

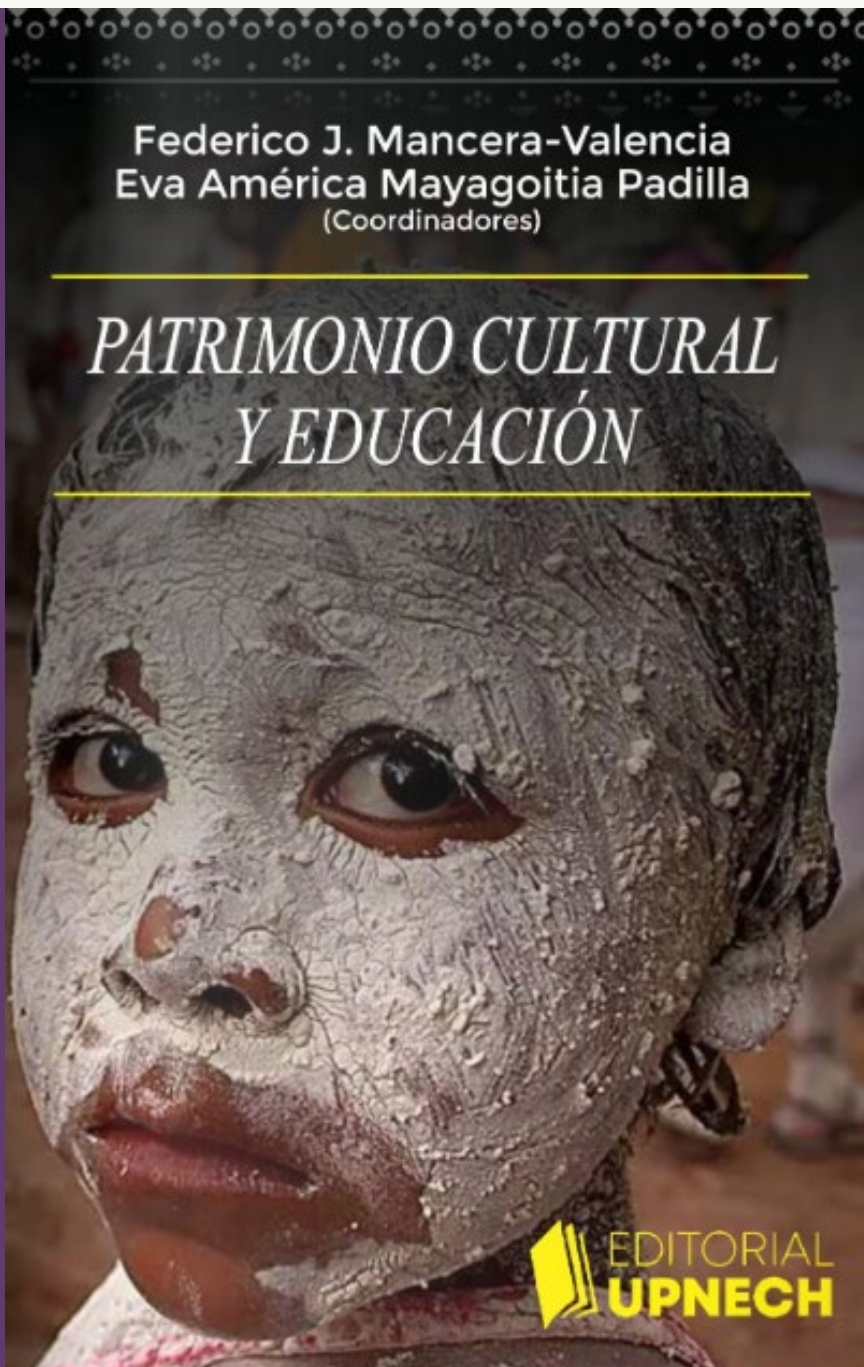
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### **Cultural Heritage and Education: a learning device connecting the past and the present**

Although the topics of the research articles that are compiled in this book focus on a wide range of themes, such as the connection between school and museums, the use of radio as a schooling device for indigenous population or the unique architecture of Mennonite schools in the north of Mexico; they all share the same objective: to foster a debate regarding the relevance of heritage education.

Some of the texts are research articles, others document intervention experiences in different educational contexts, both formal and informal. Most of them narrate practices that were implemented in Mexican territory (specifically, the states of Chihuahua, Nuevo León, Mexico City and Baja California), except for one project that was conducted in Spain. The articles cover topics like the implications of educational heritage, its purpose, didactic orientations, devices, and places.

The book coordinators, Federico Mancera-Valencia and Eva Mayagoitia, prestigious Mexican researchers, argue that patrimonial education is in its gestational state, and, since it is a research field that is constantly evolving, it has its own tensions and contradictions. The book is composed of 12 chapters, created by authors of different backgrounds and fields: professors, researchers, educators, an archeologist, an anthropologist and a geographer, all of them with extensive experience in educational heritage. These articles are organized in four sections: a) Educational heritage: tensions and debates, b) Academic Cultural Heritage, c) Cultural Heritage of Indigenous Education and d) Museums, libraries and cultural heritage management.

The first chapter focuses on patrimonial education and its interdisciplinary complexity. It discusses the tensions that this activity entails, which emerges from the connection between education and culture. Mancera-Valencia and López stress how heritage education includes a series of pedagogical and philosophical implications; mainly to foster a critical type of citizenship founded in culture, respect and knowledge of other cultures, which enables collective teaching and learning towards building an equitable society.

The second article, reflects upon the notion that cultural heritage can be used to exert power within a space of conflict. Terrazas considers two examples of this process, one of which relates the relocation of the Tlaloc monolith (Tlaloc is the rain God of the Nahuátl indigenous group) from its place of origin to the National Anthropology Museum of Mexico's capital. The towns' inhabitants opposed this measure, so the army had to intervene, thus exemplifying the government's use of power to expropriate a cultural asset.

In the third text, the reader will learn about the SOPA association (Heritage Socialization in Spanish), a project that has taken place in Spain since 2013. This organization implements cultural heritage workshops in rural areas, using devices such as puppets and movie projections. Since its creation, they

have made great strides to generate policies related to this topic, as well as incorporate community members in their practices. They have a periodical multidisciplinary publication, that can be found online (<http://ladescomunal.org>).

The fourth chapter concerns teachers' cultural heritage: the knowledge and wisdom that teachers learn by interacting amongst each other, as well as students. Chacón and Montes criticize the common notion that learning can only occur in a formal school environment via courses, workshops, bachelor's and master's degree. They claim that these programs are designed by specialists that allegedly know what teachers need to learn, but once they are faced with their everyday struggles, the knowledge proves to be useless. Instead, the authors suggest the use of critical pedagogy to foster learning among equals, so teachers are able to freely express their ideas and opinions about different topics that arise in schools and learn from each other.

In the next article, the focus shifts to the concept of vernacular school architecture of the Mennonite community that has been living in the municipality of Cuauhtémoc, in the state of Chihuahua, since the 1920's. The author goes into great detail to describe how the classrooms are usually organized: boys on one side, girls on the opposite one. A very interesting observation she makes, is how the Mennonite schools use materials common to their origins, like wood for the doors and window frames, as well as more local ones, such as adobe for the walls. Essentially, the Mennonite architecture is modified so individuals can adapt to the physical environment where they live, giving it a unique quality.

The sixth chapter, describes an intervention project that was carried out in several middle schools located in the city of Tijuana, state of Baja California. He designed and implemented a program named *Natural and Cultural Heritage Club*, in 2018; this field visits to different important sites with parents and students, with the participation of geography, history and civics middle school teachers. After this experience, the author concludes that, with an adequate management and organization of parents, teachers and experts, the student community can greatly enhance their knowledge regarding the natural and cultural heritage of their communities.

The next article, considers the use of radio schools as a part of the extensive cultural heritage of the Tarahumara's indigenous group education; a pedagogical model that was used to evangelize and alphabetize tarahumara children in the XX century. García explains the different cultural objects that are related to this educational model, like the apparatus that were used to broadcast the programs, the stations, photographs and documents; also the recollections of those who were directly involved, whose oral testimonies have been recorded and are stored in archives.

The eighth chapter also focuses on the Tarahumara or Ralámuli indigenous group, in this case in the practice of oral trials as part of their cultural heritage. Ortiz explains how the founding teachers of a

specific public middle school of the Tarahumara region started to implement this process since the year 2000, as a mechanism to repair the relationships between the school community members when a conflict arose. The author describes a case study, and highlights the idea of recovering the harmony in the coexistence of the community members, in order to take care of their soul (*iwig* or *ariwá*), so everyone can reflect, and the person that did wrong has the chance to be reformed.

Continuing with the Tarahumara region, Mayagoitia relates in the ninth chapter, how some schools in this area make a conscious effort to maintain a close link with the community, by having parents, teachers and students work together. The author analyzes different mechanisms, skills, attitudes and cultural values that are used within this ethnicity to promote the teaching and learning process during childhood. Among these, she highlights the emotional bond between mother and child, by which the infant's psycho-affective character and conduct is shaped.

The following article delves into the educational practices that are carried out in 13 museums of Chihuahua City. Mendoza and Mancera-Valencia research the pedagogical-museum related activities that are implemented in that context, and they conclude that there is a lack of educational departments in museums, as well as a need to train the staff so they can adequately coordinate the visits with the teachers. The authors highlight the relevance of developing a pedagogy that focuses on museums for elementary education, by which students and teachers are regarded as cultural subjects with specific needs and interests, and their visit can be a meaningful one.

In the next text, Chávez and Sánchez research teachers' knowledge and experiences regarding libraries, in the city of Ojinaga, Chihuahua. In their field study, the authors try to recover historical elements of this town's public libraries by analyzing its archives. In their findings, they condemn how written historical documents are not treated with the importance they deserve, considering how these artifacts embody a certain period's ideology, thus allowing us to contrast the past and the present.

Finally, the last chapter, goes into great detail to explain the work that an interdisciplinary network made of specialists of different universities across the country do in order to detect the socio-environmental and anthropogenic impact that is caused in Mexico's This group of experts is working towards creating a methodology to develop educational resources and community-based pedagogical sociocultural strategies that help preserve Mexico's natural and historical heritage.

In conclusion, readers that are interested in heritage and its connection with education will find in this book a source of innovative and relevant discussions regarding this topic. Not only will they acquire knowledge about the importance of this area, they will also be able to reflect upon the multiple meanings and implications of educational heritage through the overall diversity and richness that this text provides.



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