

HISTORICAL ENCOUNTERS

A journal of historical consciousness, historical cultures, and history education



ISSN 2203-7543 | Double Blind Peer-Reviewed | Open Access | www.hej-hermes.net

Call for papers

SPECIAL ISSUE: REVISITING EPISTEMIC COGNITION IN HISTORY: HISTORIANS, TEACHERS, AND LEARNERS

This special issue will be a follow up to the special issue *Epistemic cognition in history*, published in April 2022 (<https://doi.org/10.52289/hej9.100>). In this 2022-issue a lot of questions were raised and also answered about how historic educators conceptualize “epistemic cognition”, which research methods are most appropriate to measure the construct (qualitative vs. quantitative), and how epistemic cognition can be developed in school students in history classes as well as during teacher education programs for prospective history teachers. However, a lot of research in this area seems to be ongoing and many issues are far from concluded. Therefore, we would like to follow up with a second special issue on the topic, to be published in 2024.

Epistemological considerations have been discussed within the realm of historical scholarship for at least 50 years, and still it seems that the issue has been further highlighted in recent years, especially in relation to students and teachers of history. The acknowledgement of a disparity between the past itself and the histories about that past has increasingly also been applied to history curricula and multi-perspectivism now has a prominent place in history teaching in many parts of the world. Students’ ability to think critically has been seen as both a problem contributing to deep political division, as well as a powerful tool to help foster future citizens immune to indoctrination as it might help complicate and counter the powerful effects of master narratives that tend to reinforce national myths. However, these same history curricula are still also vehicles for national cohesion and tend to reconstruct a national past that is not up for debate. This ambiguity embedded in the combination of reconstruction and deconstruction is a difficult landscape for teachers and students of history to navigate.

This special issue seeks articles that explore both conceptual as well as empirical approaches to issues related to the epistemological ambiguity that has been highlighted in research about epistemic cognition in history. Epistemological ambiguity can be characterized by the fact that numerous epistemological positions (e.g., positivism, scepticism) can be legitimized in plural societies and are controversial at the same time. In history education, it also becomes evident by the fact that it cannot be conclusively determined which research approach is particularly fruitful (e.g., epistemic concepts, beliefs). Furthermore, it becomes apparent that every method for researching epistemic cognition has weak points, sometimes even creating ambiguities that cannot be clarified with the same method (e.g., socially desirable response patterns in questionnaires vs. answers that cannot be categorized in interviews) (Nitsche, Mathis & O’Neill

2022). Finally, empirical results are often ambiguous and not (yet) explicable, for example, when respondents indicate multiple epistemic positions, wobble between them, or if contradictory epistemic positions (e.g., criterialist and sceptical) are promoted in students in history classes although elaborated views should be promoted (Stoel, Logtenberg & Nitsche, 2022). Some of the aforementioned aspects could be uncovered in future studies (e.g., effective school-based interventions), others such as the question of the most plausible epistemology are likely to remain ambiguous.

We are especially interested in considerations or beliefs held by historians, teachers and/or students that highlight the intersections between different ways of thinking about these matters. The primary questions that we would like to have addressed in contributions to the special issue are:

- How do historians, teachers, prospective teachers, and students of history reason about the epistemic nature of history? And how does their reasoning relate to the different environments and contexts they work and or live in?
- How do teachers and students of history relate to narratives and multi-perspectivism, as epistemological issues of concern?
- How do teachers and students interpret epistemological issues discussed in curricula and syllabi?
- What are the implications of research results regarding epistemic cognition in history for prospective history teacher training and for in-service training of history teachers?
- How do teachers' and students' assumptions about history as a subject (its aims and meaning) influence their epistemic cognition about the subject?
- How can epistemological constructs be changed, developed, and promoted in schools, universities, and in teacher training?

We hope to gather research from different parts of the world and to contribute to a vibrant field of research regarding these issues.

Deadline for full papers	December 31 st , 2022
Reviews completed	June 30 th , 2023
Revisions due	November 30 th , 2023
Publication	March 1 st , 2024

Upload your manuscript here: <https://www.hej-hermes.net/submissions> (make sure you indicate that your manuscript is for the special issue on epistemic cognition)

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