

HISTORY IS A TREASURE CHEST: THEORIZING A METAPHORICAL TOOL FOR INITIATING TEACHERS TO HISTORY AND OPENING UP POSSIBILITIES OF CHANGE FOR ENGLISH-SPEAKING YOUTH IN QUEBEC

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Abstract

An open use of history lends to imagining new tomorrows and improving the quality of the future. In informing attitudes, history can help raise awareness of possibilities of change for making a positive difference in peoples' lives. As a pedagogical device for enabling Quebec teachers to help English-speaking youth overcome sentiments of group exclusion, to foster civic engagement, and to strengthen Anglo Quebec vitality, this article theorizes the usefulness of viewing and teaching about history through the lens of a *Treasure Chest* metaphor. Metaphor is beneficial for grasping history's workings and developing autonomous critical and conscientious thinking for embracing change.

Résumé

Un usage ouvert de l'histoire peut servir à imaginer des nouveaux lendemains et à améliorer l'avenir. En éclairant les attitudes, l'histoire peut sensibiliser les individus aux possibilités de transformations potentielles afin de favoriser des différences positives dans leur vie. Comme outil pédagogique pour permettre aux enseignants québécois d'aider les jeunes Anglophones à surmonter des sentiments d'exclusion, à encourager l'engagement citoyen et à renforcer la vitalité de la communauté anglo-québécoise, cet article théorise sur l'utilité de visualiser et d'enseigner l'histoire à travers le prisme de la métaphore du coffre à trésor. Les métaphores sont bénéfiques pour saisir le fonctionnement de l'histoire et pour développer la pensée critique et consciencieuse autonomes afin d'être capable d'accepter les transformations.

Introduction

Teaching national history to English-speaking youth in Quebec constitutes a challenge, especially when it comes to their integration into larger society.¹ Various socio-political and pedagogical factors contribute to the neglect of their community's diverse realities and experiences in the province's history curriculum, which lead to impeding their full civic commitment to the state and to even further complicating attempts at strengthening Anglo Quebec's dwindling vitality. Feeling excluded from the program's implicit master narrative that largely depicts their group in simplistic and antagonistic terms, English-speaking youth seem to not only question their role and place in society, but also their relevance and sense of self-worth as members of a rightful historic community that has in many ways contributed positively to Quebec's development (QCGN 2009; Standing Senate Committee 2011). The challenge of integrating English-speaking youth stems from the days of the Quiet Revolution in the 1960s when the restructuring of power dynamics between Quebec's two language groups resulted in the French-Canadian majority establishing its educational authority over all Quebec citizens and not just members of its own community (McAndrew 2003; Zanazanian 2008; Lamarre 2008).²

As new history programs were developed in subsequent years, central Francophone realities and experiences were configured as the guiding narrative for cementing students' general sense of national belonging, whereas those of English-speakers were largely ignored (Zanazanian 2008; McAndrew 2010; Jedwab and Perrone 2012). Seeking to remain nonetheless open to Quebec's narrative diversity, program developers have since then faced the difficult task of adequately balancing the transmission of a Franco-centric national storyline with that of the workings of the historical method, as one means of complicating reified historical perspectives. In light of the province's ongoing identity politics, the ensuing tension till this day lies on how Francophones, as a historic community and a recent dominant majority in the province, can remain true to and promote their own collective experiences for integrating social diversity, including Anglo Quebec, while also making room for minority viewpoints of the past that may differ from the main markers of the state's master narrative.

While Quebec's current History and Citizenship Education program encourages the promotion of differing historical perspectives, albeit well-reasoned and evidence-based ones developed through applied historical thinking skills, questions arise whether such an emphasis is sufficient for catering to the needs of English-speaking youth. As the program seeks to reinforce students' capacity to critically navigate the

state's master narrative to acquire civic mindfulness and commonality with other Quebecers, the lack of well-defined and properly integrated Anglophone perspectives leads to believe that the Franco-Québécois storyline still permeates the program and continues to offer a limited treatment of Anglo Quebec (Commins 2009; Zanazanian 2008, 2011; Jedwab and Perrone 2012; Russell 2012). Based on the central markers of the Francophone majority's collective memory – ones that encapsulate historical memories of often-unequal intergroup power relations with the “Anglophone other” – English-speakers continue to run the risk of being cast as the antagonists to Quebec's national ambitions (Létourneau 2006, 2014; *Bulletin d'histoire politique* 2007; Zanazanian 2012; Lévesque *et al.* 2013). Consequently, young Anglophones' adherence to Quebec's societal projects is jeopardized, as are the chances of overcoming lingering group differences between English and French speakers. To address these challenges, the province's history program has yet to develop successful schemes that promote a sense of group identity and belonging to the province for English-speaking students while encouraging their Francophone counterparts to accept and embrace them as important members of Quebec society, despite their differences. While the capacity of history teachers to treat their mandated subject matter judiciously is central to clarifying pre-given understandings of the historical record, it is the ability and motivation of English-speaking students to regenerate their group as an official Canadian language minority community that is at stake.

As a discursive essay, this article attends to the need of fostering civic engagement among English-speaking youth in Quebec and in the process seeks to address their community's call for strengthening its vitality. It attempts to tackle the current situation where English-speaking students are faced with learning a history program that excludes their diverse realities and experiences and that implicitly transmits a master narrative that inadvertently *others* (i.e. differentiates and distances) them and impedes them from feeling like they belong to the collective “We.” As its main objective, this article seeks to particularly introduce and discuss the idea of metaphor for helping teachers understand the workings of history and its relevance and benefits for opening up possibilities of change in such situations of group exclusion. Given their responsibility for socializing students into the manners and norms of the state, Quebec history teachers are of central importance in this equation. Prone to relying on *what they already know*, including personal values, beliefs, and goals, for teaching about narrative diversity in the history classroom, they would greatly gain from the use of metaphor for helping make a positive difference

in their English-speaking students' sense of identity, belonging, and accepted inclusion (Zanazanian and Moisan 2012).

In what follows, I theorize the idea and usefulness of the "History is a Treasure Chest" metaphor that I have developed as a means to assist teachers in articulating their social posture (i.e. their beliefs and positioning regarding society) and sense of agency (i.e. their capacity to think and act) in their important public role as history educators and thus integrators of English-speaking youth. Within a historical consciousness mindset that appreciates historical epistemology (i.e. how historical knowledge is constructed) as it relates to making sense of and acting in social reality, the objective is to provide a metaphor that highlights the usefulness of history for living life, for opening possibilities of change, and for improving the quality of Quebec's common future. In like manner, this article seeks to lay the initial foundations of a pedagogical tool for fostering civic engagement among Anglophone youth through the teaching of history.

The Teaching of History and Bringing Change to Quebec

Given Franco-Québécois sensitivities regarding their perceived negative historical experiences at the hands of the "Anglophone other," writing about English-speakers in Quebec regarding historical identity and agency is both controversial and political. It requires avoiding generalizations while paying attention to details. The difficulty stems from trying to respect the main markers of Francophones' collective memory that enable them to know and narrate themselves and give meaning to their group's potential future trajectories, while also trying to revitalize a present day community that increasingly identifies itself as English-speaking, culturally diverse, and Québécois, but whose linguistic presence is viewed by certain politicians and interest groups as a key threat to Quebec's French character. What lies at the core of this difficulty is mediating between a generalized historical consciousness that largely confines Anglophones to an exclusive and timeless category of *otherness* and the need to accept the actual changing realities of a former dominant minority that is increasingly subordinate but still widely viewed as a privileged community (Létourneau and Moisan 2004; Létourneau 2006, 2014; Bourhis 2008; Zanazanian 2008, 2012; Standing Senate Committee 2011).³ Today, while the Franco-Québécois yearn to consolidate their demographic and linguistic hold over the province's resources and institutions, their imperatives of cultural renewal as a French-speaking society in North America coincide with Anglophone concerns for survival as an English-speaking community in Quebec.

With regards to history teaching, despite the fact that both language groups have shared historical challenges in defining a common civic project, Quebec teachers can play an important role in integrating Anglo youth and building bridges between the two language communities. They hold a strong potential for influencing these students' outlook regarding their future roles and contributions to society. By addressing issues of identity, inclusion, and belonging, teachers can cultivate a motivation for civic engagement by way of helping their English-speaking students develop a stronger understanding and appreciation of their own community's past, present and potential future in the province. In strengthening their sense of group cohesion and highlighting points of commonality with their French-speaking peers, Anglo youth would come to feel that they are a recognized, accepted, and welcomed minority by Francophone Quebec (Quebec Community Groups Network 2009; Standing Senate Committee 2011).

Promoting the teaching of Anglo Quebec in the province's national history classrooms, however, faces significant challenges. These vary from technical and political aspects of teachers' work environments to their familiarity with and application of historical content matter and its disciplinary underpinnings through their pedagogical practices. It would seem that teachers' discomfort with historical epistemology and its methodological workings generally hinder them from fully sharing emergent knowledge-skills and from transmitting differing perspectives on the past, including those of English-speakers (Zanazanian and Moisan 2012). Access to a clearly structured narrative that configures the historical content knowledge of Anglo Quebec's diverse historical adventures and contributions to the province is further wanting, one where English-speakers in all their diversity are the protagonists of the offered story. While key for Anglo Quebec's vibrancy, such a narrative would surely foster an attachment to larger Quebec society. Other obstacles also exist, but are exterior to teachers' own historical capacities and pedagogical beliefs. These include the lack of reliable resources regarding nuanced details of English-speaking realities and experiences, along with teachers' necessary time, motivation, and skills to obtain such information on their own (Zanazanian 2011). Properly allocated curricular time to cover Anglophone Quebec is also lacking, coupled with both the implicit aims of the end-of-year ministerial exam whose Franco-centric framework continues to inadvertently reinforce the *othering* of Anglophones and the increased pressure from nationalist leaning interest groups to have teachers transmit a traditional Francophone storyline on the province's past.

While the promise of history teachers to bridge Anglophone youth with larger Quebec society is not that straightforward, it is

nonetheless possible inasmuch as they are given the necessary tools or mindset for doing so. One should not expect teachers to promote one concrete vision over another in their teachings. It is not a question of indoctrinating them (and students) or of replacing one ideology dogmatically with another. In respecting their right to their personal perspectives, we should aim at developing their capacity to justify the decisions that underlie their social posture in fulfilling their public role in informed and well-reasoned ways. The intention thus would be to help teachers articulate their voice and vision regarding historical and educational matters that they deem necessary – be it in terms of the nature, origins, finalities, and changes regarding history, history teaching, Quebec society, and Anglo Quebec vitality – and to act accordingly, while being fully aware of the existence of other viable options for influencing their views and guiding their actions. It is thus a question of broadening and refining teachers' conceptual lenses for understanding, explaining, and mediating what once was and what could be with how such interactions affect who they are, what they do, and how they go about doing so. It is the widening of horizons, the appreciation of the diversity of viewpoints, and the understanding of the consequences of their choices to then have them autonomously decide for themselves on the right course of action that are at play, with the hopes that they would foster openness to the *other* as well as to intergroup dialogue and mutual comprehension.

Such a capacity, however, requires the attainment of a particular mindset, one that would permit teachers to critically and conscientiously take a stance on both their personal and professional sense of identity and agency. It involves garnering a predisposition that would permit them to problematize pre-given understandings of the (historical) past and question their own (historical) thinking patterns, values, and ideals that already inform their personal understandings and practices for transmitting the national history program to their students. One important step in this direction would be to offer teachers a usable opportunity to appreciate the wonders and workings of history, not only in terms of its epistemology and methodology, but also regarding its limits and potentials for opening up possibilities of change (for common life purposes) or at the very least for making a positive difference in their students' lives.

Using Metaphor to Integrate English-Speaking Youth in Quebec

In consideration of such challenges and goals, questions arise: how can history teachers go about integrating English-speaking youth in Quebec in light of an exclusionary curriculum? How can teachers transfer important historical knowledge so that young Francophones

can appreciate and welcome English-speakers as contributing members of a common, democratic, and inclusive society? How can teachers encourage such uses of history without imposing a certain way of seeing and employing the past? Similar to their own potential capacities, how can teachers help students understand the different promises of history, including benefits and drawbacks, that influence their positionality (i.e. their sense of knowing and acting) as individuals and future citizens? And, finally, how can they generate a habit of mind that would motivate them to critically and conscientiously appropriate history for guidance, while also being answerable to their decisions regarding attitudes and consequent behaviours?

To address these questions, I offer a pedagogical device in the form of metaphor. In illuminating history's many possibilities, the relevance of metaphor is manifold and can help teachers clarify and improve their concrete pedagogical practices for effectuating positive change. Metaphor can offer them a way of discovering and reflecting on various opportunities for communicating the many uses of history and history teaching. Since teachers may sometimes feel uncomfortable to problematize and divert from what they know or what they believe they are expected to know and transmit as historical information, using metaphor can help develop mindsets for gaining self-confidence, knowledge, and skills for recognizing the legitimacy in freeing themselves from pre-conceived and imposed historical notions and expectations without feelings of guilt. It can help them acknowledge the possibility and in certain circumstances even the necessity of deviating from the main elements of the Franco-Québécois master narrative that differentiate and distance English-speakers and from conventional ways of appropriating historical content-knowledge and skills as well as teaching habits and practices that may have come to be solidified and taken for granted. In enabling them to assist students to question thought processes, values, and beliefs, and to interpret the past differently, employing metaphor can help teachers and students comprehend that it is okay to interpret the past non-traditionally and to appropriate it in one's own way for knowing and acting in reality. In initiating students to the ethical, practical, and political dimensions of history in society, teachers may thereby help them realize the importance of resorting to the use of multiple perspectives for informing their historical consciousness and for imagining new ways of seeing oneself as part of and enriching understandings of the nation.

Metaphor and its Workings

For cultivating a habit of mind that benefits fully from history's possibilities, metaphors should be understood as conceptual tools (i.e. tools of the mind). Individuals think metaphorically when reflecting on and making sense of life occurrences (Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Cook-Sather 2006). Metaphors help give meaning to general or abstract ideas that individuals use for going about their daily affairs and offer a frame of reference for signifying their experiences and sense of insertion in time (Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Cook-Sather 2006). Orientations for agency result from meanings inferred from the metaphors that they use and that are based on everyday experiences. Of interest here, under the right circumstances, metaphors can help organize and better grasp new ideas and ways of thinking and seeing the world (Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Badley and Van Brummelen 2012). They can enable individuals to understand abstract and difficult life concepts, such as history, and to develop their own voice and vision in this regard (Lakoff and Johnson 2003). The educational properties of metaphors thus become clear, pointing to their potential exploitation for purposes of impacting (and altering) how learners construct knowledge and act consequentially.

In concrete terms, metaphors bring two wholly separate semantic spaces or spaces of meaning together, which permits creating a coherent understanding of an abstract idea or notion (Cook-Sather 2006). New meaning is made through the interaction of the concepts that are brought into the equation (Cook-Sather 2006). At its core, metaphor works following a principle of inference where understanding and experiencing one form of a given life concept or semantic space is done through understanding and experiencing that of another. In this process, both concepts do not necessarily need to be related to each other and can possess different meanings. The perceptual structures that emerge from one concept, such as the *treasure chest*, however, lead to reflecting and concluding on the workings of the other, such as *history* (Lakoff and Johnson 2003). In uniting and relating at least two different domains of knowing and acting, metaphors not only provide new understandings of the target domain, but also of both terms as a result (Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Cook-Sather 2006).

Metaphor as an Educational Tool

One central value of metaphor is its capacity to function as an important educational tool for questioning pre-given notions of knowing and acting and for re-thinking them to the ends of imagining new tomorrows (Cook-Sather 2006; Martinez *et al.* 2001; Badley and Van Brummelen 2012). Metaphors work to enhance, refine, clarify, and

even alter understanding. They lend to effectuating (positive) change at a conceptual and even a concrete life level. Through fostering imaginative and visual depictions, concepts that are challenging, hard, abstract, problematic, and even novel can come to be understood.

The wonders of metaphor for teachers and for history teaching are thus manifold as they are very powerful and encompassing. In coming up with metaphors to picture their future teaching responsibilities and practices, teachers can acquire visual representations that could help clarify complex phenomena related to their professional work and development (Bullough and Stokes 1994; Martinez *et al.* 2001; Badley and Van Brummelen 2012). A sense of their professional ideals and mandates, self-worth, identity, and agency can be fostered, as can firmer understandings of social reality and the subject matter they will be teaching. Of significance, these same competencies can be transferred to their students, particularly when employing metaphor to illuminate the workings of history and its impact on negotiations of positionality. It is, however, in viewing education as a transformative life experience that metaphors can clarify the functioning of various educational and pedagogical processes and can lend to opening up possibilities of change. Metaphors can specifically help raise teachers' and students' consciousness and lead them to activate and articulate their notions of right and wrong when making important pedagogical or life decisions, each depending on the context the metaphor is used for, by whom, and to what ends. Metaphors can help users question, unmask, and rethink what is already known or taken for granted or reified, thereby dislodging or complicating personal and social pre-conceived notions and means of knowing and doing (Cook-Sather 2006; Martinez *et al.* 2001; Badley and Van Brummelen 2012).

History for Opening up Possibilities of Change

To visualize its usefulness for opening up possibilities of change, an understanding of history within a historical consciousness mindset is required, particularly through the lens of the "genetic ideal-type tendency" of historical sense making, inspired by the ideas of Jörn Rüsen (2005), which is what the "History is a Treasure Chest" is all about. To clarify, historical consciousness constitutes an individual's capacity to employ understandings of the past – both content matter and the interpretive filters used to make sense of the past – for making necessary moral decisions to guide oneself in given social relationships (Rüsen 2005). In following this logic, history specifically pertains to human quests for living life (Rüsen 2005; Zanazanian 2010, 2012). As a process of ordering time's (absurd) flow and one's insertion in it in a meaningful and sense-bearing way, history amounts to human

configurations of temporal change that serve to make sense of individual and collective pasts, presents, and futures, and that lend to determining understandings of identity and agency in the larger scheme of things. For purposes of giving meaning to reality and living life, history provides guidance for knowing and doing in time, enabling sense-making of who one is, where one fits, how one should act, and what one's destiny should be (in light of the past).

In following Rösen (2005), four interrelated criteria underlie a genetic approach to appreciating the usefulness of history when negotiating one's knowing and acting in social reality.⁴ These include recognizing that human life is complex, that human forms of thought are located and change in time, and that time itself is variable. It also involves possessing a recurring need to improve meanings given to the past. In espousing such a habit of mind, individuals may come to acknowledge that one's moral obligations to the past not only vary according to time, space, and context, and thus can be constantly adjusted, but also require sincere openness to differing viewpoints if a more complete vision of reality is to be attained. In this vein, I posit that social actors who continuously tend to demonstrate a "genetic-type" outlook when regularly engaging with the past would be greatly prone to considering diverging viewpoints, realities, and experiences when developing one's own historical perspectives. In garnering a reflex to always seek fuller understandings of the past, they may come to free themselves from visions developed by those in positions of power and influence and may open up new ways for narrating the past and apprehending social reality.

The genetic ideal-type tendency's transformational virtues offer great opportunities for exercising one's historical imagination, fostering attitudes of openness to differing perspectives, and consequently seeking fuller comprehensions of what once was (Zanazanian 2010, 2012). If teachers were to develop an inquisitive habit of mind when looking to the past, their chances of unpacking and moving beyond imposed pre-given means of knowing and doing would increase. They would be well-prepared to understand the processes involved in historical meaning-making especially when they come to see that they themselves negotiate such understandings through their own means of knowing and doing. By recognizing the value of seeking fuller understandings of past reality and of grasping the underlying politics and workings of history, they could effectively consider alternative possibilities for narrating the past and for articulating its relevance for constructing and living in social reality. Power relations involved in the manipulation of pre-given historical realities by those in positions of influence would be grasped, as would the interpretive

filters used for reading these realities, and the underlying workings of history as a form of knowledge. Equipped with this information and used as deemed necessary, teachers would either consciously promote already established narratives or eventually even recite new ones that re-visualize the relevance of history according to both the complexity involved in such processes and their updated ethical considerations. It is within a genetic mindset when engaging with history that teachers would be able to problematize and deconstruct as well as consciously adapt, change, and transform purposes, understandings, and meaning-making processes of metaphors. They would also continuously seek new opportunities and wider horizons for giving meaning to complex reality and for opening up to the other, unless they refuse to do so for practical, ethical, and political reasons.

History is a Treasure Chest: Epistemological Considerations

At an epistemological level, I am creating a metaphor to be inserted into the language teachers use everyday and that will help them gain a better understanding of the relevance of history for engaging with the world and for opening up possibilities of change. I visualize history as a “treasure chest” to illustrate its processes and potentials for living life. As an open-ended metaphor, the notion of treasure chest presents users with a relatable point of departure for appreciating history’s wonders and for particularly reflecting on their sense of right or wrong when engaging with the past for defining their sense of knowing and acting and for solving life problems of a historical nature. Metaphor here lends to encouraging critical thought and promoting a transformation of pre-conceived notions regarding the workings of social reality to the ends of improving the quality of future life.

The “History is a Treasure Chest” metaphor’s intended aim is twofold: first, for teachers to acknowledge their embeddedness in reality as moral and historical actors who, inserted in time and in employing personal ideas of right or wrong for signifying existence and guiding their lives, contribute to the making of history; and, second, for individuals to consequently appreciate the impact that their actions can have, no matter the extent, on changing the course of daily, national, and world events. While not seeking to impose any particular means of engagement, but rather to create an open and secure space for questioning, contesting, complicating, and transforming their practices and those of others (learners, peers, fellow citizens), the “History is a Treasure Chest” metaphor emphasizes the ethical, political, or practical implications of interacting with the historical past. It is through taking the different options that exist for

knowing and acting into account that important moments of dialogue and exchange may arise.

In this mindset, I believe that the more teachers grasp the workings of history and its potential for re-thinking the world, the more they may be capable of benefitting from its various opportunities for bettering current conditions. The aim would be for teachers to autonomously imagine and construct personal perspectives of the uses and practicality of history in critical, conscientious, and well-reasoned ways. As a result, they may be able to justify the implications behind their choices and may come to appreciate the socio-political consequences of complicating and problematizing their historical understandings and uses of the past. They may moreover be able to defend their reasons for adapting elements of these understandings to changing social, political, educational, and pedagogical circumstances.

In bringing these intentions together with metaphor's transformative potentials, the underlying practicality of "History is a Treasure Chest" emerges. This metaphor particularly permits examining the workings and processes of metaphor when using it to construct and act in reality, and especially so at a pedagogical level. Because of its open-endedness, it offers teachers the opportunity to problematize, deconstruct, and build upon its very purpose, upon the many understandings that can be inferred from it, and upon the very processes of users' engagement with it for creating meaning. By sharing these objectives with teachers, the treasure chest metaphor aims to: facilitate abstract thinking and the understanding of complex notions; ensure that teachers are engaged enough to be motivated and encouraged to use it; and offer a starting point for critical analysis of its impact on their sense of professional identity and agency as well as of its formulation and knowledge claims (for a better understanding of the workings of history for living life). In recognizing the treasure chest as a metaphor that possesses many metaphorical meanings and opportunities, its impact will have the potential to keep open spaces of imagination and their consequent actions (Cook-Sather 2006).

How History is a Treasure Chest: Functional Workings

In creating the "History is a Treasure Chest" metaphor, I am building upon the logic of history constituting a storehouse of wealth of information and know-how that when exploited can permit grasping history's potential for possibilities of change. So much that has happened in the past can help contextualize and assess present realities and conditions as well as permit negotiating informed decisions for guiding actions and practice. This is what brings the metaphor to life and provides it as a source of inspiration and personal agency.

To illustrate its functionality, it would suffice to imagine popular/cultural understandings of treasure chests. Embodying such a constitution, history can be perceived as something that is discovered either intentionally or unintentionally, and that is full of great and not-so-great surprises. Metaphorically, history can offer us beautiful and not-so-beautiful items, or even the strangest things that we never even thought of ever finding. We could be in awe of history and inspired by it to dream, act, create, and transform. The treasures within the history chest can make us creative, humane, generous, and greedy. They can make us behave in detrimental or amoral ways. They can drive us crazy or make us drunk with envy. If used wisely, history, just as treasures within a chest, can help us attain our goals. If used foolishly, it could only lead us into disarray. In some instances, it can lead to question what we value and why. In others, it can lead us to imagine how all this wealth was used in the past, present, and future. Or it can help us imagine what we want and can do tomorrow with or without this wealth.

In transitioning from such metaphorical connections to concrete historiographical and methodological ones, history understood through the wonders of treasure chests can increase our chances of grasping historical content knowledge, skills, mindsets, images, symbols, ideas, ideals, and stories, including important dates, events, knowledge on historical actors, notions of territorial as well as environmental change, and citizenship ideals. The list is endless, which in and of itself is the main underlying intention of the metaphor. Conceived as a treasure chest, I believe history is prone to empowering individuals to either improve or impede the fulfillment of personal and professional life ambitions, while helping them to account for political, ethical, and practical considerations when constructing and acting in social reality.

Relevance of the History is a Treasure Chest Metaphor for Teachers

The treasure chest metaphor is designed to stir teachers' curiosity and imagination, and to make them feel comfortable with the idea of doing history and to see it as a relatable subject. As a general result, the metaphor aims to motivate teachers to tackle and learn the many different facets of history and to make these relevant for them throughout their lives. In raising awareness and understanding of the workings of history and their concrete interactions with it, the metaphor can inform teachers' sense of personal and professional identity and agency, their grasp of historical content-knowledge and methodology, and their pedagogical practices for teaching the

subject matter to students. It moreover contributes to comprehending the uses of history for articulating, practicing, and promoting civic mindfulness.

Some Final Thoughts: Implications for the Teaching of History and Anglo Quebec

Having theorized the underlying logic and the practical functions of my metaphor, I will end with some final thoughts on how it should be employed for strengthening Anglo Quebec vitality and better integrating its youth into larger society. In its capacity to assist Anglophones with their regeneration as an autonomous, distinct, and contributing community in Quebec, the availability of the treasure chest metaphor pertains to its significance in enabling history teachers to shape a sense of identity, belonging, and accepted inclusion among English-speaking youth in the province. With a national history program that offers them a limited understanding of the realities and experiences of their diverse communities, students face a particularly challenging task in attaining these end goals. Portrayed in binary and simplistic terms, the national history program requires that English-speaking educators and students cultivate a particular mindset to appropriate the past differently and to imagine and strive for possible tomorrows.

Three basic requirements will permit them to do so. First, similar to many history teachers in other societal contexts, English-speaking educators would need help to appropriate the epistemological, methodological, political, and life workings of history in order to expand their interaction with the past in informed and well-reasoned ways. Second, in appreciating history as a rich source of information and inspiration, they would also need to comprehend the necessity of always seeking fuller understandings of the past, especially because the ones that are offered to them are always limited perspectives or reified ideological manipulations of complex social realities at best. Third, in recognizing their existence in the larger scheme of things as moral and historical actors who in and of themselves, and like other humans on this planet, are inserted in and confined to biological lifespans, they would come to understand that they too do contribute to the makings of history in their own way and, as such, are legitimate inheritors of time who are entitled to worthwhile futures. They would thus come to not feel guilty for adapting pre-given means of knowing and acting according to current needs and standards. In realizing that they, just as others, are entitled to possessing their own historical viewpoints and on how these pertain to living life, they would hopefully come to also respect the importance of being able to justify their historical

positions in well thought out ways that are always open to change in order to keep up with evolving times.

In following these requirements, the treasure chest metaphor constitutes a springboard that facilitates the mandated task of teachers to introduce students to the relevance of history, its content knowledge, and the main dimensions of its disciplinary workings. By grasping the different uses of history, Quebec students would increase their understanding of the weight of the limited master narrative offered to them. They would come to respect the main markers of the Francophone majority's collective memory, and realize that such an identity storyline cannot be easily altered or removed overnight, and nor that it should be. They would come to realize that this generalized master narrative is but one means that a given historical community in one point in time has slowly developed to the ends of preserving a sense of coherency and connectedness in light of perceived threats to their existence as a group. They would come to understand the logics of history and how it has further created generalized notions of the "Anglophone other." They would come to grasp that such historical understandings usually develop lives of their own and persist in time despite the changing realities of socio-political dynamics on the ground and new historiographical accounts and interpretations of past realities. And they would recognize that the transformation of the master narrative to make it more inclusive of Anglophones (or other minority groups) constitutes a politically sensitive issue. In following this logic, the relevance and value of my metaphor emerges. Not only can it help complement Quebec's master narrative and, if used properly, lend to putting it into socio-historical and political context, but it could also assist students in coming to appreciate that they too are entitled to give meaning to the historical adventures of their own various communities, including their many experiences and contributions. In further acknowledging the intricacies involved in developing well-researched and reasoned accounts of the past, students would realize the limits of their endeavours and understand the necessity of seeking fuller comprehensions of the past, thereby paying attention to and analyzing differing viewpoints. In helping students to attain such understandings, the treasure chest metaphor aims to empower teachers in their quest for fostering a sense of self-worth and self-confidence among their students to be different, to seek different perspectives on their community's past, and to develop a commitment to regenerating their group's vitality, while also reaching out to others and accepting their experiences.

Finally, in terms of *rapprochement* with Francophones, the treasure chest metaphor can serve to promote intergroup dialogue and mutual

comprehension. If Francophone teachers were to also appropriate the use of this metaphor, the chances of overcoming group differences would in all probability increase because they too would discover more of history's life workings and come to appreciate their capacity to criticize and adapt pre-conceived notions of knowing and doing to current changing intergroup realities. They may moreover come to want to better attain a fuller picture of the story of their nation, and may thereby come to appreciate Anglo Quebec's presence and contributions. In such a process of reciprocity, English-speakers may come to feel like a respected and welcomed minority, while Francophones may become motivated to be inclusive of the latter in their imagined conceptions of the collective "We." Despite all sorts of impediments, the appropriation of the metaphor as a reflex or mentality for doing history would surely lend to enabling Francophone students to see that Quebec Anglophones do not constitute an imminent threat to their sense of national security and regeneration. And, in turn, it may also help Anglophones to not feel guilty for being different or for being the inherited descendants of the "ones who conquered."

While relevant to different contexts for history teachers of all levels of schooling, it is important that the treasure chest metaphor be employed to the ends of investigating into how the many uses of history can be clarified, criticized, adapted, and mobilized for making sense of and acting in reality and for particularly promoting knowledge of historical content and methodology. Teachers could use it not only to discover what students know and ignite their curiosity, imagination, and appreciation of history, but also to develop a common itinerary for broaching the many historical themes and ideas that they will be touching upon in the upcoming year. In serving as a good start for discussing the "why history question" and for introducing the historical method along with the various dimensions of historical thinking, the metaphor can open up spaces of communication, questioning, and self-reflection. It can also help initiate a conversation between students and teachers for discussing issues of one's place and role in society and in even the world at large. Through grasping and re-imagining the possible influences of history on students' negotiations of civic engagement, new prospects for change could thus potentially be opened up. Anglo Quebec's vitality could be strengthened and bridges with Francophone Quebec could be built. While providing a clear understanding of the uses and benefits of history as well as a sense of empowerment and a strong voice to those who may find that their communities' contributions have been largely ignored, it can furthermore instigate feelings of generosity and pride, particularly among French-speakers, leading them to want to share their common space they like to call home.

ENDNOTES

- 1 For my purposes here, “English-speaker,” “Anglophone,” and “Anglo-Québécois” refer to Quebec citizens who self-identify as such, including those of either French or English descent and those who identify with both Anglophone and Francophone communities (Quebec Community Groups Network, 2009, p.8). Such an understanding goes beyond referring to Québécois of British heritage or others assimilated by this group and makes room for Anglo Quebec’s growing ethno-cultural and religious diversity as well as for its increasing embrace of bilingualism. In turn, I view “French-speaking,” “Francophone,” and “Franco-Québécois” as denoting Quebec citizens of French-Canadian descent. While these understandings do not fully cover the rich cultural diversity of both language communities, they nonetheless generally reflect what is understood as “Anglophone” or “Francophone” for most people living in the province.
- 2 In 1998, Quebec’s education system was restructured along ethno-linguistic lines between the province’s historic Francophone and Anglophone communities. Since the British North America Act of 1867, which established Canada’s current constitutional foundations, Quebec’s school boards were separated according to confessional allegiances, with Roman Catholic school boards catering largely to the province’s French-speaking group and Protestant ones to its increasingly diverse English-speaking communities. It was with the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s that the provincial government centralized its control over education and developed a common province-wide school curriculum, one that was destined for both its French and English language communities. Prior to that period, two different historical narratives were transmitted to Francophone and Anglophone students, both greatly reflecting the collective memories of each group. In general, Francophones were taught *la survivance* or the preservation of their French heritage and Catholic religion with its accompanying morals and values, while Anglophones were taught the redemptory magnificence and virtues of the British Empire. With the creation of a common provincial curriculum, a common national history program was developed for all members of Quebec society, including English-speakers, irrespective of the education system’s confessional separation that was already in place.
- 3 In the 1960s, prior to the restructuring of the power balance with the province’s numeric Anglophone minority, Francophones constituted a weak or subordinate majority in Quebec in terms of demography and strength. With the changes of the Quiet Revolution, which ushered in a period of great socio-political change and a process of modernization and secularization that brought with it institutional transformations and the creation of

a Francophone national welfare state, French-speakers eventually constituted the core of the new Québécois nation and their sociological standing increasingly transformed into that of a more dominant majority – which today can be understood as a fragile one given the predominance of English in North America. In contrast, English-speakers' status in Quebec gradually shifted as well from part of an Anglo-Canadian majority to that of a provincial linguistic minority. In this process, the Anglo-Québécois, a formerly dominant minority that is increasingly heterogeneous in its ethnic make-up and that still possesses some economic clout and institutional completeness, has come to be caught up in a sort of identity politics with Quebec Francophones, where both groups still compete with each other over their respective regeneration and linguistic reproduction. Both groups seem to be held hostage to the other's yearning for self-fulfillment, but are also deeply bound to the contours of their own understandings of the potential hindrances that the Other presents to the Self. Each seems to believe that the solution lies with the other's willingness to make concessions. Adapting to their ever-growing minority status, Anglophones are still coping with all the decried losses and fears that their change in dominance prompted and are now tackling obstacles to their vitality: their capacity to regenerate as an autonomous and distinct Quebec community.

- 4 The genetic ideal-type tendency emerges from one type of Rüsén's fourfold typology of how individuals interact with temporal change for knowing and acting in life. It touches upon the transformational virtue of history, and once interiorized as a mindset can help appreciate history as offering a plethora of opportunities for change. Influenced by Rüsén's definitions of each type, the present author's repertory of parallel and equal ideal-type tendencies of historical consciousness reconceptualises his typology. It offers four homogenized and accentuated ideational standards with which to compare how social actors interact with the past for knowing and acting in time, with the reality of the impact of their historical consciousness ultimately existing within the cracks between them (Rüsén, 2005; Zanazanian, 2010, 2012).

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