## Historical consciousness – Historical thinking – Historical culture

Core Concepts of History Didactics and Historical Education in Intercultural Perspectives.

Reflections on Achievements – Challenges for the New Generation



# What is History? Formation of historical narratives in (Finnish) context

## Introduction

- The narratives of solid national, ethnic and equivalent communities have been losing their power as they do not respond to people's own experiences of society. Yet people also cling to them when they appear to be secure amidst current rapid changes.
- When analyzing Finnish history teachers' attitudes towards history, the grand national narrative still characterizes their objectives of history teaching.

## Objectives

- We compare the Finnish history student teachers' historical narratives to the narratives produced by a group of Finnish speaking adolescences' who live in Belgium.
- We used the mixed method approach, based on writing and drawing assignments, observation and semi-structured interviews.

## **Adolescences**

Finnish speaking adolescents aged 14–17 who attend to European School, Brussels (N=9)

# History students teachers

Finnish history student teacher in Helsinki who study in University of Helsinki (N=8)

## Results

#### Adolescences

 Although people in focus group are often categorized as Finnish, the pictures shows that they do not feel unequivocally (or at all) Finns.



 These young people live at the meeting point of different cultures and are used to dealing with diversity in their lives. They construct their historical narratives from various elements.

## **History students teachers**

- Grand narrative and content knowledge is emphasizes in student teachers' discourse: "WW2 must be taught."
- Student teachers ability to articulate their own epistemological premises of history varies and it seems to be related to their ability to set objectives of their own history teaching.

## Discussion and Conclusions

Adolescences and history students teachers construct historical narratives from different premises.



Instead of grand national narrative young people in focus group seems to use their own intercultural past as a starting point of their historical narratives.

- History students teachers tend to produce more general elements for their history learning objectives.
- The national grand narrative is emphasized in their teaching objectives in expense of skills and intercultural approach.

## Towards intercultural history education

- We suggest that changes in content knowledge of history learning is not enough. Change from one grand narrative to multiple narratives does not solve the gap between teachers and intercultural adolescences views of historical narratives.
- In addition, there should be larger metahistorical discussion on how history learning objectives are defined in a way that takes intercultural considerations into account and supports the individual process of building a historical narrative.

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