



Historical Thinking, Epistemic Cognition, and History Teacher Education

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INTRODUCTION

Historical Thinking has become an important touchstone in History education research and practice. Anna Clark describes historical thinking as “the skills of scholarly historical practice and disciplinary method.”¹ In the classroom, this often takes the form of building students’ understanding of historical methodology by introducing them to the source method, the examination, analysis, and interpretation of evidence of a particular person, place, or event from the past. There is a widespread consensus in the field that teaching historical thinking should be the key focus of history education, rather than simply a matter of teaching historical content (i.e. names, dates, events, etc.).² Though Christine

¹Anna Clark, “Scholarly Historical Practice and Disciplinary Method.” In *Historical Thinking for History Teachers: A New Approach to Engaging Students and Developing Historical Consciousness*, ed. Tim Allender, Anna Clark and Robert Parkes (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2019), 47.

²See for example: Stéphane Lévesque. *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century*. (Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press, 2008); and Karl-Ernst Jeismann. “Geschichtsbewusstsein als zentrale Kategorie der Didaktik des Geschichtsunterrichts.” In Jeismann, Karl-Ernst, *Geschichte und Bildung. Beiträge zur Geschichtsdidaktik und zur Historischen*

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Counsell certainly cautions us to recognize that both historical knowledge and disciplinary concepts are necessary in order for students “to reach or challenge claims about the past.”³ Certainly, the move to an emphasis on historical thinking follows a general turn in the academy toward understanding history as a construction, the product of historical method applied to the problem of understanding the past. According to Gorzycki, Elder, and Paul, teaching historical thinking develops students’ understanding that historical narratives are interpretations of the past, constructed by historians (who have their own biases) from whatever sources (of varying degrees of credibility and validity) were available, or selected by them.⁴

In this chapter, we start by exploring the turn toward historical thinking, placing it in a contemporary context in which critical literacy has become a required skill of the intelligent citizen. We examine the specific form of historical thinking taken up in the recently formed Australian Curriculum (as an example from the Anglosphere), and the related idea of historical competencies influencing curriculum in Switzerland (as an example from the German-speaking world). We then turn to the research on epistemic cognition, and argue that scholarship demonstrating the impact of teachers’ epistemic beliefs on their teaching practice makes attending to pre-service History teachers’ epistemic cognition important in the development of history teachers. We then revisit the notion of “historical consciousness,” as understood in the Germanic hermeneutic tradition, and argue that it offers an important supplement to the focus on historical thinking, given its theorization that our prejudices or judgments are necessary to the process of interpreting the narratives we encounter, and that turning the “historiographic gaze” upon ourselves, in order to come to an understanding of these prejudices, is a key aspect of achieving historical consciousness.⁵ We link this specific notion of historical consciousness, with the idea of epistemic cognition, and propose that pre-service teachers ought to be engaged in explorations of the historical cultures they bring into the classroom, and their individual epistemological cognitions, and

Bildungsforschung, edited and introduced by Wolfgang Jakobmeyer and Bernd Schönemann (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000), 48.

³Christine Counsell, “Historical Knowledge and Historical Skills: A Distracting Dichotomy.” In *Issues in History Teaching*, edited by James Arthur and Robert Phillips. (London: Routledge, 2000), 52–71.

⁴Meg Gorzycki, Linda Elder, and Richard Paul. *Historical Thinking: Bringing Critical Thinking Explicitly into the Heart of Historical Study*. (Tomales, California: Foundation for Critical Thinking Press, 2013); Günther-Arndt, Hilke and Meik Zülsdorf-Kersting. *Geschichtsdidaktik: Praxishandbuch für die Sekundarstufe I und II*, 6th fully revised edition. (Berlin: Cornelsen Scriptor, 2014).

⁵On the “historiographic gaze,” see Robert J. Parkes, *Interrupting History: Rethinking History Curriculum after ‘the End of History.’* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011). On “historical consciousness,” see Hans-Georg Gadamer. *Truth and Method*. Translated by J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall. (New York: Crossroad, 1992); Rüsen, Jörn. *Historik: Theorie der Geschichtswissenschaft*. (Köln: Böhlau, 2013); and Jeismann, Karl-Ernst “Geschichtsbewusstsein als Zentrale Kategorie der Didaktik des Geschichtsunterrichts.” In Jeismann, Karl-Ernst, *Geschichte und Bildung. Beiträge zur Geschichtsdidaktik und zur Historischen Bildungsforschung*, edited and introduced by Wolfgang Jakobmeyer and Bernd Schönemann (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000), 46–72.

that this is a necessary aspect of developing their historical thinking as “historically conscious” History teachers for the twenty-first century. We offer a very preliminary sketch of the kinds of areas that would need to be considered to develop such an epistemic cognition of history, as a supplement to “historical thinking” as a set of skills.

THE HISTORICAL THINKING TURN

Seldom does a day go past where we are not confronted with “alternative facts” or “fake news.” This appears to be the latest problem in a postmodern or, as many now describe it, a “post-truth” world, where the circulation of conspiracy theories, hoaxes, moral panics, and the operation of filter bubbles, alongside cultural relativism, and a general loss of confidence in the knowledge produced by our public institutions have been argued to have led to the proliferation of revisionist histories, and provided fertile ground for historical denial, and may have even unseated our trust in the discipline of history itself.⁶ Arguably, the emergence of social history in the 1970s and its strategy of “telling history from below,” and the interjection of the stories of the marginalized into public historical discourse, destabilized the official histories of many nations, triggering reactionary conservative backlashes that have resulted in “politicized controversies” over “societal imaginings and depictions of national, cultural, racial, ethnic, tribal, and religious pasts.”⁷ Canadian History Education scholar Peter Seixas has argued that left unaddressed, the teaching of rival narratives in a climate of cultural relativism may leave history students unable to know what to believe.⁸ A shared concern with this post-truth situation has resulted in a general consensus that designing curricula for the purpose of teaching historical thinking is an important antidote to the lure of fake history and/or the seductive news story, and essential for a critical engagement with the historical narratives we encounter in filmic and the online web-based

⁶Two influential discussions documenting the loss of confidence in institutional knowledge come from Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by G. Bennington and B. Massumi. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1979); and Jason Harsin, “Post-Truth and Critical Communication Studies.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. December (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.757>. There is also a body of work that addresses this same issue in relation to historical knowledge specifically, including: Keith Windschuttle, *The Killing of History: How Literary Critics and Social Theorists Are Murdering Our Past*. (New York: The Free Press, 1996); Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History*. (London: Granta Books, 1997); Lipstadt, Deborah E. *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Memory and Truth*. (New York: Plume, 1994); C. Behan McCullagh, *The Logic of History: Putting Postmodernism in Perspective*. (London: Routledge, 2004).

⁷Tony Taylor and Robert Guyver, eds. *History Wars in the Classroom: Global Perspectives*. (London: Information Age Publishing, 2011), xii.

⁸Peter Seixas, “Schweigen! Die Kinder! Or Does Postmodern History Have a Place in the Schools?” In *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives*, edited by Peter N. Stearns, Peter Seixas and Sam Wineburg, (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 19–37.

history culture we regularly encounter, as well as being an important tool we need to navigate the complex societies in which we all live out our lives.⁹

The idea of a critical history education that arms students with historical thinking tools that can be used to critically engage with the history culture they encounter is not a completely new idea.¹⁰ Nevertheless, in the German speaking and in the Anglophone world, with some exchange and interaction between the two scientific communities which can't be outlined here, historical thinking is now understood as a practice which applies a set of competencies. Thus, a person can be called "historically literate" directly in relation to their ability to apply these competencies. Generally speaking, competencies have been defined as the integration of knowledge and skills while solving a specific task.¹¹ Competencies can be evaluated or diagnosed by observing an individual while performing a task. Therefore, competency-based approaches have claimed a more activity-oriented way of teaching which can bring forward the students' performances and—also to the students themselves—make learning visible.¹² A lot of western countries have adopted in their educational curricula the idea that pupils should learn that history involves interpretation.¹³ In this process, the students' epistemic understanding of history as a discipline, with its specific form of knowledge and knowing, had been claimed as important by several history education scholars from around the globe. Performing historical thinking or reasoning is understood by these scholars to be the interplay of a set of historical competencies, that is, thinking skills which can be applied to a specified content knowledge.¹⁴ Today, most of the curricula in countries such as

⁹In the English literature, see Rob Siebörger, "Fake News, Alternative Facts, History Education." *Public History Weekly* 5 (2017): 8. <https://doi.org/10.1515/phw-2017-8548>; and Sam Wineburg, *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)*. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018); and Bruce A. VanSledright, *The Challenge of Rethinking History Education: On Practices, Theories, and Policy*. (New York: Routledge, 2011). In the German language literature see Moller, Sabine. *Zeitgeschichte sehen: Die Aneignung von Vergangenheit durch Filme und ihre Zuschauer*. (Berlin: Bertz+Fischer, 2018); and Jan Hodel, *Verkürzen und Verknüpfen: Geschichte als Netz narrativer Fragmente: wie Jugendliche digitale Netzmedien für die Erstellung von Referaten im Geschichtsunterricht verwenden* (Bern: hep, 2013).

¹⁰Jörn Rüsen, *Historische Orientierung: Über die Arbeit des Geschichtsbewusstseins, sich in der Zeit zurechtzufinden*, 2., überarb. Aufl., Forum Historisches Lernen (Schwalbach/Ts: Wochenschau, 2008).

¹¹Franz E. Weinert, ed. *Leistungsmessungen in Schulen* (Weinheim& Basel: Beltz, 2001).

¹²John Hattie, *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*. (London: Routledge, 2008).

¹³Elisabeth Erdmann, and Wolfgang Hassberg, eds. *Facing – Mapping – Bridging Diversity, Foundation of a European Discourse on History Education*, 1 (Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschau, 2011).

¹⁴See for example: Carol Bertram, "Exploring an Historical Gaze: A Language of Description for the Practice of School History," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 44, no. 3 (2012): 429–42; Anna Clark, "Teaching the Nation's Story: Comparing Public Debates and Classroom Perspectives on History Education in Australia and Canada," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 41, no. 6 (2009): 745–62; Carla van Boxtel, and Jannet van Drie, "Historical Reasoning: A Comparison of How Experts and Novices Contextualise Historical Sources," *International Journal of Historical*

Canada, the Netherlands, the UK, the USA, Germany, Australia, Switzerland, and Sweden, all propose a focus upon doing history as an act of interpretation, that is, students should know the difference between historical accounts and sources and the systematic analysis and interpretation of the same.

Much of the movement from historical content to historical thinking in British Commonwealth nations, particularly, is a legacy of the British Schools History Project reforms of the 1980s, and the research that accompanied it, or grew out from it.¹⁵ In North America, the shift toward historical thinking can be traced to the significant influence of a number of researchers in the field, such as VanSledright, Wineburg, Levstik & Barton, Seixas, and his collaborators, and, in Western Europe, to the generative work of researchers such as van Boxtel and van Drie.¹⁶ The official History syllabus used in New South Wales, the only state in Australia to maintain history as a discrete subject in schools from the 1950s onward, and made mandatory for all students in junior high school in 1993, has promoted some form of “historical thinking” since the 1970s.¹⁷ However, during the era of the Howard government (1996–2007), conservative journalists, politicians (including the Prime Minister himself), and sympathetic social commentators sought to use the school curriculum as a vehicle for social cohesion, challenging revisionist histories of the nation that depicted the European colonization of Australia as “invasion.” The conflicts over depictions of the nation’s past that occurred at this time have become known as Australia’s “history wars.”¹⁸ The Prime Minister’s 2006 Australia Day speech inaugurated the movement to a historic national curriculum, in which a single national narrative was argued to be an important antidote against

Learning, Teaching and Research 4, no. 2 (2004); and VanSledright, *The Challenge of Rethinking History Education*.

¹⁵ See Dennis Shemilt, *Evaluation Study: Schools Council History 13–16 Project*. (Edinburgh: Holmes McDougall, 1980); and Dennis Shemilt, “Adolescent Ideas About Evidence and Methodology in History.” In *The History Curriculum for Teachers*, Christopher Portal, Ed. (London: Falmer, 1987) 29–61; and Peter Lee and Dennis Shemilt, “A Scaffold, Not a Cage: Progression and Progression Models in History.” *Teaching History*, no. 113 (2003): 13–23.

¹⁶ As a sample of their work, see VanSledright, *The Challenge of Rethinking History Education: On Practices, Theories and Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); Linda S. Levstik and Keith C. Barton, *Doing History: Investigating with Children in Elementary and Middle Schools* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2001); Peter Seixas and Tom Morton, *The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts* (USA: Nelson, 2012); Carla van Boxtel and Jan van Drie. “Historical Reasoning: A Comparison of How Experts and Novices Contextualise Historical Sources,” *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* 4, no. 2 (2004).

¹⁷ Robert J. Parkes and Debra Donnelly. “Changing Conceptions of Historical Thinking in History Education: An Australian Case Study.” *Revista Tempo e Argumento* 6, no. 11 (2014): 113–36.

¹⁸ On the politics of history curriculum change in Australia, see Robert J. Parkes, “Teaching History as Historiography: Engaging Narrative Diversity in the Curriculum,” *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* 8, no. 2 (2009): 118–32; and on the “history wars” Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark, *The History Wars* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2003).

home-grown terrorism. However, Howard was unsuccessful in achieving the kind of curriculum he was after.¹⁹ Instead, the left-wing Labor government that followed Howard in 2007 successfully established a national History curriculum that certainly offered a chronological view of the national past, but required throughout the explicit teaching of historical thinking skills and concepts. This did not stop conservatives from conducting a review of the fledgling curriculum that followed the successful re-election of the Liberal–National Coalition to power in 2013; however, little has changed as a consequence.²⁰

Based on the Australian Curriculum: History, the syllabus produced for the implementation of the national curriculum in New South Wales schools required attention to the following historical thinking skills: (1) Chronology, Terms and Concepts; (2) Historical Questions and Research; (3) Analysis and Use of Sources; (4) Perspectives and Interpretations; (5) Empathetic Understanding; and (6) Explanation and Communication. Likewise, a continuum of concepts was also developed, consisting of: (1) Continuity and Change; (2) Cause and Effect; (3) Perspectives; (4) Empathetic Understanding; (5) Significance; and (6) Contestability. The influence of the Canadian Historical Thinking Project is clearly evident. According to the Canadian work, to think historically a student needs to be able to: (1) Establish historical significance; (2) Use primary source evidence; (3) Identify continuity and change; (4) Analyze cause and consequence; (5) Take historical perspectives, and (6) Understand the ethical dimension of historical interpretations. Further, it is argued on their website that taken as a whole, these aspects of historical thinking become a set of competencies that must be achieved in order for a person to be considered “historically literate” (as stated earlier). As an historically literate person, the student will be able to interrogate sources and evaluate historical knowledge claims. Importantly, the scholars behind the Historical Thinking Project do not see their competencies as a set of abstract skills, but a practice that is applied to substantive content.²¹ In that sense, the Australian Curriculum: History can be seen to be strongly aligned with a Commonwealth trend, although the idea of “competencies” is not explicitly addressed in the Australian or New South Wales state curriculum policies.

Over the last two decades in the field of history education (Geschichtsdidaktik) in German-speaking Europe, several models of historical competencies have

¹⁹To read the Prime Minister’s Australia Day speech, see John Howard, “Unity Vital in Battle against Terrorism.” *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney), 26th January 2006, 1st, 11; and to understand its political and practical consequences in an attempt to shape curriculum, see Tony Taylor, “Howard’s End: A Narrative Memoir of Political Contrivance, Neoconservative Ideology and the Australian History Curriculum,” *Curriculum Journal* 20, no. 4 (2009): 317–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585170903424765>

²⁰Robert J. Parkes, “What Paradigms Inform the Review of the Australian Curriculum: History? What Does This Mean for the Possibilities of Critical and Effective Histories in Australian Education?” *Curriculum Perspectives* 35, no. 1 (2015): 52–54.

²¹See Peter Seixas, “The Historical Thinking Project.” Accessed: 25 July 2019. <http://historicalthinking.ca/about-historical-thinking-project>

been developed.²² The similarities and differences across the models have been discussed by the scientific community and common shared ideas have been highlighted.²³ All models share both the idea of a “historical question competency” and a “historical method competency.” The first deals with the ability to raise a historical question about the past. The second starts after having formulated the question. When it generates a narrative based on sources, a “process of re-construction” is triggered. Inversely, when the question focuses on a given narrative, the analytical process is called a “process of de-construction.” The ability to perform both processes is called the “historical method competency” which brings forward either a self-constructed historical narrative or a critical opinion on a given historical account. However, in the center of the diverse models lies the “historical orientation competency” (Orientierungskompetenz) which enables an individual to orientate themselves in time, that is, to connect in a meaningful way, the past, present, and future, and to develop a historical consciousness understood as “Sinnbildung über Zeiterfahrung” which Körber translates as “formation of meaning over experience of (changes within) time.”²⁴

Over recent years in German-speaking Switzerland, a curriculum reform started out that will have final implementation in 2021. This new “curriculum21”—in German called “Lehrplan21” (www.lehrplan.ch)—distinguishes three cycles over 11 years of mandatory schooling, that is, kindergarten to year 2 (first cycle), years 3–6 (second cycle), and years 7–9 (third

²² See the following: Waltraud Schreiber, Andreas Körber, Bodo von Borries, Reinhard Krammer, Sybilla Leutner-Ramme, Sylvia Mebus, Alexander Schöner, and Béatrice Ziegler, “Historisches Denken. Ein Kompetenz-Strukturmodell (Basisbeitrag).” In *Kompetenzen: 2. Kompetenzen Historischen Denkens: Ein Strukturmodell als Beitrag zur Kompetenzorientierung in der Geschichtsdidaktik*, edited by Andreas Körber, Waltraud Schreiber and Alexander Schöner (Neuried: Ars Una, 2007), 17–53; Andreas Körber, *Kompetenzen Historischen Denkens. Ein Strukturmodell als Beitrag zur Kompetenzorientierung in der Geschichtsdidaktik* (Neuried: Ars Una, 2007); Peter Gautschi, *Guter Geschichtsunterricht* (Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschau, 2009); and Ulrich Trautwein, Christiane Bertram, Bodo von Borries, Nicola Brauch, Matthias Hirsch, Kathrin Klausmeier, Andreas Körber, Christoph Küberger, Johannes Meyer-Hamme, Martin Merkt, Herbert Neureiter, Stephan Schwan, Waltraud Schreiber, Wolfgang Wagner, Monika Waldis, Michael Werner, Béatrice Ziegler, and Andreas Zuckowsky. *Kompetenzen historischen Denkens erfassen. Konzeption, Operationalisierung und Befunde des Projekts “Historical Thinking – Competencies in History” (HiTCH)* (Münster: Waxmann, 2017).

²³ Marko Demantowsky, “Jenseits des Kompetenzkonsenses.” In: Handro, Saskia, & Bernd Schönemann (Eds.): *Aus der Geschichte lernen? Weisse Flecken der Kompetenzdebatte* (Berlin: Lit, 2016) 21–35; Thünemann Holger, “Probleme und Perspektiven der geschichtsdidaktischen Kompetenzdebatte.” In *Aus der Geschichte lernen. Weisse Flecken der Kompetenzdebatte*, edited by Saskia Handro and Bernd Schönemann (Berlin: Lit, 2016) 37–51; Andreas Körber, *Historical Consciousness, Historical Competencies – and Beyond? Some Conceptual Development within German History Didactics* (Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung, 2015). Retrieved from http://www.pedocs.de/volltexte/2015/10811/pdf/Koerber_2015_Development_German_History_Didactics.pdf

²⁴ For the original concept, see Jörn Rüsen, *Lebendige Geschichte. Grundzüge einer Historik III: Formen und Funktionen des historischen Wissens* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989) 94; and its take up, see Körber, *Historical consciousness, historical competencies – and beyond?*

cycle). For the cycles 1 and 2, the FUER model of Schreiber et al. was applied with minor modifications derived from the GDSU and Kübler, whereas, for the third cycle, the development of the competencies was based on the model of Gautschi.²⁵ Therefore, there is no overarching model of progression over the 11 years of mandatory schooling. However, common competencies such as “perception competency,” (Wahrnehmungskompetenz), “question competency,” (Fragekompetenz), “methods competency,” (Methodenkompetenz), “orientation competency,” (Orientierungskompetenz), and “content competency” (Sachkompetenz) are due to be developed and fostered over German-speaking Switzerland’s mandatory schooling.²⁶

Implications of Competency-Based School Curricula for History Teacher Education

Arguably, a history teachers’ core activity is the design of teaching units around a theme, involving one or more competencies. In these units’ core lie the learning tasks which trigger the students’ competencies to solve it. This activity is often called a performance. By observing and analyzing their students’ products and performances, teachers are able to interpret and, subsequently, diagnose and plan their teaching to develop, enhance, and foster their students’ competencies. To understand historical thinking competencies, history teachers need not only to have subject matter knowledge in terms of substantive content and procedural concepts of history but also knowledge of the epistemology of history as a discipline. According to Hofer, this understanding depends on an individual’s personal theory of historical knowledge and knowing, and thus on one’s domain-specific personal epistemology. Hofer and Pintrich go further to argue that personal epistemology can be defined by intertwined dimensions that cluster into two areas: first, the “nature of knowledge” (what one believes knowledge is), which includes the dimensions certainty of knowledge and simplicity of knowledge, and second, the “nature or process of knowing” (how one comes to know), which includes the two dimensions of (1) the source of knowledge and (2) justification of knowledge.²⁷

²⁵The German acronym “FUER” stands for “Research and Development of Reflexive and Self-Reflexive Historical Consciousness” and gathers history education scholars from Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Ulrich Trautwein, et al. (2017); Gesellschaft Didaktik des Sachunterrichts (GDSU); M. Kübler, “Historisches Lernen von vier- bis zwölfjährigen Kindern im Deutschschweizerischen Lehrplan 21.” In: Monika Fenn, Ed. *Frühes Historisches Lernen. Projekte und Perspektiven empirischer Forschung* (Frankfurt: Wochenschau, 2017) 296–314; and P. Gautschi, *Guter Geschichtsunterricht* (Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschau, 2009).

²⁶Nadine Fink and Peter Gautschi, “Geschichtsunterricht in der Schweiz.” *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, no. 3/4 (2017): 154–71.

²⁷Barbara K. Hofer, “Epistemological Understanding as a Metacognitive Process. Thinking Aloud During Online Searching.” *Educational Psychologist* 39, no. 1 (2004): 43; and Barbara K. Hofer and Paul R. Pintrich, “The Development of Epistemological Theories: Beliefs about Knowledge and Knowing and their Relation to Learning.” *Review of Educational Research* 67 (1997): 88–140.

Over the last three decades, a growing body of research related to epistemic beliefs has been identified as crucial for understanding teaching and learning. The discussion about domain-specific versus general epistemic beliefs was launched by Schommer and Walker in the mid-1990s and joined later by Hofer. Questions have also been raised about the influence of culture on epistemic beliefs about the nature of knowledge and knowing.²⁸ In history education, the field is still young.²⁹ Recently, researchers in the Netherlands and Switzerland have taken up the thread of research on domain-specific epistemic cognition with interesting findings that contribute to the further debate about epistemic cognition in history.³⁰ Importantly, several studies have shown that teachers' epistemological beliefs about the nature of history can impact their teaching of

²⁸See Mariene Schommer and Kiersten Walker, "Are epistemological beliefs similar across domains?" *Journal of Educational Psychology* 87, no. 3 (1995): 424–432; and work from over the past decade including: Jeffrey A. Greene, William A. Sandoval, and Ivar Bråten, Eds., *Handbook of epistemic cognition* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016); Joanne Brownlee, Gregg Schraw, and Donna Berthelsen. (Eds.) *Personal Epistemology and Teacher Education* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Joanne M. Brownlee, Sue Walker and Julia Mascadri, "Personal Epistemologies and Teaching" In Helenrose Fives and Michael Gregoire-Gill, Eds., *International Handbook of Research on Teachers' Beliefs* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

²⁹Michael Weinstock, Dorothe Kienhues, Florian C. Feucht, and Mary Ryan, "Informed Reflexivity: Enacting Epistemic Virtue" *Educational Psychologist* 52, no. 4 (2017): 284–298.

³⁰From the Netherlands, see: Michiel Voet and Bram De Wever, "History Teachers' Conceptions of Inquiry-Based Learning, Beliefs about the Nature of History, and their Relation to the Classroom Context," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 55 (2016): 57–67; Bjorn G. J. Wansink, Sanne F. Akkerman, Jan D. Vermunt, Jacques P. P. Haenen and Theo Wubbels "Epistemological Tensions in Prospective Dutch History Teachers' Beliefs about the Objectives of Secondary Education," *Journal of Social Studies Research* 41, no. 1 (2017): 11–24; Bjorn G. J. Wansink, Sanne Akkerman, and Theo Wubbels "The Certainty Paradox of Student History Teachers: Balancing Between Historical Facts and Interpretation" *Teaching and Teacher Education* 56 (2016): 94–105; and Gerhard Stoel, Albert Logtenberg, Bjorn Wansink, Tim Huijgen, Carla van Boxtel, and Jannet van Drie, "Measuring Epistemological Beliefs in History Education: An Exploration of Naïve and Nuanced Beliefs," *International Journal of Educational Research* 83 (2017): 120–134. From Switzerland see: Martin Nitsche, "Geschichtstheoretische und -didaktische Überzeugungen von Lehrpersonen. Begriffliche und empirische Annäherungen an ein Fallbeispiel" In *Historisches Erzählen und Lernen. Historische, theoretische, empirische und pragmatische Erkundungen*, eds. Martin Buchsteiner and Martin Nitsche (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2016) 159–196; Martin Nitsche, "Geschichtstheoretische und -didaktische Beliefs angehender und erfahrener Lehrpersonen. Einblicke in den Forschungsstand, die Entwicklung der Erhebungsinstrumente und erste Ergebnisse." In *Geschichtsunterricht – Geschichtsschulbücher – Geschichtskultur. Aktuelle geschichtsdidaktische Forschung des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Geschichtsdidaktik 15), edited by Uwe Danker (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 85–106; Martin Nitsche, *Beliefs von Geschichtslehrpersonen. Eine Triangulationsstudie* (Bern: Hepverlag, 2019); and Martin Nitsche and Monika Waldis, "Geschichtstheoretische und -didaktische Beliefs von angehenden Geschichts Lehrpersonen in Deutschland und in der Deutschschweiz. Erste Ergebnisse Quantitativer Erhebungen" In Forschungswerkstatt Geschichtsdidaktik 15. Beiträge zur Tagung "Geschichtsdidaktik Empirisch 15" (Geschichtsdidaktik heute 08), edited by Monika Waldis and Béatrice Ziegler (Bern: hep, 2017), 136–150.

history as a subject in school.³¹ Further, their epistemic beliefs also have impact on their students' learning and an influence on the development of their students' own epistemic cognition of the subject.³² Furthermore, some studies show that limitations or deficiencies in teachers' subject matter knowledge can hinder their confidence in teaching difficult epistemological questions, which could have consequences for their students in the form of a null curriculum that ignores epistemic questions altogether and thus leads to an impoverished notion about the nature of historical knowledge. Also of interest is the evidence that student teachers declare that they find it difficult to recognize pupils' disciplinary thinking.³³

THE NEED FOR EPISTEMIC COGNITION AND HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The substance of History teaching in the standard "historical thinking" proposal involves a focus upon historical methodology as a form of critical thinking (or "media" literacy), drawing upon a long tradition of source criticism that inaugurated the emergence of the profession of the Historian as we know it today. But is this all that is required to equip our students for their futures? What happens when we encounter a fake news story or an "alternate" historical account that aligns with our existing biases? According to James Wertsch, "the narrative tools we employ to make sense of the past introduce a particular perspective" or "ethnocentrism" that motivates us to view the past in a biased way; our appreciation and comprehension of the past is at least partially formed through our ethnic group identifications, and that these "tribal" affiliations and ethnic commitments, that make us participants in particular "mnemonic communities," affect the way we read the narratives we encounter, whether

³¹ See Liliana Maggioni, Bruce VanSledright, and Patricia Alexander, "Walking on the Borders: A Measure of Epistemic Cognition in History," *The Journal of Experimental Education* 77, no. 3 (2009): 187–213; and Jeremy D. Stoddard, "The Roles of Epistemology and Ideology in Teachers' Pedagogy with Historical 'Media,'" *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 16, no. 1 (2010): 153–171.

³² Barbara K. Hofer, "Personal Epistemology Research: Implications for Learning and Teaching," *Journal of Educational Psychology Review* 13, no. 4 (2001): 353–383.

³³ On the issues for student teachers, see Christopher C. Martell, "Learning to Teach History as Interpretation: A Longitudinal Study of Beginning Teachers," *The Journal of Social Studies Research* 37, no. 1 (2013): 17–31; Jennifer H. James, "Teachers as Protectors: Making Sense of Preservice Teachers' Resistance to Interpretation in Elementary History Teaching" *Theory and Research in Social Education* 36, no. 3 (2008): 172–205; Susan M. Johnson and S. Birkeland, "Seeking Success with Students." In Susan M. Johnson (ed.), *Finders and Keepers: Helping New Teachers Survive and Thrive in Our Schools* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2004) 69–90; and Chauncey Monte-Sano and Melissa Cochran, "Attention to Learners, Subject, or Teaching: What Takes Precedence as Preservice Teachers Learn to Teach Historical Thinking and Reading?" *Theory and Research in Social Education* 37 no. 1 (2009): 101–135. On the Problem of the Null Curriculum, see the classic text by Elliot W. Eisner, *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1979).

“fake” or not.³⁴ Likewise, in a study of how religious and skeptical historians navigated a text from the Bible and a secular account of the origins of American Thanksgiving, Gottlieb and Wineburg found that trained historians navigate between the competing commitments of their intellectual discipline on the one hand and their social identification, allegiances, and affiliations on the other; this results in what they describe as “epistemic switching” such that the religious historians could switch from their historical thinking modalities to a faith-based religious mindset when approaching the Biblical text and switched back to a disciplinary mindset when reading the secular account of the first Thanksgiving.³⁵

Non-religious historians applied the same historical thinking mindset to both texts. This suggests an important lesson for the history teacher. It is not enough to develop a student’s capacity to engage in historical thinking, if our goal is to have the student critically examine every historical narrative they encounter. They need to be encouraged to develop an epistemic reflexivity that helps them become aware of the prejudgments that arise from their understanding of how historical knowledge claims are produced. Thus, there is a clear link between epistemic cognition, the concerns of constructivism, and historical consciousness as understood in the German hermeneutic tradition.³⁶

From a constructivist perspective, history is a mental construction. Because the past is gone and not directly accessible, historical accounts are constructed by drawing together evidence derived from traces, sources, artifacts, and accounts and attempting to make sense of them (typically in the form of an explanatory narrative).³⁷ Constructivists argue that “historiography is the imposition of meaningful form onto a meaningless past,”³⁸ that “the straightness of any history is a rhetorical invention,”³⁹ and that history is best thought of as “an artifice, the product of individual imagination.”⁴⁰ This kind of

³⁴James V. Wertsch, “Texts of Memory and Texts of History,” *L2 Journal* 4, no. 1 (2012): 10–11.

³⁵Eli Gottlieb and Sam Wineburg, “Between Veritas and Communitas: Epistemic Switching in the Reading of Academic and Sacred History,” *Journal of the Learning Sciences* 21, no. 1 (2012): 84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10508406.2011.582376>

³⁶Karl-Ernst Jeismann, “Geschichte und Bildung. Beiträge zur Geschichtsdidaktik und zur Historischen Bildungsforschung,” 2000. Rösen Jörn, *History: Narration – Interpretation – Orientation* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005).

³⁷Hans J. Goertz, *Unsichere Geschichte. Zur Theorie Historischer Referentialität*. (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001); and Rösen, “Historik: Theorie der *Geschichtswissenschaft*,” 2013.

³⁸Keith Jenkins, *On “What Is History?”: From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White* (London: Routledge, 1995) 173. See also Reinhart Koselleck, “Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte.” In Reinhart Koselleck. *Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte: Aufsätze und Vorträge aus vier Jahrzehnten*, ed. Carsten Dutt (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2014), 9–31.

³⁹Hans Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), x.

⁴⁰Louis O. Mink, “Narrative Form as a Cognitive Instrument.” In *The History and Narrative Reader*, edited by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 1978/2001), 211–20.

thinking is what we might call “narrative impositionalism.”⁴¹ It carries the idea that human beings turn the traces of the past into meaningful stories rather than those stories being present in the past itself. Making sense of the past through the construction of meaningful narratives is an important aspect of orienting ourselves in time.⁴² However, we might also consider our personal history as the lived experience of discourse (or our inscription within conversations that stretch across time and human societies, in which we are both interlocutors and subjects), and interpellated (hailed and called to account) by discourse, with a consequent shaping effect on individual cognition, marking us as part of the “mnemonic communities” discussed in relation to the work of James Wertsch above.⁴³ Thus, one must concede that historians are themselves historical beings located in time and space, who draw on specific traditions of historiography that are historically and spatially locatable, each with its own conventions, methodologies, discourses, standards, and preferred forms of representation.⁴⁴ Thus, the adoption of a specific time-and-place-affected perspective is inevitable,⁴⁵ though the degree of its determinism on our thought is obviously debatable. If we accept such perspectivalism, then we must also accept the inevitability of a plurality of interpretations and accounts; and if there is not one interpretation but a plurality, then there has to be negotiation of meaning, and, perhaps even, a struggle for acceptance of any particular interpretation.

⁴¹ To understand the narrative impositionalist view, see Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (London: Routledge, 1997), 96; and Andrew P. Norman, “Telling It Like It Was: Historical Narratives on Their Own Terms,” *History and Theory* 30, no. 2 (1991), 119–135. For the alternative view, see David Carr, “Narrative and the Real World: An Argument for Continuity,” in *The History and Narrative Reader*, edited by Geoffrey Roberts (London: Routledge, 2001), 143–56.

⁴² See: Jörn Rüsen, *History: Narration – Interpretation – Orientation* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005); or Jörn Rüsen, “Historical Consciousness: Narrative Structure, Moral Function, and Ontogenetic Development.” In *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*, ed. Peter Seixas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 63–85.

⁴³ See Foucault’s claim that we are “totally imprinted by history” in Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.” Translated by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, In *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin Books, 1971/1994) 376; or Althusser’s notion of interpellation in Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation).” Translated by B Brewster. In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, edited by Louis Althusser (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127–86. On mnemonic communities, see James V. Wertsch, “Texts of Memory, Texts of History,” 2012: 10.

⁴⁴ Avner Segall, “What’s the Purpose of Teaching a Discipline, Anyway?” In *Social Studies – the Next Generation: Re-Searching in the Postmodern*, edited by Avner Segall, Elizabeth E. Heilman and Cleo H. Cherryholmes (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 125–39; Reinhart Koselleck, “Standortbindung und Zeitlichkeit. Ein Beitrag zur historiographischen Erschliessung der geschichtlichen Welt.” In Reinhart Koselleck. *Vergangene Zukunft: zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 176–207.

⁴⁵ Reinhart Koselleck, ““Erfahrungsraum” und “Erwartungshorizont” – Zwei Historische Kategorien.” In Reinhart Koselleck. *Vergangene Zukunft: zur Semantik Geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 349–75; Christophe Bouton, “The Critical Theory of History: Rethinking the Philosophy of History in the Light of Koselleck’s Work.” *History and Theory* 55, no. 2 (2016): 163–84.

This position is consistent with claims made by Gadamer, whose work has an important place in the German hermeneutic tradition. Gadamer theorizes that the interpreter, that is, the person who is seeking to understand, is always operating out of a historical context and that this context is itself formed by the interaction of prejudice, authority, and tradition.⁴⁶ In making his claim, Gadamer returns to the pre-Enlightenment notion of prejudice as prejudgment, not in the sense of an unreflexive bigotry but as the very precondition of understanding that arises from our inculcation within specific historically located traditions; the “pre-reflective involvements with the world that stand behind judgements and in fact make them possible.”⁴⁷

For Gadamer, we should consider the “hermeneutic productivity” of tradition.⁴⁸ He does not believe we are able to “separate in advance the productive prejudices that enable understanding from the prejudices that hinder it and lead to misunderstandings.”⁴⁹ Rather, he argues that during the process of attempting to interpret the past, such prejudices help us to generate our own unique understandings. In his exploration of the work of Dilthey, one of the important figures in the secular hermeneutic tradition, Gadamer argues that historical consciousness, which might be most simply defined as the awareness of oneself as a finite historical being (and not so much understood as it is in the contemporary literature as something that seems to be more akin to awareness of the past), does not involve the naïve assimilation of tradition, but “a reflective posture toward both itself and the tradition in which it is situated. It understands itself in terms of its own history . . . [and operates as] a mode of self-knowledge.”⁵⁰ For Gadamer, “understanding is to be thought of less as a subjective act than as participating in an event of tradition,”⁵¹ and this is because “historical consciousness is itself situated in the web of historical effects.”⁵² To make clear what this means for history teaching, we draw your attention to the Remembering Australia’s Past (RAP) study conducted by the HERMES History Education group at the University of Newcastle.

This study was conducted following two decades of public struggle over the national narrative; concerns over whose history is being taught in schools; reports that teachers and school students find Australian history of little interest; and anxieties over what the public knows about the nation’s past. Such anxieties arguably motivated the well-supported and successful move to a

⁴⁶ Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Truth and Method,” 1992: 278. Although much work has been done in the German tradition since Gadamer, we return to Gadamer here as the touchstone for a particular line of thought in the hermeneutic tradition that is readily accessible in English translation, and the starting point for work that has come since.

⁴⁷ Chris Lawn and Niall Keane, *The Gadamer dictionary* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011): 115.

⁴⁸ Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Truth and Method,” 1992, 284.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 295.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 228.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 291.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 300.

national History curriculum, and continue to motivate conservative angst about the curriculum's structure and content. Much of the concern has been driven by survey research that expects an encyclopedic knowledge of the past and is intensified by politically motivated battles over the shape of the national story. Young people studying to be History teachers in Australian universities today developed their understandings about Australia's history in the crucible of these public and pedagogic struggles over the national past. This motivated the Newcastle group to ask 105 first year pre-service history teachers to "Tell us the history of Australia in your own words," adopting the methodology developed by Jocelyn Létourneau.⁵³ The aim was to explore what pre-service History teachers know, understand, and believe is important about Australia's past. As future History teachers, the views they hold about the nation's history are undoubtedly significant; and as a cohort who developed their views in the aftermath of the history wars, their views were deemed to be especially interesting. For the majority of our participants, the request to produce a narrative of the nation resulted in the telling of what Jörn Rüsen would describe as a *traditional* narrative that seeks to use the past as cultural heritage and a source of identity.⁵⁴

This was particularly the case when the participants were discussing myth-histories about the revelation of an Australian spirit in the Gallipoli campaign of WWI. Likewise, often in the same text, a *critical* narrative was presented that interrogates and challenges the received wisdom of the past from the standpoint of present "truths" whenever narrations were offered of the early colonial period and its treatment of Indigenous peoples. Thus, it could be argued that "politically correct" views of the past dominated the narratives generated by the participants.

Only rarely did a "historiographic gaze" emerge that established a *genetic* narrative in which both the past, and perspectives on it, were historicized.⁵⁵ The narratives shared by the participants underscore the importance of understanding historical consciousness as a complex phenomenon that includes not only how we understand and relate, both cognitively and affectively, to the past as Seixas declares, but also the critical capacity we have to understand the ways we "use" history for particular purposes in the present, influenced by practices we have inherited through participation in everyday "historical cultures."⁵⁶ This empirical work especially highlights the important role teacher education

⁵³ Jocelyn Létourneau, "Remembering Our Past: An Examination of the Historical Memory of Young Québécois." In *To the Past: History Education, Public Memory, & Citizenship in Canada*, edited by Ruth Sandwell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 70–87.

⁵⁴ Jörn Rüsen, "History: Narration – Interpretation – Orientation." 2005.

⁵⁵ Robert J. Parkes (2011: 99–126).

⁵⁶ See Peter Seixas, *Benchmarks of Historical Thinking: A Framework for Assessment in Canada* (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, University of British Columbia: Vancouver, CA, 2006); and for the uses of history, Robert Thorp, "Towards an Epistemological Theory of Historical Consciousness," *Historical Encounters: A Journal of Historical Consciousness, Historical Cultures, and History Education* 1, no. 1 (2014): 20–31.

should play in assisting pre-service History teachers to develop reflexive possibilities of understanding their own consciousness as historically effected⁵⁷ and how this impacts the stories about the past that they have available.

As early as the 1980s, Peter Lee argued that “philosophy of history is necessary in any attempt to arrive at a rational way of teaching history, even if it is not sufficient.”⁵⁸ A growing body of literature has argued that relocating histories within the interpretive and methodological traditions that direct historical inquiry is essential for equipping history teachers and their students with evaluative frames of reference for appreciating how diverse and competing historical narratives were produced.⁵⁹ This understanding of the multiperspectivity of history should be taught in schools, and practiced or exercised regularly. In German-speaking Europe’s history education, notably Bergmann systemized and theorized the idea of a multiperspective teaching approach in history including historical controversies and outlining plurality of interpretation.⁶⁰ For example, in Switzerland, Mathis proposes, for the teaching of the French Revolution, that the understanding how different schools of historical thought construct historical explanations is a precondition for history teachers to help pupils to gain a more sophisticated and differentiated understanding of the past. The teacher’s cognitive modeling, first, of the conscious switching from one historiographic school or approach to explanation, to another; and secondly, of confronting the students’ historical explanation with one in accordance or opposition is, as Mathis has suggested, crucial to teach according to such a “multiperspective pluralistic” stance toward history.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Truth and Method,” 1992, 306 and 336.

⁵⁸ Peter Lee, “History Teaching and the Philosophy of History.” *History and Theory* XXII, no. 4 (1983): 48.

⁵⁹ See for example, Thomas D. Fallace, “Once More unto the Breach: Trying to Get Preservice Teachers to Link Historiographical Knowledge to Pedagogy.” *Theory & Research in Social Education* 35, no. 3 (2012): 427–46; Hilke Günther-Arndt and Meik Zülsdorf-Kersting, 2014; Andreas Körber, Waltraud Schreiber, and Alexander Schöner. (Eds.). *Kompetenzen Historischen Denkens. Ein Strukturmodell als Beitrag zur Kompetenzorientierung in der Geschichtsdidaktik* (Neuried: Ars Una, 2007); Michael G. Lovorn, “Historiography in the Methods Course: Training Preservice History Teachers to Evaluate Local Historical Commemorations.” *The History Teacher* 45, no. 4 (2012): 569–79; Robert J. Parkes (2009); John Whitehouse, “Teaching the Historians: How Might Historiography Shape the Practice of Teachers?” *Agora (Sungraphó)* 43 (2008): 4–8; and Kaya Yilmaz, “Social Studies Teachers’ Conceptions of History: Calling on Historiography,” *The Journal of Educational Research* 101, no. 3 (2008): 158–76.

⁶⁰ Klaus Bergmann, *Multiperspektivität. Geschichte selber denken* (Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschau, 2000); Martin Lücke, “Multiperspektivität, Kontroversität, Pluralität.” In Michele Barricelli and Martin Lücke. *Handbuch Praxis des Geschichtsunterrichts*, 2nd edition (Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschau, 2017), 281–88.

⁶¹ Christian Mathis, “Irgendwie ist doch da mal jemand geköpft worden”: *Didaktische Rekonstruktion der Französischen Revolution und der historischen Kategorie Wandel*, 44, Beiträge zur Didaktischen Rekonstruktion (Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Hohengehren, 2015) 233–237; and Christian Mathis, “The Revolution Is Not Over Yet.” German Speaking Ninth Graders’ Conceptions of The French Revolution,” *History Education Research Journal* 14, no. 1 (2016): 81–92.

Similarly, in Australia, Parkes proposes a “critical pluralist” stance toward history. The Critical Pluralist stance recognizes “that multiple accounts of the past are inevitable, given that every historian is themselves a historical being, and the product of a specific historical culture.”⁶² He argues that recognition that multiple narratives are inevitable and an empirical fact does not prevent the student historian or the History teacher critically interrogating rival narratives of the same event, and in fact is more likely to encourage students to do the same.

Exploration of narrative diversity is thus likely to encourage students to make value judgments about these historical narratives, particularly where each narrative is examined as more or less plausible based on an evaluation of the (formal or naïve) methodologies that produced it, and in the case of academic histories, how well these methodologies were used. Thus, to truly engage in a critical, pluralist, multiperspectival approach to history teaching, one that places importance on historical thinking, requires students (and their teachers) to engage in epistemic reflection. However, despite the importance of epistemic cognition and its influence on teaching practice, when it comes to the question of the nature of history, student teachers often fail to demonstrate complex epistemic knowledge.

CULTIVATING EPISTEMIC REFLEXIVITY IN HISTORY TEACHER EDUCATION

This raises an important question. How can student teachers find out where they stand in regard of the concept of history, its purpose and function, the re-presentation of history, the structure and certainty of historical knowledge, and the justification and the sources of knowing historically? They have to reflect on their epistemic cognition in relation to history as a form of knowing and knowledge. With Barbara Hofer, the importance of epistemic reflexivity for teachers’ professional development can be emphasized as follows:

Reflection on practice is a core principle for guiding improvement in professional work such as teaching and can be enhanced by reflection on epistemic cognition, the way we think about knowledge and knowing. Viewed as an intellectual virtue, a habit of mind, and a learnable skill, epistemic reflection can help teachers learn to critically question the source, certainty, reliability, and veracity of their own knowing.⁶³

Student teachers’ development in regard to an interpretational, critical, pluralist, and multiperspectival history teaching needs self-reflectiveness (or epis-

⁶² Robert J. Parkes (2009); and Robert J. Parkes, “Developing Your Approach to Teaching History.” In Tim Allender, Anna Clark and Robert Parkes, Eds., *Historical Thinking for History Teachers: A New Approach to Engaging Students and Developing Historical Consciousness* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2019), 72–88.

⁶³ Barbara K. Hofer, “Shaping the Epistemology of Teacher Practice Through Reflection and Reflexivity.” *Educational Psychologist* 52, no. 4 (2017): 299–306.

temic reflexivity). Teaching pupils to deal with uncertainty, multiperspectivity, and critical pluralist perspectives requires teachers and student teachers to be reflective and aware of their position in terms of knowing what historical knowledge and knowing is, how history can be presented and disputed, and—above all—where they as a teacher stand and why. Thus, our assumption is that student teachers have to know where they stand in terms of the epistemology of history. Student teachers should develop an “epistemic virtue (of informed reflexivity)” as Weinstock et al. have argued.

Informed reflexivity is the learned disposition to reason about one’s knowledge-related actions, entailing context-specific epistemic characteristics. It involves an intentional stance about the need to reason about oneself and the context.⁶⁴

They go on to make the point that such an “epistemic virtue” can be built up by giving student teachers a tool to explore their epistemic cognition of history, that is, their beliefs about historical knowledge, according to a specific context of teaching. Furthermore, by providing novice teachers or student teachers with a tool to reflect on their epistemic beliefs of history, mentors and lecturers could use it in their work with student teachers which could—referring to a study of Achinstein and Fogo—promote their historical reasoning.⁶⁵ We propose that teachers’ views of the following help us to gain insight into their epistemic cognitions about history, and operate as areas to consider when attempting cultivating epistemic reflexivity in pre-service history teachers:

- Nature of history as subject
- The perceived purpose of history
- View about the certainty of historical knowledge
- Understanding of the structure of history as a way of knowing
- Beliefs about the reliability of source material

Of course, these assumptions need empirical verification. Therefore, we currently are developing a multidimensional framework of epistemological beliefs of history based on Hofer and Pintrich’s and Nitsche’s framework taking account of the domain specificity of historical knowledge.⁶⁶ This matrix shall

⁶⁴Michael Weinstock, Dorothe Kienhues, Florian C. Feucht, and Mary Ryan, “Informed Reflexivity: Enacting Epistemic Virtue,” 2017: 284.

⁶⁵Betty Achinstein and Bradley Fogo, “Mentoring Novices’ Teaching of Historical Reasoning: Opportunities for Pedagogical Content Knowledge Development through Mentor-Facilitated Practice,” *Teaching and Teacher Education* 45 (2015): 45–58.

⁶⁶Barbara K. Hofer and Paul R. Pintrich, “The Development of Epistemological Theories: Beliefs about Knowledge and Knowing and their Relation to Learning,” 1997: 88–140; Barbara K. Hofer, “Shaping the Epistemology of Teacher Practice Through Reflection and Reflexivity,” 2017: 299–306; Martin Nitsche, “Geschichtstheoretische und -didaktische Beliefs angehender und erfahrener Lehrpersonen. Einblicke in den Forschungsstand, die Entwicklung der Erhebungsinstrumente und erste Ergebnisse,” 2017: 85–106; Martin Nitsche, “Geschichtstheoretische und - didaktische Überzeugungen von Lehrpersonen. Begriffliche und empirische Annäherungen an ein Fallbeispiel,” 2016: 159–196; Martin Nitsche, “Beliefs von Geschichtslehrpersonen. Eine Triangulationsstudie,” 2019.

help student teachers to reflect more soundly on their epistemic beliefs about history and the knowledge of history. As this work takes shape, what remains is for history teacher-educators to challenge their students to consider how they, and the historians they read, have come to the conclusions they hold to be true. This requires reflection on their own personal philosophies of history and historical work and an understanding of the schools of historiography that have informed the historical narratives they encounter. Developing such epistemic virtue becomes an important supplement to the focus on “historical thinking” as a set of competencies and becomes a means of developing “historical consciousness” in the German sense of the concept.

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