain into their own teaching practice. The aim here is to *improve* the epistemological knowledge teachers already possess and to, through these teachers' newly gained insights and consequent interventions, get their own students to develop sophisticated epistemic understandings of history, namely the ability to think in a criterialist manner. The third theme relates to the resources that are generally available to teachers, such as curricular documents and textbooks, that offer normative guides for assisting teachers to better grasp and transmit a certain valued type of historical knowledge to their students. This theme offers input into the challenges that users of these documents and textbooks face in their attempts to engage with these materials – in their promotion of history in its disciplinary form –, and the extent to which it influences their practice. The fourth theme examines history teachers' knowledge of history's epistemological workings; or more specifically how history teachers in their everyday conversations with others discuss their perceptions of history as a subject matter to be taught in schools. This theme looks at such exchanges on social media, mainly Facebook, through which understandings of their knowledge or beliefs about history as epistemology emerge. Far from what is expected, teachers do not necessarily demonstrate disciplinary and criterlialist knowledge of history's workings. The fifth theme looks at key measurement tools that are widely employed in the field, such as both the *Beliefs about learning and teaching history* and the *Beliefs about history* questionnaires. It investigates different ways in which we can improve our ability to capture and assess teachers' and learners' ability to think in a criterialist manner. The purpose is to better understand what is going on in teachers' and learners' minds.

As these themes speak to the specific conversations that our contributing authors' respective articles generate, their key outputs nonetheless directly relate to the tension mentioned above. Some of these authors explicitly or even implicitly question the whole history teaching project, while others seek to build on what we have gained as collective knowledge, hoping to take these results further. It is the hope of the editors that these five themes' emergence in this special issue and the discussions they produce can conceivably contribute to opening the work conducted on history's epistemic beliefs in education in multiple directions. The challenges to overcoming the main tension listed above, along with the more distinct conversations that each of the articles contribute to, are healthy ones to have and hold the promise of promoting a better understanding of how our field might move forward in our changing times.

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Practical epistemology of history teachers and its relationship to normative injunctions

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ABSTRACT

Over the past few decades, significant work has been done regarding the epistemic beliefs of history teachers. However, nuanced epistemic beliefs do not appear to manifest as regularly as may be expected in teaching practices (Wilke et al., 2022). While exploring the normative injunctions imposed in part by the hidden curriculum (Giroux & Penna, 1979), the "school form" (Barthes & Alpe, 2018), and the challenges that history teachers face, this article argues that explicit and implicit demands made on history teachers generate a form of practical epistemology, which goes beyond epistemological beliefs. While at times this appears at odds with their understanding of history as a discipline, it enables them to meet the diverse mandates and directives they encounter. We believe that the concept of practical epistemology (Gholami, 2017) provides avenues for reflection that deserve to be pursued. Lastly, regarding criterialist epistemology (Maggioni, VanSledright, & Alexander, 2009) and historical thinking (Seixas & Morton, 2013), we emphasize that they themselves could be subjected to a critical review by both students and teachers in their practice.

KEYWORDS

Historical thinking, Epistemic beliefs, History teaching, Teaching practices, Practical epistemology

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Introduction

Over the past two decades, an increasing amount of research has been undertaken in the pursuit of a better understanding of the impact history teachers' epistemic beliefs can have on their practices (Demers, 2011; Gholami, 2017; Olafson, Shraw & Vader Veldt, 2010; Therriault & Harvey, 2013). The work of Maggioni, VanSledright and Alexander (2009) on these beliefs has often served as a framework for analyzing teachers' discourse regarding knowledge and history as a scientific discipline. However, despite all the work done in recent years, it remains too often difficult to find empirical illustrations of a real coherence between teachers' epistemic beliefs and their practices. The focus on the concepts of historical thinking as defined by Seixas and Morton (2013), among others, does not appear to have changed this situation. Could there be blind spots in our understanding of what influences history teachers' practices? Is it possible that demands or injunctions imposed in part by the hidden curriculum (Giroux & Penna, 1979) and the "school form" (Barthes & Alpe, 2018), or that the challenges that history teachers face could contradict their epistemic beliefs? Is it possible that the model of epistemic beliefs itself is incomplete and omits important facets of teachers' professional lives in their schools?

In this article, we argue that history teachers are subjected to important and far-reaching normative injunctions or prescriptions – whether they be explicitly set out in program requirements or implicit expectations regarding student performance. These numerous demands significantly affect their practice. Furthermore, we submit that history teachers are confronted daily with prescriptions from school and government officials, for instance, that set boundaries on their possible actions and may constrain their practices. Might these expectations, which are often not explicitly grounded in the subject matter being taught, partially account for the apparent inconsistencies between the epistemic beliefs of history teachers and their teaching practices?

This article examines how these injunctions likely compel educators to favour what Gholami (2017) or Wilke, Depaepe and Van Nieuwenhuyse (2022) call a practical epistemology enabling them to reconcile the needs of their students, the nuances of their discipline, and the myriad expectations placed upon them. As several authors have found, we will also see that history as a subject matter, even in the form given to it by the concepts of historical thinking, can be used for managerial purposes or for a sociopolitical discourse difficult to reconcile with epistemic beliefs recognizing history as a social construction that is itself historically situated (e.g. Doussot, 2020). Finally, we will explore how recent reflections on epistemologies and epistemic justice could complement models put forth by Seixas and Morton (2013), King and Kitchener (2004) or Maggioni, VanSledright and Alexander (2009), for instance.

The tension between epistemic beliefs and teaching practices

Sakki and Pirttilä-Backman (2019) argue that recent curricular discourse has promoted history teaching as an epistemic practice, emphasizing the importance for students to understand how history functions as a scientific field. From this perspective, history is understood as a practice with well-defined characteristics, procedures, and processes. History can then be taught, learned, and improved. The teaching of history is therefore often seen as a discipline that must not only provide the tools for understanding the societal formation of social events but also be able to take a critical look at these events. With a strong focus on historical sources, it should further delve into the methodological discussions on what is truly deemed historical and explore the nature of evidence and how it is and should be interpreted. As outlined by Seixas and Morton (2013) and other scholars, the act of thinking historically and its related processes have become fundamental in numerous national educational standards and curricula (Mathis & Parkes, 2020).

This leads to some expectations for a coherent curriculum. Embracing historical thinking means educators should adopt a refined epistemological stance and aim to cultivate epistemic cognition within inquiry-driven lessons (Schroeder et al., 2020). It also suggests that curriculum objectives and benchmarks should resonate with history as an investigative practice, facilitating the exploration of "ill-structured problems", as described by King and Kitchener in 2004.

Furthermore, this approach assumes that educators recognize the value and relevance of students grasping history as a knowledge-seeking or epistemic practice. One would also anticipate that evaluation methods would mirror inquiry-oriented scenarios demanding nuanced epistemic understanding. Yet, in their recent work, Wilke, Depaepe and Van Nieuwenhuyse (2022) acknowledge that "having nuanced beliefs did not necessarily lead to an instructional practice that supported nuanced beliefs." (p. 211) These authors make the same observation as many of their colleagues before them (Bouhon, 2010; Demers, 2011; Gholami, 2017; Hartzler-Miller, 2001; Olafson, Shraw, & Vader Veldt, 2010; Therriault & Harvey, 2013; Voet & De Wever, 2016). A tension thus exists between beliefs about teaching history, the concept of historical thinking, and how they are applied in practice. We will explore these various elements further in the following section.

As Hofer and Pintrich (1997) noted, epistemology can be understood as the branch of philosophy that explores the nature of knowledge as well as the justifications that allow an individual to know what he or she knows and whether what he or she knows can be judged true in a particular social setting. For these authors, the study of epistemological beliefs intersects with "how individuals come to know, the theories and beliefs they hold about knowing, and how such epistemological premises are a part of and an influence on the cognitive processes of thinking and reasoning." (p. 88) In history education, Maggioni, VanSledright and Alexander (2009) propose a typology of epistemic beliefs that can be broken down into three ways of viewing historical knowledge. Their research led them to theorize that it is possible to understand the epistemic beliefs of history teachers by first analyzing their representation of the interaction between "knower" and "object".

Their framework introduces three distinct stances: copier (objectivist), borrower (subjectivist), and criterialist. Though the framework doesn't imply a sequential progression towards more intricate viewpoints, it does hint at a desired outcome (Miguel-Revilla et al., 2021). The "objectivist" stance is so named due to the tendency observed in numerous students to accept the past uncritically. Individuals with this perspective view the past as unchanging and directly observable from today's vantage point. They often perceive history as a narrative that doesn't warrant critical examination. Conversely, the "subjectivist" stance leans towards a more personal and relativistic interpretation. Aligning with the pre-reflective stance detailed by King and Kitchener (2002), individuals with this perspective underscore personal interpretations of history, placing equal importance on diverse perspectives. Historical accounts are hence seen more as subjective opinions rooted in a historian's intent. The "criterialist" stance, however, is thought to provide a more balanced, introspective approach to history. It champions the use of evidence to piece together historical narratives, harmonizing both objective and subjective interpretations. In this light, history emerges as a crafted interpretation and is therefore understood as inherently different from the past itself.

For several authors (Cariou, 2022; Miguel-Revilla et al., 2021; Schroeder et al., 2020), the criterialist approach should be preferred, and it would be beneficial to cultivate students' critical skills through the teaching of history. Since the mid-1990s, an increasing number of history didacticians have argued that history teaching may be more useful when it enables students to think more like historians. In short, curriculum and teaching practices should not aim to make students memorize other people's conclusions but help them engage in what Hirst (1973) calls a "form of knowledge" that is historical thinking. This means learning to ask and answer questions in ways that, in principle, aim to be faithful to the best practices of experts in the field.

This raises the question of how the interpretation of historical events differs between novices and experts. In a 2010 study proposed by Peter Lee (2005), Éthier and Lefrançois observed two things: on the one hand, students consider history more spontaneously as a more or less accurate copy of the past than as a way of understanding it. On the other hand, these young people are bewildered by texts formed of factual statements that are true but whose general message is false. Lee has since conducted this research with a larger sample but fundamentally with the same results. In general, novices first find an answer to the question asked. Then, these individuals seek the document or excerpt confirming this opinion (sometimes, of course, they do not seek it and

stop at the "one" answer, imaginary or true). Finally, they list the extracts or facts that seem to support them, often without presenting the author or linking them to the initial question.

In contrast, historians who question the past search for as many relevant traces of it as possible no matter how contradictory, distant, and fragmentary they may be, and no matter what forms and media they take. Historians examine if they provide clues, compare them, establish their content and value, situate them in their context, attempt to understand them and build through them the most likely interpretations of past events (Lévesque & Clark, 2018).

Seixas and Morton (2013) argue that students can develop this form of knowledge when their teachers utilize the six historical thinking concepts that they developed in the early 2010s. Seixas (2017) shows the evolution of these concepts and how they complement the thinking of history educators from other historical traditions (German, British, and American). As Thorp and Persson (2020) wrote: "The history educational attempt to specify what the critical assessment of historical sources and patterns of historical explanations relied upon, evolved over the following decades into the notion of historical thinking." (p. 891)

Without going into too many details, it is worth noting that the six concepts outlined by Seixas and Morton (2013) are as follows:

1. establishing historical significance;
2. using primary sources as evidence;
3. defining continuity and change;
4. analyzing causes and consequences;
5. adopting a historical perspective;
6. understanding the ethical dimension of historical interpretations.

Seixas and Morton (2013) believed that these six concepts, if developed by students, could enable them to build historical knowledge that is critical and constructed. Thus, it is not a matter of teaching "*a* history", but rather of teaching history as a field of investigation. The goal is then to foster the growth of epistemic agents equipped with a discerning historical understanding, enabling them to grasp and engage with their surroundings more deeply. This perspective on teaching history resonates with a critical educational viewpoint and seeks to provide students with the resources to achieve genuine freedom as articulated by Freire (1968/2021). This philosophy embodies a rigorous vision of history education, transcending mere narration of national tales or basic understanding of the subject. Instead, it empowers students to adeptly wield critical tools, paving the way for their empowerment and emancipation.

However, as stated, empirical studies examining the actual teaching methods of history educators reveal an inconsistent alignment with criterion-referenced epistemic beliefs and the utilization of historical thinking concepts, and even significant discrepancies between beliefs and practices (e.g. Elmersjö, 2022; Bouhon, 2010; Olafson, Shraw & Vader Veldt, 2010; Voet & De Wever, 2016; Wilke, Depaepe & Van Nieuwenhuyse, 2022). Demers (2011) pointed out that history teachers often shift their epistemic stance when they teach. Furthering this observation, Therriault and Harvey (2013) commented that numerous educators choose to "voluntarily lower their level of epistemological refinement when they are in the presence of secondary school students (during teaching practice)" (p. 454).

In practice, the dominant teaching culture appears to remain focused on narrating history and transmitting facts listed in programs (Au, 2009; Gunn & Rawnsley, 2006; Voet & De Wever, 2016). Furthermore, historical "facts", presented as such without a real critical analysis, dominate curricula. For instance, subjective, anecdotal, or contradictory sources that could be put to the test of critical analysis seem to be rarely presented. This seems to contradict the criterialist posture. In many other cases, history teachers seem to navigate between subjectivist, criterialist and objectivist positions depending on the context and constraints. They may alternately narrate history or propose source-centered tasks with or without interpretive criteria (Demers & Éthier, 2013; Shroeder et al., 2021).

As Wilke, Depaepe and Van Nieuwenhuyse (2022) noted, these discrepancies could indicate "that other beliefs influence the relationship between epistemological beliefs and instructional practice" (p. 211). Like other scholars, Demers and Éthier (2013) have concluded that history teachers generally choose how they teach based on what could be called a *practical epistemology* – a *what-works pedagogy*, as defined later by Gholami (2017) – rather than their own epistemological beliefs or even their personal epistemology.

In the next section, we will try to present some explanations, or at least some interpretive frameworks, that could aid in the comprehension of this apparent tension between the epistemic convictions of history teachers, the practices they are urged to adopt, and the practices they in fact employ.

Practical injunctions and practical epistemology: from curricular imperatives to the hidden curriculum

It is generally acknowledged that the general aims of schooling, in terms of its role in socialization as an institution of a particular social order, are influenced by at least two sources: the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum (Apple, 2004; Giroux & Penna, 1979). The remainder of this article will take up these two aspects by analyzing the injunctions and prescriptions they contain, sometimes complementing and sometimes contradicting each other.

The formal curriculum is the official, planned framework in schools. It consists of the programs and pedagogical objectives that are deliberately put in place. The hidden curriculum consists of the everyday experiences of pupils and teachers in their interactions with peers and other staff. These interactions, governed by school rules and the rights and responsibilities of pupils and teachers, have a subtle but significant impact on citizenship education. The hidden curriculum conveys implicit social norms and values that help to reinforce school order and institutional authority. The hidden curriculum would condition a particular form of knowing and citizenship that is subject to the institutions and relations of domination that characterize the capitalist economy. Some argue that the function of the hidden curriculum is in fact to maintain the power of the dominant culture and existing class relations, thus contradicting the formal statements of the curriculum about citizenship education, particularly through the pacification of conflicts inherent in intersubjective interaction and the exercise of rights (Apple, 2004; Barthes & Alpe, 2018; Bernstein, 1977; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Giroux, 1981; Giroux & Penna, 1979; Raby, 2005).

It is worth noting that while history education is frequently conceived as a pillar of citizenship education, it is also the school subject which, as a whole, appears to generate the most public controversies. History teachers often are required to balance the political nature of historical interpretation and curriculum with the understanding that critical historical thinking provides important tools for civic engagement. One might then expect history teachers to embody a profound level of epistemic sophistication and embrace the subject's complexities, striving to integrate such depth and its related subtleties into their pedagogy. However, as previously indicated, there seems to be a disconnect, with teachers' epistemic convictions not consistently reflected in their teaching practices. There is also evidence that history teachers have shifting epistemic beliefs (Elmersjö & Zanazanian, 2022). We argue that theoretical models which idealize a seamless harmony between sophisticated epistemic beliefs – such as the criterialist stance – of history teachers and their teaching practices may neglect the pragmatic realities of teaching the subject. These models might additionally underappreciate the sociopolitical weight of history teaching, to which teachers are keenly attuned.

Interestingly, educators seem to adopt a distinctly pragmatic stance towards knowledge acquisition, as observed by Gholami (2017). Given curricular prescriptions coupled with the pressures of standardized historical assessments (either of which might characterize history merely as a collection of facts, narratives, or procedures), teachers may understandably adopt teaching practices that best fulfil these requirements. For instance, do curricula present epistemic cognition and associated criteria or its equivalent as a linear series of procedural steps to follow,

or rather as an iterative, complex, intellectual process? Do curricula present content knowledge as structured and simple or rather as open-ended and ill-structured phenomena? One could posit that, in their attempt to balance a predominantly criterialist epistemic stance with these varied and often conflicting demands, teachers lean more towards a functional epistemology instead of strictly adhering to pure or formal epistemic beliefs. Wilke et al. (2022) noted that :

> According to Kuhn and Weinstock (2002), epistemic thinking should be understood as "theory-in-action" (p. 134): peoples' "tacit theories" about knowledge and knowing are activated when they are confronted with a specific claim, problem and sources of information. A distinction should hence be made between formal and practical epistemologies (Sandoval, 2005; Sinatra & Chinn, 2012). Formal epistemologies refer to general ideas about the "characteristics of knowledge and its justification in a particular field" (Sinatra & Chinn, 2012, p. 264), while practical epistemologies refer to epistemic practices that are activated, for instance, via inquiry activities. (p. 199)

We argue that history teachers may not be simply "shifting" their epistemologies. Rather, their practices may reflect their adherence to an epistemology that could be described as practical. Although this practical epistemology may appear to contradict the traditional view of the historical discipline, it has the potential to reconcile various conflicting injunctions and perspectives, including the tension between the formal and hidden curriculum. It could then be seen as a response to normative injunctions and assessment of students' cognitive skills and needs. This notion of practical epistemology has been endorsed by scholars like Au (2009), Demers (2011) and Gholami (2017). Elmersjö (2022) highlighted this aspect by describing the intricate nature of the teaching task to ensure that students had everything they needed to succeed and learn.

To gain a better understanding of this situation, it is necessary to revisit at least in part the extent of the injunctions and demands made of history teachers and their assessment of students' abilities. Firstly, shortcomings or inconsistencies in teacher training programs could undeniably affect the epistemic beliefs of history teachers. A study by Schroeder et al. (2021) analyzed the syllabi of 48 elementary social studies method instructors in the US. They found that out of these, 27 were founded on information-based systems, 11 leaned towards inquiry-based methods, and 14 were rooted in transformation-based approaches, emphasizing critical pedagogy. This disparity becomes even more troubling considering that pre-service teachers in general are known to be less likely to have constructivist epistemology or to use higher-order skills than non-education majors (Duffy et al., 2017). As a result, pre-service educators might be *a priori* ill-equipped to navigate the intricate criterialist perspective on historical knowledge.

In previous studies (Demers, 2011; Demers et al., 2016, 2020; Demers & Éthier, 2013), we observed that curricula often depict epistemic cognition and historical thinking as mere step-by-step procedures. Additionally, assessment tasks meant to attest to students' proficiency in the subject sometimes incorporate directives that seem tangential to the core content. To meet expectations of enhancing students' test performances, teachers occasionally resort to teaching practices narrowly geared towards test content. Our findings suggest that, although certain aspects of epistemic cognition are evaluated, exams often force students to simply reproduce a "recipe" for sourcing information, as noted by Au (2009) and Stoel, Logtenberg, & Nitsche (2022). This means that students are graded on their personal interpretation and not on their ability to devise, structure, or debate criteria within reflective judgment in epistemic forums. How then can the idea of the complex and open-ended nature of knowledge be reconciled with information or procedure-based assessment?

The effects of high-stakes testing not only on schools and school systems but also on teaching practices and teachers' practical epistemology should also be questioned. The impact of high-stakes testing on teachers' practices is well-documented (Perez-Mugg, 2022; Wilson, 2022). Au (2009) for instance notes that high-stakes tests often have the consequence of trivializing history and its practice. He writes: "social studies teachers operating in states whose social studies tests

focused on the rote memorization of historical facts both added and cut curriculum content to align with the information on the tests" (Au, 2009, p. 47). These assessments – and the associated high-stakes testing – divert and often subsume history teachers' critical aims as they may very well have a major impact on the students' career path and, in some cases, on the teachers' career and the whole of school systems (Perez-Mugg, 2022).

In the current context, one needs to acknowledge the impact that capitalism and results-based management have on educational systems (Fabre & Gohier, 2015; Biesta, 2009; Maroy, 2021; Perez-Mugg, 2022). As Davies (2008) noted, history education and history research are as much a part of the labour market preparation dynamic as other academic fields.

> History teaching and research are therefore increasingly articulated in the bureaucratic or technical-managerial jargon of the "administered world" – there are frameworks, productivity targets, objectives that are calibrated according to value drivers, optimized delivery, benchmark performance, indicative measures, sector outputs and cost-effectiveness scores. (Donnelly & Norton, 2017, p. 651)

These same authors add that "[t]he current cognitive conventions of historical research and university history teaching through their normalization of teleological and identitary thinking produce and compel complacency, affirm social conventions and instantiate dominant ideologies" (Donnelly & Norton, 2017, p. 653). The sociopolitical role of history as a subject matter and the political influence of the history educator as an intellectual should not be underestimated (Davies, 2008; Donnelly & Norton, 2017).

The pedagogical aims of history teaching, even in their most commendable forms, cannot be isolated from the various political purposes it is (implicitly) asked to serve. Some believe that its purpose is to preserve (or diversify) and bequeath a heritage. Variations of this outlook aim to recover, replace, renew, or even rediscover this heritage. Others view history as a conduit to foster values like decency, civic responsibility, national pride, or alignment with a specific ideology, moral stance, or socio-political agenda. Others feel that history should present a sequence of definitive events that either challenge and debunk alternative historical interpretations or highlight the significance of these events, drawing inferences about their ensuing outcomes.

In 1993, Cohen wrote about historians: "Our calling is to read others intimately, as texts; but the 'job' carried out is mostly to politicize in the name of the reigning construction of the standard of living (including the symmetry of opposition)." (quoted in Davies, 2008, p. 464)

This idea that history and its teaching serve purposes that go beyond the disciplinary framework is not surprising. One could even argue that the concepts proposed by Seixas and Morton (2013), or any civic skills, themselves go beyond the scope of traditional history teaching in the sense that it should not only be about imparting knowledge of past events and developments. History teaching serves a greater purpose. In fact, in our opinion, the importance of critical civic skills in the teaching of history cannot be overstated. By encouraging critical thinking, deliberation, agency, and solidarity, students are better equipped to navigate complex societal issues and engage in meaningful discourse. These skills are coherent with the tenets of historical discipline and have far-reaching implications for the development of epistemic agents and responsible citizens.

If history teaching cannot be dissociated from the broader social reproduction function that is assigned to schools within the capitalist system, it would therefore be unwise to attempt to understand the practices of these educators solely through their epistemic beliefs. Normative injunctions or prescriptions that are imposed upon them, both in terms of the aims of schooling and the management of the educational system, must also be taken into consideration.

To these practical concerns, one should also add, as highlighted by the work of Voet and De Wever (2016), the constraints related to the classroom context, the lack of time, and the ever-present and pressing need to cover the entirety of the curriculum within prescribed durations, without genuinely taking account of student learning. Moreover, it is worth noting that history teachers set objectives for themselves. Once again, the study by Voet and De Wever (2016)

provides illuminating insights in this regard. They observed that history teachers tend to pursue five distinct goals in their practices: history should help better understand the present; history is part of a general education granting access to culture; history should promote critical thinking; history contributes to citizenship; and history should be engaging and interesting.

Considering that these injunctions, demands, and concerns are piled on to teachers' fears – whether justified or not – about students' actual ability to meet standards, it is possible to better understand the posture adopted by many of them in favour of a "what works" approach rather than a strictly criterialist epistemology. History teachers probably note, as Kim (2020) did, that students' personal epistemology may be somewhat confused. Similarly, Maggioni (2010) notes that change in students' historical thinking can be modest and does not consistently suggest skill progression, while Barton (2009) finds that students tend to simplistically "use history as a source of identification" (p. 275). That may in part explain why, for many teachers, students are seen as inherently incapable of sophisticated epistemic cognition (Demers & Éthier, 2013) and why a pragmatic approach seems a legitimate stance. One could argue that there are significant discrepancies between students' perceived beliefs or abilities and what the curriculum demands. These differences, coupled with the challenging requirements and conditions of teaching, can understandably result in what appears to be contradictions in teachers' practices.

Even though one could have hoped that history education "would encourage our students not simply to acquire work-based skills, but to challenge normative customs and reified practices and to ask not how society got the way it is, but how we can change society and make it better" (Donnelly & Norton, 2017, p. 653), it's understandable that history teachers may not always perfectly align their acknowledged epistemic beliefs with their instructional methods. History educators must juggle curriculum mandates, standardized assessment protocols, as well as the civic and sociopolitical imperatives linked to their subject, all while gauging their students' capabilities. Put simply, there can be a dichotomy between what teachers perceive as beneficial for students and what institutional and societal structures dictate.

Navigating these nuances is undoubtedly a challenging endeavour for history educators. Furthermore, historians themselves appear divided about the focus of history education, even at tertiary levels, and can be sceptical of students' actual capacities (Davies, 2008; Donnelly & Norton, 2017). Given these varied directives, it's hardly surprising that many educators seem to mould their practices around what they perceive as their primary duty, as outlined by Demers (2011) and Wilke et al. (2022). The evolving or "shifting" epistemology of educators, as highlighted by Elmersjö and Zanazanian (2022), might therefore lean towards a pragmatic approach that adeptly reconciles these diverse formal and practical expectations.

We believe that the concept of practical epistemology is particularly promising when addressing the practices of history teachers and their relationship with epistemic beliefs. It seems to offer a more nuanced understanding of the practices of these teachers and what drives them. By taking a critical look at everything that is asked of them, it becomes easier to reconcile their actual classroom practices throughout the year with their declared practices, as well as with epistemic beliefs and all the other aspects of teaching history.

Furthermore, we believe that recognizing the importance of teachers' practical epistemologies and what shapes them should also involve acknowledging that if interventions are needed to allow a better adaptation of history teaching in line with a more criterialist epistemology (or King and Kitchener's reflective judgment model), these interventions cannot be limited solely to changing teaching practices or re-informing teachers about best practices in this area.

Teaching practices are the result of a multitude of factors and pressures at all levels of education systems, from teacher training and resources to curricula and class sizes. To enable a change in the teaching practices of history teachers, it would be necessary to consider taking action to ensure greater coherence throughout the educational system. Expectations directed at history teachers – whether they involve high-stakes testing, social cohesion, or national pride – need to be reexamined to allow teaching practices that align more closely with a nuanced vision of history and the past.

That said, we believe it may be worth investigating the notion of practical epistemology for an additional reason: perhaps embracing a more flexible framework concerning epistemic beliefs could address overarching questions about the nature of historical knowledge itself. In the ensuing section, we explore these issues and provide preliminary insights into the potential role of perspectives like feminist or decolonial epistemologies in the realm of history education.

Should historical thinking be revisited?

In recent years, it has been widely acknowledged that history teaching should be anchored in a rather criterialist perspective. In this respect, it's important to acknowledge the significant contribution of Seixas and Morton (2013). The six concepts of historical thinking they propose have been a source of inspiration for many recent works in the field of history education. These six concepts, as we have seen, should indeed facilitate a history education that aligns with the characteristics of a criterialist epistemology.

However, Thorp and Persson (2020) note that these six concepts and the underlying premises guiding them and their implications warrant examination. Firstly, according to these researchers, historical thinking is too often championed as the key to a true comprehension of history. It is presented almost as a set formula or blueprint leading to an impartial truth. Such a prescriptive approach seems at odds with the tenets of the criterialist perspective, especially when acknowledging the significance of collaborative discourse within epistemic communities (Dewey, 1916/2018) for deciphering the past and more broadly what should be understood as knowledge. Thorp and Persson (2020) write that:

> it is the individual student that, through conquering a subject-specific way of thinking, is considered to be enabled to organize and make coherent her understanding of the world. Moreover, from a student's point of view, historical thinking utterly seems to rest upon your individual cognitive ability to think correctly according to a pre-conceived model of thinking. (p. 895)

The criterialist stance suggests that students should be equipped to establish criteria for assessing the validity of their knowledge. While the six concepts of historical thinking provide tools for analysis, they don't inherently promote critical examination of their own merits or constraints. These concepts are introduced as tools to be learned and applied. They are not necessarily to be problematized, critiqued or debated. It's thus worth considering not only the benefits of historical thinking but also its limitations. How could the gap between the idea of knowledge as intricate, socially derived, and ever-evolving and the teaching and assessment approach rooted in specific procedures or information be bridged?

The issue becomes more pressing when we recognize that even historians don't have a unanimous view on what it truly means to "think like a historian". Is historical thinking truly the sole avenue to understanding history? Moreover, some claim that the concept of historical thinking does not do enough to acknowledge the idea, as put forth by Marx (1852/2002), Gadamer (2004) and Ricœur (1986) in their defence of hermeneutics, that historians, or any individuals interpreting historical traces, are themselves intrinsically part of the history they seek to comprehend. Elmersjö (2022) writes that:

> teaching history as a form of interpretation from multiple perspectives includes some measure of explaining how there can be more than one perspective, and what that means for our understanding of the difference between the history of an event and the event itself. (p. 833)

Accepting moreover that historians are inherently embedded within the fabric of history even before their analysis begins suggests that their interpretations can only be provisional and evolving constructions. This suggests an iterative method where the interpreter must acknowledge their own historical positioning. Historical thinking seems to neglect that aspect of any interpretative science as well as to deny its own sociohistorical situatedness.

One could also argue that the work done in recent years on the concept of epistemic justice (Anderson, 2006; Dieleman, 2015; Fricker, 1999; Medina, 2013) can only have serious implications on historical thinking concepts. Epistemic injustice is understood as an epistemic vice that hinders the complete understanding of a phenomenon due to the low importance given to a group's experience or the description of that experience. Fricker (1999) identifies two types of epistemic injustice: testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice. Testimonial injustice is an unjustified deficit in credibility given to the testimony of a group that is often marginalized. Hermeneutical injustice is an injustice arising from the impossibility of making sense of experience or expressing it in all its complexity due to the limits of dominant theoretical frameworks.

Medina (2013) believes that while epistemic injustice is undoubtedly a facet of oppression and its associated processes of marginalization, it does allow for a better understanding and naming of a type of injustice that is often less visible in structures of oppression. In that respect, recent works on the impacts of colonization, including in scientific disciplines and on the most common representations of what knowledge is and should be (Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007; de Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015; Gautier & Zancarini-Fournel, 2022; Marim, 2023; McKeon, 2019), are equally likely to induce a reexamination of the concepts of historical thinking if we hope for this framework to remain current and truly relevant for history education. This should also be true ~~for in the field of~~ feminist epistemologies (e.g. Brunet & Demers, 2018; Demers, Brunet, & Bachand, 2022).

History education should probably ensure that its focus is not only on the biases that certain sources carry – as do the six concepts of historical thinking –, but also on the absence of certain sources and the relative importance given to ancestral narratives and indigenous knowledge, for example.

Although we do not have the opportunity to do this work within the context of this article, it would also be relevant to ensure that the precepts of historical thinking allow for the consideration of historical questions in all their diversity and not only the questions that most often serve as drivers for history education. By doing so, a strict criterialist stance would probably be easier to mobilize than the concepts of historical thinking, not to mention that for some authors, decolonization of historical knowledge also requires questioning the very foundations of current epistemological stances (de Oliveira Andreotti et al., 2015; Mignolo, 2003). It is worth noting again that history teachers generally think there is a notable difference between "real" knowledge and what should be taught and learned in schools. Wilke, Depaepe and Van Nieuwenhuyse (2022) write that "[w]hile teachers might acknowledge the constructed and incomplete nature of disciplinary knowledge, they sometimes consider 'school knowledge' (the knowledge students encounter in school) as fixed and complete." (p. 200) Epistemic injustice may indeed be an issue if this paradox underlies teaching practices.

Drawing on Gadamer's hermeneutics, Mignolo (2003) suggests a form of interpretation he describes as "pluritopic". According to this author, traditional hermeneutics allows the interpretation of a subject only through a corpus of texts from a relatively homogeneous tradition, typically the European tradition. Mignolo (2003) believes that if historical interpretation is to genuinely respect the plurality of voices and the complexity of historical phenomena, it should allow for interpretations that combine artefacts, texts, and rewritings from a multitude of traditions.

Acknowledging the full complexity of historical knowledge, of history as a field and of its political implications should not be bypassed. As Elmersjö and Zanazanian (2022) articulated, "If teachers acknowledge history's political nature, the chances of adopting a form of reflexivity regarding their teaching may increase, thereby enabling them to make sense of the subjectivity involved in the construction of historical knowledge." (p. 191)

These latter reflections lead us to reaffirm the importance for history teachers to promote a complex and open conception of knowledge through their teaching practices (Muis et al., 2021). However, they also call for teaching conditions and what is asked of history teachers to be adjusted so teachers may truly adopt epistemic beliefs and practices that reflect our understanding of the intricacies of historical knowledge. Moreover, we believe that such reflections could lead to a deeper insight into addressing the emotional effects frequently tied to history education.

Concluding remarks

While it is acknowledged that teaching history as a practice requires us to teach how to think historically, what this entails remains to be (re)defined or refined, given the paradoxes we have identified. We must question whether teaching historical thinking as a fixed linear procedure rather than as complex, iterative, collective and open-ended epistemic work is truly an improvement on teaching history as an assemblage of facts or as a narrative.

Further, we must continue to question whether teachers have the necessary conditions to teach history as a complex epistemic practice. Teachers' work is bombarded with often contradictory injunctions, with high-stakes testing being one of the most problematic. With teachers being increasingly stripped of their professional autonomy (Biesta, 2010; St.Pierre, 2006), history didactics research must step away from prescription and make room for listening to teachers and helping them develop context-relevant tools to subvert normative injunctions where they are contrary to student learning and well-being.

Finally, we reassert that, if teachers are to change their epistemological stance, they must engage in classroom situations in which they and their students learn to investigate history, including thinking about how history is made (Éthier & Lefrançois, 2016) and about the tools used by historians. Students should be helped to see for themselves that the virtues associated with historical thinking (including humility, thoroughness, rigour, tolerance, openness and curiosity) can be fostered as they investigate complex problems. This process can in turn enhance their capacity to frame social problems, gather evidence, establish criteria, express and defend interpretations, and do so based on all available evidence and criteria, even if incomplete or conflicting.

Cultivating these virtues is consistent with the best collaborative practices of historians, who must engage evidence and construct arguments through careful analysis and interpretation when addressing historical issues, and debating on criteria. We emphasize the importance of cultivating students' scholarly virtues in action and having them practice how to think, not only about history, but also about how history is made and what criteria can be used to determine the accuracy and validity of a historical interpretation.

Our wager (Demers, Bachand, & Leblanc, 2016; Éthier, Lefrançois, & Demers, 2018) is that a collaborative process in which both teachers and students learn from each other through dialogue and critical thinking focused on students' lived experiences and social realities will empower both to analyze the world, to question and challenge dominant power structures and social inequalities, to encourage them to become agents of change in their communities and to create a more just and equitable society. Without this critical consciousness as defined by Freire (1968/2021), the prospect of transforming the world for the better is bleak . However, even if schools were intrinsically incapable of teaching it, and even if all reforms (in healthcare, education, housing, etc.) under capitalism were inherently cosmetic or ephemeral, the practice of social transformation educates people who practice it. Furthermore, the call for democratic and quality education for all points to the limitations of the current educational system and the need for a complete transformation of society in the hope of changing education, rather than the reverse.

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"I ask different questions to my students now": An inquiry into the role of textbooks for the teaching of historical thinking in Basque secondary schools

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ABSTRACT

Starting from an analysis of the Basque competence-based secondary school history textbook *EKI* and the perceptions of teachers using it, these pages aim at investigating how history teachers relate to the textbooks they use in the classroom and the role these teaching materials play in the promotion of deeper historical understanding of their students. The Baque case offers a good opportunity to see how competence-based teaching materials are used to teach historical competences and how they may have affected the teaching of history in Basque secondary schools. Two main research questions are addressed: how this competence-based textbook integrates historical thinking skills and how it affects teachers´ understanding of history and teaching practice. The results suggest that theoretical reflections on historical thinking and epistemic questions have not permeated school teaching practices yet; however, the textbook does introduce students into historical thinking concepts and has produced changes in teachers' practices. Besides, this research has detected the interest of further investigating how we deal with historical thinking in the everyday practice of increasingly diverse classrooms.

KEYWORDS

History education, Historical thinking, Historical competencies, Textbooks, Teaching Practices

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Introduction

The quote in the title comes from one of the teachers interviewed for this research and refers to the effect that using certain textbooks has had on her way of teaching history. Instead of asking simple questions that did not require much more than memorisation and repetition, she started designing activities and asking questions that made students reflect and mobilise their knowledge and skills to solve problems. If the questions we ask our students are an indicator of how and what we teach, we could conclude that the new textbook influenced her teaching. The following article is an attempt to shed light on how history teachers relate to the textbooks they use in the classroom and the role these teaching materials play in the promotion of deeper historical understanding of their students. For this purpose, a case study based on the analysis of a competence-based history textbook used in Basque secondary schools will be presented here.

Parallel to the introduction of competence-based education, consensus about the need to promote more active teaching and learning methods in history - thereby moving beyond memorization of thematic contents to enhance students understanding of history - is growing among the teaching community in Spain. Although probably with a certain delay compared to other countries, studies on epistemic cognition and beliefs are emerging (Miguel-Revilla and Fernández Portela, 2017) and research about historical thinking has thrived in the field of history education (Chaparro Sainz, Felices de la Fuente and Triviño Cabrera, 2020). In contrast to this increasing interest in epistemological questions within the field of history didactics, however, several authors underline the absence of such reflection in the everyday practice of school history (Gómez Carrasco and Rodríguez Pérez, 2017; Miguel-Revilla, Carril and Sánchez-Agustí, 2017). Taking this apparent absence of reflection in everyday school practice as the point of departure, a further aim of the research presented here is to investigate teachers' views and the use they make of textbooks in order to see to what extent they introduce epistemic questions and the promotion of historical thinking in their classrooms.

The latest Education Law in Spain, LOMLOE, was approved in 2020 and, in accordance with the decentralized Spanish education system, it has been completed by a Basque decree in 2023, defining a new legal framework that has gone a step further towards the introduction of competence-based learning. The Basque case has been chosen here because it provides an example of competence-based educational materials (*EKI project*) that were first implemented in 2013 and offer a good opportunity to see how such materials are used to teach historical competences and how they may have affected the teaching of history in Basque secondary schools.

This empirical case study, based on the analysis of the *EKI* competence-based textbook and interviews with teachers who use it in their classrooms, poses two main research questions: how this competence-based textbook integrates historical thinking skills and how it affects teachers´ understanding of history and teaching practice. Answering these questions will help us clarify to what extent these teaching materials offer the necessary resources to overcome traditional history teaching based mainly on the reception of information and its memorization and are thus capable of developing a type of teaching that promotes a deeper understanding of history and students´ skills to build their own representations of the past.

Historical competences, historical thinking and the promotion of students´ deeper understanding of history

In an article about students´ learning strategies in history, Ioannou and Iordanou (2020) mention that students do not hold mature epistemic beliefs in history and therefore tend to memorise historical facts instead of engaging in critical thinking. In the case of Spanish schools, the popular belief that identifies knowing history with memorizing facts, concepts and dates is widely spread, and consequently Spanish textbooks and teaching practices do not seem to promote a deeper understanding of this discipline (Miralles, Molina and Ortuño, 2011; Sáiz, 2013; Gómez Carrasco and Miralles, 2015). The evolution of research in history education in recent decades does not seem to have had a significant effect on the way history is taught and learnt in schools; learners

have gone from memorizing political content and data to memorizing historical interpretations, but school history does not seem to promote autonomous thinking among students (Gómez Carrasco and Rodríguez Pérez, 2017). There seems to be little room in school history for reflection on epistemological questions and how historical knowledge is achieved.

Epistemic cognition and epistemic beliefs about history are not widely-used terms in the context of history teaching in Spain. Terms such as *pensar la historia* or *pensar históricamente* (think historically), however, are quite common when reflecting about what history is and how we know what we know about the past. As mentioned earlier, interest about historical thinking in the field of history education research in Spain is growing and there is increasing awareness of the need to promote a model of history teaching that takes epistemological conceptions into account and introduces the methods of the historian and the complexity of historical time into the classroom, making students aware of the construction of historical discourse (Gómez Carrasco and Rodríguez Pérez, 2017).

But these historical thinking skills need to be taught and learnt (Wineburg, 2001). When confronted with the need to improve students´ historical knowledge, several authors describe developmental models of epistemic cognition in history and refer to the idea of progression, showing that students can be trained to achieve a deeper understanding of history. These developmental models describe a progression from the naïve identification of history with a fixed past to the more nuanced epistemological ideas of a knower that acknowledges the possibility of multiple interpretations of the past and which uses the methods of the discipline to evaluate historical accounts (Maggioni, 2010; Stoel et al. 2017). Previously, Lee and Shemilt (2003) had distinguished 'progression' from 'aggregation' to show that progress in history is more than an increase in the amount of information students remember. According to their research, as children grow their ideas about the past change and their understanding of history and the past becomes more complex, hand in hand with the work on second-order concepts. In this sense, Shemilt's research in the early 1980s about the implementation of *School History Project* suggested that students who had worked with teaching materials that introduced training in what would be later called 'second-order concepts' understood better the nature of history than those who had used other materials (Domínguez Castillo, 2015). Using materials that introduce students into the historical thinking concepts described by Seixas and Morton (2013) or the historical competences described by Domínguez Castillo (2015) would thus contribute to the progression of students´ historical understanding. Turning Ioannou and Iordanou´s above-mentioned argument around, it could be argued that promoting activities that train students' historical thinking helps them engage with epistemological questions and acquire more advanced epistemic beliefs about history. As Domínguez Castillo (2015) affirms, thinking historically requires having knowledge of the past, but also understanding of how this knowledge is built: working with second-order concepts or historical thinking concepts requires reflection on the way knowledge is acquired as well as the development of cognitive skills that involve a certain degree of meta-cognitive reflection. Hence the interest in training historical thinking skills to enhance students' epistemic beliefs about history.

In fact, the case study presented here hints at incipient changes in this direction, partly at least related to the implementation of competence-based curricula and the creation of new teaching materials. In the new history curriculum, traditional thematic contents have become less common, and the teaching of history is committed to training the strategies and tools specific to the discipline (LOMLOE, 2020; Basque decree 77/2023). In line with this, both Sáiz (2013) and Domínguez Castillo (2015) insist that the main contribution that history can make to the new competence-based framework lies in the development of historical competences, which are directly connected to historical thinking concepts. According to Domínguez Castillo, historical competences include aspects linked to substantive knowledge, such as explaining historically the events of the past, but they also incorporate more methodological knowledge directly connected to the ability to think historically, such as the use of historical evidence and the understanding of the logic of historical knowledge.

When it comes to defining historical thinking, Seixas and Morton are the main references in the Spanish context (Chaparro Sainz, Felices de la Fuente and Triviño Cabrera, 2020). According to them, the development of historical-thinking competences is connected to the progression of students´ ability to think about how historians transform the past into history so that they can begin to construct history themselves. The aim is not just to memorise facts, but to approach history critically, understanding how historians research and use data to write historical accounts and interpretations (Seixas and Morton, 2013). Along these lines, Sáiz and López Facal (2015) affirm that school history should integrate, in a balanced way, knowledge *of* history and *about* history: learning history does not only consist of knowing substantive content, but above all it should involve being familiar with and knowing how to use second-order concepts, which are specific to the production of historical knowledge. The expression *pensar históricamente* (thinking historically) emphasizes the acquisition of cognitive skills typical of the discipline which are necessary to adequately understand the information we have about the past; that is, it refers both to knowing what happened and how we know what happened (Gómez Carrasco and Rodríguez Pérez, 2017).

In addition to this, both VanSledright (2004) and Santisteban (2010) identify similar abilities related to historical thinking skills, which point to the knowledge of the process through which historical interpretations of the past are built. For these authors, to advance in their historical knowledge students should understand that the development of their historical competence involves their investigating and answering historical questions based on sources. Working with sources becomes central in this process: evaluating them and contrasting those that may suggest different or even opposing perspectives to draw conclusions and build interpretations based on evidence. Students should understand that the result of this work is an account that tries to explain the past in a narrative form. This is work that requires critical thinking skills, as well as understanding that historians reconstruct the past based on the questions they have in the present, and then find answers to build their own interpretations.

If the aim of school history is that students obtain a more nuanced and sophisticated perspective about what we know about the past and how we know it, then it is fundamental to train students in historical thinking. This can serve to overcome their passive role as mere recipients of historical data, enabling them to build their own interpretations starting from source work (VanSledright 2004). By doing this work, students will have the opportunity to reflect on the fact that historical knowledge is not a fixed set of explanations but rather the product of evidence-based interpretations that change according to the different perspectives and the new questions we pose.

It is worth looking, therefore, at the extent to which teaching materials incorporate work on historical competences and historical thinking concepts and whether they help teachers promote students´ progress towards more developed epistemological ideas about history. Nowadays, textbooks continue to be the main teaching materials in our history classrooms and should be taken into consideration if we want to explain to what extent deeper historical understanding is trained in history lessons. Martínez, Valls and Pineda (2009) stress the traditional role of textbooks as mediators of teaching and their presence in the everyday work of both teachers and students, which by itself justifies our interest in studying them. But these authors also insist on the need to better understand how teachers relate to and use them in their everyday practice. In our case, the structure and activities of the textbook analysed may provide strategies and tools to train historical competences, but whether this happens will depend on teachers' intentions and the use they make of the textbook.

Contribution of competence-based textbooks and teachers´ practice to the promotion of historical thinking in Basque secondary schools

Sources and methodology

This enquiry is centred both on the extent to which textbooks have integrated teaching methodologies that support the promotion of historical thinking skills -thus contributing to training students to adopt more advanced epistemic beliefs-, as well as on whether and how these textbooks affect teachers´ everyday work in the classroom. For this purpose, the Basque history textbook *EKI*, used for the second year of compulsory secondary education with 13–14-year-old students, and teachers´ views will be analysed.

After completing a comparative analysis of Spanish and English history schoolbooks, Martínez Hita and Gómez Carrasco (2018) concluded that Spanish textbooks generally demand very little, asking simple questions that can be answered with a term, a date, or a very short text; the clue is usually in the text itself, very close to the question. The uncritical repetition of facts prevails over developing more complex cognitive operations; more creative and challenging activities that might guide students to formulate their thinking and build their own knowledge are less common.

This is somewhat surprising considering that competence-based education was introduced into Spain a decade ago, and at least in the Basque autonomous community teaching materials and training have long been available for teachers working in competence-based methodologies. This is why I decided to investigate the situation in the Basque context, and after analysing and comparing several textbook series, one officially approved textbook has been chosen here to see the extent to which the situation described by Martínez Hita and Gómez Carrasco applies to the Basque context. This book was chosen because, following the new curriculum, it claims to take competence-based education as a framework and is one of the most widely used in Basque schools. It is part of the wider competence-based educational project '*EKI*', developed by the association of Basque schools (*Ikastolen Elkartea)*, and it is used by most member schools as well as some other schools in the Basque provinces. Furthermore, it is probably the most innovative textbook in the sense that unlike other materials which are still predominantly content based and whose structure renders prominence to the informative text, *EKI* textbooks are characterised by a completely different arrangement of information and activities.

An analysis of the structure of the book was carried out, followed by an analysis of the teaching activities. The model used by Martínez Hita and Gómez Carrasco (2018), which defined a classification of the type of activities, the cognitive level they require and the presence of first and second order concepts, was adapted to complete this analysis. Moreover, as shown in the tables, the results obtained were compared to Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco´s results, since both studies deal with textbooks designed for the first years of compulsory secondary education.

In addition to this, semi-structured interviews were carried out with five teachers using the analysed textbook and one teacher trainer involved in its creation. Interviewees work in four different schools and were selected according to their experience and academic degrees. Four of them are experienced and have been teaching for more than 9 years, having used different teaching materials; the two less experienced teachers have been teaching for less than 3 years and do not have experience working with different textbooks. Three of the interviewees are trained historians whereas the rest have degrees in other areas of social science. Transcripts were analysed following a thematic analysis approach, identifying and defining specific key themes. This research has followed the ethical standards of the Ethics Committee for Research Related to Human Beings (CEISH) of the University of the Basque Country.

Discussion of results

How does the EKI competence-based textbook integrate historical thinking skills?

The structure of the textbook is the first innovation worth commenting on here. In this textbook, informative texts are rather scarce and not too long. Instead, the book is organized following a succession of longer activities centred on different historical thinking abilities. If there is a need for further information, the book sends students to search elsewhere, usually in previously identified digital sources. The thematic and conceptual content is not structured around chronologically organized information texts that students must read, summarize and memorise, but rather focuses on the procedures of history as a discipline and is structured following the procedures needed to develop project-based learning. In the specific *EKI* unit analysed here, the complexity of cause-consequence relationships and multi-perspectivity constitute the axis around which contents are presented. There is an 'initial phase' with some activities to delve into previous knowledge where students are presented with a challenge, a 'development phase' where they acquire the necessary contents to face it, and a 'final phase' where students apply what they have learnt. Memorizing a ready-made interpretation is clearly insufficient with this kind of approach; students are expected to develop their critical thinking skills, learn to think historically and create their own explanations. Besides, activities dealing with planning, teamwork strategies, metacognition and self-assessment are always inserted in-between activities.

Regarding the type of activities (see table 1), compared to the results obtained by Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco (2018) in their comparative analysis of Spanish and English textbooks, the low percentage of short questions in the *EKI* textbook is quite significant. This is probably due to the scarcity of informative and explanatory texts to focus on. The number of questions that require objective information also stands out: in many activities students are asked to find objective information about historical events, processes and their protagonists, thus confirming the importance given to substantive knowledge – the knowing *of* history. But unlike in the other textbooks, students are required to search for the information, select it and work on it, instead of just reading it in the textbook. Furthermore, these activities are often combined with others where students are asked to create texts, even short ones. This is connected to the structure of the book, which has prioritised the active role of students finding, assessing and commenting on information in order to create new information, rather than simply reading long informative texts. Working with images and commenting on short texts, both activities that require developing an active role and critical thinking skills of students, are quite present in this textbook. The lack of essay type activities compared to the textbooks analysed by Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco is also worthy of note.

Table 1

Type of activities

Type of activity	Spain (%)	England (%)	EKI textbook (%)
Short question	50.9	31.8	1.9
Exercises with figures/images	20.7	19.1	15
Questions requiring objective information	6.8	1.6	26.4
Commentary of text/images	4.5	9	15
Essay	5.5	26.9	1.9
Creation	5.4	10.4	26.4
Searching for information	6.2	1.4	13.2

(*) data for Spain and England comes from Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco (2018)

As for the cognitive level required to complete the activities (see table 2), even if the *EKI* textbook does not reach the number of activities included in levels 2 and 3 of the English textbooks analysed by Martínez Hita and Gómez Carrasco, it is clearly closer to them than the traditional Spanish textbooks. There are still many activities requiring a lower cognitive engagement, but the weight of level 3 activities is remarkably higher compared to the other Spanish textbooks. Activities in *EKI* are longer and more challenging; although some shorter questions that merely require identifying and repeating information may be found within the activities, most of them require comprehension, comparison, establishing connections, making hypotheses, and building critical opinion regarding the interpretation of events.

Table 2

Cognitive level

Cognitive level required	**Skills**	**Spain (%)**	**England (%)**	***EKI* textbook (%)**
1	locate, repeat, memorise	61	4.9	20.8
2	Define, relate, summarise	34.8	45.8	41.6
3	Analyse, evaluate, apply, create	4.2	49.3	37.5

(*) data for Spain and England comes from Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco (2018)

Finally, regarding the presence of first and second-order concepts (see table 3), the weight of first-order concepts is still considerable in the case of the *EKI* textbook and seems to be coherent with the number of questions requiring objective information. However, more than half of the activities proposed (57.6 %) deal with second order or historical thinking concepts, and among them cause-and-effect relationships and historical perspectives seem to predominate. In both cases the percentages are higher than in the Spanish and English textbooks studied by Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco. Historical relevance and the ethical dimension, on the contrary, are not sufficiently trained in any of the textbooks. The relatively low weight of source work (10.1%) is noteworthy considering the relevance given to this kind of activities by teachers using the *EKI* textbook.

Table 3

First and Second Order Concepts

Concept		**Spain (%)**	**England (%)**	***EKI* textbook (%)**
First order	Chronology	5.3	2.5	3.4
	Conceptual/factual	72.4	17.3	39
Second order	Historical relevance	2.2	5.5	3.4
	Sources/historical evidence	9.8	31.7	10.1
	Change and continuity	1.3	14.6	8.5
	Cause and effect	4.3	12.1	15.3
	Historical perspective	1.8	13.4	18.6
	Ethical dimension	2.8	2.8	1.7

(*) data for Spain and England comes from Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco (2018)

We can conclude that the textbook analysed here offers the opportunity for students to work on historical-thinking concepts and to deepen their understanding of history. The degree to which these will be trained, however, depends very much on the priorities and choices of the teachers.

Teachers´ views about this textbook and how it affects their understanding of history and their teaching practice.

As we have seen so far, teachers´ views are fundamental in understanding how the rest of the pieces of our puzzle fit together; their beliefs about history have implications for how they will teach in the future (Maggioni, VanSledright and Alexander, 2009; Maggioni, 2010), as well as how they will use the books when they teach. The following paragraphs present some tentative ideas drawn from my ongoing research on Basque teachers´ views about their teaching practice.
Regarding their conception of history, all teachers rejected the idea of history as identified with a fixed past and defined it as the scientific knowledge of past events. They agreed that the aim of history is to explain the evolution of societies over time and insisted on its interpretative character, based on evidence obtained through scientific methods. A definition that, even if simplified, reminds us of the nuanced or sophisticated epistemological beliefs about history proposed by scholars such as Stoel et al. (2017). Accordingly, teachers declared that they wanted pupils to understand the complexity of past societies and that they become aware of the existence of multiple perspectives, and above all, that students learn to interpret sources critically. Teachers tended to prioritize goals connected to the methods of history - critical thinking, reasoning and building their own opinions, working with information, dealing with causes and consequences, identifying past and present connections - as well as attitudes such as respecting diversity and developing sensitivity and responsibility to social problems.

Teachers did not explicitly refer to epistemological questions about history, neither did they discuss historical thinking concepts; they do not seem to have a comprehensive theoretical knowledge about them. Only the teachers with training as historians identified the presence of historical thinking concepts or second-order concepts in the textbook, even if they did not specifically refer to them as such. The textbook introduces historical thinking concepts in the activities and teachers acknowledged their importance in practice when they valued positively activities dealing with cause and effect, multiple perspectives, source work or connections between past events and present society. Even if historical thinking was not expressly mentioned, their answers suggest an awareness of the main historical thinking abilities identified by research in history didactics.

Regarding competence-based education, all interviewees underlined the active role of students when mobilizing their knowledge and abilities to face everyday challenges they encounter, and three of them were able to give a fairly accurate definition of what they understand as competences and to identify the contribution of competence-based education to the *EKI* textbooks. However, teachers were not able to identify specific historical competences: four teachers connected historical competences to what Domínguez Castillo (2015) calls *substantive knowledge* about history, that is, giving historical explanations of the past; another teacher connected historical competences with civic and intercultural competences; and only one of the teachers with a degree in history was able to give a more accurate answer, connecting historical competences to historical thinking concepts such as the critical interpretation of sources, establishing cause-effect relationships, past and present connections.

Regarding the use they make of the textbook, all teachers confirmed that they follow the methodology and guidelines proposed in the textbook when they use it in the classroom. However, they also declared that they often need to make adaptations. These adaptations consisted of providing extra information about the context to give students a red thread around which to organize and articulate the contents they were learning. Teachers have commented that the structure of the book makes it difficult for students to understand what they are learning, probably because it does not match their expectations of a book organized around long

chronologically ordered explanatory texts. Two teachers mentioned that in the particular case of the students who work with the digital version of the book, they perceive the activities as separate compartments and need help to make connections and see the whole image. Teachers also mentioned how they tried to complete the information given by the textbook, making mind-maps and timelines with their students to help them understand notions of historical time (sequencing, cause-effect, past-present connections). In other cases, the adaptations were an answer to the need to deal with diversity in the classroom, sometimes by providing materials which students could understand better - graphic and visual sources, short videos, summaries- or simplifying the information and activities from the textbook. Dealing with diversity and the lack of an inclusive approach of textbooks was quite present in the answers of the more experienced teachers, and two of them mentioned that they receive training to introduce the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in their teaching. One of the more experienced teachers commented that she tries to adapt the materials and bring different proposals into the classroom, adapting the tasks to the different cognitive levels of students, in an attempt to offer scaffolding for all of them to improve their abilities.

As we saw in the first part of this article, sourcework is one of the main historical thinking skills and the key to understanding the interpretative nature of history, but it is also one of the most difficult to teach and learn. However, all interviewed teachers have agreed that this is one of the main contributions of this textbook and a skill they insist on training. Even if in the analysed unit sourcework was not so significant, teachers have shown their appreciation for the inclusion of numerous and varied sources in the *EKI* textbooks, especially the attempt to challenge students with sources representing different perspectives. Two teachers have also commented on the difficulties that this implies for students in the lower levels of secondary education: they struggle with primary sources due to the language used in them and sometimes get confused if sources contradict each other.

> "The textbook presents many primary sources, but this is quite challenging for students. As I mentioned earlier, the multiple perspectives presented about a battle, describing it from one or the other perspective, or what the process of colonization implied for the different people, who won, who lost… I mean, to see this polyhedric image, it is quite difficult for them" (T5 experienced teacher)

Regarding the impact of this textbook in their teaching, especially the three more experienced teachers were able to give more accurate information, probably because they have previously used other more traditional textbooks. They mentioned two of the Spanish textbooks analysed by Martinez Hita and Gómez Carrasco (2018), Santillana and Vicens Vives, and explained that those books had too many description and explanatory texts, and that it was clear that they aimed at transmission of knowledge rather than at the creation of new knowledge by students. The *EKI* textbook, on the contrary, reduces the incidence of rote learning and promotes their active role. According to the teachers, the activities aim at training different competences and students are required to search for information, interpret it critically, comment, argue and create their own interpretations. Students are slowly building the contents they are supposed to learn, and the book does not provide them with a ready-made explanation from the beginning. Moreover, focus is rather on the skills they acquire, not so much on the number of facts they are able to memorise.

> "Well, as I mentioned earlier, they used to memorise data or theory. But now, they learn by doing, by drawing up diagrams, by understanding the timelines… students are able to cope with the task. It may not be important to know the exact years of the medieval conflict in Navarre, because it can be found on the web at present. So, we've had to accept that too, and we've seen that students can give a critical opinion on a text, find and organize the right information, express comparisons or cause-effect relationships..." (T1 experienced teacher)

One of the teachers insisted that she tries to limit the time for explanations and gives more time for students to do the activities on their own. Moreover, another teacher stressed the fact that these textbooks promote students' autonomy, since they include self-assessment and planning

activities, which allow students to observe their evolution and make the necessary improvements to progress in their learning.

Besides, the changes in the way teachers assess the learning of their students are worth commenting on. Two of the most experienced teachers affirmed that following the methodology of this textbook had changed the way they assess the work of their students, which significantly indicates they have changed the way they teach.

> "What I consider important to teach has changed: I used to give more weight to content, I still think it is important, but now I value more the understanding, the ability of students to produce their own interpretations, their ability to work with information and follow the procedures of a historian. The test models I design now, for example, have nothing to do with the ones I used to design. I ask different questions to my students now. I want them to compare and connect ideas, to apply what they have learnt to other cases" (T4 experienced teacher)

When asked about the effect these changes have on their students, all teachers have commented that students are not especially fond of this textbook and have given several reasons for this scepticism. Students often complain to them that they do not learn much with this book, which teachers have connected with students' expectations about what learning history is. Students still want a "fixed and true version of the past, what really happened", something they can learn by heart and are thus unable to identify what teachers want them to learn (T4 experienced teacher). This difference in the understanding of what history is about was identified by all teachers, and hints at a lack of reflection about epistemological questions in history lessons. There is a clear difference between what teachers think they should do when they teach history and what students expect from their lessons, and the lack of epistemological reflection may be a reason for that. Connected to this, the difficulties students face in completing some of the activities are another reason for their rejection: rote learning is easier for them than doing activities which require higher cognitive abilities. Many students feel more confident with activities that just require reading and reproducing information than with those which require research, critical reading and evaluation of sources, reflection, or argumentation.

Conclusions

Based on our interest to explore whether and how *EKI* competence-based textbooks help students learn not only a set of contents but also a way of thinking and reflecting on what and how we know about the past, this article has tried to look not just into the kind of activities presented in the *EKI* textbook but also into the way teachers work with it.

As was shown in the first part of this article, epistemic questions and the relevance of training historical thinking skills are gaining traction in Spanish history education research. However, these pages suggest that theoretical reflections do not seem to have permeated teaching practices in school yet. Although of course they reflect on epistemological issues, epistemic cognition is not a term used among schoolteachers. History teachers are usually trained historians and social scientists with a brief pedagogic education; they have advanced epistemic beliefs about history, but they are not sufficiently trained to transmit this knowledge to their students, often not even aware that enhancing students´ epistemic understanding about history constitutes an aim they should pursue.

On the other hand, historical thinking does not seem to be a term with which Basque history teachers are much familiarized. Seixas and Morton's concepts are well known for researchers in history didactics, but not so much for schoolteachers. Although teachers seem to be aware of the importance of certain abilities connected to historical thinking, they do not have a comprehensive understanding of this concept and thus do not train their students in a thorough way about it. The analysis of the activities in the *EKI* textbook has shown that, although the number of activities dealing with second order concepts is important, only some of the historical thinking skills are

trained systematically, while others still require more work. Multiple perspectives, cause-consequence relationships and work with sources are the most trained skills and the ones teachers have mentioned most frequently, while continuity and change, historical significance and the ethical dimension are given less attention. Thus, at least to some extent historical thinking skills are trained in the textbook, the activities included are more demanding and teachers are aware of their importance, which marks a substantial advance compared to the situation of Spanish textbooks described in the first pages of this article.

However, teachers have pointed out two important issues: first, interviewees refer to difficulties to deal with diversity in the classroom and feel they need training to adapt the teaching of historical thinking skills to those students who struggle more to learn them. The need to consider the diversity of students is a topic seldom addressed in the scholarly literature dealing with historical thinking and textbook analysis. Theoretical reflections consider ideal students who can be trained in historical thinking skills as a way of introducing them into questions such as what history is and how we gain historical knowledge, but teachers have identified the difficulties of such task in practice. Rote learning is easier for the students struggling with activities that require more developed cognitive levels, but the aim of school history should be that all students improve their historical thinking skills. Thus, more research and concrete teaching proposals about how to deal with historical thinking in diverse classrooms are needed.

And second, many students still identify history with rote learning of fixed narratives, and this becomes an obstacle for teachers trying to implement competence-based methodologies. This study suggests that including activities that make higher cognitive demands and historical thinking skills is probably not enough to help students develop their epistemic beliefs about history. More explicit reflections on the nature of the discipline of history and how we acquire knowledge *about* history should gradually be introduced in the classroom. This, at the same time, requires further training of teachers.

To the question of whether using the *EKI* textbook has affected the way teachers work, interviewees have given substantial evidence about how positively they value promoting students' autonomy and ability to build their own knowledge by training historical competences. Of course, they need to adapt the materials, but the fact that some of them affirm that they have changed their way of assessing indicates that something has changed in their way of teaching.

The fact that the study was focused on one textbook and the small number of interviewees participating constitute the main limits to the representativeness of this study. Further research should extend the number of textbooks analysed as well as the sample of interviewees. Moreover, the need to complete this inquiry with classroom observation and the inclusion of students´ perceptions have become evident throughout this research.

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"I've become more critical": Development of Dutch elementary teachers' beliefs about history and history teaching in an inquiry-based professional learning program

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore how elementary school teachers' beliefs about the nature of history and pedagogical beliefs about teaching history developed over the course of a two-year professional development (PD) program and which elements of the program stimulated this development. This PD program aimed to develop participants' skills in historical reasoning and in designing inquiry-based history lessons that encourage students to reason historically. Teachers engaged in historical reasoning and developed and implemented activities for inquiry-based learning in their history lessons. In this qualitative study, we interviewed nine teachers before and after the program, and they completed the Beliefs about Learning and Teaching History questionnaire before, during and after the program. Thematic analysis of the data shows that elementary teachers participating in our PD program developed more nuanced beliefs about history. Both epistemic and pedagogical beliefs became more crystallized and more criterialist in nature, but it is especially participants' pedagogical beliefs that became more oriented toward inquiry into historical sources and the importance of developing historical reasoning skills in students. Our findings also indicate that more naïve ideas remained in addition to more nuanced beliefs. Participants indicated that their pedagogical beliefs about teaching history and conducting historical inquiry changed because of the program. Based on the final interviews, we identified five elements that enhanced participants' professional development toward teaching inquiry-based history lessons and influenced their epistemic beliefs. It was the combination of engaging in historical inquiry, modeling by the facilitator, participating in group discussions about historical inquiry, searching for historical sources themselves and developing and discussing their own lesson designs and putting them into practice that made participants see the possibilities of inquiry-based history learning and stimulated the development of their beliefs. The findings of this study imply that to prepare elementary teachers to teach history in a way that fosters inquiry into historical sources and historical reasoning, PD programs and teacher education should pay attention to the epistemology of history as a discipline and provide teachers with tools to do inquiry.

KEYWORDS

Elementary teachers' beliefs, Historical reasoning, Professional development, Inquiry-based learning

CITATION

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Introduction

For elementary teachers, history is only one of many subjects they teach. Beliefs teachers hold about the nature of history and the construction of historical knowledge significantly influence what they perceive as relevant content and how they teach history (Stoel et al., 2022). Elementary teachers' beliefs, mental conceptualizations and constructs of history are usually formed by how history is presented in movies, books, museums and textbooks they read as students (Gibson & Peck, 2020). In general, elementary teachers have not engaged in historical inquiry themselves. This is problematic because history education researchers have emphasized the importance of historical reasoning activities in teaching history (e.g., Levstik & Thornton, 2018). Teachers can only teach students a disciplinary way of working with history if they themselves master these disciplinary skills to a certain extent. In the Netherlands, historical reasoning is not commonly part of the history curriculum for elementary schools. Teachers teach a ten-era framework illustrated with events and persons from the Dutch Canon. In schools that experiment with inquiry-based learning in history, a common practice is that students gather information on the internet and present this information, but due to no or limited modeling, real historical inquiry and historical reasoning are lacking, and students' understanding of historical events remains limited (Béneker et al., 2021). This can reinforce the naïve belief, both in teachers and students, that history is a single story based on a series of facts (Van Boxtel et al., 2021).

In their Interconnected Model of Professional Growth, Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) suggest that change in knowledge, beliefs and attitude triggers change in teachers' practice while engaging in professional experimentation. A reversed influence is also possible: teacher beliefs change through experimenting with new approaches and reflecting on the effects on student learning.

In previous research on teacher beliefs about history, attention was given to how the epistemic beliefs of teachers in middle and secondary schools influence their choices in teaching history (Voet & de Wever, 2016) and how preservice teachers' beliefs about history develop (Gibson & Peck, 2020; Wansink et al., 2017). Maggioni et al. (2004) describe developments in elementary teachers' epistemic beliefs during the course of a Professional Development (PD) program on the content and method of teaching American history. In their study, shifts in epistemic beliefs after the program were limited, suggesting relative stability in teacher beliefs. A reason for this could be that the program did not specifically target participants' beliefs or their knowledge about the disciplinary methods of historians and how these translate to the classroom.

To prepare teachers in grades 3-6 (students 8 to 12 years old) to engage students in historical inquiry and reasoning, we developed a two-year PD program called 'historical reasoning in inquiry-based history lessons'. The program aimed to develop participants' skills in historical thinking and reasoning and in designing inquiry-based history lessons that encourage students to reason historically. In this paper, we present the results of a qualitative study on how elementary teachers' beliefs about history and history teaching developed during this program. We aim to contribute to theory about the professionalization of elementary teachers in the field of history education, and in particular, how participation in a PD program focusing on historical reasoning in inquiry-based history lessons influences teachers' epistemic and pedagogical beliefs.

Theoretical framework

Richardson (2003) defines beliefs as "psychological understandings, premises or propositions felt to be true" (p.2). Teacher beliefs are part of the wider belief system the teacher holds as an individual, in which individual and professional beliefs are often entangled. Within the broad spectrum of teacher beliefs, various subgroups of beliefs can be discerned: epistemic beliefs (beliefs about the nature of knowledge), pedagogical beliefs (including subject-specific beliefs about the best way to teach), student performance beliefs and beliefs about personal capacity (efficacy beliefs) (Pajares, 1992). In this paper, our main focus lies on epistemic and pedagogical beliefs.

Epistemic beliefs about history

In teaching history, teachers are (consciously or subconsciously) confronted with the inherent epistemic question "what is history?". Various models exist for mapping epistemic beliefs. Kuhn and Weinstock (2002) distinguished realist, absolutist, multiplist and evaluativist perspectives. Based on these perspectives and types of reasoning about processes of knowing identified by King and Kitchener (1994), Maggioni et al. (2004) developed a domain-specific model for teacher thinking about the nature of history and teaching and learning history including three stances: the copier, borrower and criterialist stance. Each stance reflects beliefs about how historical knowledge is constructed, the role of the knower and the certainty of historical knowledge. Beliefs that fit the copier stance see history as a reflection of the past. Therefore, history and the past are considered the same. Beliefs fitting the borrower stance see history as a series of opinions. Anyone dealing with history borrows from the testimony that seems to be closest to their image of reality in the past. In the criterialist stance, history is understood as an interpretation of the past, and the methods of historical investigation are tools to question and analyse historical sources and evaluate historical interpretations. This model can be described as a developmental framework, where students' or teachers' beliefs develop in a stage-like pattern, although this does not imply that an individual is 'in' a specific stance at a given moment. Barzilai and Weinstock (2015) combined a developmental framework with a dimensional framework and included dimensions related to, for example, the certainty of knowledge, the source or justification of knowledge, and epistemic perspectives (absolutist, multiplist and evaluativist) to describe students' epistemic beliefs.

Empirical studies show that teachers' epistemic development is never straightforward and that beliefs develop in different dimensions, in their own way and at their own speed (e.g., Stoel et al., 2017, p.122) and that development is "not unidirectional" (Maggioni et al., 2004, p. 190). Elmersjö and Zanazanian (2022) delineated how the borders between positions are diffuse, and even in a criterialist position, one can still have the unconscious belief that, when done right, history takes you to the past itself (p.184). Wansink et al. (2017) described how individuals can simultaneously hold opposite beliefs, can switch between epistemic stances or can "wobble" (p.20). Stoel et al. (2022) concluded that teachers can experience temporary relapses in a dimension, while they are overall increasing their understanding of the nature of history. In this study, we applied the model of Maggioni and colleagues, as it is domain specific, thoroughly analysed and widely used in

research into history teaching. When using this model, we consider it plausible that teachers' beliefs can be classified into more than one epistemic stance or perspective.

Pedagogical beliefs about history teaching

Pedagogical beliefs refer to teacher beliefs about (subject specific) teaching and learning. Subject-specific pedagogical beliefs are closely connected to epistemic beliefs and therefore sometimes included in measures for epistemic beliefs (Stoel et al., 2022, p.17). For example, to measure epistemic beliefs, the questionnaire of Maggioni and colleagues combines statements on beliefs about the nature of history with statements about how history should be taught (e.g., 'Students need to be taught to deal with conflicting evidence' and 'Good students know that history is basically a matter of opinion') as indicator of epistemic beliefs. In this study, we distinguish between epistemic and pedagogical beliefs. Pedagogical beliefs about what should be taught and how it should be taught filter through in the goals teachers formulate and in teaching strategies they choose (Stoel et al., 2022). Several studies (e.g., Gestsdottir, 2018; McCrum, 2013; Wansink et al., 2017) related goals of critical reasoning and multiple perspectives and interpretations to student-centered approaches. However, Voet and De Wever (2016) found that experienced history teachers who had criterialist ideas and were in favor of a more student-centered approach, focused on content knowledge, and only a few mentioned learning goals that aimed at the development of historical reasoning skills.

Inquiry-based learning in history is described in a number of studies (e.g., Van Boxtel et al., 2021; Voet & de Wever, 2016) as a promising approach to teaching historical reasoning. Potential benefits for students include a deeper understanding of how historical narratives are created, multiperspectivity, historical reasoning skills, generic literacy skills and student motivation and engagement. Even when teachers' pedagogical beliefs favour historical inquiry and historical reasoning, researchers often find a discrepancy between these beliefs and the way they teach history in practice (Gibson & Peck, 2020). According to Wilke et al. (2022), teachers may not implement inquiry-based learning because they have a poor understanding of historical reasoning or find it difficult to design learning activities that reflect the understanding of history as interpretation. Pedagogical beliefs about how a subject can or should be taught can also be influenced by beliefs about students. Priestley, Biesta and Robinson (2021) found many examples of what they call "a deficit view of children" (p.45). Expressions about students being 'able', 'bright' or 'poor', for example, influence what teachers see as possibilities in the learning of specific (groups of) students. This can lead to tension between different beliefs. Nitsche (2019 in Stoel et al., p. 22) described how "student performance beliefs, played a prominent role in actual teaching practices and might have mediated or prevented the transfer of epistemic beliefs to practice" (p. 22). Voet and de Wever (2016) showed how a teacher's disappointment with student performance convinced him that content knowledge was what counted in the end, whereas another teacher described how the goal was the combination of beliefs about objectives (that is, students need to learn the historical method) and beliefs about students' interests and abilities that made her consistently develop historical investigations.

Can professional development programs influence teachers' beliefs?

PD programs can be effective in reaching sustainable teacher development when they aim to develop pedagogical content knowledge, encompass elements of inquiry where participants are actively working together, when participants perceive the content as relevant and useful for their daily work and when the program spans a longer time period (Van Veen et al., 2012). In their empirically founded model, Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) describe how change in teachers' beliefs (a change in the personal domain) is the result of enaction and reflection and can be related to external sources, support or stimuli, professional experimentation (e.g., in the classroom or a professional learning community) and perception of salient learning outcomes.

There are few studies on the development of elementary teachers' beliefs about history and history teaching. In their study on an elementary teacher PD program on the content and method of teaching American history, Maggioni et al. (2009) observed that participants remained relatively stable in their epistemic beliefs and concluded that epistemic beliefs need to be explicitly targeted in PD and that participants also need repeated exposure to ideas about the nature of history and its implications for history teaching. However, existing studies with secondary teachers or undergraduate students that explicitly targeted beliefs about history and history education (e.g., Van Sledright & Reddy, 2014; Wansink et al., 2017) concluded that PD programs often lead to epistemic "wobbling" rather than to sustained epistemic development. This was especially the case when participants already had strong cognitive frames, for example with history connected to self-identity, when teachers were confronted with different aspects of teaching history (transferring knowledge as opposed to stimulating historical thinking) and when (prospective) teachers had had little opportunity to practice historical thinking and inquiry.

Van Boxtel et al. (2021) discuss several elements of PD programs that can prepare teachers for inquiry-based learning in history lessons. Engagement in historical inquiry was found to improve understanding of history and positively affect teachers' beliefs about learning outcomes of inquiry-based history learning. Modelling turned out to be important because observing and participating in inquiry gave teachers ideas for their own classrooms. Receiving information about the effects of inquiry on history learning and literacy skills was important for teachers to see relative benefits compared to traditional teaching approaches.

Aim of the study

This paper addresses the research question: How does a PD program in which elementary school teachers learn to reason historically and develop skills to design inquiry-based historical reasoning lessons influence participants' epistemic beliefs about history and pedagogical beliefs about history teaching?

Method

Participants

Nine teachers from six elementary schools in the Netherlands enrolled in a two-year PD program on historical reasoning in inquiry-based history lessons (see Table 1). The names we use are pseudonyms. The ethics committee of the University of Amsterdam approved the data collection. All participants hold a bachelor's degree in education. In addition, Oscar holds a master's degree in history. Participants taught in grades 3 to 6 and, on average, had 11 years of experience. The teachers chose to participate voluntarily.

Table 1

Participants in the study

Participant	Grade	Age	Years of experience
Nicole	3	63	26
Jack	3	34	9
Dylan	4	31	4
Kathie	4	26	4
Rose	5	53	13
Lois	5	28	3
Evelyn	6	41	19
Oscar	6	39	9
Tara	6	38	11

Professional development program

We designed a PD program based on scientific literature concerning effective professional development of elementary teachers, inquiry-based lessons and historical reasoning. The program consisted of fourteen 2.5-hour meetings spread over two school years. The first author was the facilitator and actively participated in the meetings. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the first year, meetings three to six were online. Table 2 summarizes the content. During each meeting, theoretical background about historical reasoning and inquiry was offered. Topics were chosen by the facilitator or requested by participants. In every meeting, participants received historical source material and engaged in historical inquiry. This involved collaboratively corroborating and comparing sources and coming to a substantiated conclusion about the question at hand. In some cases, participants were encouraged to search for additional historical sources.

Aspects of the nature of history that were connected to these historical inquiry activities were discussed, but they were not always explicitly dealt with (as would be the case in a historical research methods course) - the focus was always on classroom practice. After each inquiry activity, participants discussed how they could adapt this for their own students. Additionally, during each meeting, participants had time to design classroom activities, following the topics they were to cover in the upcoming period. During the first year, participants developed one or two lessons. During the second year, they developed at least three lessons that they implemented in their classrooms. Participants were actively involved in all parts of the meeting, either as active partakers in inquiry, as active learners when new information was shared and discussed and as teachers talking about how an activity could be adapted for their students.

Table 2

Content of the PD meetings

Pedagogical Content Knowledge	
Year 1	Introduction to historical reasoning framework Use of primary historical sources Types of inquiry-based learning Historical contextualizing: what, how, when Dealing with students' misconceptions
Year 2	Generating historical questions Searching, choosing and adapting primary historical sources Scaffolding historical reasoning activities Thinking like an historian Role of teacher in lessons: coaching skills Enhancing historical argumentation in classroom discussion
Historical reasoning activities	
Year 1	Responses to the Spanish flu and COVID-19: identifying continuity and change Cinnamon trade in Sri-Lanka (Ceylon): identifying causes & consequences Resistance to slavery in the Dutch West-Indies: identifying similarities and differences Labor conditions in textile-factories in the 19th century: identifying multiple perspectives Promoting students to ask historical questions: photos and paintings
Year 2	John Smith on Pocahontas: corroborating historical sources Mad Tuesday: identifying causes & consequences Revolt of the Batavi: adapting textbook-lessons to include historical reasoning Floodings in Dutch history: use of eyewitness accounts Dutch response to the independence of Indonesia: causes & consequences, multiple perspectives and change & continuity

Data collection

To identify development in participants' beliefs about history and history education and what participants perceived as sources for their professional development, we collected data using two instruments: in-depth individual pre and post interviews and the Beliefs about Learning and Teaching of History (BLTH) questionnaire (Maggioni et al., 2004, Dutch version adapted by Havekes, 2015). Table 3 illustrates at which moments during the program these data were collected.

Table 3

Planning of data collection

Instrument	**Premeasurement 1st month - 1**	**End year 1 11th month**	**End year 2 23rd month**
Interview	x		x
BLTH questionnaire	x	x	x

Interviews: The semi-structured interview contained questions on teachers' beliefs about the nature of history (epistemic beliefs), objectives of history education, pedagogical approaches and inquiry-based learning activities (pedagogical beliefs) and professional development. Questions were partly based on instruments developed by Voet and de Wever (2016). Questions focusing on the nature of history were, for example, "Can you tell me, in your opinion, what is history?" and "It is possible that two historians, when studying the exact same historical sources, reach (partly) different conclusions. How can this be explained?" Questions regarding pedagogical beliefs about inquiry learning were, for example, "What is the goal of inquiry learning in history?" and "In your lessons, how do you enhance historical reasoning in your students?" In the post interview, we also asked participants what they learned and how the PD program contributed to their professional development. For example, "What in the program enhanced your development?" The interview guideline is included in Appendix A. The premeasurement interview took approximately 45 minutes, and the post interview took approximately 1.5 hours.

Beliefs about Learning and Teaching of History Questionnaire: We used a Dutch translation of the BLTH questionnaire (Maggioni et al., 2004) that consists of 22 questions (Havekes, 2015). Participants filled in the questionnaire individually immediately after the premeasurement interview and at the end of the final meeting of each year (seventh and fourteenth meeting).

Analysis

All interviews were fully transcribed. The transcriptions were coded using a coding scheme based on our theoretical framework, supplemented with themes that were derived from the answers in the pre interviews. The coding scheme (see Appendix B) consisted of five main codes, but for the scope of this study, we focus on four main codes: beliefs about general goals of teaching elementary school history; beliefs about the nature of history and how historians work; goals and experience with inquiry-based history teaching activities; professional development and sense of agency. With the last category, we only use the subcode 'sources of professional growth'. The unit of analysis was an utterance.

To investigate intercoder agreement, a second coder coded transcriptions of three interviews (one premeasurement and two final interviews). After each coding session, we calculated Cohen's kappa (see Table 4). After each session, choices were discussed, and agreement was reached on how to interpret and code certain units. In the third parallel coding session, we reached a Cohen's kappa of 0.75, which is considered sufficient interrater reliability for coding interviews.

Table 4

Intercoder agreement

Interview	Proportion of agreement	Cohen's kappa
Premeasurement (79 segments)	63,3%	0,56
Final interview 1 (63 segments)	79,4%	0,76
Final interview 2 (88 segments)	77,3%	0,75

In the next step in our analysis, using the coding and comparing the pre and post interviews, we identified changes in epistemic and pedagogical beliefs.

The interview data were supplemented with data from the BLTH questionnaire. As we only had nine participants, we used a qualitative approach in the analysis of the BLTHQ. We made individual overviews showing how participants scored items connected to a copier, borrower and criterialist stance and compared how the teacher scored on premeasurement, mid-measurement and post measurement. Statements from the BLTHQ were associated with the main codes related

to epistemic and pedagogical beliefs to find similarities and differences between what participants said during interviews and how they filled in the questionnaire. We made a descriptive portrait for each participant, combining the two datasets. We chose to describe two portraits in the findings, because these two participants exemplify a specific development profile.

Findings

Development of elementary teachers' epistemic and pedagogical beliefs about history

During their participation in the PD program, participants' beliefs about history and how history should be taught became more nuanced and more oriented toward historical inquiry. Table 5 shows the number of teachers who pronounced a certain belief, goal or experience during the interview before and after the program.

Table 5

Beliefs, goals and experiences pronounced by participants in interviews before and after the PD program

Main categories	Subcategories:	# teachers in interview 1	# teachers in interview 2
1. Beliefs about general goals of teaching elementary school history			
	Development of historical time	7	4
	Development of historical knowledge	8	9
	Development of historical skills	9	9
	Understanding and explaining the present	8	8
3. Beliefs about the nature of history and how historians work			
	History equals the past: copier	6	0
	History is a set of opinions: borrower	2	5
	History is a construct based on criteria: criterialist	3	6
	Investigating historical sources	9	9
	Contextualization	6	5
	Multiperspectivity and historical empathy	9	9
	Historical reasoning	4	1
4. Beliefs about goals and own experience with inquiry-based history learning			
	Inquiry into historical sources	7	8
	Historical reasoning skills	5	9
	General reasoning skills	6	9
	Role of the teacher during IBL	7	9
	Challenges with IBL in history	5	9
	Students' behavior or motivation	9	9

Even though there was little change in how many participants spoke about goals for teaching history in the pre and post interview, their descriptions of goals related to historical skills became more detailed. For example, in the post interview, Lois mentioned looking at an event from different perspectives, thinking about causes and consequences, selecting and comparing information from historical sources, thinking about similarities and differences, and zooming in

and out. In addition, she spoke about how to corroborate historical sources and how to formulate historical questions.

Table 6

*Response to the BLTH questionnaire***

Participant	stance	Pre: ∑ points/stance	Mid: ∑ points/stance	Post: ∑ points/stance
Nicole	COP	15	23	21
	BOR	28	29	38
	CRI	33	41	42
Jack	COP	13	10	11
	BOR	22	25	23
	CRI	35	34	32
Dylan	COP	12	15	13
	BOR	32	28	27
	CRI	37	37	37
Kathie	COP	13	12	12
	BOR	30	32	30
	CRI	37	34	40
Rose	COP	13	13	10
	BOR	25	31	26
	CRI	39	39	42
Lois	COP	13	*	12
	BOR	31	*	24
	CRI	41	*	38
Evelyn	COP	10	6	6
	BOR	17	30	37
	CRI	42	39	43
Oscar	COP	13	15	15
	BOR	30	23	28
	CRI	45	41	42
Tara	COP	10	7	6
	BOR	19	17	18
	CRI	32	31	27

* No data due to maternity leave

** Sum scores based on Likert-scales

Most apparent are changes in the number of teachers who said things connected to the nature of history and the historical research method (main category 3). Whereas in the first interview six participants (Dylan, Evelyn, Jack, Kathie, Nicole and Tara) pronounced copier beliefs about history and the nature of historical knowledge, none pronounced such ideas after the program. Apparently, participants realized over the course of the program that history is not a series of fixed facts. Clearly standing out as well is that where only three participants outed beliefs connected to a criterialist stance during the first interview (Lois, Oscar and Rose), in the final interview, three additional participants (Dylan, Evelyn and Jack) formulated ideas connected to this stance. It is important to note the increase from two (Dylan and Kathie) to five participants (Dylan, Evelyn, Kathie, Nicole and Tara) who expressed beliefs connected to the borrower stance. These results indicate that the program made participants realize that the analysis of historical sources is important in historical research, that many sources are based on human witnesses and

that opposing testimonials exist. However, most participants appeared not fully aware of the disciplinary tools historians use to analyse historical sources and build evidence. Dylan and Evelyn, for example, expressed both borrower and criterialist ideas in the post interview.

Standing out in the interview results as well are the number of teachers who expressed goals for and experiences with inquiry-based history teaching (main category 4). This is shown by the increase from five teachers saying things connected to historical reasoning skills before the program (mainly that in history thinking about causes and consequences is important) to all nine sharing their knowledge and experiences with trying to promote historical reasoning in their students. Connected with these experiences are challenges that all participants described in the final interview.

The results of the BLTH questionnaire (Table 6) also show that the development of participants is not unidirectional. For all participants, the general score on statements connected to criterialist stance beliefs about history and teaching history was, at all three measurements, highest of all stances. To interpret the results of the BLTHQ in light of the interview data, we connected these datasets in a descriptive portrait for each of the participants.

Evelyn and Rose exemplify two profiles that show how epistemic beliefs about history and pedagogical beliefs about teaching history develop. In these profiles, we see that participants simultaneously expressed beliefs connected to different epistemic stances and that scores on statements in the BLTHQ can be the opposite of expressions in the interview.

Profile 1 includes participants with copier and borrower beliefs about history and uncrystallized criterialist beliefs at the start of the program, who came to understand how difficult history is, epistemically. Participants in this profile scored high on statements in the BLTHQ connected to criterialist beliefs, but in the interviews they had a hard time explaining historical inquiry or how elements of this inquiry are done. They developed richer and more nuanced ideas during the program but also misconceptions about every historical narrative being equally valid. Considering their pedagogical beliefs, teachers in this group developed more explicit ideas about doing inquiry in history lessons. Dylan, Evelyn, Kathie, Nicole and Tara fit this profile.

Profile 2 encompasses participants with beginning or already more explicit criterialist ideas about history and history teaching at the start of the program, even if they also demonstrated copier and borrower beliefs. In the course of the program, they tended to develop richer criterialist beliefs and very explicit ideas about inquiry by students in history lessons. Jack, Lois, Oscar and Rose fit this profile.

Profile 1: Evelyn

As Evelyn recalls in the final interview, the beliefs she had about history and how historians work before the program can be characterized as copier stance beliefs: "This was what history was and that's it". Because of the program, history has become more alive for her. In the post interview, she remarked, "You start looking at it in a different way. The past is how it is, but history changes because, for example, new sources are found." Regarding the work of historians, she remarks, "I think that with the knowledge they possess, they continue linking, broader and deeper. To discover more of what happened and how things happened. I don't know if they follow a step-by-step method." She suggested that historians' "own background and values influence how [they] interpret new knowledge. […] For example, slavery: when slavery is part of your family background you look at historical sources about this differently than someone who has nothing to do with it." This corresponds with her high score on statements in the BLTHQ connected to criterialist stance beliefs, especially on the importance of comparing sources and looking for author subtext. Concerning a method or criteria for historical research, Evelyn speaks about inquiry into sources, comparing them and substantiating interpretations with arguments. This is mirrored by her high score in the BLTHQ, where history is a likely reconstruction of events in the past based on available sources. Evelyn did not, however, mention concrete criteria for how such inquiry should be done. In the final interview, she struggled with the idea of historical research. Her remark: "it is more how people interpret history and document it", shows she realized that

interpretations play an important role, but how? She said she realized that "everything has only been written or thought of by people, so it is not necessarily true. You must realize that it is not a fixed thing but recorded by people from different angles." After the PD program the results of Evelyn's BLTHQ still indicate high criterialist stance beliefs about history. However, the results also show her increase in borrower stance beliefs about the nature of history, for example, on statements describing historical narratives being a matter of interpretation or the result of historians' choice.

Evelyn's beliefs about how history should be taught develop from "telling the story how it has been" before the program to having students do active inquiry. She explained how before the program, she used to read a source as an illustration in her lesson, but it never occurred to her to give students sources to study. "I was afraid that students would interpret it in a different way. Now, I discovered that is a good thing, because [then] you can follow students' line of thinking." She also mentioned inquiry skills, such as asking questions and knowing how to come to an answer, comprehensive reading to be able to identify causes and consequences, studying sources and learning to deal with different points of view in them and formulating conclusions based on their inquiry. After the program, therefore, Evelyn's pedagogical beliefs indicated criterialist beliefs about teaching history. At the same time, her scores on statements connected to borrower stance sharply increased, especially on the statement saying students need to be aware that history is a matter of opinion.

Profile 2: Rose

In the interview before the program, Rose described history as something that is studied and "changes all the time." When asked about the method of study, she says: "I am sure there is a method, even though it doesn't have to be fixed steps. Historical sources are important: they will study them and compare them with other sources and discuss them." She continued: "they will have hypotheses that they test and further study. You cannot just make a narrative if you are not completely sure. You must substantiate it." Consistent with this are the high scores of Rose's first BLTHQ on criterialist stance beliefs about history. In the post interview, Rose said that she had become more critical and more aware. History is "an interpretation of the past, which you have to substantiate and connect to sources and then of course reliable sources." Different sources should be compared. "You must realize who wrote them and that you are always dealing with interpretations. The source can be the same, but there is always some measure of subjectivity in the interpretation. [...] That's how you get differences." These realizations about the complexity of historical research were mirrored in her increasing scores on the BLTHQ statements that a historical narrative is the result of a domain-specific research method and that one can write adequately about history, even with conflicting evidence.

When considering Rose's beliefs about how history should be taught, in the first interview, she already mentioned the importance of inquiry in history lessons. "Many skills are linked [to history]: critical thinking, good reading, making connections, cooperating, finding information and presenting." In the post interview, Rose described how she used to focus more on basic knowledge students had to acquire, but during the program, she realized that "you have to look at the relationship between events and what was the consequence of something and how were things in another place." In the BLTHQ, we see this shift in the decrease of her score on the copier-related statement that good general reading and comprehension skills are enough to learn history well.

In the post interview, Rose was more detailed about the inquiry skills students should learn in history lessons: "formulating inquiry questions [..] and making a step-by-step plan of how to do the inquiry. Children also need tools with which they can investigate the question." Students also need to "argue, reason and think logically. Which sources are there, are they reliable and how do they relate to each other? How to deal with two sources that do not correspond?" Rose also mentioned historical reasoning skills: "[thinking about] similarities and differences, continuity and change, multiperspectivity and causes and consequences." In the BLTHQ, the development of Rose's more nuanced beliefs about how to teach history can be seen in her increasing score on teaching students to deal with conflicting evidence and her high score on teaching students to

compare sources and look for author subtext as essential components of the process of learning history.

The PD program as a source of professional growth

In the post interview, participants reflected on elements of the PD program that enhanced their professional growth. Participants mentioned five major sources of professional growth in their development toward teaching inquiry-based history lessons. All five are connected to pedagogical content knowledge that was aimed at during sessions of the PD program (Table 2). First, all participants mentioned collaborative inquiry. Rose, for example, explains that what truly helped her were "the exercises we worked on and how we used historical sources ourselves." The collaborative inquiry can be seen as a form of professional experimentation that acts as a stimulus to develop knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of the participants themselves. A second source of growth were discussions. Dylan explains: "After the exercises, we discussed about historical reasoning skills that we had practiced and how we could translate this to elementary school." In the discussions under guidance of the facilitator, experiences and theory about historical reasoning and inquiry-based learning and school practice were connected. Searching and using historical source material as part of the development of lessons (professional experimentation) was a third source of growth mentioned by all participants. An expression by Tara shows how newly learned skills can lead to a change in beliefs: "What I also learned is how to look at sources in a different way and connect learning goals to them. You don't show historical sources for fun, but you also formulate inquiry questions." A fourth source of growth was modelling by the facilitator. Jack explains that "what helped me were your examples during the meetings, when you brought historical sources and showed us what to do." Kathie adds: "It was nice [..] to get an example and see what was meant. I like to learn by looking at others first and afterward do it myself." Finally, bringing to practice what they learned in lesson designs, teaching these lessons in their classrooms and seeing the increased motivation in students for these lessons (professional experimentation and salient outcomes) enhanced the development of participants. As Rose said, "practicing helps a lot. And when you see that students are enthusiastic and motivated, that motivates you to continue." The example typically illustrates what Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) describe as encouragement for the teacher to persist with experimenting.

Four participants remarked on the newspaper articles that were read during the fourth meeting in the second year of the program, which were about the research process and conclusions reached about the betrayal of the hiding place of Anne Frank's family. From these articles, participants were asked to deduce the steps of historical research. These were discussed, including similarities with classroom inquiry. The discussion, however, seems to have enhanced borrower beliefs in some participants. In the post interview, Nicole explained that she gained more insight into the complexity of historical research: "A historian will critically study these sources, but is it critical enough? We read the articles and were talking about Anne Frank and there was a witness and later they interpreted it differently and then it was all turned back. People have been working on that research a long time and can we now say they were right or wrong?" This does not indicate borrower belief per se; however, when asked what had changed in her ideas of the nature of history, she explained, "My personal view toward history has changed because I now realize that it may have been different than you read. […] It is less self-evident than I always thought it was. What is truth anyway?" This reflects the idea of history being a series of opinions from which it is difficult to determine the truth.

Conclusion and discussion

As Gibson and Peck (2020) indicate, there "is often a disjuncture between teachers' knowledge and beliefs about history and how to teach it, and how they actually teach history in the classroom" (p. 222). This may be caused by beliefs about the nature of history and how to teach history that are already fixed when teachers encounter inquiry-based history learning or historical reasoning. Existing beliefs are difficult to change, and therefore, change is usually limited (Maggioni et al.,

2004). Wilke et al. (2022) emphasized that to bridge the gap that often exists between teachers' beliefs and instructional practices, attention should be given to understanding historical reasoning and the development of competences to design inquiry-based lessons. The findings of our study indicate that elementary teachers participating in the two-year PD program, 'Historical reasoning in inquiry-based history lessons', developed a more nuanced belief about the nature of history, even though more naïve (copier and borrower) beliefs remained in addition to more nuanced (criterialist) beliefs. Their pedagogical beliefs became more oriented toward historical inquiry, especially when students responded well to the new lessons.

The development that teachers in our program showed matches the description by Wansink et al. (2017) of how individuals can simultaneously hold opposite beliefs and switch between stances, especially when beliefs about teaching history are discussed as opposed to beliefs about the nature of history. We described two development profiles. Teachers who fit the first profile come to understand how difficult history is, epistemically. They develop richer and more nuanced ideas in the course of the PD program but risk development of misconceptions about historical narratives being equally valid. Considering their pedagogical beliefs, teachers in this group developed more explicit ideas about doing inquiry in history lessons. Teachers that fit the second profile tended to develop richer criterialist beliefs and very explicit ideas about inquiry by students in history lessons. Although the PD program did not specifically target epistemic beliefs (as suggested by Maggioni et al., 2009), it still may have been powerful in this context because it was a two-year program, and we paid much attention to the historical method and forms of historical thinking.

Based on the final interview, we identified five elements of the program that enhanced participants' development toward teaching inquiry-based history lessons and understanding the interpretative nature of history. In line with Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) Interconnected Model of Professional Growth, we found that a combination and repetition of professional experimentation (engaging in historical inquiry, searching and using historical sources when designing lessons and bringing these lessons to practice), information and stimuli of external sources (modelling historical inquiry by the facilitator, connecting theory about historical reasoning and inquiry to teachers' experiences during professional experimentation) and seeing positive outcomes in students was fruitful. These findings are in line with the study of Gibson and Peck (2020), which also indicated the effectiveness of history teaching courses focusing on observing teaching methods and strategies, sharing ideas and learning with and from peers, designing and organizing learning activities and receiving practical support for those activities.

The example of reading and discussing articles on new research into the betrayal of Anne Frank's family shows that engaging in such activities may enhance borrower stance beliefs in teachers who are new to disciplinary thinking. The expression "I've become more critical", expressed in some form by six participants in the final interview, illustrates the need for knowledge of epistemology and the importance of tools for elementary teachers to deal with the conflicting nature of evidence to prevent "fostering naïve relativism and cynical skepticism" (Maggioni et al., 2004, pp. 192).

Limitations of the study

Our study included nine elementary school teachers. Although this is a good number of participants for a qualitative study, in a larger group of teachers, other profiles might be detected. Additionally, the fact that teachers participated voluntarily, which is an important factor in successful professional development, makes the results difficult to generalize.

The results of the questionnaire slightly deviate from the results of the interviews. It is unclear whether this has to do with the questionnaire. The combination of the questionnaire and the interviews allowed us to map how the beliefs of teachers in our program developed. Future research could focus more specifically on how teachers' beliefs can be charted using mixed-methods research.

Both Evelyn's and Rose's profile show that (more) explicit beliefs about the value of inquiry in history lessons go together with (more) nuanced beliefs about the nature and construction of historical knowledge, although Evelyn also demonstrated beliefs that can be related to a 'borrower stance'. However, on the basis of this study we cannot say that the development of more nuanced beliefs enhances the view that inquiry-based learning is a meaningful instructional strategy or that those views develop because of the strong emphasis on demonstration, development and implementation of inquiry-based learning lessons. More research is needed to understand the relationship between epistemic and pedagogical beliefs.

Finally, a limitation of this study is that we focused on the development of epistemic and pedagogical beliefs but did not investigate to what extent participating teachers' instructional practices changed in the direction of inquiry-based learning and whether this is also the case in the longer term. In a follow-up study, we want to look at what teachers do in their classrooms.

Implications

From this study, we draw several implications for practice, both in the professional development of in-service teachers and in educating new teachers. The elements that support the development of pedagogical beliefs (modelling by the facilitator, engaging in historical inquiry, group discussions about historical inquiry, searching and using historical sources in the context of designing lessons and discussing their own lesson designs in a peer group) can be implemented in teacher education programs to enhance the development of nuanced ideas about history and the understanding of historical reasoning from the start of teacher education on. Future professional development programs may combine the same activities as we did, but may be supplemented by providing information about the learning effects of inquiry on history learning, about misconceptions, and information about the effect on, for example, literacy skills, because these are found to be important for teachers to see the benefit compared to traditional teaching approaches (Peck, 2014; Van Boxtel et al., 2021). Perhaps most important is that both in-service and preservice teachers need to experiment with implementing historical inquiry lessons and develop skills to guide this inquiry as a teacher and provide a learning environment in which historical reasoning skills can grow.

Facilitators of such programs should be aware that borrower ideas are difficult to recognize because participants who are developing these ideas may use the same terminology as participants who are developing beliefs connected to a criterialist stance. Modelling how you as a historian think about the nature of history, comparing historical sources and weighing arguments to come to a substantiated conclusion may help to prevent misunderstanding. Combining group discussions about teachers' ideas and how they relate to theory and scrutinizing their designs may also help to enhance the development of criterialist ideas. Mathis and Parker (2020) describe a multidimensional framework of epistemic beliefs of history that is under development and could help both preservice and in-service teachers reflect on their epistemic beliefs and promote their historical reasoning skills. Such an instrument may be used during, but also after a program as extended support, possibly in combination with continued exchanging of ideas with PD facilitators and their colleagues after the program has ended (Van Boxtel et al., 2021).

Future research can focus on the question of which elements in professional development programs and learning contexts enhance the sustainable implementation of newly learned skills. New skills need to be practiced on a regular basis, and teachers' beliefs and capacities can better translate into classroom instruction when contextual factors, such as the curriculum, available resources, support and collaboration within the school, reinforce and support teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2021).

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Appendices

A. Interview guideline
B. Coding scheme

Appendix A: Interview guideline Elementary school teachers' beliefs concerning history and history teaching

Additional questions in the post interview in italics.

1. Beliefs about history education

- According to you, why should students study history in school? What are the most important goals of the subject?
- Which competencies should students gain in history education? Which knowledge should they gain? Which skills should they (start to) master?
- According to you, is history mostly about knowledge, skills or both?
- Which pedagogical approaches are suitable for history education and why?

2. Current practice in history teaching

- According to you, which teaching approaches fit well with history teaching? What is a strength of this approach?
- Can you describe your own teaching approach for history? How do you build up a lesson? What do students do during each phase?
- Do you use specific materials when teaching history? If so, can you give some examples?

3. Beliefs about the nature of history

- According to you, what does history encompasses?
- What does the work of a historian encompass? Do historians follow a certain method? If so. what would this method be/look like (steps)?
- *How do we gain historical knowledge?*
- How does a historical narrative come about? Can a historian write whatever he/she wants? Why/why not?
- Is there, according to you, a difference between a historical theory and an opinion? Why/why not?
- It is possible that two historians, when studying the same historical sources, reach a different or partly different conclusion. How can this be explained?
- *Over the two years of the program, did anything change in how you think about history? If so, what has influenced this change?*

4. Beliefs about Inquiry-based learning

- How does history as a school subject differ from historical research done by historians? What are resemblances and differences? Can you explain why you think so?
- Should teachers explain to their students how the texts in their textbook are written/chosen?
- Should students be taught the historical inquiry and reasoning skills that historians use to study the past? Why/why not? If so, what kind of historical inquiry should students learn to do? If so, do you teach these skills in your history lessons? How do you do this?

5. Learning in the PD program

- *What is the most important thing you learned during the program? Can you explain/give examples? Did you reach certain insights?*
- *What was your personal aim for joining the PD program? Did you reach this goal? What else would you (have) like(d) to learn about history teaching?*
- *What in the program stimulated your development?*
- *What was most helpful in learning historical reasoning and inquiry-based history teaching?*
- *How did collaboration in the PLC go? Did it contribute to learning? If so, in what way?*
- During the previous school year, did you have the opportunity to innovate in your school team? *Did you share with colleagues what you were doing in the plc?*
- Do you feel certain about yourself and your teaching when you teach history?
- Do you feel certain about yourself and your teaching when you let students do inquiries?
- *What encouraged you to put the lessons you developed to practice? You can think about personal factors and school factors. Were there also limiting factors?*
- *How did students respond to your new history lessons? Did you see a difference in motivation? Were there certain aspects of the lessons they appreciated? Which?*

Appendix B: Coding scheme Interviews

1. Competencies history. What should students learn?		CG
Sub category	Examples:	Code
Development of historical time	Students should learn the chronological order of time and where persons fit on a timeline.	CG-ht
Historical knowledge	It is important that students know these historical developments/events/persons.	CG-hk
Historical skills	Most important is to learn to ask historical questions, analyse historical sources, argument.	CG-hv
Understanding the present	History is important to understand the present.	CG-hb
2. Current practice in history teaching		PG
Sub category	Examples:	Code
Traditional schoolbook-based	I follow the schoolbook method.	PG-km
Telling stories	By telling stories about history, students can imagine what really happened.	PG-vv
Inquiry-based approach	Students decide on an inquiry question in their group and they investigate this.	PG-ol
Heritage learning	I look for examples from art and heritage.	PG-ce
Relate history to the present	I try to connect a subject to what is happening nowadays.	PG-rh
3. Beliefs about the nature of history and how historians work		OGH
Sub category	Examples:	Code
History equals the past: copier	History and the past are the same; history is everything that happened.	OGH-cop
History is a set of opinions: borrower	There are so many historical sources from different people. It is hard to know what happened.	OGH-bor
History is a construct based on criteria (criterialist)	History is the result of the study of the past, based on studying historical sources, using a specific method.	OGH-cri
Investigating historical sources	They search, analyse and compare historical sources to try to understand an era or a certain development.	OGH-bo
Contextualisation	They try to really understand an era or event, by using all information available.	OGH-cx
Multi-perspectivity and historical empathy	Historians always try to understand and use sources from different perspectives.	OGH-mps
Historical reasoning	Historians always compare and contrast and consider causes and consequences.	OGH-hr
4. Beliefs about and own experience with Inquiry-based learning in history		OLG
Sub category	Examples:	Code
Inquiry into historical sources	Doing inquiry is the only way to really understand a period. By critically comparing historical sources.	OLG-bo
Historical reasoning skills	In this inquiry, students are learning to explain differences and similarities.	OLG-hr
General reasoning skills	Students are also developing their comprehension and reading skills.	OLG-av
Role of the teacher during IBL	I model how they should compare the two texts and how to find arguments in the text.	OLG-rlk
Challenges with IBL in history	It is difficult to let children think of an inquiry question themselves.	OLG-u
Students' behaviour or motivation	My students were enthusiastic.	OLG-gml
5. Professional development and sense of agency		Alk
Sub category	Examples:	Code
Much influence on own work or involved in education innovation	I develop my own lessons. I was involved in how we teach this theme/project.	Alk-vi
Little influence on own work and not involved in educational innovation	We don't work this way in my school. I was not involved in the decisions about this curriculum.	Alk-wi
Professional identity	I have a clear vision about how history should be taught. I feel resistance when innovations go too fast.	Alk-pi
Sources of professional growth	It helped me that we exchanged during the first 15 minutes. And that we worked with different perspectives.	Alk-bg
Stimulating factors	We shared this with colleagues, and they are interested to try these lessons themselves.	Alk-sf
Limiting factors	It takes a lot of time to develop these lessons. Sometimes I just missed necessary background information.	Alk-bf

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Polish teachers' epistemic beliefs on history as seen through the lens of social media

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ABSTRACT

This article is based on the content analysis of the Polish Facebook group *Nauczyciele historii* ("History Teachers") which is administered by, and addressed to, practicing and prospective history teachers. The group's over six thousand members engage and interact by writing, reading, reacting to, and commenting via as many as twenty plus posts daily. We examined the group's on-line discussions for manifestations of the member-teachers' epistemic considerations: their reasoning about the epistemic nature of history; their assumptions regarding the goals and meaning of history as a school subject; and their attitudes toward the narratives of difference, diversity, and multi-perspectivism. Our findings reveal that Polish history teachers' epistemology is poorly conceptualized, rather naïve, and largely unaffected by the developments in historical and didactical theories of the last 50 years. Those teachers do not reflect on the epistemic nature of history. They approach history as a "science", which they presume to be objective and unambiguous. They tend to see themselves as transmitters of knowledge about the past which their pupils should internalize, and as propagators of those "patriotic" values that—according to certain received, long-established discourses—strengthen national identity and social cohesion.

KEYWORDS

History teachers' epistemic beliefs, Social media analysis, Teachers' discussions on Facebook

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Introduction

Taking into consideration the important role that history education plays in developing democratic citizenship, with its appreciation of multiple perspectives and critical thinking, it is important to better understand how history teachers perceive history, history education and the sources of historical knowledge. Meanwhile, research on teachers' beliefs has been complicated by concerns about the reliability and validity of any gathered data, potentially compromised by the very presence of researchers, which can impact teachers' declarations: by inducing teachers' reflections that would not otherwise occur or by soliciting opinions formulated with the aim of catering to researcher expectations.

Looking to test newly-emerging research methods and to access data available from the communicational channels of the Internet age, we decided to adapt the approach implemented by Krzysztof Jaskułowski and his colleagues. Those scholars chose not to query teachers directly about their main research questions, but instead to talk about other, collateral issues and later to tease out answers from teachers' narratives focused on those other issues. Taking this method further, we elected not to approach teachers directly at all, but instead to analyze teachers' opinions expressed spontaneously on unrelated (to our study) occasions, in their posts on an on-line forum of a Facebook group. This allowed us to examine the member-teachers' epistemic considerations: their reasoning about the epistemic nature of history; their assumptions regarding the goals and meaning of history as a school subject; and their attitudes toward the narratives of difference, diversity, and multi-perspectivism. Even though those considerations were not formulated by the authors as "epistemic beliefs", and we cannot be sure that every single post has been authored by a professional history teacher, yet they did reflect their authors' epistemic beliefs. The authors would not formulate their opinions in the way they did if their assumptions and attitudes towards the epistemic nature of history were different. And since the group members who are identified as history teachers did not object those assumptions, we may assume that they express and reflect not only opinions of individual authors.

Apart from gaining insights into Polish teachers' epistemic beliefs on history, we wanted to test the scholarly research capacities of the various new channels of formal, informal and semi-formal exchange of information, advice and opinion among history teachers resulting from the development of social media. We assert that those channels can serve as valid investigative tools also on other issues: they allow researchers to "eavesdrop" unobtrusively on teachers in their natural environment, enabling first-hand observation of a range of attitudes and practices within teacher communities. And in the case of the instant study, they enable the observation and exploration of teachers' epistemic cognition not as if it were declared upon theoretical reflection but as it is actually embodied and manifested in their interactions with peers on Facebook.

Research background

The epistemic beliefs of the Polish teachers active on Facebook's teacher forums were searched for and categorized on the basis of Maggioni's et al. (2009) classification that includes: *copiers* who see history as objective truth; *borrowers* who approach history as interpretation based on selected facts; and *criterialists* who view history as a nuanced product of inquiry (Maggioni, Alexander, & VanSledright, 2009; VanSledright & Maggioni, 2016). Quite unsurprisingly, neither of those terms ever appeared in the analyzed material, confirming that theoretical analysis is scarce in scholarly discourse on history didactics in Poland; in teacher training, typically completed in the so-called concurrent model (Ecker, 2018: 1578-1579), as part of a 3 year (Bachelor's level) plus 2 year (Master's level) university program in history; and in the actual practice of teaching. This does not mean that theoretical reflection on historical research is absent in Poland: for example, Poland's Ewa Domańska has become an internationally recognized expert in the field. But such analysis has not informed university courses in history didactics (c.f. Chorąży et al., 2009; Konieczka-Śliwińska, 2023) or impacted future history teachers. Consumed by the daily practice of teaching, Polish teachers largely do not voice any need to reflect or consult upon the epistemic nature of history.

They have not developed the habit of so reflecting. They overlook the role such reflection plays in the history of school-based education. Yet they do have beliefs, even if the latter are not expressed explicitly. They are manifested in the spontaneous reactions that can be captured in teachers' discussions on social media and the theoretical framework of Maggioni et al. (2009) allows us to do so.

Krzysztof Jaskułowski and his colleagues had already confronted the theoretical neglect of Polish history teachers in their study designed to establish how those teachers understood the goals of history education. Some of that study's respondents appeared never before to have faced the question of what deep purposes their teaching was supposed to serve (Jaskułowski, Majewski & Surmiak, 2018: 81-82). The responding teachers sometimes addressed *why* they were teaching (e.g. because they needed to implement a curriculum or because they wanted their students to know about the past) but were unwilling to address the questions: what for or to what ultimate end? Upon deeper consideration, several of the responding teachers put their educational goals in nationalist terms, for example: I teach history in order to form good, conscious Poles (Jaskułowski & Surmiak, 2017; Jaskułowski, Majewski & Surmiak, 2018). Based upon such findings, when Jaskułowski et al. continued their research to discover more about the attitudes of Polish teachers regarding national issues, they relied on indirect methodologies (Jaskułowski, Majewski & Surmiak, 2021). Instead of directly querying about a definition of, or attitudes to, nationalism, they solicited responses about the substance of school textbooks. Aware that the vast majority of Polish teachers were using officially-approved textbooks—while also complaining about such books, vocally and often—those researchers indirectly invited textbook critiques to build rapport with their respondents. Only subsequently, after completing interviews, did they analyze the received responses to develop conclusions regarding their core research objective: Polish history teachers' concepts of "the nation" and their approaches to nationalism. This strategy elicited the sought-after data: although not expressly solicited, nationalist positions repeatedly surfaced in the majority of the participating teachers' responses.

Such experience of Jaskułowski and his team prompted us not to inquire directly about Polish teachers' epistemic beliefs. Instead, we elected to solicit relevant answers in an off-hand, indirect manner. We posited that those teachers probably had thoughts about the epistemic nature of history, but likely were not ready to verbalize those thoughts on a researcher's request. Moreover, attempted verbalization on our prompts could render responses that were forced, overly intellectualized, tailored for the querying researcher, while we sought to discover genuine, authentic, deeply held intuitions and beliefs of teachers, passed on to students in a more—or less—deliberate manner.

We also used the experience from two studies of Internet user opinions conducted for two masters theses in the public history program at the University of Wrocław. One researcher, Dorota Choińska (2021), studied controversies over historical memory at the Polish-Belarusian borderlands, reflected in user comments to on-line versions of local newsprint articles. Another researcher, Agata Moskwa (2021), analyzed references to history in comments regarding tourist attractions posted by the users of TripAdvisor. Other papers on the use of social media in research on historical consciousness and understanding have also proved effective (Adriaansen, 2021; Ramirez & Smyth, 2021; Walden 2015). They have shown that Web 2.0 allows for tracking and analyzing opinions which individuals spontaneously offer and express in their self-selected Internet environment, unsolicited for purposes of research, but expressed while catering to real-life needs and experiences.

Methodology

The source

We selected a discussion group on Facebook with the accurately descriptive name *Nauczyciele historii* (hereafter "History Teachers"), which is administered by, and addressed to, practicing and

future history teachers. The group members engage and interact by writing, reading, reacting to, and commenting via, as many as twenty plus posts daily. For the purpose of this study, we analyzed all the posts published in March and April 2022.
As in the previous study based on this group (Wojdon, 2023), six major categories of posts could be distinguished:

1. History-related information, offering data, clarifications, explanations and links to academic and mass-market print and publications on events, processes, biographies.
2. Advertisements of offerings and products developed by teaching professionals, such as YouTube videos, podcasts or classroom teaching materials (e.g. maps, tests).
3. Invitations to in-service teacher training events and announcements of educational events for pupils and students, competitions or other projects involving schools.
4. Requests for teaching aids and materials, templates, sample tests and lesson plans, teaching tips and suggestions, alternative assessment rubrics, etc.
5. Questions posed by teachers.
6. Offers from teachers, including self-promotion.

Categories 4-6 were most social media-specific, because they prioritized and showcased the voices of users and members (in this case: Polish teachers). They were the most useful for our analyses; but posts and especially comments falling under categories 1-3 also provided useful data, indicating especially that epistemic beliefs were scarcely referenced or shared on the "History Teachers" group.

Validity of the source

According to data provided by Facebook, at the time of our research the "History Teachers" group had over 5,000 members self-identifying as teachers or candidates for the teaching profession. For the purpose of our research we accept the self-identification, because the group—which is private, i.e. not accessible to unregistered persons—has no reliable tools for verifying data submitted in membership applications. On occasion, group members have postulated the introduction of such verification strategies and encouraged cautious, circumspect commentaries and postings, in view of the fact that students, parents and/or school principals might be among group members, as readers or commentators. However, no administrative measures have been introduced to ensure that group members indeed are practicing or prospective teachers.

However, unlike in the studies done by Choińska (2021) and Moskwa (2021), most of the members of the "History Teachers" group are not anonymous and use their real names. Many are known in the teaching community as teachers, as authors of publications or as participants in educational projects. Some can be found on the websites of schools, which cite their information "about themselves". Yet occasionally un-identified and anonymous individuals join in the exchanges. Perhaps the "private" status of the group and the lack of anonymity prevent behaviors common in open Internet discourse, such as "the online disinhibition effect", i.e. the anonymity-encouraged flaunting of social norms, bad manners, or posting plainly offensive content (we have not examined to what degree group administrators ensure relative civility). Our respondents, like those in Choińska's (2021) study, showed a wide range of divergent opinions, expressed themselves spontaneously, freely commented on each other's statements (our analysis addresses both the posts and the comments), and also referred to extrinsic (to the Facebook forum) opinions and positions. Following the verification strategies of Caulfield & Wineburg (2023), we were unable to identify any organized pressure groups or lobbying campaigns, and promotional activities (e.g. of educational materials) were clearly marked as such, easily identifiable and conducted by the group members themselves. Therefore, in general, we consider the posts as genuine opinions of bona fide Polish teachers.

The Facebook platform has various mechanisms that prevent or limit data fluctuation. Posts, statements and entire threads are archived, so our primary research data can be retrieved and verified. However, because such verification is technically difficult, for the purposes of our research we took screenshots of the examined posts with their respective comments, also in order to preserve them, in case they might later be edited or removed. Such fluctuation of data is a common problem in research studies of Internet content, especially on social media. However, in view of the prevalence and richness of life in the virtual world, the fluctuation should not prevent scholars from studying and analyzing social media content.

Constraints

The data set collected for analysis posed two more problems, one of methodological and another of ethical nature.

First was the question of verifiability, in view of the fact that the group was "private", so not every individual could access its content at all times. However, because it is fairly easy for a Polish-speaking user to gain access to the "History Teachers" group, the posts published there meet the standards of verifiable research data. There also exists a public group of Polish history teachers on Facebook, called *Lekcja lepszej historii* ("A Lesson in Better History"), but that group is much smaller (counting 2300 members in December 2022) and less active. That group mainly publishes announcements about projects, publications, and competitions for students and teachers. There are very few substantive discussions. For these reasons we decided not to use the *Lekcja*… group, but focused on "History Teachers", where in April 2022 alone 145 posts appeared which almost always received feedback in the form of likes and emojis. The majority (123) of those posts received less than 10 reactions, but there were also several posts with over 50 reactions. The same pattern was observed in relation to comments. 123 posts received less than 10 comments, 16 got between 11 and 20, five between 21 and 30, and one as many as 94 comments.

The most "liked" and commented-upon posts in April 2022 were:

- A photo allegedly depicting German and Polish troops on July 15, 1410: a joke on the occasion of April Fools' Day, posted on April 1, 2022 (142 likes and laughs, 18 comments);
- A TikTok post on teacher career development, from April 2, 2022 (73 likes, laughs, hearts);
- Ready-to-use classroom materials: "A Calendar of historical events that happened through ages during the Easter period", from April 3, 2022 (49 likes and 10 comments);
- A question about viable methods of validly assessing Ukrainian students in Polish classrooms (in 7th grade), from April 24, 2022 (2 likes, 94 comments);
- A post advertising a lapbook on the topic of Poland's May 3rd Constitution, from April 19, 2022 (41 likes and hearts, 6 comments);
- A post about a textbook on Polish history in the Ukrainian language, from April 4, 2022 (20 likes, 18 comments).

Second, this ethical question arose: to what extent do we, as researchers, have the right to "eavesdrop" on teachers without informing them about it? D. Choińska (2021: 169) writes: "It is the researchers' choice whether they inform the targeted community that their online utterances are the base of a scientific analysis. Some practitioners claim that if the users post the information on a website whose access does not require any permissions nor identification, then such data can always be considered public and available for study. Others stress that even if the data is not confidential but discloses personal or intimate details, its contributors should be aware of their use for scientific purposes". We considered any statement made in a group of 5,000 people *de facto* public, even if the group was technically a "closed" group. Moreover, we anonymized the statements and comments cited in this article; we did not use personal information that would reveal the identity of group members; we denoted the posts published or commented on in such a way that they are difficult to track down through the search option; and we have not included

links to them. They function as field-collected examples and samples of statements made by Polish teachers, and not as expressions of the views of any specific individuals. We did not notify the users about our research for the reasons already mentioned: to optimally minimize our potential impact, as researchers, on the opinions expressed by teachers. This procedure received ethical clearance from the research ethics commission at the Institute of History, University of Wrocław. In connection with the study, we limited our own activities in the group "History Teachers" to an absolute minimum. The original design was to be completely silent observers, without ever revealing our presence. Unfortunately, the war in Ukraine did not allow this design to be fully implemented: to benefit our research, we did not want to sacrifice the opportunity of directly reaching this large group of history teachers with information about the newly developed Ukrainian-language educational materials for history lessons in classrooms with Ukrainian refugee students (Wojdon, 2022). However, our posts on those topics were purely informational and did not concern the epistemology of history.

Data coding and verification

Each of the authors of this paper screened the posts independently, but our independent conclusions about teachers' epistemic beliefs turned out to be very similar. We then crosschecked those preliminary findings with the posts from May. Since our conclusions were thereby corroborated again, we established that our sample was sufficient to examine, and to support valid commentary and conclusions on epistemic beliefs of Polish history teachers.

The analysis of the posts was conducted in MAXQDA 2022. Every post was labeled with a code that characterized its content. Those without relevant information concerning the mentioned epistemic stances were classified as "unrelated" and not taken further into consideration. Of the remaining posts, we created the following sets of codes:

1. sources of historical information;
2. importance of facts and opinions/interpretations;
3. aims of teaching history;
4. meaning of learning history;
5. emotions evoked by history;
6. differentiation between history and memory;
7. non-standard approaches to history teaching;
8. reactions to politics of history;
9. critical thinking (or lack thereof).

This examination of FB posts involved a particular level of analysis that is not akin to conducting traditional deep qualitative and quantitative analysis. However, sets 1-4 allowed us to identify the instances of group members' reasoning about the epistemic nature of history and their assumptions about history as a school subject (its aims and meaning). The first set and sets 5-9 allowed us to observe the members' positions toward different narratives and multiperspectivity, as potential indicators of *borrowers'* and *criterialists'* approaches. While specific quotes did not say much, yet upon aggregating all the citations and interpreting them as a whole, we were able to see a copier stance emerging.

Results

"History Teachers" on the academic discipline of history and on history as a school subject

Focus on factual knowledge

How the active group members saw history and how they saw their role as history teachers was revealed through the vocabulary they used in their posts (here cited with our emphasis added), e.g.: "[a learning platform] that organizes **knowledge** very well," (History Teachers, 2022, April 18a and 28a)[1]; "I **showed** [a presentation] to the students" (History Teachers, 2022, April 13); about the Ukrainian children joining Polish schools: "They have **knowledge**, but let's be honest, how much **are we able to tell** about events in history in a foreign language" (History Teachers, 2022, April 24); "what for would they need to **know** about the partitions of Poland [1138-1320] etc." (History Teachers, 2022, April 4b). A representative example of a comment reads as follows:

> **I start** with the Biblical deluge. Then a short video about the Swedes. Question. Why was this invasion [in 1655] called "the deluge". **I emphasise** the enormity of the destruction, the unequal struggle against the invaders, the loss of cultural heritage. **I draw attention** to Czarniecki referring to the national anthem (History Teachers, 2022, March 31a).

While preparing classes on the occasion of an anniversary of Poland's baptism in 966 A.D., History Teachers expected that their students would memorize the most important information about the event, including an exact date (History Teachers, 2022, March 29)—even though scholars for decades had been debating the circumstances of the baptism, with no consensus reached due to the scarcity of primary sources and the contradictory data the scarce extant sources provide.

Some posts in the "History Teachers" group promoted "learning through playing" strategies. As many as 25 user comments in April promoted such "attractive activities" as escape rooms, role-playing and games (mostly Kahoot!, Wordwalls and Genially activities). However, their main (if not sole) purpose turned out to be assessment and testing of pupils' knowledge in more attractive forms. Whether the students would impersonate Julius Caesar's "legionnaires" or participants on the "Wheel of Fortune", their goal was to correctly answer factual questions or "show canniness and knowledge" (History Teachers, 2022, April 3b, April 20c).

The members of "History Teachers" often requested ready-to-use presentations on specific topics or materials that might help them prepare their own classroom presentations (History Teachers, 2022, April 2 and 12); and when they shared activities, those members rarely considered, or commented upon, *how* to use the files they were sharing or *for what particular purpose* (except for simply, literally: conducting a history lesson). A calendar of events that, over centuries, had taken place on Polish territories during Easter times was well-received by dozens of users (49 likes and hearts), who appreciated the "tremendous amount of work" and "tedious labor" of its author. Those commenting declared intentions to use the calendar in their classrooms, but offered no details as to *how* they would use it (History Teachers, 2022, April 3a), nor *what for/to what end*. One can reasonably appreciate the difficulty of designing intellectually stimulating classroom activities based on a set of unrelated events from a period of 10 centuries, from the 10th to 20th.

[1] Bold script emphasis added by the authors.

Lack of reflection on the constructed nature of narratives about the past

For many group members, history constituted no more than a treasure trove of interesting facts and curiosities. Responding to a contest posted by one teacher and educational influencer, in which two statistical history books could be won as prizes—*Okupowana Polska w liczbach* (*Occupied Poland in numbers*) and *Przedwojenna Polska w liczbach* (*Pre-war Poland in numbers*)—someone commented:

> For me, the shocking discovery was the life expectancy of both men and women in the Second [interwar] Polish Republic and the rapid increase in life expectancy in the second half of the 20th century :-). For the record, in the early 1930s, men lived an average of 48 years while women lived more than 51. It is also interesting to note that the age difference between the two genders was not as big as it is today (History Teachers, 2022, April 26).

Both the author of the post and the commentator approached history as a collection of curiosa. The competition question—"What data (figures) in the context of history have made the strongest impression on you?"—required little analytical processing, especially that there was no need to justify the choice or answer. Neither the author nor commentators saw a need or opportunities for such a justification, for exploring or developing respondents' second-order concepts, e.g. of historical significance or continuity and change (Lévesque, 2005).

The group members claimed to attach great importance to factual accuracy. They saw factual accuracy as allowing a view of the past as it "really had been", indicating that certain educational materials had high educational value. These standards can be observed in the posted recommendations of movies for classroom use. "I recommend the excellent video *The French Revolution*. [...] One may **learn interesting things** from it", as someone responded to a member seeking materials for history lessons in English (History Teachers, 2022, April 22a). The idea of deconstructing the narrative of the film has not appeared in this or in other movie-related posts.

Another user penned the following comment concerning a movie about the Polish People's Republic: "pleasant and easy to watch, nevertheless overloaded with dates. Some of the claims are highly debatable and others are completely wrong (e.g. the mention of [president] Bierut from a working-class family is part of a biography fabricated for the [Communist] Party's purposes)" (History Teachers, 2022, April 20a). This commentator's intention was to discourage teachers from using the film in their teaching process, not to encourage critical screening.

As in the case of the above-cited French Revolution film, videos are regarded as potential replacement of teachers in transmitting information—yet another reason to conclude that factual accuracy is accorded great importance. It seems that pupils were to watch "valid" movies passively, without any queries or commentary before or after the screening: "TedEd on YT, great channel (some of the videos have Polish subtitles and English lector). It **does a great job ;-)**" (History Teachers, 2022, April 22a); "I **devoted three lessons** in the 8th grade to [watching] *Black Thursday*.[2] I think it is worth the time" (History Teachers, 2022, March 2).

"History Teachers'" attitudes towards multiperspectivity

As Polish teachers typically follow the national curriculum, it is not surprising that their lesson plans are focused on Polish history. Many teachers organize commemorations of important events in Polish national history to strengthen the sense of national identity amongst their students. The analyzed posts confirm that this task is usually assigned to history teachers by school principals,

[2] The movie about a massacre of Polish workers by the communist authorities in December 1970 is 1 hour and 45 minutes long.

just as it used to be in the past (History Teachers, 2022, March 27, April 18b and 19). In this vein, the users active on this Facebook group appreciated the materials prepared by the Institute of National Remembrance and other public institutions whose aim was to promote Polish "patriotic values" (History Teachers, 2022, April 15a, 21a, 22b, 28b and April 15b and 20b). We did not observe any critical comments on such materials.

The view of history as a culture/identity builder explains why multiperspectivity is a rare concept in Polish schools. In the "History Teachers" group, exceedingly rare were posts and comments accounting for, or recognizing, the existence of diverging interpretations of the past or of diverse perspectives on historical figures. Such attitudes were displayed almost exclusively in reference to school-based extracurricular activities. In the extracurricular context, one user recommended the use of "[p]art of the Holy Bible. Selected for the Use of the Negro Slaves" from 1808, since "[it] has a good chance of generating curiosity and discussion in the classroom"—by illustrating how editors once had selected scriptural material to Christianize the enslaved in the United States, without exposing the enslaved to the concepts on freedom and equality also reflected in the scriptures. The post received 18 likes, but also "surprised" and "angry" emoticons (History Teachers, 2022, April 15c). Another person encouraged teachers to reach for books concerning Polish queens in order to see early modern Polish history from a gendered perspective (but received no reactions) (History Teachers, April 16, 2022).

The majority of those commenting made statements indicating their belief that there only existed one truth and that historians were obliged to find it. When teachers asked for suggestions and references useful for preparing lesson plans, those commenting often proposed they look for "reliable" content (History Teachers, 2022, April 2), preferably texts authored by professional scholars. The member teachers usually reached for officially-approved textbooks (cf. Roszak, 2018 on the process of textbook approval in Poland) and websites of Poland's public institutions: museums and the Institute of National Remembrance; scholarly, college, and school texts (but less frequently monographs with a specific thematic focus); dictionaries published by established publishing houses and the Internet version of the renowned PWN (Polish Scientific Publishers) encyclopedia. References to Wikipedia were rare. This may mean that many teachers tended not to trust Wikipedia or knew it was generally perceived as unreliable, and therefore preferred not to admit that they were using it[3].

The Russian aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, and the subsequent massive influx of Ukrainian refugees to Poland, posed unexpected challenges to the prevailing model of school history education—as transmission of, or search for, the one "truth" about the past. On the one hand, Polish teachers perceive "Polish" vs. "Ukrainian" pasts as two divergent narratives, despite the fact that the two societies for centuries had shared the same territory. On the other hand, however, they were reluctant to treat the Ukrainian narratives as equally valid. Such attitudes were reflected e.g. in the following comment: "[they, i.e. the Ukrainian pupils] have the right [sic!] to learn about Polish culture and to preserve their traditions, customs and religion" (History Teachers, 2022, April 24, cf. also April 4b and 24). Another commentator was more extreme and demanded that "[i]f they [Ukrainian pupils] are going to stay [in Poland] then they must embrace Our culture and science".

The group users verbalized appreciation of student engagement and of activities aimed at developing critical thinking skills and creativity—at least when they expected to be observed by

[3] The post from Autumn 2020, announcing a webinar on Wikipedia use in schools, was met with little enthusiasm among the group members (4 likes and one comment). The webinar organizer thanked for the one positive comment that followed the post, noting that she was glad to see a favorable response when many Polish teachers treated Wikipedia entries on equal footing with other Internet resources, i.e. as "evil" (History Teachers, 2020, November 25). This observation was confirmed by pupils of one of the Wrocław's high school in which one of us taught in the school year 2021/2022.

school principals (History Teachers, 2022, April 4a and 7). But in concrete situations, those teachers regarded any narratives contradicting their beliefs as biased and manipulated, and judged harmful any exposure of their (Polish) pupils to such contradictory narratives. This was observed in relation to the movie *Gierek* (2022), a bio-pic profiling the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in 1970-1980. While sharing film recommendations, one member cautioned others against this movie, opining that watching it with pupils was a "screw-up": "The kids got confused and had to be corrected, some wondered—Gierek the hero?" (History Teachers, 2022, March 25). According to some of those commenting, exposing young people to such "inappropriate" material could cause them to "misunderstand" the actual realities of the time. What is worse, students so exposed might begin to display "undesirable" attitudes, including an appreciation of communists. Such derogatory comments persuaded some teachers to abandon the idea of watching the movie with their pupils (History Teachers, 2022, April 20a).

In a similar vein, during a heated debate regarding textbooks for a newly-introduced school subject *Historia i Teraźniejszość* ("History and the Present") combining contemporary history and civic education, some commentators vocally opposed the government's attempt to use the new subject to indoctrinate pupils (History Teachers, 2022, April 1). Some were less skeptical about the government's political objectives. Yet not one person recognized that the mis-aligned or contradictory narratives about Poland's communist era offered any educational opportunities.

"History teachers'" non-approach to critical thinking

As mentioned above, during the period under analysis, no teacher shared any tips on how to encourage pupils' critical approaches to the movies. A similar lack of critical attitude was expressed towards museum exhibitions, which were to be taken at face value, with emotions involved but not reflected upon. For example, after a visit to Warsaw's Museum of everyday life in the Polish People's Republic, one member wrote only: "Amazing place! It brings tears to one's eyes" (History Teachers, 2022, March 2).

A similarly emotional approach was observed when someone recommended a lesson plan about everyday life in the Polish People's Republic aiming, inter alia, to show students that "even though there was nothing, everyone had [what was] the most important" (History Teachers, 2022, March 28). Thus, the posting teachers did not seem to differentiate between history (as an academic discipline) and memory (as a source of emotions and basis for identity formation). 19 likes followed a post in which a user shared a song by Jacek Kaczmarski (dubbed the "bard of Solidarity"), recommending its use to begin a teaching unit on the institution of martial law in Poland in December 1981. The post said: "[It] reminds me of my student days when we used to sing Kaczmarski during parties in the dorm ;-)" (History Teachers, 2022, April 27). Another user claimed that a song addressing the martial law "recreates the impression of how people felt under the martial law" (History Teachers, 2022, April 5).

The more remote in time the event discussed in the classroom, the fewer emotions and nostalgia were displayed. On the other hand, some group members expressed the belief that events that had happened in the past may happen again, and for this very reason people should learn history. For instance, under a post discussing the challenges of grading Ukrainian refugee pupils, one member asserted that due to various traumatic events from the past (which he enumerated and detailed, including massacres of Polish civilians by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army from 1943 to 1945) the two nations would be unable to live together (History Teachers, 2022, April 24). In this instance, history was perceived as a "teacher of life", with selected facts from the past cited to support one's beliefs and assumptions. Neither any critical approach nor any distinction between history and memory were explicitly mentioned.

Conclusion and discussion

On teachers' epistemic beliefs

According to people active on Polish "History Teachers" Facebook group, the first and most important purpose of history in schools is the transfer of knowledge about historical facts in accordance with the national curriculum and with the received concept of national identity. There is a lot of continuity in this approach. For decades, history education in Polish schools has served as a tool of national identity building. Even during the so-called communist decades, between ca. 1945 and 1989, nationalism played a crucial role in forming the system of values transmitted by public schools and the state propaganda system. Generations of Poles, including history teachers, were brought up in this paradigm and adopted it (Wojdon, 2012).

Many members of the Polish Facebook group "History Teachers" treat history as a set of "facts" that everyone in Polish society should know – yet another example of continuity in Polish teachers' attitudes. They do not explicitly consider or discuss the epistemic nature of history, though their posts and comments suggest that they recognize history as an academic discipline. Those teachers appear to believe that human knowledge about the past is drawn from historical sources, analyzed by "objective" professional historians who are equipped with the scholarly skills to do so reliably. These teachers see themselves as transmitters of the knowledge accumulated by scholars. In these respects, their attitudes parallel Maggioni's concept of *copiers*.

We cannot describe the members of "History Teachers" as *borrowers*, who—according to Maggioni et al. (2009)—regard history as a subjective construct, and accept divergent opinions. The group users cited above hardly tolerated any discrepancies or differences in judgments about the past events.

Unlike teachers recently examined by VanSledright and Maggioni (2016), the Polish teachers active on Facebook do not wobble epistemically—they have clearly formed epistemic positions, but lack what Mathis and Parkes (2020) call epistemic reflexivity and historical (self) consciousness. Our findings do not correspond with the results of eight other projects where researchers had conducted in-person interviews and questionnaires with teachers and prospective teachers to find out that on declarative level the majority of them valued criterialist approach (Stoel et al., 2022). Polish teachers seem to believe that their role is to pass on the "truth" about the past to younger generations, in order to raise them in a nationalist (patriotic) spirit. Such objectivist position correlates with the perception of history as a tool in nation building, which was also found in studies from other countries (Zanazanian & Moisan, 2012; Sakki & Pirttilä-Backman, 2019), and confirm these observations of Jaskułowski & Surmiak (2017: 43-44): "Remarkably, [Polish] teachers do not see any contradiction between teaching history as an instrument for promoting 'patriotism' and teaching history as an entirely fact-based practice […] and they paradoxically define their role as politically and ideologically neutral".

During the period under analysis, no teacher shared any tips on how to encourage pupils' critical approaches to historical sources. The movies, one of the frequent topics of discussion, were seen as a useful tool for facilitating transmission of knowledge. We registered no reflection suggesting that the movies were interpretations, rather than representations, of the past—although such critical approach has been recommended in history didactics for years (cf. Seixas, 1994; Marcus et al., 2018).

What we have found overall confirms the findings from other studies: that Polish history teachers' epistemology is poorly conceptualized, rather naïve, and uninformed by the developments in historical and didactical theories of the last half-a-century. Our results reveal the urgent necessity for reform of history education in Poland, so it adheres to the contemporary world. Also the way history teachers are trained needs to be changed.

On social media as a research tool

Already in an earlier study of this Facebook group, one of us had concluded that its content confirmed the anecdotal reports about Polish teachers and corroborated the results of studies conducted by other scholars, using other methods; and, therefore, this Facebook group could be considered reliably representative of Polish teachers' opinions. Moreover, "[it] provide[s] access to larger and more divergent pools of practices and opinions [which] makes it a potentially useful basis for dealing with areas where traditional methods have failed or proved difficult to implement" (Wojdon 2023: 418-419). Current findings, related to teachers' epistemic beliefs, remain in line with that conclusion.

Therefore, thanks to the online-based approach, behaviors that formerly did not exist or could not be investigated with the help of the more traditional investigative tools, can now be observed, analyzed, and described (Jemielniak, 2013: 98-99; Markham, 2004: 95), even though the authenticity and accuracy of online data can vary greatly, with the potential for misinformation, manipulated content, or biased representation.

One could point to certain limitations resulting from unique character of interactions on social media. The majority of the group members just read posts (or perhaps just skim them), and only a minority exchange ideas, opinions, demands, etc., as well as react to the published or shared content through likes and emojis. Even fewer people engage in conversations under posts, perhaps out of fear of being judged or out of preference for passive membership. On the other hand, the active members of "History Teachers" not only communicate about the reality of history education in Poland among themselves, but also reach the passive members. Consequently, the exchanges in the group directly or indirectly influence opinions and teaching practices of the whole community, albeit one cannot evaluate precisely to what extent (cf. Choińska, 2021).

Our analysis also reveals that some teachers are open to novel, interesting ideas and/or ready-to-use materials. Therefore, Facebook groups (like "History Teachers") may be effective platforms for information-sharing and peer consulting, thereby promoting diverse approaches to history, disseminating historical-thinking teaching aids, and inspiring thoughts about how history is constructed, studied, and taught. We have been contemplating a form of action/intervention experiment: using the same "History Teachers" Facebook group to disseminate selected epistemic ideas and approaches—explicitly or implicitly—and then studying the members' reactions. Social media could thereby serve not only as a field research site but also as a transformative tool.

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Podcasts as Teacher Talk in Historical Thinking

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ABSTRACT

One of the challenges associated with preparing teacher-candidates to teach historical thinking involves moving away from narrative practices that inhibit explicit use of historical thinking concepts. One belief is that if teachers are able to demonstrate out loud how historians work with primary sources—and thus model historical reasoning through the use of historical thinking strategies—they can better assist their students to arrive at more complex understandings about the constructed nature of history. Indeed, as van Boxtel and van Drie (2018) have argued, how teacher-candidates make sense of the past is key to how their future students will learn to make sense of the past. In this practice-oriented journal article, I explore the benefits and challenges of using podcasts as a pedagogy for preparing pre-service teachers to model historical thinking—and thus engage in dynamic conversations as teacher talk. Through a semester-long project that culminated in the development of "Unwritten Histories" podcasts, teacher-candidates were encouraged to work in groups to adopt a National History Day framework for historical inquiry. This involved the use of annotated bibliographies, inquiry questions, and storylines. Participants were also required to adopt a vocabulary for historical thinking, thus practising the strategy of modelling historical thinking out loud—as teacher talk. This pedagogy was found to be beneficial in supporting a criterialist stance in historical reasoning. What makes this inquiry unique is that while a great deal of research has been undertaken with regards to explicitly teaching historical reasoning through document-based writing (De La Paz et al., 2010; Monte-Sano, 2011; Nokes et al., 2007; Sendur et al., 2021), very little research has been undertaken with regards to creating dialogic podcasts for this purpose.

KEYWORDS

Podcasts, Teacher talk, Historical thinking

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Introduction

As Nitsche, Mathis, and O'Neill (2022) have pointed out, practice-oriented research has stressed that epistemological development is directly related to historical thinking and arriving at evidence-based conclusions about the past (p. 2). In preparing teacher-candidates to teach historical thinking, one of our major goals is to move their teaching practise away from a content-driven lecture format, so as to embrace teaching strategies that will enable their future students to think historically. In Canada, it is widely believed that Peter Seixas' six concepts of Historical Thinking are well suited to achieve this pedagogical goal (Gibson and Peck, 2020; Seixas and Morton, 2013; Miles et al., 2017), since as Seixas (2006, 2017a, 2017b) has argued, they provide students with a tangible set of cognitive tools to engage in historical reasoning. Likewise, demonstrating explicitly, how historians work with primary sources and adopt historical thinking strategies, has been found to be highly beneficial in assisting students to arrive at analytical statements about the past (Martin and Wineburg, 2008; van Drie and van Boxtel, 2003).

In this journal article I consider how explicit use of Historical Thinking concepts, combined with an inquiry-based podcast project, might engage pre-service teachers in complex levels of epistemological reasoning. In so doing, I explore the benefits and challenges of using podcasts as a pedagogy for preparing teacher-candidates to teach Historical Thinking. Working with three groups of teacher education candidates at the University of Ottawa, I analyse their historical reasoning, as well as challenges experienced in adopting Seixas' six concepts of Historical Thinking, as they engaged in dynamic conversations that model Historical Thinking. Their assignment was to develop a podcast in which they entered into a conversation with a colleague, and explicitly employed at least three concepts of Historical Thinking. In so doing, the teacher-candidates were challenged to "thinking out loud" like historians. As part of this assignment, they were also asked to adopt a National History Day framework1 for historical inquiry (National History Day, 2023), which involved the use of annotated bibliographies, inquiry questions, and storylines. In their final reflection process paper, participants were then invited to reflect upon their epistemological challenges; via an exit survey, they were also invited to reflect upon the potential of using such pedagogy in their future classrooms. What makes this research unique is that while a great deal of research has been undertaken with regards to explicitly teaching historical thinking and reasoning in the context of document-based writing (De La Paz et al., 2010; Monte-Sano, 2011; Nokes et al., 2007; Sendur et al., 2021) very little research has been undertaken with regards to creating dialogic podcasts for this purpose.

Literature Review

Teacher talk

Although it is widely accepted that contextual knowledge is equally important as procedural knowledge when teaching and learning about the past (Chapman, 2021; Darling-Hammond, Orcutt, and Austin, 2015; Ellsworth, 2017; Powell, 2020; Schulman,1986; Thorpe and Persson, 2020; van Boxtel and van Drie, 2004; van Drie and van Boxtel, 2008; VanSledright, 2011; VanSledright and Limón, 2006), dialogic learning—in the form of "teacher talk"—has also been identified as an effective teaching strategy for modelling historical thinking (Allender, 2019; Gestsdottir, van Boxtel and van Drie, 2018; Holt, 1990; Reisman and Wineburg, 2008; Sandwell, 2014; Stoel, van Drie, and van Boxtel, 2015; van Boxtel and van Drie, 2017, 2018). This was the objective of this inquiry: to engage teacher-candidates in practising their "teacher talk" as historical thinking.

One of the earliest proponents of this pedagogical belief was American historian Thomas C. Holt (1990), who rocked the foundation of history education in North America by proposing that—rather than presenting students with a "predictable litany of other people's facts served up by teacher-technicians on a kind of educational conveyor belt" (Kelly, Meuwissen, and Vansledright, p. 116) that teachers examine their own assumptions about the past and—among

other fundamental teaching practices—become models of mindfulness. In this sense, as Dennie Palmer Wolf and Robert Orrill have explained: "teachers must find ways to make their thinking public, visible, [and] audible—without prescribing its course or conclusion" (Holt, 1990, xii).

Reisman and Wineburg (2008) have since built upon Holt's argument by recommending that teachers explicitly model contextualised thinking about the past—as well as provide background knowledge, and ask guiding questions—as a way of assisting students to develop their historical thinking skills:

> Historical thinking is by its very nature invisible. If teachers want students to learn how to think contextually, they must show them what this thinking sounds like. Thus, the third tool used to develop students' contextualized thinking is the expert think-aloud. (p. 204; see also Stoel, van Drie, and van Boxtel, 2015)

Here in Canada, Ruth Sandwell (2011) has emphasised the role of dialogue as a way of conveying the "epistemological framework and analytical tools that [students] need [in order] to understand and navigate a complex social world" (p.81). In her pre-service history teacher classroom, Sandwell (2014) adopted an approach to modelling historical thinking that utilised primary documents as a way of enabling her students to learn how to *do* history with their future students. Sandwell found this teaching practise to be very effective. Her pragmatic observations are certainly supported by the research of Janet van Drie and Carla van Boxtel (2008; see also van Boxtel and van Drie, 2017), who have also emphasized the role of dialogue in the classroom: "An important task of the teacher… becomes to create ample opportunities in the classroom for students to practice historical reasoning, for themselves, in dialogue with other students, and in dialogue with the teacher" (p. 105).

More recently, Tim Allender's (2019) study of history teaching practice in Australia, has identified the "teaching voice" of experienced teachers "as central to the craft of history teaching, particularly in the way it orchestrated the disciplinary intersections between epistemology and pedagogy, teacher procedure and student cognition" (p.162). As Allender notes: "This voice was… built using a repertoire of intuitive adaptations to classroom realities in terms of student interest and knowledge deficits, although these adaptions remained largely unscripted—even to the teachers themselves." (p.162).

For this inquiry I combined this theoretical base of "teacher talk" and "teacher voice" with Susanna Gestsdottir, Carla van Boxtel, and Janet van Drie's (2018) framework for evaluating teacher practise; since, as Gestsdottir et al (2018) have noted, demonstrating historical thinking and reasoning through teacher practise is one of the key indicators for successfully teaching historical thinking (p. 967). In addition—and perhaps more importantly for this inquiry—they have also noted that being able to demonstrate historical reasoning is distinct from being able to provide instruction on how to apply tools for historical thinking (p. 970). Moreover, van Boxtel and van Drie (2018) have also emphasized the importance of explicitly modelling historical thinking in the classroom—as a form of what Collins, Brown, and Newman (1989) have termed *cognitive apprenticeship*—in order to move their students' reasoning towards a *"*more mature *criterialist"* (van Boxtel and van Drie p.158) understanding of the constructed nature of history (as cited from Maggioni, VanSledright, and Alexander, 2009).

All of these findings point to the critical role of teacher talk as a way of modelling historical thinking. As this body of research suggests, teachers demonstrating out loud how historians work with primary sources of evidence—thus modelling historical reasoning through the use of historical thinking strategies—can assist classroom students to arrive at a better understanding of the complex nature of history. In this context, how teacher-candidates make sense of the past becomes key to how their future students will learn to make sense of the past. This is the premise on which this podcast teaching strategy was developed: enabling teacher-candidates to practise their teacher talk around Historical Thinking concepts.

Teaching to think

While historical thinking has been widely embraced as a pedagogy for history education in North America, one of the epistemological challenges associated with preparing teacher-candidates to teach historical thinking involves moving away from a narrative format that inhibits explicit use of Historical Thinking concepts (Case and McLeod, 2014; Maggioni 2010; Powell, 2020; Seixas 1998; Yeagar and Davis, 1996). Critical historical thinking in the pre-service teacher classroom, as Roland Case and Genie MacLeod (2014) have observed, requires knowing the difference between "teaching 'to think' and teaching 'what to think'" (p 210). Hence, the responsibility rests at the university level for instructors to "walk the talk" (Case and MacLeod, 2014, p. 211) in order to enable teacher-candidates to "talk the walk" in their future history classrooms. As the authors conclude:

> 1. Commonly used pedagogy in history and social studies methodology courses is often inconsistent with the theory and practice it purports to teach;
> 2. It is possible to teach methodology courses in a manner that more closely models the pedagogy espoused in these courses; and
> 3. "Walking the talk" is not only necessary—it is more likely to successfully prepare students to teach in desired ways in their own classrooms (p. 211).

In Canada, Lindsay Gibson and Carla Peck (2020) have piloted a teaching strategy that shows promise in this regard. Throughout their 13-week course, students were asked to complete five "in-class" assignments and five major assignments designed around six concepts of Historical Thinking (Seixas and Morton, 2013): "What is historical thinking? (4 classes); Evidence and Interpretations (6 classes); Historical Significance (2 classes); Continuity and Change (3 classes); Historical Perspectives (2 classes); Ethical Judgments and the Ethical Dimension (3 classes); Assessing Historical Thinking (3 classes); [and] Historical Thinking in Indigenous Contexts (2 classes)" (Gibson and Peck, 2020, p. 228). In-class activities were intended to provide students and instructors with evidence regarding abilities to model effective historical thinking assessment strategies and practices, within the limitations of Alberta's K-12 Social Studies curriculum. The final course assignment involved designing a lesson plan around Seixas' six Historical Thinking concepts that included:

> - An effective historical inquiry question, identify[ing] the historical thinking concept(s) they are focusing their inquiry activity on;
> - Relevant learning outcomes from the Alberta K-6 Program of Studies to focus their lesson on;
> - Accessible primary and/or secondary sources relevant to the topic being investigated;
> - A sequence of learning activities that scaffold the key substantive and procedural knowledge the lesson focuses on;
> - Blackline masters, data charts, or other tools and strategies that will help students organize their findings and respond to the historical thinking question;
> - Valid assessment criteria for assessing students' understanding of the historical thinking concept(s) and the substantive knowledge being focused on (Gibson and Peck, 2020, p. 231).

Although the authors clearly indicate the limitations of their research—specifically, whether pre-service teachers would actually transfer their newly acquired knowledge about historical thinking

into their future classrooms; and whether this acquired knowledge might impact their future students' historical reasoning (Gibson and Peck, 2020, p. 225)—their findings are particularly significant because of what was not achieved. As Gibson and Peck discovered, while pre-service teachers in their inquiry became well versed in teaching and assessing for historical thinking, their own epistemological beliefs about the meaning of history and teaching history remained unchanged (p.244). This finding, as well as research discussed thus far, points to the question that guides this journal article: How might epistemological reasoning and teacher practise that supports historical thinking be aided through podcast-project teacher training?

Data Collection

Podcasts as teacher talk

Findings presented here are focused upon three classes of fourth-year education students enrolled in an elective course entitled "Teaching History at Senior Level" at the University of Ottawa. This course was held during the winter terms of 2021, 2022, and 2023 (35 participants in total). Participants in 2021 and 2022 (23 in total) were in the last semester of a two-year Bachelor of Education, and had already completed their second-year practicum requirements. Due to the covid pandemic, their entire course was conducted on-line synchronously, with additional short-quiz assignments and readings made available asynchronously.

Participants in 2023 (12 in total) were completing their first semester of the same two-year Bachelor of Education, but had not yet commenced their second-year practicum requirement. Instruction for the 2023 weekly course was conducted in person, with the same short-quiz assignments and readings as in previous years made available asynchronously. For this latter group, additional information was also collected with regards to their previous experience in learning and teaching history. Of these twelve, all but two had completed coursework in history during their undergraduate studies, and five had majored in history. Only two possessed teaching experience in history, and that was at post-secondary level. All of the teacher-candidates had already completed a companion course during the previous term about teaching history at junior level (ages 12 to 14), so all were very familiar with Seixas and Morton's (2013) six concepts of Historical Thinking.

As with Gibson and Peck's inquiry, the 11-week course was designed around Seixas and Morton's (2013) six concepts of Historical Thinking[2]: Evidence and Sources (6 classes); Historical Significance (2 classes); Cause and Consequence (2 classes); Continuity and Change (2 classes); Historical Perspectives (2 classes); and Ethical Dimensions (2 classes). In addition, throughline classroom instruction and activities were provided around evidence-based inquiry methods (5 classes); designing critical questions (3 classes); historical agency (2 classes); and assessing for Historical Thinking (2 classes). During each class, participants were provided with explicit instruction around implementing and teaching each historical thinking concept, three of which they were then requested to use explicitly in their culminating final assignment of creating an "Unwritten Histories" podcast as a think-aloud in historical thinking (hence demonstrating criterialist historical reasoning through their own teacher practise). In this sense, participants were explicitly asked to think out loud epistemologically, by adopting at least three of the six concepts of Historical Thinking.

How this final assignment differed from that of Gibson and Peck's (2020) is that—rather than designing lesson plans for their students to follow—these teacher-candidates were tasked with "walking the talk" (Case and MacLeod, 2014, p. 211) of *doing* history (and hence experiencing a project-based pedagogy as their future students might experience it) in the form of teacher talk. In addition, what set this assignment apart from Sandwell's (2011) methodology, is that these teacher-candidates were required to adopt a National History Framework, which culminated in a final reflection process paper (appendix A). As a result, through their 8-week journey of developing their podcast-project, they were prompted to not just follow the steps of *doing* history,

but also think—with each formative assignment along the way—about *what they were doing, how they were doing it,* and *why*.

In addition to this final assignment, each week we read and discussed a chapter in Margaret MacMillan's publication *Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History* (2009), as a way of understanding how historical narratives can change, depending upon the political times in which we live and who controls the narrative. Then, as an extension of this thesis, participants were asked to develop lesson plans suitable for their future senior level classrooms, using Historical Thinking concepts and also adopting a specific theoretical lens (relevant to Ontario's senior level history curriculum): Indigenous Perspectives in History; Feminist Theory in History; Settler Colonial Theory in History; Anti-racism in History; Transnational Theory in World History; and Social Justice Theory in History.

The culminating final assignment was to work in groups of two to create an "Unwritten Histories" podcast on any historical topic relevant to Ontario's History curriculum. In so doing, participants were required to explicitly model at least three concepts of Historical Thinking, and engage in an investigative conversation with their partner (hence employing techniques of dialogic learning). They were also prompted to "thinking out loud" like an historian—by clearly employing a vocabulary for Historical Thinking (adopting such terms as Cause and Consequence, Continuity and Change, Historical Significance, etc.). The length of the podcast was limited to 15 minutes, which meant that their conversation would have to be succinct and to the point. This podcast assignment extended over 8 weeks, becoming a key activity for learning and implementing the "Big Six" concepts of Historical Thinking (Seixas and Morton, 2013). To first demonstrate this approach to historical inquiry, participants were initially asked to review a podcast from the popular CBC Broadcasting series "Secret Life of Canada" (CBC Radio, 2023). Their task was to recognise when the podcasters were implicitly adopting Historical Thinking concepts, and to explain how the podcasters eventually arrived at a statement of Historical Significance.

National History Day framework for historical inquiry

Overall, what made the culminating final assignment somewhat different from a typical podcast project is that participants were asked to adopt (and with each portion of the assignment were guided through) the National History Day curriculum framework for historical inquiry (National History Day, 2023; Kuhn and O'Hara, 2014). This involved the development of annotated bibliographies, inquiry questions, storylines, scripts, statements of historical significance, and a final reflection process paper (appendix A). The objective (which was made very clear to participants at the very beginning) was to model in explicit ways their use of historical thinking strategies. In so doing, they were requested to adopt a vocabulary for Historical Thinking, thus employing at least three of the concept terms during their podcast, as a way of entering into a dialogue with their partner and modelling historical thinking. More specifically, the project was staged over eight weeks in the following manner:

Week 1 (which was actually 3 weeks into the course): 'How-to' review of "Secret Life of Canada" due. Participants were asked to review a podcast from this popular Canadian series—meaning—identify how the authors use and demonstrate one or more of the "Big Six" concepts of Historical Thinking (Seixas and Morton, 2013):

1. **Evidence and Sources:** Selecting, comparing, and interpreting primary and secondary sources of evidence;
2. **Historical Perspective:** Understanding the past as different from today, with a diverse range of social, cultural, intellectual, or emotional contexts that shaped people's lives and actions;
3. **Cause and Consequence:** Identifying how both direct and indirect conditions or actions led to others;

4. **Continuity and Change:** Identifying turning points in history as well as what has changed and what has remained the same over time;
5. **Historical Significance:** Why we care today about certain events, trends or issues in history; or
6. **Ethical Dimensions:** How we, in the present, judge actors in different circumstances in the past, and/or how different interpretations of the past reflect different moral stances on what happened (Seixas, 2006, pp 1-2).

Week 2: Participants' own "Unwritten Histories" podcast topic selection due (any topic of their choosing that supports Ontario curriculum outcomes).

Week 3: Preliminary annotated bibliography for their "Unwritten Histories" podcast due.

Week 4: Draft outline for their "Unwritten Histories" podcast due.

Week 7: "Unwritten Histories" podcast presentations and peer reviews take place in class.

Week 8: Submission of final "Process Paper" (instructions outlined in appendix A) along with a final revised annotated bibliography, podcast, and final script. This final process paper served to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on the assignment, identify bottlenecks in their research, and explain how they worked around these problems (if any).

Along with each weekly submission, participants were provided with formative feedback, enabling them to refine their focus, clarify their use of the Historical Thinking concepts, and consider alternative primary and secondary sources of evidence.

Data Analysis

As Gestsdottir, van Boxtel, and van Drie (2018) have pointed out, simply engaging classroom students in doing history is not nearly enough. Gestsdottir et al (2018) have identified 7 key categories for evaluating teacher practise:

1. The teacher communicates learning objectives that focus on historical thinking and reasoning goal;
2. The teacher demonstrates historical thinking or reasoning;
3. The teacher uses historical sources to support historical thinking and reasoning;
4. The teacher makes clear that there are multiple perspectives and interpretations;
5. The teacher provides explicit instructions on historical thinking and reasoning strategies;
6. The teacher engages students in historical thinking and reasoning by individual or group assignments;
7. The teacher engages students in historical thinking and reasoning by a whole-class discussion (p. 970).

In addition, Maggioni, Alexander, and VanSledright (2004) have identified three types of epistemological stances:

1. A *copier* stance regards claims about the past as either right or wrong, citing one authority as correct;

2. A *subjectivist* stance acknowledges that authorities can disagree, but as merely a matter of opinion;

3. A *criterialist* stance understands the constructed nature of history and the use of specific Historical Thinking concepts to evaluate the validity of author interpretations, resulting in the idea that some interpretations can be more plausible than others (van Boxtel and van Drie, 2018, p, 158).

This is the criteria that was adopted for analysing the final podcasts and scripts. As illustrated in Table 1, participants' podcasts were compared against Gestsdottir et al's (2018) categories 2 through 5 for the following evidence of teaching practice: 2) demonstrating historical thinking and reasoning; 3) using historical sources to support their reasoning; 4) adopting multiple perspectives or interpretations; and 5) explicitly adopting a vocabulary for historical thinking. In turn, the podcasts and scripts were also hermeneutically analysed against Maggioni et al's (2004) categories for epistemological stance: copier, subjectivist, and criterialist.

Table 1

Participants Epistemological Stances

Participants	2 - Reasoning	3 - Sourcing	4 – Multiple Perspectives	5 – Use of terms	Historical Reasoning
1 and 2	✓	✓	✓	No	2 - Criterialist
3, 4 and 5	✓	X	✓	No	3 - Copier
6 and 7	✓	✓	✓	Yes	2 - Criterialist
8	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Criterialist
9	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Criterialist
10 and 11	✓	✓	✓	Yes	2 - Criterialist
12	✓	✓	✓	No	Copier? Criterialist?
13	✓	X	✓	No	Copier
14 and 15	✓	X	✓	No	2 - Copier
16	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Criterialist
17 and 18	✓	✓	✓	No	2 - Criterialist
19	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Criterialist
20	✓	X	X	No	Copier
21 and 22	✓	✓	✓	Yes	2 - Copier
23	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Criterialist
24	✓	X	✓	No	Subjectivist
24	X	X	X	Yes	Subjectivist
26 and 27	X	X	N	No	2 - Copier
28	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Criterialist
29	✓	X	✓	No	Subjectivist
30 and 31	✓	✓	✓	No	2 - Copier
32	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Criterialist
33	✓	X	✓	No	Subjectivist
34 and 35	✓	✓	✓	Yes	2 - Criterialist

Notes: Evidence of Gestsdottir, van Boxtel, and van Drie's (2018) categories for evaluating teacher practice in participant podcasts and scripts: 2) demonstrating historical thinking and reasoning; 3) using historical sources to support their reasoning; 4) adopting multiple perspectives or interpretations; and 5) explicitly adopting a vocabulary for historical thinking.

In addition, participants' final process papers (outlined in appendix A) were analyzed for evidence of benefits and challenges associated with their overall podcast-project experience. Lastly, participants were also requested to complete two final exit survey questions: 1) Please explain what challenges you experienced in adopting Historical Thinking as a learning pedagogy for this project; and 2) How might this pedagogy apply to your future teaching practice in history education?

Findings[3]

Podcasts and scripts

What I was looking for in the final podcasts and scripts was evidence of whether there existed a correlation between implementing the terms (vocabulary) of Historical Thinking and adopting a criterialist stance in historical reasoning—i.e., moving away from "telling what happened" (a copier or subjectivist stance), to thinking historically *about how we know* what happened (a criterialist stance). This is a teaching practice that also corresponds with Gestsdottir, van Boxtel, and van Drie's (2018) criteria for teaching historical thinking in the classroom: demonstrating historical thinking or reasoning in their own thought process.

What I found is that for those participants who demonstrated a criterialist stance in their podcast presentations (17 out of 35), most (13 out of 17) also demonstrated elements of Gestsdottir et al's (2018) categories for teacher practise and were successful in adopting a vocabulary for historical thinking (see table 1).

For example, in the podcast developed by HO and AC (appendix B) the two teacher-candidates set about adopting the Historical Thinking concepts of Evidence and Sources:

> … the Parthenon acts as a **primary source** that we can analyze as **evidence** and what that evidence is saying is that Athenians wanted everyone to know the struggle it took to be victorious, but they again took that notion a step further when they started comparing their successes to the stories of the gods.

Historical Perspective:

> This is a great example of **historical perspective**! This primary source account is representative of the thoughts and beliefs of the Athenians at the time. And the fact that this story is documented by a writer living almost 500 years later shows just how powerful collective memory can be. By spreading stories of divine support for their Acropolis, Athens created a legacy of Athenian superiority.

And Historical Significance:

> So in conclusion, when we look at the Acropolis with historical perspective, it becomes clear that to ensure a lasting legacy of Athenian victory and supremacy, the Athenians memorialized the suffering and loss that they endured on their path to achieving Greek victory in the Persian Wars.

In so doing, they also laid their historical thinking out to the listener, thus demonstrating criterialist reasoning:

> Exactly! We envision them as these affluent, civilized, philosophers who mastered art, architecture, and literature. But is this picture just a snapshot of Athens at height? Does this mean that the Acropolis is a successful tool of propaganda if we still believe in this narrative of Athenian superiority thousands years later?

In addition, for HO and AC, like many of the others, their epistemological journey to create their podcast was guided by specific criteria:

> 1) …it needed to be relevant to today, inspire critical thinking, and be a lighter topic so that our podcast could be upbeat and funny (AC, p. 2);
>
> 2) …we had to be sure to be true to the facts, stay historically accurate, bring in the interesting tidbits, and ensure our audience could have a laugh or two, often at our own exaggerated expense (HO, pp 2-3).

In this context, historical thinking was indeed—as Sam Wineburg (2001) has described—an "unnatural act":

> The difficulty lies in picking the right information, not presenting too much information, fitting it into fifteen minutes, and being clear and concise while following the curriculum and the historical thinking concepts. The easy part was getting it to flow and make sense as a team. Once we got started, and got over all our initial trepidations of feeling inadequate to write a script it became fun and easy, and interesting (to us) (HO, p. 3).

Hence, through the process of developing their podcast around a topic of special interest to themselves, HO and AC consciously and deliberately engaged in refining their teaching practise to support Historical Thinking.

Annotated bibliographies

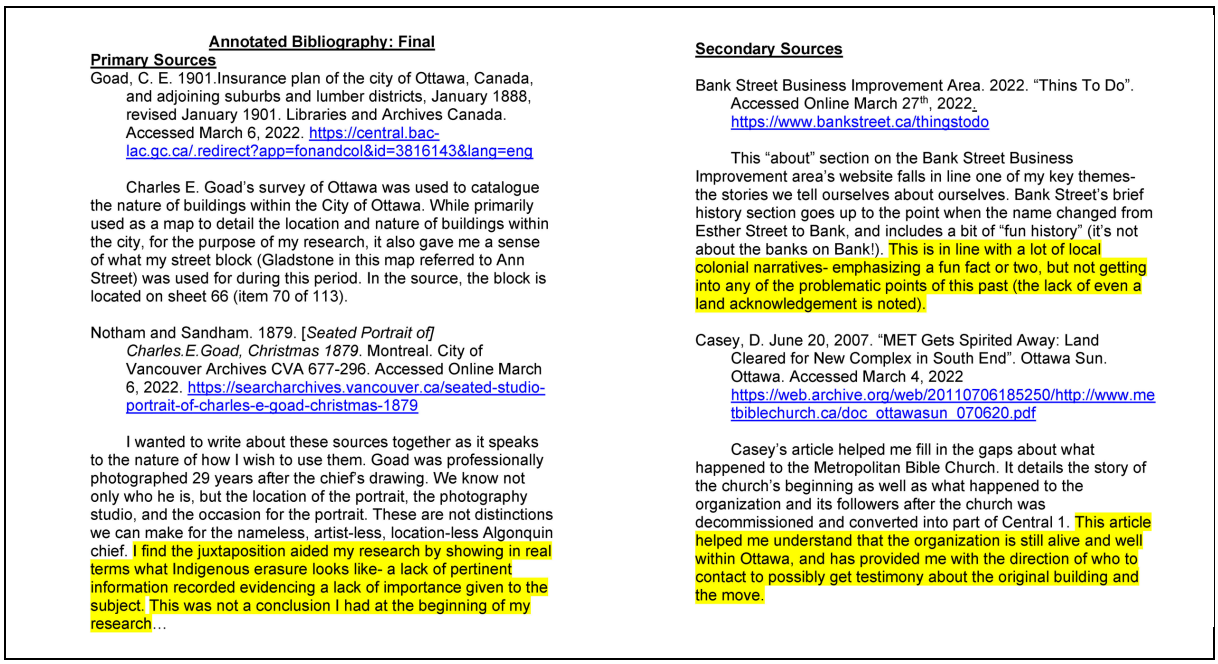
In keeping with the National History Day framework, preliminary annotated bibliographies were submitted early in the development of the podcast projects. Overall, this assignment became key to moving participants away from simply "telling" their audience what they already knew to be true—what Kuhn, Weinstock and Cheney (2000) have referred to as a "copier (e.g., history as a copy of the past)" or "borrower (e.g., people choose their preferred facts)" mode of epistemic development (Nitsche, Mathis, and O'Neill, 2022, p. 3). The desired outcome for the overall project was to move the teacher-candidates towards a "criterialist stance (e.g., history as a process of inquiry)" (Nitsche, Mathis, and O'Neill, 2022, p. 3).

The thought of developing a detailed bibliography at the BEGINNING of their project was not the most popular activity for participants. Upon explanation of the assignment, I sensed a unanimous groan—since the task required thoughtful upfront planning as to what primary sources would be considered, what alternative sources would be compared, and how these sources may or may not relate to the secondary information participants already possessed in hand. Without this key activity, I sensed that the end podcast result would be simply a polemic on a narrative that the participants had already copied, or borrowed, and was already well fixed in their belief system as true.

As illustrated in figure 1 below, this example of KT's final (revised) bibliography demonstrates a critical stance in making choices of what sources to include in his inquiry. What is important (I think) is that from the very beginning of his podcast project KT was thinking through HOW and WHY he would incorporate a specific piece of evidence into his analysis—and how this might compare to other sources of information. In other words, actively demonstrating corroboration of sources and reflecting upon their meaning:

Figure 1

Excerpt from KT's annotated bibliography



Annotated Bibliography: Final

Primary Sources

Goad, C. E. 1901.Insurance plan of the city of Ottawa, Canada, and adjoining suburbs and lumber districts, January 1888, revised January 1901. Libraries and Archives Canada. Accessed March 6, 2022. https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.redirect?app=fonandcol&id=3816143&lang=eng

Charles E. Goad's survey of Ottawa was used to catalogue the nature of buildings within the City of Ottawa. While primarily used as a map to detail the location and nature of buildings within the city, for the purpose of my research, it also gave me a sense of what my street block (Gladstone in this map referred to Ann Street) was used for during this period. In the source, the block is located on sheet 66 (item 70 of 113).

Notham and Sandham. 1879. [*Seated Portrait of] Charles.E.Goad, Christmas 1879*. Montreal. City of Vancouver Archives CVA 677-296. Accessed Online March 6, 2022. https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/seated-studio-portrait-of-charles-e-goad-christmas-1879

I wanted to write about these sources together as it speaks to the nature of how I wish to use them. Goad was professionally photographed 29 years after the chief's drawing. We know not only who he is, but the location of the portrait, the photography studio, and the occasion for the portrait. These are not distinctions we can make for the nameless, artist-less, location-less Algonquin chief. I find the juxtaposition aided my research by showing in real terms what Indigenous erasure looks like- a lack of pertinent information recorded evidencing a lack of importance given to the subject. This was not a conclusion I had at the beginning of my research…

Secondary Sources

Bank Street Business Improvement Area. 2022. "Thins To Do". Accessed Online March 27th, 2022. https://www.bankstreet.ca/thingstodo

This "about" section on the Bank Street Business Improvement area's website falls in line one of my key themes- the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves. Bank Street's brief history section goes up to the point when the name changed from Esther Street to Bank, and includes a bit of "fun history" (it's not about the banks on Bank!). This is in line with a lot of local colonial narratives- emphasizing a fun fact or two, but not getting into any of the problematic points of this past (the lack of even a land acknowledgement is noted).

Casey, D. June 20, 2007. "MET Gets Spirited Away: Land Cleared for New Complex in South End". Ottawa Sun. Ottawa. Accessed March 4, 2022 https://web.archive.org/web/20110706185250/http://www.metbiblechurch.ca/doc_ottawasun_070620.pdf

Casey's article helped me fill in the gaps about what happened to the Metropolitan Bible Church. It details the story of the church's beginning as well as what happened to the organization and its followers after the church was decommissioned and converted into part of Central 1. This article helped me understand that the organization is still alive and well within Ottawa, and has provided me with the direction of who to contact to possibly get testimony about the original building and the move.

KT was also conscious of how his ideas were changing over time, as he sifted through—what seemed at times—an overwhelming quantity of sources and potential avenues for investigation:

> In my original annotated bibliography, I had made mention that I would dive into how the National Capital Commission discusses its acquisition of land, and how the Algonquin territory includes the fracturing of the Algonquin of Quebec, as represented through documentary. I omitted both of these avenues of research as, the more I examined my topic, the more I focused on the specific example—what could *this condo* say about colonial erasure, leaving the other stories for another day... As far as next steps go, would I have had more time to research as well as more time allocated in this podcast, I would have loved to bring in a couple of guests—someone from the Metropolitan Bible Church, Robert S. (who seems to really enjoy getting into local history, albeit colonial history) and an Algonquin elder to speak to their relationship and recommendations for what development could look like (KT, April, 2022).

KT, like other teacher-candidates who participated in this inquiry, found it difficult and "messy" to work with sources and evidence. Yet, while many (21 out of 35) recognised this as a challenge that they had to overcome, the actual cognitive experience of working through that challenge is what Thorpe and Persson (2020) have noted is missing from the Canadian model for Historical Thinking:

> We think that the intersubjective, unsettled and existential dimension of historical thinking suggested here is given too little attention in history educational research, where instead the primary focus seems to be the question of how we can transfer and operationalize academic standards of history in history education (p. 898).

This element of personal reflection, as described by KT, also illustrates what Thorpe and Persson (2020) have argued is often overlooked in methods-style teaching—when too much attention is focussed on procedure over reasoning:

> …historical thinking should be seen as an attitude or stance that we can have towards history (and ourselves) rather than the mastering of a certain methodological technique. In addition, we have stressed the need to provide students with excessive opportunities to both use and challenge their own experiences as human beings (Thorpe and Persson, p. 899).

Benefits

An overwhelming number of participants (24 out of 35 participants[4]) indicated, upon completion of their podcast projects, that they enjoyed the experience of applying their Historical Thinking skills in this way, on a topic of their own choice. They also indicated that they would like to undertake similar activities in their future classrooms. As KR explained:

> I absolutely see the benefit of podcasts, and also can understand an even greater benefit of podcasts in high school history classes with students. If I was teaching the history class, I would not change anything that I learned in this process, including the self or peer reflection, the sharing of knowledge, the multiple steps to create the podcast, etc. A podcast would allow them to enhance research abilities, understand the importance of primary research, and find an interest in historical development (KR, 2023).

KR also elaborated upon the unnatural act of not just *doing* history—but actually *thinking* about adopting the concepts in meaningful ways:

> It was a challenging experience to adopt historical thinking as learning pedagogy because it was a new topic for me this semester. In the semester prior to this, we touched on historical thinking concepts broadly, but did not apply them particularly to a project. Therefore, using the historical thinking concepts with a podcast and building a script was challenging.
>
> The process was time-consuming, and using the historical thinking concepts made research more difficult, though less general. It was also challenging to fit the historical thinking into the podcast in a meaningful and academic way without ruining the flow of the project.
>
> Despite the challenges, however, the podcast and the historical thinking pedagogy was extremely helpful to my understanding of history as a teachable subject because it allowed me to complete a deeper analysis of my topic.

So, how might epistemological reasoning and teacher practise that supports historical thinking be aided through podcast-project teacher training? Although evidence presented in table 1 does not definitively suggest a direct correlation between using a podcast assignment as a way of training teachers to "talk the talk"—hence demonstrating criterialist historical reasoning—such findings do suggest potential benefits for both teacher-candidates and their future students. As HD pointed out in her final reflection:

> It took a lot of time and planning to adopt Historical Thinking as thinking out loud. Some challenges I experienced were developing the argument through having both HS and I talking. I did some research online on how to make a podcast and a lot of professionals use a script, so we went with this method. This was helpful because we were able to work through our ideas and plan on paper. I also enjoyed writing the script because it reminded me of writing a screenplay which I loved doing when I was a kid. In terms of pedagogy, it can we really useful to work through your ideas using reading, writing and speaking and this assignment includes all 3 modalities which could be really useful for helping students to learn and understand history (HD, 2022).

The overall benefits of such a model also seem to be closely aligned with Gestsdottir, van Boxtel, and van Drie's (2018) criteria for teacher training:

1) Teacher-candidates were prompted to focus their historical reasoning upon specific historical thinking goals;
2) they were also prompted to explicitly demonstrate historical thinking;
3) by using both primary and secondary sources to support their historical thinking; and
4) to seek out multiple perspectives and interpretations.
5) By explicitly adopting a vocabulary, they were prompted to model Historical Thinking for their future students;
6) they also engaged in a meaningful group assignment that could be replicated with their future students; and
7) through peer-review and presentation of their final podcast project engaged in whole-class discussions on their topic of interest.

Challenges

Such an approach was also not without its challenges. One of the most obvious deficits was finding reliable primary sources—and in particular, sources that reflected alternative perspectives, such as that of Indigenous Peoples. This highlights an important point with regards to sourcing of information, since one of the central premises of historical thinking is to engage in close reading of evidence and sources (Seixas, 2017; Martin and Wineburg, 2008; Wineburg, 1991). All of the participants in this inquiry turned to the Internet for access to both primary and secondary sources; yet, as Weinburg and others (Wineburg, 2018; see also Cutrara, 2019; Steinhauer, 2022; Wineburg and McGrew, 2019) have pointed out, the very nature of Internet archival resources presents their own unique challenges, making it difficult to realise alternative perspectives and multiple interpretations. The creator of the data resource also requires critical examination. As HP explained:

> Finding primary sources from Indigenous peoples… was unfortunately very difficult, which reflects the Eurocentrism of academia. While things are starting to change, for centuries, academia has prioritized the voices and opinions of Europeans and those of European decent, particularly white men. As a result, most of our sources are written by white men, and it is nearly impossible to find an "academic" source written by an Indigenous person on the topic (HP, 2023).

This points to a serious limitation in adopting inquiry projects as a method for teacher training in historical thinking. More time needs to be devoted to critical analysis of the producers of Internet materials (not just in analyzing the primary sources that are found therein).

A second major challenge was in sifting through the multitude of sources available via the Internet to narrow down a topic. This points to the "messiness" of history—in that more often than not, there are no easy or clear answers. Being able to recognise the constructed nature of history—and sift through a variety of interpretations or assemblages of sources—is key to being able to adopt a criterialist stance in historical reasoning.

So while these two points were recognised as challenges by the teacher-candidates, they also point to opportunities for supporting historical thinking in teacher training, since participants came to realise the problematic nature of historical inquiry, and began to think of ways to scaffold their future students in similar activities.

Conclusion

In this journal article I have considered how explicit use of Historical Thinking concepts, combined with an inquiry-based podcast project, might engage pre-service teachers in meaningful historical inquiry. Enabling participants to practise their teacher talk was found to be very beneficial in making their historical thinking public, visible, and audible (Holt, 1990). It also served as a valuable prompt for reflecting upon their own historicity, and laying out their own historical reasoning. These results are very much reminiscent of what other researchers (Collins, Brown, and Newman, 1989; van Boxtel and van Die, 2018; Maggioni, VanSledright, and Alexander, 2009) have described as *cognitive apprenticeship*. Through their production of podcasts, teacher-candidates were learning to not just lead their future students through what Thorpe and Persson (2020) have termed an "operationalised" set of skills—but rather ask questions (of themselves as well as their colleagues), gather background knowledge, and explore the "messiness" of historical inquiry.

For those who demonstrated a criterialist stance in historical reasoning (17 out of 35 participants), the process of developing their podcasts around a topic of special interest led them to consciously and deliberately engage in refining their teaching practise. Certainly, with exception of three participants (out of 16), it was evident that successfully adopting all four of Gestsdottir et al's (2018) criteria for teacher training correlated with demonstrating a criterialist stance in historical reasoning. This points to potential benefits of such a teaching strategy in aiding teacher-candidates to gain a more complex understanding of the constructed nature of history.

In addition, the formative experience of developing and refining—over time—an annotated bibliography was found to be supportive in guiding teacher-candidates towards a criterialist stance. As was evident in the examples presented, the reflective act of sifting through a multitude of evidence and sources—thus narrowing down and comparing—actually led participants to think about the HOW and WHY behind their choice of specific pieces of evidence and sources. In other words, actively examining, corroborating, and reflecting upon their meaning became an act in itself for establishing criteria around understanding the constructed nature of history.

Modelling historical thinking out loud, in the form of a conversational podcast, was found to be very appealing for those who participated in this inquiry. An overwhelming number of these teacher-candidates indicated that they would like to undertake a similar project with their future students, since they found the communication technique more dynamic than writing an essay or completing an exercise. Indeed, as Case and McLeod (2014) have pointed out: "'Walking the talk' is not only necessary—it is more likely to successfully prepare students to teach in desired ways in their own classrooms" (p. 211) Nevertheless, although participants appreciated the creative process, as well as being able to select their own topic of inquiry, their challenge rested with sifting through multitudes of sources available on the Internet—and recognizing the limitations of such Internet resources.

The adoption of a formative development process was found to be necessary in order to move participants away from borrowed truths—to instead adopt more analytical (criteria-based) considerations of their inquiry topic. This was achieved through the National History Day framework, which involved providing participants with individualised formative feedback, as well as opportunities for discussion on a weekly basis. In so doing, participants were prompted to continually reflect upon *what they were doing*, and why; hence not just follow prescribed steps for historical thinking, but actually think more wholistically about the problem of history meaning-making. As Thorpe and Persson (2020) have pointed out, this element of historicity can become easily overlooked when teachers focus too much of their attention on teaching the methods of historical thinking, without also reflecting upon their own—and their students'—human experience (p. 897).

How might epistemological reasoning and teacher practise that supports historical thinking be aided through podcast-project teacher training? What these findings confirm is that such a

learning process does support a "criterialist" stance in historical reasoning, as well as a more complex understanding of the constructed nature of history. It also presents history as a reflective process of inquiry, rather than simply tasks to be completed (Nitsche, Mathis, and O'Neill, 2022; Thorpe and Persson, 2020). Working through historical thinking concepts in an explicit and practical way—hence not just following the steps of *doing* history, but thinking more wholistically about *what you are doing, how you are doing it, and why*—holds great potential as a method for engaging and promoting more complex historical reasoning in teacher training.

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Endnotes

[1] Established in 1974 in the United States, the National History Day (NHD) curriculum framework is designed to engage senior level students (ages 14 to 16) in original project-based research, on historical topics of their own interest. Students present their research projects to the public at local and regional fairs, where they are judged by historians, and top projects are advanced to a national competition held each year at the University of Maryland. In Canada, a similar program, directed mainly to junior level students (ages 11 to 14), has operated since 1993, and is sponsored by Canada's History Society. As part of the NHD framework, students are required to follow procedural steps replicated in this inquiry, which involve the development of primary and secondary source annotated bibliographies, inquiry questions, storylines, scripts, statements of Historical Significance (e.g. thesis statements), and a final reflection process paper.

[2] **Evidence and Sources:** Selecting, comparing, and interpreting primary and secondary sources of evidence; **Historical Significance:** Why we care today about certain events, trends or issues in history; **Cause and Consequence:** Identifying how both direct and indirect conditions or actions led to others; **Continuity and Change:** Identifying turning points in history as

well as what has changed and what has remained the same over time; **Historical Perspective:** Understanding the past as different from today, with a diverse range of social, cultural, intellectual, or emotional contexts that shaped people's lives and actions; **Ethical Dimensions:** How we, in the present, judge actors in different circumstances in the past, and/or how different interpretations of the past reflect different moral stances on what happened (Seixas, 2006, pp 1-2).

[3] Limitation of findings: It is important to state that the researcher's role in this inquiry was also that of course instructor.

[4] The other remaining 11 did not complete the exit survey.

Appendix A

How to Write your "Unwritten Histories" Podcast Process Paper

Please adopt either MLA or Chicago formatting style.

THIS IS NOT A REPORT!! THIS IS A NARRATIVE, EXPLAINING HOW YOUR PROJECT CAME TOGETHER!!

There are five parts to a process paper:

1. Title Page (Headliner)

A title page is required as the first page of written material in every category.

2. Process Paper

This paper describes how you put your project together.

This paper should be 1000 words. The word limit does not include the Title Page, Annotated Bibliography, or Assessment Rubric.

Paragraph 1: Describe your podcast topic. How/why did you choose your topic? What was your big idea and guiding question?

Paragraph 2 and 3: Begin to explain where you found most of your research. If a person (librarian?) was very helpful, it is a good idea to mention them here. Also, mention two or three of your most useful sources, and why they were helpful to your project.

Paragraph 4: If you encountered any problems during your research or in producing your project mention it here. If you were looking for a specific source and had difficulty locating it, mention it here.

Paragraph 5: Statement of Historical Significance. Explain how your topic fits into the Ontario history curriculum and outcomes. Discuss the importance of your topic in history (adopting the Historical Thinking framework we studied in class) . What Historical Thinking concepts did you chose to use and why? Use this paragraph to stress why your topic is impactful, revealing, and symbolic.

3. Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography is required for all projects. It should contain all sources that provided usable information or new perspectives in preparing your entry. You will look at many more sources than you actually use.

- **You should list only those sources that contributed to the development of your project.**
- Sources of visual materials and oral interviews must be included. The annotations for each source must explain how the source was used and how it helped you understand your topic.
- Oral history transcripts, correspondence between you and experts, questionnaires, and other primary or secondary materials used as sources for your entry should also be cited in your bibliography but not included as attachments to your bibliography.

- Annotations should not be a book report, but 3-4 sentences that describe how or why the source was important to your research.
- You are required to separate your bibliography into primary and secondary sources.
- Use the annotation to explain why you listed a source as primary or secondary.

4. Script

Provide a revised copy of the script you developed for your podcast. What changes did you make from your original draft?

5. Podcast Presentation

Provide a link (or file attachment) to your podcast presentation. The length of the podcast should be approximately 15 minutes.

Appendix B

Sample Podcast Script

I'll Bet You Didn't Know That!
The Athenian Acropolis

Hosted by HO and AC

HO: Hello and welcome to the podcast "I'll Bet You Didn't Know That!" all about history, fun facts, and every other random thing you can use at a dinner party to sound smart! I am HO, and I am here with my podcast partner AC!

AC: Hi everyone! Thanks for tuning in. After careful consideration, and lots of suggestions we finally decided to delve into the podcast topic EVERYONE has been asking for "the Athenian Acropolis"...hold the applause.

HO: Honestly, this is too exciting. I am so happy our listeners picked this, so many people don't know the history behind this monument and I am happy to finally dive deep into this VERY popular topic. So AC, why was the Athenian Acropolis constructed?

AC: Well essentially, it all comes down to propaganda. However, it's a lot more nuanced than that. But before we get started, as always, let's get some context, buzzwords, key terms, and fun facts in order to set the stage!

HO: Alright...let's roll. First things first...what is propaganda? How is it used, what are the most popular examples we remember today, and does it work? Anyone who is anyone, has taken a history class and seen the classic popular examples of propaganda posters from WWII, whether it is Rosie the Riveter, Uncle Sam saying I want you, or anything depicting a strong soldier asking for victory bonds, we have seen it all...in poster form.

AC: So what is it? "Propaganda is the dissemination of information—facts, arguments, rumours, half-truths, or lies—to influence public opinion. Propagandists have a specific goal or set of goals. To achieve these, they deliberately select facts, arguments, and displays of symbols and present them in ways they think will have the most effect."

HO: Now, does it work? As I took a deep dive into discovering the effects of propaganda I was excited to find that it is a very hard thing to measure. In general, the word now carries a negative connotation. Most people like to believe that we are above being influenced. However, the truth of the matter is that we are bombarded with propaganda in every aspect of our lives all of the time, it would be absolutely impossible to be absolutely uninfluenced by it entirely. So...does it work? Short answer: yes.

AC: Quite the conundrum to ponder… but there is time for that later. Now onto the topic that brought us here today, one of Greece's most popular tourist attractions.

HO: You do see lots of photos all over social media #Acropolis #Athens #Ancient Greece am I right?

AC: Right! So let's get into it! But first, some background information. We are discussing the Acropolis that we are familiar with today but it is important to note that artifacts have been discovered on the site dating as far back as the middle neolithic era. That's about 12,000 years ago. However, the buildings we know and love today were constructed in the mid 5th century BCE.

HO: Crazy cool! What a time to be alive! Now onto the meat of the story! After the Persian Wars which ended in 449 BCE, Athens instituted a new program of commemorative propaganda. The program focused on inserting Athenian victory and supremacy into historical memory in order to create a lasting legacy. The desired collective memory was developed by the architectural monuments built on the Acropolis in the period following the Persian Wars.

AC: I would like to imagine this is well intended, but as we have seen so many times in history, faking or embellishing your history isn't the strongest strategy in the long run, we all find out eventually! Anyways, continuing on this Athenian journey, both the buildings themselves and their artistic programs were used to illustrate the messages that would ensure that Athenian victory and supremacy would be remembered by future generations. The pursuit to secure a lasting Athenian legacy was integrated into the Acropolis monuments through a variety of different propagandistic themes that worked to create the new Athenian legacy emerging out of the post war period.

HO: As we know, propaganda we are more familiar with comes out in the media and posters, unfortunately for our Athenians the same means and exposure did not exist...so what could they use to deliver the same messages and create a narrative?

AC: Why, architecture of course! Even though Athens possessed the funds to construct the Periclean Acropolis out of entirely new materials, the ruins of the old Acropolis were incorporated in order to act as a symbolic reminder of the Persian Wars. The fortifications of the Acropolis were the first structures to be rebuilt after the Persians had sacked, destroyed, and burned the old Acropolis in 480 BCE. The north wall, a section of the site's fortifications, was constructed using ruins that remained from the Persian sack, a technique used to exploit the emotions and imaginations of the people, forcing the reminder of Persian brutality against Athens to remain present in collective memory. (**HO:** Harsh!) By incorporating the ruins so blatantly into a structure constantly looming above the city, the Athenians ensured that the populace was unable to forget the threat of the Persians, the anger they should feel towards them, and the sacrifice of their city that Athens had made in order to defend the Greek world from this foreign threat.

HO: So great architects, deep thinkers, and strategic propagandists in their time?

AC: Undoubtedly...remarkable people really.

HO: Imagine being so wealthy you remake your buildings as a tool of propaganda, rather than a poster or like, a jingle? Crazy. But it does not stop there, the Athenians took their Acropolis propaganda a few steps further...with decorations!

AC: Now remember, these are public buildings, most of them were temples dedicated to various gods and goddesses, and they were built on the Acropolis which literally means the highest point of the city. Not only would these buildings be seen and visited many times by Athenians, but also by any travelers who visited the city.

HO: That means that the decorative programs would have had a large presence in Athens. On the Parthenon, the largest building on the Acropolis, scenes of conflict are favoured over that of immediate triumph. These scenes signify that Athens had won but not without the struggle or loss befitting any great war. This message is featured prominently on the sculptures decorating the exterior of the Parthenon. The sculptural decorations depict mythical villains such as the centaurs and amazons delivering killing blows to the lapiths and Greeks, the heros who come out of the struggle victorious.

AC: So, the illustration of these dying figures associated Athenian losses with the struggles faced by heroic victors of the past while highlighting the price that Athens paid in human suffering. The associations with myth help distance the grief that the Greeks faced in order to keep the message's focus on Athenian triumph afforded by the sacrifices it made to protect Greece.

HO: So basically, the Parthenon acts as a **primary source** that we can analyze as **evidence** and what that evidence is saying is that Athenians wanted everyone to know the struggle it took to be victorious, but they again took that notion a step further when they started comparing their successes to the stories of the gods.

AC: Exactly! And, the Athenians weren't done there. To further establish a legacy of Athenian victory and leadership, they utilized art and architecture to showcase their superiority over other Greek city states.

HO: So what **evidence** do we have for this?

AC: Great question HO! It all comes down to the Parthenon again. You see, Athens had emerged out of the Persian Wars better off than they had been at the start. They now held more wealth and prominence within the Greek world and were determined to ensure that this prosperous and triumphal version of their city was the one which would be remembered throughout history. The Parthenon was an expression of this new Athens and through its costly materials, complex iconographic program, and technically sophisticated style of execution, it basically functioned as a victory monument.

HO: So when you analyze our **primary source**, the Parthenon, what **evidence** do we have to be able to claim that it had a complex iconographic program?

AC: Analyzing the interior and exterior decorations of the Parthenon shows us how much emphasis they put on depicting scenes. There was a 524 feet continuous carving that depicted an Athenian procession, 92 separate stand alone scenes of mythical battles, and at least 17 sculptures depicting the birth of Athena and her battle with Poseidon for Athens.

HO: Wow! That does sound like a complex iconographic program. I'm certainly impressed by this propaganda!

AC: Yes, and now that we've used our evidence to establish its complex iconographic program, we also need evidence that proves its true purpose as a victory monument and not just a religious temple. Despite the temple being a marvel of architecture and art, it did not house the precious and ancient wooden cult image of Athena as would be typical, instead it housed the Athenian treasury. All of the riches that they had looted in the wake of their Persian victory.

HO: So what does this all mean? **What does** this **reveal** about Athens and the Acropolis?

AC: It means that the Parthenon should perhaps be considered not so much a temple to Athena like a site or focus of worship—but rather as a temple to Athens, a storehouse of its wealth, a marble essay on its greatness, and the focus of its ideology. The new Acropolis built by Pericles serves as an expression of Athenian supremacy as it flaunts the wealth and technical mastery that Athens possessed. The Athenians also used this new program of propaganda to portray themselves as the defenders and upholders of Greek principles. The Athenians saw themselves as the defenders of the Greek world and believed that they alone possessed the moral qualities for this position of leadership.

HO: Classic leadership scene we have all seen before. I am doing so grea, therefore I must be the greatest. This is my favourite condensed speech of any ruler throughout history! But what evidence do we have that says the Athenians saw themselves as the manifestation of Greek ideals?

AC: Well, to give credit to this idea that Athens best represented the Greek ideals, the Athenians used their goddess to indicate the longevity of Athenian virtue. The east end of the Parthenon depicts the birth of Athena, a scene which serves as a metaphor for the birth of Athens as they benefit from her patronage. Just as the birth of Athena brought all that she embodies to the world, the patronage of Athena brings to the Athenians the power of intellect, wisdom, and civilization. Athens is the most fit to be the leader of the Greeks since they are gifted with the virtuous attributes of their patron goddess Athena.

HO: So not subtle at all, the Athenians not only won in battle, rebuilt their beautiful monuments and temples, had tons of cash to spare...but then they went on to propagate their superiority and likeness to the Gods. Brilliant. All it takes is winning a war and building a temple with my victories, and then maybe Poseidon will let me ride a dolphin?

AC: Yes HO...that's exactly how it works! Back to the propaganda… Athens wanted further proof that they were blessed by the gods and soon tales spread about the divine support that Athens received. Pausanias, a Greek writer from the 2nd century CE recounts a story about a miracle that occurred on the Acropolis after the Persians had sacked it. He writes "Legend... says that when the Persians [burned] Athens, the olive [tree] was burnt down, but on the very day it was burnt, it grew again to the height of two cubits" (Paus. Attica, I, 27, 2). That's about 2.4 meters of growth within a day!

HO: A true miracle!

AC: Yes, and the Athenians spread tales like these far and wide to prove that they had the divine support from their goddess, making them the ideal leaders of the Greeks!

HO: Well if a miracle olive tree wasn't enough, Pericles even claimed to have been visited by the Goddess herself during the construction of the Acropolis.

AC: This sounds interesting! Please do tell!

HO: This story comes from my man Plutarch, a Greek writer living in the 1st century CE. He says "A wonderful thing happened in the course of their building, which indicated that the goddess was not holding herself aloof, but was a helper both in the inception and in the completion of the work. One of its artificers, the most active and zealous of them all, lost his footing and fell from a great height, and lay in a sorry plight, despaired of by the physicians. Pericles was much cast down by this, but the goddess appeared to him in a dream and prescribed a course of treatment for him to use, so that he speedily and easily healed. It was in commemoration of this that he set up the bronze statue of Athena Hygieia on the acropolis." (Plutarch, Lives, III, 13, 8)

AC: Wow! It sounds like Pericles was the chosen one!

HO: Yeah! This is a great example of **historical perspective**! This primary source account is representative of the thoughts and beliefs of the Athenians at the time. And the fact that this story is documented by a writer living almost 500 years later shows just how powerful collective memory can be. By spreading stories of divine support for their Acropolis, Athens created a legacy of Athenian superiority.

AC: So in summary, Pausanias' story presents the **perspective** that the goddess Athena supported the Athenians through the miracle growth of her sacred olive tree, and Plutarch's tale offers the **perspective** that Athena supported the building of the Acropolis through her advice to Pericles.

HO: Exactly! And both of these stories support the Athenian **perspective** that they were supreme since they had divine support.

AC: So in conclusion, when we look at the Acropolis with **historical perspective**, it becomes clear that to ensure a lasting legacy of Athenian victory and supremacy, the Athenians memorialized the suffering and loss that they endured on their path to achieving Greek victory in the Persian Wars.

HO: They ensured that the buildings constructed on the Acropolis served a double purpose. They function as religious temples but also as victory monuments that demonstrated Athenian skill, wealth, and supremacy.

AC: Finally, they closely associated themselves with their goddess Athena to highlight their Greek morals and the divine favour that they received.

HO: There you have it folks! The long-awaited episode on Athenian propaganda! We explored propaganda, we contextualized the Persian wars, we examined **different evidence and sources, established historical perspectives** and discovered the **historical significance** of the Athenian Acropolis! And in the end, it all points to the successful force of propaganda!

AC: And what a successful force it was! As with most stories of the ancient world, the myths are often more widely accepted than the truth, and when you throw Greek gods into the mix, it becomes easy to see why. Who wouldn't want to be in the same storyline as a God? When all it takes is building a temple…

HO: That's certainly something to keep in mind the next time you're pondering Athens. How much of current perception of Athens has been swayed by their propaganda campaign which began over 2000 years ago!?

AC: Exactly! We envision them as these affluent, civilized, philosophers who mastered art, architecture, and literature. But is this picture just a snapshot of Athens at height? Does this mean that the Acropolis is a successful tool of propaganda if we still believe in this narrative of Athenian superiority thousands of years later?

HO: These are some deep questions! I can't wait to bring them up at my next family dinner!

AC: Hahaha, move over small talk! HO's got bigger questions on her mind!

HO: Well, thanks again for tuning in to another episode of "I'll Bet You Didn't Know That!"

AC: See you next week for some more fun history facts!

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Epistemic beliefs of Norwegian history student teachers: Testing and assessing two measurement instruments

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ABSTRACT

Since teachers' and students' epistemic beliefs about history are believed to significantly impact teachers' practices, students' performance and the ability to think historically of both, investigating such beliefs is important. Following the seminal works of Maggioni and colleagues (Maggioni, 2010; Maggioni et al., 2004; Maggioni et al., 2009), a number of studies have adapted versions of her Beliefs About Learning and Teaching History Questionnaire (BLTHQ) and Beliefs about History Questionnaire (BHQ) to quantitatively evaluate epistemic beliefs in different national contexts (Mierwald et al., 2016; Miguel-Revilla et al., 2017; Namamba & Rao, 2016; Nitsche, 2019; Stoel, Logtenberg, et al., 2017). However, the validity and reliability of these instruments have mostly been found to be problematic (Mierwald & Junius, 2022; Stoel et al., 2022). We have tested two different questionnaires – Maggioni's BLTHQ and our own adaptation of the BHQ – in separate surveys, on respectively 176 and 324 Norwegian history student teachers. For both questionnaires, our exploratory analysis showed a three-factor solution, supporting King and Kitchener's (1994) model, and undermining the two-factor solutions found in many former studies. However, despite both questionnaires showing acceptable consistency and fitness, these levels were not optimal, and confirmed the problem of epistemic inconsistency (or 'wobbling') revealed by previous studies. These results encourage further qualitative studies to better understand the problem of wobbling, to design better questionnaires to be tested in the future.

KEYWORDS

Epistemic beliefs, Epistemic wobbling, Norwegian history student teachers, Measurement instruments

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Introduction

Since the 1970s, epistemic beliefs have been widely acknowledged as having significant influence upon, and partially predicting, students' and teachers' metacognitive processes to learn and teach and their levels of critical thinking in different domains of knowledge (Buehl & Alexander, 2001; Hofer & Bendixen, 2012; King & Kitchener, 2002; Kuhn, 1999; Stoel et al., 2022; VanSledright & Limón, 2006). Consequently, in History and Social Studies education, a range of different models have been conceptualized and tested to understand and evaluate people's epistemic beliefs (Maggioni et al., 2009; Miguel-Revilla et al., 2020; Stoel et al., 2022). The Beliefs about Learning and Teaching of History Questionnaire (BLTHQ) developed by Liliana Maggioni and colleagues (Maggioni et al., 2004; Maggioni et al., 2009) and its later version, the Beliefs about History Questionnaire (BHQ) (2010) have gained particular interest, as they reveal latent structures of directly obtained beliefs and offer a quantitative approach that saves considerable time and energy, compared with some more nuanced yet more complex qualitative surveys. However, both questionnaires have proven to meet several challenges, which are discussed in detail below (Maggioni, 2010; Maggioni et al., 2004; Maggioni et al., 2009; Mierwald et al., 2017; Stoel, van Drie, & van Boxtel, 2017).

Following Maggioni's work, our goal has been to test two versions of the BLTHQ in a Norwegian context. To do so, we have translated the original BLTHQ into Norwegian, and developed a modified version (hereby called OHF) derived from the BHQ and other similar questionnaires. We have given both questionnaires to Norwegian history student teachers and compared their respective factorial structures, and tested their validity.

Theoretical framework

The role of epistemic beliefs about history in education

In the wake of the cognitive revolution started in the 1950s' (Royer, 2006) and the Schools Council History Project in the UK in the 1970s' (Shemilt, 1980), we can see a paradigmatic shift in the way history education is conceptualized. Namely, a shift from history studies focusing on the memorization of a set of facts and national narratives, to the recognition of history as encapsulating a diversity of topics, perspectives, methodologies, skills and abilities (Lévesque, 2008; Mathis & Parkes, 2020). In particular, the skills and competences associated with "doing history" have provoked questions about students' and teachers' epistemic ideas about history and historical knowledge (Mathis & Parkes, 2020). Furthermore, the level of students' epistemic beliefs has been closely linked to the achievement of greater disciplinary motivation, academic performance, and critical thinking (Buehl & Alexander, 2001; Lee & Shemilt, 2003). In turn, these insights have been deemed crucial for the proper participation of future citizens in pluralistic and democratic societies where both the role of social media and the flow of information, are increasing (Barton & Levstik, 2009; Journell, 2017).

Regarding teachers, it is upheld that epistemic beliefs influence their teaching practices and their ability to change them durably (Brownlee et al., 2017; Buehl & Fives, 2016; Hofer & Bendixen, 2012, pp. 239-241).

Defining and assessing epistemic beliefs about history

The theoretical conceptualization of epistemic beliefs in history education has been mainly informed and influenced by the models developed by King and Kitchener (King & Kitchener, 1994, 2002), Kuhn and Weinstock (Kuhn, 1999; Kuhn & Weinstock, 2002), and Lee and Shemilt (2003). Through qualitative investigation of tasks and in-depth interviews, these models have outlined different stages of development, where the highest level is the ideal to attain. Maggioni and colleagues have aimed to combine and synthesize these models to design a questionnaire – the BLTHQ – that could be used to quantitatively determine people's epistemic beliefs on a three-level scale (Maggioni et al., 2004; Maggioni et al., 2009). At the first level, the copier stance is equivalent to King & Kitchener's pre-reflective period and Kuhn and Weinstock's realist and absolutist positions (schematically, historical knowledge is considered as objective and mirroring "what happened"). At the second level, the borrower stance corresponds to King and Kitchener's quasi-reflective period and Kuhn and Weinstock's multiplist positions (historical knowledge is considered as subjective and relative). At the highest level of progression, the reflective stance parallels King and Kitchener's reflective period and Kuhn & Weinstock's evaluativist positions (historical knowledge is the result of constructed interpretations and narratives based on debated disciplinary criteria of scientificity). The original BLTHQ was replaced in 2010 by an alternative, the BHQ (Maggioni, 2010).

The design of the BLTHQ and the BHQ were well-grounded and led to German and Spanish translations (Mierwald et al., 2017; Miguel-Revilla & Fernández, 2017). However, issues arose regarding validity and the interpretation of its answers. First, the factor analysis of the original BLTHQ isolated only two factors: one including the objectivist and subjectivist items, the other encompassing the criterialist items – instead of the three factors expected in the light of the original theoretical model and King & Kitchener's Reflective Judgment Model (RJM). The same issue arose in the first version of the German BHQ (22 items – a study called ARGUMENT), tested on 124 upper secondary school pupils (Mierwald et al., 2017). Moreover, the loadings of some items, particularly the objectivist and the criterialist ones, were problematic in the German, Dutch and Spanish translations of the BHQ (Mierwald & Junius, 2022; Miguel-Revilla et al., 2020; Stoel, Logtenberg, et al., 2017). Consequently, the theoretical background of the subjectivist items has been criticized as ambiguous and potentially wobbling between naïve and more nuanced statements (Mierwald & Junius, 2022; Stoel, Logtenberg, et al., 2017).

Stoel, Logtenberg, et al. (2017) tested an alternative questionnaire of 26 items, partly based on a Dutch translation of the BHQ, on 922 upper secondary school students, aiming to highlight a two-factor solution between naïve beliefs (15 items – beliefs viewing the past as fixed or as the result of opinions) and nuanced epistemic beliefs (11 items – seeing history as multiple interpretations of the past and the result of disciplinary criteria). As a result, five factors emerged from their exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and although some factors could be categorized as belonging either to naïve or nuanced epistemic beliefs, the original aim of obtaining a clear distinction between two factors proved difficult to achieve.

Moreover, an issue of epistemic inconsistency has often been identified, particularly for beginners (Maggioni, 2010), but also among experts (Stoel, Logtenberg, et al., 2017). This shows that participants may hold views reflecting different stances that appear to be contradictory, for example agreeing (or disagreeing) with statements belonging either to the pre-reflective/objectivist stance, the quasi-reflective/relativist/subjectivist stance or the reflective/criterialist/evaluativist stance.

Interestingly, Mierwald et al. (2017) tested a modified version of the BHQ (a study called SOSCIE) on 224 German student teachers. They obtained originally a six-factor structure, that was reduced to three factors, based on the visual inspection of the Scree plot. Those three factors explained 41% of the total variance and most items intended to each stance loaded on the same factor – in accordance with Maggioni's (2010) three epistemic stances – and with good internal consistency (Mierwald, 2020; Mierwald & Junius, 2022; Mierwald et al., 2017). However, the SOSCIE-study had reduced the original Likert-scale from six to four alternatives and forced the

confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with three factors. Reducing the complexity in representation of the respondents' beliefs may have overestimated the effects and makes comparisons difficult.

Some years later, Mierwald and Junius (2022) performed a think-aloud questionnaire and interviews with four German students. Their study showed that, although most items in the questionnaire were clear and easy to understand, a few statements from the criterialist and objectivist stances were still problematic. Together with previous studies, this supports reducing the complexity and the epistemic ambiguity of the questionnaire, by rewording the statements more adequately, fastening them closer to the stance they mean to represent, and discard references to the school context (Barzilai & Weinstock, 2015; Mierwald & Junius, 2022; Muis et al., 2014).

In addition, several studies have indicated that the national and cultural context of each country may influence the way people understood and answered questions related to their epistemic conceptions about history (Sakki & Pirttilä-Backman, 2019; Stoel et al., 2022; Wansink et al., 2016).

Therefore, there are many interesting questions to consider when adapting and testing the BLTHQ and a modified version of the BHQ:

- Does a replication of the BLTHQ among Norwegian history student teachers show results comparable to those from the original study (Maggioni et al., 2004; Maggioni et al., 2009) and the ARGUMENT-study (Mierwald et al., 2017)?
- Does a test of the validity of the BLTHQ and of a modified version of the BHQ in the Norwegian context show significantly different results – for example, a better fit to a three-factor distribution and a solid consistency of the different factors?

Method

We tested two different questionnaires in separate surveys. The first survey used a translation of the BLTHQ (Maggioni et al., 2004) in Norwegian. The second survey used a questionnaire we have developed (called *Oppfatninger om historiefaget* [Beliefs About History as a Discipline], OHF – see Table 1), based on a mix of Maggioni's BLTHQ (2004) and BHQ (2010), and King and Kitchener's principles for their RJM (1994). Following Stoel et al. (2022), we considered the stages in the different developmental models to be roughly equivalent. Table 2 shows a comparison between the BLTHQ, the BHQ and our OHF. Together with introducing some nuance in the wording of certain statements, we made changes in the hope of better singling out the different groups.

Firstly, we chose to have an equal number of items in each category. The BLTHQ and the BHQ have an unbalanced number of statements for each stance, and we wanted to avoid any imbalances which could potentially impact the results. The BLTHQ included a total of 21 items, nine of them belonging to the objectivist stance; eight to the subjectivist stance; and four to the criterialist stance. The BHQ was originally composed of 22 items; five items in the copier stance; nine items in the borrower stance; and eight items in the criterialist stance. We opted for a total of 18 items, assigning six items to each stance, making the questionnaire more compact and balanced.

Secondly, some statements in the original questionnaires seemed redundant or to be overlapping (Table 2). For example, "Students who are good at memorization learn history quickly" (BLTHQ – item 1) and "To learn history means mainly to study many facts about the past and commit them to memory" (BLTHQ – item 6); or "History is simply a matter of interpretation" (BHQ – item 2) and "Students need to be aware that history is essentially a matter of interpretation" (BHQ – item 17); or "A historical account is the product of a disciplined method of inquiry" (BHQ – item 3) and "History is a critical inquiry about the past" (BHQ – item 11). We tried to avoid questions or statements that were too similar.

Thirdly, we kept the item S4 "History should be taught like a story: Some things are true, but some others are just a matter of personal opinion" (Table 2), but moved it from the subjectivist

stance (in the BLTHQ) to the objectivist stance in our OHF-model, considering that this item (P5) may better correspond to the description in Stage 3 of the RJM – stating that knowledge is assumed to be certain, but in case of uncertainty, personal opinions will prevail (King & Kitchener, 1994, pp. 56-57).

Table 1

Items defined in our OHF-questionnaire, grouped by stance

Code	Item and item number
	Objectivist/Pre-reflective stance
P1	1. History is not only about learning and memorizing facts, but it is the most important part.
P2	2. The facts speak often for themselves in history and do not need to be discussed or debated.
P3	3. It is fully possible to be objective in History, if one examines things with an open mind.
P4	6. Good general reading and comprehension skills are usually enough to learn history.
P5	14. History should be taught as a narrative: Certain things are true, and others are only a matter of personal opinions.
P6	18. When in doubt between to contradicting interpretations, one should choose the interpretation coming from the person one trusts the most.
	Subjectivist/Quasi-reflective stance
Q1	4. What we know in history is relative: Two contradicting interpretations can both be true, depending on the perspective.
Q2	8. The choice of arguments and evidence in history is subjective and individual.
Q3	9. When reading an historical account, it is more important to focus on the author's perspective than on how he/she supports their reasoning.
Q4	10. It is actually impossible to be sure of anything in history: one can question most of it.
Q5	11. To teach/learn that one particular interpretation is better than another is in fact unfortunate in history.
Q6	13. In history books, the accounts are usually largely depending on the historian's own perspective.
	Criterialist/Reflective stance
R1	5. The hope of being objective in history must be abandoned; one can only be aware of one's own choices of methods and perspectives.
R2	7. It is fundamental that students learn to assess methods used in history.
R3	12. Comparing sources and understanding author perspective is essential in history.
R4	15. In history, it is essential that students learn to deal with conflicting evidence/sources.
R5	16. It is fundamental that students are taught to support their reasoning with evidence and sources.
R6	17. History is about assessing the sources available to produce the most probable and trustworthy interpretation.
	Summarizing question
S	19. Which of the following alternatives is closest to your own conception of history as a discipline?
O	a) History is mainly about what is true and false; to find out what actually happened and why. One has to be as objective as possible, which is a difficult task, but one has to try.
Q	c) It is actually impossible to know anything for sure in history, because everything is subjective, relative and hinging on perspectives and points of view. One shall only understand the different perspectives, preferably without taking sides.
R	b) History is about understanding the past, based on different sources and remains available. It is about assessing perspectives and methods used to produce the most likely and trustworthy interpretation.

Table 2

Comparison of the three different models: BLTHQ, BHQ and OHF

BLTHQ (Maggioni et al. 2004, 2009)	BHQ (Maggioni 2010, Miguel-Revilla 2020, Mierwald et al. 2017)	OHF
Copier/Objectivist	**Copier/Objectivist**	**Objectivist/Pre-reflective stance**
O1 Students who are good at memorization learn history quickly.		**P1** History is not only about learning and memorizing facts, but it is the most important part.
O2 Corroborating evidence and identifying sources are important learning strategies in history, but only after mastering the basic facts		
O3 In history there is really nothing to understand; the facts speak for themselves.	16. The facts speak for themselves.	**P2** The facts speak often for themselves in history and do not need to be discussed or debated.
O4 Students who know their textbook well will be good at history.		
O5 To learn history means mainly to study many facts about the past and commit them to memory.		
O6 Teachers need to avoid giving students conflicting sources, since it makes historical investigation impossible.		
O7 In learning history, summarizing is more important than comparing.		
O8 Teachers should not question students' historical opinions, only check that they know the facts.	20. Teachers should not question students' historical opinions, only check that they know the facts.	
O9 Good general reading and comprehension skills are enough to learn history well.	9. Good general reading and comprehension skills are enough to learn history well.	**P4** Good general reading and comprehension skills are enough to learn history well.
	5. Disagreement about the same event in the past is always due to lack of evidence.	
		P3 It is fully possible to be objective in History, if one examines things with an open mind.
		P5 History should be taught like a story: Certain things are true, and others are only a matter of personal opinions.
		P6 When in doubt between two contradicting interpretations, one should choose the interpretation coming from the person one trusts the most.
	19. Even eyewitnesses do not always agree with each other, so there is no way to know what happened.	
	23. Differences in historical accounts result from absence or falsity of historical facts.*	
	25. History consists of the sum of collected historical facts.*	
Subjectivist/Quasi-reflective stance	**Subjectivist/Quasi-reflective stance**	**Subjectivist/Quasi-reflective stance**
S1 Students who read many history books learn that the past is what the historian makes it to be.	4. Students who read many history books learn that the past is what the historian makes it to be.	**Q6** In history books, the accounts are usually largely depending on the historian's own perspective.
S2 Good students know that history is basically a matter of opinion.	6. Good students know that history is basically a matter of opinion.	
S3 Students need to be aware that history is essentially a matter of interpretation.	17. Students need to be aware that history is essentially a matter of interpretation.	
S4 History should be taught like a story: Some things are true, but some others are just a matter of personal opinion.		
S5 In reading a history book, it is more important to pay attention to the perspective of the historian than to his or her reasoning on the evidence discussed.		**Q3** In reading a history book, it is more important to pay attention to the perspective of the historian than to his or her reasoning on the evidence discussed.
S6 Since there is no way to know what really happened in the past, students can believe whatever story they choose.	10. Since there is no way to know what really happened in the past, students can believe whatever story they choose.	
S7 Teaching that one historical interpretation is better than another is usually inappropriate.		**Q5** Teaching/Learning that one historical interpretation is better than another is usually inappropriate.
S8 Teachers need to make all historical interpretations available and let the students construct their own understanding of them.		
		Q1 What we know in history is relative: Two contradicting interpretations can both be true, depending on the perspective.
		Q2 The choice of arguments and evidence in history is subjective and individual.
	14. It is impossible to know anything for sure/with certainty about the past, since no one of us was there.	**Q4** It is actually impossible to be sure of anything in history: one can question most of it.
	2. History is simply a matter of interpretation	
	8. Historical claims cannot be justified/substantiated, since they are simply a matter of interpretation.	
	12. The past is what the historian makes it to be.	
	22. There is no evidence in history	
Criterialist stance	**Criterialist stance**	**Criterialist stance/Reflective stance**
C1 Knowledge of the historical method is fundamental for historians and students alike.	15. Knowledge of the historical method is fundamental for historians and students alike.	**R2** It is fundamental that students learn to assess the methods used in history.
C2 Comparing sources and looking for author subtext are essential components of the process of learning history.	13.Comparing sources and understanding author perspective are essential components of the process of learning history.	**R3** Comparing sources and understanding author perspective is essential in history.
C3 Students need to be taught to deal with conflicting evidence.	7. Students need to be taught to deal with conflicting evidence.	**R4** In history, it is essential that students learn to deal with conflicting evidence/sources.
C4 It is fundamental that students are taught to support their reasoning with evidence and ask that history textbook authors do so also.	1. It is fundamental that students are taught to support their reasoning with evidence.	**R5** It is fundamental that students are taught to support their reasoning with evidence and sources.
	21. History is the reasonable reconstruction of past occurrences based on the available evidence.	**R6** History is about assessing the sources available to produce the most probable and trustworthy interpretation.
		R1 The hope of being objective in history must be abandoned; one can only be aware of one's own choices of methods and perspectives.
	3. A historical account is the product of a disciplined method of inquiry.	
	11. History is a critical inquiry about the past.	
	18. Reasonable accounts can be constructed even in the presence of conflicting evidence.	
	24. Historians reconstruct the past based on regulated methods. *	

* Questions added to the original BHQ in Mierwald et al. (2017)

Moreover, the BLTHQ focused on creating statements affiliated to history learning and teaching, assuming that they were a good proxy for the epistemic beliefs of their main target: history teachers. Following recommendations from Mierwald and Junius (2022), we replaced recurrent references to the school system by more direct statements about conceptions about history as a discipline. For example, we added statements like "It is fully possible to be objective in History, if one examines things with an open mind", and "What we know in history is relative: Two contradicting interpretations can both be true, depending on the perspective", or "The hope of being objective in history must be abandoned; one can only be aware of one's own choices of methods and perspectives". We hoped that these additions, together with the inclusion of adverbs that introduce further nuance in the statements, would help the participants answer more easily and would make clearer divides between the three stance categories. In the same spirit, we added a last question that intended to explicitly summarize the meaning of each position, by asking each participant which stance was closest to their own overall epistemological position towards history (Table 1). This summarizing question is intended 1) to indicate clearly which stance each respondent thinks s/he belongs to, and 2) to display eventual disparities between the respondents' answers to the previous statements and their perception of their own overall epistemic position.

Finally, we kept the original six-point Likert scale system, as used by Maggioni (1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Agree; 6 = Strongly agree). The order of the 18 different items was randomly set but was the same for all participants. The questionnaire was distributed online, using SurveyXact, through the University portal for History student teachers at different levels (from first year to master), from four different universities. We followed the formal ethical rules of confidentiality and personal data protection endorsed by the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research.

176 subjects (74 female and 102 male) filled in the BLTHQ – 215 were between 18 and 24 years old; their mean study experience was 2,3 years (median = 2,00; std. dev. = 1,60), and 155 were in their first year of History study. For our OHF-questionnaire, we gathered answers from 324 respondents (134 female and 190 male); 215 were between 18 and 24 years old; their mean study experience was 2,93 years (median = 3,00; std. dev. = 1,84); 200 were in their first year of study.

We have used JASP (2022, Version 0.16.2), a free software based on R, to extract our results and test the two different models through an EFA, and then a CFA. We have supposed that the different factors were not independent and used a Varimax rotation based on main components, excluding loadings lower than 0.400. Factor analysis is a statistical method used to measure whether a large number of variables (e.g. "items" in a questionnaire) can be reduced into fewer groups (e.g. here "objectivist", "subjectivist" or "criterialist" stances); the result for each item reflects how strongly it relates to a particular factor.

Findings and interpretation

The measure of the Kayser-Meyer-Olkin coefficient for both questionnaires turned out satisfactory to run a factor analysis (KMO for BLTHQ = .750; KMO for OHF = .726), which was also confirmed by the Bartlett's tests of sphericity – testing whether a matrix (of correlations) is significantly different from an identity matrix, it provides probability that the correlation matrix has significant correlations among at least some of the variables in a dataset, which is a prerequisite for factor analysis to work.

Table 3

Bartlett's test of sphericity

	X^2	df	p
BLTHQ	910.631	210.000	<.001
OHF	916.537	153.000	<.001

For both questionnaires, we managed to extract a three-factor solution through the EFA with a Varimax rotation (Tables 6 and 7). However, the three factors stood for a total of explanation of the variance of only 32.4% in the BLTHQ (Table 8), and for 27% in the OHF-questionnaire (Table 9). In both cases, furthermore, Factor 3 explained only 5,2% of the variance, which can be considered rather low. Moreover, although each factor clustered items belonging to the same stance, the hierarchy of the explaining factors in each model is not the same. In the OHF (Tables 5 and 7), Factor 1 gathers reflective/criterialist items (α =.64), Factor 2 cumulates quasi-reflective/subjectivist items (α =.53) and the less explaining Factor 3 associates pre-reflective/objectivist items (α =.57). In contrast, in the BLTHQ (Tables 4 and 6), Factor 1 gathers also criterialist items (α =.78), while Factor 2 gathers objectivist items (α =.68) and the less explaining Factor 3 cumulates the subjectivist items (α =.56). We used a Maximum Likelihood algorithm, and the measures of Unidimensional Reliability for the different scales show that, for the BLTHQ (Table 4), the reliability of the O-scale is acceptable, while the S-scale is weak and the C-scale is good. For the OHF, the reliability of the P-scale and the Q-scale is weak, while the R-scale is acceptable (Table 5). Besides, the p value of the Chi-squared test for both questionnaires was significant ($p < .001$), which indicates that both models do not fit optimally.

Moreover, although the Cronbach's α of the different factors in the EFA supports that the BLTHQ is more consistent than the OHF, the fit measures calculated in the CFA signal that the OHF fits better than the BLTHQ – the p-value of their Chi-square tests were respectively .032 versus .003; the value of their respective Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was .945 versus .923, while their respective Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) showed values of .931 versus .905; the Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of the OHF-questionnaire (.035) was lower than the RMSEA of the BLTHQ (.054). This apparent incongruity will be addressed in the discussion.

Table 4

Frequentist Unidimensional Scale Reliability for BLTHQ

	O-scale		S-scale		C-scale	
Estimate	McDonald's ω	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω	Cronbach's α
Point estimate	0.685	0.676	0.562	0.557	0.781	0.778
95% CI lower bound	0.613	0.592	0.453	0.429	0.725	0.714
95% CI upper bound	0.757	0.745	0.671	0.660	0.837	0.829

Table 5

Frequentist Unidimensional Scale Reliability for OHF

	P-scale		Q-scale		R-scale	
Estimate	McDonald's ω	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω	Cronbach's α
Point estimate	0.593	0.567	0.541	0.533	0.634	0.635
95% CI lower bound	0.521	0.486	0.460	0.448	0.568	0.565
95% CI upper bound	0.666	0.638	0.621	0.608	0.699	0.696

From Tables 6 and 7, we can observe that most items clustered as expected to their respective stance. However, some items did not: O6, O9, S8 and C1 were problematic regarding the BLTHQ (Table 6); and R1, P4, P5, P6, Q1 and Q6 were problematic concerning the OHF (Table 7). In addition, since the OHF-questionnaire and the BLTHQ have some statements in common, a comparison of their results is also interesting (Table 10). In both cases, there were three kinds of problem: 1) some items loaded negatively on a factor; 2) certain items' loadings were lower than 0.400; 3) certain similar items loaded very differently: higher than 0.400 in one questionnaire and lower than 0.400 in the other.

1) In the BLTHQ (Tables 6 and 10), O6 loaded negatively (-0.448) on factor 1 with the criterialist items, which means that O6 was a statement that criterialist informants disagreed with more than it was an item objectivist informants agreed with. Its negative formulation ("Teachers

need to avoid giving students conflicting sources, since it makes historical investigation impossible") may explain this result and should be revised so that it more clearly relates to the objectivist stance.

The same issue affected item R1 (Tables 7 and 10): R1 loaded negatively on factor 3 (which clustered objectivist items), which means that R1 was more a statement objectivist informants disagreed with than an item criterialist informants resolutely agreed with. This may be explained by the statement's formulation ("The hope of being objective in history must be abandoned; one can only be aware of one's own choices of methods and perspectives"): the first part has a clear (negative) connection to the objectivist stance that may have overshadowed the main intended criterialist nature of the statement.

Table 6

Factor Loadings – BLTHQ in Norwegian

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Uniqueness
C3	0.767			0.405
C4	0.710			0.496
C2	0.671			0.513
O6	-0.448			0.638
O5		0.726		0.423
O7		0.543		0.578
O3		0.526		0.678
O4		0.490		0.746
O1		0.470		0.746
O8		0.457		0.690
O2		0.413		0.790
S2			0.626	0.582
S1			0.602	0.626
S3			0.590	0.559
S7			0.453	0.754
S6			0.425	0.777
S5			0.424	0.782
S4			0.411	0.807
O9				0.886
S8				0.886
C1				0.839

Note. Applied rotation method is varimax.

Table 7

Factor Loadings – OHF-Questionnaire

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Uniqueness
R5	0.627			0.605
R4	0.591			0.590
R3	0.573			0.636
R6	0.494			0.735
R2	0.481			0.763
Q3		0.538		0.667
Q4		0.490		0.722
Q5		0.460		0.778
Q2		0.444		0.793
P3			0.667	0.552
R1			-0.559	0.602
P1			0.509	0.629
P2			0.448	0.671
P4				0.906
P5				0.899
P6				0.860
Q1				0.873
Q6				0.852

Note. Applied rotation method is varimax.

2) Items O9 and S8 were very unique, with results lower than 0.400 in the BLTHQ (Table 6); this was similar to items P4, P6 and Q1 in the OHF (Table 7). It means that they were not connected strongly enough to the stance they were meant to relate to. We can gather that their formulations were not contentious enough; these statements were easy to agree (or disagree) with, independently of the stance the respondents mainly belonged to.

Item O9 ("Good general reading and comprehension skills are enough to learn history well") in the BLTHQ was identical to item P4 in the OHF (Table 10). Their respective results were lower than 0.400, probably for the same reason: the statement was too widely formulated and not linked specifically enough to the objectivist stance. Respondents belonging to the other stances may also agree with this statement.

Likewise, item S8 ("Teachers need to make all historical interpretations available and let the students construct their own understanding of them") in the BLTHQ (Tables 7) was too widely formulated and linked specifically enough to the subjectivist stance.

Items P6 and Q1 (Table 7) have suffered of the same type of problem. P6 ("When in doubt between two contradicting interpretations, one should choose the interpretation coming from the person one trusts the most.") was meant to be understood as an objectivist statement. However,

the last part of the statement ("the person *one trusts the most*") is too ambiguous to be interpreted as clearly objectivist: the *trust* may be grounded on scientifically well-founded criteria and not only on the reputation of the person. Those belonging to the other stances may also agree with this statement. As for Q1 ("What we know in history is relative: Two contradicting interpretations can both be true, depending on the perspective."), the formulation is not ambiguous, but not exclusively subjectivist enough: both subjectivist and criterialist respondents may have agreed upon this statement.

3) Three similar sets of items had very different results (Table 10).

S1 ("Students who read many history books learn that the past is what the historian makes it to be") loaded significantly on factor 3, while Q6's ("In history books, the accounts are usually largely depending on the historian's own perspective.") loading is lower than .400. Table 7 shows that Q6's uniqueness is high.

The same issue appeared for C1 ("Knowledge of the historical method is fundamental for historians and students alike") and R2 ("It is fundamental that students learn to assess the methods used in history"). This may indicate a hermeneutical problem: the understanding of certain similar statements may differ substantially because of (small) wording differences, or because of inconsistencies in the participants' answers and epistemic conceptions. It may also be due to contextual reasons, such as the order of the items in the questionnaire.

As for S4 and P5 ("History should be taught like a story: Some things are true, but some others are just a matter of personal opinion"), it may be argued that their respective results are not that distant: S4's loading (0.411) is only just above 0.400 and the uniqueness of both items is high (Tables 6 and 7).

Table 8

Factor Characteristics – BLTHQ in Norweigan

	Unrotated solution			Rotated solution		
	SumSq. Loadings	Proportion var.	Cumulative	SumSq. Loadings	Proportion var.	Cumulative
Factor 1	3.468	0.165	0.165	2.397	0.114	0.114
Factor 2	2.244	0.107	0.272	2.352	0.112	0.226
Factor 3	1.086	0.052	0.324	2.048	0.098	0.324

Table 9

Factor Characteristics – OHF-Questionnaire

	Unrotated solution			Rotated solution		
	SumSq. Loadings	Proportion var.	Cumulative	SumSq. Loadings	Proportion var.	Cumulative
Factor 1	2.421	0.134	0.134	1.868	0.104	0.104
Factor 2	1.507	0.084	0.218	1.579	0.088	0.192
Factor 3	0.939	0.052	0.270	1.420	0.079	0.270

Table 10

Comparison of the loadings of the items in the two questionnaires

BLTHQ				OHF-questionnaire			
Factor 3	**Factor 2**	**Factor 1**			**Factor 1**	**Factor 2**	**Factor 3**
	0.470		O1	P1			0.509
	0.413		O2				
	0.526		O3	P2			0.448
	0.490		O4				
	0.726		O5				
		-0.448	O6				
	0.543		O7				
	0.457		O8				
			O9	P4			
				P3			0.667
				P6			
0.602			S1	Q6			
0.626			S2				
0.590			S3				
0.411			S4	P5			
0.424			S5	Q3		0.538	
0.425			S6				
0.453			S7	Q5		0.460	
			S8				
				Q1			
				Q2		0.444	
				Q4		0.490	
			C1	R2	0.481		
		0.671	C2	R3	0.573		
		0.767	C3	R4	0.591		
		0.710	C4	R5	0.627		
				R6	0.497		
				R1			-0.559

Finally, the examination of the factor covariances of both questionnaires (Tables 11 and 12) is revealing of other challenges.

Table 11

Factor Covariances for the BLTHQ

							95% Confidence Interval	
			Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
C	↔	O	0.287	0.100	2.880	0.004	0.092	0.482
C	↔	S	-0.560	0.076	-7.370	< .001	-0.709	-0.411
O	↔	S	-0.028	0.104	-0.271	0.786	-0.232	0.175

Table 12

Factor Covariances for the OHF-Questionnaire

							95% Confidence Interval	
			Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
P	↔	Q	-0.135	0.098	-1.375	0.169	-0.327	0.057
P	↔	R	-0.488	0.075	-6.486	< .001	-0.635	-0.340
Q	↔	R	0.403	0.086	4.700	< .001	0.235	0.572

In short, *p* expresses that, in both models, subjectivist items (S or Q) and objectivist items (O or P) do not correlate, while criterialist items (C or R) correlate with the two other stances in contradictory directions: criterialist items correlate positively with objectivist items in the BLTHQ we tested, but negatively in our OHF; likewise, criterialist items correlate negatively with subjectivist items in the BLTHQ, but positively in the OHF. This demonstrates that the criterialist items are problematic in both cases and could be interpreted as a strange case of "wobbling": in the BLTHQ, this "wobbling" is between criterialist and objectivist items, while in the OHF, it happens between subjectivist and criterialist items.

Discussion and conclusion

Although the results of our study seem interesting, they are also ambiguous, confirming the complexity and difficulties of assessing epistemic conceptions through a quantitative approach.

On one hand, it is interesting to have been able to extract a three-factor solution in both cases – we even tested a two-factor solution, and it did not work at all. As such, our study contradicts the results obtained by Maggioni et al. (2004) and is in agreement with the theorical tenet of a three-stance model to assess epistemic beliefs. However, the level of explanation of the total variance in both models is relatively modest, and lower than the 41% shown in the SOSCIE-study (Mierwald et al., 2017, p. 186). Moreover, although the OHF-questionnaire seems to be a slightly better fit, the BLTHQ displays a better internal consistency, in contradiction with our expectations.

On the other hand, we observed puzzling correlation patterns between the different factors in each model, that may be related to the phenomenon of "wobbling" (Maggioni et al., 2009) observed in the previous studies, but this time with a new twist. In the first questionnaire, respondents seem to "wobble" between criterialist and objectivist items, while in the second model, they "wobble" between the criterialist and the subjectivist items. In both cases, the criterialist items appear to be the stance participants 'wobbled to'. These patterns are contradictory to previous studies (Maggioni et al., 2004; Maggioni et al., 2010; Maggioni et al., 2009; Mierwald et al., 2016; Miguel-Revilla, 2022), that showed a 'wobbling' between the objectivist and subjectivist stances.

These findings could be due to different reasons to be explored in further studies.

Firstly, our results may have been affected by the differences of the sample sizes and especially the rather limited numerosity of the data related to the BLTHQ.

Secondly, another limitation may be due to the sampling of the respective groups. Our investigations were conducted among university student teachers in History, which is a sample of people with a prior interest in History. As shown in previous studies, particular interest can enhance more nuanced considerations (Stoel et al., 2022, p. 20): the fact that the participants have a particular interest in history could explain some of the wobbling towards criterialist items. Besides, the different compositions of the respective groups, regarding their age, study experience and other criteria might also have impacted our results. As shown in former studies (Miguel-Revilla et al., 2020; Nitsche, 2019; Perry, 1970), these factors tend to influence people's epistemic beliefs.

Thirdly, our results suggest that differences in the wording of the items, even small, can have a decisive impact on their interpretations by the respondents. Thus, the introduction of fewer and more nuanced statements in the OHF than in the BLTHQ may explain the contradiction between displaying a slightly better fit together with a weaker consistency. In addition, our results may also indicate hermeneutical difficulties due both to the understanding and the developmental structure/approach of the questionnaires. Being composed of complex questions that can easily be misunderstood or misinterpreted either in themselves, or due to their wording or the order in which they are presented, the developmental nature of the approach may involve that the questionnaire is primarily designed to be fully understood by respondents who are (presumably) at the third/highest stage. Participants that are (supposedly) at the first stage – because they are at the first stage and do not have the necessary prerequisites – will be more likely to

misunderstand the items belonging to stages two and three. If the same problem occurs for respondents at stage two, one may understand the lack of internal consistency and the "wobbling" observed.

These interpretations and problems suggest different avenues and solutions for future research. Further study could work towards creating a better questionnaire, by simplifying and sharpening the wording of different statements. Following on from our comparative study, one can imagine retaining the statements with the highest results from both questionnaires, and revising the statements with low results (e.g. items O9, S8, C1, P4, P5, P6, Q1 and Q6). In addition, increasing the number of items belonging to each stance could be a good idea to increase the consistency of the new tool. The next step could be to assess, qualitatively, through think-aloud individual interviews, how respondents understood the different statements of the questionnaire, to identify the abovementioned potential hermeneutical issues or issues inherent to the developmental approach of the instrument. More generally, such cognitive interviews to secure the quality of future questionnaires appear necessary, not only among experts, but also among the group of individuals researchers will be targeting for further studies. Lastly, another objective of future study could work towards creating a larger questionnaire, by integrating dimensional perspectives or prioritization scales, in order to refine the instrument and address the problem of "wobbling". Given the believed impact of epistemic beliefs on students' and teachers' practices and performance, improving the means to evaluate these beliefs remains an important goal for history education.

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What does a history teacher do? Knowing, understanding, and enacting the work of teaching history

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ABSTRACT

This study considers the questions, "How do teacher candidates conceptualize the relationship among historians, history teachers, and history students?" and "How is this understanding revealed in candidates' representation of the work they do in classrooms as history teachers?" Using a case study approach, researchers gathered data from fifteen teacher candidates in a teacher preparation program in the Midwestern United States. The data consisted of participants' responses to three questions (What do historians do? What do history teachers do? What do history students do?) and their selections of and rationale for including artifacts in a portfolio designed to showcase "who they are" as history teachers as represented by their developing pedagogical content knowledge in history. The researchers' findings reveal a discrepancy exists between teacher candidates' emerging beliefs about their responsibilities as teachers and the work that they chose to highlight after having completed clinical experiences. Specifically, the findings suggest a critical disconnect exists between what teacher candidates are taught about teaching history, what they believe about teaching history, and the opportunities that they have in clinical experiences to enact these ideas. This research highlights the central yet often unexamined role of emerging teachers' epistemic understandings in shaping opportunities for pedagogical reform in history.

KEYWORDS

History teaching, History teacher education student beliefs

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Introduction

Americans often base their understanding of the practice of teaching on the experiences they encountered as students (Cuban & Tyack, 1995; VanSledright, 2011). Having studied history, to varying extents, in elementary and secondary schools, many Americans believe that they know and understand what history is, and the majority consider it an "assemblage of names, dates, and events" (Burkholder & Schaffer, 2021). Yet, historians and history educators argue vehemently that as a discipline, history represents a way of thinking and a way of knowing (Fischer, 2013; Gagnon, 1989; Wineburg, 2001). As they enter universities, teacher candidates often encounter competing epistemological models as they engage, as historians, in the formal study of the discipline while also preparing for a teaching career in classrooms that rarely reflect the disciplinary approach to studying the past.

History educators often advocate for and implement discipline-based approaches to the teaching of history. But studies frequently report that little has changed in American classrooms when it comes to history teaching and learning. To make significant and lasting changes with respect to history teaching, researchers must pay more attention to the evolving epistemic stances of teacher candidates that frame the possibilities and limits for classroom learning. This study investigates the relationship between teacher candidates' understanding of history and history teachers (Yilmaz, 2008) and their intended practices pertaining to planning, teaching, and assessment. The research draws from theoretical frameworks pertaining to beliefs about the nature of history as a discipline and about the teaching of history (McCrum, 2013; McDiarmid, 1994), and it is situated in research that studies the relationship between these two types of beliefs and the ways that context influences beginning teachers' actions (Voet & De Wever, 2016). The two questions guiding this work seek to connect beginning teachers' epistemological understandings of the practice of doing history and how they represent their understanding of teaching history:

> Research Question 1: How do teacher candidates conceptualize the relationship among historians, history teachers, and history students?
>
> Research Question 2: How is this understanding revealed in candidates' representation of the work they do in classrooms as history teachers?

Previous Research

Student learning and classroom culture are shaped by countless decisions that teachers make before, during, and after direct instruction, and these decisions reflect the important role that teacher beliefs play in pedagogical decision making (Stoel et al., 2022). While research increasingly explores the epistemic stances of students and teachers and places such ideas on a developmental framework (Stoel et al., 2022), the disciplinary understandings of teacher candidates is an under examined fulcrum of history education as such ideas play a role in both "mediating the curriculum" and shaping the professional identity and roles of emerging teachers (McCrum, 2013, p. 79). A key ingredient in reimagining the teaching of history is reforming history teacher education to make these beliefs visible and subject to interventions that ensure that teachers' decisions reflect a disciplinary approach or what Jay refers to as the "signature intellectual processes" of historians (2022). The most recent research (Wilke et al., 2022) suggests the nuanced roles of educational context and teacher education, a complex set of experiences

where students transition from secondary students to professional teachers, are the most important ingredients in understanding the persistent gap between theory and practice.

The disciplinary approach to history education in the United States struggled to take hold until the cognitive revolution in education led to the Amherst Project in the 1960s and Shulman's articulation of pedagogical content knowledge in the 1980s. (American Historical Association, 1898; Brown, 1996; Bruner, 1961; Hughes & Brown, 2023; Shulman, 1986; VanSledright, 2011; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988; Wineburg, 1998). However, much of the subsequent scholarship perceived the epistemological stances of history teachers as an assumed and relatively stable ingredient in the learning process. Instead, scholars often prioritized the complex role of historical consciousness among students who find their experiences with the past, both individually and collectively, shaped by the historical profession, classroom instruction, and collective memory (Lévesque, 2008; Rusen, 2005; Seixas, 2004; Taylor, 2019). For many such scholars, curriculum reform meant teachers creating meaningful, intentional, and assessed opportunities for students to embrace the disciplinary methods and concepts of historians (Bain, 2000; Chapman, 2017; Lavelle, 2004; Lee, 2004; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Stearns et al., 2000). As Seixas (2004) explained, such efforts meant that historians' practices, rather than the specific scholarship historians produced, became the standard for evaluating history education. This emphasis resulted in a growing number of studies assessing student thinking and often emphasizing the challenges of teaching historical thinking to students (Bain, 2000; Letourneau & Moisan, 2004; Monte-Sano et al., 2014; Reisman, 2012; van Boxtel & van Drie, 2013; Wineburg et al., 2011).

In contrast, this research on teacher candidates, a unique type of student of history, intersects with studies that emphasize the historical thinking of teachers and how their perceptions of history as a discipline inform their emerging practices and, in turn, classroom learning (Fehn & Koeppen, 1998; Bohan & Davis, 1998; Hartzler-Miller, 2001; Maggioni et al., 2009; Monte-Sano & Cochran, 2009; Seixas, 1998; VanSledright & Maggioni, 2016; Yeager & Wilson, 1997). Often this line of inquiry has sought to better understand the limits of educational reform as scholars such as Barton and Levstik (2004) have explored the intractable "gap between promise and practice." Many history teachers, even those who have demonstrated excellent disciplinary knowledge, deliver classroom instruction shaped far more by issues such as classroom management, real or perceived curriculum mandates, and their specific educational context than the provocative research on historical inquiry (Chapman et al., 2018; Cuban, 2016; Van Hover & Yeager, 2007; Watras, 2004).

This study falls squarely into what McDiarmid and Vinten-Johanson (2000) referred to as the "perennial puzzle" of history teacher education. In this vein, researchers have emphasized the need to better understand the varied cognitive frameworks of teacher candidates (Chapman, 2017; Chapman et al., 2018; Lévesque, 2014; Pollock, 2014; Sears, 2014; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988; Yeager & Davis, 1995). For Fragnoli (2005), individual reflection is a key part of this process as teacher candidates must identify the contradictions between "their theories and practice" as they "negotiate their preexisting conceptions" with the evolution of history education. However, others such Barton and Levstik (2004), who stress the sociocultural context of teaching, encourage scholarly research centered on the actual classroom behavior rather than the thinking of teacher candidates. From this perspective, the evidence suggests that teacher candidates struggle to embrace historical inquiry as their "internal discourse," especially when it conflicts with their preconceptions about teaching and learning or their specific classroom goals formulated well before higher education (James, 2008; Van Hover & Yeager, 2007; Virta, 2002).

Not surprisingly, such conclusions have fueled increased commentary about the need to reimagine history teacher education. VanSledright (2011) argued that 95% of teacher candidates' learning as apprentices stems from problematic observations of practicing teachers, as opposed to teacher education faculty, and VanSledright (2011), McDiarmid and Vinten-Johansen (2000), and Von Heyking (2014) call for increased collaboration between historians and history teacher educators. Moreover, the implication of this research and the arguments of others is the need for a different kind of teacher education, what Sears (2014) contends includes "boundary practices" that involve specific kinds of transformative, longitudinal, and collective professional

development where emerging teachers confront, revise, and develop their cognitive frames for teaching history. The purpose of this study is to contribute to research in the realm of boundary practices.

Research Design and Methodology

This research used a case study design bound by definition and context (Yinn, 2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994). It centered on two questions:

> RQ1: How do teacher candidates conceptualize the relationship among historians, history teachers, and history students?
>
> RQ2: How is this understanding revealed in candidates' representation of the work they do in classrooms as history teachers?

Participants and Context

Participants included fifteen undergraduate social studies teaching majors at a large public university in the Midwestern United States. The eleven male and four female participants took part in the study during two consecutive semesters of their undergraduate teacher preparation program. During each of these two semesters, participants enrolled in a class that focused specifically on methods of teaching history/social studies. The first class emphasized teaching at the middle school level (Content Methods I), and the second class focused on teaching at the high school level (Content Methods II). One of the authors of this chapter was the instructor of both courses. While enrolled in Content Methods II, candidates also took two courses designed to provide them with extensive field experiences in middle schools and high schools. These two courses were taught by faculty other than the researchers.

Data Collection

The researchers collected data in two sets (see Table 1). Data Set 1 corresponded to RQ1 and consisted of participants' written responses to three questions: 1) What do historians do? 2) What do history teachers do? 3)What do history students do? During the first week of the Content Methods I course, participants were given 10-15 minutes to respond, in writing, to these three questions. The researchers limited participants' response time in order to capture participants' frames of reference, rather than gathering responses they might have composed if engaged in significant reading and conversations with peers.

At the onset of the study, the researchers assigned participants random numbers. For Data Set 1, researchers first organized participants' responses to the three questions by question (listing the responses of all 15 participants to question 1, then to question 2, then to question 3) and then by individual (listing the responses of each individual to all three questions to check for a relationship among responses by individual). For question 1, "What do historians do?" researchers engaged in descriptive and pattern coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). They read the participants' responses closely and highlighted common words and/or themes that emerged. Through discussion, they achieved consensus and determined that use of a word or expression of an idea by two or more candidates would be noted. They recorded these responses in Table 2.

The researchers initially followed a similar approach when analyzing candidates' responses to question 2. However, identifying clear patterns (beyond a general emphasis on "teaching" and "history") that could be categorized by close reading and pattern coding alone proved challenging. Therefore, researchers decided to utilize an existing framework to help them code candidates' responses. Because the emphasis in question 2 was on the work of teachers ("What do history teachers do?") and a purpose of this research was to determine the extent to which there is a relationship between candidates' understanding of disciplinary practices and the work of teachers, the researchers decided to draw upon "Teaching Practices for Historical Inquiry" as

articulated in a Delphi survey led by Fogo (2014). Using the nine practices identified by the Delphi survey experts, the researchers coded participants' responses based on the extent to which they aligned with descriptions of the practice. Again, consensus was achieved through discussion. These outcomes appear in Table 3.

For question 3 ("What do history students do?"), researchers utilized methods similar to those incorporated when analyzing participants' response to question 1. While a clear response to the question was simply that students "learn," close reading and pattern coding prevailed without the need of an additional framework. After discussion and consensus, four categories emerged as depicted in Table 4. Three of the categories also aligned with "Teaching Practices for Historical Inquiry" in the Delphi survey. Therefore, for both question 2 and question 3, the Teaching Practices in the Delphi survey played a role in the data displays that emerged.

Data Set 2 consisted of a portion of a portfolio that participants submitted in the final weeks of enrollment in Content Methods II and the two field experience courses. The teacher candidates were instructed to organize their portfolio around four areas pertaining to pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in history as articulated in Monte-Sano and Budano's (2013) synthesis of history education literature: 1) representing disciplinary practices; 2) transforming sources for student use; 3) considering and responding to student thinking; and 4) framing the past for understanding. Candidates were to include seven artifacts in the portfolio, and they were required to include at least one artifact in each of the four categories. In addition to including artifacts, teacher candidates were required to write a paragraph for each artifact, explaining why they believed the artifact met the criteria for the portfolio and describing how it represented "who they are as teachers," and how it related to their developing PCK in history. An artifact was defined as any assignment or materials created in upper-level coursework or field experiences in the teacher preparation program. This structured flexibility compelled teacher candidates to address each area of PCK in history while providing them with the opportunity to highlight artifacts that most interested them or that they felt best represented their development as history teachers. In this study, the researchers focused on artifacts candidates submitted in two specific areas: considering and responding to student thinking and framing the past for understanding.

Table 1

Summary – Research Questions and Data Set Descriptions

Research Question: How do teacher candidates conceptualize the relationship among historians, history teachers, and history students?	**Research Question:** How is this understanding revealed in candidates' representation of the work they do in classrooms as history teachers?
Data Set 1 (3 Questions)	**Data Set 2 (Portfolio with Four Categories)**
Question 1: What do historians do?	Emphasis: Considering and responding to student thinking
Question 2: What do history teachers do?	Emphasis: Framing the past for understanding
Question 3: What do history students do?	

Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed participants' responses for the purposes of this study only after the candidates had completed their coursework in its entirety. In Data Set 1, question 1 elicited the most detailed and descriptive responses from participants. Table 2 depicts participants' responses, by candidate, to the question, "What do historians do?" To demonstrate the coding, an example response from Candidate 10 follows Table 2.

Table 2

(Question 1) What do historians do?

Coding for Question 1	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13	C14	C15	Total Number of References Across Candidates
Primary sources	x			x	x			x	x	x			x	x		8
Understand		x		x			x		x			x	x		x	7
Present		x			x	x			x		x	x			x	7
Analysis	x		x	x	x				x							5
Narrative				x		x	x			x			x			5
Secondary Sources					x			x		x			x			4
Question			x		x		x						x			4
Communicate to the public			x	x		x			x							4
Evidence	x													x		2
Gather information						x		x								2
Explain									x	x						2

Notes. C=Candidate, followed by their assigned number

C10: Historians use **primary** and **secondary sources** in order to create a **narrative** about the past. They can use these **narratives** to further **explains** [sic] other events, artifacts or anything else from the past.

Based on the information in Table 2, candidates believe historians' work focuses on providing the public with an understanding of the past. Historians engage in this process by analyzing primary and secondary sources, creating narratives, and asking questions to help the public link the past to the present. Candidates did not emphasize particular disciplinary concepts or provide specific information about historical narratives. Perhaps, given the broad nature of the question, teacher candidates answered the question with a response that was equally broad in nature.

When responding to question 2 in Data Set 1, participants used words abundantly, but deriving meaning from their words alone or seeing patterns proved challenging. "History," "historians," or "historical" appeared frequently (77 times) in their collective responses, and five of the fifteen participants referenced preparing students for "citizenship" as the role of the history teacher (none of the participants who referenced citizens or citizenship explained their understanding of this concept). The researchers therefore turned to the aforementioned Delphi survey to be used as a lens through which to read the responses to question 2. Within the context of this framework, the researchers were able to derive meaning from the participants' statements, and patterns emerged. Because the researchers were drawing from a specific framework in their analysis of responses to question 2, they agreed to record even one reference of a teaching practice by participants. The responses are recorded in Table 3, with Candidate 10 highlighted as an example.

Table 3

(Question 2) What do history teachers do?

Coding for Question 2	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13	C14	C15	Total Number of References Across Candidates
Use historical questions					x		x				x		x			4
Select & adapt historical sources	x						x	x	x	x	x	x		x		8*
Explain & connect historical content		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	12**
Model & support historical reading skills																0
Employ historical evidence											x					1
Use historical concepts																0
Facilitate discussion on historical topics					x											1
Model & support historical writing																0
Assess student thinking about history																0

Notes. C=Candidate, followed by their assigned number

* Participants only referenced selecting sources, not adapting sources.

** Participants often focused on describing, understanding, relating, or giving content.

C10: History teachers **use sources** and narratives to **explain to students past events** and **create understanding** with these. They should also teach the students how past events can be applied to current and future events.

Table 4

(Question 3) What do history students do?

Coding for Question 3	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13	C14	C15*	Total Number of References Across Candidates
Learn/connect / absorb content	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x			11
Question					x		x				x		x	x		5
Use documents/ sources	x	x														2
Engage in citizenship				x										x		2

Notes. C=Candidate, followed by their assigned number

*C15 emphasized paying attention and being respectful of others.

C10: History students learn from teachers in order to form their own opinions on current and past events.

Table 5

Coded responses to Questions 1, 2, and 3, by candidate

Candidate (C)	Coding Question 1	Coding Question 2	Coding Question 3	Connected Understanding
C1	Primary source; analysis; evidence	Select and adapt historical sources; explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content; use documents/sources	All three actors use primary sources to understand the past.
C2	Understand; present	Explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content; use documents/sources	We study the past to explain the present and learn from mistakes.
C3	Analysis; questions public	Explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content	Historians know a lot and teachers select what to show students from this knowledge; students write about how the present comes from the past.
C4	Primary source; understand; analysis; narrative; public	Explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content; engage in citizenship	Historians make sense of the past; teachers connect students to historians; students learn and apply it.
C5	Primary source; present; analysis; secondary source; questions	Use historical questions; facilitate discussion on historical topics	Question	Questions are important and so is using sources.
C6	Present; narrative; public; gather information	Explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content	Historians determine the value of the past, teachers present it, and students draw conclusions.
C7	Understand; narrative; questions	Use historical questions; select and adapt historical sources	Understand/connect/absorb content; question	Historians ask and answer questions, teachers filter and teach, students ask and answer questions.
C8	Primary source; secondary source; gather information	Select and adapt historical sources; explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content	Historians compile information, teachers teach it, students consume it.
C9	Primary source; understand; present; analysis; public; explain	Select and adapt historical sources; explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content	All understand the content so we can take the information and use it in the present.
C10	Primary source; narrative; secondary source; explain	Select and adapt historical sources	Understand/connect/absorb content	Narratives are developed from sources, teachers explain them, and students learn them.
C11	Present	Use historical questions; employ historical evidence; select and adapt historical sources	Question	Historians pay attention to context, teachers bring sources to students, students ask questions.
C12	Understand; present	Select and adapt historical sources; explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content	Historians investigate the past so we can understand the present, teachers make it consumable for students, and students understand.
C13	Primary source; understand; narrative; secondary source; questions	Use historical questions; explain and connect historical content	Understand/connect/absorb content; question	Historians understand the past through sources, teachers present it and encourage questions, students absorb information and ask questions.
C14	Primary source; evidence	Select and adapt historical sources; explain and connect historical content	Question; engage in citizenship	Historians create accounts, teachers use sources to build citizens, students take the skills and use sources to become citizens.
C15	Understand; present	Explain and connect historical content	n/a [response addressed being respectful]	All actors understand others through diverse perspectives and respect.

Notes. C=Candidate, followed by their assigned number

While a clear common theme for Question 3 was that history students "learn," close reading and pattern coding revealed four areas that served as participants' points of focus (as with question 1, two or more explicit references to a concept by participants overall deemed the concept significant enough to appear on Table 4). Candidate 10's responses once again provide an example.

While it is tempting and potentially illustrative to draw conclusions based on the number of references candidates made to concepts/ideas, given the small data set, a frequency study can be misleading. Therefore, Table 5 illustrates the coded responses of each teacher candidate individually, across the three questions.

Potential connections among participants' responses to the three questions make sense given that the teacher candidates were asked to respond to all three questions in the same sitting, and examining candidates' responses to determine if a relationship exists aligns with the first question that drove the purpose of this study ("How do teacher candidates conceptualize the relationship among historians, history teachers, and history students?"). For example, Candidate 10 emphasized historians' use of sources when constructing explanatory narratives, and this individual connected sources and narratives to teachers' explanations for students as well. For Candidate 10, the task of students was to learn from their teachers in order to form their own opinions about both the past and the present. This individual connected the three "actors" - historians, teachers, and students - in the history classroom. Other candidates' understanding of the relationship among the three "actors" is documented in Table 5 as well, with the researchers' summaries included in the column on the far right side. Making sense of and/or explaining content was a clear point of focus of most of the teacher candidates.

Next, the researchers wanted to investigate if there would be a connection between candidates' understanding of the relationship among the "actors" in the history classroom and how these candidates would represent their work as teachers (RQ2: How is this understanding revealed in candidates' representation of the work they do in classrooms as history teachers?). To that end, researchers analyzed a portfolio that candidates created after extensive field experiences. Their selections constitute the body of evidence in Data Set 2.

It is important to note that the researchers did not assess the quality of the artifacts included in the portfolio, nor did they observe the candidates' teaching practices; rather, they focused only on the description of the artifacts and the rationale candidates provided for including the artifacts. Drawing from Fragnoli's (2005) emphasis on reflection, the researchers' focus remained on what the candidates *thought* they were conveying about their own beliefs as history teachers. The researchers did note if the artifact failed to meet the criteria of the portfolio category.

Because of teacher candidates' emphasis on "understanding content" as a primary contribution made by historians and history teachers and as an action taken by history students (Data Set 1), researchers decided to focus on artifacts submitted in categories 3 and 4 of the portfolio. The researchers selected category 3 (considering and responding to student thinking) because participants identified understanding content as a key responsibility of history students. The researchers wondered how the teacher candidates would select and explain artifacts in which they were assessing their students' historical understandings. The researchers selected category 4 in the portfolio (framing the past for understanding) because it aligned most closely with the candidates' emphasis on content understanding as represented in responses to questions 1, 2, and 3 in Data Set 1.

Table 6 summarizes the artifacts participants selected for category 3 (addressing student thinking) in the portfolio. Ten of the fifteen participants selected the same artifact—an assignment from the Content Methods I class. In this task, candidates traveled to a local middle school and engaged an assigned student in a "think aloud" activity with primary sources (Wineburg, 2001). The candidates were asked to instruct their student to read a primary source out loud and to stop and explain their thinking. Candidates took detailed notes and then wrote an essay in which they analyzed the thinking of the student. This assessment took place in the first four weeks of Content Methods I. Although the original assignment called for candidates to provide an analysis of student

thinking, only six of the ten candidates called attention to their original analysis of student thinking when writing the rationale for including the artifact in the portfolio. For an example of a candidate calling attention to a student's thinking, see Table 6.

Of the other five participants, two selected artifacts that were assessments they designed. While these assessments provided purposeful opportunities for students to engage in disciplinary thinking, the assignments had never been administered to students; they were part of lesson plans that were never taught. Therefore, the candidates were unable to write reflections that included what they learned about their students' learning. The artifacts selected by the other three participants focused on note-taking, a discredited "learning style" self-assessment, and an assessment that focused on general literacy categories. Based on the participants' descriptions, it was not clear if these assessments had been used with students; no analysis of student thinking accompanied these artifacts in the portfolio.

Table 6

Considering and Responding to Student Thinking

Artifact	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13	C14	C15
Think-Aloud from Content Methods I	Y				Y	N		Y	N	N		N	Y	Y	Y
Reading Sources to Promote Disciplinary Thinking			N				N								
General Instructional Strategies		N		N							N				

Notes. C=Candidate, followed by their assigned number

Y=Candidate offered an analysis of student thinking; N=no analysis of student thinking included in portfolio

> C8: I chose to include this artifact because as he was struggling to make sense of the significance of those differences, I was able to use his ideas to point him in a direction where he was able to gain the information he needed to make a full interpretation of the story being told by the two sources. I was able to assess his knowledge and ideas about the historical circumstances displayed within the documents, and help to eventually direct his thinking toward the conclusions that I was looking for in the activity. This type of exercise in close reading displays something that is commonly done in history classes, and is a crucial skill required to practice historical inquiry.

When addressing framing the past for understanding (portfolio category 4), twelve of the fifteen participants included artifacts that related to this category. Artifacts submitted by the other three participants were not considered in this analysis because they did not meet criteria in the category. The artifacts that met the criteria consisted of unit plans or series of linked lesson plans, and in the rationales that participants wrote to explain why they selected these artifacts for this category, all twelve focused on specific concepts that relate to the discipline of history. Table 7 depicts the ideas expressed by the participants in portfolio category 4 and draws attention to Candidate 1's response as an example.

Table 7

Framing the Past for Understanding

Disciplinary Concept/ Practice	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13	C14	C15	Total Number of References Across Candidates*
Cause	X						X				X	X		X		5
Building Narratives		X		X				X					X		X	5
Historical Significance				X	X									X		3
Chronology			X													1
Not Applicable						X			X	X						

Notes. C=Candidate, followed by their assigned number

*Total number of concepts referenced = 14 because 2 candidates identified 2 concepts each.

C1: [F]raming history in this manner, help[s] to build the understanding of history as a cause and effect story, where a wide variety of coexisting movements and contexts have influence upon one another in a variety of ways.

Results

The researchers' findings reveal a discrepancy exists between teacher candidates' emerging beliefs about their responsibilities as teachers and the work that they selected to highlight their professional identity after having completed clinical experiences. When asked what history teachers do, no candidate identified assessing students' thinking about history as a task of a history teacher (Table 3). Their apparent disconnection from this aspect of pedagogical content knowledge in history, as documented in the selections they made for their portfolio (Table 6) changed very little from the time when they responded to the questions that constitute Data Set 1 and when they submitted artifacts for Data Set 2. They emphasized multiple times that history teachers should explain content to students (Table 5), but their portfolios suggest they either did not consider or did not have examples of how they would evaluate the success of this endeavor. Specifically, the findings suggest that beginning teachers' epistemic understandings of teaching history might not include thinking about their students in substantive ways. As importantly, the findings demonstrate that these candidates' had likely not integrated disciplinary thinking into their classroom teaching. Their portfolio examples, which did focus on disciplinary thinking, came from assignments they created specifically for a university-based class, not materials they prepared for use with their own students in field experiences.

When demonstrating their ability to consider and respond to student thinking specifically (Data Set 2, portfolio category 3), twelve of the teacher candidates selected artifacts that accurately reflected the requirements of the portfolio. The artifact selected by ten of these candidates was highly directed by the course instructor and was designed as an introduction to learning about and from student learning; but only six of these ten candidates wrote rationales that demonstrated that they understood how to consider and respond to student thinking. In a portfolio designed to allow candidates to showcase their best work as history teachers, candidates selected an example from the first weeks in their teaching methods course sequence, and the example they selected was an assignment the instructor intended to be a starting point for their learning—not an assignment that represented their best work as teachers. In addition, the candidates had all completed the assignment satisfactorily, but when asked to reflect on why their previous work demonstrated their ability to respond to student thinking, four of the candidates merely described the assignment; they did not link their work to learning about how students think—even though the original assignment had set that goal as the purpose. Furthermore, this

example represented a single interaction with students, and it broke away from what many of the candidates themselves had identified as the role of teachers and the role of students in the history classroom (Data Set 1, questions 2 and 3): understanding content.

It is significant that the teacher candidates in this program experienced 16 weeks of clinical experiences and daily interactions with students, but when asked to identify artifacts that represent how they consider and respond to student thinking, twelve of the fifteen candidates did not pull examples from their work with students in extended clinical experiences. Furthermore, the examples of three candidates in no way reflected assessments designed to engage students in disciplinary thinking in history or to promote students' understanding of content in a clear way. Candidates' beliefs about their students and other contextual factors potentially played a role in their decisions (Van Hover & Yeager, 2003), but we can tentatively conclude that there is missing piece in clinical experiences that did not provide space for candidates to believe that they were engaged, in significant and notable ways, in considering their students' thinking, especially as it relates to the discipline of history.

Based on findings in Data Set 1, the researchers also focused on teacher candidates' depiction of how they frame the past for understanding (Data Set 2). Analysis of artifacts from Data Set 2 indicates that teacher candidates can articulate their own disciplinary understandings and can design lesson plans that incorporate disciplinary concepts into their framing of history. They incorporated such concepts as cause, historical significance, and chronology, and they emphasized the role that narrative construction plays in history as a discipline. Importantly, for all fifteen candidates the lesson plans included in their portfolios in this category were never used with students. Even though candidates worked in classrooms and taught multiple lessons over the course of their field experience, the artifacts represented candidates' ideas about framing history, but they did not demonstrate how candidates incorporated these ideas in practice.

These findings relate to research that addresses the importance of context with respect to teachers' beliefs about the teaching of history (McCrum, 2013; Voet & De Wever, 2016). The participants believed that building their students' content understanding was important, and they demonstrated that they were capable of drawing from discipline-specific ideas when planning lessons for students. But they chose not to demonstrate how they enacted these beliefs in the context of working with students. This begs the question: Did they? When examining the artifacts participants included in their portfolio, researchers noted that of the total artifacts submitted by all fifteen teacher candidates, 49.5% of the artifacts came from candidates' clinical experiences. Even though the portfolio was presented to teacher candidates as their opportunity to demonstrate "who they are" as teachers, only half of the items they collected as a whole came from potential interactions with students. When researchers considered portfolio artifact selection by individual, no one candidate selected more than four artifacts from their field experiences, and four candidates included only one or zero artifacts that demonstrated their work in classrooms. Candidates understood that their portfolios were meant to highlight their developing expertise as history teachers, but a significant number of candidates selected artifacts that reflected only their planning and their thinking while in a university classroom; the artifacts did not demonstrate a key aspect of teaching—interactions with actual students. It is possible that candidates were observing and working with mentor teachers whose practices did not frontload student learning (VanSledright, 2011) and that other contextual factors (McCrum, 2013; Voet & De Wever, 2016) restricted their ability to emphasize student learning.

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings suggest a critical disconnect exists between what teacher candidates are taught about teaching history, what they believe about teaching history, and the opportunities that they have in clinical experiences to enact these beliefs. This research highlights the central yet often unexamined role of emerging teachers' epistemic understandings in shaping opportunities for significant pedagogical reform in history.

Based on their responses to RQ1, participants believe that knowing content is most important in "doing" history and that content knowledge develops through the study of primary sources. Their responses also indicate that the candidates did not think about paying attention to student learning as an obligation of history teachers. In their responses to the three questions asked initially, candidates made it clear that history teachers were supposed to use primary sources to assist them in conveying content to students, but then it was unclear what students were supposed to do with this knowledge other than "understand" it.

Participants in this study mainly identified understanding and/or explaining historical content as a key task of historians, history teachers, and history students. But when asked to select artifacts that best represented "who they are" as history teachers, they did not include materials that related to a focus on content knowledge. And, importantly, they did not include materials that demonstrated their interaction with students in any way. Instead, they focused on disciplinary understandings. Perhaps candidates' beliefs had shifted, after having taken two teaching methods courses that emphasized discipline-based teaching. Or, perhaps simply the requirements of their portfolio led students toward this focus on disciplinary understandings. But, when they spent 16 weeks in clinical experiences working daily with students, they apparently could neither provide evidence of working with students to build their disciplinary understandings nor provide evidence of having emphasized building students' understanding of content. Their artifacts that focused on attending to students' ideas about history (Data Set 2, Category 3) and framing students' historical understandings (Data Set 2, Category 4) came mainly from assignments they completed in a university classroom. There did not seem to be a space in their clinical experiences to demonstrate any part of their beliefs as history teachers with respect to these two aspects of pedagogical content knowledge. Or, perhaps they did not receive explicit support for engaging in these practices and therefore, they simply did not do so. Regardless, while the candidates might have intended to teach in a disciplinary fashion or to teach by emphasizing content acquisition through the use of primary sources, they did not provide evidence of having enacted their own beliefs.

This study, of course, has limitations. First, while the task of answering three key questions about the roles of historians, history teachers, and history students provided a potentially honest response from candidates, the methodology (requiring candidates to respond without preparation and in a specific amount of time) precluded opportunities for clarification, probing, and follow-up evidence. Second, the use of a portfolio that was created as a class assignment is a limiting factor because of the possibility that candidates selected artifacts they thought would please the instructor, that they had discussed and confirmed with peers, or that were simply readily available. And, while engaging teacher candidates in purposeful reflection (Fragnoli, 2005) was a key purpose of this study, the use of evidence from a portfolio meant to represent the thinking of teacher candidates did not enable the researchers to ask candidates questions about why they did not provide artifacts that linked clearly to their classroom behavior (Barton and Levstik, 2004) in clinical experiences. Finally, focusing on a small amount of evidence from fifteen candidates in a case study limits the generalizability of the outcomes, and achieving interrater reliability through discussion also limits reproducibility. Nevertheless, our findings contribute to research pertaining to the epistemic stances of teacher candidates because this work has highlighted the need to investigate thoroughly the opportunities that do or do not exist for candidates to learn to enact their beliefs during clinical experiences. These outcomes align with previous findings relating to the important role that context plays (Voet & De Wever, 2016) with respect to teachers' beliefs.

Our emphasis on considering opportunities for candidates to interact purposefully with students, in the context of clinical experiences, is significant and calls attention to the need for further examination of the epistemic stances of teacher candidates in order to enact meaningful pedagogical reform in history teacher education. The researchers operated under the assumption that teacher candidates would think about their students' thinking, especially when explicitly tasked with doing so in order to meet the requirements of a portfolio. This study indicates that this clearly was not the case and that candidates needed explicit support and guidance. Twenty

years ago, Van Hover and Yeager (2003) called for extended mentoring for beginning history teachers. This research confirms that extended mentoring, beginning in clinical experiences, would indeed be beneficial. In addition, further study of the evolving epistemic stances of emerging teachers, in the context of clinical experiences, is central to creating and sustaining meaningful pedagogical reform in history education.

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An exploratory study of epistemological stances among teachers and secondary IV history students in Quebec

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ABSTRACT

An analysis of the history curriculum (MEES, 2007, 2017) as taught in Quebec Secondary schools shows that it encourages the development of a constructivist view of history, focused on the historical method and on developing skills and competencies in students (Boutonnet, 2017; Cardin, Éthier & Meunier, 2010; Duquette, 2020; Éthier, Boutonnet, Demers & Lefrançois, 2017; Éthier, Cardin & Lefrançois, 2014). Yet some scholars (Demers, 2012; Moisan, 2010; Yelle, 2016) have noted the conflicting presence of two epistemological stances toward history among Quebec teachers: history that serves as a "memory reservoir", or history as a science that develops intellectual qualities. These diverging views of history can lead to different teaching styles and usage in the classroom. Given tensions in the educational community between the Quebec ministerial exam (Blouin, 2020; Déry, 2016)—which is predicated on the concept that there can only be one correct answer—and the constructivst curriculum, between the stances of the teachers themselves and the representations of history among the general public (Éthier, Lefrançois & Joly-Lavoie, 2018; Rosenzweig, 2000) some questions remain: how do students view the learning of history? How do teachers react to these representations when confronted with them? To answer these questions, we conducted an exploratory study in which 332 students completed a questionnaire (Maggioni, 2010; Maggioni, VanSledright & Alexander, 2009; Miguel Revilla, Carril Merino & Sánchez Agustí, 2017) on their representations of history. We also held interviews with eight teachers to further explore how beliefs and epistemology are constructed in history class. We used these questionnaires and interviews to gain insight into part of this construction.

KEYWORDS

History education, Epistemology, History teachers, High school students, Historical representation, History class, Historical thinking

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Introduction: The Issue

As a science, history has changed paradigms more than once. Positivist epistemological stances (Gavard-Perret, Gotteland, Haon & Aubert, 2008), were particularly popular in the field of history during the 19th century (Caire-Jabinet, 2008; Carbonell, 1978, 2002; Cardin, 2010; Moisan, 2010) favoured the development of narratives seeking to transmit a historical truth in an attempt to offer objective and neutral points of view. There has since been a shift away from the search for an absolute truth (and taught as such in the classroom) to more interpretative stances inspired by qualitative methodology, where historians are exegetists, constructing their interpretations using historical sources and evidence (Cuban, 2007). We have also seen a growing interest and awareness in giving a greater voice to minorities traditionally left out of the dominant narrative (Caire-Jabinet, 2008). With the ascendancy of these constructivist epistemological stances and tools developed through qualitative research (Gavard-Perret et al., 2008), there has been a noticeable change in the way that history is produced and represented. As interpreters of the past, historians are increasingly seeking to make sense of the various artifacts or traces left behind to construct their interpretation of a given phenomenon (Cardin, 2010; Seixas & Morton, 2013).

While this paradigm shift is now well established in academic circles around the world, it does not appear to have reached the halls of elementary and secondary schools—nor the general population—in Quebec. Laville (1984) in Quebec, Sandwell (2005, 2006) in Canada and Marbeau, Audigier, Crémieux, Le Gall & Margairaz (1981) in Europe have already noted the widening gap between the history of academic historians and the discipline taught in schools. Sears (2014) argues that history teachers represent the fringe of the active community of historians. An American study by Wilson and Wineburg (1993) found that teachers' representation of history in the classroom often reflects the history taught during their initial training. Sears (2014) and VanSledright (2011) both point out that secondary school history teachers hardly ever had the opportunity to exercise historical thinking during their pre-service years, thus it makes sense they might eschew teaching it in class in favour of replicating what they themselves experienced as learners, a teaching focused on imparting set knowledge presented as "true." Bain (2000), an American researcher with one foot in teaching high school while pursuing postgraduate studies, witnessed first-hand the difficulty of reconciling the historical method of instruction in graduate studies with the representations of his own high school students, as they sought to learn "true" facts chronologically related to past events.

An analysis of the elements in the Quebec Education Program (MEES, 2007, 2017) related to the teaching of history at the secondary level shows that it encourages a constructivist view of history and the historical method, and is focused on developing competencies in learners (Boutonnet, 2017; Cardin, 2010; Cardin, Éthier & Meunier, 2010; Duquette, 2020; Éthier, Boutonnet, Demers & Lefrançois, 2017; Éthier, Cardin & Lefrançois, 2014). While the education program encourages the development of a constructivist vision of history, the presence of a "Progression des apprentissages" and a "Précision des connaissances" - additions to the programs by the Ministry in response to teachers' concerns about the lack of a list of knowledge to be acquired in the program - points towards a transmissive vision of history. Even within the Ministry documentation, we can feel an alternation between the ideas that history is a science with a method and the idea of history as a source of factual knowledge. In this situation, where two contradictory discourses on history are being heard, teachers are trying to create a learning

environment that is coherent with ministerial directives, Ministry-imposed assessment and their own representation of history.

Among teachers of the discipline, Yelle (2016) and Moisan (2010) contend that there are two main conceptions of history education that thrive: a "memory reservoir" to be acquired, or a science serving to develop certain intellectual competencies. Ironically, in an educational context, the views of teachers in Moisan's study suggest that historical knowledge must be acquired through declarative knowledge, a foundation that appears to be essential, from the teacher's viewpoint, in understanding the world in which learners thrive. Demers (2012) concurs, noting among her sample of teachers a "tendency to conceive history as an objective truth accessible through expert narratives" (p.23).

This brings us to the question of the current representation of history among Quebec students. To address this, we must first and foremost consider the context of the ministerial history exam. For Quebec students who won't go on to higher education, the ministerial exam is the last time they will have an "active relationship" with history. That's why this turning point is so important to study. This uniform, province-wide assessment of competency is rather complex to produce as it tries to consider the interpretive nature of knowledge production in history (Barbe et al., 2016). Although it officially recognizes the value of learning history, several scholars have expressed concerns about this exam (Blouin, 2020; Déry, 2016, 2017; Duquette, 2020; Éthier et al., 2014), particularly the operations students need to perform during it—which mimic historical thinking without reaching it—and the epistemological stance this tool appears to convey. The exam also encourages teachers to make strategic choices about the use of class time, between preparing students for the exam and teaching history (Lanoix, 2019; Moisan & Saussez, 2019; Pageau, 2023).

Among students who had failed this exam and enrolled in summer remedial courses, one reason for failure often cited was that they had not sufficiently studied or memorized the historical narrative imparted by the teacher to be able to answer the questions (Pageau, 2016). In other words, in their view, the reason they failed was not due to poor proficiency in history, but rather because they had not memorized the "official narrative" well enough.

Considering that epistemological understanding of the discipline can influence results on the single test and is therefore linked to academic failure, by documenting the impact of the present situation on learner training and assessment, we will address a sensitive issue for teachers, school administrators and the Ministry of Education. Indeed, our investigation concerns the social representations of historical science that are currently developed among Quebec learners, which leads us to pursue a political and pragmatic issue (Van der Maren, 1995). Given tensions in the educational community between the history curriculum in the Quebec Education Program and the requirements of the ministerial exam, between the epistemological stances reproduced by the teachers themselves and the view of history among the general public (Rosenzweig, 2000), one question remains: Which representation of history students construct? This article will aim to trace the social representations of the history of students about to take the single ministerial test. To deepen our understanding of the phenomenon and the various influences on students, we'll also look at the representations of teachers working with students, drawing, in this article, a dual portrait of the representations found in Quebec schools.

Conceptual Framework

It is impossible for us to go back and experience the past. We can, however, make a representation of it with the help of what has been left behind. This idea, a cornerstone of the constructivist view of history, led Lowenthal (1985) to declare that the past is irretrievably gone, leaving us only artifacts to organize our understanding. The study of history allows us to arrange our collective experience of the past and provide a meaningful context for our experience of the present (Seixas, 1996; Wineburg, 2001).

Secondary school students' representations of history are influenced by their experiences both in and out of the classroom (VanSledright & Reddy, 2014). Lee (2005) argues that learners come

to history class with preconceived notions about the topics covered. It is important to take these preconceptions into account, as it is easier for students to hold on to them than to change their representations (Moliner, 1992). Any study on adolescent representations will be informed by not only the sum of their academic learning but also the many experiences related to this learning. The learning drawn from these experiences can help construct a functional and hopefully coherent representation for us to examine, that is, how history learners rely on their social representations to understand the content encountered in history class, as well as history as a science.

Social representation is a system of beliefs shared by a community that facilitates communication between its members (Jodelet, 1984; Moscovici, 1989). Through school and experiences, secondary students build their social representation of history and what constitutes a history class. Based on the Central Core Theory (also known as Central Nucleus Theory), a representation can be viewed as a dual system with a core and a periphery, whose function is to maintain the stability of the representation through any differences that individual members bring to it (Moliner, 1992). Any deviation between the representation and observable reality can lead first to the transformation of its peripheral elements and then to the development of what Flament (1989) calls "strange schemas": patterns that seek to negotiate the deviation and reconcile the representation with the contradictory elements. If the deviation persists, the representation is likely to collapse. For Moliner (1992), in the transformation of a social representation, individuals will still retain their individual representations when only the peripheral elements are modified. However, when an element of the central core is contested, a change in the representation occurs. Hence the importance of examining students' representation of history as a science: their actions in class and in preparing for the ministerial exam will most likely be linked to their representations of history and the operations required during the test.

We owe to Lee & Ashby (2000), Lowenthal (1985) and Shemilt (2000) the nuance between "history" and "the past", which succinctly defines the past as the whole of time that took place before the present moment and on which the historian looks to find answers through an interrogative approach (the historical method). Shemilt (2000) suggests that learning history allows the learner to create accurate images of the past. His observations—yet to be empirically verified—led him to develop a schematic representation in four stages[1] to outline the learner's progress in understanding the currency of narrative frameworks used in history (Figure 1).

Figure 1

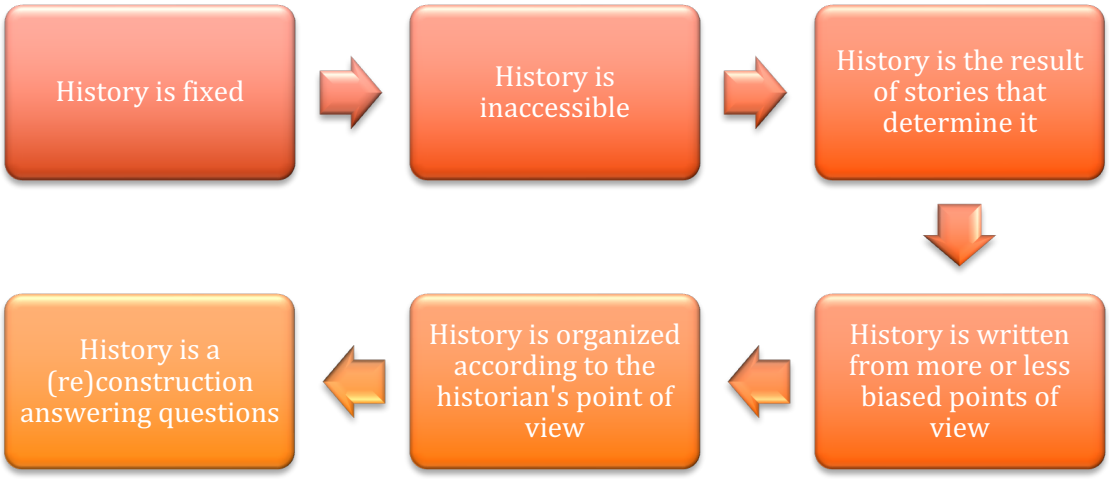
Schematic representation of understanding narrative frameworks in history

Notes. Based on Shemilt (2000)

Lee and Ashby's Concepts of History and Teaching Approaches (CHATA) project sought to study the perception of history among children between the ages of 7 and 14, and map how their representation of history changes over time. Figure 2 shows how the different stages of representation of history are articulated in Lee and Ashby's (2000) work. The authors found that age appears to matter less in advancing between these stages than the learner's own experience with history (Lee & Ashby, 2000).

Figure 2

Stages in representations of history



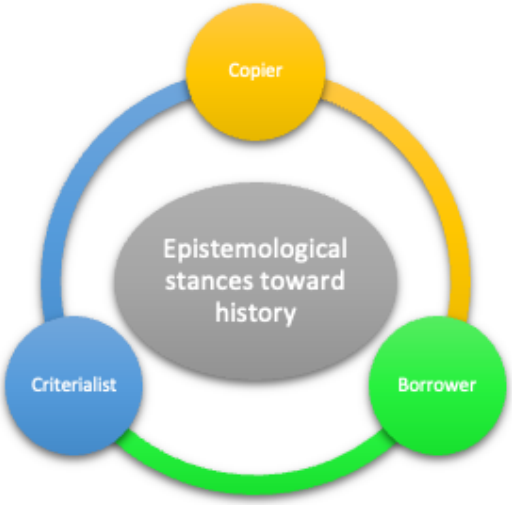
Notes. Based on Lee and Ashby (2000)

As part of Lee & Ashby's work, the notion of first-order (historical) and second-order (metahistorical) concepts emerged. The latter allows us to study the logic underpinning how history learning is organized, anchored in concepts that evolve across pens and over time, for example: time, change, historical empathy, causes, evidence and accounts (Lee, 2005).

Maggioni, VanSledright and Alexander's model (2009) synthesized this second-order logic into three epistemological stances: the *copier*, where history is viewed as a transmission; the *borrower*, where evidence is built using bits of information about the past to understand it; and the *criterialist*, where history answers questions and involves the use of historical thinking (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Maggioni, VanSledright and Alexander's model (2009)



This model has led to the development of a survey tool, the *Beliefs about Learning and Teaching History Questionnaire* (BHQ)[2] (Maggioni, VanSledright & Alexander, 2009), a questionnaire that brings out the participant's dominant postures (Stoel et al., 2022).

To understand what representations of history adolescents construct, we have therefore built a tool that will enable us to document students' school and out-of-school experiences (VanSledright & Reddy, 2014), students' preconceptions (Lee, 2005), which will bring out the structures of students' representations (Flament, 1989; Jodelet, 1984; Moliner, 1992; Moscovici, 1989), which will document how they perceive the difference between the past and history (Lee & Ashby, 2000; Lowenthal, 1985; Shemilt, 2000) and which will document their epistemological postures towards history (Maggioni, 2009).

Methodology

For our exploratory study, data collection began with a survey of Secondary IV history students preparing to take the ministerial exam. We then conducted explanatory interviews with history teachers about theirs representations of history but also about their perception of the representations of history of theirs students. This twin data collection aimed to produce a comprehensive picture of the representations students build of history.

We carried out an exploratory analysis as defined by Van der Maren (1995) with mixed methods (Fortin & Gagnon, 2010; Van der Maren, 1995) using principal axis factoring (Dancey, Reidy & Gauvrit, 2007) on the results of the BHQ questionnaire[3] (Maggioni, VanSledright & Alexander, 2009, Miguel Revilla, Carril Merino & Sánchez Agustí, 2017). For our study, we limited factoring to three axes to reflect the three epistemological stances we hypothesized would emerge (copier, borrower and criterialist)[4].

Our survey tool also employed, first, a thematic analysis (L'Ecuyer, 1990) of open-ended questions (Van der Maren, 1995) (see Table 1). Thematic analysis was used to bring out the main themes of the open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire and interviews. We also used cluster analysis of idea occurrence[5] to understand how closely associated themes emerging from the thematic analysis were. We used, in second and third, both free and forced association exercises of hierarchical evocation (Flament & Rouquette, 2003; Moisan, 2010) (see Table 2) to arrive at a more granular picture of the representations of history our student respondents had. Hierarchical evocation is a strategy for understanding the organization of participants' social representations by associating key words (using the whole of one's vocabulary in free association or limiting it to a pre-established list in forced association), thus enabling one to understand the organization of one's thoughts in relation to a subject.

Table 1:

Two (translated) examples of open-end questions from the survey that was addressed to students.

What do you think history is?
What do you think is the point of studying history?

Table 2:

Example of the free association of hierarchical evocation method with the keyword "history" (translated)

Name the four keywords that come to mind concerning the following word. Indicate the order of importance of each word, with 1 indicating the most important, and 4 the least important:	
History	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

To document social representations, we need to establish the elements linked to these representations in the minds of the participants, hence the use of hierarchical evocation. The thematic analysis enables us to go further in this exploration, refining and validating the results obtained.

In all, we collected data from 332 secondary students and 8 history teachers across Quebec, through an online questionnaire and Zoom meetings using convenience sampling. Our student sample was 64% female and 36% male, with an average age of 15.46. Of the teachers, three were women and five were men, with seven working in the public education system and one in a private school. The average number of teaching years was 17.5.

Results

Student epistemology

First, using a French version of the BHQ[6] adapted for Quebec, we were able to gauge how the epistemological stances of student respondents aligned with those identified by Maggioni et al. (2009) in the Likert scale with a principal axis analysis. Using groupings of questions[7] based on the different stances, we first calculated, for each respondent, his or her average agreement for each question and then, for each grouping. This value was a number between 1 and 6 (the lower the average, the more in agreement the student was with a given group of items[8]). In the next step, respondents were then subdivided into categories: those who had obtained high averages (H) for each grouping of items and those who had obtained low averages (L). This allowed us to produce respondent profiles as well as determine their relative frequency. To better visualize the sample distribution, we set two thresholds, the median and the upper quartile (Table 3).

Table 3

Student respondent profiles obtained using the median and upper quartile

Category	Profile significance	Frequency at median	Percentage at median	Frequency at quartile	Percentage at quartile
HLH	Copier Borrower Criterialist H L H				
HLH	High agreement with copier and criterialist stances	28	8.4	15	4.5
HHH	High agreement with all stances	70	21.1	18	5.4
LHH	High agreement with borrower and criterialist stances	47	14.2	18	5.4
HHL	High agreement with copier and borrower stances	47	14.2	18	5.4
LLH	High agreement with criterialist stance	27	8.1	28	8.4
HLL	High agreement with copier stance	29	8.7	42	12.7
LHL	High agreement with borrower stance	43	13.0	45	13.6
LLL	No high agreement[9]	39	11.7	146	44.0
Incomplete	Insufficient data	2	0.6	2	0.6
Total		**332**	**100**	**332**	**100**

A more detailed analysis of our categorization using the upper quartile reveals that a large majority of our student sample gravitate to the borrower (13.6%) and copier (12.7%) stances, followed by the criterialist stance (8.4%). It is thus possible to conclude that the first two stances are the most common among our students and that the presence of hybridization between the

stances in the median table shows a change or ambivalence in their thinking. It is possible to note that some students agree with two "opposite" stances, this will be explained with the thematic analysis that follow.

Second, we undertook a thematic analysis of responses given to the question "Selon toi, qu'est-ce que l'histoire?" ["In your view, what is history?"] With the help of a cluster analysis using Jaccard's coefficient on the responses, we were able to better measure the social representation of history among our student samples. Looking past the inevitable outcomes, we observed an interesting proximity in the corpus between the grouping of the verbs "to learn", "to remember" and "to know" with the grouping of the nouns "events" and "past", thus confirming the trio of ideas that has been recurrent in our study: for these students, history is learning about past events. Taking this analysis even further is the logical continuation, according to the groupings in the analysis, that history influences the present and allows us to understand it. Also emerging is the concept that the construction of "us" linked to identity is also closely connected to tracing back our origins and ancestry.

To reach a better understanding of the students' results, we interviewed teachers and presented them with our preliminary findings. These corresponded with their perception of what students' representations of history were. As the interviews progressed, the idea of the malleability of the students' representations of history emerged, testifying to the fact that students adapted their representations to the school situation: during a discussion on the nature of history, they tended more towards a criterialist posture; during evaluation, they retreated to a more copier posture.

Lastly, and most importantly for our study, we were able to define our student respondents' social representation of the word "history" using free and forced association exercises and hierarchical evocation (Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4

Frequency and ranking of words freely associated with the word "history" by students

	Global Frequency	Frequencies in the first position	Frequencies in second place	Frequencies in third place	Frequencies in fourth place
Évènement [event]	90	28	27	13	22
Guerre [war]	44	5	15	16	8
Fait [fact]	37	10	16	7	4
Important [important]	26	2	10	4	10
Date [date]	25	5	8	6	6
Évolution [evolution]	24	3	6	10	5
École [school]	23	6	7	3	7
Étude [study]	21	2	4	7	8
Personnage [person/figure]	19	3	7	6	3
Ancien [old]	17	2	10	3	2
Politique [politic]	17	3	3	7	4
Temps [time]	17	6	3	6	2
Ancêtre [ancestor]	16	1	8	4	3
Historique [historical]	16	4	6	3	3
Intéressant [intersting]	16	-	2	7	7
Connaissance [knowledge]	14	4	4	3	3
Culture [culture]	14	4	5	2	3
Cœur [heart][10]	13	4	3	2	4
Compréhension [understanding]	13	4	3	3	3
Marquant [marking]	13	5	3	2	3
Cours [class]	12	-	3	4	5
Matière [subject]	12	5	5	1	1
Apprentissage [learning]	11	1	1	6	3
Histoire [history]	10	4	1	2	3
Livre [book]	10	2	3	3	2
Quebec	10	2	3	2	3
Vieux [old]	10	3	3	1	3

Table 5

Frequency and ranking of words (in French) in forced association with the word "history" by students

	Global Frequency	Frequencies in the first position	Frequencies in second place	Frequencies in third place	Frequencies in fourth place
Faits [facts]	135	21	37	38	39
Culture [culture]	122	18	33	37	34
Chronologie [timeline]	121	20	39	29	33
Dates [dates]	108	29	28	30	21
Mémorisation [memorization]	82	24	27	16	15
Personnages [person/figure]	75	10	16	20	29
Célèbres [famous]	72	10	15	19	28
Société [society]	60	4	15	21	20
Interprétations [interprétations]	37	5	6	10	16
Temps [time]	34	3	11	9	11
Étude [study]	34	10	12	2	10
Récit [narrative]	30	4	6	14	6
Sources [sources]	26	2	5	12	7
Critique [critique]	23	4	5	8	6
Durée [length]	22	2	9	3	8
Esprit [thinking]	22	4	4	8	6
Narration [narration]	21	2	5	11	3
Évaluation [evaluation]	21	6	7	5	3
Futur [future]	19	2	8	3	6
Examen [examination]	17	2	7	5	3
Plaisir [pleasure]	17	5	3	4	5
Présent [present]	13	5	2	3	3
Facile [easy]	12	3	2	3	4
Difficile [hard]	11	2	4	3	2
Diplôme [diploma]	10	4	1	3	2

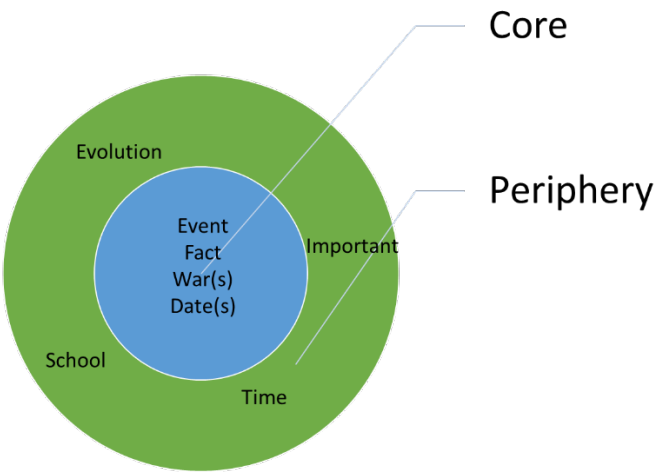
In the free association exercise on the word "history", it is possible to see the relative importance of the words "event", "war", "fact", "important", "date", "evolution", "school" and "study" (Table 2). A total of 1,483 words were logged in this exercise, with 25.5% excluded from our calculations (e.g., conjunctions). To streamline our analysis, only words occurring at least 10 times were retained.

For the forced association exercise on the same word, respondents were provided with a list of keywords that had been selected following the pretest and discussions with teachers, and asked to choose and rank, in order of importance, four words from the list. In total, 1,383 words made the list and 16% were excluded from further analysis (Table 3). As with the free association results, only words occurring more than 10 times were retained.

In light of these results, applying Central Core Theory and taking into consideration the global frequency and the hierarchical position, we found that the social representation of history among our student sample appears to be arrayed around four keywords: "event", "fact", "war" and "date" (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Student respondents' social representation of history



For the peripheral elements, we opted for "evolution", "important", "time" and "school". When it came to choosing these, we favour words from the free association exercise results, reasoning that this would better reflect the respondents' own thinking, unprompted by any suggested word bank (i.e. the forced association word list).

Teacher epistemology

Before being interviewed, seven of the eight secondary history teachers who agreed to participate in our study took part in free and forced association exercises ranking certain words of interest.

Table 6

Frequency of words (in French) freely associated with the word "history" by teachers

	Frequency	Number of cases	% of case
Passé [past]	3	3	42,86%
Compréhension [Compréhension]	2	2	28,57%
Identité [identity]	2	2	28,57%
Interprétation [interpretation]	2	2	28,57%
Présent [present]	2	2	28,57%
Agit [act]	1	1	14,29%
Anticipation [anticipation]	1	1	14,29%
Changements [change]	1	1	14,29%
Chemin [way]	1	1	14,29%
Connaissance [knowledge]	1	1	14,29%
Critique [critical]	1	1	14,29%
Découverte [discovery]	1	1	14,29%
Démarche [approch]	1	1	14,29%
Enquête [survey]	1	1	14,29%
Esprit [thinking]	1	1	14,29%
Explication [explanation]	1	1	14,29%
Fait [fact]	1	1	14,29%
Fierté [pride]	1	1	14,29%
Partage [share]	1	1	14,29%
Perspective [erspective]	1	1	14,29%
Pouvoirs [power]	1	1	14,29%
Questionnement [questionning]	1	1	14,29%
Temps [time]	1	1	14,29%
Évènements [events]	1	1	14,29%

Table 7

Frequency of words (in French) in forced association with the word "history" by teachers

	Frequency	Number of cases	% of case
Angoisse [anxiety]	4	4	57,14%
Passé [past]	4	4	57,14%
Stress [stress]	4	4	57,14%
Culture [culture]	3	3	42,86%
Faits [facts]	3	3	42,86%
Évaluation [evaluation]	3	3	42,86%
Difficile [hard]	2	2	28,57%
Diplôme [diploma]	2	2	28,57%
Examen [examination]	2	2	28,57%
Étude [study]	2	2	28,57%
Actuelle [current]	1	1	14,29%
Facile [easy]	1	1	14,29%
Forme [shape]	1	1	14,29%
Futur [future]	1	1	14,29%
Inutile [useless]	1	1	14,29%
Plaisir [pleasure]	1	1	14,29%
Présent [present]	1	1	14,29%

In the free association exercise (table 6) on the word "history", some recurring words were suggested: "Past" was mentioned by respondents three times (ranked in first and fourth position). "Understanding" (first and third), "identity" (first and fourth), "interpretation" (first and third) and "present" (second and third) were all mentioned twice. Words related to "interpretation" (e.g. "understanding", "interpretation", "explanation") and "identity" (e.g. "pride", "identity", "culture") also emerged.

In the forced association exercise (table 7), the word "past" was brought up on three occasions in the first position and once in the fourth positions. "Anxiety/stress" was chosen four times in the second and the fourth position. "Culture" and "facts" were both selected three times in first and third position. "Evaluation" was selected three times and ranked second.

It appears that teachers place the past at the center of their representation of history. In their view, history serves to understand, interpret, and construct identity. For this group of respondents, history in a secondary school setting is closely associated with the idea of evaluation and anxiety.

Teachers were also asked to complete the BHQ questionnaire (Maggioni, 2010; Maggioni, VanSledright, & Alexander, 2009). As only seven questionnaires were administered, we did not feel it would be meaningful to conduct the same statistical analysis we did for the student cohort. However, we were able to apply the classification of the questions used in the student questionnaire, divided into the three stances (copier, borrower and criterialist) generated by the tool (i.e., the result of principal axis factoring) to measure the degree of agreement relative to each of the epistemological stances of the teachers participating in this exercise.

Table 8 presents the relative degrees of agreement of the participating teachers with the three stances investigated in the questionnaire. The closer the average value was to "1", the more likely the teacher was to agree with the stance, while disagreement was expressed with values closer to "6".

The analysis of this average led us to conclude that all the teachers in our sample lean toward a criterialist view of history, given that their averages (situated between 1 and 3.5) express a greater degree of agreement.

Table 8

Degree of agreement relative to copier, borrower and criterialist stances among participating teachers

Teacher	Average agreement with copier stance questions	Average agreement with borrower stance questions	Average agreement with criterialist stance questions
1	4.25	3.75	2.78
2	5.00	4.50	2.63
3	3.88	3.75	2.22
4	3.43	4.00	3.13
5	3.71	3.25	2.63
6	3.80	3.75	3.25
7	4.00	3.75	3.00

Lastly, we concluded our investigation with a thematic analysis of the teacher interviews. A cluster analysis of occurrences of ideas using Jaccard's coefficient helped us visualize the links between the themes conveyed in the teachers' definition of history. In order of importance, we see first the dominant theme of "identity", strongly linked with the themes of "culture" and "passion". These are also closely linked with the duo of "not repeating the mistakes of the past" and the "future". The second most important grouping would be the one related to "society(ies)" and having many "perspectives" to "understand" it (them). Next in descending order are the themes of "ancestry", "politics", the "student-teacher relationship" and "teaching approaches". There is also a strong correlation between the duo "History as a Science versus History Education" and "recounting history". Another interesting grouping for our analysis is that formed by the themes linking the importance of studying the history of "minority groups", "heritage" and "understanding the past". Finally, we noted that "interpretation" and "memorization" were often coupled together and connected to the idea of using history to develop a "worldview", and to a lesser extent, engaging in a "conversation," "historical process," and "knowing the past." One last pairing of note was "critical thinking" and "curiosity".

Limitations

While our sample size too small to be generalized to the entire population. We must also consider the fact that a participant in a study on epistemological positioning may tend to show greater epistemological sophistication to satisfy the researcher's projected requirements, through the social desirability effect (Therriault, 2008). We also had to deal with the constraints associated with the global Covid-19 pandemic, which tinged the responses we obtained with, among other things, allusions to distance learning, which was not a phenomenon under study here. In addition, our data collection was based on the voluntary participation of respondents, so it is conceivable that we obtained feedback from students with a relatively positive relationship to history. Despite these limitations, our study has enabled us to paint a picture of certain trends and phenomena present in the population studied.

Discussion

Through the BHQ questionnaire and the open-ended questions in our survey tool, we were able to glean students' views of history and thus understand the representations of history they developed during their school years. We examined these representations through the epistemological parameters identified by Lee and Ashby (2000), Maggioni (2010) and Maggioni et al. (2009). From the interview with the teachers, we found that students tended to be malleable in their epistemological stances, depending on the learning situation they encountered: likely to

take a more criterialist stance in a student/teacher discussion setting, but retreat to a copier stance and use tools such as memorization during an exam. This piece of information helps us to understand the surprising fact that some students can agree with two, apparently, opposite stances in the BHQ questionnaire. Factors that would explain this phenomenon are many and varied: being taught by different teachers through their educational background, learning, and being introduced to history as a science, the view of history among the general public (Rosenzweig, 2000) or in-class pedagogical activities, to name but a few. This finding was corroborated by the responses to the BHQ questionnaire, where students would agree with one question describing the copier stance concerning one particular memory but adopt a criterialist stance on another reminiscence. This malleability, when presented to the teachers who participated in the explanatory interviews, seems to be in line with what they have observed in their own classrooms and with what is called the wobbling or epistemic inconsistency (VanSledright & Maggioni, 2016).

Our free and forced association exercises revealed that teachers do place the past at the center of their representation of history and that history is used to understand, interpret, and construct their students' identity. The BHQ questionnaire made it possible to confirm that all the teachers in our sample lean toward a criterialist view of history. We were also able to demonstrate the proximity between the key ideas of history, "past" and "culture", which are followed, at a second level, by those of "society" and "identity" then by the ideas of "fact", "politics", "heritage", "critical thinking", "event", "understanding", "path" and "today".

Conclusion

The aim of this article was to trace the social representations of the history of students about to take the single ministerial test, and those of the teachers who accompany them. We were able to document the malleability of the social representation of history among teenagers. We were also able to see, in the interviews, that teachers encourage their students to connect with their past by introducing them to a culture and a construction of identity through intellectual curiosity and the study of history. This type of history education is used to develop critical thinking when considering diverse perspectives in historical or societal settings. An analysis of the teachers' views on how they use history to help to acquire a shared social vision in developing a group identity among students. It is therefore possible to connect the dots between the societal aspect of the student's representation of history, as reflect in the thematic analysis, and how teachers use history in class. While resisting the temptation to reduce this association to a simple cause and effect, there is a need here to reinforce this aspect of representation.

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Endnotes

1 For information on epistemological stances which aren't domain-specific, see Hofer, B. K., & Pintrich, P. R. (1997). The Development of Epistemological Theories: Beliefs About Knowledge and Knowing and Their Relation to Learning. *Review of Educational Research, 67*(1), 88-140. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543067001088

2 You can find the tool developed by Maggioni, L., VanSledright, B., & Alexander, P. A. (2009). Walking on the Borders: A Measure of Epistemic Cognition in History. *The Journal of Experimental Education, 77*(3), 187-214. https://doi.org/10.3200/jexe.77.3.187-214

3 We chose this methodology over the one elaborate by Bouhon (2009) for its straightforwardness that suits our goal with the teenage population.

4 While previous researches were in exploratory mode with this construct, which motivated the use of principal component analysis, we chose principal axis analysis, as we had a theoretical basis established by Maggionni et al. (2009) implying that constructs must emerge (Jean, 2017) (i.e. the three postures of copier, borrower, and criterialist). Thus, it can be seen that our analysis is based on three axes, whereas Maggionni et al., in principal component analysis, was based on two components with an opposition between two postures.

5 A cluster analysis shows how closely associated the ideas in the sample are. To do that, we also used the Jaccard similarity coefficient to evaluate the similarity of the sample set. This analysis enabled us to assess the closeness of the ideas evoked by the participants during their interviews.

6 You can find the tool developed by Maggioni, L., VanSledright, B., & Alexander, P. A. (2009). Walking on the Borders: A Measure of Epistemic Cognition in History. *The Journal of Experimental Education, 77*(3), 187-214. https://doi.org/10.3200/jexe.77.3.187-214

7 The groupings used to classify items according to epistemological postures depend on principal axis analysis, as found by the American (Maggioni, 2010; Maggioni et al., 2009) and Spanish (Miguel-Revilla & Fernández Portela, 2018) teams that have used this tool. Thus, for our Quebec participants, 8 items were classified as copier, 4 as borrower and 11 as criterialist. The Cronbach's alpha for each stance were 0.640 for copier, 0.548 for borrower and 0.714 for criterialist.

8 Related to the tool we used, the closer the average value was to "1", the more likely the participant was to agree with the stance, while disagreement was expressed with values closer to "6". The original BHQ is coded between 1 (strongly disagree) and 6 (strongly agree).

[9] The large number of students with no dominant postures is simply explained by the fact that many respondents remained in the central levels of the Likert scale and did not compromise to a posture.

10 In French, knowing something ''par cœur" [at heart] means to have memorized it: it's a plausible explanation for the presence of that word.