

Cosme Jesús Gómez Carrasco,
Pedro Miralles Martínez and
Ramón López Facal

**Handbook of Research on
Teacher Education in
History and Geography**



PETER LANG

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Chapter 13 What can be learned from decontextualised heritage?¹

Abstract: This paper analyses the perceptions of trainee primary education teachers on the inclusion of relevant and socially conflictive issues in heritage education. In university classes, a strategy based on collaborative learning and research methodology oriented towards the development of critical thinking is taught. Places which have been flooded by the construction of dams are studied due to the conflict which this causes between local interests and social benefit. This research employs mixed methods in order to analyse the perceptions of trainee teachers regarding conflictive heritage and its use in the classroom. The learning is evaluated in order to understand social problems and to analyse to what extent they consider that such issues can contribute towards constructing a socially committed citizenship. The results show that trainee teachers modify their perceptions regarding how to approach heritage education when research methodology is incorporated into their training process.

Keywords: Teacher training, Heritage education, Social problems, Conflict, Critical thinking

Introduction

The conflict which surrounds certain types of heritage is frequently attributed to situations of political violence in which oppression or social confrontation have led to pain and trauma. In such situations, heritage has been the object of attack during armed conflicts, opening up debate on the morality of the destruction of heritage (Frowe and Matravers, 2019). In Spain, the semantic attribute “conflict” has been linked with historical memory and the Francoist dictatorship (1936–1975). In the present day, uncomfortable heritages which have a symbolic legitimation but which nobody wants to recognise (Prats, 1997) coexist with others which the perspective of time and the desire for conciliation have sought to forget or to conceal.

1 This research is part of the coordinated projects PGC2018-094491-B-C31 with funding from the Spanish State Research Agency (AEI) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

So-called low intensity or low impact conflicts, in which heritage becomes a scenario of confrontation (Sánchez and Jiménez, 2016) are linked with everyday life. The decision to build dams which flood inhabited places gives rise to situations which are difficult to resolve if they are not handled democratically. The construction of a dam and the loss of a local heritage generate a social conflict with conflicting views regarding who has the legitimacy to take the decision to flood a territory or not. Furthermore, the mechanisms of restitution to be put in place for the area in question and how the possibility of moving buildings to a new location is evaluated are also conflictive issues.

Communities which create, protect and transmit heritage do not generally participate in this debate, giving way to a narrative which excludes the most vulnerable. In order to manage heritage conflicts and to promote peaceful coexistence, it is necessary for communities to regain the leading role. The ethical principles for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage drawn up by UNESCO state that the community must play a key role in the identification of the main threats to its heritage, among which is its decontextualization: "Communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals should play a significant role in determining what constitutes threats to their intangible cultural heritage including the decontextualization, commodification and misrepresentation of it and in deciding how to prevent and mitigate such threats"(UNESCO, 2015).

The term "decontextualised heritage" alludes to the process of the forced relocation of a community and, with it, the loss or alteration of the meaning and physical or intangible nature of its heritage. This process causes a conflict of interests and an exchange of opinions regarding the relocation of the group and the resignification of its heritage. It makes the recovery of local memory and the reconstruction of a shared identity difficult. Decontextualised heritage becomes a controversial issue and dealing with it in the classroom may favour the formation of a citizenship with a critical conscience and the capacity for acting accordingly.

The main objective of the present study is to identify the perceptions of trainee teachers regarding how to include relevant and socially conflictive issues when designing heritage education activities for primary schoolchildren. In their classes at university, they analyse certain places which have been flooded by the construction of dams. The learning sequence is based on collaborative learning and research methodology. Several dilemmas are proposed in order to encourage their investigative, ethical, emotional, reflective and argumentation skills. Situations are approached in which the loss of local heritage and the

spheres of everyday coexistence have been imposed. The trainee teachers must evaluate the heritage and its local and cultural context.

The following specific objectives have been formulated:

- Specific objective 1 (SG1). To analyse the perceptions of trainee teachers regarding heritage and its use in the classroom.
- Specific objective 2 (SG2). To evaluate the learning of trainee teachers in the understanding of problems via the handling of sources, historical contextualisation, comprehension and critical argumentation and ethical commitment.
- Specific objective 3 (SG3). To analyse to what degree they assume the usefulness of heritage education in dealing with conflictive and socially relevant issues in the primary classroom.

The training of teachers in dealing with heritage conflicts

Heimberg (2010: 49) defines education for democratic citizenship as the “reasoned and critical study of social problems based on the disciplinary knowledge of the social sciences.” Dealing with relevant social problems makes it possible to promote democratic habits, such as respect for conflicting opinions in a plural society. It requires the teacher to have developed civic skills and methodological strategies which facilitate interaction among pupils.

Conflicts are inherent to human relationships and studying real problems helps pupils to learn how to manage them (Soley, 1996). Working on controversial issues “stimulates critical conscience, helps to build opinions and reasoned judgments, to accept positions different to our own, promotes participation and connects the reality of the world, its conflicts and its complexity with the knowledge acquired at school” (Santisteban, 2019: 63).

The selection of the controversial issue is as important as the attitude of the teacher when approaching it in the classroom. Heimberg (2010) states that teachers should avoid false neutrality: they must show their point of view in order to demonstrate to their pupils that several legitimate opinions can coexist. López and Santidrián (2011) classify the way in which teachers approach conflictive issues: (a) the teacher avoids discussion: exclusive neutrality; (b) the teacher indoctrinates: exclusive partiality; (c), the teacher stays on the side-lines: neutral impartiality; (d) the teacher expresses his/her own opinion but does not impose it and encourages debate: committed impartiality. This research investigates whether future teachers assume the latter attitude when approaching social conflicts.

Heritage stirs up contradictory attitudes. At times, economic profit and political instrumentalisation interrupt or modify the process of social identification. Heritage tourism has played a significant role in the construction of national identity (Light, 2015). However, it often leads to discrepancies: a source of income or a sense of property – “for them” or “ours”; memory or amnesia – natural narrative or indifference due to lack of knowledge; desiccation or renovation – anachronic preservation or contemporary social: “The making of heritage may give rise to two opposing impacts simultaneously – increased social cohesion and place pride, on the one hand, and envy and competition (and, thus, social atomisation), on the other hand – and residents are totally cognizant of the tension between the two” (Silva, 2014, 14). Managing these disputes entails an exercise in seeking consensus among the community and other agents involved in the guardianship of heritage.

The practice of historical thinking makes it possible to understand interaction between the past and the present in order to take grounded decisions looking to the future. In teacher training, principles regarding the value of cultural heritage to society must be present in order to “establish processes for conciliation to deal equitably with situations where contradictory values are placed on the same cultural heritage by different communities;” (Council of Europe, 2005, Art. 7). Heritage is not something which has passed and is closed. Rather, it is a reviewable link from the present among the members of a community in order to understand the meanings of their union.

Method

The research hypothesis is that investigating a relevant and socially conflictive heritage problem employing case studies as a strategy facilitates the formation of critical thinking.

Tools

Four tools have been employed for measuring students’ perceptions regarding how to approach relevant and socially conflictive issues from the perspective of heritage education, the improvement of knowledge and the semantic contextualisation of heritage and of its educational potential.

- Tools 1 and 2 (SG1). Pretest and posttest questionnaires on heritage and its use in the classroom.
- Tool 3 (SG2). Group work: A case study on decontextualised heritage.

- Tool 4 (SG3). A semi-structured questionnaire for individual critical reflection.

Tools 1 and 2 had previously been employed in a study with a group of trainee teachers in order to measure the transformative capacity of heritage education from an experience-based approach. On this occasion, the focus was on the traumatic past of a community which was forcibly removed to another location due to the construction of a dam which flooded a town of medieval origin (Castro and López, 2019). The same tools were used to confirm its validity. Changes in the conception of heritage and in discursive associations were measured.

Tool 3 collected narratives which were contextualised and argued in small groups on the study of a conflictive case and reflections after pooling information with the group as a whole. The aim was to show that learning based on the resolution of social problems contributes to forming social and critical thinking.

Tool 4 was submitted to validation by an expert in history and heritage education, which made it possible to adapt it in terms of structure and content. The changes introduced contributed to reducing the number of questions from 32 to 18, refining the statements to facilitate understanding and avoiding responses which were too open and dichotomic. The questionnaire was designed to analyse the students' reflections regarding: (a) the social conflict generated by the case study, (b) the role of education in developing the capacity for critical thinking when faced with social problems related with heritage; and (c) the strategy of critical training based on social problems dealt with in the classroom.

Characterisation of the sample

An intentional and deliberate sample of 29 students was selected for the pretest, 24 of whom were maintained for the rest of the tools. The 24 people who participated in all of the tools are taken as a reference point: 17 women and 7 men. Twenty of them were less than 25 years of age; three were between 25 and 30 and only one was older than 30.

Selection criteria: students from the 3rd and 4th years of the undergraduate primary education degree at the University of Santiago de Compostela during the 2019–2020 academic year who took the optional subject “History, heritage and education in Galicia.” The group had some prior knowledge of heritage education. More than half (51.7 %) stated that they had obtained this knowledge

during their degree, while a minority (10.3 %) had done so in an extracurricular manner.

Procedure

1st Phase. Starting point: pretest questionnaire at the beginning of the course

Twenty-nine pretest questionnaires containing 13 questions (tool 1) were distributed in order to discover the students' perception of heritage and its educational potential in accordance with objective 1 of this study.

2nd Phase. The contextualisation of the learning sequence

Work was carried out in class on the specific contents of the subject, such as heritage education for the construction of a democratic citizenship, the role of heritage in schools, the legal context of heritage education and the process of heritagisation and the construction of identities. At the same time, the decontextualised heritage of Portomarín, a small town in the interior of Galicia flooded in 1963 by the construction of a dam, was examined. A new town was built at a nearby location and some buildings were moved brick by brick. The trauma of the conflict remains latent but concealed among the town's population due to a lack of intergenerational dialogue (Castro and López, 2018, 2019). This is a controversial issue which seeks to promote the capacity of reflection among the students by way of research. In other words, they are encouraged to learn to apply concepts, to analyse social phenomena, to take decisions and to contribute alternatives in a reasoned manner.

3rd Phase. Development: research and case study

In a context of cooperative learning (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 1994) the students were required to investigate the flooding of Portomarín in small groups. This collaborative process of analysis of the case promotes responsibility and the students' control over their own learning, enabling them to plan, supervise and evaluate it (Coll, Mauri and Onrubia, 2006). It also contributes to developing the competence of learning to learn with a critical sense (Zahonero and Martín, 2012).

Working in small groups responds to objective 2, which seeks to evaluate the capacity for integral understanding of conflicts associated to heritage via the analysis of problems, the correct handling of sources, historical

contextualisation, critical argumentation and ethical commitment. The students employ the above-mentioned skills and must also situate and characterise the educational potential of the case, and heritage contents in general, in primary education.

Four group assignments (tool 3) were made on the problems caused by the construction of dams in Aswan (Egypt), Capel Celyn (Wales), Uglich (Russia), and Ilisu (Turkey). These are all places in which the exploitation of hydroelectric energy generated conflict directly affecting the heritage of the local area. The forced removal to which the inhabitants of these places were subjected led to a process of the multifaceted revision of identity, similar to the case of Portomarín explained in class. When examining these cases, the students were required to identify and define the heritage elements in conflict, to situate the poles of the confrontation and, above all, to propose a possible adaptation for primary education.

Each group worked on a conflictive situation, employing a structured process of research: (1) presenting the case connected with the problem of conflictive heritage and arguing the social and educational value of the topic; (2) identifying and explaining the causes and intentions which led to the destruction of the heritage site in question; (3) constructing their own interpretation of the problem by way of contrasting data and relevant materials; (4) selecting and justifying four representative images of the dimensions analysed in the case study; (5) evaluating to what extent the problem could be adapted to the primary classroom in this context. This learning sequence aims to teach the students how to elaborate a historical explanation of a conflictive social problem.

The students presented their projects to their classmates and a pooling of information was organised regarding the application of the knowledge learned to nearby social conflicts. A virtual chat room was also made available in order to gather the students' opinions. In this way, it was hoped that the development of communicative competences could be encouraged by way of dialogue, informed opinion and the critical interpretation of the problems analysed.

4th Phase. Evaluation of the learning sequence and prospects for a desirable future: semi-structured questionnaire

Objective 3 of the study seeks to discover to what degree trainee teachers consider that heritage education can contribute towards building desirable future action based on socially relevant problems. A semi-structured questionnaire (tool 4) was employed, making it possible to reflect individually on the corresponding case study and to evaluate the learning sequence implemented.

Twenty-four questionnaires were completed which revealed the trainee teachers' conceptions on the research method for dealing with conflictive problems in the classroom, aimed at the socialisation and formation of their pupils as citizens.

5th Phase. Posttest questionnaire

In order to achieve the first specific objective and to contrast the data collected in the first phase, the 24 posttest questionnaires of six questions (tool 2) were distributed. This questionnaire evaluated the evolution of the students' knowledge and their associations regarding heritage and its educational use.

Data analysis

A mixed methodology, differentiated for each tool, was designed:

Quantitative

Quantitative methodology was applied for tools 1, 2 and 4. The data were processed with the SPSS program. A joint database for tools 1 and 2 was created, along with a specific one for the critical reflection of tool 4. The variables were categorised, and the open questions recoded according to a criterion of simplicity in order to facilitate the operability and comparability of the responses. Subsequently, a statistical analysis of the data was carried out. In the first stage, a frequency analysis was carried out in order to discover the direct results of the questions. Afterwards, a chi-square significance analysis was carried out in order to explore the relationships between the different variables. The values yielded were not conclusive due to the reduced size of the sample. In addition to the frequency analysis, descriptive analyses were carried out in the measurement or evaluation scale variables in order to obtain mean scores.

As far as the words solicited in the pretest and posttest questionnaires regarding heritage and Portomarín are concerned, a frequency analysis was carried out in order to dump these results in the Nvivo program, which then generated word clouds. In addition to this quantitative exploitation, the questions were also analysed qualitatively, taking into consideration the semantic field of the words obtained. This procedure is explained in the following section.

Qualitative

The research contained three elements which required qualitative analysis: the words solicited in tools 1 and 2, the work carried out by the students on a case

study of decontextualised heritage, which constitutes tool 3, and a large proportion of the responses and reasonings contained in tool 4. These are sources with different qualities which have required individualised approaches.

A frequency analysis was carried out in order to discover the incidence of the different words in each question. These words were categorised in a deductive manner and were compared between their stages, paying particular attention to the beginning and the end of the learning sequence developed. In order to facilitate the visualisation of these results, the frequencies were dumped in the Nvivo program, by way of which word clouds were obtained.

A double analysis was carried out of the students' work. First of all, a critical reading was made in order to identify contents relating to the teaching of decontextualised heritage. The different components which proved to be representative of the topic of the research were placed in a table, from which the critical analysis was complemented by the visualisation of word clouds.

In order to analyse the critical reflection (tool 4), the students' responses were read and a frequency analysis of the recoding of their justifications and reflections was carried out.

Results

Specific objective 1. To analyse the perception of trainee teachers regarding heritage and its use in the classroom

The comparative analysis of tools 1 and 2 indicate an increase in the consideration that emotions have an influence on the preservation of heritage. The mean score increased from 4.62 in the pretest to 4.75 in the posttest. Between these two moments, the students matured their justifications and related them more with heritage education in the posttest (Tab. 1). The change of perspective stands out compared to emotions as conditioning factors of perception: from a majority of answers in the pretest to a minority in the posttest. The importance attributed to emotions in strengthening or generating a link with heritage remained stable. The value attached to the role of emotions in the development of feelings of identity in cultural terms increased. In other words, a change occurred from primary recognition of emotions as a factor in perception to an argumentation construction, which explains the transformation of the justifications focused on perception to those which point towards their effect on the link with heritage and its preservation.

The students evaluated the importance (on a scale of 1 to 5) of different educational activities relating to heritage (Fig. 1). The most highly-valued option in

Tab. 1: Evaluation regarding emotions

Justifications	Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%
They affect our perception and capacity of identifying heritage	12	41.4	4	16.7
They generate/strengthen the link with heritage	10	34.5	9	37.5
They foster a good attitude towards preservation	4	13.8	6	25
They strengthen feelings of ownership/identity	1	3.4	5	20.8
They need to be taught at school	1	3.4	-	-
They develop community links	1	3.4	-	-
Total	29	100	24	100



Fig. 1: Mean evaluation of educational activities

both questionnaires was direct contact with heritage elements through visits to sites or specific places (the score improved in the posttest). The development of the subject served to increase their evaluations of all the educational activities proposed. Talks by specialists was the element whose score improved the most, going from 2.9 to 3.5. The worst-valued element in both cases was explanation by the teacher, which did not exceed a score of 3 out of 5.

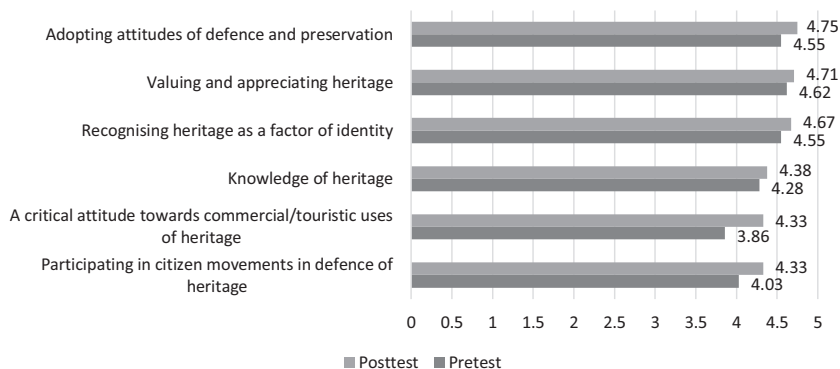


Fig. 2: Mean evaluation of educational contribution

As far as the contribution of heritage to primary education is concerned, in both cases, the change in attitude towards defence and preservation which can be generated among schoolchildren stands out, as it became the best-valued element between the pretest and the posttest (Fig. 2). The value and appreciation of heritage is the item with the next best score, although it went from being the best-valued item in the pretest to having the second-best score in the posttest. The perception of all of the educational contributions improved. However, the improvement in the critical attitude towards commercial and touristic uses particularly stands out, as its mean score changed from 3.86 to 4.33.

Furthermore, semantic associations were solicited with “heritage,” in order to measure the dominant conception, and others with “Portomarín” which was the decontextualised heritage explained and analysed in the classroom (Tab. 2). In relation to the 10 words which the students had to indicate in relation to “heritage,” 135 different words were collected in the pretest and 100 in the posttest. The most repeated words in both phases were “culture,” “history” and “identity,” although their specific weight varied. However, it cannot be stated that this change, in which “identity” became the word with most incidences, is due to a greater degree of importance being attributed to this issue (it only increased from 12 to 15 repetitions). Rather, it may be due to the fact that the incidences are more widely distributed and concentrated in other words which have a clearer relationship with the content worked on in the subject.

The students were required to indicate words related with Portomarín. To begin with, they were asked whether they knew anything about the history of the town, with only a minority (7 %) stating that they had some knowledge of

Tab. 2: Association of words with heritage: 10 words with the highest incidence

Pretest		Posttest	
Culture	23	Identity	15
History	17	Culture	14
Identity	12	History	12
Society	10	Inheritance	8
Art	8	Preservation	8
Monument	7	Respect	7
Surroundings	7	Education	7
Past	7	Feelings	6
Important	6	Link	6
Architecture	6	Protection	6

it. In the pretest, 10 words evoked spontaneously were solicited, followed by another 10 after having searched for information about the town. In the posttest, the students were only required to indicate 10 words in a spontaneous manner. Ninety-five different words were obtained in the spontaneous exploration of the pretest, 115 after searching for information and 118 in the posttest (Tab. 3). In addition to a greater semantic variety between the two tools, which reflects the evolution of knowledge, there are changes which extend beyond errors, such as the reference to the sea in the initial spontaneous association, which confirms the lack of knowledge of the history and location of Portomarín, which is located in the interior of Galicia. Their knowledge evolved towards the educational content with regard to heritage. Between the spontaneous and informed responses a semantic evolution took place towards the specific, and correct, geographical location and more specific heritage elements linked to tourism were highlighted. However, the spontaneous responses in the posttest emphasise the heritage conflict. It is also significant that one of the five most used words in the spontaneous responses of the posttest related to a feeling. Indeed, semantic contents related with feelings can only be found in the responses to the second questionnaire. Ultimately, the semantic associations solicited from the students show an evolution in the capacity of analysis regarding heritage. The participants went from evaluating a geographical location in its most superficial aspects to a resignification in terms of heritage.

The semantic associations solicited with “heritage” and “Portomarín” yielded relatively similar results to those obtained in a prior study via the data collection tools 1 and 2 (Castro and López, 2019).

Tab. 3: Association of words with Portomarín: 10 words with the highest incidence

Pretest Spontaneous		Pretest Search		Posttest Spontaneous	
Sea	14	Lugo	14	Dam	11
Fishing	14	Camino de Santiago	13	Heritage	10
Galicia	14	River Miño	10	Removal	8
Port	12	Church	9	Identity	7
Town	9	Bridge	8	Loss	7

Specific objective 2. To evaluate the learning of trainee teachers in the comprehension of problems

Tool 3 sought to measure the scope of the research by carrying out group work. The data on questions which were expected to be found are summarised in Tab. 4.

All of the assignments contained definitions of heritage offered by UNESCO or by experts, and heritage typologies affected by the construction of dams were identified, albeit with reflections of differing levels of depth. Those students who examined in more depth the effects of the conflict were also those who formulated a more complete educational approach, particularly as far as the development of competences relating to empathy and favourable attitudes towards the preservation and care of heritage are concerned. The students understood and applied their analytical capabilities, above all towards aspects linked with material elements and the population and demonstrated more limitations in evaluating dimensions such as landscape and intangible heritage.

Difficulties were identified in searching for information, not about the historical event in itself, but rather concerning the conflict of interests which it provoked. A lack of the use of empirical data for the contextualisation of the problems studied seems to indicate a low level of ability in the use of sources and critical resources on the part of the students. Thus, they are unable to analyse the problem by confronting different points of view. Only one of the assignments made use of maps and only one provided data in order to empirically evaluate the impact of these conflicts on a social and economic level. However, none of them made mention of the evolution of the situation once the dam had been built.

The groups unanimously considered it of value to include this type of problem relating to heritage in the contents of the primary curriculum. Three of the groups even believed that, with the corresponding adaptation to a similar event

Tab. 4: Comparison of the assignments on decontextualised heritage

Analysis	Dimension	Aswan	Capel Celyn	Kalyazin	Ilisu
Heritage education	Definition of heritage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Characterises and distinguishes typologies of heritage affected	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Argues for the educational application of the case study	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Identifies different levels of impact	Population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Cultural	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Material heritage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Intangible heritage	Yes	No	No	No
	Natural	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Contextualises	Historically	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Geopolitically	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Sociologically	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Contrasts benefits and losses	Yes	No	No	No
	Identifies and argues the condition of victims	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provides empirical data	On economic impact	No	No	No	No
	On social impact	Yes	No	No	No
	Maps	No	No	No	Yes

of more geographical or cultural proximity, the same case could be worked on in the 6th year of primary education (11–12 years of age). The fourth group considered that working on the Uglich dam in Kalyazin was not very relevant due to its distance in terms of time and geography and because dealing with nearby cases implies a greater availability of resources and visits or talks by experts.

Specific objective 3: To analyse to what degree they assume the usefulness of heritage education in dealing with conflictive and socially relevant issues in the primary classroom

In order to measure the third objective of this study, the students were required to respond to a questionnaire (tool 4), which sought to analyse: (a) their critical capacity regarding the social conflict generated by the decision to build a dam

and flood the town, (b) their evaluation of a heritage education model committed to the resolution of socially conflictive problems, and (c) their evaluation of the learning sequence developed in the subject based on the research strategy of the case study.

Heritage and social conflict

The assignments were required to discuss the appropriacy or not of the decision to build the dams and the questionnaire returned to this issue in order to explore in greater detail the students' opinions. All of them, without exception, considered that the decision to build the dams was not correct as the opinions of the local population were not taken into account and due to the fact that the benefit obtained did not compensate for the loss of heritage. 37.5 % justified the dams as the search for the lesser evil (Fig. 3), although the majority considered that there were other alternatives or that a greater social consensus should have been sought. 29.2 % of the students made reference to the lack of participation of the local population or, rather, the complete inexistence of consideration for the affected population. On the other hand, almost 21 % stated that if other options were in existence, other geographical alternatives should have been considered to the eventual location of the dam and that more prospective studies should have been carried out in order to exhaust all possibilities before proceeding to flood a town and eliminate its heritage. 12.5 % of the students considered that the heritage was of more value than the hydroelectrical infrastructure. Only one of the 24 students, in reference to the case of Kalyazin, considered that there was no other option than to build the dam.

The objective of this study is not to discover the detailed results of each of the cases studied, given their different geopolitical or procedural situations. However, it seems interesting to compare these justifications in order to

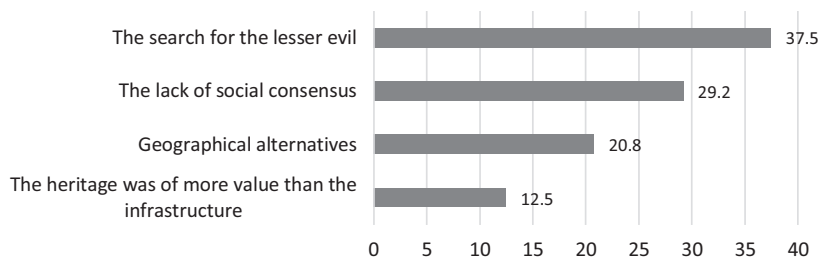


Fig. 3: Justification of the alternatives to the construction of the dam (%)

Tab. 5: Justification for the alternatives to the construction of the dam according to the case analysed

Justification	Aswan (Egypt)		Capel Celyn (Wales)		Kalyazin (Russia)		Ilisu (Turkey)		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Geographical alternatives	0	0	1	16.7	2	28.6	2	33.3	5	20.8
The search for a lesser evil	3	60	0	0	3	42.9	3	50	9	37.5
The heritage was of more value than the infrastructure	1	20	0	0	1	14.3	1	16.7	3	12.5
A lack of social consensus	1	20	5	83.3	1	14.3	0	0	7	29.2
Total	5	100	6	100	7	100	6	100	24	100

visualise the capacity of analysis and the identification of the conflictive elements (Tab. 5). The case of Capel Celyn has been characterised as a conflict in which social consensus was one of the main factors. The remaining cases have been identified with a greater general conflict and the justifications have been divided between the need to search for geographical alternatives or to search for the lesser of two evils. It is also worthy of note that the issue of heritage did not have greater prominence in cases such as that of Aswan, which are usually more clearly associated with this issue. Consensus or the search for social agreement with regard to the construction of the dam has proved to be a crucial element in the definition of the conflict.

Imagining the occurrence of a similar situation to the cases analysed today, the students clearly considered that legitimacy in the decision to flood a town should fall upon the community via its local government, with a score of 4.04 out of 5. The role of the national government, taking into account the opinion of society as a whole, received a score of 2.46. This score seems to indicate that the students clearly identified that the community should participate in the resolution of the conflict as the main agent affected by the decision.

Compensation is a fundamental aspect of the social evaluation which these types of conflicts end up having. Therefore, it was also desirable to know the students' perception regarding how the loss of heritage could be compensated in a similar situation which would lead to the loss and modification of local heritage (evaluated from 1 to 5). In general terms, none of the solutions for

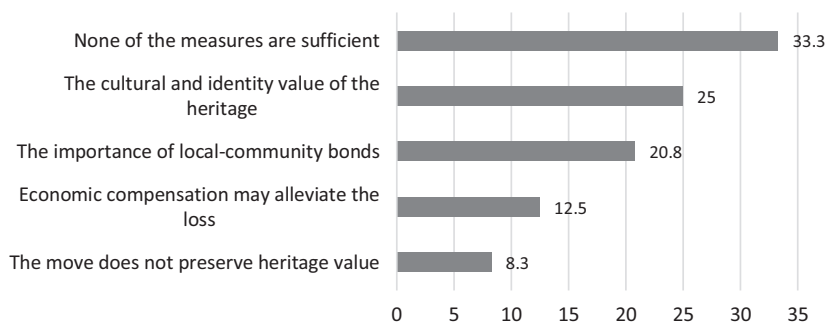


Fig. 4: Justification of compensation for the construction of the dam (%)

compensation proposed received very positive evaluations: economic compensation to continue living in another place (2.29); the removal brick by brick of certain buildings and important constructions to the new site of the community (2.67); living in proximity to the flooded site so that the community can maintain the links between its members (2.29). When asked for a justification in this response, the majority stated the insufficiency of these possible measures (33.3 %). Value in terms of the culture and identity of heritage is another of the most frequently expressed arguments, along with the importance of the component of space in the construction of community links (Fig. 4).

In the majority of the cases analysed, when the dam was built, heritage elements in the area to be flooded were transferred to a new location, and our aim was to look in depth at the potentialities of this fact. In general, the students showed a negative evaluation in terms of the relationship between community and identity in the local population. 83 % considered that this type of move converts heritage elements into a tourist attraction for outsiders, thereby limiting or reducing the community's sense of identification with them. When justifying this answer, the weight of the argumentation, in the majority of the cases (79 %), fell on the situation of the decontextualisation of the heritage. However, 21 % of the participants believed that these elements can be taken advantage of for tourism and that this can, to a certain extent, repair part of the loss derived from the move. The most significant point, in any case, is the extreme importance given to the concept of contextualisation, one of the key aspects of the subject, thereby showing the greater semantic wealth with regard to heritage that dealing with these case studies and the contents of the subject has brought to the students.

Heritage education and critical thinking

The students were asked whether the cases of decontextualised heritage analysed, with arguments both in favour and against, would be suitable for teaching to children from the 4th to the 6th years of primary education (9–12 years of age). The great majority stated that these issues could be taught in order to learn to take decisions when faced with possible social problems which may arise in the schoolchildren's environment (91.7 %). The remaining students considered that this is not a very relevant issue for children of these ages. As far as the appropriacy of dealing with these social problems in schools located in the area where the conflict arose is concerned, in general, it was considered necessary mainly so that the memory and history of the place should not be lost, and also to contribute towards conciliation. The possibility of not approaching these issues due to the risk of opening up old wounds was valued extremely negatively (Fig. 5).

Based on the reading of the paper “Los conflictos sociales candentes en el aula” (Controversial social conflicts in the classroom) (López and Santidrián, 2011), the majority (92 %) considered that committed impartiality is the most appropriate attitude for the teacher to adopt in order to work on conflictive heritage in the primary classroom, followed equally by neutral impartiality (4 %) and exclusive neutrality (4 %). No students selected the fourth option proposed of exclusive partiality. On the other hand, all of the competences proposed for the improvement of learning associated to dealing with this problem in primary schoolchildren's surroundings were valued favourably with scores of above 4 out of 5 (Fig. 6). The fostering of critical questioning was the best valued (4.75), followed by the argumentation of critical and informed opinions (4.71) and the fostering of civic competence (4.67).

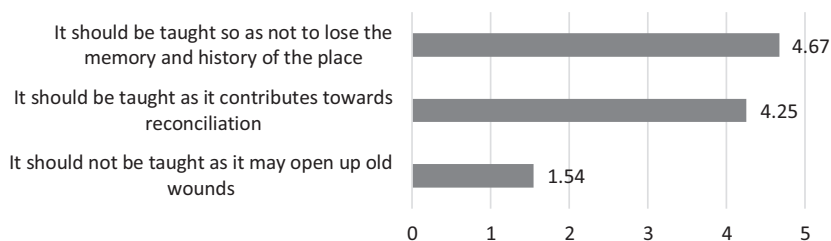


Fig. 5: Mean evaluation of the reasons for teaching, or not, the decontextualised heritage in the schools of the places affected

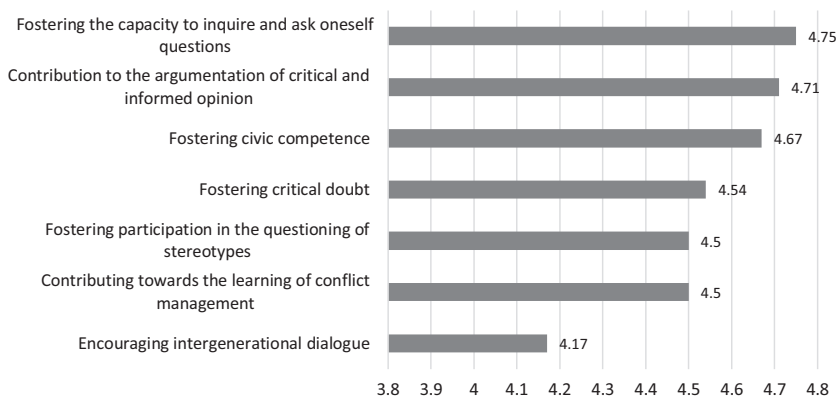


Fig. 6: Mean evaluation of the educational usefulness of the decontextualised heritage. Note: Each student was able to select more than one option

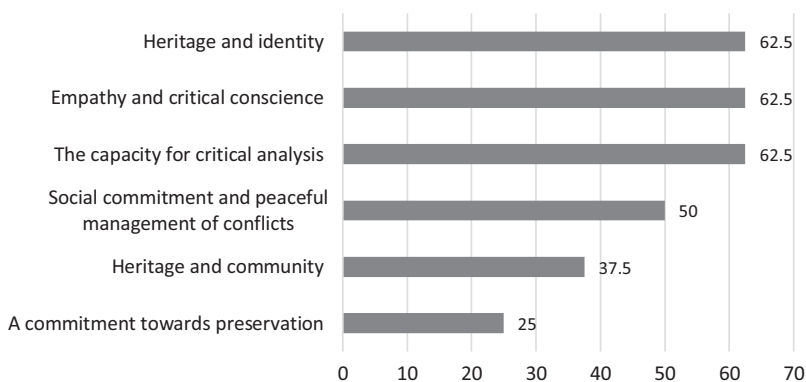


Fig. 7: Desired learning competences (%)

Last of all, the students were asked to state the three things which they would like primary schoolchildren to learn when dealing with a social problem such as their case study in the classroom. Given that this was an open question, the responses were recoded in order to be able to operate with them (Fig. 7). The relationship between heritage and identity, empathy and critical conscience and the capacity for critical analysis are the three elements mentioned the most, present in 62.5 % of the responses. 50 % also mentioned learning how to manage conflicts peacefully and social commitment

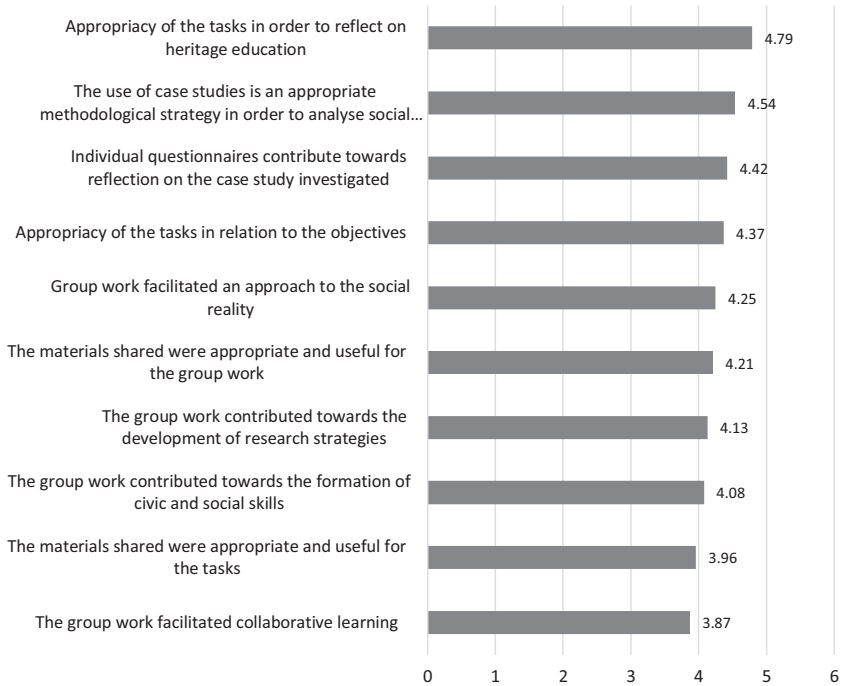


Fig. 8: Evaluation of the learning sequence developed in the subject

Social problems and teacher training

The learning sequence developed in the classroom obtained a positive evaluation (Fig. 8). The two most highly-valued aspects were the suitability of the tasks carried out in order to reflect on the role of heritage education and the use of case studies as a methodological strategy for analysing social reality.

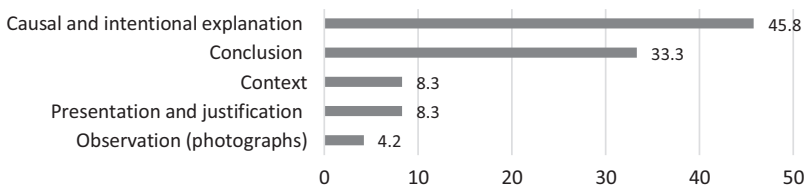


Fig. 9: Evaluation of the case study (%)

Tab. 6: To what extent can I incorporate the contents of this subject into a teaching proposal on socially conflictive problems?

Aims of heritage education	<i>Heritage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “What I liked most about the subject was learning to give importance to heritage. Beforehand, I was not aware of everything that this concept encompassed or of the need to know how to look after it and how to work on it in the classroom with our pupils” (A10).
	<i>Historical thinking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “I did not know how important it would be for me, as a future teacher, to work on these cases [. . .]. However, as I contextualised, analysed and reflected on my case study, I realised the great benefits it presented” (A5).
	<i>Critical thinking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “In primary classes, it is unlikely that we would work on these cases due to a lack of preparation [. . .] these cases allow us to consolidate all of the competences contemplated in the curriculum and to develop that critical and reflective thinking in the pupils, based on their own interests, with the aim of them becoming autonomous beings capable of taking their own decisions in everyday life, learning to value what is theirs in order to be able to do so with the rest, in order to create a better future” (A5).
	<i>Social thinking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “(I would like to emphasise) the importance of fostering a critical attitude towards all of the cases approached, to involve the children in all of the realities and to encourage them to establish links with society and to be aware of the importance of heritage in their lives, their history and their identity” (A1).
Research strategy	<i>Emotional trigger</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “In tackling an issue such as heritage, I believe that the emotional aspect is extremely important along with involving the children so that they feel part of the reality which we wish to show them” (A1).
	<i>Case study</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “I must say that not only did the contents of the subject help me to reflect, but also the methodology which we carried out, as a concept so ambiguous as heritage education would be extremely difficult to understand in its totality only by making use of educational materials” (A7). ■ “Working by seeking for information implies a process of exploration of the world which implies asking many questions and making different discoveries. Furthermore, it implies that pupils take the leading role and become autonomous . . . the fact of working on real cases leads to an increase in the interest and curiosity of the pupil” (A9).
	<i>Perspective of analysis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “A good way of speaking about socially conflictive places could be [studying] cities or towns which the children know nothing about, but in such a way they will not feel identified and will not experience the topic with the same enthusiasm and interest as with a place which they can visit someday” (A8).

As far as the research process carried out by way of group work is concerned, the sections which were considered to be of most use in applying the contents of the subject were: causal and intentional explanation of each case (45 %) and the prospective educational outlook solicited in the conclusion (33.3 %). This result is particularly significant in terms of the perception that the students built on their development of critical thinking. Some distance behind were both the historical and geopolitical context and the social educational presentation and justification of the case. The least-valued aspect was the use of photographic documentation as an iconographic source for measuring the scope of the conflict (Fig. 9).

The degree of satisfaction of the students with the functional learning acquired is high; they appreciate the potentiality of working on the analysis of social problems in primary education by way of cooperative work. Their opinions clearly show that they attribute sense to their learning and that they value the transformative capacity of heritage education in order to acquire useful knowledge which can be transferred to everyday life within the framework of a democratic education. In this regard, they considered that heritage education contributes towards the development of key competences, such as conflict resolution, critical capacity and civic commitment (Tab. 6).

Conclusion

The hypothesis has been confirmed that researching about a socially conflictive problem by way of heritage education contributes towards the formation of critical thinking if case studies are employed as a knowledge strategy. The results obtained seemed to confirm that the future primary teachers have learned the educational potentialities of dealing with cases of decontextualised heritage in the classroom. A positive evolution of their social thinking and capacity for analysis has been observed, particularly in terms of how their semantic universe around “heritage” and the particular conflict of Portomarín explained in the class, has gone from being merely descriptive to incorporating elements of heritage evaluation in material, intangible and emotional terms. The students have demonstrated great accomplishment in dealing with their case studies. Not only have they adequately developed the capacities required in the handling of information (reasoned use of sources, critical and committed thinking), but they have also argued about the educational use of their case studies, searching for a place for them in the primary curriculum and proposing alternatives for adapting the content to different year groups and to the local area of their future pupils. Finally, the students have also recognised the contribution of heritage education in the development of their critical capacities for dealing with social

problems (identification, contextualisation, explanation, argumentation and discussion), and in the development of key skills for primary schoolchildren.

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