

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

ISSN 2764-0558

vol. 6, n. 2, 2026

... ARTICLE 3

Acceptance date: 10/03/2026

A NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: HERITAGE EDUCATION AND HISTORY TEACHING WITH ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES IN PELOTAS

Júlio Roberto Dahmer Spohr

Federal University of Pelotas



All content published in this journal is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).



Abstract: This article analyzes the experience of the project A Night at the Museum, developed through collaboration between the Museu do Doce (Sweet Museum), the Municipal Department of Education and Sports of Pelotas, and the Heritage Education discipline of the History Degree course at the Federal University of Pelotas. The objective is to discuss the potential of educational activities in museums for teaching history, democratizing access to cultural heritage, and initial teacher training, with a focus on night classes for young adults and adults (EJA). Methodologically, this is an analytical report of experience, constructed from the stages of planning, theoretical appropriation, pedagogical mediation, visitation, and evaluation of the project. The results indicate that the rapprochement between museum, school, and university fosters a sense of belonging, broadens critical reading of local history, and strengthens extension practices committed to citizenship. It is concluded that heritage education, when linked to the specificities of EJA, contributes both to the appreciation of cultural heritage and to the qualification of teacher training in history.

Keywords: Heritage education. EJA. Museum of Sweets. History teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Heritage education has been consolidating itself as an important field of articulation between teaching, memory, cultural heritage, and citizenship. In history teaching, this perspective makes it possible to shift students' gaze to the cultural assets that make up the space they live in, allowing the past to be understood in direct relation to the present and to the social experiences of

the subjects. In this sense, heritage ceases to be merely complementary content and becomes a relevant mediation for the historical reading of the city, cultural practices, and collective memories.

The project A Night at the Museum - educational activities at the Museu do Doce for EJA/Pelotas classes is the result of a joint effort by the Museu do Doce, the Municipal Department of Education and Sports of Pelotas, and the Heritage Education discipline of the History Degree program at the Federal University of Pelotas. Its objective was to build a heritage education experience capable of contributing to the integration of the extension in the History course and, simultaneously, to expand access for Youth and Adult Education students to the city's cultural heritage, with an emphasis on the nighttime, historically less contemplated by educational actions of this nature.

The relevance of the proposal is linked to two complementary aspects. The first concerns the understanding that educational activities in museums strengthen the relationship between society and the past, as they mobilize cultural assets as references for memory, identity, and belonging. The second refers to the EJA audience, made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds, often marked by interruptions in schooling, work, and family responsibilities, which requires more dialogical pedagogical practices that are sensitive to the life experiences of these students.

Based on this context, this article aims to discuss the potential of educational activities in museums for teaching history and for teacher training, analyzing the experience developed at the Museu do Doce with EJA classes in Pelotas. It seeks to demonstrate that the articulation between

museums, schools, and universities can produce important educational effects, both for students in basic education and for history majors involved in the development and execution of the project.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Heritage education, memory, and history teaching

Heritage education understands heritage as historical and cultural production, rather than a neutral set of preserved objects. According to Horta, Grunberg, and Monteiro (1999), educating for heritage involves creating conditions for different audiences to learn about, interpret, and value cultural assets in their social dimension. This means recognizing that houses, museums, documents, festivals, knowledge, and everyday practices are supports for memory and can be mobilized pedagogically for the construction of meaningful learning.

In the same vein, Funari, Pelegrini, and Rambelli (2009) emphasize that cultural heritage involves material, immaterial, environmental, and symbolic dimensions, which are subject to disputes over value and preservation policies. Thus, working with heritage in history teaching does not only mean presenting monuments or established traditions, but also questioning the processes by which certain assets are recognized, preserved, and socially transmitted.

In the Brazilian school context, Silva (2016) argues that heritage education is related to schooling policies by favoring educational practices committed to citizenship, cultural plurality, and critical reading of social space. Coelho and Cutrim (2020) also point out that the National Common Core

Curriculum offers possibilities for the pedagogical treatment of heritage, especially when considering the appreciation of historical and cultural diversity and the construction of collective identities.

In this way, heritage education takes on specific relevance in the teaching of history because it enables the approximation between memory, territory, and social experience. By recognizing heritage as didactic mediation, schools expand students' ability to critically interpret the city, discourses about the past, and the relationships between culture, power, and belonging.

Museums, schools, and universities in teacher training

The Museu do Doce is a particularly fertile space for this type of work. According to Leal (2019), the museum's establishment is linked to the appreciation of Pelotas' confectionery tradition and the association between two aspects of the city's heritage: the material, represented by the old residence that houses the institution, and the immaterial, represented by the confectionery tradition. The choice of Conselheiro Maciel's house to host the museum therefore expresses a heritage policy that articulates architecture, urban memory, and food culture.

This characteristic expands the museum's educational potential. When visiting the space, students come into contact not only with an expository narrative about local sweets and traditions, but also with a historic building that synthesizes the social, political, and urban processes of Pelotas. The museum thus operates as a place of cultural mediation, capable of promoting integrated readings about heritage, city, and memory.

In addition, the convergence between museum, university, and school strengthens the initial training of teachers. When teacher trainees participate in the development of extension projects and educational activities aimed at the community, they broaden their understanding of pedagogical planning, cultural mediation, and interinstitutional work. In this sense, the museum ceases to be just a place to visit and becomes a laboratory for teaching, research, and extension.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

From a methodological point of view, this text is characterized as an analytical report of experience, qualitative in nature, focused on the description and interpretation of an extension action developed in the first semester of 2024. The project was organized within the scope of the Heritage Education discipline of the History Degree course at UFPel and coordinated with the Museu do Doce (Sweet Museum) and the municipal coordination of EJA (Youth and Adult Education) in Pelotas.

The first stage of the work involved theoretical appropriation and collective project development. The class was divided into thematic areas, including heritage education and educational activities in museums, the history of the Museu do Doce, the relationship between heritage and schools, and the specific characteristics of heritage education in Education of Young People and Adults. This moment involved lectures, text readings, debates, and written assignments, allowing the students to build a conceptual and pedagogical foundation for the intervention. The next step was to implement the project. Meetings were held with the coordination of the Municipal Education Se-

cretariat's EJA (Youth and Adult Education) program, a meeting with the management of the Museu do Doce (Sweet Museum), a visit by the university class to the museum, the selection of participating schools, and the planning of awareness-raising, visitation, recording, and evaluation activities. The process also included the organization of the project's collection in digital media, composing a documentary record of the experience.

The analysis presented here considers these stages of planning, execution, and evaluation, emphasizing the pedagogical aspects of the initiative, its educational scope for teacher training students and adult education students, and its contribution to the curricularization of extension and the democratization of access to cultural heritage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the experience highlight, first of all, the importance of creating heritage activities specifically aimed at the EJA audience in the evening shift. In

general, students who attend school during this period have less access to cultural activities, both due to time constraints and a historical focus on daytime activities in institutional planning. By organizing a proposal aimed at this segment, the project adopted the democratization of access to heritage as a pedagogical and political principle.

Second, the experience reinforced the role of the museum as a space for civic education. Contact with the historic house and Pelotas' confectionery tradition fostered discussions about memory, local identity, preservation, and belonging. By perceiving

heritage as part of the city's history and cultural practices, students were able to establish connections between school content and the territory in which they live, transforming the visit into an opportunity for historical interpretation of everyday life.

Another relevant result refers to the appreciation of EJA itself. Instead of treating this audience only as recipients of a cultural activity, the project recognized the students as subjects of experience, memory, and interpretation. This stance is decisive for the teaching of history, as it considers that adults and young workers have repertoires that enrich the reading of heritage and allow for more horizontal mediations between school knowledge and social experience.

From the perspective of teacher training, the project showed that university extension programs can enhance teacher training by placing future teachers in real-life situations involving planning and mediation. University students participated in the development of the project, dialogue with partner institutions, and the design of educational activities, which allowed them to develop skills related to teaching practice, listening to audiences, and linking theory and practice.

Also noteworthy is the alignment of the proposal with educational guidelines that value cultural diversity and heritage in the curriculum. By working with local history, the confectionery tradition, and the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage, the project brought legal and curricular guidelines closer to the concrete reality of students. This shows that heritage education does not need to occupy a peripheral place in school; on the contrary, it can be a central strategy for promoting socially relevant historical learning.

Finally, the experience allowed us to understand the Sweets Museum as a space of convergence between university, school, and community. At this confluence, cultural heritage ceases to be merely an object of contemplation and begins to function as an element of dialogue, investigation, and social participation. The project, therefore, goes beyond the specific dimension

of a guided tour and asserts itself as a teaching practice committed to cultural citizenship and critical education.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of the A Night at the Museum project allows us to affirm that educational activities in museums have great potential to strengthen the teaching of history, expand access to cultural heritage, and improve the initial training of teachers. In the case studied, the collaboration between the Museu do Doce, the university, and the municipal school system resulted in an experience that brought EJA students closer to cultural assets relevant to the history of Pelotas and, at the same time, consolidated university extension as a formative dimension of the teaching degree.

The focus on nighttime EJA classes is one of the main merits of the proposal, as it responds to a concrete demand for cultural and educational inclusion. By recognizing this audience as subjects of memory, belonging, and knowledge production, the project contributes to overcoming narrow views of the role of museums and of EJA itself.

It can therefore be concluded that heritage education, when planned in a dialogical and contextualized manner, promotes more meaningful historical learning processes.

ses, strengthens links between individuals and territory, and broadens the understanding of heritage as a cultural right. In this sense, the experience analyzed can serve as a reference for other initiatives that seek to integrate schools, universities, and museums in projects committed to citizenship and the appreciation of local histories.

REFERENCES

BESSEGATTO, Maurí Luiz. O patrimônio em sala de aula: fragmentos de ações educativas. Santa Maria: Evangraf, 2004.

COELHO, Samary Pinheiro; CUTRIM, Klautenys Dellene Guedes. A base nacional comum curricular e sua contribuição para a preservação do patrimônio. NAEA, v. 1, n. 3, p. 2-15, 2020.

FUNARI, Pedro Paulo; PELEGRINI, Sandra; RAMBELLI, Gilson. Patrimônio cultural e ambiental: questões legais e conceituais. São Paulo: Annablume/FAPESP, 2009.

HORTA, Maria de Lourdes Parreiras; GRUNBERG, Evelina; MONTEIRO, Adriane Queiroz. Guia básico de educação patrimonial. Brasília: IPHAN; Museu Imperial, 1999.

LEAL, Noris Mara Pacheco Martins. A trajetória de uma construção patrimonial: a tradição doceira de Pelotas e Antiga Pelotas na constituição do Museu do Doce da Universidade

Federal de Pelotas. 2019. Tese (Doutorado em Memória Social e Patrimônio Cultural) - Universidade Federal de Pelotas, Pelotas, 2019.

SILVA, Rodrigo Manoel Dias da. Educação patrimonial e políticas de escolarização no Brasil. Educação & Realidade, Porto Alegre, v. 41, n. 2, p. 467-489, abr./jun. 2016.