

## **Collections of the Estonian Pedagogical Archives-Museum – The Treasury about the History of Education**

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Dear ladies and gentlemen, honoured participants of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Symposium for Museums of School Life History Collections! I am pleased to greet you on behalf the Estonian Pedagogical Archives-Museum and would like to thank the organisers for the opportunity to participate at this international symposium!

This is the second opportunity for the Estonian Pedagogical Archives-Museum (EPAM) to participate and first time to represent the EPAM activities on such an international forum ever. As a museum scientist I have concentrated on my work mostly on researching the history of the pre-school education in Estonia. In my master thesis that I defended 1998, I concentrated on the preparations of the kindergarten teachers until 1940 and its influence to the development of the pre-school education in Estonia. Since 15 August 2006 I am working as the acting head of the museum.

I would like to introduce the development of the Estonian Pedagogical Archives-Museum and its activities, especially from the perspectives of its role in preserving and acknowledging the Estonian educational history and the development of the pedagogical concept in Estonia. With the first part of my presentation I would like to give you an overview about the history of the museum. In the second part of the presentation I will concentrate on the museum's current activities.

Before starting I would like to ask your kind understanding to my English. Today it is only my second time when I present in English, therefore I do apologise for the mistakes I possibly make.

**As mentioned I will start my presentation with the overview on the history of the Estonian Pedagogical Archives-Museum (EPAM).** Since 1999 the EPAM has been operating as the independent entity at the Tallinn University. The Tallinn University identifies itself as a modern university in a historic city! Although the university started its activities with current institutional set-up only in 2005, it is one of the successor of the

institution that has provided teacher-education in Tallinn since 1919. From 1992-2005 this institution was called Tallinn Pedagogical University.

The EPAM today has operated since 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1983 (under different names). Its routes however go back to as far as 1892, when more progressive elementary school teachers in Tallinn and from its surroundings established a lending library. One can find many references about the establishment of the library from the archives of 1916, before the Estonian Republic became independent. The archives from February 1919 show also that there were ideas to establish a central collection of the teaching-materials. That time Estonia was just freed from the German occupation, the Freedom war with Russia was still ongoing. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 1919, the war had a decisive moment. Estonians celebrate that day as a Victory Day.

The Tallinn Municipal Pedagogical Museum was established on 18<sup>th</sup> of January 1922, its first director managed the museum until 1941, when he was executed by the Germans. The main purpose of the museum was to collect and lend teaching materials to the schools. While expanding its activities the museum organised exhibitions of the teaching materials and of the pupil's works, it held lectures, opened workshops for the pupils and the excursion centre. Also radio programs were broadcasted. The museum was there mainly to satisfy the needs of the teaching work of Tallinn schools; it was not concentrating on collecting and preserving for future generations. Thanks to the progressive manager of the museum during the Estonian Republic during 1918–1940 however the museum grew into a broader institution and various organisations grew out of that.

During and after the II World war the assets of the museum were either destroyed or re-distributed to other organisations. The workers of the museum from that time still remember the destruction in their interviews. Nobody was allowed to know about the Estonian people, organisations nor the achievements in the field of education. The immediate objective of the communistic regime was to destroy the national intelligence; it concerned especially the Estonian education and science.

The Tallinn Municipal Pedagogical Museum was the basis for establishing the Institute for Teachers Further Education of the Estonian Soviet Republic in 1945. Its main purpose was to organise the methodological work and the further education itself for the educational

workers. During 1960 the institute started to collect lot of educational materials (manuscripts of the memoirs, projekts, photos, school furniture etc). Also a permanent pedagogical exhibition was opened. The 1960's favoured the collection of materials as many people influencing the Estonian education life during the Estonian Republic time were still alive. The core of valuable manuscripts was collected. The purpose of establishing a pedagogical museum evolved again.

Nowadays, the EPAM can be considered as the successor of the Tallinn Municipal Pedagogical Museum. The EPAM has preserved part of the teaching materials and publications. Among others there are some publications also from the collection of the lending library established in 1892. As mentioned above the current EPAM has been operating since 1983, when the Pedagogical Museum was finally established. The archive library had to be built up from the scratch. The collection of old books was and is one of the core activities of the museum. Nowadays we can find Estonian school literature from mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in the museum.

**What are the main activities of the EPAM nowadays?** Our activities fall into three main domains: the collection of the publications, manuscripts and photos/items.

The main emphasis in developing the **publication's collection** is on the Estonian teaching materials and on materials published in Estonia. Very important are the publications from schools (pupil's journals, newspapers and other publications). Our collection entails also valuable samples of the Estonian schoolbooks published after the II World war outside Estonia. Based on one research we can say that our's collection covers about 50% of the Estonian schoolbooks published outside Estonia.

Therefore the publication collection in EPAM can provide the overview on Estonian national educational teaching and methodological literature, on the teaching programs and on the organisation of schools throughout different times. Nowadays one can find also a lot of publications on teaching materials on teaching Estonian as the second language.

**The manuscript's collection in EPAM** consists of memoirs of educators, projects and correspondence. Important educational and cultural sources are the school chronics, protocol- and daybooks, certificates of schools and exercise books and other documents.

There are a lot of manuscripts available concerning the development of Estonian school abroad after the II World war. Separately one should mention the **personal collections** where the most profoundly are represented also internationally known educationalists Johannes Käis (1885-1951), Aleksander Elango (1902-2004), Herman Rajamaa (1902-1987) and Heino Liimets (1928-1989). F.e. the collection of A. Elango includes almost 3000 items as he gave his archives to the EPAM.

**The photo- and item`s collection in EPAM** has valuable photos about people, whose lives are or were related to our education, school buildings and -events. We collect and preserve pupil`s handwork, symbolics of schools and other items. Audiovisual materials cover the teaching movies from soviet times but also the teaching materials from nowadays. The collection in broader scale has been hampered by the lack of space. During last 10 years the museum has had to move 3 times. From the beginning of 2006 the museum is located at Tallinn University campus.

On 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007 the EPAM had registered in its collection ca 117 700 items, where 70% of them have been described scientifically in the electronic database. In average 6000 items are added to the collection annually but due to the moving of the museum and the changes in the staff, the increase of items into the collection has been less during recent years. In order to introduce our collection, the museum is organising at relevant education events and exhibitions, workshops and lectures. The projects conducted by our own staff members have been published in the science- and periodical pedagogical publications.

The collection of EPAM is open to everybody who is interested in the Estonian pedagogical and educational history, especially to the students and the lecturers of the Tallinn University. EPAM is cooperating with the Estonian Ministry of Education and Science, with public and media, museums, libraries and schools, but also with Tallinn City Government and local governments. The collection and activities of the EPAM are important from the national, local and personal level. The collection of EPAM holds an unic treasury of the Estonian educational history.

I hope the symposium will provide us opportunities to explore our interests and contacts further and find possibilities for our future cooperation!

Thank you very much for your attention!