

# HISTÓRIA, CULTURAS E DEMOCRACIA

## HISTORY, CULTURES AND DEMOCRACY\*

**HISTORY, CULTURES AND DEMOCRACY (HCD)** is an annual optional discipline designed by the Portuguese History Teachers Association in collaboration with CITCEM, a research group team from the Porto University. It aims to contribute, making use of History's methodologies, for the development of critical skills to help students making sense of the contemporary world. Its development was inspired by the lines that guide the **EUSTORY** network competitions.

The four themes that make up the discipline are – **HISTORY IS A CRITERIOUS CONSTRUCTION, (G)LOCAL AND PATRIMONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS, PAINFUL PASTS IN HISTORY, HISTORY AND PRESENT TIME**. These themes were structured around three organizing axes: construction of historical knowledge based in specific methodologies; comprehension of the contemporary world departing from the local, regional and global levels; problematization of contemporary themes considering the connections between past and present.

\* This translation, done by one of the coordinators of the project, Miguel Monteiro de Barros, president of the Portuguese History Teacher's Association, is a shortened version of the original, that can be consulted at: [https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Curriculo/Aprendizagens\\_Essenciais/ae\\_hcd\\_12.o.pdf](https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Curriculo/Aprendizagens_Essenciais/ae_hcd_12.o.pdf)

## Anchor ideas of the theme HISTORY IS A CRITERIOUS CONSTRUCTION

- History methodologies allow for rigorous and sustained analysis of different points of view from the past, thus preventing ideologic manipulation and promoting a democratic and inclusive citizenship.
- Diversified and reliable sources, correctly questioned, allow for the construction of critic, sustained and counterintuitive reflections.
- The rigorous definition of concepts is essential for the construction of historic knowledge.
- Objective and definitive historic narratives are a myth. History is not an exclusive of winners and majorities - cultural, ethnic or others.
- The methodologic imprint of this theme allows for a total flexibility on its application. It can be managed in an autonomous way or it can be taught and learned alongside other themes.

### ORGANIZER THEMES

### SKILLS

Students must be capable of:

### HISTORY IS A CRITERIOUS CONSTRUCTION

Recognize the diversity and heterogeneity of historic sources.

Understand the informative and formative relevance of sources for the construction of historic knowledge.

Recognize the provisional character of historic knowledge, dependent of the context in which it was produced and of the subjectivity of historians.

Recognize the importance of the correct definition of concepts, for the construction of historic narratives.

Identify/apply the concepts: historic narrative, historic source.

### WORK SUGGESTIONS

#### 1. Multiperspective in History – the example of The Battle of Aljubarrota

Compare the different perspectives regarding the Battle of Aljubarrota and the crisis of 1383-85 - Fernão Lopes (Portuguese), Pedro López de Ayala (Spanish), Jean Froissart (French) and the Anonymous Chronicler.

#### 2. The importance of the disambiguation of concepts to the «making of History». An example.

Define, resorting to the most recent researches the following concepts: massacre, ethnic cleansing and genocide. Discuss the concepts, their various definitions and ambiguity with a critical approach.

## Anchor ideas of the theme (G)LOCAL AND PATRIMONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

- The critical interpretation of patrimonial sources provides an understanding of the permanencies and changes that characterize all societies.
- Patrimony, in all its typological diversity constitutes the cultural heritage of dominant and minority communities, present and past.
- The construction of patrimonial consciousness takes into account the intercultural and identity complexity and empowers critic interventions, from local to global.

### ORGANIZER Themes (G)LOCAL AND PATRIMONIAL CONSCIOUS- NESS

#### SKILLS

Students must be capable of:

Recognize patrimonial diversity.

Characterize permanencies and changes on the patrimony.

Understand the patrimony as a heritage of dominant and minority communities.

Articulate the existing patrimony with local, regional and global contexts.

Develop a patrimonial consciousness, open to intercultural and identity complexity.

Empower the patrimonial consciousness with contextualized civic interventions.

Identify/apply the concepts: patrimony, culture, patrimonial consciousness, identity(ies), interculturality.

#### WORK SUGGESTIONS

##### 1. Material patrimony and local power

Research for data regarding the local town hall building. Example: was it built purposely for that function, when was it built, what kind of administrative functions had in the past, etc. If the town hall occupies a building that was used originally for other functions research about these different uses and the transformations it suffered over time. If there was another building where the town hall was previously installed, research about its location and history in primary and secondary sources. Produce syntheses/digital presentations that describe and explain changes and permanencies over time, on the analysed patrimony. Divulge the results of the researches to the educational community, as a way to sensitize to its preservation.

##### 2. Immaterial patrimony. Between local and global, from pharmacies of the past to contemporary ones.

Research the local traditions relating to the use of plants for health purposes, namely through the conduction of interviews to older members of the community. Research, on sources for information on medicinal plants, either local or imported, in the past and in the present, paying special attention to the external influences, namely after the beginning of the Portuguese global expansion. Organize study visits to convents and their medicinal gardens, to museums (example: Pharmacy museums of Lisbon and Porto), to agricultural enterprises producing medicinal plants, pharmacies, herbalists, laboratories, preferably of the region where the school is located. Produce syntheses/digital presentations that describe and explain the changes and permanencies, over time, on the analyzed patrimony. Divulge the results of the researches to the educational community, as a way to sensitize to its preservation.

## Anchor ideas of the theme PAINFUL PASTS IN HISTORY

- Ignorance and contempt for painful pasts can lead to fanaticism and instrumentalization of History.
- Individual and collective memories must be valued, given the fact that they constitute valuable contributions to socially alive issues.
- Assuming painful heritages can contribute to the appeasement of social relationships on a democratic culture.

## ORGANIZER

### Theme

### PAINFUL PASTS

### IN HISTORY

### When the past is present

## SKILLS

Students must be capable of:

Identify painful memories socially relevant, close or distant in time and space.

Value the personal and family contributions to the understanding of socially alive issues.

Infer, from the crossing of different sources, the role played by multiperspective in historical reflections.

Recognize the importance of this theme in avoiding forgetfulness and revisionisms.

Inscribe painful pasts in a democratic and transgenerational culture.

Identify/apply the concepts: painful pasts, socially alive issues, transgenerational responsibility, memory, democratic culture, slavery, ethnic cleansing, massacre, genocide.

## WORK SUGGESTIONS<sup>1</sup>

### 1. «Our» painful past – Colonial War

Research and collect information about the Colonial War in diversified sources: memories (oral and written), photos, postcards, aerograms, media, propaganda, clothing and any other type of personal objects, documentaries, novels, films... Select sources with relevant information and multiple perspectives: fighters at service in the Portuguese army and at service in the movements of liberation; relatives; inhabitants of the colonies; points of view of the Portuguese and foreign presses, etc. This file can be lodged on a *website* of restricted access while the research is taking place. Conduct interviews/questionnaires to people that lived the Colonial War, collecting their memories, without neglecting the critical analysis that they must go through (Oral History methodologies). Departing from sources and information on the theme, organize a documentary, placing in evidence the different perspectives and the experiences of those who participated, directly and indirectly, on the war. It is fundamental the build-up of a coherent narrative making use of the multiple perspectives originated from the individual memories.

### 2. The «others» painful past

Research for information about painful pasts socially relevant in present times and in different latitudes. Select sources with diversified points of view. Prepare a presentation to the class about the selected cases, stressing the space time location, the context, the actors, the consequences at the time and the ones visible still nowadays. Organize an exhibition making use of diversified forms of expression (written, iconographic, audio-visual, etc.), presenting the painful pasts analyzed by the students and promoting creativity in the way the different cases are presented (diversity); answering to the following questions: where, when, who, what, how, why and which were/are the consequences (uniformity).

## Anchor ideas of the theme HISTORY AND PRESENT TIME

- Phenomena that mark the present can and must be explained by the past.
- Without critical thinking it is not possible to build-up a truly democratic culture.
- Common sense analysis about the past are best fought with narratives built-up with methodological rigor and counter-intuition.

### ORGANIZER

#### Theme

### HISTORY AND THE PRESENT TIME

### SKILLS

#### Students must be capable of:

Analyse relevant events and processes in order to be able to understand the contemporary world.

Present critical ability in selecting sources.

Question relevant issues of contemporaneity within a constructivist historical perspective.

Mobilize critical thinking in order to consolidate a democratic culture.

Analyse the implications of these processes on the daily lives of those affected (empathy).

Identify/apply the concepts: migration, climate change, nationalism, populism, fundamentalism.

### WORK SUGGESTIONS<sup>i</sup>

#### **1. Concepts and citizenship practices on the long duration – permanencies and changes**

Research and collect information in written and iconographic sources about concepts and practices of citizenship in chosen historic moments – Ancients Greece and Rome, 18<sup>th</sup> century, liberalism, dictatorships / democratic regimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Compare the concepts of citizenship and respective practices in key moments of Western History, in such a way as to understand that the analysis and comparison of different space and time realities although can and must be done, must always consider the specific contexts in which those realities appeared and developed.

#### **2. Human Rights. Human traffic: past and present**

Research and collect information in written and iconographic sources about human traffic and slavery, with a focus on the Portuguese practices between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Analyse forms of resistance from the enslaved.

Compare enslavement in several periods of History, including modern forms of the practice.

Understand that the analysis and comparison of different space time realities must be done considering the specific contexts in which those realities appear and evolve.

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**<sup>i</sup> Other possible themes:**

Forced labour on the Portuguese colonies (1878-1974).

Refugees from the colonies (Goa, Mozambique, Angola, Timor – 1961-1975).

Portuguese emigration – 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Internal and seasonal migrations – 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Dictatorships and repression (Estado Novo, PREC, Franco regime, etc.).

Holocaust.

Other genocides – 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**<sup>ii</sup> Other possible themes:**

Nationalisms.

Populisms.

Fundamentalisms.

Migrations.

Climate change.