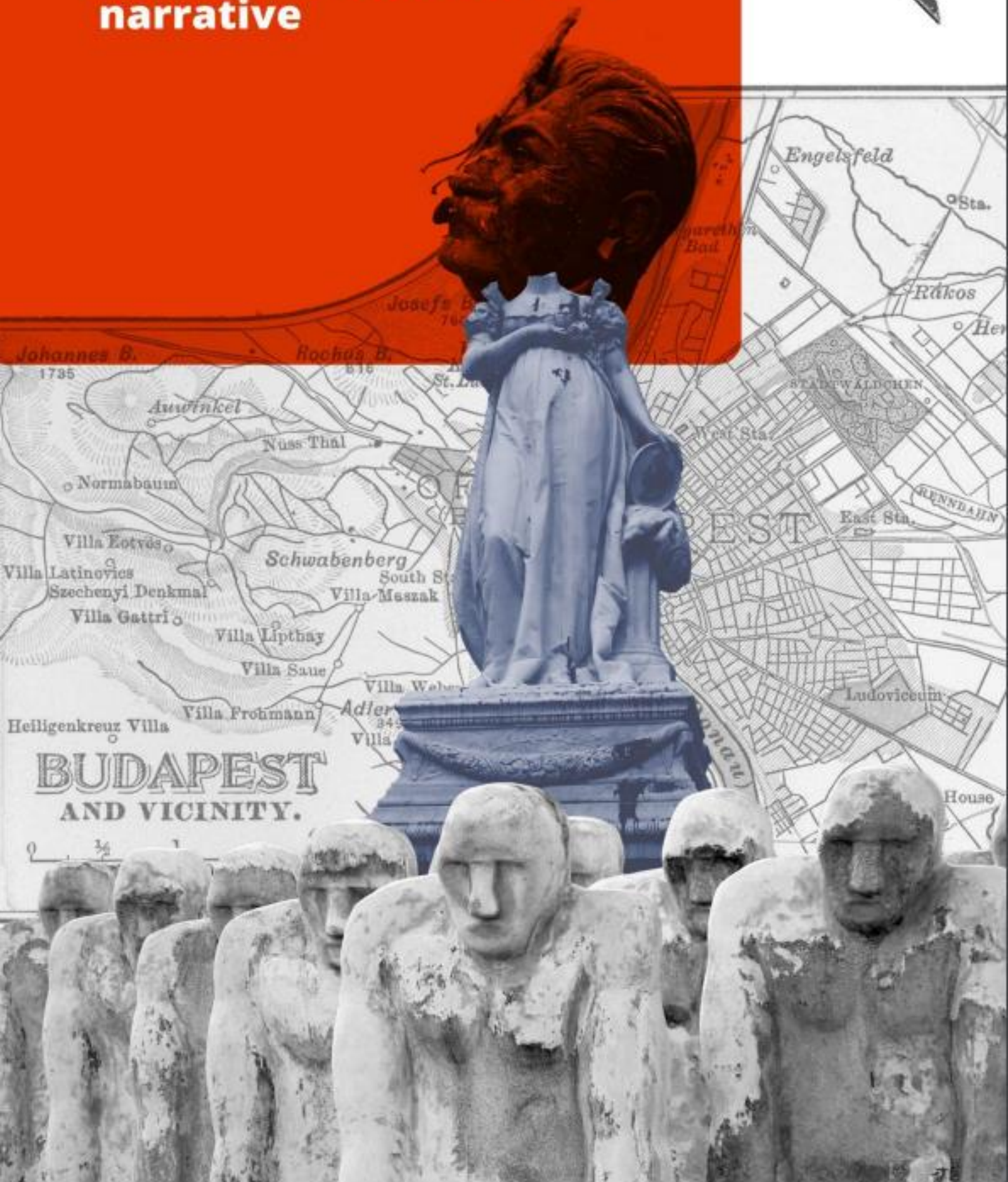


# Using commemorative practices to teach that history is a constructed narrative



## **Sharing European Histories**

Self-Guided Course

## **Using Commemorative Practices to Teach that History is a Constructed**

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# Using Commemorative Practices to Teach that History is a Constructed

## Example Lesson Plan

By Juraj Varga

This example lesson plan of the [Using Commemorative Practices to Teach that History is a Constructed Narrative Teaching Strategy](#) is part of the Sharing European Histories Self-Guided Course, developed by Juraj Varga. Its aim is to demonstrate how the Teaching Strategy can be adapted into the local context and classroom setting.

### Introduction

Lesson plan and its activities focus on different historical layers of public space in the small eastern Slovak town Trebišov. Activities engage students with visual and textual sources and lead them to understanding of the relationship between public spaces and ideologies and political systems.

**Time needed:** 30 min

**Approximate age:** 14 - 18

**Number of students:** 16

### Learning objectives:

- To develop critical thinking skills through the analysis of visual and textual materials;
- To comprehend the relationship between public spaces and ideologies or political systems;
- To identify the ways in which ideologies or political systems can influence public spaces.

### Materials needed:

1. Visual sources
2. Textual sources

### Preparation:

1. Print the visual and textual sources.
2. Decide on how you wish to divide your class into smaller groups.

## **Lesson Plan**

**30 min**

### **Activity 1: Analysis of Sources in Groups**

**5 minutes**

Students are divided into three groups and will receive all three visual and all three textual sources. Students then analyse sources, pair them, contrast them using the worksheet, appoint a spokesperson and present their work. To analyse the sources, students can use the following guiding questions:

- What do you see in the picture? Please describe the monuments you see in the photograph.
- Who or what do they commemorate?
- Can you locate these monuments in your hometown/in the town of Trebišov? Where would you find them?

### **Activity 2: Matching Sources and Worksheet Assignment**

**10 minutes**

In this step, students will be asked to pair the textual sources with the corresponding visual sources that they studied in the first activity. Then, using both the visual and textual sources, students will fill in the worksheet, identifying the monuments' connection to:

1. Its connection to political, social, cultural and/or economic history?
2. Which ethnic group's past is reflected?
3. Is it part of local, regional, national, and/or international history?
4. What changes does it reflect?
5. Which spheres of life are missing in the monument and why?

### **Activity 3:**

**15 minutes**

In the final step, the groups will present their outcomes of their work and the teacher will have space to explore differences and similarities and to contextualize if needed.



## Visual Sources





Sources: Trebišov na starých fotografiách.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2IPqKNY26FXTDJfWm9nMm1LSHc/view?usp=sharing&resourcekey=0-gfDei5lq70Lm\\_1L6f0wzHQ](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2IPqKNY26FXTDJfWm9nMm1LSHc/view?usp=sharing&resourcekey=0-gfDei5lq70Lm_1L6f0wzHQ)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2IPqKNY26FXck4yMmdQVm9DWDWA/view?usp=sharing&resourcekey=0-Txi0n6UKwRaMR7R8Bx7ZcQ>

Štátny oblastný archív, Trebišov.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2IPqKNY26FXYXlBbFRES3hIbnM/view?usp=sharing&resourcekey=0-r0WNFwvjhMpERAYWYG1ppw>

### Textual Sources

**Statue of Milan Rastislav Štefánik.** This statue was placed on the Main street of the town and then named after him. He was a Slovak politician, diplomat, aviator and astronomer. During World War I, he served at the same time as a general in the French Army and as Minister of War for Czechoslovakia. As one of the leading members of the Czechoslovak National Council (the resistance government), he contributed decisively to the cause of Czechoslovakian sovereignty, since the status of Czech- and Slovak-populated territories was one of those in question until shortly before the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in 1918.

**Statue of space rocket.** The statue was built to commemorate Sputnik 1, the first artificial Earth satellite and humankind's exploration of space. It was placed in the central part of the town. The Space Race was a 20th-century competition between two Cold War adversaries, the Soviet Union and the United States of America, to achieve superior spaceflight capability. It had its origins in the ballistic missile-based nuclear arms race between the two nations following World War II.

**Central pole.** Military parade by 17th Rangers Regiment of the Czechoslovak army in the middle of the town at the Central pole, a place where speeches by local political authorities were held, where information from town officials and state officials was displayed and announced by local harbinger. This center of the town was used for manifestations, festivities and political and military parades.

The textual sources are composed by Juraj Varga. For more background information about Milan Rastislav Štefánik, have a look at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan\\_Rastislav\\_%C5%A0tef%C3%A1nik](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan_Rastislav_%C5%A0tef%C3%A1nik) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space\\_Race](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Race)