

Introduction

The goal of this expert meeting is how we will research and answer the problems and the tasks with regard to “Europe and identity”, to which Ina was referring a minute ago. To achieve this, we have invited several experts, who will put the wall charts for the history lesson in a historical, didactic and pedagogical context. Today and tomorrow, insights and answers will (hopefully) be formulated to the question of how wall charts could be of use regarding the subject “Europe and identity”. How will old and often forgotten wall charts for the historical education be able to achieve an intercultural dialogue between European citizens in the twenty-first century?

Cultural memory and wall charts

Cultural memory means, that there are collective and individual memories within a culture, which are the basis of the formation of an identity: Who am I? What am I a part of? What do I think? What is the collective history of the people I live together with in a country, but also in a city or a village? What binds us?

In the Western society, there is an abundance of collective and individual memories. Family photo's, personal documents, but also statues, buildings, movies and even advertisements form our individual and collective identity. The popular media and advertising eagerly make use of memories: sometimes a person does not remember if a memory is his own, real memory, or if a false, imagined memory is implanted in his mind (a so-called imposed memory).

Memories of school-time have also fallen prey to the media and the advertising world. An example: generations of Dutch school children have learnt to read with a so-called *primer* (a sort of a horn-book), on which the words *Aap*, *Noot*, *Mies* (Monkey, Nut, Mies) etcetera can be read. These words were presented with appealing images. This educational method was introduced at schools in 1910 and was used extensively throughout the 60's. From the 80's, these appealing images were used in advertisements, on tea trays, plates, posters, puzzles etcetera. The present-day Dutch people, young and old, are familiar with this images. Many think that they have learnt to read with these words. But some people doubt: the memory of *Aap*, *Noot*, *Mies* is sometimes exchanged for another series of words: “*Aap*, *Roos*, *Zeef*, *Muur*...” (Monkey, Rose, Sieve, Wall). What is happening here? Not all Dutch people have learnt to read with the series *Aap*, *Noot*, *Mies*... but because of advertisements, their school memories are mixed up.

Does this mean that school memories – an important part of the cultural memory – cannot be used? On the contrary: school memories plays an important role in Europe and identity. Why?

From the second half of the nineteenth century to a large part of the twentieth century, wall charts hung on the walls of school classes. For the Netherlands, an important, unsuspected source for this statement are the many class pictures that have been taken from the end of the nineteenth century, to remember the school-time. The pictures offer a treasure of information:

what did the desks look like? What kind of educational appliances were used? And what was on the walls? Answer: wall charts.

Most wall charts were often used for a long period. For the publishers, they were “longsellers”, which were sometimes adapted to the aesthetical demands of the period, like the wall charts about the figure of Karel de Grote (Charlemagne), who was very important in Europe. The contents of the manuals for the wall charts hardly changed: from this we can deduce that the desired images, that were transferred with help of the wall charts, stayed for a long period. These images were intended to transfer subjects like a national conscience, patriotism, respect for the royal house, but also sense of public responsibility.

Many of these wall charts made a big impression on the majority of pupils. Recently, the Dutch columnist Henk Hofland wrote an article about a wall chart that had made a big, unforgettable impression on him as a child. He saw a wall chart in the National Educational Museum in Rotterdam. It is the wall chart *Ter Walvisvaart* (Whaling) of Cornelis Jetses. This wall chart from 1911 has been used in the Dutch historical education for decades. The wall chart was meant, according to the manual, as the teacher’s aid to give the pupils an impression of the spirit of enterprise and trading of the Dutch people in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Hofland, who is now 82 years old, described his feelings and memories about this wall chart:

“This is a representation of the highest dramatic order. On the right, in the front, there’s a polar bear, which is bound to be shot to death, whereas a spear will be stung through its neck on top of that. The polar bear has its left front paw on the right leg of a sailor, but it ends well for him (the sailor). In another part of the scene is a whale at full speed, half above the water. Two harpoons are already sticking from its body. In a second it will be struck by a third one. In the distance there are more men in rowboats with harpoons. For this mammal, its last hour has come. On the horizon, a fleet of whalers can be seen. (...) I looked at this wall chart and at the same time I was on primary school again, maybe for a minute, which is a lot regarding my age. I didn’t watch the representation as a whole, I studied the details. I took side with the animals again, just like when I was six or seven years old.”

This citation of Henk Hofland shows us what kind of influence imagery can have on pupils. But it also indicates that the memory of the image does not correspond with the subject-matter of education. The teacher told about tough guys with character who fought with a bear and slaughtered a whale; Henk Hofland remembers 75 years later how he, as a pupil, pitied the tormented and doomed animals. The question is, how we can bring together those personal memories with the pedagogical starting point in the time the wall chart was used. Would the wall chart about whaling be of use for the project “Europe and identity”? Maybe it can be used for the society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Or the Animal Liberation Front, these days an actual European theme.

Invisible subjects

Visible themes on wall charts are wars and sea battles, trade (merchant service), religion, cities, politics and hero-worship. Themes like suppression, slavery and violence to the native inhabitants of the many European colonies don't occur on wall charts. There are wall charts on which, on the side, unintentionally a subject like slavery is depicted. On German wall charts for biology education, for example, there are figures that look like slaves, but it's not totally clear whether they in fact are slaves.

The main goal of the wall chart was to explain exotic plants, tobacco in this case. Slavery on wall charts and in school books is a subject during this expert meeting: descendants of slaves do live in practically every Western country. The subject of slavery has in 2007 been incorporated in the so-called canon of the Netherlands: it is one of the fifty themes that may not be absent in the history education on a Dutch school. Which themes are central during the history lessons in other European countries? And how can we use wall charts to put colonialism and slavery in a historical perspective for pupils?

Description of the project

The congress map contains the document *Description of the project*. On page 3, some questions in relation to the project have been formulated.

Stock-taking questions

- How many images have been produced for the history lessons in the classroom?
- Which bigger and more extensive series have also been published abroad?
- How far have wall charts been imported and exported in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands and, wherever possible in Europe?

These questions could be answered for Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, because an inventory of the collections of these three countries has already been made.

The composition of the collections

Germany: 2.000 historical wall charts

Denmark: 1.066 historical wall charts

The Netherlands: 200 wall charts

Germany had a huge production of wall charts, because many publishers were on this market of educational appliances. Germany was a big country and had many schools.

The collection of Denmark is composed as follows:

Composition of the Denmark collection

Country	Number
Austria/Hungary	140
Denmark	264

Finland	9
France	21
Germany	441
Great Brittain	9
Italy	3
Norway	64
Russia	69
Sweden	52
Total	1372

Danmark is, like the Netherlands, a relatively small country and has imported many wall charts for this reason.

In the Netherlands, the publisher Wolters was dominant in the area of wall charts for history lessons. From 1911 to 1970, this publisher didn't only publish a series which were used in the Netherlands, but also in other countries: "Schoolplaten voor de vaderlandse geschiedenis" (Wall charts for the national history). In Germany, the publishing-firm Höpffel published this Dutch series from the fifties. We can ask ourselves though with what pedagogical-didactic goal the Dutch wall charts were used in these countries. A well-know wall chart on which a sea battle between the Netherlands and England is depicted, shows us battleships on which the Dutch flag can be seen. The goals of the history lesson during which this wall charts was shown, were to teach patriotism, national conscience and knowledge about naval history. In Germany, the goals were to teach about naval history.

One could ask himself how the collections of wall charts in other European countries are composed. How were the wall charts used in the historical education in France, Belgium, Greece, Italy and other countries.

Conclusion

The subjects in this expert-meeting are very miscellaneous: "Europe & identity" is the read thread (=rode draad, ander word?):

- How long has there been some talk of the concept of "Europe"? Is Europe an idea of the last two centuries? Or is Europe much older?
- The history of the wall charts is tainted – this is an important fact, considering the invisible subjects like slavery, suppression and the visible themes like hero-worship and nationalism. How can we use these wall charts to bring to light a subject like, for example, "history and prejudice" in and also outside the classroom?
- Which identities were transferred in the nineteenth and twentieth century and which identity (or identities) is (are) central in the twenty-first century? Which role played the wall charts and schoolbooks in the formation of this/ identity/identities?

- What was the role of the national governments in regard to wall charts? In 1857, the Dutch government for instance recorded in an educational law that history should be a compulsory subject. This new law said, among other things, that the subject of history was part of the ‘national upbringing’. Important educational goals were to stimulate the ‘warm patriotism’, Christian virtues, the cultivation of honour for the government and the royal house (the House of Oranje-Nassau). Did the other European countries in the nineteenth and twentieth century also have a law for the education of history? And what is the influence of the European governments on the twenty-first century?

Questions and more questions about “Europe & identity”. During this expert-meeting in the beautiful Wuerzburg, hopefully some answers will be formulated. Thank you all for your attention.