Chapter 6
Heritage and Museums as Objects of Education for Citizenship in the Teaching of History

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ABSTRACT

Over the last few decades, heritage education in Spain has shifted from being just another area of knowledge to a scientific discipline in its own right. Heritage and heritage education actions have been demonstrated to contribute to the development of critical and active citizenship. From school onwards, heritage is an important resource in education for citizenship and teaching history. This chapter aims to provide the theoretical premise for working in the classroom with archaeological heritage to contribute to the learning of social sciences. The focus on education with heritage is laid out, the Spanish educational curriculum is analyzed, and the necessary tools will be provided for work in the classroom with archaeological heritage. In conclusion, it presents how field trips can be integrated into the teaching program.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, Heritage Education in Spain has shifted from being just another area of knowledge to a scientific discipline in its own right (Fontal & Ibañez-Etxeberria, 2017). In formal education, Heritage Education seeks to train students to be able to get to know, value and enjoy cultural heritage
and defend its conservation and dissemination - a basic value that according to Estepa, Cuenca, and Martín (2015) underpins democracy itself. The authors claim that heritage facilitates the understanding of current and historical societies, so heritage elements are seen as witnesses and sources from which to start in order to gain knowledge and even to make decisions in the future. They are linked with our cultural roots and traditions, but at the same time are used to foster an attitude of respect for the different cultural symbols of other societies. On the other hand, Heritage in non-formal Education seeks to create connections between the object and people, arouses sensitivity, identity and otherness, as well as learning from heritage through a gender perspective (Luque & Benítez, 2017).

Heritage education in the classroom contributes to the development of skills and competencies that encourage students to participate in and create critical citizenship, which is the purpose of the Faro Convention and all the actions that the Council of Europe (2017) develops for this purpose. The Faro Convention assumes that citizens must be responsible for respecting their heritage. Heritage is understood as an exponential factor in the search for elements from the past that allow us to act and learn to solve conflicts. Some of its lines of work are to manage how heritage can create conflicts (as a generator of identity) and generate tools for the resolution of conflicts through heritage. This agreement includes the Namur Declaration (2016), approved by the committee of ministers in February 2017, whose purpose is to generate citizen participation in heritage, through measures like “Strategy 21.”

In December 2018, the University of Huelva hosted a workshop organized under the framework agreement of the Council of Europe on the value of cultural heritage for society, through the research actions developed from the Faro Convention, whose name Cross-fertilization roads between Heritage and Participatory Citizenship, demonstrates the evolution of democratic participation and heritage that has been developing since 2005 (year in which the Convention is ratified). For example, in the field of formal education, the value of heritage for the democratic participation of citizens is reflected in the actions that the International Centre for History and Heritage Didactics (Alma Mater Studiorum, University of Bologna) develops, some of them under the program of the International History Festival (Bologna, Italy). It is a project that includes the whole community: university, territory, community, associations and schools (Borghi, 2008; Borghi and Dondarini, 2009, 2016).

Ultimately, Heritage Education is necessary if citizenship education is to be guaranteed, since education is the first means of fostering civic and democratic values. The school must promote this knowledge of heritage, based on the use of sources like oral history (life histories or oral sources). In addition, it should not be forgotten that heritage is important at school because it generates emotions, identity, contexts of belonging - the links that Fontal and Ibañez-Etxeberria (2017) portray. There is a process of “appropriation” based on this feeling, not only of identity but also of otherness: only when you are educated and know your own heritage will you be able to understand the heritage of the other and empathize with it.

Calaf (2009) considers that postmodern society needs a heritage that is close to all citizens, its public is not intended for the inquisitive and studious, and so much she turns her interest to the museum-school relationship. She has directed one of the most innovative research projects in an attempt to analyze this relationship within the education programs of various museums with different heritage categories (Calaf and Suarez, 2016; Gutierrez and Calaf, 2013; Roser, Gillate, and Gutierrez, 2015).

Santacana (2012) and Calaf and Fontal (2010) value the heritage within our reach as a vehicle for learning through museum visits. They consider that this non-academic history that is taught outside the classroom through heritage should increasingly replace academic history, in the sense that the teaching processes that can be produced in non-formal educational spaces through heritage objects are effective for understanding and learning history and move away from traditional history teaching, based on boredom.