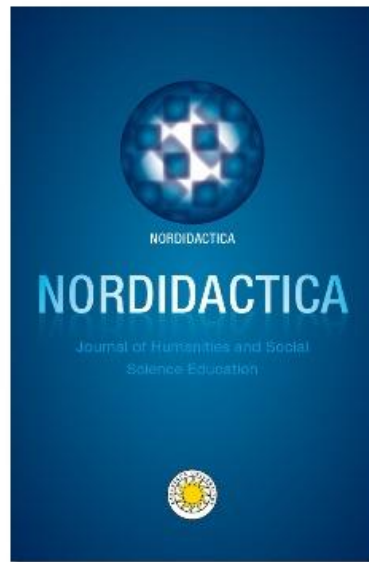


# **Developing Critical Historical Consciousness: Rethinking the Dynamics between History and Memory in History Education**

**Alexandre Dessingué**



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# Developing Critical Historical Consciousness: Re-thinking the Dynamics between History and Memory in History Education

Alexandre Dessingué

University of Stavanger

*Abstract: Over the past 20 years, concepts of historical thinking and historical consciousness have received increasing attention in the field of history education and history didactics. This new orientation in the teaching of history has involved the need to take into account the complexity of the historical discourse and more generally the multiple ways in which people relate to their individual and collective pasts. It has also implied the need to consider the diversity of "places" where history occurs. In this article, I will take a closer look at the relationships between the concepts of historical consciousness and memory, which, to a certain extent, seem to be neglected and misunderstood in the teaching of history and history education in general. More specifically, I will frame what I call a 'third way' for history education in relation to Ricoeur's theories and the connections and nuances he establishes between epistemology of history and phenomenology of memory.*

**KEYWORDS:** HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS, MEMORY, HISTORY CULTURE, MEMORY CULTURE, HISTORY EDUCATION, EPISTEMOLOGY, PHENOMENOLOGY

**About the author:** Alexandre Dessingué is Professor of Literacy Studies and History Education at the University of Stavanger, Norway. His research interests focus on history education, cultural and collective memory, cultural representations of WW1, WW2, the Holocaust and of the colonial period, literary and memory theory and critical literacy. He has published several articles, books and book chapters in the fields of critical literacy studies, history education, cultural memory studies and cultural history. His last publications include a co-edited volume with Jay Winter *Beyond Memory: Silence and the Aesthetics of Remembrance* (2016) and the book chapters "Paul Ricoeur: Understanding the Past and Writing the Future" (Routledge, 2017) and "The Ethics of Memory in *My Heart of Darkness*" (Verlag, 2017).

## **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

Over the past twenty years, concepts of historical thinking and historical consciousness have received increasing attention in the field of history education and history didactics. These notions are central in history teaching and curriculum around the globe. Recently, in the Norwegian context, for instance, historical consciousness has become one of the five key elements in the new curriculum of history as a part of a reform, which will come into force in the fall of 2020. (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2018)

The concepts of historical thinking and historical consciousness overlap sometimes and have been defined in many ways. They are today related to both historiographical, philosophical and didactical considerations. (Clark and Grever, 2018, Seixas, 2017a) In the contemporary field of history education, thinking historically has usually been interpreted and used as a pragmatic disciplinary competence. This singular competence is characterised by a capacity to evaluate and use historical tools and methods; a capacity of thinking as a historian. (Seixas, 2004, Seixas, 2017b, Lee, 2007, Wineburg and Reisman, 2015, Wineburg, 2001) On the other hand, the concept of historical consciousness traditionally includes an ontological consideration: it implies a reflection about the historical conditions of the human being (the historicity of the being). (Rüsen, 2002, Gadamer, 1963, Jeismann, 1979)

In this article, I argue that history education needs to overcome the dualistic approach between epistemological and ontological considerations of history and suggest a new conceptual framework for history education called the “third way” (see Figure 1). In addition to epistemological and ontological perspectives, the “third way” takes into consideration the role memory plays in the understanding/interpretation of the past and in the relations people establish with the past, i.e. a phenomenology of memory. Inspired by the theories of Paul Ricoeur (2004), this framework proposes then to consider the development of a critical historical and memory consciousness at the crossroad of the triangle formed by the epistemology of history, the phenomenology of memory and the historicity of the being. In the meeting with representations of the past, a critical historical and memory consciousness is characterised by a deeper understanding of the dynamics and tensions that emerge within each perspective and between the perspectives. On a horizontal axis (Figure 1), this critical and dynamic approach to history education suggests to consider the fundamental relationships and tensions that exist within and between epistemology of history (the elaboration of historical knowledge) and phenomenology of memory (the way the past is remembered). On a vertical axis, the dynamic consideration of epistemology of history and phenomenology of memory leads to the third aspect of this framework connected to a deeper understanding of the historicity of the being and of the construction of cultural identities. (Ricoeur, 2004, xvi-xvii)

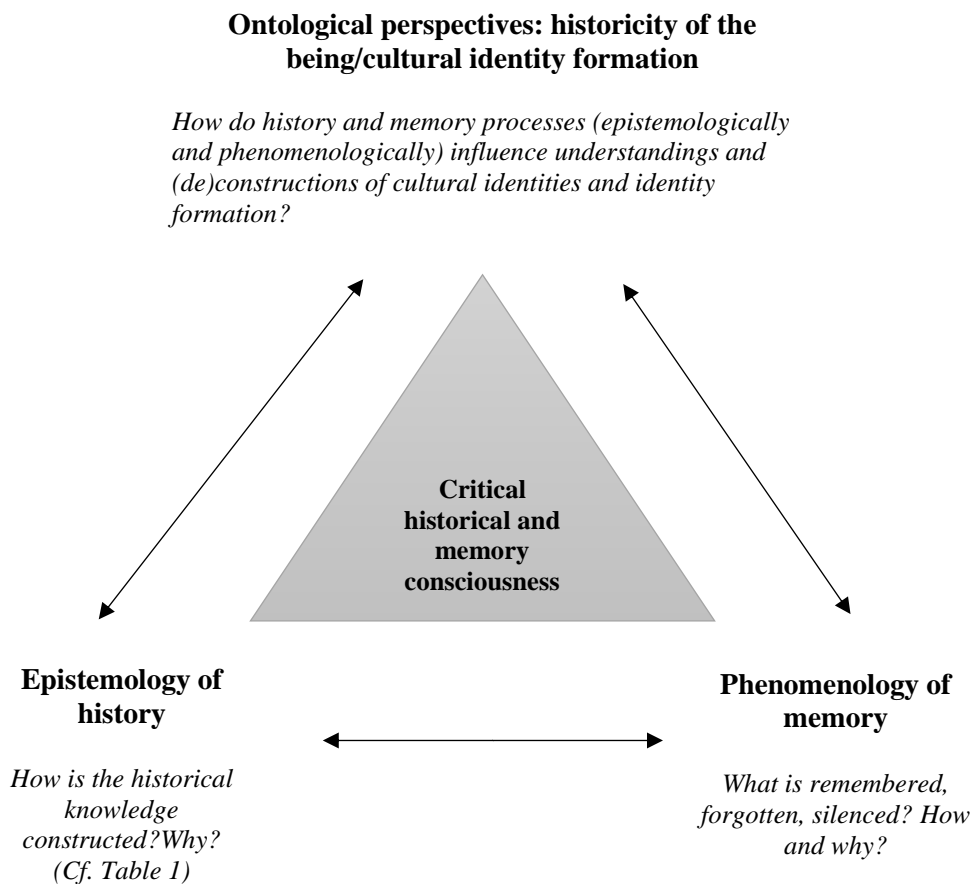


FIGURE 1.

*Framework for the 'Third Way': a new History Education for the development of a critical historical and memory consciousness.*

As we will see later on, several historians and history educators have reduced memories to disturbing factors in history education and memory processes are regularly limited to collective homogenous reminiscing or even myths.<sup>2</sup> On contrary, history and historical methods are often presented as critical ways of studying and approaching the past. These positions need to be nuanced and problematised. This paper suggests to look closer at the interconnections, which exist within and between the construction of history and historical knowledge and memories or processes of remembering. We need to do that in order to get a better understanding of the many ways individuals and societies construct cultural identities and in order to frame a deeper approach to the development of a critical consciousness in history education.

In the first part of the article, I will then focus on the development of a critical historical consciousness from an epistemological point of view, remembering that history and historical knowledge is a singular human discourse. Such a critical perspective involves a capacity of asking questions about how the historical knowledge

is produced and why (see Figure 1 – epistemology of history). From a didactical point of view, this perspective is connected to the ambition of overcoming a normative understanding of what history is made of or what history is about. A classic example of this normative use of history is the nation-building processes in Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries where stories about victories and defeats were created and used, also by historians, to define and endorse national communities and eventually to exclude ‘minorities’. (Carretero et al., 2012)

In the second part of the article, I will focus on the phenomenology of memory and its potential role in the development of a critical consciousness in history education. In post WW2 Europe and in particular in the former West Germany around the 1970s, a central question was how to deal with the Nazi past. This was, among other things, politically justified by the need to build a democratic society. Remembering the war and the Holocaust could easily create divisions and contradictions. But how would one prevent it from happening again if one did not learn from what had happened? It was argued for a history teaching and understanding that not only made up for forgetting or remembering the past, but for developing historical consciousness in the sense of creating a deeper understanding of the interplay between past, present and future. This focus leads necessarily to a deeper reflection about the importance and function of history and memory in today's society and for the future. Such consideration involves then a capacity of problematizing the phenomenological perspectives of the representation of the past between a logic of retention and protention, to use the terms of Husserl's phenomenology. (Merleau-Ponty, 2013) In other words, a phenomenology of memory, which is concerned with questions about what/how is remembered, forgotten, silenced and why. (Dessingué and Winter, 2016)

This article argues that memory and history should be connected domains of investigation in history education. History and memory engage with each other, influence each other and depend on each other in a dynamic and, sometimes, problematic way. In this article, a critical approach to history *and* memory as intertwined perspectives in history teaching is considered as a necessary condition for the development of a critical historical consciousness.

## **Problematizing the epistemology of history in history education**

From the early 1990s to the early 2000s, the affluence of memorial and historical laws in France led to strong reactions among many intellectuals and especially historians. Consequently, the French parliament established a mission of information on issues of memory. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008)<sup>3</sup> During this mission of information, politicians and intellectuals discussed issues of memory laws with a double objective: to clarify the role of the legislator facing historical research, and to discuss the influence of politics in the school curriculum, related to history as a school discipline.

Interestingly, during the debates, public actors and historians discussed several epistemological perspectives on history. These discussions highlight a number of epistemological tensions in history as a practice and discipline. After presenting the

main characteristics of these tensions, I will argue that epistemological ambiguities and tensions in history should be at the very heart of history education. As we will see, these epistemological ambiguities and tensions offer an interesting framework for the development of criticality among pupils in history teaching. History teaching should be considered as a privileged arena for the development of a critical competence, and at first, in relation to the epistemology of history.

During the hearings with the parliament members, historians referred regularly to the work of Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (1953), comparing the work of the historian to that of an investigating judge. They differentiated between the work of a court judge and that of the historian. Historians insist on this analogy to specify the relative objectivity of the historical profession. This interesting distinction allows them to affirm the need for the historian to gather evidence without having to pronounce judgment. We find this connection to Marc Bloch in the hearing of Jean Favier who says that "historians are not judges but mediators", affirming further the need to consider the historical profession as an investigating judge rather than a court judge. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008, 203) Similarly, François Dosse returns to this distinction by referring explicitly to the work of Marc Bloch:

*Your previous discussions [within the commission] have also raised the question of the possible identification between the investigating judge and the historian. But Marc Bloch had also asked this question in The Historian's Craft and he was keen to this connection, distinguishing at the same time the investigating judge to whom the historian can be compared, and the court judge. The differentiation between the two should indeed be radical: "A time comes when the paths diverge, writes Bloch, when the scholar has observed and explained, his task is finished. The judge has yet to render his decision." And there is no historical judgment: the historian doesn't have to judge but must strive to understand. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008, 246)*

It is easy to understand why historians seek to highlight here some kind of incompatibility between the historian and the court judge who renders a final and normative judgment about a specific (past) event. There is a methodological similarity between the historian and the investigating judge: both have a responsibility to discuss the degree of falsifiability of the evidence they gathered and they must remain in a "neutral" posture in relation to the events they describe and analyse. The questions related to the nature of the evidence and to the neutrality of the historian are central in the development of a critical epistemological approach to history.

When it comes to the falsifiability of the evidence, history has a peculiar position in comparison to other human sciences. It is at this stage that the question of "historical objectivity" might be discussed and verified. As stated by Ricoeur, it is through the consideration of the trace that we must and can oppose revisionism or any other denial of crimes against humanity:

*The terms "true" and "false" can legitimately be taken at this level in the Popperian sense of "refutable" and "verifiable". Is it true or is it false that gas chambers were used at Auschwitz to kill so many Jews, Poles, gypsies? The refutation of Holocaust deniers takes place at this level. This is why it was important to correctly delimit this level. (Ricoeur, 2004, 179)*

In other words, according to Ricoeur, historical objectivity must be regarded in relation to the objectivity of the trace and not of the historical discourse. The question of objectivity is at the very heart of the methodological phase or what Ricoeur calls the documentary phase. (Ricoeur, 2004, 146) In this way, Ricoeur introduces a distance with poststructuralist theories and the linguistic turn represented among others by Hayden White for whom history is first of all analysed and considered through explicative and characteristic discursive modes. (White, 1973) In Ricoeur, the historian's work is also characterised by the documentary phase *and* by a singular pact of trust with the reader of history. (Ricoeur, 1985, 286) At the same time, the objectivity of the documentary phase has to be nuanced.

The historical discourse is based on a series of traces from the past, which only can function as synecdoches, i.e. smaller parts of larger and more complex past "realities". In other words, historians would never be able to access the past in totality. This includes then the need to consider the documentary phase as a *relative* objectivity. Moreover, it is because of this relative objectivity that the historical discourse becomes questionable and opens a space for a critical historical consciousness already from the documentary phase. (Ricoeur, 2004, 335) The notion of criticality in history teaching regarding the documentary phase is too often reduced to the evaluation of the validity and the reliability of the trace, i.e. the question of source criticism. We tend to forget in history education that the documentary phase is a process of relative objectivity because of the way archives or traces from the past function: they give us a partial answer to a larger complex past reality. Challenging the relative objectivity of the documentary phase in history education gives us the possibility to develop a deeper consciousness of the historical representation/discourse as a synecdoche and an understanding of history as unfinished and incomplete process.

Moreover, the analogy suggested in the debates between the historian and the investigating judge, as mentioned previously, establishes another kind of epistemological ambiguities related, this time, to the historian's neutrality. The consideration of the selection of the traces and archives results from what I would call a 'situated intentionality'. Historians handle different kind of traces but they also give them a voice that necessarily leads to a certain subjectivity. This happens because the historian's voice is expressed from a defined spatiotemporal location, a specific "chronotope" to use the words of Bakhtin. (Bakhtin, 2002) In other words, a question has been asked and the documentary phase constitutes a first answer to a singular question. The documentary phase is always conditioned by a preliminary quest. Already in this early phase of documentation and of gathering proofs, past, present and future interacts through the intentionality of the subject who investigates. From a history didactical perspective and for the stimulation of criticality, pupils should be more often confronted with the question "why" in history teaching: "Why is this particular story or event told?" and not only "Are the sources reliable or verifiable?". This would reinforce the consciousness of the historical representation/discourse as answering predetermined question(s) and an understanding of history as a selective process.

Furthermore, many historical works are filled with "judgments of value", which also destabilise the question of neutrality. During the French hearings, historian Jean Favier,

for instance, was one of the few who acknowledged having written in one of his books on Philippe le Bel that “the Templars deserved what happened to them”. In addition, he insisted that historians should also have the possibility to tell what they mean and not just to make a simple “inventory” of the past. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008, 203) Similarly, the monumental work of Pierre Nora on French sites of memory is full of “judgments of value” about French history. Why choose one memory site over another in the pantheon of French collective memory? If the choice is based on their symbolic dimension in the construction of the French collective identity, can’t we consider then that it necessarily includes a judgment on the past? Politician Christiane Taubira suggests this idea during the hearing with Pierre Nora: “Pierre Nora has edited a book of immense quality about sites of memory. But I found nothing about colonisation. I have even looked at the article on coffee: not a word about the plantation colonies (...)”. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008, 209)

These discussions about the role of history and the historian lead to several interesting reflections for the history educational context and in particular for the potential development of a critical historical consciousness. The discussions show us to what extent history, as discipline and practice, is full of tensions and ambiguities at an epistemological level. The way people understand and work on historical consciousness in educational settings depends on the way history and historical knowledge are conceptualised. There are many different conceptualisations and understandings of history, as the debates in the French parliament have shown us, but several principles seem to be of extreme importance to underline in the context of history education.

From an educational perspective, the epistemological ambiguity of history is crucial. This ambiguity should be considered as a powerful didactical resource. Being critically and historically conscious must include the understanding of the complexity of history as a multifaceted phenomenon or, as Paul Ricoeur already asserted in 1955, a consciousness of the fact that “historical language is necessarily ambiguous”. (Ricoeur, 1955, 30)<sup>4</sup> Rüsen asserts the same ambiguity fifty years later: “At the turn of the twenty-first century the very term ‘history’ brings extremely ambivalent associations to mind”. (Rüsen, 2005, vii) Engaging with the tensions that exist at an epistemological level in all representations of the past and all historical works is then central to develop a critical historical consciousness.

A qualified critical historical consciousness must be aware of the epistemological subjectivity of history (and any representations of the past), no matter who produces it. The recognition of the position of the subject facing his object of study, a subjectivity, is undoubtedly what best defines a qualified science as human science. Refuting the subjectivity of historical representations creates the illusion of a blinding objectivism in history that may lead to the risk of intellectual stagnation. It would give to the historical language the same prerogatives as the legal language and make history an unquestionable field. Furthermore, it would define historical consciousness as a simple matter of historical knowledge acquisition and of mastering disciplinary skills.

The theoretical position of Ricoeur is, in many aspects, interesting for the field of history education because it compels us to consider the historical work as a work in perpetual tension with different phases of both relative objectivity and subjectivity.



Pupils at school should be aware of these different stages in the historical work. The historical distance, which is necessary in the documentary phase and in the gathering of historical evidences, becomes more challenging when the historian goes over to the narrating phase. At the same time, it should be underlined, in educational contexts, that accepting the subjectivity of the historical discourse is not tantamount to questioning the relative objectivity of the trace(s).

The theoretical position of Ricoeur is singular because he never tries to overcome the tensions, which exist within the historical work or the ambiguity of the historical language. He acknowledges a *necessary* ambiguity in history, which represents a fundament for the development of a critical historical consciousness: “[...] we must fight against the tendency to consider the past only from the angle of the accomplished, of the unchangeable, of the completed. We must reopen the past, revive in it unfulfilled, impeded or even massacred potentialities”. (Ricoeur, 1985, 390)<sup>5</sup>

The necessary epistemological tension, which is at the very heart of the historian’s work and of all representations of the past, should be a privileged arena for history education and a central resource to enhance a critical historical consciousness. Historical consciousness does not only involve a capacity to think across different time perspectives or to manage the use of the historian’s toolbox, it implies a capacity to discuss epistemological tensions and ambiguities within singular historical representations. This can be done, in an educational setting, through a triple epistemological lens as showed in the table below (Table 1).

TABLE 1

*Analysing the ambiguity of historical epistemology: a didactic model*

	<b>Epistemological levels</b>		
<b>Which lens?</b>	The traces	The author/historian's chronotope	The author/historian's intentionality
<b>Didactic questioning</b>	Which traces are used to shape this historical representation/discourse?	From where and when is this historical representation/discourse shaped?	Why is this historical representation/discourse shaped?
<b>Critical historical consciousness</b>	A consciousness of the historical representation/discourse as synecdoche.  An understanding of history as unfinished and incomplete process	A consciousness of the historical representation/discourse as situated.  An understanding of history as non-neutral process	A consciousness of the historical representation/discourse as answering predetermined question(s) and/or topics.  An understanding of history as a selective process
<b>Time tension perspectives</b>	The use of the past in the construction of the historical representation/discourse	The present of the author/producer in the historical representation/discourse	The future of the historical representation/discourse

## **Critical historical consciousness towards a phenomenology of memory**

Another topic, which is extensively discussed through the debates within the French mission of information on issues of memory, is the connections and tensions that exist between history and memory. According to Pierre Nora, “the importance and influence of memory in society” is a consequence of “the collapse of the national collective narrative”. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008, 209) According to him, collective memory processes have become problematic because they have replaced the historical discourse, establishing consequently a ‘public past’, which has become too hazardous and too dependent on politics. Another historian, François Dosse, “deplores that, in recent years, the confusion between memory and history has been so massive”. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008, 246) For the historian Gérard Noiriel, there is a need to make a differentiation between what he called “history as science” vs. “history as memory”:

*Since the beginning of the 19th century, discourses on the past have been divided in two: “history as science”, which seeks to understand and explain the past; “history as memory”, which includes a judgment on the past. (...) The danger arises when an imbalance occurs between these two poles. “History as memory” has been carried by forces infinitely more powerful than “history as science”. So far in France, “history as science” has never been threatened with extinction, but it risks being marginalized from public space. (Assemblée Nationale, 2008, 238)*

Although, these historians have different opinions on memory politics and on the epistemological differences that exist between history and memory,<sup>6</sup> the interconnections between history and memory processes are clearly established and problematized in their reflections and comments. Teaching history with the ambition of developing a critical historical consciousness cannot be reduced to an epistemological approach to past representations. It should also engage with the way the past is used and transmitted in society and it should engage with the role memory plays in this transmission. This assumption is at the very heart of the theories of Ricoeur when he reaffirms the danger that remains in the affirmation and recognition of an epistemology of history that would be separated from a phenomenology of memory and vice versa. (Ricoeur, 2004, xvi) In emphasising this, Ricoeur defines a “risk” that assumes a systematic opposition or at least a disconnection between history and memory.

The tensions between history and memory, that have been highlighted in the debates about issues of memory in France, are quite similar to some of the tensions formulated by history educators during the last decades. For Mark Salber Philipps, inspired by Peter Novick and Pierre Nora, the ambition of history education is to construct what he calls “historical distance”. (Phillips, 2004) In particular, memories are according to him a good example of “a way of seeing the past that truncates or denies distance”. (Phillips, 2004, 191) This assumption raises several problematic issues. First, the notion of ‘historical distance’ can never be considered, in any historical works, as an absolute notion. The historical distance will always be relative as we have seen in the first part of this article. The present of the historian (or any ‘producer’ of history) will always have an impact in the construction of historical narratives. The consciousness of the relativity of historical distance is an important matter in history education and in the development of a critical historical consciousness. Historical distance, understood as a critical evaluation and consideration of the traces and sources that are used in the construction of historical narratives, is certainly a major skill, but a critical historical consciousness cannot be reduced to the mastering of this singular skill. At least, it should be problematised in an educational setting.

Moreover, the fact that memories are defined as ‘truncating’ elements, in opposition to historical distance, exclude the possibility to challenge and reflect upon uses and misuses of memory in societies. Refusing to consider memories as an object of study within history education represents a potential gap in the development of a critical historical consciousness.

The same kind of argumentation is used in Peter Lee’s chapter, who asserts that “memories cannot have privileged status: evidence has to come in, and with it inference and judgment”. (Lee, 2004, 135) Again, Lee considers memories as disturbing factors in the perception and understanding of the past. The most interesting issue in critical memory studies is not really to find out if the memories of individuals or groups of individuals are based on verifiable sources (memories don’t work that way), but rather to understand why people remember the way they do and which meanings and interpretations of the past they procure and generate. John Torpey seems also in his chapter to problematize the role memory plays in everyday life:

*In recent years, the distance that normally separates us from the past has been strongly challenged in favour of an insistence that the past (...) is constantly, urgently present as part of our everyday experience. Indeed, a rising chorus of memory entrepreneurs asserts that the ordinary relationship between past and present described by Magris does not and indeed should not exist. (Torpey, 2004, 241)*

This discourse embodied here by Phillips, Lee and Torpey is a good example of a tradition within history education that never accepts to go beyond the framework of the epistemology of history as presented before (see Figure 1). There is a risk here of making history as close as possible to the “legal language”, which tends also to limit history education and historical consciousness to the framework of academic history. In such a perspective, memories are interpreted as disturbing factors that should be avoided and should be kept at distance in history education. The consideration of the interconnections between memory and history is still underestimated in history education, although some voices have manifested a real interest in the issue of memory during the last decade, stressing, for instance, its importance in relation to the development of historical consciousness and historical culture. (Ahonen, 2005, Simon, 2004, Dessingué, 2017, Grever and Adriaansen, 2017)

In a recent volume edited by Clark and Peck, tensions between history and memory (or what they call differences between “everyday historical understandings” and “scholarly discipline”) are again clearly underlined: “(...) whereas the scholarly need to understand and incorporate everyday “past-mindedness” into the corpus of the history discipline is imperative, it should not signal a retreat from understanding the distinctive skills of historical cognition”. (Clark and Peck, 2019, 7) Even though the integration of memory and everyday historical understandings are presented by an increasing part of history educators as a clear benefit, particularly, for the development of historical consciousness, connections between memory and history are in many occasions considered as ‘potentially’ uncanny and problematic. A qualified critical historical consciousness should have the possibility and the ability to recognize the role memory plays even in historical works or what have been called “historical cognition”. I would argue that history teaching should consider history and any representations of the past as resulting from singular acts of remembering but also as potential producers of cultural, communicative and collective memories. (Assmann, 2010) History as a discipline is epistemologically dependent on different memory processes: it involves the archive or the trace as ‘objectified memory’ and the memory of the historian or the one who produces the representation of the past. At the same time, any historical representations (inclusive the historian’s work) has the potential to shape (phenomenologically) cultural and collective memories. It seems then difficult to oppose the notion of historical distance to the notion of memory, since history depends on different memory processes and materialities.

The singularity in Ricoeur’s theories, which is particularly important to underline in an educational context, is that memory and history form two sides of a same coin. Each of them operates in a particular epistemological framework with specific rules and norms, but they also depend on and influence each other.

Both perspectives (epistemology and phenomenology) are necessary to take into consideration if we want to understand the dynamic relationships people maintain with the past. Both are necessary to incorporate in educational settings if we want to understand and challenge the ways societies interact (or not) with their past. We find here in watermarks the Benjaminian posture of Ricoeur. In his work entitled *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* published in 1928 in its German and original version, Benjamin reaffirms the need to consider any historical event “with a twofold aim (...) on the one hand as a restoration, a restitution and secondly as something that is thereby unfinished, always open”. (Benjamin, 2009, 44) This is another way of emphasising the fact that every historical representation can be analysed from an epistemological point of view and a phenomenological point of view. This contributes to an understanding of history that goes beyond the knowledge of established facts and that binds them to their “post-history”, to their becoming and use in society; in other words, history *includes and leads to* a potential act of remembering at both an individual and collective level.

In a phenomenological approach, every act of mediation and representation of the past involves a process of remembering, which implies an act of time-destabilization for the individual. (Dessingué, 2017, 566) This perspective should be integrated in history teaching because it gives an opportunity to look closer at the way people (dis-)connect with their past(s) in many different domains and situations. As seen before and from an epistemological point of view, the improvement of a critical historical consciousness depends on the understanding of every representation of the past as a selective, non-neutral and incomplete construction; from a phenomenological point of view, it implies a deeper understanding of how the past is mediated in the present and for the future and how it potentially affects our individual and collective memories or ways of remembering.

In line with Ricoeur, the new framework for history education, suggested in this article and called the “third way”, considers memories and everyday life experiences of/with past events as privileged issues where historical consciousness can critically be improved, discussed and challenged. Therefore, the development of a critical historical consciousness (which also includes a critical memory consciousness) should preferably be located at the crossroads of the subject’s consciousness and the many different historical and memorial materialities and discourses (as many synecdoches) that form history and memory cultures the subject is a part of and contributes to (Figure 2). (Grever and Adriaansen, 2017)

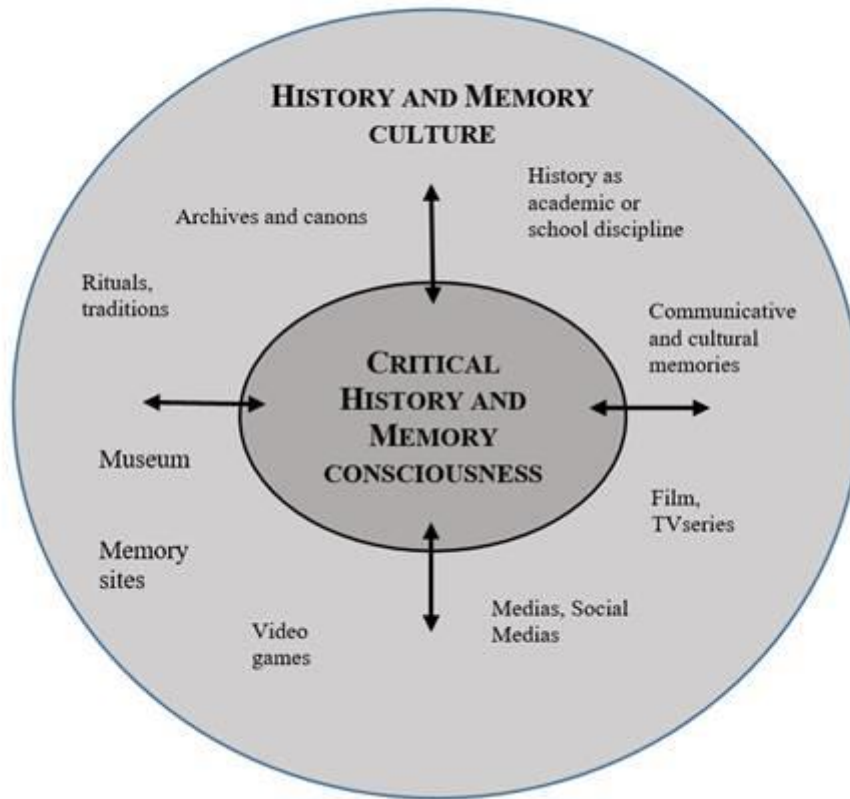


FIGURE 2.7

*Interaction between history and memory consciousness and history and memory culture.*

It is in the interaction (represented by the arrows in the figure 2) between consciousness and culture(s) that critical awareness and critical thinking may occur. Within history education, the human capacity of acquiring self-reflexivity and criticality does not only depend on the isolated acquisition of an objective form of knowledge; it depends also on the capacity of challenging the relationships between the conscious self and the history and memory cultures that surround us and in which we participate. Acts of remembering and of telling are powerful instruments that allow the subject to confront the critical question of individual and collective identity constructions and cultural representations. This relation between memory and historicity of the being is a dynamic process that implies the understanding of notions of cultural identity constructions as instable and fragile. The culture in which people participate is always a result of mnemonic negotiations both at a collective level but also at an individual level. A critical historical and memory consciousness is aware of the fact that the culture, which surrounds us, is open and negotiable, not closed and definitive.

The “third way” for history education and historical consciousness situates the question of the phenomenology of memory at the crossroad of a new historical discipline. It suggests to analyse any representations of the past, including the historian’s work, as processes of remembering, forgetting and silencing. It suggests also

to discuss the impacts of such processes on the development of societies and individuals or groups of individuals. (Dessingué and Winter, 2016, 5)

## Conclusion

History and memory are key elements of a discourse that represents and interprets the past. This discourse is always established through the lens of a present perspective and engages with and creates an expectation for the future. The framework for a new history teaching suggested in this article, called the “third way”, proposes then to think of history education as a privileged arena where the connection between epistemology of history and phenomenology of memory functions dynamically and complementary. The consideration of the dynamics between history and memory is at the very heart of the formation of collective and cultural identities, because memory and acts of remembering allow us to assert ourselves as a group or individual against the passing of time. (Ricoeur, 2004, 81) In this sense, the phenomenological approach to the study of the past through the focus on memory represents the “missing link” in the traditional and dualistic approach to historical thinking and historical consciousness as presented in the introduction of this article. In the model proposed in this article, the phenomenology of memory interconnects with both epistemological approaches to the past/history and ontological considerations in relation to the uses of the past/history (the historicity of the human condition and of identity constructions) (See Figure 1).

Processes of globalisation and digital mass communication force us in one way or another to rethink our relationship to the past and the transmission of the past in all its complexity and its multivocality. Because of this complexity, epistemological approaches cannot monopolise the understanding and interpretation of the past in history education. It cannot be the only way towards the development of a critical historical consciousness in education. Pupils do not learn mathematics at school for becoming mathematicians, they do not learn to write and read for becoming novel writers. Pupils should not “learn history” with the unique ambition of thinking like historians.

As telling, writing and reading, a critical historical and memory consciousness should be considered as a central and transdisciplinary educational objective. The role of history and memory in society is of paramount importance and the development of a critical historical and memory consciousness is a massive challenge for the 21st century. More than ever, the issue and formation of cultural identities and belongings need to be understood as a question of dynamics and tensions, related to processes of knowledge construction (an epistemology) and acts of remembering, forgetting and silencing (a phenomenology). Understanding and engaging with these tensions or dynamics should naturally be at the very heart of history educational policies and practices, and in particular in relation to the development of a critical historical and memory consciousness.

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DEVELOPING CRITICAL HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: RE-THINKING THE DYNAMICS  
BETWEEN HISTORY AND MEMORY IN HISTORY EDUCATION

Alexandre Dessingué

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<sup>2</sup> See for instance Vansledright: "At its best, the school-based collective memory approach that Brinton endorses manages fairly well at binding a freedom-quest narrative arc to the historical memories of students who encounter it. At the very least, the approach successfully reinforces the narrative template that is sold in many forms for mass culture from historical theme parks to the US Park Service's commemorative sites to television's The History Channel. If the goal of the collective-memory approach is to inculcate in students a foreshortened, thematically linear, simple and upbeat storyline of national development (...), then some research evidence indicates that the results remain salutary." (2011, 24)

<sup>3</sup> Translations are mine. The mission of investigation started in April 2008 and had a last hearing in November 2008. This mission of investigation started in a tense context between historians and politicians. Two profiled scholars and historians Pierre Nora as president of the association "Freedom for History" and Gérard Noiriel as president of the Association CVUH (Vigilance Committee against the public uses of history) were active in the debates. These associations of historians were created in 2005 following the Pétre Grenouilleau-case (a historian sued by a group of people from West Indians, Reunion and Guiana for writing "wrong" on slave trade) but also as a result of the law called "Mekachera", which emphasized the positive role of colonization (but which since has been removed). These collectives did not claim the same things. In the hearings, Noiriel highlighted the fact that unlike "Freedom for History", the CVUH did not demand complete and total withdrawal of all memory laws, but only the law of the 23rd of February 2005 (the Mekachera law). According to them, this law "illustrated a direct intrusion of political power in the teaching of history" and a judgment of value on the past, with the "positive" characterisation of colonisation.

<sup>4</sup> Translation is mine.

<sup>5</sup> Translation is mine

<sup>6</sup> See Endnote 3.

<sup>7</sup> The figure 2 shares many common aspects with the "Scale model" or "den åbne skalamodel" defined by Bernard Eric Jensen (1994). However, this new framework proposed in this paper incorporates a clear dynamic between the notion of history and memory cultures and the notions of history and memory consciousness. It underlines also clearly the role memory plays within the formation of a critical historical consciousness and historical culture as inspired by Ricoeur.