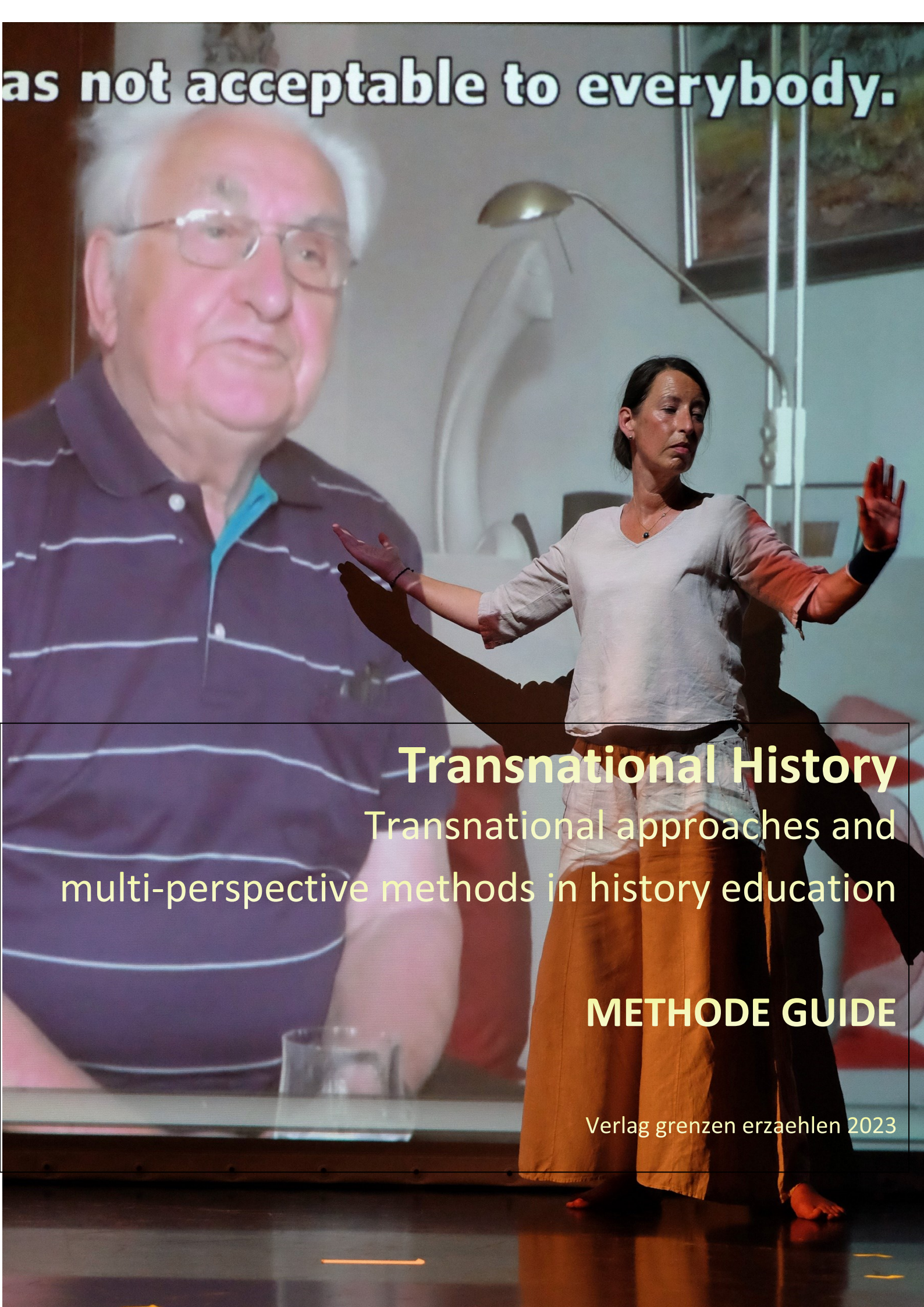


as not acceptable to everybody.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and wide-legged orange trousers, is performing a movement exercise on a stage. She has her arms extended horizontally to the sides, palms facing up. In the background, a large projection screen displays a close-up of an elderly man with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue polo shirt with white horizontal stripes. The text 'as not acceptable to everybody.' is visible at the top of the screen. The stage floor is dark and reflective.

# Transnational History

Transnational approaches and  
multi-perspective methods in history education

**METHODE GUIDE**

Verlag grenzen erzählen 2023



## Erasmus+ Programme 2014-2020

### Key Action 2: Strategic Partnership Projects

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**Transnational History** – Transnational approaches and multi-perspective methods in conveying history 2020-2023

#### Project lead



Institute for Science Communication and Higher Education Research, University of Klagenfurt, Austria

#### Project partners



Forschungszentrum für historische Minderheiten, Vienna, Austria

#### EU WAREHOUSE

EU WAREHOUSE, Brussels, Belgium



Muzeji i galerije Konavala, Gruda, Croatia



Kulturzentrum Die GEMS, Singen, Germany



Sprachendienst Konstanz, Konstanz, Germany



Instytut Tolerancji, Łódź, Poland

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## The Method Guide

The method guide serves important roles in the ERASMUS+ Transnational History Project. It provides clear, detailed and easily understandable summaries of all the methods and artistic forms of representation exchanged and used in the project and on the method platform in a comprehensible form for practical application. It also contains the theoretical basics of transnational, multi-perspective approaches in history teaching. Brief descriptions of relevant methods and theoretical approaches are -among others - available for the following topics:

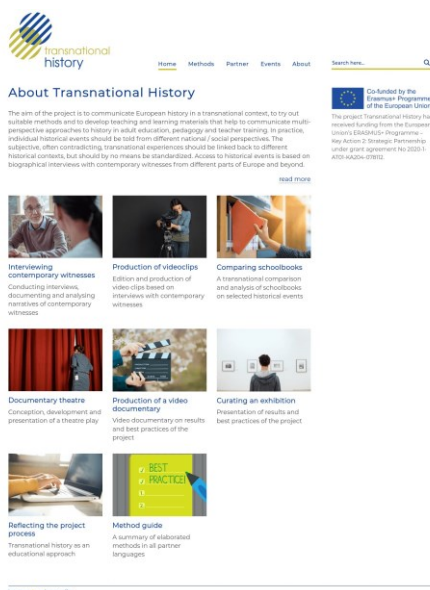
- ❖ biographical interviewing,
- ❖ biographical narrative circles,
- ❖ transnational textbook analysis,
- ❖ editing of contemporary witness narratives: text and video,
  - ❖ theatre education,
  - ❖ visualizing transnational history in exhibitions,
  - ❖ teaching complex historical facts.

The method guide is designed for adult educators, multipliers, cultural workers in the field of education, teacher training candidates, and everyone for whom the project topic is of interest.

The method guide can be downloaded from the method platform as a print-ready publication in PDF version. All tools and best-practice examples, detailed descriptions of all methods, and all other products of the strategic partnership will be clearly described and available on the digital method platform <https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/>.

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## ABOUT THE PROJECT TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY

Seven cultural and educational institutions from Austria, Croatia, Germany, Belgium, Poland and Sweden are working on the EU-funded project "Transnational History". The aim of the project is to develop a common understanding of "transnational history" and to try out methods for looking at historical events from different perspectives.

The European Union is distinguished by the diversity of its member countries. The individual member states are also heterogeneous. They are made up of autochthonous ethnic minorities and majorities, and also bring together people of very different origins. Many immigrated decades ago, others arrived recently. They change their place of residence for professional reasons or are forced to do so by war and disasters.

What they all have in common is that they bring with them a variety of transnational experiences that go beyond national narratives of history. Experiences that are not reflected in history textbooks, as our research showed.

We have now asked ourselves what methods in the teaching of history take up this breadth of transnational experience? How can we capture diverse perspectives on historical events that challenge dominant national narratives?

The methodological approach is an inter-weaving of socio-scientific methods of re-search with artistic forms of expression for the communication of history.

All approaches are described in detail on the project's method platform <https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/>.

### Biographical interviews

The focus is on the personal narratives of people whose experiences deviate from the national mainstream. Each partner institution chose a specific moment in contemporary history on which those affected and contemporary witnesses talked about their lives.

#### ❖ Flight and expulsion

In Germany, we conducted interviews with members of German minorities who had to leave the countries formerly occupied by Nazis after 1945.

We also interviewed people who had to flee Afghanistan in recent years and Bosnia during the Balkan War.

#### ❖ Perspective of ethnic minorities

In Austria we asked for the perspective of representatives of the Carinthian Slovenes on historical events. The ethnic minority in the south of Austria was persecuted under National Socialism and fought for their rights for decades after the war.

#### ❖ March 1968 in Poland

In Poland, the communist regime used the 1968 student protests as a pretext for anti-Semitic repression. Ten thousand Polish Jews lost their jobs and were expelled from Poland. The interviewees talk about their flight and their new beginnings in foreign countries.

#### ❖ Decolonisation: From Belgian Congo to Brussels

Two women who spent very different child-hoods in the former Belgian colony in the Congo and had to flee to Brussels in 1960 talk about their lives in both worlds in the Belgian interviews.

#### ❖ EU and history

Along the chronicle of the development of the European Union, contemporary witness-es tell their individual life stories. Complex and abstract history meets personal stories.

#### ❖ European internal migration

In Sweden, the interviews focus on the right to work in another Member State and to be treated equally to nationals. People from Greece who live and work in Sweden talk about their experiences.

#### ❖ Changing Regimes in the Konavle Region

The Croatian interviews deal with the effects of changing governance in the Konavle region during the 1940s. Neighbours grew up a few metres apart in different school systems with different historical narratives.

### Artistic forms of conveying history

For the publication, excerpts from the biographical interviews were turned into short video clips. The video clips were then used by artists to enter into a sensitive dialogue with the narrators.

In the ethnographic museum of Čilipi, the exhibition "Kome opanci, kome obojci" combines regional and transnational aspects. Traditional footwear from different eras provides an insight into social conditions and is linked via QR codes to the transnational narratives of the video clips.

"Mauerläufer" is the name of the scenic collage in which actresses and amateurs reflect the stories from the video clips on stage. At the cultural center "Die Gems" in Singen, they integrate the heterogeneous life stories into a performance that gains more general validity on a meta-level.

They lead us back to our initial question: How can transnational experiences be integrated into the teaching of history? How can the diversity of stories be told?

... Through biographies.

## METHOD: BIOGRAPHICAL INTERVIEWS

Sprachendienst Konstanz / Die GEMS

### Short description

Biographical interviews are about former and, thus, remembered experiences.

"Oral history is the recording of people's memories. It is the living history of everyone's unique life experiences".  
(www.ohs.org.uk)

Biographical interviews are recorded in audio or video to document the narration as a source for historical research.



### Detailed description

Biographical interviews can be open or closed. There are different forms of interview technique. An important distinction is the manner in which the interview is conducted. One or more persons can talk uninterruptedly, i.e. monologically (open), or the interviewer can interrupt by asking follow-up questions (closed).

What all forms have in common is that every interview is a process of interaction between the narrator(s) and the interviewer. The different forms of interview technique are:

#### The narrative interview

Opens with an introductory question that corresponds to the topic. This stimulates the interviewee's willingness to talk. Only narration is allowed; no evaluation or argumentation is allowed. In contrast to other interview techniques, the narrative interview does not serve the purpose of confirming opinions or hypotheses.

#### The guided interview

Is a way of obtaining detailed information on a specific topic. The interviewee can give concrete information and the interviewer can ask follow-up questions and questions of understanding. In this sense, this interview technique is similar to an ordinary conversation.

#### The biographical interview

The structure of a biographical interview follows the temporal traces of an entire life story.

## How to conduct a biographical interview

Before and during the interviews, the following must be observed:

- ❖ Check and ensure the technical conditions and the operation of the equipment.
- ❖ Ensure that the atmosphere is calm and free of disturbances.
- ❖ Explain to the interviewees that selected passages will be translated into English, and video clips will be published on the project's website as learning examples, and obtain their written consent.
- ❖ Preface the interview with a brief summary of the topic.
- ❖ Clarify the time frame.
- ❖ Do not interrupt the flow of speech, accept pauses in the narrative.

### ... after the interview

- ❖ If necessary, have an after-interview discussion with the interviewees to enable them to process, balance and evaluate their own experiences.
- ❖ Show the complete interviews and the clips to the interviewees.

## Practice, implementation and experiences in the project

The topic of the Sprachendienst Konstanz, "Flight and Expulsion", is methodically developed through four interviews with people belonging to different generations and nationalities. The stories of flight took place over a period of 70 years in Europe, Africa and Asia.

The people interviewed have different cultural, religious, social and political backgrounds and different reasons of their flight.



The interviews enable a transnational narrative and thus an expansion of historical perspectives beyond national and state borders. They are the basis for a video documentation, an exhibition and a theatre production. All four interviews have a duration of about one hour and were conducted in German. The clips were cut from these long interviews, lasting no more than 10 minutes and focussing on the theme of "flight and expulsion".

The first interview with H.C., a 90-year-old German who fled with his family from East Prussia to the West in 1945, was conducted as a narrative interview. The narrated opening question was a narrative incentive.



This method offers a high degree of listener orientation and a low degree of foreign structuring, which was due on the one hand to the age of the interviewee and and, on the other hand, to the fact that H.C. told his escape story in its entirety for the first time.



Regarding the interviews with A.A. from Togo, Mr. and Mrs. A. from Afghanistan and with S.P. from Bosnia, the method of a guided interview was used. All interviewees have in common that their German language level is B1. This method made it possible to obtain detailed information on the topic without overburdening the interviewees linguistically.

### Potential of the method for transnational and multi-perspective approaches

All interviewees were found to lose their own sense of time during the interview and the interviewer had to signal the end. The telling of one's own story to interested persons was responded to with much openness and attention to detail. The experience that one's personal story is significant triggered a lot of empathy towards people who have to leave their homes for all kinds of reasons at all times.

For tools and all further materials and documents please refer to the method platform of the project:

<https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/methods/biographical-interviews-with-contemporary-witnesses/>



## METHOD: BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE CIRCLES

Norrköpings stadsmuseum

### Short description

In the following section, further examples of working with biographical narratives are presented with the help of two work-shops. The biographical storytelling circle offers the opportunity to share biographical experiences with other people in a protected setting of small groups. The focus is on the person telling the story; the other participants listen without interrupting until it is their turn to tell the story.

### Workshop: Biographical narrative circle in an exhibition

All participants should bring a personal object related to a personal memory that can be told to the other participants.

Group size: 10-12 people.

Venue: Any historical museum exhibition.



Everybody sits in a circle in the exhibition and pulls out their own personal object. They hold it up and tell the others what it is then pass it around so that everybody can feel, touch and smell the object.



After getting familiar with all the objects, the participants will get only a short time, around 10 minutes, to quickly stroll around the exhibition and find the perfect place for their object to be displayed. The spot could be chosen for

any reason, it looks nice there because of its colour, shape, or design. It fits in history, or the memory connected with the object fits in historically or fits in with the surrounding exhibited museum objects. It could be any reason, but the participant has to have a clear idea why he or she chooses this particular spot.



The group gathers again, leaving their objects in the display, and the museum pedagogue starts the guided tour of the exhibition. When the group reaches one of the participant's objects, the participant is invited on the guided tour to tell their story, their memory connected with the object and why they chose this spot in the exhibition to display their object.



### Potenzial der Methode für transnationale, multiperspektivische Ansätze

Together, the museum pedagogue and the museum visitors, the participants, tell a unique story of the exhibition but also about the historical theme in the exhibition. Depending on the origin and cultural roots of the participants, transnational aspects are also included.

## Workshop: Walk in the Industrial landscape in Norrköping

Norrköpings stadsmuseum

Walk in the Industrial landscape in Norrköping using oral history as a way to engage participants in the history of the area.

The walk starts with a brief introduction of the industrial landscape before the group gets four different spots to look for:

- ❖ Choose a place that reminds you of a personal (childhood) memory.
- ❖ Show us a place you can tell something historical about. (Ex: Old relatives worked here.)
- ❖ Show us a place you have visited before. (Ex. You visited a museum or a pub or found your stolen bicycle in the water.)
- ❖ Choose the most beautiful place and tell us why.



The people in the group walk by themselves for 30 minutes before the museum pedagogue gets everyone together and starts the walk. Participants say 'Stop' when they wanted to tell about a special place they have found. The pedagogue also participates and gives historical facts to the places chosen. Hopefully it will be a fruitful dialog where all share knowledge and experiences about the area.

As in the exercise with participants bringing their own objects and putting them in the exhibition at the museum, this exercise in the Industrial landscape is a new approach to museum education and museum pedagogy. The key point is that visitors to the museum are regarded not only as people to educate, but also contribute something to the museum. They participate on a more equal level with the interpreter.

This also highlights the importance for the interpreter to feel safe and secure in his or her role. To be questioned and open to other people's viewpoints. It is also very important that the interpreter is very knowledgeable about the exhibition in which the objects should be placed or in this last case about the industrial landscape, to elevate this exercise beyond just a nice social 'get-together' and put peoples' own stories and objects in a perspective.



Then hopefully people leave the museum with a feeling of participation but also with a new insight into how their own personal history is part of something wider.



For tools and all further materials and documents please refer to the method platform of the project <https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/>.



## METHOD: SCHOOL- AND TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS

Forschungszentrum für Historische Minderheiten

### Short description

The textbook analysis for teaching history is intended to show the extent to which national and transnational perspectives are anchored in the teaching of history. The method is therefore suitable - beyond history lessons - for different teaching and learning contexts. An international comparison of history books can help to critically question national narratives.

### Detailed description

The analysis of textbooks from a transnational perspective can be seen as an indicator of the extent to which narrow national historical narratives in a society are broken down in favour of a transnational perspective.



The method works with discourse-analytical tools from applied linguistics. It examines whether and in what context certain topics are dealt with and how they are conveyed: Who talks about whom and in what way? Which social groups are portrayed in an active role and which in a passive role? To what extent are opinions and ideologies - explicit or implicit - also transported in the texts? Do the texts contain stereotypes or generalisations when "own" or "other" positions are described? What perspectives are missing from the texts?

The analysis does not only refer to the textbook texts, it also includes the illustrations. In the picture analysis, the choice of illustrations and the corresponding captions is examined. To what extent is the reading of the pictures influenced by the captions? Do the texts and illustrations support each other in their statements or do they convey contradictory messages?

Similar questions arise in relation to the didactic tasks. Do the exercises encourage learners to question stereotypes or adopt different perspectives?

An international comparison of textbooks can show different perspectives on the same historical events and developments. Especially in border areas, where there is often a

mixing of population groups, cross-border historical events can be perceived differently.

### Practice: How to analyse textbooks under a transnational perspective

Choose a general topic such as "ethnic minorities", "refugees", "colonialism". Then pick out concrete historical events that relate to the topic. Make a selection of different textbooks that cover the issue. Find the relevant passages in the textbooks and analyse the texts in the way described above.

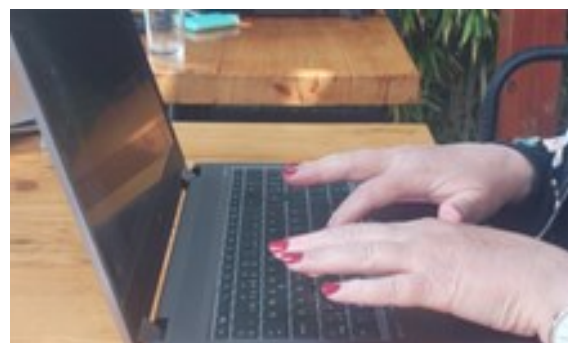
The results should be recorded on a separate analysis sheet for each textbook. In this way, the findings can be summarised and compared in a matrix. Even if the selected event does not occur in a history textbook, this can be counted as a statement.

The results of the analysis can then be reflected on in a group discussion. In doing so, the participants learn to critically question the teaching materials and develop a sensitivity for transnational and multi-perspective approaches to historical topics.

### Implementation and experiences in the project

As a method to look back on and to reappraise historical events, the project team analysed and compared history textbooks from seven European countries currently used in the classroom. In each partner country, several textbooks at the high school level were examined.

In some countries, like e.g. Belgium, printed history textbooks are not the only source of teaching materials for history lessons. Teachers there can choose from a pool of teaching materials from an official school Internet platform. Since the teachers design the lessons very individually (within the official teaching goals of the school curricula), it is more difficult to get a general inside to what extent the pupils are confronted with / made aware of transnational and multi-perspective approaches in the teaching of history.



However, even in countries where textbooks are mainly used, teachers can choose among several textbooks. Therefore, the analysis has to take into account by which team of

authors a textbook was written and by which publisher it was published.

Both forms offer different possibilities and pose different challenges for teachers. In textbooks, history is often presented in the form of a chronology. The pool of internet materials leaves it up to the teacher to establish historical connections according to his or her own priorities. Lessons can be geared to the composition and interests of the students and thus pay more attention to some historical events. On the other hand, textbooks can rather ensure that a certain canon of historical events and developments are seen in their (not only) chronological context and that they are covered in class.



Particular attention was paid to whether narratives about selected historic events were presented from different national and social perspectives. If a chosen topic was too specific, we looked for a related issue in a wider context. Even the absence of a topic should be seen as a result with regard to the assumed national and social relevance of the topic from the perspective of the editor.

One result of our analysis was that there are hardly any transnational and multi-perspective approaches to teaching history in the teaching materials themselves. And even if global phenomena such as colonialism and migration are found as topics in the textbooks, they are mainly not presented from a transnational perspective. Only in exceptional cases are historical events told from the perspective of different social groups.

#### **Potential of the method for transnational and multi-perspective approaches**

The history textbooks currently used in schools or teaching materials on internet platforms reflect those historical narratives that seem to be of interest to educational policy at a particular time. Therefore, the analysis of textbooks and teaching materials is also of interest outside the school context.

Against the background of national movements regaining strength in the European context and the increasingly diverse societies in terms of ethnic and national affiliations, the critical questioning of national historical perspectives is of particular importance. Text and image analysis generally sharpens the view of how historical events are conveyed in different contexts and media (newspapers, television, Internet, advertising, political speeches). The knowledge of explicitly and implicitly transported messages sensitises the learning groups in everyday life for too narrow national narratives, enemy images, and clichés. Source criticism is an essential prerequisite for being able to reflect and criticise fake news or hate messages with regard to ethnic and national minorities, especially on the Internet and social media. Awakening interest in the views of others opens up a broader horizon and promotes the questioning of (one's own) inflexible opinions.

Textbook analysis should encourage the learning group to critically question recognised authorities, such as teachers, but also other "self-appointed experts" again and again.

The findings of the textbook analysis can encourage learning groups to try out the methods carried out in the project "Transnational History".

There are some initiatives between neighbouring countries to produce textbooks focusing on their specific relationship. In most cases, these are countries that have conflictual relations, like Germany and Poland or Austria and Czech Republic.

More detailed information on the method of textbook analysis can be provided e.g. by studies on international history research conducted by the Georg Eckert Institute for International History Research, which carries out thematic studies in textbooks in a country comparison but also textbook analyses for a selected country.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Tools for download**

For tools and all further materials and documents please refer to the method platform of the project:

<https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/methods/comparing-schoolbooks>

Further reading on the historical topics chosen in the framework of the project: <https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/methods/historical-topics/>

<sup>1</sup> Georg-Eckert-Institut für internationale Geschichtsforschung  
<http://www.gei.de/en/home.html>



## METHOD: EDITING OF CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES

Universität Klagenfurt

### Short description

This section relates to editing filmed interviews for publication. The process will be reflected, taking into account ethical, editorial, and linguistic issues.

### Detailed description

Within the framework of our project, each partner institution chose a specific moment in contemporary history to which contemporary witnesses tell about their lives. Excerpts from the interviews were published as short video clips on the method platform [www.transnationalhistory.eu](http://www.transnationalhistory.eu). A total of 19 video clips and one audio clip were produced.

Editing video clips for publication requires selecting relevant passages from an editorial point of view and combining them into a new, shortened narrative. The skill for this procedure lies in not distorting the content and preserving the character of the narrative, despite shortening the text. The interventions in the interview by cutting can be revealed, follow-up questions from the interviewer can be included, and black fade-outs can indicate time jumps in the narrative.

There are different approaches to transcribing spoken interview passages. For scientific analyses, pauses in speech, repetitions, and slips of the tongue are recorded as relevant events in the transcription.

For the publication of biographical interviews in the context of adult education, an intermediate position can be taken. On the one hand, what has been said must be authentically reproduced, on the other hand, editorial interventions in favour of the readability of texts – for example, subtitles – are possible. The sentence order of the spoken language can be adapted to the reading habits, repetitions can be omitted.

### Practice, implementation and experiences in the project

#### Filming of the interviews

Während der Interviews wurde jeweils eine fixe Kamera – im Idealfall mit Stativ – aufgestellt, die nicht bewegt wurde. Sie ruht ausschließlich auf der erzählenden Person, die Interviewerin ist nicht im Bild. Die Videoaufnahmen pro Interview sind zwischen ein- und zweieinhalb Stunden lang.

#### Editing of the video clips

Excerpts from each interview were edited into three to 15-minute video clips. These video clips provide insight into the different narratives on the project's method platform. The video clips also formed the starting / source material through which cultural workers entered into a sensitive dialogue with the narrators. In this way, an exhibition and a theatre performance were created.

### Transcription and subtitling of the video clips

The spoken text of the video clips was transcribed by the project partners and translated from German, French, Swedish, Croatian and Polish into English. When the interviewee speaks (too) quickly, the translated text had to be shortened or compressed, so that the subtitles are easy to read and following the narrative flow is possible.

### Release of video clips by the interview partners

Most interviewees agreed to the release of the video clips. They signed release forms for the use of their text in the project. One interviewee only agreed to the audio recording of his interview. In this case, only the audio track is published on the method platform. Another interviewee agreed to the video recording, but did not want to be recognizably pictured. In this case, her image was partially pixelated.

### Potential of the method for transnational and multi-perspective approaches

#### The content of the interviews

First of all, the transnational aspect is in the content of the interviews conducted with people whose life experiences cross national borders. Each interview reflects personal perspectives on events in the past that go beyond national historical narratives. If, as in the present project, several interviews are placed next to each other, this alone is a spectrum of perspectives.

#### Reflecting on the publication process

The publication process itself requires an in-depth, multi-perspective reflection of the narrated content. On the one hand, the dignity and integrity of the interviewee must be preserved (respectful treatment of the entrusted texts and images, etc., no distortions of the content). On the other hand, ethical questions in dealing with ideologically coloured statements of the interview partners, such as stereotypes, politically incorrect statements or racism, etc., must be discussed and clarified in the editorial team or in the learning group.

Finally, the editor has to respond to a future audience, e.g. with regard to length and comprehensibility of the text, arc of suspense and conclusiveness when stringing together interview excerpts, and much more.

#### Subtitling and translating

Sensitivity and understanding of text and language are required when transcribing spoken texts for subtitles, when interview statements need to be compressed linguistically to accommodate the reading habits and pace of the audience. Transnational aspects also arise when subtitles are translated into other languages. The vocabulary of historical events can diverge in different languages and refer to national narratives.

## Workshop: Editing of biographical interviews

Excerpts from each interview were edited into three to 15-minute video clips. These video clips provide insight into the different narratives on the project's method platform. The video clips also formed the starting / source material through which cultural workers entered into a sensitive dialogue with the narrators. In this way, an exhibition and a theatre performance were created.

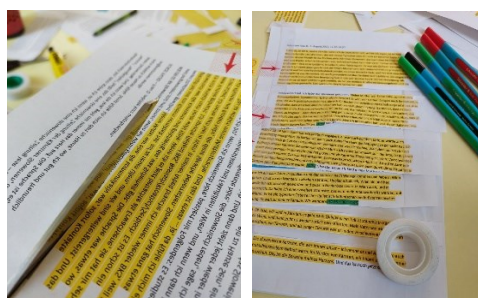
### Material

- ❖ Paper printouts of the biographical interview transcript - if possible with time codes for each paragraph so that participants can estimate the length of the text excerpt;
- ❖ scissors, glue;
- ❖ large table surface;
- ❖ space for several small groups.



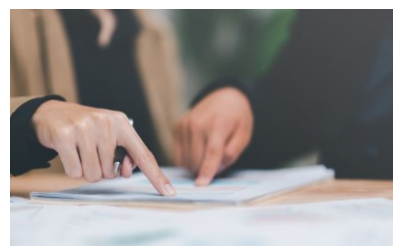
### Task

Cut a meaningful 5-minute clip from the existing transcript of an overall interview of about 90 minutes. Select relevant passages of text and assemble them into a new, abbreviated version of the text, but with unaltered content.



### Procedure

Participants work in small groups. They discuss their text selection during the working process.



Each working group presents the produced text version and the underlying editorial decisions in plenary. In a more in-depth step, the text results from the working groups can be compared and characterised.

Duration: four hours.

### Tools for download

For tools and further materials and documents please refer to the method platform of the project: <https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/methods/editing-of-biographical-interviews/>

Among others:

- ❖ Recommendations for filming biographical interviews
- ❖ Template for transcription and preparation of subtitles
- ❖ Example of a consent form for interviewees



## METHOD: THEATER EDUCATION

Kulturzentrum Die GEMS

The following remarks refer to a theatre educational approach based on the development of our theatre collage "Mauerläufer".



### Short description

Theatre educators work with amateur actors and actresses and develop a play together on the basis of different materials under the given thematic framework or the joint development of a theme.

### Detailed description

A theatre educational project can work with documentary / biographical materials (videos, photos, texts, experiences, etc.) with elements of improvisational theatre, movement, dance, music, theatrical-aesthetic tools and other artistic methods.

According to the choice of a topic or theme, the educational project can be based on the choice of an existing play. In the case of play development, a working theme is needed on the basis of which common scenes are developed, resulting in a play or a collage. The working method is democratic, on an equal footing and participatory.



### Practice, implementation and experiences in the project

In the course of the play development, the group rehearses under the theatre educational guidance and develops the

common play in this process. During workshops, skills can be learnt and developed, for example through a dance workshop under professional instruction. In addition, workshops that include external persons can open up a productive space for feedback, criticism and suggestions.



### What to think about ...

#### ... preparing a theatre play

It needs a theatre educational guidance, a (direct) contact to the target group (this has to be defined beforehand). In the context of the acquisition of participants, the form of the participants must be considered. It needs a rehearsal plan and adequate space in which to rehearse.



#### ... during the project

It is important to discuss the goal of the project with the participants and to find a suitable way of working in which a positive group dynamic can develop. Therefore, at the beginning of the project, space should be provided for group development. In addition, there must be enough time for experimentation, improvisation and discussion so that the process can result in proper scenes for the final product. The framework is set by the theatrical educational guidance, in which the group members have creative freedom.

#### ... after the project

After the play has been performed for the last time, a nice finishing touch is to organise a final official meeting to re-

view the process and get feedback. This can also be combined by watching the video documentation of the play together, if available.

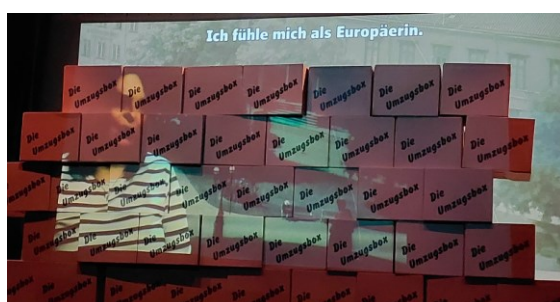


### Potential of the method for transnational and multi-perspective approaches

Theatre is a medium that uses a variety of methods and can also combine the most diverse media. Moreover, theatre is very sensual and opens many possibilities of interpretation. Therefore, it is a suitable method to deal with transnational and multi-perspective approaches.

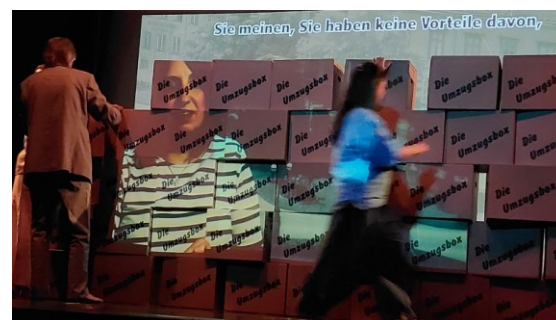
The greatest potential is to bring people's stories, experiences and voices onto the stage. We are a transnational society; therefore, these experiences also belong on stage and need to be seen, discussed and experienced. This enables visibility and opens up space for dialogue and exchange, and can pave the way for change.

Another potential lies in the medium itself. It uses different possibilities of presentation, thereby creating reinforcement and impressiveness and arousing the most diverse emotions. One scene should be mentioned as an example from the collage. A wall was built from moving boxes in dynamic movements. The wall is so high that the actors and actresses disappear behind it.



A picture emerges – a woman we interviewed. Her recording is projected onto the wall of cardboard boxes. The video is played back. The actors and actresses, trying to create gaps in the wall, repeat the interviewee's words and phrases. Others quickly close the gaps again, thus cutting off the words of those behind the wall. Words and parts of sentences that were impressive and moving to the actors are amplified by them. As an audience member, you see the interviewee talking about her experiences and chal-

lenges of finding a foothold and acceptance in a new country, and you also see the actors trying to tell the audience something, but always being prevented from doing so. If someone creates a gap, it is immediately closed. This is, among other things, the feeling that emerges from watching the interview, which has then been theatrically brought onto the stage. Thus, these different levels of video, acting, text and perception are interdependent.



### Workshop: Theater

An intensive warm-up is essential both for gathering concentration and for group development. An example of a workshop lesson is given here. In the rehearsal in question, we started with a game of association with the ball and then practiced dissociation: the group stands in a circle. Player A asks Player B: 'What are you doing?' Player A responds with a statement (for example, 'I'm cooking'), but at the same time performs a movement that shows something other than what she named. Player C asks player B: 'What are you doing?' Player B now performs as a movement what Player A said (but did not do), but at the same time names another activity, etc..



This was followed by a voice warm-up: The group stands in a circle and swings the upper body back and forth (toward the centre of the circle) in a common rhythm (step tempo). Every participant then, taking turns, expresses a sound with her voice and the whole group repeats it.

In the main part of the rehearsal, we first watched a video together. Then, using a wall of moving boxes, we tested different reactions of the group and individual participants to the video. The focus was on the question of whether still images or moving images are more effective. In this case,



moving images proved to be more effective. Different players shifted parts of the wall so that gaps in the wall opened up again and again, through which faces became visible.

The next step was to experiment with the interview text. Different players repeated individual words or parts of sentences from the interview to the movements of the group with the cardboard/wall elements. The final step was an attempt to capture the process in such a way that it could be repeated.

### Experiences

It turned out that it can take a long time to put together a reliable group. This led to the fact that for quite a while the level of knowledge about the project (e.g., knowledge of the interviews) and the level of familiarization within the group was quite heterogeneous.

However, this changed and led to a working atmosphere characterized by a lot of playfulness and mutual trust. The group also coped with organizational shortages, room changes, etc. with an optimistic and constructive attitude.

### Tools for download

For tools and further materials and documents please refer to the method platform of the project: <https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/methods/documentary-theatre/>



## METHOD: VISUALISING TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY IN EXHIBITIONS

### Short description

Transforming biographical material with a transnational history theme into an exhibition.

### Detailed description

The exhibition visualizes impressions on the topic of the project (here: Transnational History). It is (can be) locally (regionally, nationally etc.) oriented and has potential for addressing the broadest possible local and regional audiences (or various other audiences).

### Practice, implementation and experiences in the project

Below are points to check before producing an exhibition:

- ❖ What is the main idea that argues behind the realization of the exhibition?
- ❖ What environmental factors influence the exhibition idea (background, internal needs, and external interests)?
- ❖ What is the purpose of the exhibition and how does it relate to the vision and objectives of the exhibition?
- ❖ How does the exhibition support the stated goals of the project?
- ❖ Why is it an exhibition? Is it median appropriate medium? Are there other alternative media for this exhibition? Could the exhibition be realized in a different form?
- ❖ Make suggestions for objects or other materials, internal or external, that could be used in the exhibition. Gather all the documents/facts/materials you will need.
- ❖ What different target groups can the exhibition potentially reach and how can we stimulate their interest?
- ❖ What educational opportunities does the exhibition offer?
- ❖ What risks, consequences and effects are associated with the exhibition?
- ❖ Monitor the surrounding world, factual experts and/or influencers and collaborators you will be able to use.
- ❖ Which venue is suitable for the exhibition?
- ❖ Which exhibition period is suitable for the project?
- ❖ Appoint a group to produce the exhibition.
- ❖ What skills will be needed to prepare the exhibition?

## Potential of the method for transnational and multi-perspective approaches

An exhibition is strong in its three-dimensional form as well as its potential to create an overview of intriguing and sometimes difficult/complex issues. But it has the potential to also create curiosity, emotions and concern. Participation can be empathized through pedagogical programmes, but visiting an exhibition can -on its own- start discussions and have visitors to interact.

### Realisation of an exhibition

A museum exhibition is opened in the Museum of Konavle in Croatia in May 2023. The exhibition visualizes impressions on the project topic Transnational History. It is locally oriented and has potential to attract a broad local and regional audience.



### Tools for download

Link to the exhibition:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUxmInG746k>

For tools and further materials and documents please refer to the method platform of the project: <https://www.transnationalhistory.eu/methods/curating-an-exhibition/>

## EXCURSUS: TEACHING OF COMPLEX HISTORICAL FACTS

### EU WAREHOUSE

The main principles of the Transnational History project are to communicate European history in a transnational context, to try out suitable methods and to develop teaching and learning materials that help to communicate multi-perspective approaches to history in adult education, pedagogy, and teacher training. In practice, individual historical events should be told from different national or social perspectives. The subjective, often contradicting, transnational experiences should be linked back to different historical contexts, but should by no means be standardized. In this way, the subjective, transnational experiences of the interview partners open up new perspectives on the coexistence of people in Europe and on narrowly defined national historical narratives.

School classes and adult learning groups are increasingly ethnically heterogeneous. Learners bring a wide range of transnational experiences to the classroom. A multi-perspective approach does justice to this changed teaching situation, but poses new challenges for the pedagogical staff.

As a teacher/adult educator, it is worthwhile to actively make connections, providing clear structures, and base your teachings on strong and trustworthy sources. In this chapter we will have a look at a selection of the diverse teaching aspects, which are part of the complex challenge of teaching history and provide some tools, ideas and suggestions to master the complexity and open up a multi-perspective approach to mediating complex historical facts.

Let us look at the “before – while –after” teaching and learning situations and dimensions and at the “personal” and “institutional” dimension. In general this would include the questions of who am I as a teacher/adult educator, who are my students, how to teach, what?

### Teaching strategies and social identity development

#### Self-reflection, individual needs and experiences

Why can a better understanding of social identity development be useful (not only) in teaching complex subjects? Social identity models can serve as tools for self-reflection.

It can help to understand one's own and students' (and colleagues') perspectives and behaviours, select teaching strategies that disrupt power dynamics, foster dialogue, support reflection for increased self-awareness and development, and provide expanded learning opportunities.

A key outcome of intentionally exploring social identities is increased confidence in talking about diversity, supporting inclusion, working across differences, and addressing challenges or unexpected issues that may arise.

There are several types of “social identity profile” activities that are useful for self-reflection and building comfort around exploring and talking about social identities (our own and others). Social identities may shift and while some of our social identities may stay the same over our lifespan (e.g. ethnicity, racial identity), others may change (e.g. age, able-bodiedness, class status)..

Most social identity development models identify a similar sequence of *developmental milestones*:

- ❖ accepting and internalizing the dominant ideology and values that assume the superiority of the dominant group and the inferiority of the subordinated group;
- ❖ questioning, rejecting, and resisting the dominant ideology and oppressive systems and thus the way their social group is characterized;
- ❖ exploring, redefining, and developing a new sense of social identity that is not rooted in the norms and values of superiority and inferiority; and
- ❖ integrating and internalizing the new identity along with a commitment to social justice. (Adams, 2016, p. 36)

The stages or levels can be read and used as a metaphor to help a person describe where they feel themselves to be and to provide a framework for reflection and increased understanding. These are not fixed or final categories.

Some of our social identities remain fixed, such as ethnicity, place of origin or first language. Others may change, either because we change or because the culture changes. Our social identities are socially constructed and assigned relative value by society, and these systems work differently in different cultures. Age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ability status, socio-economic status, nationality/citizenship status and body size are all identity categories in which an individual will or may experience a significant change.

### Intersectionality and multi-identity perspective

Intersectionality is a framework for conceptualizing a person, a group of people, or a social problem as affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages. It takes into account people's overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.

Intersectionality theory helps us understand how membership in multiple disadvantaged identity groups results in compound challenges. Intersectionality theory emerged through studying how legal processes were applied in such a way that only single identity-based issues could be addressed at one time – thereby obscuring facts or impacts of a given situation on an individual who might be impacted based on two or more social identities (Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1991). The theory is regarded as a useful way for exploring the complexity of identity and the challenges of establishing systemic equity.



The concept of intersectionality enables us to remember the multi-identity perspective—both for ourselves and for others—and the complexity of power dynamics, group dynamics, individual experience, and the interplay of all of these in the learning environment.

The concept of intersectionality considers including race or/ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical or mental ability, or any other social/group identity that is important to you. Each of these listed categories has a form of oppression associated with it: racism, sexism, religious oppression/anti-Semitism, heterosexism, classism, ageism, and ableism.

More questions that can be explored in that context:

- ❖ Where are you a member of an advantaged group and where are you a member of a disadvantaged group?
- ❖ What have your experiences been like at the intersections of your various social identities?
- ❖ Do people spend more time thinking about the identities in which they experience discrimination?
- ❖ What more would you like to learn about the social patterns related to the groups to which you belong that you may not have thought about before?

One reflection that might emerge from pondering these images is to note that identity development is deeply affected by culture. Additionally, the ways in which forms of oppression operate are pervasive and dynamic, and considering the intersections is helpful for showing us that identity is more complex than a single category or two.

There is no ‘simple truth’ to achieve in the application of approaches of social identity development model and the intersectionality theory. But they can be used as a framework for personal and professional development in your own teaching experience..

### **Potential of the method for transnational and multi-perspective approaches – a best practice suggestion**

#### **Native knowledge 360**

Native knowledge 360 is a national education initiative at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) to transform teaching and learning on Native Americans. It has many best practice features which reflect on the discussions of the Transnational History project, and its framework is highly transferable.

Native Knowledge 360°(NK360°) provides educators and students with deeper and more comprehensive knowledge and perspectives about Native Peoples, bringing the richness of the museum’s collections, scholarship and live programmes, along with the diverse voices of Native experts and young people, directly into classrooms nationwide.

The first component is a set of so-called essential understandings. The first task is to replace some of these inaccurate, incomplete, and stereotypical stories. So a framework of essential understandings was developed based on the 10 themes of the National Council for the Social Studies standards.

These concepts reflect a multitude of untold stories about American Indians that can deepen and expand the teaching of history, geography, civics, economics, science, engineering, and other subject areas. We want to replace those common narratives that we find in textbooks, with a set of essential understandings that provide for more expansive, more inclusive thinking and learning about Native Americans.

In addition, NK360° is collaborating with native communities to create new online lessons that offer a richer and more inclusive discourse and include the voices of native peoples themselves.

Real, substantive, and lasting change will only happen when we prioritize and institutionalize truth instead of racist views and when we not only tolerate but embrace who we truly have been and who we are. Education systems will follow..

### **TOOLS AND DOWNLOADS**

Social Identity Wheel : <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/social-identity-wheel/>

[Native knowledge 360](#)

The Historical Thinking project: <https://historicalthinking.ca/about-historical-thinking-project>

House of European History: [https://learning-corner.learn-ing.europa.eu/learning-materials/house-european-history\\_en](https://learning-corner.learn-ing.europa.eu/learning-materials/house-european-history_en)

Europe in 12 lessons: <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/eu-in-12-lessons/en/>

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