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Editorial

Hilary Cooper ü

It is remarkable how the papers in volume 12.2 of the IJHLTR discuss history education through the lens of groups of common, interrelating themes, each running through several papers: historical empathy; historical consciousness; teaching about traumatic issues, perspectives and interpretations; evaluations of textbooks and curricula; 'Master Narratives', and teaching strategies, including strategies for teaching national history and identity.

Historical Empathy- Cyprus, New Zealand

Lukas Perikleous explores the concept of historical empathy and the reasons why this important dimension of historical understanding is frequently ignored. Martyn Davidson identifies both the cognitive and affective processes through which secondary school students in New Zealand interpret historical empathy and, as a result of an intervention programme, posits a sequential pathway in developing both dimensions the concept.

Historical Consciousness – Brazil, Sweden, UK, Greece

Marcelo Fronza analyses the ways in which Brazilian High School students interpret visual images using aspects of historical consciousness, and Niklas Ammert explores the ways in which Swedish history textbooks and curriculum documents, over the last hundred years had similar content based on the 'Master Narrative', but interpreted it to convey different meanings to students about the relationship between the past and the present. Gradually students are encouraged to weave themselves into the past and to realize that their decisions influence the future, a position very similar to the concept of historical conscientiousness. Stuart Foster and Michael Gray investigate what thirteen to fourteen-year-old students' knowledge about the Holocaust was before they were taught about it, where that knowledge comes from and what it is used for. This ties into the focused-analysis of the role of the past in shaping personal and communal identities. Eleni Apostolidou researched students' attitudes to the current economic crisis in Greece and found some categories of response to be indicative, in Rüsen's terms, of 'traditional' and 'paradigmatic' types of historical consciousness, types that 'imply similarities between past and present' which demand that the past be related to the future.

Teaching about traumatic issues – Greece, UK

Dmitri Mavroskoufis and George Kokkinos investigate the attitudes of primary and secondary school Greek students and teachers to teaching and learning about traumatic issues in Greek history, which are still, 'open wounds'. By contrast, Stuart Foster and Michael Gray identify astonishing misconceptions some young students have about the Holocaust, its causes and perpetrators, in order to plan the best way to teach the subject. Adam Burns questions whether teachers will avoid teaching about the 'dark side' of the British Empire, which must be covered in the new National Curriculum.

Perspectives and interpretations – Brazil, Greece, UK

Marcelo Fronza's paper focuses on what tools students use to interpret contrasting images and concludes that the most dominant influence is traditional iconic teaching of the 'Master Narrative' rather than the processes of historical enquiry. Eleni Apostolidou finds many diverse interpretations of the reasons for the Greek economic crisis: that Greece has always had problems but always emerges strong, that heroism and suffering have always been at the heart of Greece, and that Greece has always been the target of other states. Adam Burns considers the various interpretations of the British Empire and how teachers can mediate the requirement to teach about it from a range of perspectives.

Evaluation of textbooks and curricula- Spain, Sweden, Greece, Lesotho

Sebastien Molina, Cosme Corrusco and Jorge Ortuno, like Niklas Ammert, analyse text books and curriculum documents. In their paper they evaluate new curriculum reforms in Spain. They find that the reforms and history textbooks do little to promote historical enquiry, critical thinking and seeing different perspectives and interpretations. However they are encouraged by many teachers who mediate the curriculum and take responsibility for developing history based on enquiry and conceptual understanding, at all levels of education. They take students to museums and archaeological sites and are supported by a number of educational publications. It is interesting that, like Niklas Ammert, Marcelo Fronza and Eleni Apostouli, they find the Master Narrative still dominating curricula and textbooks, but encouraging that some teachers are sufficiently confident and enthusiastic to develop more multi-faceted history teaching. Mary Ntabeni finds a similar problem with text books in Lesotho, which are inappropriately Eurocentric. As an example she draws attention to the Lesotho people who were involved in, and some of whom died fighting, in the two World Wars, but who are not mentioned in text book accounts of the Wars. And she suggests excellent teaching strategies, which teachers might use to teach about the Wars from a Lesotho perspective. Recent books, she says are beginning to mediate the curriculum in such a way.

Teaching strategies: national history and identity, children with special needs, teaching historical empathy –Greece, Sweden, Spain, UK

Each of the papers is in some way concerned with the question of history education and its relationship with identity. Many of the English students in Foster's and Gray's paper had a fine-grained knowledge of the Holocaust before learning about it in school, which was clearly of familial and communal origin and experienced through the media, and was a major element in their historical consciousness and part of their identity. The use of a Master Narrative underlies many curricula, for instance in Greece, Sweden and Spain, and clearly aims to develop a shared national identity, but the related papers examine ways in which this can be problematic. Adam Burns considers the issue of national identity and how it can best be developed in terms of the British Empire and a multi-ethnic society.

Matthew Sossick investigates how primary school trainee teachers may be supported in combining and applying theory and practice learnt on their training course to teach history to children with speech, language and communications needs and finally, Jeffrey Byford describes how he used a board game to encourage American students to understand the experiences and frustrations of shopping in Communist Poland.

This journal illustrates and shares sophisticated questions which are being explored, on the basis of a premise that history involves processes of historical thinking, appreciating different interpretations of the past, is important to social, emotional and cognitive development, values education, debate, democracy and citizenship. This movement started in 1960s and has developed in complexity, raising questions about pedagogy and so resulting in empirical research involving teacher trainers, teachers and students, both primary and secondary. It is a privilege to work with all the colleagues from around the globe, involved in the History Educators' International Research Network (HEIRNET) and the *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research*.

DEVELOPING AN HISTORICAL EMPATHY PATHWAY WITH NEW ZEALAND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Martyn Davison, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract:

This article seeks to understand how students interpret historical empathy, a concept frequently thought of as vicariously walking in the shoes of someone from the past. It does this by drawing upon insights from secondary school students, who took part in an instructional intervention that involved me teaching historical empathy to two social studies classes. It also draws on my reading of the literature, especially Gaddis (2002). Eliciting the students' interpretations from interviews and visual materials and by reflecting on my reading, I identified a series of elements that I categorized as belonging to either the affective or cognitive dimensions of historical empathy. Pulling together these elements and Gaddis' idea that historical empathy is potentially acquired through phases, I developed an historical empathy pathway. This pathway proposes a guiding sequence of affective and cognitive elements that could inform teaching and learning.

Keywords

Historical empathy, Affective, Cognitive, Pathway

Introduction

Historical empathy can be described as vicariously walking in the shoes of someone who lived in the past. This description is similar to dictionary definitions of empathy, stating that the concept comes from the German word *Einführung*, which means the "capacity to understand and enter into another person's feelings and emotions" (Colman, 2001: 241). While these are useful starting points to understanding what is meant by historical empathy, they do not say very much about the process of empathising; something this article seeks to explore. In doing so, it draws upon the reflections of high school students, who took part in an instructional intervention that involved me teaching historical empathy to two social studies classes. The article also draws upon the history education literature, in particular Gaddis (2002), to theorise that historical empathy consists of several elements; equal numbers of which, are either cognitive or affective in character.

Rationale

Understanding historical empathy is worthwhile because the concept has the potential to contribute to democratic society, as it requires students to not only identify the points of view of others, but to at least temporarily attempt to understand them. Left to our own devices nearly all of us, whether we have studied history or not, can empathise with those who are similar to ourselves; developing historical empathy however, may teach us to do something harder but equally worthwhile: to empathise with those who are different from us. It does this by affectively tuning in to our shared human traits and by cognitively comprehending why another person holds a different set of beliefs. Hoffman's (2000) point that "children [who have learnt to empathise] will be more aware of the impact of their actions on others who differ from them in obvious ways" (2000: 294) is a compelling reason to study how students get better at historical empathy. Yet, this potential may not be realised because historical empathy has for a long time been seen by history educators as a rather confusing concept which is perhaps best avoided.

Literature

Historical empathy: a confusing concept?

Historical empathy has a chequered reputation. It emerged in classrooms in 1970s England, when the so-called *New History* (Rogers, 1978) advocated students 'doing history' rather than solely acquiring knowledge of events. In a climate where students were now cast as apprentice historians, it was a desirable historical skill that reflected the historians' practice of re-thinking and re-imagining the past (Collingwood, 1946). Yet, within a decade, historical empathy in the history classroom was under attack.

As Harris and Foreman-Peck (2004) have emphasised, this was largely because it supposedly led to a 'let's pretend' view of the past. Furthermore, its affective attributes, such as using imagination, were claimed to be too wishy-washy and fanciful to properly assess students' understanding of history (Low-Beer, 1989). By the late 1980s, historical empathy had become the most disputed element of the *New History's* skills-based approach. Phillips (1998) has described how conservative academics and politicians publically discredited historical empathy as replacing knowledge of historical events with exercises in imagination which were devoid of knowledge. While many history teachers and students disagreed with this interpretation, it was, as Phillips pointed out, the detractors who dominated the debate. By 1997, historical empathy had disappeared from the history curriculum in England. Within the pages of the Historical Association's journal 'Teaching History', Clements (1996) asked the question: historical empathy – R.I.P.?

Similarly, in New Zealand the teaching of historical empathy seemed a somewhat discredited idea in the history community. The Forms 5-7 (16 to 18 year old students) History Syllabus for Schools' (Department of Education, 1989) aim to "develop in students the ability to enter imaginatively into the events of the past" (1989: 8) had been seen as problematic. Urging students to imaginatively "explore their own feelings and reactions in simulated historical situations" (1989:13) had tended to lead to activities that began with: 'imagine you are ...' As Booth, Culpin and Macintosh (1987) have argued, such activities could work, but experience tended to show disappointing results because they provided students with minimal guidance as to what to do and led to the projecting of present-day feelings into past situations.

It is perhaps surprising then, that historical empathy, in the last fifteen years, has re-emerged within the field of history education. Once again it has been included in various models which attempted to define high school history as being about critical thinking and mastering what historians practice (Seixas and Peck, 2004; Taylor, 2005; Van Drie and Van Boxtel, 2008). Equally, neuro-science had made empathy a more tangible concept, highlighting the affect as an important part of learning (Damasio, 1996). This provided a strong theoretical basis for the idea of emotional intelligence (Arnold, 2005; Cooper, 2011). Furthermore, empathy had been connected with democratic citizenship and the idea that in today's world "everyone feels the pressure to 'empathize' with the experience (and notably the suffering) of others" (Moyn, 2006: 397). Similarly Slotte (2007) put empathy at the heart of civic society when positing that it is a "mechanism of caring, benevolence, compassion" (2007: 4). This renewal of interest in empathy however, appeared to cast the concept either as a predominantly cognitive activity or one that was mostly affective.

Cognitive historical empathy

Reading Seixas and Peck (2004) it is possible to conclude that developing historical empathy is a wholly cognitive activity. They describe historical empathy or what they call historical perspective-taking as the imaginative attempt to understand the otherness of past lives by paying very close attention to evidence. In other words, the imagination is tied to evidence. For Seixas and Peck the emphasis is upon evidence and the cognitive act of critical thinking and understanding. As such historical empathy “is not, in this context, an affective achievement” (Seixas and Peck, 2004: 113). This is similar to Wineburg’s (2001) idea that historical thinking requires a counter-intuitive effort to switch off emotion and to engage the cognitive acts of cautious judgement exercised through the building of contextual knowledge and the handling of evidence. Wineburg (2007) contends that the historical thinking of experts (professional historians and doctoral students) is counter-intuitive and emotionally detached whilst novices (students and teachers) intuitively and emotionally rush to judge the past.

Affective historical empathy

The affective nature of historical empathy however, is not always cast as belonging to novices. As Clements (1996) reminds us, when his students made an emotional and caring connection with a survivor of the Holocaust, who had made a visit to their classroom, it heightened their cognitive understanding. This suggests that suppressing the affective dimension of historical empathy is not always desirable. And, from the perspective of psychotherapy it is possible to see empathy in almost the opposite way to Wineburg, as being about interpreting feelings and emotions (Colman, 2001). It positions empathy as a means of understanding the emotional and subjective world of the patient. As McWilliams (1999) has put it, “the analyst’s empathy is the primary tool of investigation” (1999: 2). She has cited Freud’s ability to empathise as a way of explaining why he took seriously those patients who other physicians disregarded as timewasters. It is this ‘taking seriously’ of others that is arguably a characteristic of well written history. Of course, in psychotherapy, the therapist-patient relationship is reciprocal and real in a way that is not the case in the student-historical character relationship. It is also important to stress that education is not therapy.

However, the idea that historical empathy becomes harder when its affective characteristics are downplayed is an important counter-argument to Wineburg’s mostly cognitive way of seeing historical empathy.

Bringing together the cognitive and affective

Gaddis (2002) contends that historical empathy is a process of “getting inside other people’s minds ... [by allowing your own mind to] be open to their impressions - their hopes and fears, their beliefs and dreams” (2002:124). He goes on to say that once these impressions have been given serious consideration the student of history ‘bails out’ and begins to critically make sense of what they have empathetically experienced. This process is cognitive because it requires thinking about how pieces of evidence fit together. But it is also affective because it attempts to imagine what an historical character might have felt about their circumstances. Taking these points into account historical empathy can be defined as:

Enter[ing] into some informed appreciation of the predicaments or points of view of other people in the past ... it is simply a word used to describe the imagination working on evidence, attempting to enter into a past experience while at the same time remaining outside it (Department of Education and Science, 1985: 3).

Drawing upon this definition and the points made in the last few pages, Table 1 outlines my first attempt at defining the affective and cognitive dimensions of historical empathy before beginning the data gathering stage of my research.

Historical empathy's affective dimension	Historical empathy's cognitive dimension
Using imagination to recognise appropriate feelings	Building historical contextual knowledge
Listening to and entertaining 'others' point of view	Being aware of the past as different from the present
Caring about and being sensitive and tolerant towards people from the past	Using evidence to understand / think about the past

TABLE 1. Proposed affective and cognitive dimensions of historical empathy

Methodology

My research was carried out within my professional setting at Eastside Schoolⁱ; a suburban co-educational secondary school in New Zealand, catering for students aged 13 to 18. The majority of students identify as either Pākehā (New Zealand European) or Asian, with eight per cent being Māoriⁱⁱ.

To answer my research question: 'how do students interpret historical empathy' I decided on a qualitative comparative case study research design. This involved me teaching an intervention to two of my Year 10 (14-15 year olds) social studies classes. The intervention consisted of sixteen one-hour lessons and focused on a topic that was part of the pre-existing social studies curriculum at the school: the 1915 Gallipoli campaign, an event of historical significance for New Zealandersⁱⁱⁱ. The content was the same for each class: eight lessons focusing on affective activities and an equal number of lessons with cognitively focused activities (see Table 2). Because however, in another aspect of my research I was interested in the sequencing of these activities, one class (Class A/C, $n=22$) was taught the affective lessons first, followed by the cognitive and the other class (Class C/A, $n=23$) was taught the reverse; that is the cognitive first followed by the affective.

My study used a purposive typical-case convenience sample. In Class A/C, of the 22 participants, 7 (32 per cent) were boys and 15 (68 per cent) were girls. Of the 23 participants in Class C/A, 9 (39 per cent) were boys and 14 (61 per cent) were girls. Mirroring school-wide ethnicity, 70 per cent of participants were of Pākehā (New Zealand European) or Asian ethnicity, and 8 per cent were Māori. Six students from each class did not participate in the study however they took part in the same activities as those who participated in the study.

Interviews

To obtain a thick description of how students interpreted historical empathy I used semi-structured group interviews. I used maximal variation sampling to select twelve students to participate in a series of two interviews: six students from Class A/C (three boys and three girls) and an equal number from Class C/A (also three boys and three girls). The students were interviewed in single-sex, same-class (i.e. they were all from Class A/C or Class C/A) groups of three. Each group took part in two, twenty minute interviews. While I did use an interview schedule I also followed up on points made by the students as the interviews unfolded. My intention in doing this was to encourage the students to make a full response (Creswell, 2008).

I began my analysis of the interview data by coding the interview transcripts. I used a thematic analysis based on the six elements drawn from my interpretation of historical empathy's affective and cognitive dimensions (see Table 1). Much of my data however, did not easily fit these elements and I therefore used a more inductive process, set out by Creswell (2008), of gradually funnelling the data into a series of labelled segments so that I was left with a small number of elements. To begin with I had over forty labelled segments that I hoped would help me describe these elements. Using an iterative technique of re-reading the transcripts and reflecting on the labelled segments, I was able to see that some of these could be conflated whilst new ones emerged and others were discarded.

	Affective activities	Cognitive activities
1	Watching the film <i>Gallipoli</i> (Weir, 1981). The intention is to help students enter into the past, encourage them to listen to different viewpoints and to begin to care about the film's main characters.	Building historical contextual knowledge. The intention is to help students develop this by exploring a wide range of source material about the 1915 era and the British empire.
2	Collecting a name from the local war memorial and writing a found poem. The intention is for students to select a name of an individual soldier - someone they might begin to care about. Using the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website they find the soldier's military record, select 50 words from this record and then reorder them to create a poem.	Examining a contemporary newspaper. The intention is for the students to explore what a series of extracts from the newspaper and record what they say about the war. I lead a discussion with the students about the newspaper's strengths and limitations might as a source.
3	Responding to pictures. The intention is for students to explore their feelings about Gallipoli by responding to six posters published by Macmillan (Cormack, 2009). The posters are placed around the classroom and students visit each in turn.	Explaining the motivations of soldiers using the recorded recollections of veterans. Students are given a selection of transcripts and identify why each veteran join up. These are collated and their frequency ranked then there is a discussion about the range of perspectives and what this activity might say about using evidence.
4	Moving into a freeze-frame. The intention is for students to work in groups and adopt the positions of historical characters from a number of photographs taken in 1915, and then to hold this position for 10 seconds. These 'freeze-frames' are presented to the class and discussion follows about the feelings evoked by the activity	Building contextual knowledge of the Gallipoli landings. The intention is to use a range of online evidence to find out about at least two different perspectives on what happened on the first day of the landings.
5	Carrying out a role-play. The intention is for students to explore the experience of Bill Leadley, a signaller at Gallipoli. Students are given entries from Bill's diary (Chamberlain, 2008) and act these out.	Overcoming presentism. The intention is to use the documentary <i>Gallipoli: Brothers in Arms</i> (Denton, 2007) to explore past and present attitudes to Gallipoli.

TABLE 2. Summary of affective and cognitive activities

Note: See Davison (2012) for a fuller description of these activities.

Visual materials

By visual materials I mean that I asked the students to draw pictures to represent historical empathy, thereby revealing what they thought or felt about the concept (Wagner, 2010). My decision to use visual materials was based on my desire to elicit student beliefs about historical empathy that might otherwise go unsaid.

All students in Class A/C and Class C/A were asked to draw what they thought and felt it meant to empathise historically when studying people who had lived at the time of the Gallipoli campaign in 1915. I used the elements I had elicited from the interview transcripts to provide a means of interpreting the underlying meaning of the drawings.

Findings

Students talking about how they interpret historical empathy

Seven elements emerged from the interviewees' description of historical empathy (Table 3). With the exception of 'feeling care', 'multiple perspectives' and 'open mindedness' these elements were present in the descriptions of all four interview groups.

Students' visual interpretations of historical empathy

I found that students in Class A/C depicted historical empathy as something that was linked to the suffering caused by the First World War (Fig. 1). Five of the six drawings focused either on grave-stones and inscriptions or on the death of soldiers. Four drawings included characters crying and who appeared to be mourning the loss of loved ones. For instance, Lucy's (Fig. 1) drawing focuses on the idea of a grieving relative. These responses were similar to the 'feeling care' element that emerged from my analysis of the interview transcripts. They also suggested that for these students historical empathy was about forming a judgement of the past; in this case that the First World War was about enormous loss and heartache.

Descriptive elements	Example	Class C/A girls	Class C/A boys	Class A/C girls	Class A/C boys	Total	Frequency rating
1. Feeling care	"It does make you feel sad" (Helen, Class A/C, FIG, line 116)	(1)	(0)	(3)	(0)	(4)	5=
2. Evidence	"The more sources you use means that you are more able to take a step closer" (Vince, Class C/A, FIB, lines 34-35).	(2)	(3)	(2)	(2)	(9)	2
3. Imagination	"Instead of just imagining being yourself as you are, you would imagine yourself as they were then ... we need to imagine ourselves to be there as other people" (Rick, Class C/A, SIB, lines 33 and 85).	(2)	(4)	(4)	(2)	(12)	1
4. Multiple perspectives	"Like getting the point of view of all of the people so that you can get all of the sides of the story" (Dave, Class A/C, SIB, lines 22/3).	(1)	(0)	(1)	(3)	(5)	4
5. Contextual knowledge	"Things like the Boer War (see note) and that, they thought they were going to get away unscathed" (Rick, Class C/A, FIB, lines 31-32).	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(4)	5=
6. Open mindedness	"I think I got better at being open-minded and being empathetic when there was more to it, like when there was another point of view" (Hailey, Class, A/C, SIG, lines 77-78).	(0)	(1)	(2)	(0)	(3)	7
7. It is difficult to do well	"What was difficult is why they would feel like that? Why it was so different then than now?" (Hailey, Class A/C, FIG, lines 19-20).	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(8)	3

TABLE 3. Students description of historical empathy

Note: Interview notation: FI = first interview, SI = second interview, B = boys, G = girls

Note. Numbers in parenthesis refer to the number of interviewees who identified each element.

Note: King (2003) has pointed out, in the Boer War 1899-1902, relatively few New Zealanders, 59 from a total of 6500 men, died while fighting. For civilians it was therefore possible in 1914, to see war as something you had a very good chance of surviving. Rick's comment signals that he has sufficient contextual knowledge of the period to realise that this belief influenced the thinking of those heading to Europe in 1914.

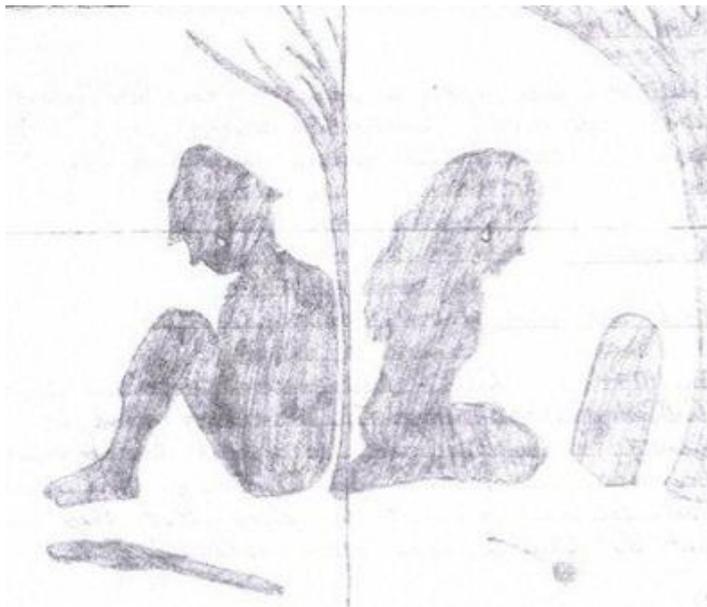


Fig. 1 Lucy's drawing of historical empathy, class A/C

The drawings by the students in Class C/A reflected a number of different interpretations of historical empathy. These students whilst also focusing, in some cases, on the loss associated with the First World War, also described the 'process' of empathising with historical characters. Vince described his drawing of historical empathy (Fig. 2) as being about the idea that history is sometimes written from only one perspective. Here, the winning army gets to write in the large history book on the lectern. Overall the drawings from Class C/A illustrated a relatively diverse range of factors, unlike the sample of drawings from Class A/C which focused mostly on the morality of war and conveying a sense of loss.

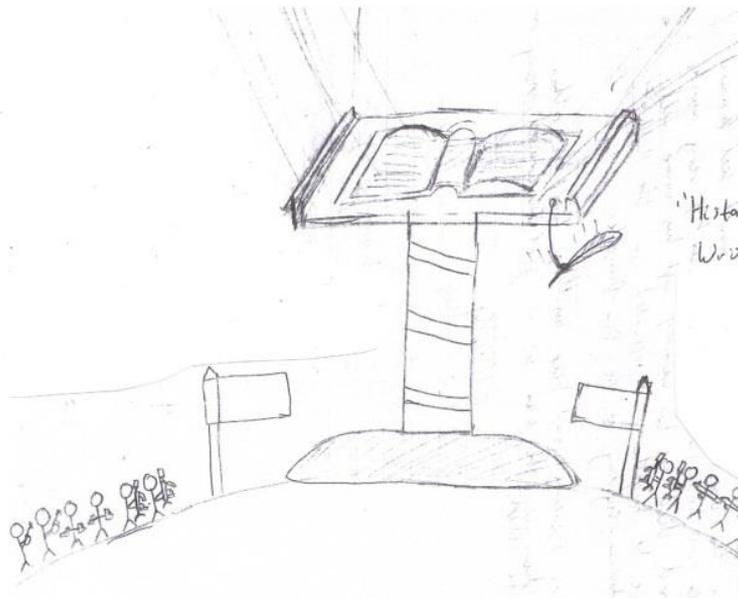


Fig. 2 Vince's drawing of historical empathy, class C/A

Discussion

Bringing together my findings, the assertion can be made that the affective and cognitive dimensions of historical empathy are underpinned by a series of elements. The affective elements of open-mindedness, feeling care and imagination play an important role as students attempt, so to speak, to enter into the past.

Open-mindedness allows students to be receptive to past experiences and makes it more likely that they will begin to take seriously, at least temporarily, beliefs that are different to their own (Barton and Levstik, 2004; Noddings, 2005). Receptivity, may lead to identification with historical characters, as Foster (2001) warns, but evidence from psychotherapy shows that empathetic individuals can identify with others whilst not agreeing with them (McWilliams, 2004). This is because they can perceive the thoughts of another person while retaining their own viewpoint (Shea, 1998). Without an open-mind, as Rachel in Class A/C, pointed out in this study, “you can't really feel what the person was thinking”^{iv} (Class A/C, SIG, lines 5-6). However, it was also apparent in this study that students did not begin looking at a new historical topic with an open-mind and that therefore the uptake of this element would be more likely if it was pre-taught.

Feeling care fosters in students a sense that past-lives mattered and of wanting to find out more by entering into that past. In this study, the element of ‘feeling care’ was evoked when students felt close to historical characters. For instance, Alvin in Class A/C, felt care towards the soldiers of the First World War when he said that they could have been “just from next door or something, they really weren't that far away” (Class A/C, FIB, lines 39-40). For Hailey, a feeling of care emerged as she watched the film, *Gallipoli* (Weir, 1981): “even for me in the movie ...they were actual people” (Class A/C, FIG, line 101). When after watching *Gallipoli*, Helen asked “what would I feel like if I went through that?” (Helen, Class A/C, SIG, lines 44-45), there was a clear sense that she had entered into the past and was now pondering what she would have done, had she been there. While Barton and Levstik (2004) argue that feeling care helps students to explore and potentially change their beliefs, my focus has been on its capacity to help students enter into the past.

Imagination is about being projected into the past. For Rick, in Class C/A, it meant the ability “to imagine ourselves to be there [in the past] as other people” (Class C/A, SIB, lines 33-34 and 85-86). One way of doing this is to watch a film like *Gallipoli* (Weir, 1981). As Seixas and Peck (2004) have posited, film is designed to “sweep their audiences into an apparent past [so that they have] a direct window into what the past looked like, felt like, and what it meant” (2004:109). They caution however, that being ‘swept along’ into an imagined past is not what is wanted if learning history is about critical thinking. I would argue that being swept along is desirable if the teaching goal is for students to enter into the past. What is also desirable, and here I agree with Seixas and Peck, is that attention is paid to historical empathy’s cognitive dimension.

Historical empathy’s cognitive elements of: exploring evidence; building contextual knowledge; finding multiple perspectives; and, being aware that past and present are different, become important once students have entered into the past and begun working with the record of the past.

Evidence was thought of by the students in this study as: a checking device to test out hunches about the past; as a means of building historical knowledge; and, as a way of stimulating an emotional interest in the past. The first point reflects the almost universally held view that the claims of historians are only warranted if they are underpinned by evidence (Gosselin, 2011). The second is particularly relevant to empathising with an historical character because it implies sifting through the record of the past to try and find relevant source material that may help to contextualise their life. The third however, would be seen by Wineburg (2007) as a novice-like approach to evidence, far removed from the world of historians, who he argues, handle evidence with cool detachment. Still, in terms of engaging with historical empathy, evidence that activates an emotional interest in the past is useful in that it may foster student interest. In this study, both Helen (Class A/C) and Michelle (Class C/A) felt that without such engagement, handling evidence could be demotivating.

Building contextual knowledge enabled the students in the study to develop a more rounded picture of historical characters. As they learnt about the context of soldiers’ lives and New Zealand and Australian society in 1915 so they were able to make better sense of what it might have been like for these soldiers to serve at Gallipoli. Ashby, Lee and Shemilt (2005) have described this acquisition of contextual knowledge as developing “a sense of period” (2005:167).

Finding multiple perspectives also enables students to realise that historical characters are rounded people who are likely to have more than one emotion or outlook. Hailey in Class A/C found that she “got better at ... being empathetic when there was more to it, like when there was another point of view” (Class, A/C, SIG, lines 76-78). By identifying multiple perspectives students are also ensuring that they empathise with not only a single-perspective account of the past, but also with the stories of others (Seixas and Peck, 2004; Taylor, 2005).

Recognising that the past and present are different is an element of historical empathy that is likely to emerge from cognitively working with the record of the past. As contextual knowledge grows students are able to distinguish past beliefs and values from those they hold here in the present.

Once this work on the record of the past is complete, students exit the past. From this point, they are trying to form judgments about their experience of the past, and are drawing upon some or all of the affective and cognitive elements that they have encountered. Looking at the twelve drawings of historical empathy it was clear, especially among those from Class A/C, that about half of the drawings included making a moral judgement about Gallipoli. Most of these were drawn by girls in the Class A/C sample, perhaps reflecting the findings of Jaffee and Hyde's (2000) meta-analysis of gender differences in moral reasoning, which found in females a slightly higher tendency than males to show a morality of care that focused on a compassion for others. They might also reflect Barton and Levstik's (2004) argument that students displaying a caring morality tend to be studying contexts that allow for emotional engagement through categories such as human tragedy and bravery. Because, for so many New Zealanders, Gallipoli was about sacrifice and heroism (Fischer, 2012), it makes sense that students have a caring morality about it. This would indicate that the choice of context is potentially important to fostering a moral response to the past.

The final element, that historical empathy is difficult to do well, was less definitional. The students who described historical empathy as being difficult felt that this was because they were looking at an 'adult' past of which they had no experience. For Tim this meant guessing what that past might be like or in the case of Helen, at the start of the instructional intervention, it meant a sense of bewilderment: 'I don't know how she [the historical character Mrs Sievers] is feeling, how do you expect me to know that?' (Class A/C, SIG, line 53). The danger here is that students, not comprehending the past, either write a let's pretend version of it or, just as problematically, write nothing at all. However, during the course of the instructional intervention Tim and Helen overcame these difficulties and both developed a strong grasp of historical empathy.

What was significant in Tim and Helen's comments was that historical empathy was a challenge. To begin with neither student felt that they could grasp the concept of historical empathy. Both needed to be sufficiently engaged to persevere with the task of exploring historical empathy through the context of Gallipoli. This is similar to Gehlbach, Brinkworth and Wang's (2012) assertion that understanding can require enthusiasm and energy and what Barton and Levstik have called a willingness to care sufficiently to want to empathise with historical characters.

Historical empathy pathway

To accommodate the ways in which the students' interpretations of historical empathy have influenced my thinking, I have developed an historical empathy pathway (Fig. 3). The Pathway brings together the elements from the analysis of the students' interpretation of historical empathy, as well as drawing from the literature to propose a guiding sequence that could inform teaching. It does not include the less definitional element of historical empathy being 'difficult to do well'. This is because this element lends itself to an interpretation of how students might develop or get better at historical empathy and was explored in another part of my doctoral research not discussed here.

The pathway shows that as students empathise historically they affectively strive to enter into the past. They then cognitively work with multiple sources of evidence (the record of the past) and finally they exit from the past and reflect on their learning (both affective and cognitive) about the past in the context of the present. These can be thought of as three stages/phases, each with their specific elements that together make up historical empathy's affective and cognitive dimensions; in this they replicate Gaddis' (2002) sequence of

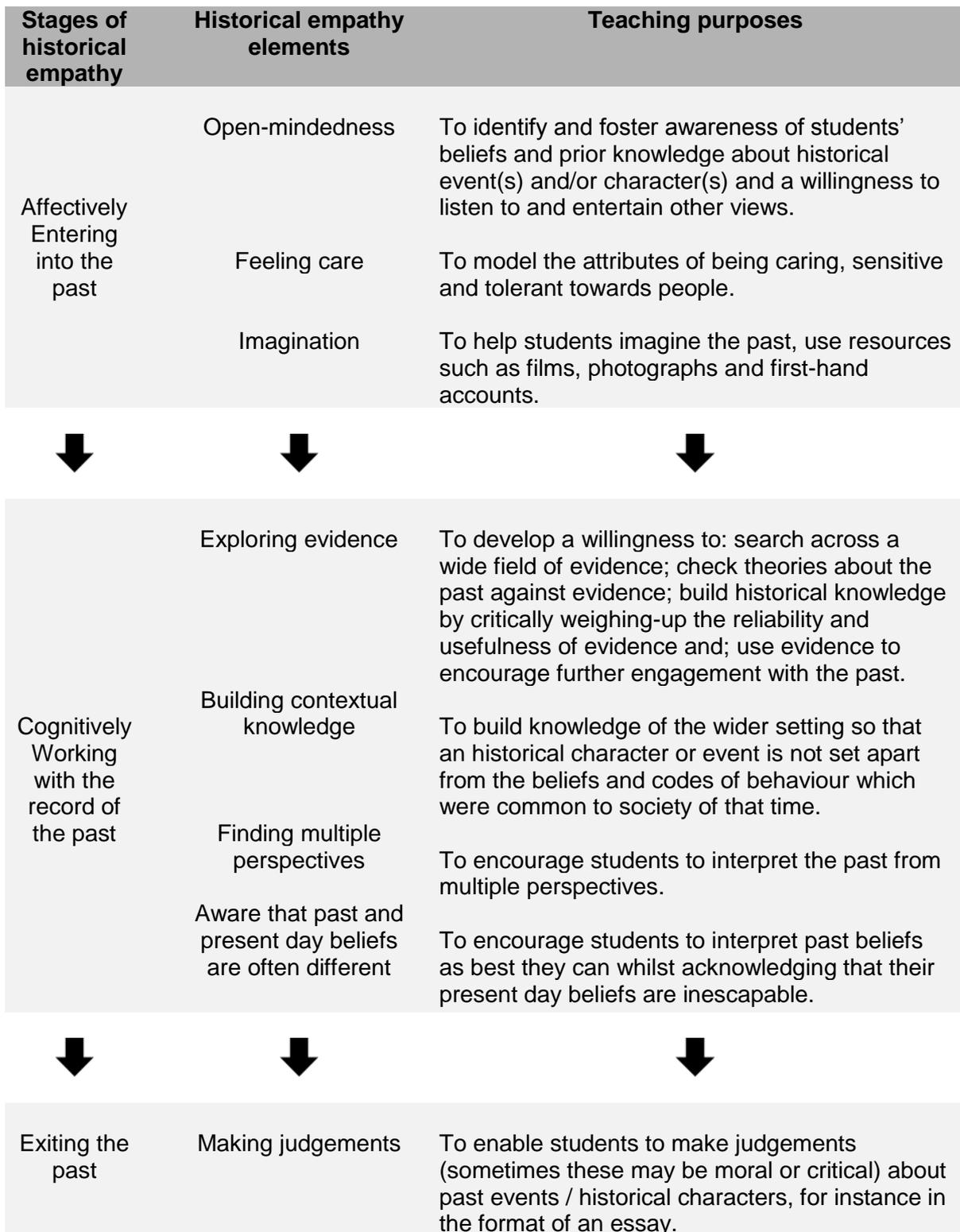


Fig. 3 Historical empathy pathway

learning. I have stopped short of calling this pathway a model because I agree with Stake's (2004) argument that models suppose a "recipe or ideal" (2004:29). Nonetheless, the affective and cognitive elements outlined in the historical empathy pathway are critical components in the sense that if either those belonging to the affective or cognitive dimension were omitted the learning experience would be far poorer.

Conclusion

My findings suggest that students at Eastside School interpreted historical empathy as a relatively complex concept made up of a series of elements. Drawing upon the literature, and in particular Gaddis (2002), I have devised an historical empathy pathway. Whilst particular to my setting as a teacher researching his practice, the pathway is potentially useful in developing knowledge about learning and teaching historical empathy among history education researchers and teachers. While it has long been understood that any given student "is capable of using many different pathways, and tasks, to gain his (sic) measure of skill" (Stake, 1975, p. 16), I hope to have provided readers with a sufficiently rich description of my findings to reflect on whether they could transfer the pathway to their practice.

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Notes

¹ i To help protect the anonymity of the research participants in my doctoral study, pseudonyms were used for for the research setting and participants' names.

¹ ii Māori are the indigenous people of New Zealand. They are the tangata whenua – the people of the land. Before 1300 AD, ancestors of Māori journeyed to New Zealand from Pacific Islands. The arrival of large numbers of Europeans in the 1800s had a significant impact on the way of life of Māori and began what Professor Ranginui Walker has called an "endless struggle of the Māori for social justice, equality and self-determination" (Walker, 2004, p. 10).

¹ iii The Gallipoli campaign in 1915 is sometimes described as a side-show in the larger history of the First World War. For the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) it was a defeat which foreshadowed worse losses on the Western Front. 8709 Australians and 2721 New Zealanders lost their lives in the campaign and as a place where the ANZAC spirit was forged it has found a significance place in the narrative of Australian and New Zealand history.

¹ iv. Interview notation: FI = first interview, SI = second interview, B = boys, G = girls

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DEANNA TROI AND THE TARDIS: DOES HISTORICAL EMPATHY HAVE A PLACE IN EDUCATION?

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Abstract

This paper attempts to challenge objections regarding the place of historical empathy in education, which are related to ideas of empathy as identification, sympathy and imagination. Drawing from literature within the areas of history education, philosophy of history and philosophy of mind, the paper argues for the impossibility and incompatibility of these notions in relation to historical empathy. It also discusses what is involved in understanding past behaviour and briefly suggests key issues that should be taken into consideration when teaching towards the development of ideas of historical empathy.

Keywords

Historical Empathy, Identification, Sympathy, Imagination, Understanding past behaviour

Introduction

What happened in the past is related to human behaviour, which was guided by certain ideas, beliefs and intentions. In this sense, understanding why people in the past acted the way they did, means that we need to understand these ideas, beliefs and intentions. We also need to understand the way they viewed their world and the historical context in which they were situated. In the case of history education, we cannot claim to develop our students' historical thinking without helping them to understand people in the past. This kind of understanding in history education was given the label historical empathy, originally in the UK, mainly due to its adoption by the Schools Council History 13- 16 Project (Lee and Shemilt, 2011; Lee and Ashby, 2001). Since then, the concept has been one of the most contested aspects of history education. Much of the criticism is related to the kind of mental act that historical empathy is supposed to be. Teaching methods related to historical empathy (such as role play and simulation) have been accused of being low quality and promoting an unhistorical approach, by letting students imagine themselves in the past (Harris and Foreman-Peck, 2004). Historical empathy has also been attacked as being a complex and vague concept which promotes 'generalised sentimentality' (Deuchar, 1987, p. 15 cited in Harris and Foreman-Peck, 2004). Finally, some explicitly question its place in education, claiming that the concept 'belongs within the affective rather than the cognitive domain of knowledge' (Low-Beer, 1989, p. 8) and is therefore problematic in terms of teaching and assessment. In this paper, I argue that these objections are mainly due to relating historical empathy to impossible tasks. Tasks which resemble the abilities of Deanna Troi in *Star Trek* and require the use of a TARDIS.¹

¹ Deanna Troi is a fictional character from the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* series. She is a Betazoid, an alien species that can sense and share the emotions of a wide variety of species. The TARDIS (Time and Relative Dimension in Space) is a time machine of alien origin. It is the device that the Doctor, another fictional alien character from the *Doctor Who* series, uses to travel through space and time.

This is partly due to the great variety of meanings given to the term empathy, which have caused (and still do) a great amount of confusion among educators and in many cases lead to problematic teaching approaches.² This lack of consensus regarding the meaning of the term leads some authors to question the place of historical empathy in education (Knight, 1989; Low-Beer, 1989) while others argue for the need to clarify the term in order to avoid confusion.³ Attempting to overcome confusion about the meaning of empathy, alternative terms have been proposed.⁴ However, as in the case of empathy, these alternatives are not immune from confusion and misuse. Although, as is obvious so far in this paper empathy is the preferred term, no claims are being made here about the impossibility of the existence of a more appropriate one. What is much more important is to define what is involved in understanding people in the past in terms of explaining their behaviour and practices.

Historical empathy and identification, sympathy and imagination

In order to avoid many of the possible misuses of historical empathy, Foster (2001) suggests that a better understanding of the concept 'may be derived from an appreciation of what it is not' (p. 169) and claims that historical empathy is not a) identification, b) sympathy or c) imagination. As I will argue in the following paragraphs, Foster's claim is a valid one and can be supported with reference to ideas expressed in the areas of philosophy of mind and philosophy of history.

The first problem with the idea of historical empathy as identification is that there is no way, at least not an epistemologically sanctioned one, to transfer our mind into that of another person and identify with them. Furthermore, as Edmund Husserl (1969) and Emmanuel Levinas (1990) claim, the alterity of another person is what makes understanding them possible, since in the absence of alterity 'the Other' would simply cease to exist as such. In this sense, to claim that the only way to understand other people is to identify with them is problematic since, even if this was possible, we would not be able to tell the difference between them and us. Since identifying with people whom we encounter in our everyday life is impossible, claiming that such an ability exists when we attempt to make sense of people in the past is obviously even more problematic.

In addition, the idea of identification is incompatible with the study of history since it ignores a) the principle that historians are interpreting the past from their contemporary point of view and b) the notion of hindsight (Foster, 2001). As Husserl (1969) claims, whenever we experience an object, it is also experienced by Others. If we do not acknowledge this, our experience of the object will never be objective and real. To realize that our understanding of the world and the Other is one among many understandings also means to become aware of the fact that our own perspective is also contextualized. In the words of Barton and Levstik (2004) 'this is the recognition that our own perspectives depend on historical context: They are not necessarily the result of logical and dispassionate reason but reflect the beliefs we have been socialised into as members of cultural groups' (p. 219). In other words, the historian is not standing on an Archimedean point from which they relate to the historical agent's mind unaffected by their own contextuality.

² See for example, Peter Knight (1989) and Peter Lee and Denis Shemilt (2011).

³ See for example Boddington (1980), Foster (2001), Lee and Shemilt (2011), Lee and Ashby (2001) and Perikleous (2011).

⁴ See for example Davis (2001), Downey (1995 cited in Yeager and Foster, 2001), Lee and Ashby (2001), Barton and Levstik (2004) and VanSledright (2001).

Apropos the idea of hindsight, as Alfred Schütz (1967) argues, there is a major difference in the way we understand people in the present and people in the past. This is because in the case of the past, '[t]he historian already knows perfectly well what the actor intended to do because he knows what he did in fact do. Furthermore, he knows the whole further course of historical events right down to the time he himself asked his question' (p. 213). Although we should refrain from claiming that, as Schütz seems to suggest, knowing what the historical agent actually did can always inform us about their motives and intended outcomes (not all outcomes of an action are intended ones), we can still argue that in many cases their intentions can be illuminated by their later actions and the general course of events that followed. For example, the most convincing argument that the airplane hijackers on the 11th of September 2001 took control of four airplanes with the intention of crashing them on buildings is the knowledge of that this is what they did eventually. In order to explain why they hijacked the planes we do not attempt to identify with them at the moment they took control of them. Instead, we explain this action (hijacking) by reference to a later action (crashing them on the buildings).

Thinking and teaching historical empathy in terms of sharing feelings or sympathising can also be problematic. In fact, it would be unreasonable to try to share the feelings of people in the past since we do not share their beliefs. We cannot also share their hopes or fears since we already know whether they came true or not (Lee and Ashby, 2001). As Max Scheler (1954) argues, in order to understand the Other we do not necessarily need to share their feelings. When, for example, a third person observes parents grieving for the loss of their child, this person does not have to feel their sorrow and despair in order to understand that they have these feelings. Although the observer does not feel their sorrow, this feeling is the object of their empathy. This does not exclude the possibility of the observer also feeling sad, but it is not necessary in order to identify the presence of the feeling or the reason for its existence. In this case, the phenomenon of feeling what the Other feels is not empathy (in terms of understanding the Other), but, in the words of Scheler, 'emotional contagion' and it is not a necessary condition for understanding.

Furthermore, we can also argue that we cannot even share feelings that we ourselves previously experienced. The claim is quite valid if we think of the countless situations in our life where we cannot feel the way we ourselves previously felt, or understand why we felt in a certain way, a few years or even a few hours before. A similar idea is to be found in the work of Collingwood (1961), who distinguishes between acts of thought and feelings and claims that while an act of thought can be re-enacted, the same does not apply in the case of a feeling. The latter 'does not reappear, [since] the stream of experience has carried it away for ever; at most there reappears something like it' (p. 293).

The main argument for an affective aspect of empathy is that feeling something of what people in the past felt and caring about them enhances our empathetic understanding.⁵ However, as already discussed in the previous paragraphs, feeling what people in the past felt is arguably impossible. This, of course, does not exclude the possibility of feeling something. This feeling, though, could be an illusion (falsely believing that what we feel now is what the people in the past felt), or could be related to sympathy (an emotional engagement with people in the past). The fact that these two phenomena can exist does not prove their contribution to understanding people in the past (or even in the present). Illusion clearly cannot enhance understanding, and caring for someone does not always mean that we understand them better. For instance, in traditional ethnocentric approaches in which history aims to develop feelings of admiration for 'our' ancestors, we cannot claim that what is developed is genuine understanding of the people

⁵ See for example Barton and Levstik (2004), Holt (1990) and SREB (1986).

in the past. At best the students respect and admire their ancestors and strive to follow their steps, but this does not mean that they understand them.

Of course, caring for the people in the past is likely to make us more receptive to different points of view and more willing to understand the Other. In history, however, in many cases, we seek to understand the actions of people with whom sympathising is difficult and, for many, even undesirable. For instance, although many teachers would be happy to see their students sympathising with the Nazis' victims, they would probably not wish them to do the same for the Nazis themselves. In history, however, we don't only seek to understand the 'victims', but the 'perpetrators' too. This does not mean that the feelings of people in the past should not be acknowledged or respected. More importantly it does not mean that we should approach these people as inanimate objects. People in the past did things also because of the way they felt. Therefore in history we seek to understand their feelings too. As Lee puts it, if we 'treat people in the past as less than fully human and do not respond to those people's hopes and fears, ...[we]... have hardly begun to understand what is history about' (2005, p. 47). This, however, as already pointed out, is not about sharing their feelings and it is something that we strive to do not only for those whom we like or for whom we feel pity, but also for those who did things with which we disagree, whom we consider to be the wrong-doers, the perpetrators and even evil. In this sense historical empathy is also a disposition of respecting all people in the past, and also their ideas, feelings and beliefs.

Imagination can also be a misleading notion when we think about historical empathy and its misuse often leads to unsophisticated approaches. Lee (1984) points out that 'a good historian, it seems, must have imagination, and a mediocre one lacks it. Too much of it, however, and the result is not just a mediocre historian, but a downright bad one' (p. 85). Although Lee here is right to say that imagination can benefit or hinder historical thinking, we should not think of this issue as merely one of quantity. Collingwood makes a clearer distinction regarding the role of imagination in history when he claims that although the work of a novelist and a historian are both works of imagination, 'the historian's picture is meant to be true' (1961, p. 246). In their pursuit of truth the historian uses historical imagination as a way to connect the available evidence, always taking into consideration the historical context. In this process the historian is responsible both for the connections made and the evidence they used. Finally, they are aware of the fact that their picture can be challenged in terms of the validity of both of these elements. Having the above in mind, imagination can be a problem for empathetic explanations when it is used without taking into consideration the available knowledge about the ideas and beliefs of the people we study and also the historical context in which they lived. In this case our explanations will be closer to a work of fiction than a historical explanation of past behaviour.

Understanding past behaviour

Attempting to provide a description of historical empathy, Shemilt (1984) suggests that the exercise of historical empathy rests upon specific theoretical assumptions. The first one is that the perspectives of people in the past are likely to be different from our own. In other words, we cannot expect people in the past to share the same ideas, beliefs and world views as people today. This realization protects us, and our students, from viewing the different world of the past as culturally homogenous with our present world and from explaining the 'strange' behaviour of its people as the result of their inferiority or irrationality.

Furthermore it allows for the possibility of thinking that people in the past behaved rationally based on their own beliefs and the way they perceived their world. Based on this second assumption, we can then proceed to try to connect the historical agent's ideas, aspirations and

views of the situation to their behaviour in question. As Lee and Shemilt (2011) point out, '[t]he aim is to understand how [a certain behaviour] could make sense: why what was done would have seemed to be the best thing to do in the circumstances' (p. 40). This assumption also stresses the importance of acknowledging the agency of people in the past. In this sense, empathetic understanding also has to do with the acknowledgment that people in the past made their own decisions and their behaviour was not simply imposed by their situation.

A third assumption, proposed by Shemilt, is the idea that '[w]e share a common humanity with people in the past (1984, p. 47). As Lee and Ashby (2001) argue, in order to understand the past empathetically we need to 'entertain purposes and beliefs held by the people in the past without accepting them' (p. 25). This is possible exactly because people in the past were human beings as we are. This idea is also to be found in the work of thinkers within philosophy of mind and history. Schütz (1967) for example, claims that although our world and the one of the past are different ones, they are bound together by the fact that they are both experienced by the human mind. Collingwood (1961) also voices a similar argument with his famous notion of re-enactment, according to which, the same act of thought can be re-enacted in different minds from different times.

Finally, Shemilt argues that our way of life is genetically connected to the way of life of the people in the past. This means that although we cannot experience this past way of life, our contemporary one is developmentally related to it. Hence empathetic explanations are also based on an understanding of how this past way of life fits into a broader pattern of ideas, goals and beliefs, which extends to the present.

At this point, it should be stressed that merely acknowledging that people in the past held different ideas and beliefs and different views of the world and their specific situation, is obviously not enough in order to explain their behaviour. We also need to know about these different ideas and views. Furthermore, we should always bear in mind that these were influenced by the historical context in which the historical agents lived.⁶ In this sense, empathetic understanding demands strong substantive historical knowledge. This does not mean to discover historical agents' ideas and context (since the past is not hidden to be discovered), but to reconstruct them based on the available historical evidence and the methods and the logic of the discipline of history. Therefore, historical empathy cannot exist on its own in the absence of disciplinary and substantive knowledge.

Despite our best efforts and despite how sophisticated our historical understanding may be, limits in our understanding of other people (both in the present and the past) and a distance between them and us will always exist. This call for attention to the limits of our access to the people of the past does not mean that we cannot make any sense of those who lived before us. It does mean, however, that we should be aware of these limitations and the fact that any conclusions are tentative and, often, not a matter of general agreement. Historians and even our students can disagree on their interpretations. Acceptance that there are different interpretations does not mean that 'everything goes' and that all empathetic explanations are equally accepted or equally rejected. Instead, each one has to be assessed on the basis of the validity of its arguments.

Conclusions

⁶ See for example, Shemilt (1984) and Foster (2001).

In the light of the above, teaching historical empathy as the act of explaining past behaviour involves, at least from my point of view, helping students to realize that in this pursuit they need to consider:

- a) the ideas and beliefs about the world that people in the past held which were often dramatically different from the ideas and beliefs that the students hold,
- b) the possible aims, intentions and aspirations of people in the past, and
- c) the historical context in which people in the past lived, which is vital in making sense of the different ways in which people in the past viewed their situation and their world in general.

It is also important to help our students to think about the tentative nature of empathetic explanations and in this sense prevent them from falling into what Collingwood (1961) calls 'the illusion of finality' in relation to knowledge of the past.

It is obvious that this approach demands firm substantive and disciplinary knowledge. In fact some claim that historical empathy is too demanding and students lack the contextual knowledge, historical evidence and life experience needed to make sense of people in the past.⁷ Research evidence from the last three decades, however, challenges such claims and suggests that, as long as we do not expect to educate expert historians, it is possible help pupils to try to understand the feelings, thoughts and actions of people in the past, in a variety of settings. Even younger students, when prompted, seem to be able to move beyond simplistic explanations and start thinking about the differences between them and the people in the past and between the contemporary world and the world of the past. More importantly, students seem to be able to take these differences into consideration when they attempt to explain past behaviour.⁸

It should be pointed out, however, that more needs to be done in this area. Especially in terms of exploring long term effects of teaching practices which aim to develop students' ideas of historical empathy. It is also important to pay more attention to the ideas that teachers themselves hold and the way that these are manifested in their teaching practice. In other words, as with many other issues in history education, the one of effectively promoting historical empathy cannot be considered as settled for good.

In conclusion, my short answer to the big question of the title is that helping students to understand past behaviour and developing their capacity to do so has a place in education. As in the case of education in general, developing ideas of historical empathy is not an all-or-nothing situation. Instead, it is a continuous effort of helping students to move to more powerful ideas by building on simpler ones and challenging ones that are problematic. Provided that we keep striving for developing effective teaching practices based on research evidence, our non-Betazoid students who cannot travel back in time with the TARDIS have a fair chance of making some sense of people in the past.

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⁷ See related arguments in Harris and Foreman Peck (2004)

⁸ For studies relating to students' ideas of historical empathy in a variety of educational settings see for example Ashby and Lee (1987), Cooper (2007), Dickinson and Lee (1978), Dickinson and Lee (1984), Kourgiantakis (2005), Lee and Ashby (2001), Lee, Dickinson and Ashby (2001), Ribeiro (2002 cited in Barca, 2004), Shemilt (1984), Dulberg (2002), Skolnick, Dulberg and Maestre (1999), Barton and Levstik (2004), Yeager *et al* (1998), Doppen (2000) and Perikleous (2011)

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**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE WAYS IN WHICH YOUNG BRAZILIAN STUDENTS USE
SUBSTANTIVE CONCEPTS OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS TO INTERPRET GRAPHIC
NARRATIVES IN HISTORICAL COMIC BOOKS**

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Abstract

This paper investigates how second year high school students in four Brazilian cities employed the substantive concepts of historical consciousness, (LEE, 2006) to interpret historical graphic narratives in the form of history story [comic] books. The research goal was to understand how substantive terms and concepts, some of which are in the form of proper names (RÜSEN, 2007) linked to historical situations, reflect ways in which students express the concepts of intersubjectivity and truth associated with historical identity. The 2011 research programme sought to analyse student responses to a question regarding the recognition of historical situations (FRONZA, 2012) based on qualitative research (LESSARD-HEBERT; GOYETTE & BOUTIN, 2005). The research focused on two historical story [comic] books with different interpretations of the same historical event: the Independence of Brazil (DINIZ & EDER, 2008, p. 41-45; PAIVA & SCHWARCZ, 1995, p. 5-9).

Research findings were related to the theory of historical consciousness (RÜSEN, 2001). The findings were analysed using categories linked to the three mental operations of historical consciousness: experience, interpretation and orientation. The conclusions suggested that elements related to the historical thinking of the students develops knowledge and understanding the substantive terms and concepts involved. Moreover, the way in which the students understood historical truth and intersubjectivity directly influenced the way in which their cognitive processes of historical consciousness structure the 'meanings' given to these substantive terms and concepts in historical graphic narratives, i.e. history story [comic] books.

Keywords

Brazil, Concepts, Rüsen, Historical graphic narratives, Historical truth and Intersubjectivity. History story books [comics], Proper names, Qualitative research, Rüsen, Substantive terms and concepts, Visual representation - pictures

Introduction

I wanted to understand which categories of historical consciousness young Brazilians in four public high schools would employ when they read graphic historical narratives which give two different interpretations of the same experience in the past: Brazilian Independence. My goal was to find out which of the categories, (experience, interpretation and orientation), they use to express the concepts of intersubjectivity and truth linked to their historical identity.

Accordingly, I understand that historical concepts related to proper names (RÜSEN, 2007, p. 93) make sense of substantive ideas⁹ presented to students when they read two versions of historical comic books. I understand that the proto-narrative potential of names and images, linked to historical situations which the students recognized in graphic narratives, provide possibilities for interpretation about apply the processes of historical consciousness.

Proper names¹⁰ are concepts which are substantive elements for the construction of historical ideas which provide a story line to build historical interpretations. According to Jörn Rüsen (2009, p. 9-10) images and symbols that can be approximated by analogy to the proper names are not histories. However, they generate histories, as 'sense bearers' or 'semophores', images stimulate historical consciousness. They have an important role in the production of historical interpretations and a role in the construction of interpretative models. They can be 'principles that carry meanings and generate in temporal interpretation.'

The narrative function of images and proper names is seen when they become landmarks for the formation of a historical interpretation. With this, we can say that the images take the place of a history. In other words, is a 'abbreviated narrative' that provides meanings for some kind of narrative or historical elements for the construction of a history (RÜSEN, 2009, p. 10).

The historical narrative is an expression of historical consciousness constructed from three mental operations. Historical experience is constructed in the relationship between past and present inferred from historical evidence based on sources. The mental operation of historical interpretation refers to the theoretical frameworks of interpretation which give meaning to the historical experiences. Historical orientation constructs a relationship in time between past, present and future in which a person constructs an identity, based on self knowledge, from historical interpretations and experiences.

The Study

Research questions

This study aims to find answers to the following research question: what meanings do young high school students give to ideas of historical truth and intersubjectivity when they read historical comic books?

Methodology

The research cohort was 125 14-18 year-old students in second grade classes in four Brazilian public high school in São João dos Patos, Maranhão (43 students); Três Lagoas, Mato Grosso do Sul (26 students); and Vitória da Conquista, Bahia (33 students); Curitiba, Paraná (23 students), on 9th, 18th and 30th May and 6th October, 2011, respectively. The research used a research tool drawn from a qualitative research methodology, supported by the work of Michelle Lessard-Hébert (2005). The goal was to investigate the meanings given by individuals

⁹ British historian Peter Lee (2006) sets out some principles of historical cognition: substantive concepts refer to the specific content of history, such as Ancient Egypt, the Roman Empire, the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, etc..., and the second-order concepts, are those relating to historical structural ideas of historical thought, whatever the content, such as temporal categories — continuities, ruptures, periodization, etc. — and also those related to the forms of historical understanding, as the concepts of historical explanation, evidence, inference, empathy, significance, imagination, objectivity, truth and historical narrative.

¹⁰ Proper names — such as Julius Caesar, D. Pedro I, Portuguese America, World Cup, Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, Government Geisel — are concepts usually based on historical sources of a specific time, but can also receive their names by historians. These ideas refer to states of affairs and subjects of the past in its singular occurrence in a historical context (RÜSEN, 2007, p. 93; SOBANSKI et al., 2010, p. 24).

to the actions and guidance of practical life they made. The research instrument in question was a questionnaire with open and closed questions that sought to diagnose how young people understand the relationship between comic books and intersubjectivity and historical truth.

This research tool consists of the juxtaposition of two examples of historical graphic narratives, intended to address didactically from an historiographical perspective, the underlying theme of Brazil's Independence Day on September 7, 1822. The first example, called *The Independence of Brazil*, is a cartoon (Diniz & Eder, 2008, p. 41-45). The research also involved a third graphic element, a painting of the key historical moment, figure 3.

Fig. 1



Version A

The second is from an historical story book, version B, called *From Colony to Empire: A Brazil to English People ...* authored by the Brazilian historian Lilia Moritz Schwarcz (Pauva & Schwarcz, 1995, p. 5-9).

Fig. 2



Version B

Following the Peter Lee's criteria (Lee, 2006) these historical visual story books try to avoid anachronisms in relation to subjects and situations in their representations of the past.

The following picture (with dialogue) is an iconic oil painting, *Independência ou Morte*, popularly known as *O Grito do Ipiranga*, produced by Pedro Américo in 1888. Copies of this painting are present in almost all history textbooks in Brazil.

Fig. 3



Pedro Américo de Figueiredo e Mello. *Independência ou Morte*, 1886-1888. Oil on canvas. São Paulo: Museu Paulista.

Available in: <http://historiandonanet07.wordpress.com/2011/01/16/%E2%80%9CIndependencia-ou-morte%E2%80%9D-de-pedro-americo/>. Access jul. 17, 2013.

Now I presented the young high school students answers with the research question[s]: "*Starting from versions A and B, which past situations do you think really existed? Why?*"

Main Results

The research question[s]: 'Starting from versions A and B, which past situations you think really existed? Why?' aimed to diagnose the substantive concepts and proper names that young people understand to be historically true. This question was inspired by the exploratory research of my master's dissertation (Fronza, 2007) and in the English textbook *Skills in History* (Shuter & Child, 1990).

The high school students' answers to this question required the construction of two tables: one related to the past situations that the students believe which really happened (Table I, the other (Table II) refers to the justification about the choice of the past situations.

Past Situations		Curitiba - PR	São João dos Patos - MA	Três Lagoas - MS	Vitória da Conquista - BA	Youngsters Number	
About Brazil's Independence	The Ipiranga's Cry and the Declaration of Brazil's Independence	7	2	14	16	59	82

Past Situations		Curitiba - PR	São João dos Patos - MA	Três Lagoas - MS	Vitória da Conquista - BA	Youngsters Number
	The Ipiranga's margins	0	6	2	2	10
	Independence Anthem	1	2	3	0	6
	September 7 Day	0	1	0	3	4
	The ride for Independence	2	0	0	0	2
	Paintings about the Independence	1	0	0	0	1
Situations with D. Pedro	The letters delivered to D. Pedro I	4	7	5	8	24
	The D. Pedro's rebellion	0	1	3	1	5
	The d. Pedro's White Horse	1	3	0	0	4
	D. Pedro's sword	0	2	0	1	3
	D. Pedro's waiting or rest	0	2	0	0	2
	D. Pedro would return to Portugal	1	0	0	1	2
	Books expressing D.Pedro's words	0	1	1	0	2
	D. Pedro's Clothes	0	0	0	2	2
	D. Pedro's speech	0	0	0	2	2
	Mounted on a donkey	1	0	0	0	1
	Painter criticizes D. Pedro	0	1	0	0	1
	D. Pedro's Soldiers	0	1	0	0	1
D. Pedro Emperor of Brazil	0	0	1	0	1	
Other Past Situations	Version A	10	7	7	6	30
	Version B	6	4	3	5	18
	Report the facts or past cases	1	3	1	1	6
	Crisis and oppression of Brazil by Portugal	0	1	0	2	3
	Proclamation of the Republic	0	0	0	3	3
	All (or almost all)	1	0	1	0	2
	The world wars (rages and wars)	0	1	0	1	2
	History of Brazil	0	1	0	0	1
	History of Humanity	0	0	0	1	1
	Intrigues between France and Portugal	0	0	0	1	1
	Many versions	0	1	0	0	1
	The Whites	0	1	0	0	1
	The Indians	0	1	0	0	1
	Motor vehicles	0	1	0	0	1
	Slaves' Liberation	0	0	0	1	1
Reported by comic books	0	0	1	0	1	
Not answered	0	0	0	3	3	

TABLE 1. The past situations which students believe really happened

It was possible to recognise three categories of responses by the students: situations about Brazil's Independence Day, eighty-two; situations with D. Pedro, 50; other past situations, 73.

The situations that were directly related to the Independence of Brazil are indications which showed that the Ipiranga's Cry and the Declaration of Brazil's Independence actually happened and that this event occurred in the Ipiranga's margins. They also referenced the Independence Anthem and to September 7. These indications point to the youngsters' belief about these situations and that their plausibility is demarcated by the date (September 7), space (the Ipiranga's margins) and sources (Independence Anthem) which, according to tradition, prove

their provenance. There were also quotes related to the ride for Independence and to the painting by Pedro Américo on this event.

This category is linked to his character. Students give great significance to the letter as an important explanatory factor that led to the decision to D. Pedro to support the declaration of Brazil's Independence. The D. Pedro's rebellion, his horse, and his sword were also often cited by students as evidence. Other citations concerning D. Pedro referred included his return to Portugal, his riding on a donkey and his record as emperor of Brazil, his clothes, his speeches and history books that tell his story.

Other more general factors were related by the students to versions A and B, with with reference to reports of facts and previous situations, i.e. cases. Some of these past cases were describe, such as the oppression of Brazil by Portugal, the intrigues between France and Portugal, and the era of Independence - such as the Proclamation of the Republic, the World Wars and the slaves' liberation. It is possible that these references were made by students drawing on their school culture, in relation to the history of Brazil and humanity and relationships between the Portuguese and the indigenous population of the Indians.

I understand the relevance of references of Maranhão students to the Indians, because these indigenous characters were not represented in any of the comic book versions used in the research programme. The Maranhão students reference to Indians relates to their recognition of identity from the perspective of indigenous groups, transmitted either by the traditions of the school culture or because of the proximity of the city to two indigenous territories in Maranhão (Porquinhos and the Apaniekrá Rodeador Guajajara).

To understand the choices it is necessary to investigate the reasons given by the students in Table 2. The responses and justifications can be synthesized from a structure based upon the three dimensions of historical consciousness (experience, interpretation and orientation) that analyses/groups/organises the reasons for the choices by referring to the past situations described¹¹.

¹¹¹¹ Not all mobilizing categories will be presented in this article, just the most relevant.

Mental Operations	Mobilizing Categories	Curitiba - PR	São João dos Patos - MA	Três Lagoas - MS	Vitória da Conquista - BA	Youngster Number
Historical Experience	Situations of the national past	4	13	8	12	37
	The past as authority of tradition	2	3	3	4	12
	Relationship with historical learning	0	3	3	0	6
Historical Interpretation	Relationship with Historical Truth	6	6	5	7	24
	Skeptical relationship with the past	1	2	0	0	3
	Interpretation of Past Experience	1	1	0	0	2
Historical Orientation	Historical memory as national identity	2	7	3	1	13
	Aesthetic relationship with the past	3	0	3	2	8
	The past as orientation for the present	0	1	0	0	1
	Relationship with communication	0	0	0	1	1
HQs' Versions		2	2	1	3	8
Other		0	1	0	0	1
Do not answered		2	4	0	3	9

TABLE 2. Justification of choice made about what really happened in the past situations

Here are the categories constructed from the students' explanations.

1 Historical Experience

Fifty-five young people based their argument on historical experience.

1.1 Situations of the national past

Thirty-seven students, the most, from Maranhão and Bahia, pointed out the situations of the national past as a justification for their choices.

No. Part from where D. Pedro that the slaves are getting freedom (sic.). He goes to fight for the Brazil's Independence (Alexandra - 17 years old - Vitória da Conquista)

Dom Pedro declared independence in Ipiranga River. In all versions he was talking about the banks of this river with the soldiers (Virgília - 17 years old - Três Lagoas)

Upon receiving the initial letter that was the reason for the beginning of Independence until the letter that Pedro was receiving to go to Portugal (Hipólita - 16 years old - Três Lagoas).

I know he was not on a horse, and yes, in a donkey. I think that arrived also a letter (Liberdade - 15 years old - Curitiba).

Among past situations Alexandra connected D. Pedro with the freedom of slaves and then he goes on to fight for political freedom in Brazil. This type of anachronistic confusions was rare in students' responses. It is clear that in the time of D. Pedro there were radical liberals, who were

inspired by the French Jacobinism and ideas of English political economy, who fought against slavery and in favor of a Constitution — as Gonçalves Ledo — and even that sometimes D. Pedro had been allied to this radical wing for support in his project of a unified country's Independence. However, the end of the slave system was not in the plans of D. Pedro nor the Brazilian rural elite, which supported the social pretensions of the future emperor (Paiva & Schwarcz, 1995).

Virgília used a theoretical argument to set the historical plausibility of the Declaration of Independence made by D. Pedro in Ipiranga river: both versions narrated this event in the same location. She uses the criteria of matching data to define historical truth of a situation. Hipólita went further by stating that the letter was a sufficient cause for the attainment of Independence. This student begins to operate mentally from a monocausal historical explanation. The term 'initial letter' is a clue that it references version A. In contrast to the other students, Liberdade relied in counter-narratives representing the version B from a counterfactual assertion by stating that D. Pedro sat on "a donkey" and not on a horse as in the Pedro Américo representation. The letter was another element to be considered. However, this young girl has not developed a reason for explaining this issue.

These interpretations are reflecting the categories proposed by Isabel Barca (2000, pp. 161-165) who found some of these kinds of explanations in her investigation. The hypothesis considered here is that some of the students implicitly drew upon historical explanation without an explicit request to do so. Again, I argue that this phenomenon is due to the stimulating power of historical graphic narratives, because they are elements of youth culture, and can help the researcher reveal the mental operations of young people's historical consciousness, unconscious in principle, because they are deeply rooted. The power of the conclusion (*induction*) (Mccloud, 2005), seminal to the nature of the historical story [comic] book, is one of the structural elements that allow students to express their ideas related to truth and historical explanation.

1.2 The past as authority of tradition

Twelve youngsters, in relative balance between the four Brazilian public schools, indicated the authority of tradition as justification for your choices.

September 7. Because this appears in Brazil parades. In crisis, the arrogance of Portugal (Rosália - 18 years old – Vitória da Conquista).

The delivery of letters, the D. Pedro's rebellion and the Proclamation of Independence, they are the facts that historians say that actually happened (Beatriz - 16 years old - São João dos Patos).

The argument used by Rosália presents the September 7 as a past case: it uses as evidence the parades held on this day up until the present. Following the same path, Brenda indicated the Anthem of Independence as evidence of historical plausibility for the significance of D. Pedro's declaration. However, Rosália also pointed out implicitly, as a contextual cause to Brazilian independence, the arrogance, i.e. the attitudes and behaviour, of Portugal. Again, the moral values are referenced as the basis for an explanatory historical factor.

Beatriz presents an argument of another hue, i.e, the process that culminated in the delivery of the letter, the D. Pedro rebellion and the Proclamation of Independence. Beatriz stated this 'is substantiated by the facts narrated by historians'. She argued that the historical plausibility of this process is based in the findings of the historian. Therefore, at a basic level, she has begun

to explain how to develop the principles of the historical method resulting in an historical interpretation. Possibly Beatriz implicitly indicated an intersubjective relationship between herself and historians by recognizing 'the other' who narrates the history (RÜSEN, 2001).

1.3 Relationship to historical learning

Due to the content of students' responses the analysis indicated that the relationship of the student to historical learning as the employment of historical experience. Six students from São João dos Patos and Três Lagoas justify some of their responses in this way:

The receipt of the letter and the Cry of Independence. From early on we learn this history in school (Ludovico - 16 years old - São João dos Patos).

The letters, the D. Pedro rebellion and Independence. Because that's what history teaches and I believe her (Tom - 15 years old - Três Lagoas).

When D. Pedro said: 'Independence or Death'. By the fact that in all the textbooks are expressed these words spoken by him (Alícia - 15 years - São João dos Patos).

Ludovico and Tom have the same argument by stating that they chose past situations, because they are sourced from history taught in school. Tom went further by stating his belief in this past narrative. Alícia's argument is that the Declaration and the Cry of Independence are real because these are reproduced in text books. She even pointed out that all textbooks contain this historical evidence. Alicia identified the key-point about how this traditional interpretation of history prevailed: by its ubiquity. Elias Thomas Saliba (1999), writing about the iconic images, figures 1-3, states that the power of these icons and the hegemonic perspectives they represent are supported by their omnipresent reproduction in all visual media to which young people relate. Here the public role of history becomes clear.

2 Historical Interpretation

Twenty-nine students responses revealed two aspects of the activation of the interpretative working of historical consciousness, 2.1 and 2.2.

2.1 Relationship to the historical truth

Twenty-four students, distributed equally between the four Brazilian schools, used arguments related to historical truth. Their answers included:

The situation in the past that I think really happened was the version "A", as well as being more complete, it reports more past facts (Marjane - 16 years old - Curitiba).

A (version). Because we can say that in some ways it was more compelling and realistic (Salma - 17 years old - São João dos Patos).

The B version, because the character is actually dressed appropriately). There is his speech. Everything is correct (Comênio - 19 years old - Vitória da Conquista).

Marjane and Salma are students who, to support their version, used arguments sustained in historical plausibility. For students from Paraná, the narrative provides a more complete picture containing more 'past facts'. Behan McCullagh (1998) and Martin (1993) argue that more complete interpretation tends to be the most historically plausible. For a student from Maranhão the convincing power and realism of the B version are the factors that underlie its accuracy. The

student who found the B version the most plausible searched for arguments about the capability of accurate historical representation of this comic book. Comênio bases his argument upon the representation of the clothing of the characters, which for him were more consistent with reality, unlike the forms of dress represented in Pedro Américo's painting, which are part of the traditional view about this event. Again, information regarding the counterfactual tradition appears here. The evidence suggests that this student had a critical historical consciousness, at least in relation to this issue and the investigative question.

An important finding has to do with the explanation of different versions held by these young people, because they were not asked about the difference between the two versions but they addressed it anyway. I understand that these subjects addressed a contradiction between the comic book versions after reading them as they had already made a judgment about which one was more plausible.

2.2 Interpretation of past experience

Two female students, one from Curitiba another from São João dos Patos, developed interpretations of the past to justify their choices. As their responses were similar, one example suffices:

The concentration of the Portuguese on the Ipiranga River's margins and the declaration of Brazil's Independence by D. Pedro. Because of many stories we have heard or seen is one of the unique parts that do not change (Betty - 16 years old - São João dos Patos).

Betty's argument is supported by the idea that the location of the Portuguese (soldiers of D. Pedro) and the Declaration of Independence are moments in the history of Brazil which, in all versions, have a common interpretation. This young girl detected the core basis of the argument of traditional historiography about the theme that is its sole focus. These two aspects of the Independence process dismiss alternative interpretations. So this student realized that while supporting a vision grounded in dogmatism (RÜSEN, 2001 it is a form of historical thinking.

3 Historical Orientation

The mental operation that historical orientation involves was also evident in the responses of twenty three students.

3.1 Memory as a factor in national identity

Thirteen students, including seven from São João dos Patos, mobilised memory in relation to national identity to justify their choices.

The Proclamation of the Republic. Because is marked till today in the history of mankind (Saturnino - 15 years old - Vitória da Conquista).

The moment he (D. Pedro), on the horse, shouted: Independence or Death! We are separated from Portugal (Margrette - 16 years old - São João dos Patos).

The ride for Independence, because there are several paintings about it (Irene - 16 years old - Curitiba).

I think version A really happened, because I remember having studied it. (Valeria - 15 years old - Três Lagoas).

Saturnino produces an inaccurate interpretation of this moment in the Independence movement, confusing it with the Proclamation of the Republic. However, she points out the relevance of this historical event to the 'history of mankind'. It is possible that this interpretation has been made with the idea that other independent nations were emerging world wide. The argument unifying these quotes is the relationship between the experience of the past and reference to the present. Margrette indicated the fact that 'we are separated from Portugal' as a relevant argument to prove the relationship between a past situation and the Independence of Brazil and the contemporary situation. The evidence that "the river" Ipiranga "still exists" was suggested by Norton. In the same way Irane's argument is related to the present as evidenced in the existence of "several paintings" about the ride for Independence.

These three female students presented as criteria an explanation grounded in historical evidence at three levels, based on the historical sources (paintings and places of memory as the Ipiranga River) and the difference between past and present (political separation between Brazil and Portugal). The memory about what was the case in the past is the Valéria's argument which even indicates where this historical memory was coming from: 'I remember having studied. The school culture is the memory place that politically instrumentalized how the historical culture is internalized by young people. Even the choice of the version A also indicates that the graphic narratives' aesthetic dimension (RÜSEN, 2009) is subordinated to political instrumentalization of the school culture to reveal the mental operations that make the youngsters aware, but from a traditional conception of history.

3.2 The past as orientation for the present

It is from Maranhão, the young boy who used the relationship between the past and the present to justify his choice. Here is his answer:

His (D. Pedro) arrival in Ipiranga with his troops and mounted on a horse with a sword, because at that time there were no motor vehicles (Conrado - 16 years old - São João dos Patos).

To Conrado the plausibility of the pictorial representation of the historical situation about Independence is supported by the temporal difference between the picture's visual evidence and how the scene would be represented today. The example given by him was that D. Pedro had a sword and was riding as opposed to the present day, where vehicles are motorized. For this student this reveals an understanding of the transformative nature of historical time and that the historical graphic narratives could represent this historical change by the consistency / accuracy of the evidence they contain in the context of the picture's period. This perspective has been detected in several works of Peter Lee (2006) for the second-order concept of historical change. Bodo von Borries (2009, p. 105-108) also detected in a female student he investigated the understanding of historical change about issues related to its historical identity. We can therefore argue that Conrado presented an ontogenetic historical consciousness which recognize the structural difference between the past and present.

Conclusions

In summary, it is possible to build the relationship between historical truth and intersubjectivity employed by high school students from the history story [comic] books investigated. According to the research evidence, this relationship is structured by the three mental operations of historical narrative: historical experience, historical interpretation and historical orientation.

To justify indications about existing past situations students employed the three mental operations that historical consciousness involves. An attitude of affirmation of tradition prevailed among the students that focused on the operation of historical experience. Regarding the past situations recognized by them they were connected to the predominant representations or the national past, such as the "Ipiranga's Cry", the September 7 Day, the Ipiranga River, including a reference to the Pedro Américo's painting. There were also frequent allusions to the past and the authority of tradition. All of the references relate to the second-order concept of historical evidence and to the category of historical situations. These categories tended to suggest that traditional narratives arise mainly from the students school culture's within a wider national cultural context.

When students applied historical interpretation they indicated scepticism regarding the veracity of historical narratives in the history story [comic] books genre. However, most students in the research programme produced complex modes of causal explanation about the past as narrated in historical comic books. The relationship with the historical truth was more relevant in relation to the historical interpretation process, including counterfactual statements that were explicit in their interpretations. In this category justification based in the traditional affirmation of historical culture was also hegemonic.

Regarding the mental operation of historical orientation, historical memory and national identity involved a proactive strategy for demarcating the type of intersubjectivity that students use to deal with past experiences and which are permeated by political manipulation of the cognitive and aesthetic dimensions in school culture. A student, Conrado, from São João dos Patos, had a sense of orientation in time in which past experiences were expressed through its difference from the present analogous context. For example, he used the example about the use of horse transportation in the nineteenth century as a variation in relation to the present based in the use of motorized vehicles. From this point of view intersubjectivity employed an implicitly affirmative attitude toward the traditional narratives related to the formation of national identity. It appears then a subjectivity, which internalizes, in a positive way, the tradition and the generalizing norms, usually internalized from the school culture.

The historical ideas of these students help us to understand that their concepts of history are very similar to those of teacher-historians and historians. The difference is in the degree of complexity. The research project indicates that the processes of historical enquiry of historian professionals can provide the cognitive tools for high school students to build their own complex and sophisticated historical narratives to consider their own identities and historical modes of acting and thinking.

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CONTACT AND CONTRAST: THE SUBJECT OF HISTORY AND ITS RELATION TO STUDENTS 1905-2005

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Abstract

This paper traces changes in history textbooks and syllabi in Sweden over the past hundred years, not in terms of content, in which the 'Grand Narrative' changes little, but in the different meanings conveyed by the books to students because of the ways in which they are written at different periods. It suggests reasons for the changes. The earlier examples of books and syllabi suggest that in the past life was better than the present; interpretations are linked to understanding contemporary concerns, not to the values of other times. By the late 1960s the emphasis in books is on progress, on the past as different and not as good as the present. In syllabi the student is central, and the starting point is what is current, local, relevant and of interest to the student. By the 1980s there is a stronger social perspective. Most recently the books draw student into the past through fictionalized accounts, adapting to the new media landscape and making links with the students' experiences. Gradually students are encouraged to 'weave themselves into the past' and to realize that their decisions influence the future, a position very similar to the concept of historical consciousness.

Keywords

History text books, history syllabi, Grand Narrative, text books and their messages

Introduction

At a first glance at curricula and textbooks, history teaching and its content in schools appears to be the same over a long period of time. Selected subject matter, which concentrated on political and social processes, war and destitution, peace and progress is in many respects the same. There are however aspects of history's presentation that are seldom analyzed or treated. One such aspect is how the relationship between the past and the student's understanding is approached.

This study is based on the assumption that the relationship between the student and the past makes sense and meaning, and that meaning, particularly in the humanities, increases the understanding of and the interest in the object of study and its broader context. The creation of meaning is central in the subject of history and for history teaching. One sometimes says that history is when the past becomes meaningful and bears significance: 'History is time transformed into sense,'¹² as the German historian Jörn Rüsen expresses the idea. Meaning in this context should be interpreted as a story, an event or a phenomenon set in a context so that it has meaning and becomes understandable for a person.¹³ There are two overarching theoretical interpretations of how cultural objects and receivers interact, and how meaning is thereby communicated or created. Representatives of mass culture theory, the Frankfurt school, argue that the cultural message is strict and tightly packed and that receivers hardly have the possibility of interpreting the message.¹⁴ An opposite approach is found in popular culture theorists, who argue that meaning is a function of the receiver's mind which interprets incoming messages.¹⁵ With today's view of people's historical consciousness and learning and how

¹² Rüsen, Jörn, "Historical Objectivity as a Matter of Social Values", i Leersen, Joep & Ann Rigney (Eds.), *Historians and Social Values*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2000, s. 61

¹³ Se exempelvis Almqvist, Jonas et al, "Pragmatiska studier av meningsskapande" i *Utbildning & Demokrati* Nr 3, 2008, s. 11-17.

¹⁴ Griswold, Wendy, *Culture and Societies in a Changing World*, Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge 1994, s. 86, Fukuoka, Kazuya, "School History Textbooks and Historical Memories in Japan: A Study of Reception" in *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, No 24 2011.

¹⁵ Fiske, John, *Understanding Popular Culture*, Boston: Unwin Hyman 1989 och Griswold 1994, s. 85 f.

knowledge is internalized, the latter interpretation is appropriate to adopt. The present text deals with the following questions: What is the relationship between the past and the reader (the student) in history textbooks during the period from 1905 to 2005? Does the relationship change and if so, how? Is the development recognizable in curricula and syllabi, and does it thereby express anything about any changes in the subject over time?

The above-mentioned theoretical concept, *historical consciousness*, is an underlying and fundamental concept in this present study. Historical consciousness is defined here as an individual phenomenon, in which the person sees herself as interwoven in time by experiencing a connection between the interpretation of the past, the understanding of the present and a perspective on the future. There is a circular link between meaning and historical consciousness, because meaning requires that a person experiences the connection between the different time dimensions. At the same time, historical consciousness functions as the reference frame and interpretation model that gives phenomena and events their meaning. Texts from textbooks and syllabi are discussed in the concluding section, based on the four types of historical perspectives which historian, Peter Aronsson, states describe the relationship between different time dimensions and thereby characterize people's historical consciousness. The first is that the past is fundamentally different from the present and that any connection to the past lies in comparisons and differences. The second type is based on the idea that for the most part, the past is like the present and no great changes are expected in the future either. Another variant, which encompasses the two remaining types, highlights change. In the third type, the idea of steady progress is central. Change, continual improvement, describes the relationship between the past and the present. Finally, the fourth type, in contrast to the preceding case, involves a Golden Age from which we unfortunately slide further away the more time goes by. In other words, everything is getting worse.¹⁶ The four types can be organized along two axes, where one axis refers to types 1 and 2, namely, similar or dissimilar, and along the other axis, the view of development over time, namely, toward improvement or toward deterioration. The model takes shape in the four-field matrix below. In the following discussion, the relationship between past and present in the curricula and syllabi with textbooks' are placed in the matrix, and a discussion is carried out about how the meaning of the different approaches.

Table 1. Historical perspective

	The past is like the present	The past is not like the present
A lost Golden Age – Everything is getting worse		
The Bright Future – Everything is getting better		

Textbooks are relevant to study because they offer content, a message and a perspective, which, in building on students' prior knowledge and interpretation, makes sense of it. In this respect the textbook has a unique position because of its frequent use in teaching¹⁷ and that through its de facto control can stimulate students to develop an understanding of the past and the present. Likewise, students can develop their historical consciousness by reading

Radway, Janice, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1991.

¹⁶ Aronsson, Peter, *Historiebruk – att använda det förflutna*, Lund: Studentlitteratur 2004, s. 77-85.

¹⁷ Skolverket (2005). Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003: Samhällsorienterande ämnen, Rapport 252 2005. Stockholm: Skolverket, s. 35.

themselves into the relationship between the past and the present. The textbook also has a unique position in that it has a dual function. On the one hand a textbook reflects the social, historical and pedagogical context of history of education context in which it is written. At the same time, on the other hand, it influences what students learn.¹⁸

History Textbooks and Students

The importance of text books, and whether students are really influenced by their content and message, is debatable. There are no scientific ways of measuring exactly what students learn, precisely when or how students learn. However it is reasonable to conclude that text books, which students meet regularly and use in organized settings where they are later examined and assessed, must influence students. The majority of Swedish students state that textbooks are central to their instruction and that lessons revolve around them. Educational researchers, Monica Reichenberg and Dagn Skjelbred, go a step further and argue that history textbooks have shaped students' and teachers' basic understandings of the subject and how it is taught; textbooks control thinking even when they are not used.¹⁹

Textbooks are complex documents that should meet requirements from the government and authorities, as well as demands from publishers, teachers and students.²⁰ However, this study focuses on just one aspect of what the books convey about the subject, though an absolutely crucial aspect: the relationship between the reader/student and the past.

A study of school instruction and the materials used must be longitudinal in order to give a comprehensive picture. In the present study the hundred-year period, 1905-2005, has been chosen so that both continuity and change might be identified. The study is based on an analysis of thirteen history textbooks and seven curricula and syllabi. The books investigated are those most sold and so used during a period and so those that most students have come into contact with. Thus the study of textbooks comes as close as possible to what is taught, although the period studied extends nearly one hundred years back in time. It is certainly not possible to access sales statistics from textbook publishers, but interviews with publisher representatives and several generations of teachers have provided a satisfactory basis for the choice textbooks examined.²¹ To obtain comparability over time, two study areas or time epochs are investigated which recur throughout the investigation: Antiquity and the French Revolution.

In order to identify text passages that highlight a relationship between the past and the present, I have read the texts closely. The aim was to consider how the writing in the textbook relates the past to the reader and to her time. The analysis was made through my active search for passages, formulations and contexts, in which a contact between the past and the reader's time was described. In the same way, I studied policy documents from the period 1905 to 2005 but the study focuses on textbooks, because they are the reality students have actually met. Later my observations about text books were related to the policy documents.

¹⁸ Ammert, Niklas, *Det osamtidigas samtidighet: Historiemedvetande i svenska historieläroböcker under hundra år*, Lund och Uppsala: Sisyfos förlag 2008, s. 26 ff och Karlsson, Klas-Göran, "Läroboken och makten – ett nära förhållande" i Ammert, Niklas (red.), *Att spegla världen: Läromedelsstudier i teori och praktik*, Lund: Studentlitteratur 2011, s. 47 ff.

¹⁹ Reichenberg, Monica & Dagn Skjelbred, "Critical Thinking and Causality in History Teaching Material", i Helgason, Thorstein & Simone Lässig (Eds.), *Opening the Mind or Drawing Boundaries? History Texts in Nordic Schools*, Göttingen: V&R Unipress/Georg Eckert-Institut für Schulbuchs forschung 2010, s. 185 ff.

²⁰ Ammert, Niklas, "Om läroböcker och studiet av dem", i Ammert, Niklas (red.), *Att spegla världen: Läromedelsstudier i teori och praktik*, Lund: Studentlitteratur 2011, s. 30 ff.

²¹ Korrespondensen med representanter och lärare finns i författarens ägo.

The past with elements of the present – The period 1905 -1960

At the outset I can say that 'The great narrative' that has been long regarded as the foundation of education and formation of Western society – exists in rather an unchanged form throughout twentieth-century textbooks. Greek mythology, democracy in Athens, the Persian wars, the Punic Wars and prominent Roman emperors are at the center of textbooks on Antiquity. In the case of the French Revolution, the descriptions concern the situation under the Ancien Régime, the Enlightenment, the Bastille and the Reign of Terror. Regarding perspective taking, however, in many respects, presentation and interpretation change during three different periods of the twentieth century, which are set in this paper.

During the first half of the century, the chronological perspective dominated, with stories that followed a line from the beginning via the periphery to the end.²² A noteworthy feature is that the historical narratives link the writers to events and issues that were current at the time of the book's publication. The last three lines of the passage below should be particularly studied.

Themistokles realized all too well that the small land area of Greece was inferior to that of Persia; therefore he wanted the Greeks to build a strong fleet, for on water the Greeks were more at home than the Persians. At this time there was a proposal to distribute the income of the state's silver mines among the citizens. Themistokles suggested instead that these funds should be used for ship-building. However, from this it would follow that the fourth class citizens in Athens, as the ship crews, would have increased military service obligation, and therefore should have the same rights in the state as the three other classes.²³

In the middle of the story about the Athenian fleet, the author writes about the struggle for national rights of the Athenian ship crews. This was written during the time when voting rights were a hot topic in Sweden.²⁴ The writer lets the past come into the present and implies a possible development; at the same time current issues of the present are used to understand the past.

Ideologically, The ideological charge is an observation that It is interesting to consider the story's ideological, message-bearing function. It is obvious the interpretation is contemporaneous with the textbook rather than based on the values climate at the time of the historical occurrence. Another expression of a contemporary ideological position is in the following quotation:

Revolution means violent overthrow of the old community. The opposite is reform, the peaceful, lawful change, which repairs rather than destroys. Just as no single person under ordinary circumstances prefers to burn down his house instead of repair it, so there must be extraordinary reasons for a whole people to further lay waste a social structure, painstakingly erected through generations of labor.²⁵

²² Ammert, 2008, s. 82 ff.

²³ Rydfors, Aron, *Historisk läsebok: Allmänna läroverkets första och andra klass*, Stockholm: C. E. Fritzes K. hofbokhandel 1904, s. 161.

²⁴ Andersson, Lars I, *Sveriges historia under 1800- och 1900-talen*, Stockholm: Liber 2003, s. 108. Se också Boëthius, Simon Johannes, *Allmän historia för realskolan*, Stockholm: P. A. Norstedts förlag 1905, s. 42 och Rydfors, 1904, s. 201.

²⁵ Ekmark, Johan Olof & Aron Rydfors, *Läsebok i allmän historia för realskolan II: Nya tiden efter år 1650*, Stockholm: C. E. Fritzes bokförlag 1920, s. 161. Rydfors, 1923, interprets the results of the French Revolution as "[A]fter a few years the french people were som tired of the terror regime, that they were ready to lay down the new 'freedom', in order to regain law and order". (s. 63)

This quotation can either be interpreted as the author rejecting the idea of overthrowing a society or that under exceptional circumstances it can be justified. The book came out in the years after the Russian Revolution and the discussion on revolution was current at the time. In terms of the meaning-bearing function, questions about the link between then and now, and how the reader can read herself into the text, are interesting. It can be seen that the past is crucially linked to the present can be seen in Agrippa's fable about different tasks being the foundation of societal harmony. The implication for the reader is that separate tasks and responsibilities are essential also in today's society.²⁶

When the present ruled the past – The period 1960-1994

If we are to have a prefect in a class or a captain of a football team, it is natural for us to let the members in the class or the team participate and vote on who will be class prefect or team captain. And every vote counts the same, as one vote. [...] We call this democracy.²⁷

The perspective in 1965 has origins in the present, where the reader recognizes him or herself. The description deals with an ideal type of representative democracy.

If we go back 200 years in time, and see how society was organized then, we find – as in the case of industry – completely different conditions. In the 18th century people were not considered as equal.²⁸

The text moves students to the middle of the eighteenth century and the contrast to our time is striking. It is a crucial difference that then people are not seen as equal. Therefore the eighteenth century appears obsolete and strange. The picture of the past as faraway and exotic is strengthened by the 1700s being described without chronological or contextual support. No attempt is made to justify the historical comparison.

The textbooks draw on the reader's prior knowledge to a large extent, especially when making connections to the time in which the reader is located. Tham & Häger frame the change and novelty by building on the present and pointing out analogies:

It is not often that we see a horse in traffic on our streets today – it has almost completely played out its role as a draft animal. But the horse has had great importance for development and once created as great a revolution in transport as the locomotive did in the nineteenth century and the combustion engine in the twentieth century.²⁹

The reader can understand the importance of the horse for humans based on the importance of the locomotive and the combustion engine for later development. Similarly, Hildingson uses the British colonies in North America in order to explain the Greek colonies and how they could grow more powerful than the mother country.³⁰

²⁶ Rydfors, Aron, *Allmän historia för folkskolan – i valda stycken*, Stockholm: C. E. Fritzes bokförlag aktiebolag 1923, s. 24.

²⁷ Dannert, Leif & Waldemar Lendin, *Historia för grundskolans högstadium 1 Årskurs 8*, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell 1965 (a), s. 34.

²⁸ Dannert & Lendin, 1965 (a), s. 34.

²⁹ Tham, Wilhelm & Bengt Åke Häger, *Historia: Grundskolan årskurs 9*, Stockholm: A V Carlssons bokförlag 1965, s. 19.

³⁰ Hildingson, Lars, *Levande historia: Högstadiet*, Stockholm: Natur och Kultur 1987 (a), s. 58.

A distinctive feature of the period from the 1960s to the early 1990s is that the present is the starting point and an explanatory reference. The textbook authors more often choose to use interpretation frameworks from the present when they are dealing with historical events. The purpose is probably so the students can more easily understand problems in the past by linking to contemporary conditions and problems. The ideological character is also clear during the latter half of the 1900s. It appears in Tham & Häger's book from 1965, for example, where class issues and social conflicts are central when describing Roman culture. The authors of the texts and the students who read them during the 1960s, were in a social context where class issues became an increasingly familiar way of looking at reality. Pictures of class pyramids, with keywords such as class, base, production, and power struggle, were assumed to be understood and not explained.³¹ In many contexts the past being painted in dismal colors compared with, and contrasted to, the good present. Öhman shows an example where the Romans had a completely different view of human life than what we have.³² The implication is that development has progressed, from a dark to a lighter time. Description of a more undeveloped and thereby worse situation in the past is a way to legitimize the contemporary political and social systems.

The texts are likely meaningful to the reader in different ways. A major change in the 1960s books is that they encourage the reader to identify with the text or the text communicates with the reader in another way. The reader identifies with the text because the reader is directly addressed: 'If you and I...'. One further change is seen in the 1980s, when the textbook authors begin to use a type of narrative which has a social and almost ethnographic perspective, with 'ordinary' people's lives at the centre. The stories produce clear images.³³

The students' ability to interpret the past and orient themselves in time ought to be fairly good, since I have described typical feature of the period was that the present is used as the basis for understanding the past. However, the present-day reader understands that the past is related to our present day, but was not at all like the present; the past *is like* our now. There are further nuances of the 1960s one which must consider. In several instances, the comparison between now and then forms the basis for the contrast effect that shows what is different in the past.³⁴ It is obviously one possible way to interpret the past, but it can hinder opportunities to see connections over time. Or maybe the opposite: the contrast effect helps us to understand better what was. In other words, one can ask in what ways do the contrasts show how the present builds upon the past. It is also hard to see how the student can orient herself in time if the whole presentation builds on everything being different before, and everything becoming better with time.

Snapshots and fictional narratives – The period 1994-2005

Soon she will arrive in Rome. The morning chill has given way to the intense sun. She is tired. First war, then captivity and the journey to the slave market. After that the long voyage over the

³¹ Hildingson, 1987 (a), s. 63, 92, 100, Hildingson, Lars, *Levande historia 2. Högstadiet*, Stockholm: Natur och Kultur 1987 (b), s. 191, 193, Öhman, Christer, *Historia för högstadiet: SAMS*, Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell 1989, s. 131, Tham & Häger, 1965, s. 75.

³² Öhman, 1989, s. 87.

³³ Hildingson, 1987 (a), Kvinnors position och roll betonas särskilt i Hildingson, 1987 (a), s. 66 ff, 76, 98 ff. 117, Öhman, 1989, s. 46, 59 f, 80 ff., 134.

³⁴ Lowenthal, David, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985, s. xvi f, och 35ff.

sea and now the road from the harbour. It hurts and feels tight in her left leg. Three months later she still feels the hot iron.³⁵

In the midst of the action the reader meets her: a girl about whom nothing is known, except that she has been sold as a slave. Acquaintance comes quite readily because the story provides detailed information, for example it feels tight in her left leg from where she has been branded. Her owner is a rich man in Rome. That is where she is on her way. She will be a domestic slave. It is hard to be happy when one has lost everything. She was not even allowed to keep her beautiful Greek name. Now she is going to be Tertia, meaning the Third in Latin, a language that she does not understand.”³⁶

The context is clarified when it becomes clear that the girl is on her way to Rome. The authors name her and expand the reader's knowledge by including actual conditions in ancient Rome.

*Suddenly she stops. In the distance the city sprawls. It is really big, much bigger than the cities she has seen before. But what are the strange city walls that run criss-cross over the fields? Primus laughs and explains that they are aqueducts that supply Rome with water. He takes her hand and pulls her into the city. All the new sights intoxicate her. For a moment she forgets the pain in her groin and feels free.*³⁷

The quotation is a typical example of the different approaches to the subject matter that appear in history textbooks in the early 2000s. A key element is that the books again present whole narratives. However, it is a new kind of narrative that has not appeared in earlier books. The text content is a fictional, dramatized and romanticized story that leads the reader into the past. Such a way of telling a story lies well in line with Hayden White's thoughts about narrated history being both found and invented. It has undergone selection, clarification and adaptation to the modern media landscape, and thus is not understood as a perceived or realistic history.³⁸ Another aspect is that one tries to make the text vivid and comprehensive through placing the reader directly in the event. The presentation is embellished with the help of drawings and details whose authenticity the author cannot possibly substantiate. In a comment box to the text introducing the 1990s period above, the authors clarify that the story is fantasy, but based on facts.

The writers largely use the reader's probable prior knowledge as a way to describe events in breadth and depth. Hildingson & Hildingson use 'a red thread,' a little box that introduces each chapter in the book. The thread should reconnect to the material studied previously and thereby maintain continuity in the presentation.

Another and more common way to appeal to the reader's understanding is to connect to the present. In many instances the texts allow formulations about our time and our lifestyle to be clarifications and exemplify connections. In such formulations students can also interpret the past and orient themselves in time. Textbooks of the early 2000s present history in ways which enable readers to place themselves in similar situations. It is no longer clear that the present

³⁵ Nilsson, Erik, Hans Olofsson & Rolf Uppström, *Punkt SO Historia: Grundbok Del 1A*, Malmö: Gleerups 2001, s. 56.

³⁶ Nilsson et al, 2001, s. 57.

³⁷ Nilsson et al, 2001, s. 57.

³⁸ White, Hayden, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1978, s. 82 f.

time is the norm and the past is the strange contrast, as was the case in the history textbooks from 1962-1994. Rather the present is an explanatory reference point. The following assignment involves the reader thinking about the Roman military power: 'Show that the army gave work to many people. Have you got some examples from our time of the military offering employment for many people?'³⁹ Current with the reader's time were closures of military installations and transference of state authorities in Sweden. Our time is also used as a reference point when the importance of the Punic wars is explained: 'For the Romans these wars were almost like the First and Second World Wars for us present-day Europeans. Everyone always talked about the events of the wars.'⁴⁰

Contemporary textbooks are characterized largely by people today being able to participate in the past and the past being brought to life. This manifests itself most in the fictional stories described above. The authors also use thoughts about ideals and values as explanatory and unifying elements. In the narrative on ancient Rome concepts like anti-Semitism⁴¹ and equality⁴² appear. In all likelihood they were not used at the time, but they are discussed within the historical context of conditions about two thousand years ago. At the same time, questions on the same subject are allowed to emerge from our modern perspective. Thus, today's issues can meet the past and – presumably – the past can help students to understand the present.

Curricula and syllabi for the subject of History

Teaching plan for national statutory education in schools in 1919

Statutory school education lasted six or seven years. (In 1936 seven-year compulsory schooling was began.⁴³) This study examines particular history textbooks for the final years of the compulsory schooling and how the periods 'Antiquity' and the 'French Revolution' were presented investigating how the past was related to the reader's time. Textbooks are compared, as well as the goals and policy documents for history teaching, during the last years of compulsory schooling.

In the opening sentence to the teaching plan of 1919 the following passage appears:

History teaching in the compulsory school has the task of giving children, according to their age and ability, an appropriate presentation of our nation's history, thereby particularly familiarizing them with important personalities, events and period phenomena, which contribute to the culture's enhancement or are of major importance for understanding the social life and societal conditions in our time, and instilling in children a sound patriotic feeling and healthy community spirit.⁴⁴

A connection between the past and the present is thus considered to be clear and unproblematic. Teaching about the past will lead to the understanding of the reader's own time. The line between then and now is unbroken, and both time dimensions stand in direct

³⁹ Hildingson & Hildingson, 2003, s. 231, uppgift 3, s. 216 uppgift 2, 3, 5 och 13. Nilsson et al, 2001, s. 85, uppgift 3.

⁴⁰ Nilsson et al, 2001, s. 62.

⁴¹ Nilsson et al, 2001, s. 81.

⁴² Hildingson & Hildingson, 2003, s. 229. Nilsson et al, 2001, s. 43, Nilsson, Erik, Hans Olofsson & Rolf Uppström, *Historia punkt SO: Grundbok del 2A*, Malmö: Gleerups 2002, s. 48.

⁴³ Edgren, Henrik, "Folkskolan och grundskolan", i Larsson, Esbjörn & Johannes Westberg (red.), *Utbildningshistoria*, Lund: Studentlitteratur 2011, s. 113.

⁴⁴ *Undervisningsplan för rikets folkskolor, 1919*, Stockholm: Svenska bokförlaget P.A. Norstedt & söner 1945, s. 100.

connection with one another. There is also an ambition to tie events to the student's own time in the following teaching plan.

*In so far as possible, the historical account should be based on or tied to surviving remains and memories of the past in the local and regional area, such as old roads and bridges, fields from time immemorial bearing harvests, monuments, buildings, relics, customs, folksongs, legends, etc.*⁴⁵

Syllabi and teaching methods guidelines for secondary schools 1955

In the 1950s a comprehensive plan for instruction in the nation's secondary schools was implemented. In 1953 there were 55,048 students enrolled in secondary schools and other upper schools in Sweden, which represents about 20% of the total number of students aged 12-14 years.⁴⁶ From the syllabus text, it appears history instruction should build on the earlier compulsory school instruction. Under the heading *General Remarks*, the authors of the syllabus state:

*"History teaching is not just a task to impart students with knowledge of certain historical persons, events and circumstances, but also and more importantly, to open them to the historical perspective, which is necessary for a proper understanding of the past as well as of our own time. Instruction in history, undertaken in the right way, can contribute at the same time to arousing reverence for the nation's heritage and belief in its progress. It is first through the historical perspective that one realizes movement, the unstoppable changing of events, and one is freed from a static view of existence."*⁴⁷

The emphasis is not primarily on the events, persons and circumstances themselves, but rather on the students' understanding of the past as well as of their own time. One word that is emphasized is *perspective*, which is implicitly considered to be the way toward understanding and to the process view of history as described with the following words: '[...] movement, the unstoppable changing of events.'⁴⁸ The historical perspective is on one side of the equal sign and change on the other. This is a new perspective in the policy document of 1955. The relationship between the past and the present gets clear emphasis when the syllabus expresses that teaching can arouse both reverence for the past and belief in progress. The perspective forming the basis for a historical perspective in the syllabus description of the learning material, however, is not clear.

Wording that can be linked to the meeting between the past and the present concludes the description of Antiquity: 'General ancient history can appropriately be concluded with a summary of the ancient culture's importance for future generations.'⁴⁹

A clear and concrete example is to be found in terms of students' own landscape and the history of the home area. The teacher should 'not neglect, on all appropriate occasions, to relate to the local region and its historical memories.'⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Undervisningsplan för rikets folkskolor, 1919, s. 108.

⁴⁶ *Statistisk årsbok för Sverige 1955*, Statistiska Centyrälbyrån, Stockholm: F.A. Norstedt & söner 1955, s. 278.

⁴⁷ *Kursplaner och metodiska anvisningar för realskolan*, Kungliga Skolöverstyrelse, Stockholm: Svenska bokförlaget Norstedts 1955, s. 103.

⁴⁸ *Kursplaner och metodiska anvisningar för realskolan*, 1955, s. 103.

⁴⁹ *Kursplaner och metodiska anvisningar för realskolan*, 1955, s. 104.

⁵⁰ *Kursplaner och metodiska anvisningar för realskolan*, 1955, s. 106.

Curriculum for compulsory school 1962 (Lgr62)

In the 1960's compulsory education was reorganized into a nine-year compulsory education for all pupils and in 1962 a new curriculum was implemented. Under the heading *Objectives and guidelines*, democracy education and informing the students' knowledge and skills are at the centre of the compulsory education mission. Among these general formulations, it is also stated that students should achieve a broader understanding of the natural and cultural world:

Through an objectively-characterized instruction in Christianity education and in social studies and natural science subjects, bring them into the surrounding reality and in the past, and seek to clarify the connection between the past and the present as well as orient them in philosophical issues.⁵¹

The word 'connection' is an interesting formulation. Is it a connection in a relative sense (more neutral) or does it mean that there really is a connection in the sense that the past and the present are bound together?

For the subject of history, important events, phenomena and personalities have continuity between and throughout the curricula. Lgr62 complements this by stating that history instruction should 'give the student an idea of the life, which past generations lived and of the significance of that heritage, which they left behind.'⁵² The wording is neither new nor striking in this context. What is new, however, is that the students' contemporary time is emphasized: 'Substantial space should be allotted to our own time.'⁵³

Regarding the eighth grade, which for several elective study areas in the primary school, was the last year that one studied history, one is immediately met with this introductory sentence: 'General and Nordic history from about 1815 to the present time has its main foundation in current events and conditions [...].'⁵⁴ It is a clear indication that one should have a basic foundation in current events and circumstances. Further examples are given in the following note to teachers, 'In many situations it can be suitable to take local circumstances as the starting point for the study of an era.'⁵⁵ The curriculum text even handles issues about right and wrong, and good and evil, with more specific regard to racial persecution and minority oppression. The emphasis, in these cases, is on illuminating the historical origins of racial persecution and minority oppression, which means that in our day these are the main objectives.⁵⁶ It is also pointed out that the study of the last 150 years of history can be based on what the students know about current events and conditions. Also, in terms of material selection and organization, relevance for the present is the priority. In addition to describing several areas of development, the curriculum writers lay focus on 'what knowledge is deemed to be essential for understanding today's world.'⁵⁷ Here, however, the present is not the obvious starting point for study, but the understanding of today's world is the priority. The word *development* appears frequently. It is not a 'neutral' development, but a development that implicitly means that things are getting better.

Curriculum for compulsory schools 1969 (Lgr69)

⁵¹ *Läroplan för grundskolan 1962*, Stockholm: Kungliga Skolöverstyrelsen 1962, s. 15.

⁵² Lgr 62, s. 252.

⁵³ Lgr 62, s. 252.

⁵⁴ Lgr 62, s. 253.

⁵⁵ Lgr 62, s. 254.

⁵⁶ Lgr 62, s. 258.

⁵⁷ Lgr 62, s. 254.

Just seven years after the introduction of nine-year compulsory schooling was introduced, a new curriculum (Lgr69) was determined. The main change eliminated the elective vocational and academic specialisations in the ninth year, but instead there was one more common year together. Another change, purely content, was that the capabilities and needs of the individual student her were written up. Even the introductory heading was worded 'The student in the centre.'⁵⁸

In terms of relationships between the past and the present, there is less intensity in the Lgr69 descriptions compared to those in Lgr62. Lgr69 emphasizes that schools should give students a perspective on society's variability, so that they both understand the conditions in their own time and hold onto what is valuable from the past.⁵⁹

The syllabus for the social studies subjects expresses the following in the general section:

Instruction should further give an idea of the life that past generations lived and on the significance of the heritage they left behind, and thereby attempt to create an understanding of each period and its gestalts should be judged, based on its conditions.⁶⁰

It is noteworthy that the text points out that every epoch and its gestalts should be judged on its own conditions, which has not been clarified in earlier course plans. The phrase thus implies that respect for the past as well as for the students' contemporary time is important. The perspective means further that the ability to see across time-boundaries is emphasized. The education authorities' view on how the instructional content should be treated highlights what is current, local and relevant to the student.

The treatment of a content unit in the social studies subjects can in general be introduced by taking up one of the student's current questions or by raising other issues that require a closer study, or by presenting lesson material to be learned.⁶¹

Regarding selection of learning material within history, the indications are even more specific. The guiding premises should be: 'Emphasis should thus be placed on such phenomena that make a substantial contribution toward creating the conditions, problems and tensions that prevail today.'⁶² The selection should clearly relate to the present so that the students understand today's world.

Curriculum for compulsory schools 1980 (Lgr80)

In the curriculum of 1980 for compulsory schooling, the student and her knowledge continues to be at the centre. The curriculum's general section states that students have knowledge and experiences gained outside of school: 'Schooling must tie the learning to these.'⁶³ Similarly the curriculum stipulates that teachers must try to build on the students' curiosity in their teaching.⁶⁴ The spotlight is directed all the more towards the student, her curiosity and her questions. A consequence of this is that the emphasis on the present should be obvious, which in part is

⁵⁸ *Läroplan för grundskolan, Lgr 69*, Stockholm: Skolöverstyrelsen 1969, s. 10.

⁵⁹ Lgr 69, s. 11.

⁶⁰ Lgr 69, s. 170.

⁶¹ Lgr 69, s. 173.

⁶² Lgr 69, s. 184. Se även *Läroplan för grundskolan Lgr 69: Supplement Orienteringsämnen Högstadiet*, Stockholm: Skolöverstyrelsen 1969, s. 18.

⁶³ *Läroplan för grundskolan Lgr 80: Allmän del*, Stockholm: Skolöverstyrelsen 1980, s. 14.

⁶⁴ Lgr 80, s. 48.

confirmed in the course plan: 'the students' own experiences and observations should be the starting point for studying the surrounding environment.'⁶⁵ At the same time, authors of the course make it clear that instruction should help the student to put herself in a larger temporal and spatial context. The lessons should contribute to the student learning that every era has its own character and that its people should be judged according to the conditions prevailing at that time.⁶⁶

The authors of the syllabus in history more concretely formulate how the overall time context should be treated:

The instruction should help the students to put themselves in the greater context of time and space. They should have the opportunity to experience that their own lives have roots in earlier generations. The studies should lead to the insight that material conditions, ideas and beliefs influenced the shaping of people's lives. The students should also be made aware that it was and is possible to change the prevailing conditions. They should learn that every era has its character and that its people should be judged according to the conditions that prevailed then. The students should be familiar with different ways of looking at the historical development.

*Instruction should lead to the students' knowledge of such events and phenomena that contributed to creating the conditions that exist today. By analyzing the prevailing conditions from an historical perspective, students should be aware that the future depends on the actions and decisions of yesterday's and today's society.'*⁶⁷

The syllabus for secondary school history teaching does not mention the word *history* as the name of the subject. Instead there is the heading 'Human activity – Time perspective.' The content is organized under eight points. Of these, five points illustrate the relationship between the past and the present. The perspective on the present is visible, but not dominant.

Syllabus in the Curriculum for Compulsory Schooling 1994 (Lpo94)

Subject area syllabi and assessment criteria from 1994 are collected in a separate document, apart from the general curricula with general descriptions. Unlike Lgr80, the identity of the subject is clarified, and for history, its aim has been taken from the 1960s' emphasis on the present, to a greater emphasis on contact between the past and the present.

The subject history fosters knowledge that makes it possible to see oneself and phenomena in the present as part of a historical development. The aim of history education is to develop critical thinking and an analytical approach, as tools to understand and explain society and its culture. The subject should stimulate students' curiosity and desire to broaden their world in a time dimension, and provide the opportunity to empathize with the past and the circumstances that existed for men, women and children in different cultures and in different social classes. This should develop an understanding of the present and be a foundation for establishing a perspective on the future.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Lgr 80, s. 121.

⁶⁶ Lgr 80, s. 120.

⁶⁷ Lgr 80, s. 120.

⁶⁸ *Kursplaner och betygskriterier 2000 grundskolan*, Stockholm: Skolverket 2000 (Del av Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet 1994, Lpo94), s. 76.

In other words, the text describes instruction that strives to have students experience themselves as interwoven in time. The descriptions are very close to the definition of the concept *historical consciousness*, which was formulated by Karl-Ernst Jeißmann in 1979⁶⁹ and which for many years has been central to research on history didactics and research on the use of history, as well as to the curricula and course plans in some countries. The concept *historical consciousness* is the first objective to strive towards in the *Syllabi and Assessment criteria 2000*. Besides the more abstract goals to strive after, the curricula and syllabi of Lpo94 contain learning objectives. The learning objectives are more concrete and make up the foundation for what is required of a student to pass the subject after Grade 9. Among these objectives are several formulations that concern mainly the contact between different time periods. '[...] to be able to identify and reflect on some different historical events and developments with significance for our own time.'⁷⁰

Contact and contrast – a summary discussion

Generally, Swedish history textbooks for 14 to 16-year-olds in the twentieth century contained a canonic selection of material. However, there are substantial differences regarding specific aspects, and borrowing a musical expression, the approaches in the textbooks can be described as *variations on a theme*.

The first half of the 1900s is characterized by textbooks expressing continuity with emphasis on the similarities between the past and the present, together with reverence for a lost, but highly valued past. The emphasis on continuity is present throughout policy documents. Both textbooks and syllabi see an unbroken line between the past and the present, in which the past is like the present. Given Aronsson's typology, the description of the relationship to the past is 'Nothing new under the sun.' The past was good, which can be exemplified with the description of 'important personalities, events and period phenomena, which contribute to the culture's enhancement or are of major importance for understanding the social life and societal conditions in our time.'⁷¹ The past is a lost golden age, so the ideals and values from the past are seen as morals in the sense-making process. Correspondingly, the current social issues are written in a story about the past and thereby given legitimacy and positive value.

A possible interpretation of why policy documents and textbooks impart the above-described perspective is that in many respects the first half of the twentieth century was a time marked by transformation of society in terms of urbanization and democratization. There was also considerable concern about the world in connection with World War I, the interwar period and World War II. Curricula and textbook wording highlights a mainly conservative view of society and a nationalism that aimed at unifying the people. A possible interpretation therefore is that the state's goal was to promote peace and stability in society.

During the period from 1962 to 1994 the textbook writers clearly use contemporary time as the starting point, which should increase the students' opportunities to refer to known phenomena and conditions. Change and clarification of the differences in relation to the past are other features. History does not repeat itself. Through the contrast effect, development and progress are placed in the foreground.

⁶⁹ Jeißmann, Karl-Ernst, "Geschichtsbewußtsein", i Bergman, Klaus et al (Hsrg), *Handbuch der Geschichtsdidaktik, Band I*, Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann 1979, s. 42.

⁷⁰ Kursplaner och betygskriterier 2000, s. 79.

⁷¹ Undervisning för rikets folkskolor, 1919, s. 100.

In the policy documents the present is emphasized; the known is the starting point. The teacher should base history instruction on the students' prior knowledge, questions and interests, but the picture is not uniform in the course all planning texts. The priority is to understand and to create an understanding of a bygone era, based on the situation at the time.

The analysis indicates that the textbook authors, in relation to the curriculum texts, draw interpretations further and, through contrast, approach the past as essentially different from our time. The different past forms a relief to the present, which thus appears to be more prosperous, democratic and positive. In the matrix of the relationship between the present and the past, textbooks are placed in the field where the past is not like the present, while for the policy documents it is not equally clear-cut. However, regarding development going towards improvement, there is no contradiction.

If the results are put in relation to the societal context in Sweden, the decades after 1960 are characterized by social welfare reforms. A rapid and revolutionary technological development gave a strong optimism for the future. Against this background, the textbooks' strong emphasis on the present and development is natural. The curricula express clearly that relevance for the present and preparedness for the future are worthwhile goals, which textbooks also respond to.

Distinctive features of the textbooks from 1994 to 2005 are that chronology and historical context play out in a more complex composition. Complete stories that radiate continuity are interrupted with lightning flashes of the past. Harmonies with references to and anchoring in the present are added to this composition. The play between different time dimensions makes it possible to see the connections among the past, present and future. Past and present are relatively equal in textbooks. The present can provide explanatory comparisons to the past at the same time as today's young people can recognize themselves in the past. Thus diversity exists in the relationship between the present and the past, a diversity that sometimes manifests itself also in fictional stories.

Policy documents emphasize that history is created a little bit every day, which means a more individualized approach. Students should experience being interwoven in time and be able to empathize with historical times. Lpo94 does not express a difference between the present and the past. My interpretation is that suggestions like, for example, the student should broaden her world in a time dimension, point toward continuity and that similarity is a bridge over time. Textbook authors' writings go beyond what the syllabus prescribes: the fictional stories and the film-like picture-language with quick clips breaking up the context, have no support in the syllabus of 1994.

Given the above discussion, the relationship between the past and the present is shown to be ambiguous and divergent. The contacts and similarities with the past are thus shown to weigh heavier. The image of the past remains fairly neutral. References and clarifications are taken from the present, a present that exudes a truism. There is no criticism of the present, but neither should the present be considered superior.

During this period textbooks are under strong influence from the media culture that exploded in the last decade of the twentieth century, with advertising television networks, computers and a narration that is characterized by rapid clips and fleeting images. The late twentieth century was also characterized by a time when superpowers suddenly changed, as the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed. At the same time Sweden became more markedly a multi-cultural society, in which the issue 'our history' or who 'we' are, obviously got ambiguous answers. The

reaction was the newly designed and fictional stories created to frame historical events, to make them relevant and interesting to students and provide common experiences and narratives.

The matrix below based on Peter Aronsson's typology of historical perspectives is used to illustrate the reasoning surrounding the relationship between the past and the present.

Table 2. Textbooks, policy documents and the relationship between the present and past.

	The past is like the present	The past is not like the present
A lost Golden Age – Everything is getting worse	Policy doc 1905-1961 Textbooks 1905-1961 Policy doc 1994-2005	
The Bright Future – Everything is getting better	Policy doc 1960-1993 Policy doc 1994-2005 Textbooks 1994-2005	Policy doc 1960-1993 Textbooks 1962-1993

In several circumstances the textbooks go beyond the perspectives projected in the policy documents. Even if the subject matter is the same as that in the policy document, some approaches involve the relationship between the past and the present giving a specific or different picture of history. This is particularly evident during the period 1960 to 1993, which emphasizes contrasts, and between 1994 and 2005, when the action in the past sometimes appears as a film from the present. The textbook authors find alternative and timely ways to meet and speak to the readers (the students). Probably this is necessary in order to stimulate students' interest, but given that instruction - as earlier research has shown - is based on textbooks, this gives a modified and in certain respects particular picture of history. Up to 1991 a national review of textbooks in Sweden was carried out. The review concerned mainly authenticity, impartiality and objectivity. That the textbooks deviate from curricula. However, this is not remarkable, given that the discrepancies and differences relate to the relationship to the past and not an unequivocal picture of the past itself.

Meaning is created and the students' historical consciousness is probably developed when both differences and similarities are emphasized. Sense-making necessarily builds on references and relevance to the student's day. The picture of the past, however, risks becoming somewhat different from what the syllabi stipulate.

There are further nuances in the discussion. The many connections between the past and the present have a sense-making function. At the same time they are problematic in several respects. First, the genetic and chronological perspective can lead to thoughts of what happens today must necessarily be, that we are solely a product of the past with no possibilities to make an impact. Second, the use of central concepts from a genealogical point of view involves much difficulty. A concept such as democracy can not purely lexically be used when the ancient form of government is analyzed. The textbook description of the Athenian democracy as a 'democracy with many shortcomings'⁷² is based on our way of defining democracy.

There are different ways to relate the past to the present. Contact gives connection, reference and recognition. Contrast provides distinction and specificity, but also the risks of contemporary

⁷² Hildingson & Hildingson, 2003, s. 201.

complacency. Both aspects are meaningful however. Importantly, it is through the study of history that one gets a perspective on the present and does not take it for granted as the most perfect epoch. The British historian John Arnold put it:

Visiting the past is something like visiting a foreign country: they do some things the same and some things differently, but above all else they make us more aware of what we call 'home'.⁷³

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WHAT DO THIRTEEN AND FOURTEEN – YEAR- OLDS KNOW ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST BEFORE THEY STUDY IT?
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ABSTRACT:

Within England, the teaching of the Holocaust is of central importance and appears likely to remain so under the new National Curriculum for history. At present, most children study the Holocaust in year 9, when they are aged 13-14. The research conducted to date suggests that they arrive with pre-existing knowledge and understanding of the subject before they formally learn about it in the classroom. Using a mixed-method approach and a sample of 298 children, aged 13-14 who had not yet studied the Holocaust in history lessons, this paper explores trends and patterns in pupils' preconceptions and misconceptions about the Holocaust. It analyses children's ideas about themes such as the causes of the Holocaust, its perpetrators, chronology and ending. In addition to this, it explores pupils' concepts of resistance, their knowledge of the camps as well as the scale of the Holocaust. It concludes by highlighting the implications of these for curriculum planning and classroom practice. It argues that effective Holocaust education ought to tackle misconceptions and build upon the existing knowledge and understanding that children bring to their learning.

Keywords:

Holocaust, Holocaust Education Development Programme, Education, Preconceptions, Misconceptions, Knowledge, Understanding, School, Classroom, Curriculum, Year 9, Pupils

In 2009, the Institute of Education's [IOE] Holocaust Education Development Programme [HEDP]⁷⁴ conducted an empirical study on the nature of Holocaust teaching throughout English schools. The research, which was commissioned by the Pears Foundation and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, involved 2,108 teachers in 24 different schools. One of its many findings was that the Holocaust is typically taught across a wide number of subjects, most notably history, religious education and English, but even on occasions, in drama, modern foreign languages, maths and philosophy. The HEDP study also found that the Holocaust was most commonly taught when children were aged 13-14, with history teachers alone spending on average six hours dealing with this subject (Pettigrew et al., 2009: 5-6). This paper, based on an empirical study of 298 participants, explores what pre-existing knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust, is typically held by 13-14 year olds in English schools, before they study the subject formally in history.

Since 1 September 2013, the current National Curriculum programme of study for history at Key Stage 3 (age 11-14) is no longer statutory, with a new National Curriculum being introduced in September 2014.⁷⁵ The consultation documents for the new curriculum again include the Holocaust as a topic of central importance and state that, 'pupils should be taught about...Nazi atrocities in occupied Europe and the unique evil of the Holocaust'. (Department for Education, 2013). The situation in England, however, is further complicated by the fact that state-funded 'academies' do not have to follow the new National Curriculum. There are over 4,000 secondary schools in England and more than half are now academies, with this number likely to rise. Despite this, there is no reason to suggest that the Holocaust will not continue to be a significant element of what children learn in history lessons.

When teaching the Holocaust, just like teaching anything else, recognising pupils' preconceptions is paramount if effective learning is to take place. Donovan and Bransford correctly assert that:

⁷⁴ Now called The Centre for Holocaust Education (CfHE).

⁷⁵ At the time the research was conducted, it was a statutory requirement for all pupils aged 11-14 to study the Holocaust.

New understandings are constructed on a foundation of existing understandings and experiences... While prior learning is a powerful support for further learning, it can also lead to the development of conceptions that can act as barriers to learning (Donovan and Bransford, 2005: 4-5).

Until practitioners discover what pupils already understand about a topic - including their misconceptions - it will be difficult to challenge inaccuracies and generalisations or to build upon existing knowledge. Hein expresses this when he states:

Learning is contextual: we do not learn isolated facts and theories in some abstract ethereal land of the mind separate from the rest of our lives... Therefore any effort to teach must be connected to the state of the learner and must provide a path into the subject for the learner based on that learner's previous knowledge (Hein, 1996: 32).

In contemporary English society, learners have typically acquired many ideas before they formally come across them in school. This seems particularly true of the Holocaust, which features as a subject or context of so many popular children's books and films such as *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* and *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, to name just two. Schweber anecdotally writes:

I suspect that most kids... first learn about the Holocaust, slavery, and other atrocities in history accidentally, randomly, because they happened to be standing by the monkey bars in the school playground on a Thursday morning (Schweber, 2008: 2074).

What Schweber says of children in the USA is supported by Cohen's 2009 study, which found that 99 per cent of Junior High and High School students had heard about the Holocaust before they had come across the subject in the school curriculum (Cohen, 2009). Conversely research conducted by Ivanova in Ukraine (Ivanova, 2004), Misco in Romania and Latvia (Misco, 2008, 2011) has found that rather than hold meaningful preconceptions, children are often ignorant of the Holocaust.

The very limited research which has been conducted to date on pupils' preconceptions of the Holocaust in England suggests that unlike in Eastern Europe, children have significant knowledge and understanding although this is fused with various misconceptions. Edwards and O'Dowd conducted research on a very small and unrepresentative sample of 26 boys in a single school in London. They found that their respondents 'would bring to formal teaching in Year 9 [ages 13-14] a varied range of prior understandings about the Holocaust. In a few cases understandings were detailed and in most cases they showed a familiarity with some of the main events' (Edwards and O'Dowd, 2010: 22). Edwards and O'Dowd concluded that pupils often understood the Holocaust in simplistic, Hitler-centric terms, without recognising its evolutionary nature or complexities over who should be classified as a perpetrator.

The only other research to date has been conducted by Gray. A pilot study for this project explored the preconceptions of fifty-six 13-14 year olds and concluded:

Almost all pupils do have at least some knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust. They certainly don't approach their study of the topic as a blank canvas. Yet their knowledge is often basic and intellectually restrictive. Their existing misunderstandings may limit their

acceptance of certain facts about the Holocaust until the misconceptions that they hold have been challenged and dismantled (Gray, 2011: 25-6).

Unlike its pilot, this study, which draws upon a much larger and wider sample, did not seek to find out whether pupils have pre-existing ideas and understandings of the Holocaust, but rather what those specific conceptions are.

Methodology

Conducted between September 2012 and February 2013, all pupils who participated in the study completed two written exercises, which were followed up by two rounds of semi-structured interviews for a selected sub-sample of 36 pupils. The first exercise asked pupils to fill in eight empty boxes (or as many as they could) in a spider diagram exercise. The central statement read: 'the treatment of the Jews during the Second World War'. The second task was a three page questionnaire asking various open-ended questions such as 'How were the Jews treated during the Second World War?' and 'Who carried out this treatment of the Jews during the Second World War?' In total 298 pupils, all aged 13-14, completed both of the exercises. The table (Table 1) shows the composition by gender.

	Nationally ⁷⁶	Sample for questionnaire	Sample for first round of interviews	Sample for second round of interviews
Male	49.2 per cent	47.9 per cent	41.6 per cent	46.6 per cent
Female	50.8 per cent	52.1 per cent	58.3 per cent	53.3 per cent

TABLE 1. Sample in relation to national trends

The respondents came from four different schools in Oxfordshire and London and as a sample was broadly representative, not just in terms of gender but also in terms of ethnic identity. In two of the schools, the percentage of ethnic minority pupils was slightly lower than average while in the other two, the number of pupils from an ethnic minority background was above average. One of the schools was a Catholic comprehensive, while the other was Anglican. Two of the schools had no religious affiliation. Four pupils who took part in the research were Jewish, constituting just one per cent of the sample.

None of the respondents had been taught about the Holocaust in history lessons at the time the research was conducted. It was the case, that some of the pupils had briefly studied the Holocaust in either their primary schools or in subjects other than history, such as religious education.

The second stage of the research involved conducting semi-structured interviews with 12 groups of three pupils. Five of the groups participated in a second round of interviews where further questions were asked on the basis of findings from the written exercises and first interview stage. While those who participated for the first round of interviews were randomly selected, the sub-sample for the second round was chosen on the basis of their original comments. Those who had provided answers which merited further inquiry, clarification or development were interviewed a second time. All of the interviewees had also completed the written tasks. Analysis of the data involved triangulation between the answers provided in the questionnaire, the spider diagram exercise and the interviews. This system of cross-checking enhanced the validity of the findings and helped to highlight any anomalies. Codes were developed from the

⁷⁶ According to the 2011 National UK Census.

qualitative data drawing on the principles of emergent theory and the iterative process was further supported by findings from existing literature, previous empirical studies and pilot research. In addition to this, the wealth of quantitative data collected allowed for the presentation of descriptive statistics in which the distribution of variables could be expressed. This often enabled statistical measures of central tendency while the identification of key themes (e.g., understanding the causes of the Holocaust; its development and scale) was typically determined by common trends in pupils' answers.

Results

Almost all of the respondents were capable of providing some sort of answer to the questions asked of them, with many being able to articulate thoughtful responses even if they lacked detail or accuracy. By including pupils' answers to both of the written exercises, the 298 respondents wrote a total of 66,573 words, equating to 223.4 words per pupils on average.

The Causes of the Holocaust

In order to explore how they understood the causes of the Holocaust, pupils were asked on the questionnaire, 'why were Jews treated like this?' having previously been asked how Jews were treated. Many respondents also tackled this issue in the spider diagram exercise with 40.6 per cent (n121) using at least one of the eight boxes available them to the state a cause of the Holocaust. Out of the 121 pupils who talked about the causes of the Holocaust in their spider diagram activity, 83.4 per cent of them (n101) only provided a single reason. In total, 272 out of 298 (91.3 per cent) respondents answered this question on the questionnaire, with 72.8 per cent of pupils (n198) giving a single cause.

As seen in Fig. 1, the single largest cause that respondents gave, explained the Holocaust in Hitler-centric terms. While some of these explanations failed to elaborate, such as 'because of Hitler' or 'Hitler hated them', others were able to describe Hitler's motives or rhetoric, for example, 'Hitler wanted the world turned into an Aryan race and being a Jew didn't fit into being Aryan'. Hitler-centric approaches were thus a key part of what the HEDP report described as "perpetrator-oriented" perspectives. Overall, 71.1 per cent (n212) of respondents explained the causes of the Holocaust by focusing on the motives and aims of the perpetrators with 17.1 per cent (n51) opting to explain the causes of the Holocaust by focusing on the victims.⁷⁷

• ⁷⁷ See, Gray, 'Exploring Pupil Perceptions'.

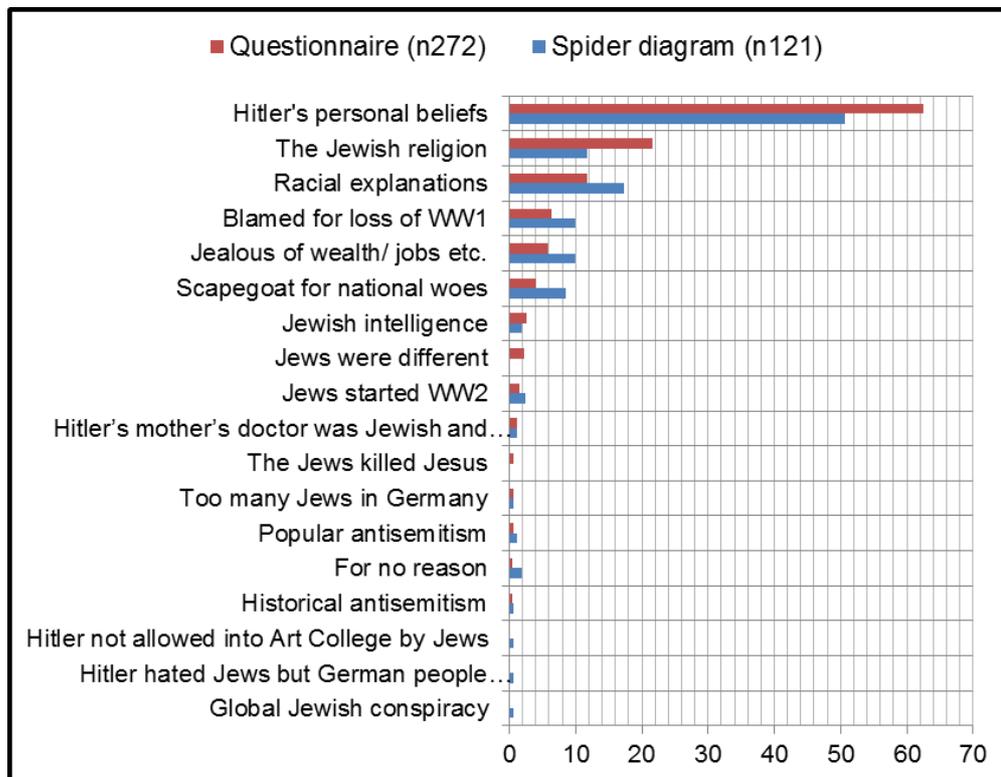


Fig. 1. Pupils' explanations for the causes of the Holocaust (%)

It seems that many pupils appear to view the origins of the Holocaust in simplistic, mono-causal terms, which revolve around Hitler's personal antisemitism.

The Perpetrators of the Holocaust

The centrality of Hitler in pupils' thinking was equally apparent in their response to the question, 'who carried out this treatment of the Jews during the Second World War?' Around 53 per cent (147) stated only one perpetrator, with over 93 per cent (n255) stating one or two. As Fig. 2 shows, Hitler again featured most prominently in pupils' explanations of who implemented the Holocaust. On occasions, answers suggested that some pupils were unable to distinguish between the Nazis and the *Wehrmacht*. The phrase, 'Nazi soldiers' was used five times and 'Nazi army' on three occasions.⁷⁸ Many of the answers which mentioned soldiers or the armed forces, continued to see Hitler as the driving force. One pupil wrote, 'Hitler ordered it and his soldiers did it', another remarked, 'Hitler ordered them and then the generals oversaw that it happened', while a third remarked, 'soldiers, but Hitler forced them to'.

⁷⁸ These were categorised under 'German army' in Fig. 2.

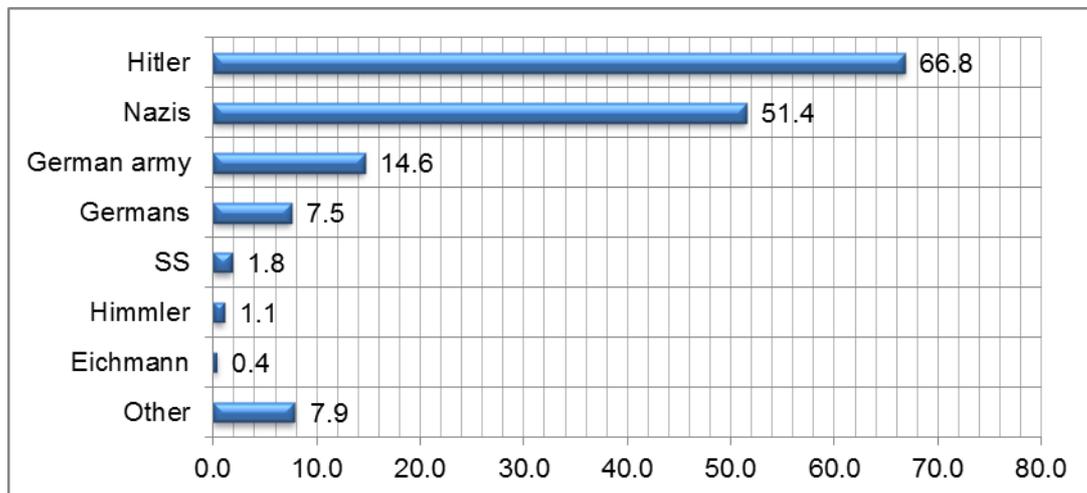


Fig. 2. Pupils' explanations of the perpetrators of the Holocaust (%) (n282)

This final comment suggests that those who implemented the Holocaust were doing so reluctantly or against their will, which was also apparent by a girl who remarked, 'although they did not want to, the soldiers had to treat them badly'. These answers support findings by Gray (Gray, 2011, pp. 23-4) and the HEDP (Pettigrew et al., 2009, pp. 49-50) on students and teachers respectively, the majority of whom erroneously believed that any member of the German armed forces who refused to participate in killing Jews would be punished.

A minority of pupils were able to demonstrate greater specificity in their understanding of perpetrators. While fewer than two per cent mentioned the SS, three pupils did refer to Heinrich Himmler and one to Adolf Eichmann.⁷⁹ Two of the most sophisticated answers hinted at some knowledge of the nature of killing and the quasi-autonomous status that was possessed by some of the key perpetrators:

It was ordered by Hitler but these acts of murder were actually done by Hitler's Nazi police organisations. The SS, SD and Gestapo.

It was run by Heinrich Himmler but the day to day running was down to officers in the SS.

Hitler was informed of what was happening.

Only one pupil specifically mentioned the *Einsatzgruppen*⁸⁰ although two answers in the spider diagram exercises referred to firing squads. Equally conspicuous by its absence was reference to the role of collaborators in other countries. When asked about local involvement in the killing during the interviews, pupils almost universally, found the concept of people voluntarily participating in the murders utterly inconceivable.

The Chronology of the Holocaust

In the interviews, pupils were told that Hitler came to power in 1933 and that the Second World War did not start until 1939. They were then asked how Jews in Germany were treated in between these two key dates. Most respondents articulated in varying degrees of detail that there was a gradual deterioration of Jewish living standards and that state antisemitism increased:

⁷⁹ There was no mention of Reinhard Heydrich.

⁸⁰ The *Einsatzgruppen* (meaning task force) were mobile killing squads which played a key role in implementing the "Final Solution" through mass shootings in the East.

It got worse and worse and worse.

The horrificness spread over time. [Sic.] Probably gradual, probably a gradual development in what ended up in the Holocaust.

A wide range of discriminatory measures was expressed, with nine pupils referring to *Kristallnacht*, although they did not all use the term. There was mention of the boycotts of Jewish goods, although the Nuremberg Laws and the removal of German citizenship were not expressed once.

It was common for pupils to mistakenly believe that Jews in Germany before the War experienced some of the measures which did not come into force until the onset of War or were only applied to Jews living in Nazi occupied Poland.

They had to start wearing wristbands, eh, armbands to symbolise they were Jews.

They were given a curfew.

They had to move to ghettos.

Until September 1941, the decree to wear the Star of David initially only affected Jews in Poland. The establishment of ghettos occurred in October 1939 for Jews living in the General Government, while the curfew on Jews was announced on 1st September 1939.

In addition to confusion over the chronology of the Holocaust, there was also a clear lack of knowledge of certain developments. This was particularly the case with regards to pupils' awareness and understanding of the ghettos. In response to the question, 'what sort of things happened to the Jews during World War Two?' only seven pupils mentioned that they were put in ghettos. Moreover, in the spider diagram exercise, only eleven pupils referred to the ghettos, often with differing (and sometimes erroneous) conceptions of the term.

During the second round of interviews, pupils were specifically asked about the ghettos. Out of the eight children who were questioned on this subject and shown two photographs of the Warsaw Ghetto, none of them had ever heard of it or knew that Jews had been made to live in ghettos during the Second World War. Frequently throughout the research, pupils indicated that Jews had been taken to the camps directly from their homes. While this did happen to some Jews throughout Europe, the majority were first concentrated into ghettos.

The absence of knowledge on how the Holocaust evolved, suggests that some pupils may see the Holocaust as an event rather than a process. This finding is supported by various pupil comments:

The Holocaust was one event in which 6 million Jews were killed by gas chambers. Even children were killed.

The Holocaust was a time in the Second World War when the Nazis captured Jewish people from neighbouring countries and put them in concentration camps where they were killed.

The Camps

Out of all the areas of Holocaust knowledge explored, it seems that pupils knew most about the camps. On the questionnaire, respondents were given the following statement: 'During World War Two, many Jews were sent into camps like Auschwitz and Dachau'. They were then asked, 'what do you know about any of these camps?' and 'Describe what you think would happen to

Jews upon arrival at a camp'. Out of 298 pupils, 18.1 per cent (n54) left their answers to these questions blank or demonstrated no knowledge whatsoever, while 24.8 per cent (n74) were able to give one fact and 37.2 per cent (n111) provide two facts. A further 19.8 per cent (n59) were capable of providing three of more facts.

Despite possessing knowledge of the camps, many pupils gave the impression that the camps were a homogenous entity where the weak were murdered and the strong made to work. This was characterised by comments such as, 'they had to work and when they got too weak to work a full day they were killed'. Drawing upon the statement that was given to them, pupils demonstrated greater familiarity with Auschwitz than Dachau. While the former was mentioned by 35 pupils in their answers, only three made reference to the latter.

In the spider diagram exercises, which were completed before the questionnaires, Auschwitz was commented upon by 27 pupils. Often their remarks were vague such as 'Auschwitz was one of the main camps, millions were killed there', or 'the Jews were held in concentration camps like Auschwitz'. Dachau was mentioned twice in the spider diagram exercise. Bergen-Belsen and Birkenau were also mentioned on one occasion.

In answering the question, 'Describe what you think would happen to Jews upon arrival at a camp', a wide range of answers was given, as seen in Fig. 3. It is noteworthy that the two commonest answers were only the experiences of those who were not immediately selected for murder upon arrival at a death camp. In reality, very large numbers of Jews were never given a uniform nor made to work. With only 18.5 per cent (n55) of pupils stating that Jews would be killed or gassed upon arrival, it suggests the possibility that there is limited knowledge of just how few were given work at the camps in relation to those immediately murdered, although it must be taken into account that there was huge variation in these figures depending on the camp, the origin of the Jews on the transport, and the particular needs of the German war effort.

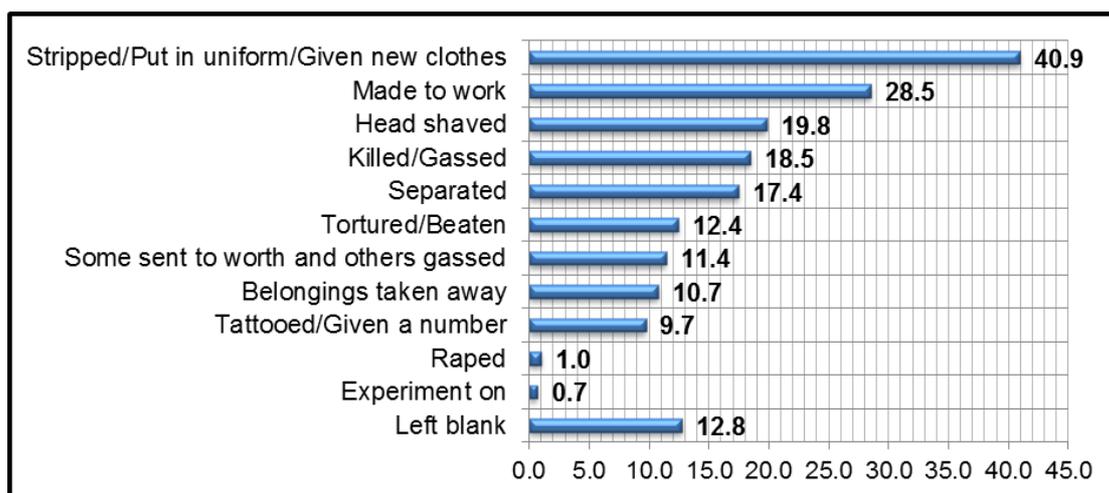


Fig. 3. Pupils' answers to the question: what would happen to Jews upon arrival at the camps (%)

As Fig. 3 highlights, 9.7 per cent (n29) of pupils stated that Jews were tattooed upon arrival. In fact, this only occurred at Auschwitz. It seems likely that because Auschwitz was the largest and most well-known of the camps, pupils apply their knowledge of it to the entire camp system.

Resistance

Pupils typically lacked any awareness of Jewish resistance during the Holocaust, which may be connected to their lack of knowledge regarding the ghettos. Despite uprisings in camps such as Treblinka, Sobibor and Birkenau, resistance was easier to organise within the ghettos and was characterised by many armed revolts for example in the Bialystok ghetto in 1942 and in the Czestochowa and Warsaw ghettos the following year. It was common for answers to state that there was minimal resistance during the Holocaust. Thinking also tended to be very black and white, with respondents defining resistance only in terms of violent opposition to the Nazi regime. During the interviews, pupils were specifically asked about different types of resistance, such as religious or cultural, although without exception, they appeared dismissive of the worth of such methods:

Well there is only really one way to resist.

*I think the only form of resistance would have been violence and aggression
It's not really going to help them in any way.*

When given specific scenarios⁸¹ from the Holocaust and asked how that individual might react and whether or not they were likely to resist, pupils often recognised the difficulty of generalising and how a response often depended on multiple variables:

Well it depends on what kind of person he is like. Most people in that kind of situation wouldn't because they would be too scared. They would be going against the whole of the Nazi government and they might end up with them too. But you might stand up to them if you were particularly brave.

He might have a reason to live, he may still want to see his family for the last time and stuff, so he may not want to, it just depends on his scenario.

It seems that pupils' ability to understand resistance is affected by their overall knowledge of the Holocaust. While they appear to typically underestimate the extent of resistance they seem to have some historical empathy and ability to appreciate the complexity of the decision-making process.

The Scale

In assessing pupils' understanding of the scale of the Holocaust, questions were asked concerning which countries the murder of Jews occurred in and approximately how many Jews were killed by the Nazi regime. The first question asked, 'Where in Europe did the killing of the Jews take place?' The wording was such as to encourage answers which stated the location of the killings, rather than the countries from where Jews were sent to be killed. A map of Europe during the Second World War accompanied the question to assist pupils' answers.

⁸¹ Scenarios included:

Samuel was taken to Auschwitz and forced to work for the Nazis. He was made to work in the running of the gas chambers.

Joseph was a Polish farmer near one of the Nazis' camps. Every day inmates from the camp would walk past his fields on the way to work.

Fig. 4 shows the answers that the 298 respondents provided. It was unsurprising in the light of previous answers, that so few pupils acknowledged countries in Eastern Europe as locations of the murders. Nevertheless, more respondents believed that Jews were killed in Britain than in the USSR, Lithuania, Latvia or Estonia. Fig. 5 shows that 76.2 per cent (n227) of answers stated that Jews were murdered in Germany with 27.5 per cent (n82) giving this as their only answer. Just over eight per cent (n24) of pupils gave only Germany and Poland as their answer. In addition to Eastern Europe it is factually correct to emphasise both Germany and Poland as the location of mass murder. While all of the death camps were located in modern-day Poland, this was not necessarily the case during the War. Auschwitz-Birkenau for example was situated in Upper Silesia and as a consequence of new borders drawn up on 26 October 1939 by the Border Commission of the Ministry of the Interior it was part of the German Reich (Steinbacher, 2005, pp. 16-17).

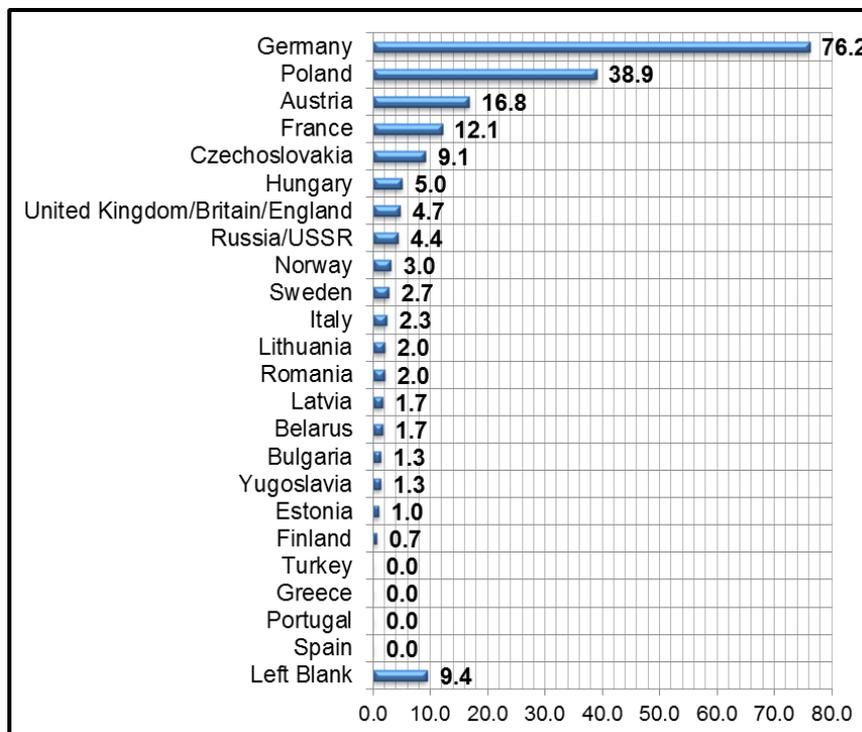


Fig. 4. Pupils' answers to the question: where in Europe did the killing of the Jews take place? (%)

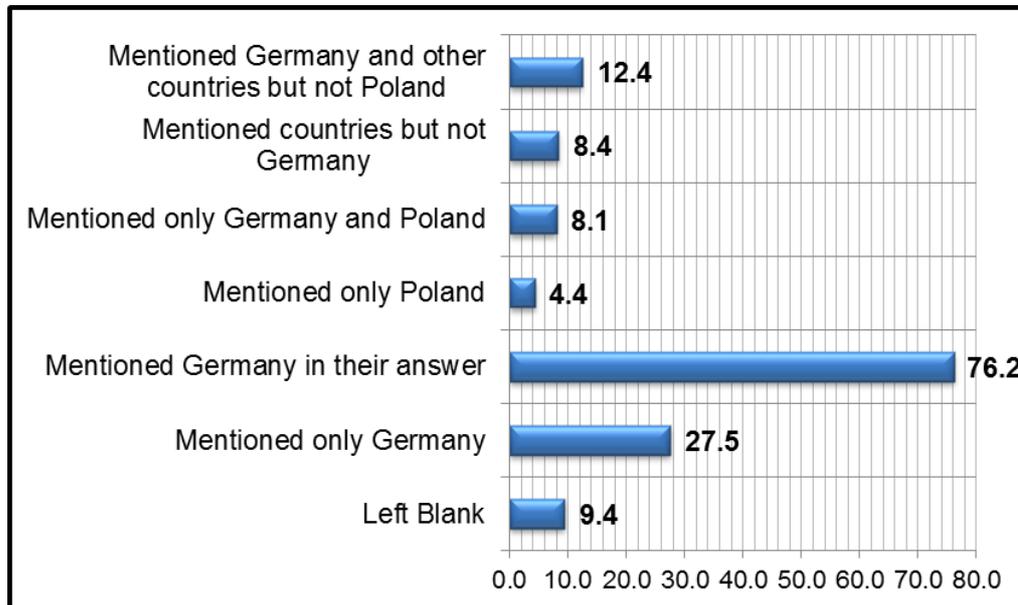


Fig. 5. Pupils' answers to the question: where in Europe did the killing of the Jews take place? (%)

Pupils were also asked on the questionnaire, 'Approximately how many Jews were murdered during World War Two?' Fig. 6 shows that approximately ten per cent of the 298 respondents were aware that six million Jews were murdered; with 44.6 per cent (n133) believing the number was lower than this. The range of answers given was considerable. It seems clear that most of the respondents lacked knowledge of how many Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. Fifty six pupils (18.8 per cent) believed that Jewish deaths were fewer than one million, while 39 of that 56 suggested the death toll was 100,000 or fewer. At the other extreme, more pupils thought that Jewish deaths were ten million or higher (n33) than they did six million (n32). Twenty five respondents believed that the Nazis murdered at least twenty million Jews.

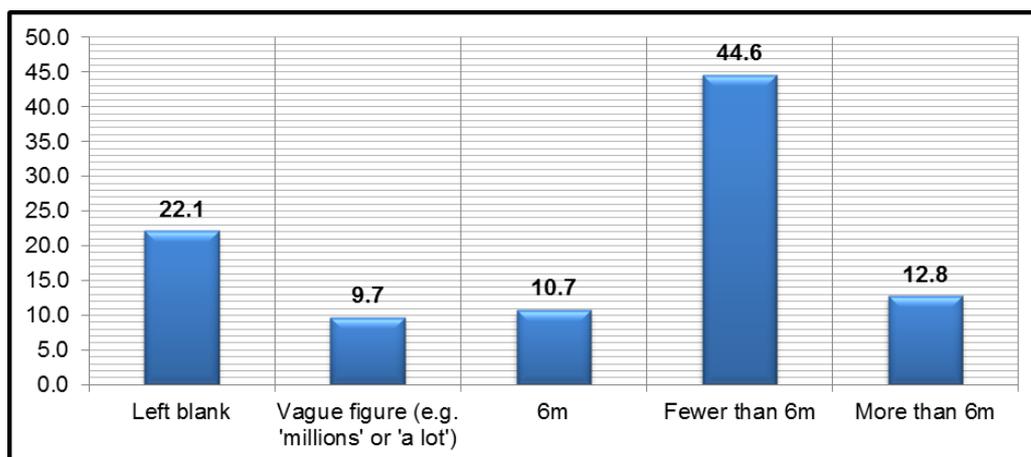


Fig.6. Pupils' answers to the question: approximately how many Jews were murdered during World War Two.

The Ending of the Holocaust

In order to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of this topic, the questionnaire asked, 'Why did the Nazi killing of Jews end?' This theme had only been mentioned once out of all the spider diagram responses, with 19.4 per cent (n58) of respondents leaving this question blank and a further 5.4 per cent (n16) writing comments such as 'don't know' or 'not sure'. The answers that were provided showed a number of misconceptions and suggested that this is an area of the Holocaust where there is significant ignorance.

Out of the 224 pupils who did provide a reason, 71.9 per cent (n161) of them gave only one explanation. Out of these 161 responses, only 91 of them (56.5 per cent) gave the allied victory, the Nazis' defeat or the ending of the War as their rationalisation.

In seeking to explain why the Holocaust ended, 24.4 per cent (n73) gave Hitler's death as a reason for the cessation of the killing. Thirty responses (10.1 per cent) gave the suicide of the Nazi leader as the only reason for the ending of the Holocaust. It would appear that some pupils do not understand that Hitler's death had no impact whatsoever on the ending of the Holocaust. By his death on 30 April 1945, almost all camps had been liberated and even Stutthof concentration camp, the last camp to be liberated on 9 May 1945, had been evacuated in January of the same year. Some answers which referred to both Hitler's death and the Allied victory saw the former as the cause of the latter:

It ended because Hitler allegedly killed himself and the Allies took control.

Hitler killed himself and the Nazis were wiped out by Joseph Stalin.

Because Adolf Hitler killed himself so the Nazis were blown by this loss and signed a peace treaty.

Hitler died and England were pushing forwards, the main reason was probably because Hitler killed himself, ending the war.

In addition to showing some confusion about the relationship between Hitler's death and the Allied victory, there was also a common misconception that the War was being fought in order to stop the Holocaust:

It was wrong so people (like Britain) invaded and shut down the camps

The British and Americans realised what was happening and invaded them and freed many Jews.

This ended because British aircraft spotted these camps and sent troops to shut them down.

Other mistaken beliefs included four answers which stated that the Nazis made a peace treaty with the Allies. Another pupil thought that the Holocaust ended because Hitler went to prison while eleven responses intimated that the Nazis had a change of heart and recognised the error of their ways.

Because they realised that what they were doing was wrong and evil.

People realised it was wrong and Germans stuck up towards Hitler.

Because when Hitler died all the men thought it was wrong.

Three answers suggested that the Holocaust ended because all the Jews had been murdered. Other erroneous remarks included the statement that the camps were invaded by the Red Cross.

During the interviews, pupils were shown photographs of survivors who had been liberated from the camps and asked what would happen to them and where they would go. Almost universally,

respondents stated that Jews would simply 'go home'. There was a common misconception that Jews could simply return to their country of origin and back to their house, find the rest of their family and live, as it were, happily ever after. Typically, pupils' comments about the lives of survivors were simplistic and optimistic.

Pedagogic Implications

It seems evident that the majority of pupils have already acquired knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust before they formally study it in the classroom; that they arrive with preconceptions which are likely to influence the way that they approach learning. Yet what are the practical implications of this and in what ways does Holocaust education in the classroom need to take account of pupils' prior ideas and understandings?

Curriculum Planning

Taking into account adolescents' preconceptions of the Holocaust needs to commence before the teaching of the subject even begins. The most effective Holocaust education will be based on a curriculum which has been influenced by understanding both what pupils already know and what knowledge they have not yet acquired. What this means in reality will very much depend on the particular subject in which the Holocaust is being taught. Teachers of citizenship for example ought to recognise pupils' minimal awareness of the Nuremberg Laws and emphasise why the removal of citizenship from German Jews in 1935 was so important. For teachers of religious education, it seems pointless talking about the Holocaust as the essence of 'unique evil' if some pupils think that it consisted of only a few thousand deaths. While neither comparing the levels of suffering nor the number of deaths is a sound pedagogic practice, it is surely impossible for pupils to understand the Holocaust without some appreciation of its scope and scale. Consequently, the fact that this evidence suggests that many pupils lack such knowledge before they study the subject, it seems only necessary and appropriate for practitioners to highlight some of the key elements of the Holocaust before using it to discuss concepts of evil or suffering.

Because the nature of this research was exploring respondents' historical knowledge, the implications for designing a history curriculum seem particularly apparent. Arguably, a history programme ought to tackle the simplistic assumptions and preconceptions of pupils and challenge the mono-casual and Hitler-centric explanations by adding layers of complexity. This can be done by analysing the structure of the Nazi regime, the importance of local decision-making processes and the various organisations and collaborators who were involved in both administering and implementing the murder of Europe's Jews. Greater complexity in thinking also needs to be developed with regards to pupils' ideas about resistance. Areas of ignorance must also be confronted and thus the ghettos and the *Einsatzgruppen* surely merit specific and perhaps even considerable attention on any history curriculum. In order to accommodate this, it may well be necessary to spend less time studying the camps, which generally appear to be areas where there is relatively sound knowledge and understanding. It would also appear beneficial to ensure that sufficient time is given to teaching how the Holocaust ended. The number of misconceptions in this area indicates a level of confusion and misunderstanding which needs to be addressed.

Cross-Curricular Learning

In order to facilitate the most effective Holocaust curricula, different departments within an institution ought to co-operate accordingly. The HEDP research demonstrated that it is not until a pupil enters year 9 (ages 13-14) that history will be the dominant subject in which they will encounter the Holocaust (Pettigrew et al., 2009, p.36). Consequently, either non-history specialists are teaching about what happened in the past, or else pupils are studying the Holocaust in subjects other than history without having first been grounded in the historical accounts. Without such grounding, adolescents are surely incapable of either approaching fictional representations of the Holocaust in literature and film critically as well as being unable to explore other themes within Holocaust studies such as suffering, evil or racism. Joined-up learning and inter-departmental co-operation might enable religious education lessons to teach about Judaism and Jewish culture before studying the Holocaust in history, which would importantly precede addressing the subject in literature or other non-historical disciplines. While such co-operation and compromise may involve practical difficulties, it seems that such a holistic and pupil-centred approach might prove very beneficial to learners of the Holocaust.

In the Classroom

The primary pedagogic implication of this research for teachers in the classroom is that practitioners need to be aware of the ideas and preconceptions that their pupils bring with them. Teachers need to recognise that their class is not a blank sheet but arrives in their lessons with many important ideas and understandings which are likely to have a significant impact on how they interpret new knowledge and integrate it into their existing frameworks. While this research highlights some trends in thinking, which teachers ought to consider, it is also the case that many pupils will not fit into neatly generalised categories. Every learner is the product of a unique set of experiences and interactions which have shaped the knowledge and understandings which they hold. Consequently, each teacher ought to take the time to discover the preconceptions and misconceptions of their pupils and ensure that this influences how the subject of the Holocaust is taught. Deconstructing erroneous ideas and problematic assumptions and simplicities is central if effective Holocaust is to take place.

Conclusion

This research supports the existing literature and overwhelming evidence that pupils arrive in the classroom with preconceptions. It also corroborates the relatively small corpus of existing scholarship which indicates that adolescents in England have acquired some familiarity with the Holocaust before they formally study it. By highlighting trends in pupils' preconceptions, Holocaust education can tackle misconceptions and build upon existing foundations of knowledge and understanding. Ultimately, it is hoped that thoughtful curriculum planning and intelligent pedagogical practice will lead to significantly more effective teaching and learning about this complex and vital historical phenomenon.

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ASPECTS OF STUDENTS HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN SITUATIONS OF CRISIS

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Abstract

This paper reports preliminary findings based on an analysis of 151 students' written questionnaires. Students, among several other tasks, were also called to narrate their country's (Greece) history and the study took place in a period starting from March to July 2013. That was a period when the consequences of the international economic crisis on the Greek economy and on the Greek political culture were ubiquitous. The purpose of the study is to locate the constructs with which students internalized a big crisis within a framework of Greek history. The crisis was prominent in the answers. The findings indicated that the crisis was experienced by students as a traumatic event (Ankersmit, 2001), but the students did not produce new "cultural potentials" (Rüsen, 2007) to account for it. Instead they seem to have been "haunted" (La Capra, 2001) by their highly "particularistic" national identity (Lorenz, 2001). The political atmosphere, as dominated by the mass media ought to have played a tremendous role in students' experience, since mass media and public political culture have been reproducing a war atmosphere from at least 2010. It is suggested that contemporary history, a history having more clear connections with the present should be explicitly taught in the school classes in order for the students to "historically contextualize" current affairs (Barton, 2004), as a means for critical historical thinking.

Keywords:

Atavism, Contemporary History, Memory, Crises – national, Culture, Narratives, Greece, Historical Consciousness, Crises, Master narratives, Memory, Memory – collective, National identity, Rüsen, Trauma – national, Historical consciousness

Introduction: Memory, History, Historical Consciousness and Crisis.

Memory, history and historical consciousness are all narration processes: while memory constitutes an "effort after meaning" process (Bartlett, ed. 1995, p. 84), historical narratives are considered as modes of "explanation" and understanding human action (Mink, 1998, p. 124); historiography in the form of historical narratives is a "sense generating process" (Rüsen, 2005, p. 67). Historical consciousness, also according to Rüsen, includes the mental operations through which experienced time in the form of "memory" is used as a means of "orientation" in everyday life, so history is perceived as meaningful time.

As it is in the nature of narratives to help people to make sense of the world that surrounds them, memory, history and historical consciousness develop especially in cases where people feel puzzled, helpless, thus in crisis. Actually Ankersmit recognizes trauma as the "forgotten source of historical consciousness" (Ankersmit in Rüsen, 2002, p. 72) explaining that there is "an indissoluble link between history and the miseries and the horrors of the past" (ibid, p.76). He adds that trauma and suffering help people to form a more coherent collective identity than happiness and joy. It is then accepted among scholars that the formation of historical consciousness is actually the formation of an identity, personal or collective, responding to something that seems to be unintelligible, thus traumatic.

According to Rüsen historical consciousness' realization coincides as well with a feeling on the part of the people that they can intervene and change the world. "Causality of fate" is replaced in people's mental schemas by a "value guided commitment" to the world (Rüsen 2001: 259). Along similar lines Ankersmit attributes people's interest in the past and its explanation, to their feeling of responsibility for the world and how it develops. People try to explain the past when they feel frustrated by their lack of control over their lives and when they try to figure out 'what went wrong'. Also, according to Koselleck (Koselleck in Carr, 1987, p. 199), it was exactly the moment when people felt responsible for their future that modernity was differentiated from premodernity. As Koselleck explained, the "future [for premodern societies] was still closed off by the apocalypse".

If the formation of historical consciousness or of a historical narrative by a professional historian is the successful handling of a difficult and puzzling situation (possibly traumatic), the question is what happens when people fail to do so. According to the relevant literature there are two cases: Ankersmit, Koselleck and Rüsen speak about the pre-historiographic era when people failed to comprehend change over time (Seixas, 2004, p. 230). This is actually the first type of Rüsen's typology of historical consciousness, where people experience time as an obligatory repetition of traditional ways of life. If, as it has been stated above, people started writing history because they were frustrated by the changes that took place in modernity, in the context of Rüsen's "traditional" type people do not perceive of changes in time and on the other hand they do not feel that they can have impact on the course of history. As Ankermit put it, "traditional type" people did not yet have the capacity of "suffering collective trauma" (Ankersmit in Rüsen, 2002, p.77), and in Koselleck's words they could not calculate and produce their own future since a "divine plan" guided their lives (Koselleck in Carr, 1987, p.200).

The other case where people fail to make sense of the past, is not when they do not feel frustrated enough to enter the process of explaining the course of events, but when they are actually overwhelmed by the past. Theorists describe this state of mind in different ways: La Capra speaks of whom "is haunted or possessed by the past and performatively caught up in the compulsive repetition of traumatic scenes - scenes in which the past returns and the future is blocked" (2001, p. 21), while Ankesrmit explains that "trauma occurs because of the subject's incapacity to absorb the traumatic experience within the whole of his life story, ... actually because of the subject's incapacity to suffer ..." (Ankersmit in Rüsen, 2002, p. 78). Suffering or mourning is according to psychoanalysis the essential phase to overcome trauma, it is the process of 'executing', removing, one already dead in the way that people connected with him can continue their own lives. Liakos reminds us that writing history has been compared to mourning, in the sense that in both cases one ought to get actually alienated from the traumatic situation in order to account for it, either on a personal or historiographic level (Liakos, 2007, p. 223).

in conclusion, people either arrange their memories in an appropriate context, historiographic, or personal, forming in the latter case a certain type of historical consciousness, or they get overwhelmed by painful memories becoming numb, in the end inactive. Cognitively, in this case of failure to construct an explanatory framework of what happened, people may reproduce old schemas of thought to account for current issues. I think that this is case of the Greek students described in this paper: they use their national official narrative to account for an international economic crisis, a crisis that has extremely changed their lives, if not deteriorated it, prolonging past situations, national struggles and wars in the present.

The research sample: place, time and procedures

The research sample analysed in this paper is drawn from three age groups, see table 1, from the city of Ioannina.

Students	Grade/Age	Sample Size	Boys	Girls	Didn't say	Time	Question
University of Ioannina (Primary Education Department)	3 rd year/ 21 y old	49	10	37	02	4 March 2013	"Briefly narrate Greek history since a long time ago, till now"
Secondary School ("5 th Junior High School"), Ioannina	3 rd class 15 y old	53	08	08	37	13 May 2013	"Briefly narrate the history of the Greek state from 1830 till now, focusing on changes"
Primary (Experimental) School (Zosimaia 1 st & 2 nd Elementary Schools), Ioannina.	6 th class 12 y old	49	24	24	01	13 June 2013	Complete the following sentence "Greek history is the story of a country that ..."

TABLE 1. Population and sampling

Ioannina is a city of 117.000 in the northwestern part of Greece. It used to have a flourishing economy as a trade and manufacturing centre in the 19th century while a part of the Ottoman Empire. It was made up of Christians, Jews and Muslims. It was annexed to Greece in 1913 during the Balkan wars. Since then, the city has lost its economic influence in the Balkans and its international contacts. Today fifty per cent of the population work in services⁸², many people for the university which has a students' population around twenty thousand. Though,

⁸² Source: <http://www.cci-ioannina.gr/el/economy.htm> (Ioannina Chamber of Commerce)

unemployment is high. The secondary school visited for research purposes is situated in a middle class neighbourhood, an extremely well run unit, also participating in several European educational networks.⁸³

The sample was collected from March 2013 to June 2013, in three phases: first the university sample during a lesson about narrative schemas and their intervention in historical thinking. Excerpts from students' papers were read aloud in the classroom and the several stereotypes that came up were discussed. On my visit to the 5th Junior High School of Ioannina I was focused on my research question of "how the students would account for the economic crisis in Greece and within framework of Greek history?". This is the reason why I restricted the students to the period of the Greek state (unlike the university students and the primary school students): I wanted to see whether students in the age of fifteen (who have recently completed a course in modern Greek history) can use historical knowledge of similar events (economic crises in Greece in the 19th century) to construct an explanatory framework for the contemporary crisis, since many times students fail to do so because of lack of specific knowledge.

At the time of the research, Greece is in the third year of a deep recession. As a consequence of receiving economic support by International Monetary Fund, the European Union and the European Central Bank but also of an agreement with creditors to accept a 50% cut in government bonds, the Greek government has undertaken to implement severe austerity measures. These are experienced by the population as changes in collective labour agreements, reductions in services, horizontal cuts in salaries and benefits and tax increases, and even medication shortages; for the first time after decades, food insecurity is reported among students⁸⁴.

The findings presented in sections C and D of this paper were produced through a process of analytic induction. Recurring patterns were sought in students' narrations of Greek history and these are presented both through students' quotes and through tables indicating the frequency of each pattern. The patterns are not allocated to "previously defined units", as in classic content analysis (Titscher, Wodak and Vetter, 2000: 56) rather they are produced from my interpretations of the students' responses.

Greek Students' Fidelity to their Official Narrative: when history repeats itself (the "Resistance" pattern).

There is expansive literature and current discussion about how community narratives or experiences students bring from home obstruct them from seeing the others' point of view, or from being critical (Penuel and Wertsch, 1998, Barton and Levstik, 1998). The examples of the USA both university and school students in the literature mentioned above, exhibit the power of the official narrative schemas or national stereotypes which seem to provoke the assimilation of new past material into old explanatory frameworks. Quite often the frameworks used are those that are the most comforting and reasserting existing stereotypes, for the individuals concerned. In relation to the Greek sample described in this paper, students used the official national narrative they are familiar with, from the pattern and the content point of view to explain an international economic crisis that afflicts their country. More specifically students transferred the cases of previous wars, population moves, foreign countries' occupation of Greece and famines, to the reality of the 2010-2013, implying more or less that "nothing changed". What they many

⁸³ <http://blogs.sch.gr/5gymioan/> (the site of the 5th Junior High School of Ioannina).

⁸⁴ <http://www.avgi.gr/article/213737/nut-peinane-ta-paidia-stin-ellada> (AVGI, a daily newspaper 19-07-2013 reproducing New York Times).

times explicitly articulate, is that there is a repetition of calamities continuously afflicting their country and its population and at the same time they predict that the country will overcome the new misfortune in the way it has always done. Typical excerpts of student statements are:

- a Greek history is a history of a country that always used to have difficulties, but it has always been saved by the unity of the people and the Hellenic spirit even from the ancient era (high school student 1).
- b Greek history is the history of a country that has been in lots of **sufferings**, she is still in sufferings, but **she always returns strong** and I just hope this will happen **for once more** (high school student 40, a boy).
- c I think that since 1830 that we became an independent Greek state, Greece has been in a process of deaths, resurrections and flares...generally speaking we have been having many changes in Greece without having completely left the bad habits of the past... (high school student 3).
- d ...Greece is currently facing a crisis period, but, and as it has always been so, she will make it.(university student 3, a woman).
- e ...a country that is repeatedly reborn from her ashes...(university student 21, a woman).
- f Greece in contemporary years has been through many difficulties ...in every previous period the Greek people made mistakes, fought, made efforts and despite all difficulties Greek people managed to stand on their feet.... (university student 23, a woman).

We first notice in the above excerpts the well known pattern of the Greek official narrative, the “resistance pattern”, meaning the ability of the Greek people to survive through wars, revolutions, political turmoil, misfortunes while everything and everyone is against them. We second notice the time and especially the frequency indicators like “*always used to*”, “*always returns strong*”, “*repeatedly reborn*”, “*she falls again*”, “*continuously loses her balance*”, “*in every period*” which imply repetition.

The first “resistance” pattern in students’ thought complies with relevant patterns in traditional Greek historiography of the 19th century. The latter historiography has often been analyzed in a critical, historically contextualized way, but critical historiography does not seem to reach students: “... the structure of national time elaborated over the past two centuries persists in the public use of history and in historical culture” (Liakos, 2001: 40). Liakos notes also that this narrative of resistance has been equally endorsed and used by right and left wing people in Greece assimilating in the course of time all the great moments of Greek history, from the liberation war within the Ottoman Empire till the resistance in the 2nd World War and the Dictatorship and the seven year military dictatorship of 1967-1974. We cannot also help noticing that the same epochal moments of Greek history Liakos refers to, form the kernel of students’ current speech: the historical events selected by either the 3rd grade Junior High students, or the twenty – year- old university students, both imply a comparison between the great wars of the 20th century and the economic crisis of the years 2010-2013.

However, economic crises are frequent occurrences in modern and contemporary Greek history that often involved unsustainable international borrowing. Thus, there was a financial crisis in 1843 which resulted in Greece being put under informal control by England, Russia and France , in 1860, in 1893 (which involved a bankruptcy leading to economic supervision by the International Financial Commission) and finally in 1932. Some of these were parts of international crises as well (the latter as a consequence of the 1929 crisis). Though since 2010 onwards there were many references in the public sphere (in newspapers many times accompanied by political cartoons of the 19th century, art exhibitions dedicated on political

cartoons, tv talks and others) to the economic crisis of 1929 and the national bankruptcies of the 19th century, there was actually only one university student who attempted a comparison between what was happening in the 19th century and the contemporary crisis.

One could argue that the students lacked knowledge of the past economic crises; on the other hand many students' narratives from the sample were well supported by relevant data. Students on the whole tended to refer to specific events mentioning them in the correct timeline. The issue here is not that the students' narratives lacked a factual basis but the kind of events they used to make a comparison with the 2010 crisis. I think that because students experienced the changes brought up by the economic crisis in a traumatic way, they assimilated them in their official national narrative with all the other equally traumatic events (like wars and population moves). This finding is consistent with findings from other questions given to the secondary school students (within the same research context) and with previous research. Eighteen secondary school students in a sample of forty five (that answered the relevant question) stated a preference for being taught for contemporary history rather than ancient, byzantine or modern. Thirteen primary school students in a sample of forty five also opted for contemporary history.

	Ancient	Byzantine- Medieval (4 th AD-15 th AD)	Modern (15 th -1945)	Contemporary (1940s onwards)	Answered	All
Primary	15	6	9	13	43	49
Secondary	11	10	6	18	45	53

TABLE 2. Frequency of students' choices in task about historical periods

Primary school students also selected events of national importance as the most significant among ten historical events they had to choose from: they opted for the Greek liberation movement of 1821, the liberation of Ioannina from the Ottomans in 1913, and finally the 1940 war.

Events	Students' choices
Dervenakia Battle, 1821 (Greek Liberation Movement)	11
Athens Olympics 1896	6
Korinthos Canal 1893	1
Greece's Bankruptcy 1893	2
Ioannina Liberation 1913	9
Publishing of school books in modern Greek, 'demotiki', 1918	1
1940 War	8
Vote to women in Greece, 1952	4
Greece connected to European Union, 1981	1
Economic Crisis in Greece, 2010	5
All students	49 (1 student didn't answer)

TABLE 3. Frequency of Primary School students' choices about significant events

Discussion

The above findings which reveal students' preference for contemporary history and especially for identity significant events (like national victories or traumas), are consistent with previous research conducted as a part of the 'Youth and History' project (Frangoudaki & Dragonas in Angvic and Borries von 1997, p. A304). They are also consistent with other research conducted in the same Greek town (Ioannina) in a sample of about three hundred primary school students (12 years old) and one hundred and fifty primary school teachers conducted by Kokkinos et. al in the school year 2002-2003 (Kokkinos et al, 2005). It is also consistent with the findings of a large scale empirical study of 971 secondary school teachers in relation to their perception of the past and the discipline of history (Apostolidou et al, 2009), and also with another study Kokkinos and Betrou (2002). In the 2009 study senior high school teachers opted for the teaching of contemporary history and especially for events like the expulsion of Greeks from Minor Asia in 1922, the Balkan Wars and the issue of Cyprus. Students of the 2005 sample in Ioannina also opted for learning more of contemporary history, while in the Kokkinos and Betrou study of 2002, university students that had to indicate the most significant events of the modern Greek history, opted for once more for the expulsion of Greeks in Minor Asia in 1922, and the Greek Civil War in the 1940s. On the whole, there is a tendency among Greek people of victimizing themselves insisting on the most traumatic past. As Kokkinos and Betrou put it in their study, Greek people, perhaps in an effort to explain current issues that distress them, seem to have a tendency for a "negative historical consciousness" (2002, p. 201).

Avdela (2000, p. 245) had commented on the image of the nation or of Hellenism as constructed in history textbooks: "... an unalterable and unified entity, independent of time and space, *that ceaselessly resists the nation's various enemies outside of and beyond historical change ...*". The history textbooks and the curricula have changed in Greece while empirical research has been questioning for many years the textbooks' and the school's role in the formation of students' historical consciousness in contrast to the students' community's historical culture and that of the mass media (Wineburg, 2001, p. 240, Seixas 1993, Barton and McCully, 2005).

Greek school students do not seem to have changed their views and beliefs at all: = they insist on the unaltered status of the Greek historical course using in their speech adverbs that indicate repetition such as “*always*”, “*repeatedly*”, “*again*”, “*continuously*”.

Lorenz says that “whenever individuals or collectives transform their differences into an issue, this is the surest indication that their experience of being different is under threat” (2001, p. 6); this ought to be the case with all three groups of students in Ioannina. Economic crisis has had extraordinary consequences for the Greek population, both economic and psychological. Yet students do not appear to have developed new cultural tools (concepts) to account for it: Rösen talks about a “normal crisis” case which “evokes historical consciousness as a procedure for overcoming it by employing pre-given cultural potentials” (2007, p. 20). Students in the sample described are stating with confidence that nothing has changed using significant events of the traditional and soothing national narrative, events to which they are comparing the current crisis.

It might be either that they have not realized the significance of the crisis itself hoping it will pass, or that they deny seeing it: in that case we may read students’ excerpts using Ankersmit’s notion of forgetting because of the abandonment of an old identity. Greek students of Ioannina may in fact realize that things have changed for good in a way that remembering their old national identity past is the consequence of a deeply traumatic experience. Ankersmit focuses on that last version of the past remembrance, and describes a past that is always present in memory though painful, (2001, p. 302). Students in the sample described are stating with confidence that nothing has changed using significant events of the traditional national narrative, events to which they compare the current crisis.

Greek Students’ Identity in situation of Crisis (the other patterns)

Primary school students, despite the fact that they did refer to crisis, did not in the end manage to reason about it. Reading the university and the secondary school students’ data we located five different patterns: the “resistance” pattern as described in section (c) of this paper, the “enemies” pattern, the “politicians” pattern, the “self-critique” pattern and the “repetition” pattern. The “enemies” pattern is the second most frequent finding after the “resistance” pattern and indicative of the same political culture that reads current issues in Greece within a conspiracy veil.

	University Students	Secondary School Students	University & Secondary School Students	Primary School Students	All sample (3 groups)
Students	49	53		49	151
Students that developed a narrative	30	27	57	45 (produced 'titles' with no reasoning)	
Narratives that referred to the crisis	23	21	44	11 (titles), no special constructs	
the Resistance pattern	10	14	24		
the Enemies' pattern	7	6	13		
the Politicians' pattern	4	1	5		
self-critique pattern	7	2	9		
Repetition p.	2	3	5		

TABLE 4. Frequency of students' constructs related to economic crisis

Students' excerpts follow:

- g. it is the history of a country that is continuously losing her balance **because of enemies' attacks and wars,**" (high school student 3).
- h. Because of her geopolitical position Greece **became a subject to claims from the ancient years till now ...**" (university student, a woman, town of Naoussa).
- i. Because Greece stands on the crossroads of west and east **has always been the target of many other states...**Later other occupants came (after the Turks), like Germans and Italians ... this is the reason **why today we have to fight for our country to overcome the envy many people have for Greece**", (university student 15).
- j. The Greek state endured many wars and hardships (German occupation, dictatorship, civil war, etc) but at some point she managed to stand on her feet and achieve a lot in many sectors till now, but today we are through occupation again, though in a more modern way (high school student 17,a boy).

Excerpts (g, h, i) are indicative of the mentality that Diamandouros defines as the underdog culture in Greece: its characteristics are

an apparent xenophobia of equally religious and secular origins, a prevalence for conspiratorial explanations of political events, a Manichean logic of dividing the people into philhellenes and the ones against Greece, a low self-esteem in relation to Europe that also urges Greek people to form alliances with groups or individuals that are supposed to have been victims of the west, like Arabs and others" (2000, p. 48-49).

Within the same framework the geopolitical significance of Greece is overestimated (see the excerpts h and i), alike its culture and the importance of the latter to the formation of the western

culture. According to students, Greece appears to be continuously under siege, while the economic crisis is a war that Greece has to fight “for once more” on an international level.

Indicative of the political and cultural climate in which Greek people have lived for the last three years is the phrasing of the students’ views in excerpt j: the comparison this student makes with the German Occupation (1941-1944) has been very common since the first consequences of the crisis were felt among the population. The traditional hostility against Europeans, “underdog” in its origin as described by Diamandouros above, augmented, while the talk about the German occupation was common among all the political parties, right and left. In her analysis of the behaviors, verbal or actual, adopted in Greece throughout the crisis, Frangoudaki notices the prevalence of a resistance vocabulary among the political parties, the people in protest (political slogans in protest marches) and the whole population in general: people were summoned in 2012 by a left newspaper to resist memorandum under the slogan “resistance now as then [in the occupation time]”, while the tax upon home ownership imposed by the Greek government after 2010, was called “haratsi” (Frangoudaki, 2013, pp. 202 and 205), which is a Turkish word for the taxes the conquered people paid to the Sultan within the Ottoman Empire. The latter remarks could at least partially explain the articulation of the specific speech and use of the specific vocabulary by the students.

Apart from these reactions that Frangoudaki describes in her book, there have also been critical voices and on the whole public debate; the latter didn’t seem to have reached the students who function with standard historical knowledge. For example historians explained in newspapers editions that the German Occupation time and the consequences of the economic crisis are not comparable whatever the impact of the crisis in everyday life in Greece was (Charalambidis, 2013, p. 40). Others called the people to focus not on a “North-South colonization metaphor” but on the specific economic conditions in each European country and on the fact that “German taxpayers as well their Italian taxpaying fellows are both exploited by German bankers as well as by rich Italian private landlords and tax evaders” (Petri, 2013, in English).

Excerpt k. about Greece trying to keep up with Europe could also be read though Frangoudaki’s assessment of Greeks’ deep Eurocentrism, a Eurocentrism that sees western Europeans as superior to everyone else, a stance that puts, Greeks, once more, on the defensive (2013, p. 153):

- k In 1980 Greece becomes a member of the European Community, and she is modernized **trying to keep up with Europe**...(university student 19, a woman).

Finally self-critical excerpts l and m reveal disappointment, complaint and reflection on the part of the students since they comment on the abrupt changes in their everyday life:

- l There have been many leaders in this country but they usually shared the same visions. Greece **after 1989 presented a remarkable development in a way that there were no signs about the situation today. There have been many mistakes** bringing the country in a situation without any organization at all and indebted to her lenders (university student 11, a woman).
- m Unfortunately Greek people today bear very few similarities with their glorious ancestors; there is a “couldn’t-care-less” attitude and cunningness, and this is the reason why we ended up like this (university student 14, a woman, town of Naoussa).

It is possible that the student in excerpt (l) refers to the notorious decade of the 1980s when a remarkable increase of revenues in favor of the middle and lower middle classes took place in Greece, automatic indexation also, policies that today are characterized as disastrous and populist on behalf of the governing political parties of those days. It is estimated that despite the benefits to the living standards of the Greek population, the financial problem began in the 1980s and its deterioration because of the incapability of the Greek state to collect taxes. Mazower summarizes as the biggest problem in Greece the combination of a bad and unfair tax system along with the increase of social expectations for state benefits (Mazower, 2013). It is also possible that the student by the “1989 development” meant the so called “shallow” modernization followed by the governments in the 1990s, that led the country to the European Union (Loulis, 2011, p. 133).

In excerpt (m) we have another attempted self-critique by the student who ends up with past nostalgia and rejection of whatever modern Greece is about.

Excerpts (n,o) could be indicative of the criticism exercised by the students upon politicians:

- n On the course of history things in Greek economy have not been always smooth. The economic problems, the political power **and the several political personas have been wearing** and influencing economic life till today (university student 16, a woman).
- o **Unfortunately Greek politicians have managed** to solve the problems that have been wearing the Greek people **only a few times** (university student 2, a woman).

Frangoudaki (2013, pp.99-102), and Loulis (2011, pp. 9-10 and 296) in their analysis of Greek political culture both refer to what they call a two-party system crisis, while Frangoudaki insists on a crisis relevant to the whole of the parliamentary system and that has its parallel in Europe too. Economic scandals led the population to the critique and questioning of the integrity and efficacy of the two main government parties. The latter questioning reached its apex when the economic crisis broke out. Loulis puts the emphasis on the fact that this crisis had appeared a lot sooner than it is usually believed, and he locates the crisis in the 1990s when the two big parties had already lost 16% of their supporters.

I also quote excerpts (p, q) indicative of the repetition pattern located in students' data:

- p Interests led to assassinations, bankruptcies, collaboration and alliances ... this is the reason why we know **that history repeats itself** (school student 11, a girl)
- q ...students ought to work together with the teacher to locate in the most active way how an event took place, as **the basic principle of history is that it repeats .itself** (university student 20, a woman, town of Trikala)

The above excerpts can also be approached through primary and secondary school students' answers to another question they were asked apart from the narration of Greek history; the question was: “Why do you think we learn history?” In forty three answers seven students adopted the “mistakes not to be repeated” construct saying that the purpose of learning history is to avoid past mistakes, while four of them gave “identity”

answers saying that history is about the ancestors' past (see excerpts r and s). Similar constructs in the same question were developed and among the primary school students.

	Students	Students that produced constructs	"Mistakes not to be repeated"	"Identity"	Other constructs
Primary School	49	36	4	16	16
Secondary School	53	43	7	4	32
All students		79	11	20	

TABLE 5. Frequency of students' constructs related to the purpose of learning history

Students' excerpts

- r ... in order **to learn from the past's mistakes** and avoid making the same ones in the future" (secondary school student 8)
- s ... to learn about the people who sacrificed their lives for Greece" (secondary school student 46)

Both "identity" and "mistakes not to be repeated" constructs, along with the repetition rationale located in students' narrative about the crisis, are indicative of their "traditional" and "paradigmatic" in terms of Rüsen's types of historical consciousness; types that bear the implication of similarities between past and present, similarities that demand the repetition of the past or present to the future. The best past to be repeated according to the students is the ancestors' past, i.e. atavism.

On the whole, in this section of this paper we were able to analyse students' use of stereotypical constructs of elements of national 'master' narratives that characterise, in Lorenz's term (2001, p. 6), particularistic identity tendencies. Students either adopt a strong attitude of the 'resistance' identity type or are completely entrenched in the 'enemies' or the 'repetition of (history)' cluster of constructs that involve the repetition of national mistakes or misfortunes. The 'repetition' construct prevents students from seeing the international economic crisis as a separate, unique phenomenon.

Conclusion: an overall appreciation of the data and implications for history didactics

This was a first analysis of data collected from three different student age groups in 2013, i.e. primary school, secondary school and university phases. The strengths of the study are the expanded and differentiated sample (primary, secondary schools and university students) and the indirect way in which the data was retrieved: students were not asked directly about the economic crisis but through other questions and the more important through many different questions (at least for the primary and secondary school samples). Also the university students were not asked to focus on a history of the Greek state, a wording that challenges certain comparisons, but they were actually put in a state to reproduce stereotypes: they finally did so, but it is impressive that all three groups, in their majority contemplated on the crisis without being asked to.

So the findings indicate that while students of all ages seem to assign future historical significance to current economic crises, they tend to evaluate them using the categories of war and to filter them through “national” self-image. It appears that this is the case even among older students who presumably have more time to assimilate historical knowledge available to them from comparable economic events. Another issue is the dominant role that both the history produced in the public sphere, and the political culture of the country, played in students’ effort to make sense of the crisis. It is suggested that students’ historical and political communities’ culture[s] ought to be taken under consideration in lesson planning and curriculum design in a way that enable students to assess critically current affairs (Barton 2009, Van Boxtel, 2010).

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APPENDIX A

TABLES

Students	Grade/Age	Sample Size	Boys	Girls	Didn't say	Time	Question
University of Ioannina (Primary Education Department)	3 rd year/ 21 y old	49	10	37	02	4 March 2013	"Briefly narrate Greek history since a long time ago, till now"
Secondary School ("5th Junior High School"), Ioannina	3 rd class 15 y old	53	08	08	37	13 May 2013	"Briefly narrate the history of the Greek state from 1830 till now, focusing on changes"
Primary (Experimental) School (Zosimaia 1st & 2nd Elementary Schools), Ioannina.	6 th class 12 y old	49	24	24	01	13 June 2013	Complete the following sentence "Greek history is the story of a country that ..."

TABLE 1. Population and sampling

	Ancient	Byzantine- Medieval (4 th AD-15 th AD)	Modern (15 th -1945)	Contemporary (1940s onwards)	Answered	All
Primary	15	6	9	13	43	49
Secondary	11	10	6	18	45	53

TABLE 2. Frequency of students' choices in task about historical periods

Events	Students' choices
Dervenakia Battle, 1821 (Greek Liberation Movement)	11
Athens Olympics 1896	6
Korinthos Canal 1893	1
Greece's Bankruptcy 1893	2
Ioannina Liberation 1913	9
Publishing of school books in modern Greek, 'demotiki', 1918	1
1940 War	8
Vote to women in Greece, 1952	4
Greece connected to European Union, 1981	1
Economic Crisis in Greece, 2010	5
All students	49 (1 student didn't answer)

TABLE 3. Frequency of Primary School students' choices about significant events

	University Students	Secondary School Students	University & Secondary School Students	Primary School Students	All sample (3 groups)
Students	49	53		49	151
Students that developed a narrative	30	27	57	45 (produced 'titles' with no reasoning)	
Narratives that referred to the crisis	23	21	44	11 (titles), no special constructs	
the Resistance pattern	10	14	24		
the Enemies' pattern	7	6	13		
the Politicians' pattern	4	1	5		
self-critique pattern	7	2	9		
Repetition p.	2	3	5		

TABLE 4. Frequency of students' constructs related to economic crisis

	Students	Students that produced constructs	"Mistakes not to be repeated"	"Identity"	Other constructs
Primary School	49	36	4	16	16
Secondary School	53	43	7	4	32
All students		79	11	20	

TABLE 5. Frequency of students' constructs related to the purpose of learning history

APPENDIX B

Indicative primary school students' answers to the question:

"Complete the following sentence "Greek history is the story of a country that ..." (give a title for Greek history).

Answers:

"Greece is a country in economic crisis", (primary school student 9)

"Greece is a country usually in difficulties but at the same time with a glorious past" (primary school student 26)

"Greece is a country always in problems" (primary school student 28)

"Greece is a country almost always in crisis, the people is always in hunger and pays for the nonsense the politicians make, we shouldn't vote for them", (primary school student 47)

STUDENT TEACHERS' VIEWS ON TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IN SCHOOL HISTORY COURSES: THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND IDEOLOGICAL FACTORS

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Abstract:

In this paper we attempt to make a connection between relatively recent theoretical and instructional perspectives on teaching controversial issues in school history courses from the point of view of student teachers. This is a case study, which was conducted using a questionnaire given to students in the Department of Philosophy and Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), and also to students in the Department of Primary Education at the University of the Aegean (Greece). The aim of this study was to examine the attitudes, beliefs and opinions of these students about teaching controversial (traumatic or ideologically charged) issues in relation to their social and cultural backgrounds, and also their ideological-political placement. The first group of students can work after graduation in secondary education and the second group in the primary education. Both could teach history.

Keywords

Controversial issues, History education, Student teachers, Empirical study, Social factors

Introduction

Despite the fact that holistic structuralist and marxist historiography, along with post-war 'New History' (in its various and intersecting parameters), caused the collapse of the established views about the role of the historian, and in particular of the discipline of history, as early as the Mid-war period, in reality, the modern academic and socio-political role of the historian began to be formulated under the dynamic promoted by the 1960s culture of controversy and mainly the linguistic and cultural developments, which marked the course of academic historiography during the last three decades of the 20th century (Iggers, 1997; Noiriel, 2005; Cannadine, 2002; Megill, 2007; Kokkinos, 2012). Since then the historian is no longer considered to be the nation's biographer and mythographer, nor the monopolising conveyer of substantiated historical truth. S/he is rather a product, from personal perspectives, of critically defined and holistically orientated historical meaning. Indeed, during our time, which is characterised by the dramatic democratisation of the discipline of history and of culture, the historian tends to distance her/himself from the appearance of intuition based on evidence and primarily aims to promote the historical authenticity of the conditions which produce historical meaning. He / she therefore becomes the most reliable judge and deconstructor of historical narratives and national myths constructed by the community subjects over time, in order to formulate and establish their identity or to justify their choices or their action. In other words, the critical reflections of the modern historian, within the framework of self-evident interpretative versatility regarding the past, has gradually replaced the self-confidence in knowing, the hieratical solemnity and/or the prophesying vanity of his/her predecessors, resulting in a crucial blow to the delusion that there is a single historical truth. Nowadays, most of us should understand that history is the science or the art which, for the sake of truth and truth only, can reach out to tangible evidence, deconstruct the 'solid centres', mock the 'nostalgic fantasies', bring down the myths and the facades, adore lack of pattern itself, since entropy is the object of its observation, its concern. Besides, this view

is in keeping with the complex processes that make collective self-knowledge not only necessary but also possible. According to what George Steiner notes as early as 1971, referring to the critical role of the 'Thirty Years' War 1618 – 1648, in the conscious of destruction of western civilisation, '[...] *the dark places are always at the center. Pass them and there can be no serious discussion of human potential*' (Steiner, 1971).

More specifically, after the collapse of communist regimes, the main factors that led to the spreading of a radical and therefore dangerous image for the historian are some of the following:

- a) the deconstruction of the myth about "*the end of ideologies*" and of the national and worldview mythologies in general;
- b) the historians' vigilance to incorporate memory in their research practices without however attributing its principal role in representing and interpreting the recent past;
- c) their aggressive criticism in demonising totalitarian regimes, that is to say, in the exclusively moral approach to history, and
- d) the focus of academics' –among others'– interest in the mechanisms and the processes of constructing historical narratives, both of the dominant as well as other, and/or oppressed groups. In essence, a new and heterogeneous type of historian has emerged in the public space and discourse, who is potentially dominant and functions according to various established views, like "*an enemy from within*".

This new type of historian fights against absolute truths, is not afraid to research taboo issues, disrupts the veil of guilty silence that substantially covers the traumatic and controversial historical facts of national history, gives speech to the losers of history, and fights against treating ideas in history and history education as an instrument that offers a guide to action, for example the misuse of history for political or nationalistic purposes. In some way, when historical science becomes more reflective, the historical knowledge produced by the historian acquires a wider critical range, contributing substantially to collective historical knowledge. The iconoclastic myth busting is not considered today as a trap set by relativist nihilism, but, on the contrary, it is approached as if it were the uterus in which historical self-knowledge itself is conceived and gradually formulated, whether it is individual or collective, academic or public. Despite the complex relationship between identity-memory-history, historical self-knowledge, in these difficult times, can only constitute an axis for the evolution of citizenship (Barton & Levstik, 2008). The demand for collective self-knowledge and democratic and scientifically appropriate discussion about the meaning and the value of the past implicitly concerns historical education¹.

Numerous professional historians all over the world engaged with the recent past (colonisation, decolonisation, WWII, totalitarian regimes) have confronted these issues with judicial control, while, from time to time, their views have been censored and prohibited, because in some circles it was considered that their research jeopardises international relationships and peace, attacks dominant views and deconstructs the nation, the state, the party, the race, the dominant religion or ideology, the system, the supreme lord, the monarchy, the revolutionary process. Furthermore, many historians gave in to the threats against them and self-censored. As De Baets reports, especially in Western Europe, the "*witch hunt*" against the historians does not usually concern historical facts before the decade of 1930-1940 (de Baets, 2002, p. 353).

Historical research should be exercised without problems as it searches for the truth and contributes to collective self-knowledge. However, there are preconditions for encouraging research, teaching and writing freely by historians, as De Baets points out:

- a) to abolish laws about slandering the nation and the state,
- b) to be legally allowed to investigate “*the dark*” political establishment or state and party officials, who very often, in order to justify their actions, invoke the supremacy of the argument of “*authentic*” experience, in relation to the “*cold-blooded*” report of the historians,
- c) for it to be understood that a strict repressive armoury cannot protect the dead, even if they are considered founding-fathers of the national state and their memory has been sheathed with the mantle of sanctity (de Baets, p. 348).

On the other hand, this does not mean that it is allowed to collectively violate ‘*the dignity of the dead*’, that is, to doubt a widely accepted moral principle (de Baets, p. 349).

In its monodimensional and conventional ethnocentric version, school history is constructed on the ontologicalised division ‘*we*’ vs. ‘*the others*’, with both poles of the antithesis being closed, solid and homogenised. Also, it is constructed on the epistemological belief that there can be absolute identification between the past and historical interpretation. As a consequence, doubting this polarisation can be taken as a high crime against the nation. On the other hand, in its pluralistic version, school history is organised with historicity as its epistemological starting point and therefore interpretation of the past is recognised as relative. At the same time, it promotes heterogeneity and the internal polymorphism of social groups and cultural systems, the differentiation of historical experiences, the multiperspectivity and the precariousness of historical representation and interpretation into a central principle, creating thus the framework for an ethic of recognition, respect of the other, dialogue, responsibility, historical empathy, mutuality and solidarity.

The dominant types of an alienated perception of the other in modern world are the following: bigotry, racism, anti-semitism, islamophobia, homophobia, the phobia for gypsies, xenophobia, nationalism, neo-fascism and neo-nazism, aversion to the sick, the elderly, the disabled, and the poor, the demonisation of globalisation (Ramberg, 2006). The conscious and intentional removal of almost all kinds of historical or cultural traces of intrastate or external heterogeneity from the analytical curricula and the school history books is an obvious type of official/state – institutionalised– racism. As it is understandable, this racism is not part of policy statements, but lurks in the shadow of the anti-racist political correctness of our era.

We live in a world where ethnicity, religion and culture are approached with essentialism as eternal characteristics of a collective identity, taking the same ideological role as the one played by racism during WWII; in a Europe perceived by the dominant political class and a substantial part of the societies as a “*fortress*” –an enclosed earthly heaven of security, prosperity and democracy– despite the fact that political correctness of the era requires the pretentious application of policies that fight discrimination and exclusion, xenophobia, modified racism and neo-fascism; in a Europe where 47-67% of the population does not want immigration from Africa, the Middle East as well as Eastern Europe, while, at the same time, an 80% thinks it is necessary to take drastic and direct measures for the limitation and control of immigration to European Union States for economic or political reasons; lastly, in a Europe where, from the 1st May 1999 and the enactment of the Amsterdam Treaty, institutional measures are taken to eradicate discrimination, poverty and exclusion (about the internal re-organisation, the common social policy, and the internal security), perhaps it is understandable to consider that there is a relationship of direct analogy between the intolerance against whatever comes from outside the borders, different and foreign and the command to suppress linguistic, religious and ethnic interstate heterogeneity, vanishing under the pressure of dominant ideology and nationalism, sterilising the collective identity and historical consciousness. This heterogeneity is artfully concealed behind the undisrupted facade of truth’s singularity, “*crystal clear*” ethnic homogeneity,

racial purity, cultural supremacy, and the historical mission of a nation or of western civilisation. It is the same heterogeneity that is approached mono-dimensionally and is demonised only as a danger or a threat. For the dominant rationale, people who belong to minorities, immigrants and refugees, and at the same time those who are not convinced about the singularity of truth, are considered to be a threat. They are the ones who are given the role of internal enemy and unintentionally fill the imagery of the dominant group with fear, because, it is considered that their presence jeopardises the group's identity, purity, prosperity, and security (Hubrecht & Mugiraneza, 2009, p. 57).

Empirical Research

Starting point of the research.

The above theoretical premise became the starting point of this research. Besides, for about fifteen years there are recommendations for including "*controversial issues*" in history teaching, since we recognise the contribution of such issues to formulating future citizens, who are called to live in a world that is complex and full of contradictions and controversies that they should understand (Percoco, 2001; Stradling, 2001).

Furthermore, apart from the contribution these "*controversial issues*" provide to democratic and citizenship education, it is the nature of historical discipline itself that creates controversies and dispute, as it is interwoven with the '*Three Ds (debate, disagreement, discourse)*', elements that should be taken into consideration by the school as well (Hahn, 1994, pp.201-219).

However, even though the school classroom could be the natural environment for engaging with "*controversial issues*", there are serious limitations such as the fact that history often functions as a vehicle for spreading and supporting or overthrowing ideas and values. In addition, many relevant issues divide societies or nations, because they can cause great emotional charge and be extremely sensitive for teachers and students. Finally, from a pedagogical perspective, there is a danger that their approach can lead to a non-pedagogical process, where everyone can share their opinion, whatever that is, or where he/she just recites historical information.

Therefore, it is necessary to approach such issues with great caution, especially in societies with open wounds, such as Northern Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Israel and Palestine, for example. In such cases it is necessary to apply a network of recommendations during teaching, which includes "*reconciliation with emotions, effective use of differentiation, search for support, and effective use of a specific methodological framework*" (Barton & McCully, 2007, pp.13-19). There have been many recommendations for such methodological frameworks, such as the ones by Cavet, McCoy, McCully, Stradling, and others (Cavet, 2007). In fact, the first two of the authors of this study, in collaboration with other colleagues, have published the first relevant book in Greece which includes, apart from the theoretical framework and the methodological recommendations for teaching "*controversial issues*", with specific applied examples (Kokkinos, Mavroskoufis, Gatsotis & Lemonidou, 2010). Thus the interest for the subject is understood, especially since we teach in university faculties where future teachers of primary (George Kokkinos) and secondary education (Dimitris Mavroskoufis) study.

Aim, objectives and methodology of the research.

The main aim of this research is to record and evaluate the views and the attitudes of students about the teaching of controversial issues in history classes in secondary education. More specifically, within this framework, we, first of all, investigate the participants' views about the extent to which they think they can meet the general requirements of teaching history. Then,

they are required to semantically define *'controversial issues'*, to indicate the issues that can be characterised as such, both from the Greek as well as the European and World History, and evaluate which of these issues would have been difficult or impossible to be included in history teaching and which should always be included in the curriculum. Next, we examine the practicality and usefulness attributed to the teaching of *'controversial issues'*, as well as their evaluation of the support that the current analytical curricula and history textbooks provide towards teaching such issues, asking them to justify their views.

In order to collect the data, we constructed a questionnaire constructed by ourselves, mainly because makes it possible to easily obtain a satisfying sample that allows the recording and examination of the subjects' attitudes and to make observations and generalisations. The research was carried out in October 2012 and was based on a sample of 192 subjects, 94 (49%) of which were students of the Department of Philosophy and Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki-Greece and 98 (51%) were students of the Pedagogical Primary Education Department at the University of the Aegean-Greece. As soon as the questionnaires were gathered, we began to analyse the data using the statistical software of S.P.S.S. 15 for Windows.

Figures 1 to 6 in the appendix show the variables of the sample regarding sex, age, senior high school graduation, the ideological-political stance, the profession, and the parental educational level.

Research results.

This part presents the findings that emerged from the statistical analysis of the data.

General objectives of history teaching

The general objectives of history teaching, which, according to the analytical curriculum, are defined as the development of critical thinking and historical consciousness, are achieved well or very well, by 6.3% of the participants in the research, moderately well by 1/3, and less than half or none of the objectives are met by 9.4% of the participants. The 4.51% of the participants attribute their evaluation to the fact that the exam-oriented educational system promotes learning by heart, grade hunting and sterile knowledge without allowing space for doubting, critical analysis, reflection, thinking, commenting and deepening into the issues. As one student characteristically points out, *'pupils just swallow knowledge without chewing it. They do not ask questions, they learn simple facts, which they later forget'*. For 30.1% of the participants, the main responsibility is attributed to the teachers, who, in the larger part, are considered as not adequately trained pedagogically as well as historically and moreover, they are indifferent and inactive. Their method of teaching is teacher-oriented, tiring, monotonous, one-sided and inadequate. The 16.8% focus on school textbooks which are characterised as inappropriate, because they are badly written and unclear, contain inaccuracies that often serve propagandistic interests, presenting facts from one side, the Greek perspective, resulting in the development of nationalism. A student points out indicatively: *'books cultivate the boosting of national vanity and not the development of historical self-knowledge and thinking'*. Lastly, nine students mention that it is impossible to achieve history's general objectives due to the limited hours provided for this lesson.

Definition of 'controversial issues'

In the open question about the semantic definition of *'controversial issues'*, 40% of the students did not provide any answer. One out of four was limited to referring only to example-cases, focusing mainly on the Greek-Turkish relations and secondarily on the Cyprus dispute and the Greek Civil War [1946-1949]. A 28.7% defined *'controversial issues'* as questionable issues that

are open to many interpretations-versions and about which –even today– historians seem to have a significant variation in opinion. For the 1/5 of the subjects, ‘*controversial issues*’ are related to traumatic facts, cause dispute and tension between peoples or citizens of the same country and generally upset people and social developments. Lastly, one out of ten considers that ‘*controversial issues*’ are issues with political or religious content.

Most traumatic issues

Next, the subjects were called to indicate from two lists of 70 issues –one list from the Greek history and the other from the European and World History– which issues they deem to be traumatic. From their answers, shown in Figures 7 and 8, it turns out that the high percentage of positive views from the first list are events that took place during the 20th century, with the Greek Civil War (78.1%) and the Asia Minor War [1919-1922] (76%) being first, coming secondly were the 21st April dictatorship [1967-1974] (57.3%), the Cyprus dispute (56.8%) and Metaxas’s dictatorship [1936-1941] (52.1%). On the contrary, events of the distant past, with the exception of the expedition and the politics of Alexander the Great (54.7%), get percentages that are lower than 50%. Also, such percentages are given to issues from ancient times to the 19th century, with the exception of Holy Wars (59%) and marginally the French Revolution (51%). From the 20th century events what stands out in the students’ choices are WWI and WWII (63 and 62% accordingly).

Which controversial issues can be taught in school?

The 27.5% of the subjects who consider that all 70 issues included in the questionnaire can be taught in history. However the rest, that is 72.5%, estimate that some of these issues would have been difficult or impossible to be included in teaching, but only a small percentage named them. From Greek history issues, most of the students’ choices included the Cyprus dispute, the 21st April dictatorship, the management and development of other national issues during the 20th century and Greece foreign affairs during the 20th century (11, 8, 7 and 7 accordingly). From European and World History, they included economic theories and practices during the last three decades, terrorism as defined by the UN, the political and military interventions by the USA and the USSR (11, 11, 9 and 8 accordingly). The participants who justified the above choices in issues were so few that it is meaningless to present the relevant opinions.

Is it important to teach controversial issues I school history?

Almost the greatest percentage (94.7%) of the students consider that teaching ‘*controversial issues*’ at school is purposeful and useful. Half of them, who completed the open question which required the justification of their previous answer, argued that in such ways students develop their critical skills, strengthen their thinking, intensify their research spirit and their horizons are broadened. Of these 22.9% noted that students also achieve a deeper understanding of the facts, their causes and generally they approach the historical reality in a better way and 21.7% pointed out that students acquire a rounded and complete view, develop a multi-dimensional perspective, and avoid fragmentation and confusion. Lastly, 6% observed that students realise the mistakes of the past without prejudice and preconceptions while they proceed into the future with greater attention and lucidity.

Which controversial issues should definitely be taught?

In answer to the question which required students to write down up to five (5) issues that should be definitely included in the curriculum, the first place in their choices in Greek History was taken by the Civil War (N=96) and further down we get the Asia Minor War (N=66), the Greek Struggle for Independence (N=53), the 21st April dictatorship (N=50) and the Cyprus dispute (N=46). From the European and World History we have in the first place WWII (N=85), while at a greater

distance we have the French Revolution (N=51), the Crusades (N=58), Holy Wars (N=46) and WWI (N=49).

Experience of learning about controversial issues

The 68.7% of the participants stated that they have had the experience of learning about '*controversial issues*' during their school years, while the 61% state that they have relevant experience from the university studies. At the same time, almost eight out of ten considered that current analytical curricula and school history textbooks do not support them in teaching '*controversial issues*'², as they deal with historical facts in one-sided and mono-dimensional ways, conceal important details, and avoid pointing out the mistakes of the Greek side, serving thus political interests. Lastly, we also have to point out that there was a significant statistical relevance between the dependent and independent variables (university faculty, sex, age, ideological-political attitude, profession and educational level of the parents).

Conclusions

We can firstly conclude from this research that the larger number of the students of the sample, who in the future can work as teachers in primary schools (as graduates of the Aegean University) or secondary schools (as graduates of the Aristotle University) and teach history to children or adolescents, consider that the basic aims of teaching, developing historical thinking and historical consciousness, is almost impossible to achieve on the basis of the current reality (analytical curricula, textbooks, teaching methods, exam-oriented system, inadequacy of teachers). Here one can highlight the realisation that 8 out of 10 believe that analytical curricula and teaching textbooks contain ethnocentric and monodimensional material, a fact that does not encourage teaching '*controversial issues*'. However, almost half of them are totally positive when it comes to including '*controversial issues*' in teaching school history, despite the difficulty they had in providing a satisfactory definition and in choosing controversial issues from a long list including issues from the Greek and World History and especially since over 60% of them revealed that they had such learning experiences from their years in school and university. Furthermore, a very clear indication about the influences from dominant ideology and their, non-conscious perhaps, conflicts is the fact that, despite the positive stance of the subjects, about the three quarters consider that some issues would be difficult or impossible to be included in the analytical curriculum, and it seems that these issues mainly come from Greek History. Lastly, we have to note that it was a surprise for the researchers not to observe a statistically significant interconnection with the department where the students of the sample study, with the parental profession and educational level, as well as with the ideological viewpoint of the students in the seven-grade scale of '*left-right*', where the larger part of the students were around the middle³.

As our research shows, as well as other relevant researches in Greece, the basic elements of '*historical literacy*' are almost unknown. Using just one textbook in class, the problematic analytical curricula and textbooks, the persistence in the narrative approach for history and the inadequate preparation of the teachers who teach history, make the development of historical thinking and historical consciousness an unattainable dream.

Notes

1. For a full view of the developments in historical education and mainly for a critical cross-section view in its character, its orientations and its components, see Davies, I. [Ed.] (2011) *Debates in History Teaching*. London and New York: Routledge; and Perikleous, L. and Shemilt, D. [Eds.] (2011) *The Future of the Past: Why History Education Matters*. Nicosia, CY: Association for Historical dialogue and Research.
2. The History curricula in Greece are usually drafted by teams of experts under the supervision of the Pedagogical Institute and then approved by the Ministry of Education. The textbooks are written by academic historians and educators with expertise, after a public tender or after direct awards. In each grade is used a single textbook, the same in all schools. Very often, both the curricula and textbooks are subjects to controversy (curricula and textbooks “wars”).
3. In our opinion, the failure to differentiate among students is due to the dominant ideology for History (one single truth, absolute objectivity, old fashioned positivism, etc.), to the ethnocentrism, and to the negative teaching tradition (narrative approach, limited use of primary sources, memorisation, “chalk and talk” teaching methods, etc.).

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Appendix

	f	%
Men	25	13,0
Women	167	87,0
Total	192	100,0

Fig 1. Variable of the sample based on the participants' sex

	f	%
20	10	5,2
21	140	72,9
22	20	10,4
23-32	22	11,5
Total	192	100,0

Fig 2. Variable of the sample based on based on the participants' age

	f	%
Thessaloniki/ Athens	49	25,5
Rest of Greece	143	74,5
Total	192	100,0

Fig 3. Variable of the sample based based on the participants' senior high school

	f	%	Crf
1	1	,5	,5
2	9	4,9	5,5
3	33	18,1	23,6
4	50	27,5	51,1
5	72	39,6	90,7
6	14	7,7	98,4
7	0	0	98,4
8	1	,5	98,9
9	2	1,1	100,0
Total	182	100,0	
Missing	10		
Total	192		

Average 4,33
Mean: 4
Sampling error: 1,18

Fig 4. Variable of the sample based on the participants' self-definition of political ideology (1: far left and 9: far right)

	Father		Mother	
	F	%	f	%
Scientist (doctor, lawyer, teacher, architect, etc.)	49	26,5	46	26,0
Tradesman, businessman, entrepreneur	26	14,1	7	4,0
Low status (worker, driver, keeper courier, etc.)	76	41,1	35	19,8
Private servant	15	8,1	23	13,0
Public servant	19	10,3	11	6,2
Housewife	0	0,0	55	31,1
Total	185	100,0	177	100,0
Missing	7		15	
Total	192		192	

Fig 5. Variable of the sample based on their parents' profession

	Father		Mother	
	F	%	f	%
Primary/Secondary education	55	28,6	35	18,2
Senior high school	78	40,6	64	33,3
Polytechnic	26	13,5	25	13,0
University	33	17,2	68	35,4
Total	192	100,0	192	100,0

Fig 6. Variable of the sample based on the parents' level of education

	%
The structure and organization of Ancient Sparta and Athens	17,7
The social structures and the relations inside the city-states	21,4
The Peloponnesse War	37,5
The Kingdom of Ancient Macedonia and its relations with Greek city-states	19,8
The expedition and politics of Alexander the Great	54,7
The relations between Greeks and Romans	26,0
The political and military prime of the Byzantine Empire	16,1
The Byzantine culture and its relation with Hellenism	24,5
The social structures and the relations inside the Byzantine Empire	12,5
The relations of the Byzantine Empire with neighbouring or western countries.	19,3
The imperialist politics and the dominance of the Ottoman Empire	49,5
The position and living conditions of non-muslim population inside the Ottoman Empire	38,0
The Greek Struggle for Independence (1821-1827)	50,0
The relations of Greek revolutionaries and the later Kingdom of Greece with the West	21,4
The organization and function of the political system inside the Kingdom of Greece during the 19th century	16,1
The social structures inside the Kingdom of Greece during the 19th century	17,2
The content of "Megali Idea" [Big Idea]	29,6
The relations between the Greek state and the Balkan countries during the 19th century	24,5
The Balkan Wars	46,4
Greece's participation in WWI	48,4
The Asia-Minor War (1919-1922)	76,0
The regulations about population exchange after the wars	35,9
The political and social life in Greece during the Mid-war period	15,6
Metaxa's Dictatorship (1936-1941)	52,1
Greece's participation in WWII	49,5
Resistance against the occupying forces (1941-1944)	25,5
The (Greek) Civil War (1946-1949)	78,1
The organisation and function of the Post-civil War state	13,0
The 21st of April Dictatorship(1967-1974)	57,3
The organisation of the political system after the dictatorship	22,4
The management and development of the Cyprus dispute in the 20th century	56,8
The management and development of other national issues in the 20th century	40,1
Greece's membership in the European Union	37,0
Greece's international relations during the 20th century	27,6
The structure and organisation of Greek society and economy during the Post-war period	23,4

Fig 7. Estimations of the subjects regarding issues of Greek History considered controversial

	%
The history of Ancient Eastern civilizations	15,6
The history of Ancient European civilizations	16,1
The relations of the Roman state with other European or Eastern civilizations	24,5
The structure and organization of the Roman State	10,9
The foundation and organization of Middle Ages European states	15,6
The christianisation of European people	42,2
The social structures and relations during the Middle Ages	20,3
The role of Catholic Church and its relations with political power and society from the Middle Ages until the 18th century	46,9
The Holy Wars	59,0
The Religious Reformation	29,2
The Crusades	28,9
The Discoveries	20,8
The Renaissance	33,3
The Enlightenment	34,9
The American Revolution	34,9
The French Revolution	51,0
The relations among European States during the 18th and 19th century	21,4
The French-German relations during the 19th century	23,4
The relations between the USA and other countries of the American Continent during the 19th and 20th century	27,1
WWI	63,0
The Bolshevik Revolution	31,8
The rise of fascist parties and the establishment of totalitarian regimes in Europe	45,8
WWII	62,0
The post-war organisation of Europe and the course towards the creation of the European Union	13,0
The relations of the USA and other Western countries with the USSR	31,3
The political and military interventions of the USA in other countries	49,0
The political and military interventions of the USSR in other countries	40,1
The relations of Western countries with African and Asian countries during the 20th century	25,5
The relations of the USSR with African and Asian countries	19,3
The interstate relations in Africa, Asia and Latin America	19,3
The structure, organisation and function of the States of Australia and Canada	7,3
The political structures and social relations inside the USSR and the People's Social Republics	22,9
The downfall of the USSR and its allied People's Social Republics	31,8
The economic theories and practices during the last thirty years	34,9
What the UN calls terrorism	51,0

Fig 8. *Estimations of the subjects regarding issues from the European and World History considered controversial*

THE JEWEL IN THE CURRICULUM: TEACHING THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE
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ABSTRACT

This article brings recent UK coalition government moves for curriculum reform under the spotlight and relates the place of imperial history in the curriculum to both recent proposals for change and curriculum theory more broadly. With this essential context established, the article then moves on to look at three other important areas of concern for history educators: significance, mediation and identity. By looking into the debates and research that has been undertaken in these areas, this article seeks to identify the varied challenges that teaching the history of the British Empire pose for educators. Where some see learning about the UK's imperial history as essential for young people to understand a multicultural twenty-first century Britain, others see its inclusion in the curriculum as an attempt to celebrate or glorify Britain's imperial past. Whether a renewed focus on imperial history helps to create a cohesive identity, greater understanding, or exacerbates feelings of difference, is a debate that divides commentators and has yet to be answered. This article does not seek to provide definitive answers but instead to bring together a variety of viewpoints that help to identify areas for future educational research that may aid us in better understanding this contentious and important topic.

Keywords

Imperial history, British Empire, Secondary History, Mediation, National identity, Curriculum reform, Significance

Introduction

The issue of teaching imperial history in schools is one that has never been more relevant than in the twenty-first century. England is an increasingly diverse country and no small part of this diversity has its roots in Britain's imperial past. As modern classrooms grow ever more reflective of these changes, the place and purpose of imperial history as part of a core history curriculum has come under increasing scrutiny from policy makers and academics, as well as the British media. Cole (2004, p. 534) argues that an 'honest evaluation' of imperialism needs to be reintroduced to British schools in order to at least make students aware of the implications and ramifications of racism (potentially a somewhat narrow focus); a choice, as he calls it, 'between a continued enslavement by an ignorance of Britain's imperial past or an empowered awareness of it'. Whereas Cole feels that knowledge of Britain's imperial past could empower today's students, others fear that the current UK coalition government's curriculum reforms have other designs.

Keating (2011, p. 761) suggests that generally the Conservative members of the current government are less interested in education for citizenship – with its focus on rights and responsibilities – and are instead more interested in 'using the teaching of a 'national narrative' in school history to foster a sense of pride in the British nation among its individual citizens – from which they presume a sense of responsibility will naturally emerge'. Similar criticisms were levelled at the coalition's 2013 citizenship handbook for new migrants, described by the then immigration minister, Mark Harper, as focusing 'on values and principles at the heart of being British'. This view was far from universal, and the handbook was criticised by the director of the Migrants' Rights Network as: 'in danger of looking more like an entry examination for a public

school which requires complete identification with elite views of British history and culture...The chapter which primes applicants' knowledge about history is permeated with the sort of Whig views of the world-civilizing mission of the British realm which have encouraged generations of Etonians and Harrovians to play their role in the great imperial enterprise' (Booth 2013). In the opinion of Parmar (2010), the current UK Education Secretary, Michael Gove had been aiming (at least prior to summer 2013) to revive a post-1989 Anglo-American project whereby 'an imperial narrative in the school curriculum, contested though it would be, would keep alive the flame of the British empire'. Somewhat naturally, these competing aims and viewpoints led to clashes on both a political and wider cultural level.

On becoming Education Secretary back in 2010, Michael Gove asked historian Niall Ferguson to become involved in the drawing up of a new-look history curriculum, leading to criticism from many in the more centre-left media. Indeed, to many, Ferguson represents a broadly 'pro-imperial' historian (Porter 2012, 23). Ferguson's ground-breaking work, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World*, concluded – not without qualification – that the rule of the British in their empire had, to a significant extent, a 'benign' effect (Ferguson 2004, 370). With such viewpoints and political connections, combined with the tied-in TV spin-offs from his best-selling publications, Ferguson has attracted widespread attention from the media (Fleming 2010, 17). Although Ferguson was certainly not the only historian consulted, with Simon Schama becoming the preferred history 'czar' at a later stage, the reaction to Gove's initial approach of Ferguson is certainly worth noting.

On hearing of Mr Gove's potential consultation of Ferguson, an unimpressed Seumas Milne of the *Guardian* criticized the Education Secretary for allowing a pro-imperial historian to be involved in 'some of the most sensitive parts of the school syllabus'. Milne went so far as to suggest that presenting even a balanced view of the British Empire (rather than a critical one) was akin to presenting the pros and cons of the Third Reich (Milne 2010). Laurie Penny, writing for the *New Statesman*, put it equally bluntly, arguing that, 'The Tories want our children to be proud of Britain's imperial past' (Penny 2010). The decision to involve many more high-profile historians who have a strong media presence only served to further broaden public and academic interest in both the idea of what historian David Cannadine – one of those consulted – has termed 'The Right Kind of History,' as well as the role the British Empire has to play in any new history curriculum.⁸⁵ For an in depth treatment of the debates over Gove's various advisors and his new curriculum, see Guyver (2013).

Gove's draft proposals to reform the curriculum, published in February 2013, met with a storm of criticism, even from some of those consulted. Simon Schama described the curriculum as a 'ridiculous shopping list' of topics focusing on figures such as the 'sociopathic, corrupt thug' Clive of India (Hennessy 2013). Cambridge's Regius Professor of History, Sir Richard Evans, felt that those who opposed Gove's February proposals, such as the Royal Historical Society and the Historical Association, were right to want an end to what he saw as Gove's attempt 'to use the teaching of history in schools to impart a tub-thumping English nationalism' (Evans 2013). Although some historians, such as Ferguson, Beevor and Starkey, backed the February proposals, such was the weight of opinion against the nature of the draft that it led to a U-turn on the part of Gove when it came to the final publication of the history curriculum in September (Hennessy 2013).

This article seeks to further explore the place of imperial history in the National Curriculum for England, not only from the point of view of media commentators and media-savvy historians, but

⁸⁵ Cannadine's book, *The Right Kind of History* (2011), explores the history of History teaching.

also through the lens of numerous educational theorists. In order to do so, the following piece is divided into four core sections: various understandings of curriculum, significance, mediation, and identity – all issues at the core of understanding the position of imperial history in the English school curriculum.

Curriculum

Michael Gove's February curriculum proposals identified the aims of history education as follows (DfE, 2013a, p.166): 'A high-quality history education equips pupils to think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. A knowledge of Britain's past, and our place in the world, helps us understand the challenges of our own time'. However the excessive amount of content outlined was immediately criticized by the Historical Association (2013) on their website by suggesting that 'to try and teach the content listed in any meaningful way would require a vast expansion of history teaching time. This is a high speed superficial tour rather than the old fashioned grand tour'. As noted, after much criticism in the media and from high-profile historians, the draft proposals underwent dramatic changes leading to a final September 2013 curriculum, which bore little resemblance to the one Gove had initially aimed to implement. Where the February document had sought to put the focus on Britain and key figures in British history (including its empire) – as mentioned above – the finalised September version had very little that was compulsory that touched on the British Empire. Although the statutory guidelines for history do mention 'empire' quite often, these are 'empires' – particularly at KS1 and KS2 – broadly interpreted and international in scope. At Key Stage 3, which focuses on history post-1066, the only statutory mention of the British Empire is within the heading of one of seven key areas: 'ideas, political power, industry and empire: Britain, 1745-1901' (DfE, 2013b). Although the British Empire does not loom as large as it did in the February proposals, the fact that it was so often cited as a negative focal point by media critics does ask important questions about its place. Also, there is still substantial scope for teachers to interpret and select within the new curriculum which aspects and examples of British imperialism they want to teach, and this in itself raises a number of interesting questions that will be touched upon later.

Before looking more closely into the justifications for including (or marginalising) imperial history in the curriculum, one must first consider the ever-evolving literature on the concept of the curriculum itself. In perhaps the clearest recent study, Smith (2000) outlines four key approaches to curriculum theory and practice:

1. Curriculum as a body of knowledge to be **transmitted**
2. Curriculum as an attempt to achieve certain ends in students – **product**
3. Curriculum as **process**
4. Curriculum as **praxis** [emphasis in original]

Smith argues that some curriculum planners still equate a curriculum to a syllabus – as in his first point – and their primary consideration is 'the body of knowledge that they wish to transmit'. This chimes quite clearly with many of the debates considered here and the idea that the selection and prescription of content as displayed in policy documents and syllabi is potentially of central importance. The second key approach identified by Smith (2000) – curriculum as product – focuses upon learning objectives and outcomes, vocationalism and key competencies. This approach differs from the first in that its core concerns are the development and measurement of (often vocational/generic) *skills* for use in life after formal education, rather than

a primary focus upon transmitting *knowledge*. In this case, it is harder to ascertain the importance of imperial history above any other form of history as the skills and competencies produced would unlikely be affected directly. However, if one heeds the work of those such as Peter Rogers (1979), one could argue that education in history must always involve both 'know how' and 'know that' when it comes to knowledge formation, and so it is never possible to fully disconnect knowledge and skills from one another (Chapman 2010, pp.52-53)

As Smith's article continues, he moves on from models that see the curriculum as 'a set of documents for implementation' to see 'curriculum' instead as 'the interaction of teachers, students and knowledge'. Here Smith looks at alternatives such as the third and fourth approaches on his list. 'Curriculum as process,' where Smith borrows largely from Stenhouse (1975), might be summarised as a refocusing of attention onto the process of learning. Given that this emphasises 'interpretation and meaning-making' by students, Smith goes on to suggest that very different means may be employed in different classrooms leading to a 'high degree of variety in content'. Smith notes that in this situation the teacher is centrally concerned with the learning process, making the students subjects – rather than objects – of the process. The final approach is 'curriculum as praxis' which builds on the process model. The praxis model brings 'informed, committed action' into the process and this brings up issues that start to engage with the place of imperial history in the curriculum. By studying – for example – the history of British colonisation in West Africa, students could explore the cultural, racial differences/experiences of the groups involved, see why they differed (at the time and over time) resulting in a greater understanding of collective, rather than individual attitudes. In both the 'process' and the 'praxis' model, the views and aims of the teacher/educator are fundamental – as are those of the learner – and, again, these suggest important lines of investigation in terms of mediation of information and how understandings of British imperialism are formed beyond the narrow confines of a written curriculum. In both of these approaches the curriculum is seen as an evolving process where learning is an active and experimental process and not (as is the case with the first approach) a process of transmission and memorisation of ideas – instead the curriculum is something to be divined through involved experience.

Moving on from Smith's article, Wiles (2009) identifies a more activities-focused curriculum, whereby the curriculum is still clearly defined but it is the activities that shape student behaviour. This model could perhaps avoid the 'value-laden' aspects of a clearly defined curriculum (Wiles, 2009, p.2). However, this potential evasion of the defined 'syllabus-based' curriculum might well undermine the aims of political curriculum architects. As Young (2011) notes, Gove initially put much emphasis on curriculum reform whereby the government selects the knowledge students should learn and the schools transmit this knowledge. Beck (2012, p.8) suggests that some of Gove's most 'attention-grabbing' policies have been his insistence on students learning 'facts' combined with a renewed emphasis on a more traditional 'our island story' version of history. Using the work of Basil Bernstein as a point of reference, Beck suggests that Gove's vision for the curriculum – at least until the summer 2013 curriculum U-turn – was to shape a 'prospective neoconservative pedagogic identity' among England's children and future citizens.

A number of recent studies consider the aims of policymakers in determining the content of school curricula. Osberg and Biesta (2008, pp.314-315), for example, contend that for many policymakers the curriculum 'becomes a course by means of which the subjectivity of those being educated is directed in some way'. For a politically-based education policymaker, as the previous paragraph suggests, this might well be the central aim – 'reassuring' an MP's constituents, supporters and the sympathetic general electorate that what students are learning is something the government has control over. The aims of the current Education Secretary seemed to be relatively clear, as he told the BBC on 20 January 2013: 'I'm not going to be

coming up with any prescriptive lists, I just think there should be facts' (BBC News, 2013). Professor Niall Ferguson (2013), felt that Gove's February curriculum proposals were broadly laudable and labelled the 'pomposity' of attacks on the proposals from 'Oxbridge historians', as 'in inverse proportion to their accuracy'. With such dissonance between both historians and policymakers as to whether Gove's proposed changes were for the good of education, one might be led to wonder whether such debates can ever be truly resolved for long. Gilbert (2011, p. 246) notes that there are many competing voices and ideals regarding what history in schools should be about, and for politicians 'history is a tool of policy aimed at establishing national ethos and order, and a field of skirmishes in culture wars'. Interestingly, Gilbert's article focuses on the debates over the history curriculum in Australia, not the UK, yet one cannot help but see the obvious parallels. Gilbert notes the tensions between seeing history's goal as providing a structured narrative from which to formulate identity and a skills-based approach, respectively championed by two recent Australian PMs John Howard and Kevin Rudd (Gilbert, 2011). Indeed, Guyver (2011) notes, that there are 'significant similarities between problems faced over national identity and the interpretation of the past in Australia and England'. If refocusing the nature of the history curriculum is controversial in the UK, it is certainly not something that affects England uniquely.

Indeed, far from being a peculiarly English phenomenon, Ismailova (2004, p.250) notes the difficulties facing History curriculum reform in a country as politically removed from the UK as post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan: 'Curriculum does not just neutrally represent the knowledge that unquestionably corresponds to the real things in the world. It reflects a broader political, ideological and socio-cultural context, within which it is developed'. Given Ismailova's suggestion that a curriculum is not neutral but reflects contemporary concerns/contexts, it is interesting to note Myers' (2011, p.793) argument that recent debates over the English history curriculum have re-emphasised the continuing allure of the idea that one might create a cohesive identity for all students through a 'national history'. This allure is especially strong for politicians and offers a chance at identity forming. Another study that touches on this theme notes that given the identity-forming nature of grand narratives in history, it is important that such narratives be inclusive, both politically and socially (Ahonen, 2001). Ahonen (2001, p.190) suggests that it is important for history curricula to recognise 'alternative narratives,' and thus avoid, one might assume, some attempt at creating an *exclusive* identity.

One might then ask whether British imperial history is included to help learners understand today's society or to celebrate a bygone era (though, of course, such a black and white division lacks the necessary subtlety). Christou (2007, p.711) notes that 'national history curricula tend to propagate a nation's desirable vision of itself and minimize any references to its 'dark pages in history'. The author points to a recent controversy over a Japanese textbook that critics suggested marginalised Japan's violent imperial past. Looking at ideas such as this, yet more questions are raised over what might be achieved by including British imperial history in an English curriculum – if imperialism is taught and a national narrative is to be created, will the retelling of imperial history really delve into the 'dark pages' of our own national history? If this were to be the case, one might consider again the suggestions of Parmar (2010) – that the government's true aim in the February 2013 curriculum proposals had been to keep the flame of empire alive – or Beck (2012) – that they might have been centred on creating a future generation of neo-conservatives. One might also wonder whether, even if a government prescribes subject matter, they ever really know how it will be taught or received by students – or how widely such experiences might differ from place to place?

Significance

In a recent article for the *Telegraph*, journalist and writer Jeremy Paxman made the following case for teaching the history of the British Empire:

[It] explains so much about who we are now... Imperial history explains both why Britain has a seat on the UN Security Council and the readiness of British prime ministers to commit British troops to overseas wars. But it goes much further, too. The empire reshaped our education system and redefined how we think of ourselves. It was the trigger for much post-war immigration, and anything that changes the very genetic make-up of the population can hardly be dismissed as superficial (Paxman, 2012).

However, Paxman also suggests that empire is unfairly characterised as a bad thing, an idea, it is argued here, that is shared by Michael Gove, and one that raises even more questions regarding the nature of why and how one teaches imperial history. Whatever one's view on these questions, William Dalrymple (2013) makes the compelling point that, unless British imperial history is taught effectively in our schools, many people who go through the English education system will remain 'wholly ill-equipped to judge either the good or the bad in what we did to the rest of the world'.

Gove's intended approach to curriculum reform shared a number of ideas that were central to the New Right of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Phillips (1998, p.129) notes that the great history debate of this earlier period was 'not about the past but the present' and that 'its dynamism stemmed from tension between contrasting discourses on the nature, aims and purposes of history teaching, linked to correspondingly different conceptions of nationhood, culture and identity'. Indeed, as the influential theorist Jörn Rüsen (2005, p.11) notes, one function of an historical narrative is to 'establish the identity of its authors and listeners' and this can be through a number of different routes (such as identity by: affirmation, generalisation, denial or mediation). Much like the idea that we might begin to 'celebrate' empire in schools today, New Right advocates suggested that a more traditional approach to history not only added a breadth to knowledge, but 'even a sense of gratitude' towards our imperial forbearers (Phillips, 1998, p.34).

Cave (2002) suggests that the nature of teaching imperial history is inextricably linked to the motivations behind history teaching in general. He feels that the UK Labour government's embrace of source-work and interpretation at the start of the twenty-first century (related to the New History movement and the Schools Council History Project), when compared to Japanese schools' focus on teaching facts, allowed English pupils to examine imperial issues in more depth. One might question whether, with Michael Gove's February curriculum proposals and their focus on 'facts', such depth would have been lost and to what end?

Further to issues surrounding the depth of historical focus, one must also consider the nature of the selection process. Seixas (2005, p.143) notes that the very idea of 'significance' is fraught with complications: he asks whether, in a post-feminist world where multiple voices are embraced, it follows that 'anything' can be seen as significant? Even if the British Empire is significant – which parts of it should we teach? Ever since the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978, the idea of Western imperialists' views of their imperial subjects and the formation of stereotypical 'otherness' has created much debate and discussion among historians. As Macfie (2002, p.96) notes, Said and other theorists (such as Abdel-Malek, Tibawi and Turner) generally concur that Orientalist views of the East were generally used in the

service of empire. If this was the traditional nature of the presentation of those subjected to imperial rule – how are we to avoid repeating this kind of stereotyping in future?

In a recent examination of the teaching of diversity in the history classroom in England, the issue of empire arose as a key contemporary concern. The study argues that, in the early twentieth century, History was used 'to support a common national identity and empire' (Bracey *et al.*, 2011, p.174). However, as the nature of Britain and its relationship to empire have changed, attempts have been made, and are still being made, to adapt existing frameworks 'to meet the needs of a multicultural society' (Bracey *et al.*, 2011, p.175). In this guise, the teaching of Britain's imperial history has an important, if complex, role to play. As Haydn *et al.* (2003, p.18) note, by the 1980s many schools in larger urban areas looked to use school history 'to promote appreciation of cultural diversity, celebrate cultural pluralism and combat racism'. However, an important question remains as to whether the teaching of imperial history (and perhaps more so *how* it is taught) serves to lessen or exacerbate feelings of racial difference and/or prejudice?

Mediation

In many of the questions raised so far in this article, the issue of how 'facts' and syllabi are mediated comes to play an important role. Grever *et al.* (2008, pp.78-9) note that, though commentators are divided as to whether school history should put more emphasis on the 'transmission of the achievements and cultural heritage of the nation' or 'reflect more fully the presence and achievements of those from ethnic minority backgrounds,' either approach must also take into consideration the preconceptions that students (perhaps with multiple identities) bring to the classroom. This leads to one of the key concerns and challenges that the teaching of British imperial history poses: the teachers and students of a multicultural and 'post-imperial' British society. Rösen (2005, p.4), when discussing whether history is 'representation or interpretation,' suggests that History is both and that these facets are mutually dependant. Bruner (2005, p.29) also observes that one of the features of hermeneutic compulsion 'is the push to know 'why' a story is told under 'these' circumstances by 'this' narrator'. As both of these commentators suggest, history teaching involves a significant degree of interpretation: not only that of a single historian and their text, but those of the teacher and the diversity of learners in a class.

In addition to such factors, one might also question the extent to which classroom experiences shape students' views of the past. Television, film and music – not to mention families and friends – are but a few contributors to the cultural perceptions that students (and their educators) bring to the classroom. In the opinion of James (1999 ed., p.643), for example, modern British perceptions of the British Raj 'depend more on literature and cinema than history'. Similarly, Elton-Chalcraft (2009) notes that young people's conceptions of race owe a great deal to perceptions gathered from the media – particularly television. This idea is taken even further by Rozas and Miller (2009, p.25) who argue that students and teachers 'bring a variety of social identities into a classroom, ranging from identities forged through frequent encounters with racism to those living in bubbles of unexamined white privilege,' and that many harbor stereotypes that could either subconsciously or consciously lead to discomfort, or even confrontation, in the classroom. The teaching of empire certainly echoes such problems and raises the same issues. King (2004, p.73) identifies a form of race consciousness in the classroom that she terms 'dysconscious racism'. For King, this racial dysconsciousness is 'an uncritical habit of mind' that includes perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs that justify inequality by accepting an unequal *status quo*. Such complexities, added to the more overt diversities and acknowledged biases of teachers and learners, serve to illustrate just how impossible it is for one to remain wholly neutral whilst teaching, despite one's best efforts (if such an effort is made at all).

Identity

Race and ethnicity – both their important role in imperialism and their equally important role in post-war British society – are central factors in a teacher's concerns when covering imperial history. Cole and Stuart (2005), in their study of Asian and black trainee teachers working in South-east England, found that racism and xenophobia were widespread. Their conclusions suggest that the extent of racism is 'deeply worrying,' but also add that: 'the teaching of imperialism, past and present, in schools...informs us most precisely about the historical and contemporary nature of British society' (Cole and Stuart, 2005, p.363). In Cole's earlier piece of 2004, cited in the introduction here, he argues that an honest evaluation of imperialism needs to be reintroduced to British schools in order to at least make students aware of the implications and ramifications of racism (Cole, 2004, p.534).

Like a number of the theorists cited here, historian Bernard Porter (2004, pp.314-316) notes – critically – that many commentators see British attitudes to race as strongly connected to the empire and that these racial attitudes 'are so often attributed to or connected in other ways with imperialism as to almost identify them together in some people's minds'. Theorist Bill Schwarz argues that 'empire has much to tell us about race'. Schwarz feels that 'the determination to open up the story of empire to new voices – colonized as well as colonizers, black as well as white, women and children as well as men, queer as well as straight' has met much continuing resistance (Schwarz, 2011, p.17). Judd (1996, p.5), similarly, feels that the 'long-lasting experience of Empire affected the way in which Britain viewed both themselves and those whom they ruled'. He later notes that modern-day perceptions in Britain cannot escape their imperial past entirely: 'Centuries of supremacy have left many British people ensnared in a mesh of prejudice and shallow assertiveness' (Judd, 1996, p.16).

However, whether studying imperial history helps widen one's understanding of modern racial views and prejudices or exacerbates them is difficult to judge without further investigation. An interesting study by Barton and McCully (2005, p.111) found that a 'balanced and neutral' portrayal of History in Northern Ireland's curriculum has not necessarily led to a lessening of tension between Unionists and Nationalists. Instead the authors found that as students moved through the curriculum their 'identification with Unionist or Nationalist history actually intensifies, and they appear to draw selectively from the school curriculum in order to bolster their developing understanding of partisan historical narratives'. These authors' findings raise interesting questions for those who feel that, by selecting a certain type of subject matter, a certain way of thinking might be inculcated in students. If indeed the government of the day wished to create an ideologically-charged narrative of Britain's imperial history, there is little firm evidence that selecting facts and placing them on a 'syllabus-style' curriculum would have anything like the desired outcome.

Discussion

As suggested from the outset, this article not only touches upon issues of contemporary political and media interest, but also addresses a relatively broad array of educational literature and theory. In the short review of literature above, a number of compelling areas of interest are raised.

From exploring the literature surrounding the idea of a real versus an imagined curriculum, it becomes apparent that the current government had initial designs on stressing the knowledge that is to be learnt as their primary focus, fitting most closely to a vision that equates curriculum to syllabus. Although the September 2013 curriculum did not come to embody this vision, one might question whether such a vision was ever likely to become a reality just because a

prescribed list of content was introduced – especially considering the many other understandings of a curriculum as experiential and ever-evolving.

Closely linked to the understanding of the curriculum is the issue of significance, and why imperial history deserves a place on a timetable already hampered by the nature of a topic (history) so vast as to make selection essential. If certain amounts of imperial history must be covered, then which ones will be covered and in what depth? The current curriculum allows schools to decide what is taught about the British Empire when its teaching is mandatory (in the Key Stage 3 statutory requirements). Linked to this, the literature also asks questions of what sort of presentation of imperial history is to be given and whether a ‘neutral’ presentation of imperial rule can or should be avoided.

Mediation appears to be a critical factor in the nature of how a curriculum is delivered and/or experienced, especially in a subject as politically and culturally charged as History. One might question whether reforming the curriculum with a “fact based” approach could ever guarantee or even guide the nature of the learning that takes place. One must also consider the diversities and acknowledged biases of teachers and learners as well as the extra-curricular influences on their understanding.

Finally, the issue of identity – forming and developing – becomes yet another area that has a role to play in any exploration of teaching imperial history. Writings by both historians and educational theorists reveal an on-going discourse about the historical (and continuing) effects of empire on the British people that is far from resolved. Whether a renewed focus on imperial history would help to create a cohesive identity, greater understanding, or exacerbate feelings of difference is a debate that divides commentators and is yet to be answered. The place of British imperial history in the curriculum seems important to many of the commentators cited here, but the nature of how it is taught seems to raise a multitude of questions that will keep educational researchers busy for many years to come.

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*HISTORY EDUCATION UNDER THE NEW EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN SPAIN: NEW WINE
IN OLD BOTTLES*

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ABSTRACT

This article is concerned with the current Spanish school history scene and the responses of the new Spanish curriculum to the problems detected. As in other countries in Europe, the government of Spain has just revised the pre – university history curriculum in order to correct its weaknesses and to offer a better history education which is capable of combining both an understanding of the past and the promotion of critical thinking. However, the changes seem to be insufficient and the responsibility for school history education again seems to depend the efforts and expertise of practitioners. Through a study of the recent practice in classrooms application bibliography this article offers some small insights into the problems of and hopes for history teaching in Spain.

Keywords: History Education, Spanish curriculum, Historical Thinking, Civic Education.

Introduction

In a recent article by Professor López-Facal (2010), in which he analyses the textbooks used in secondary education in Spain from the 70's to the present, a very interesting and revealing in-depth analysis is made about the problems that history education in Spain is facing. This author observes both a serious lack of educational strategies and also that the history taught to pupils is closer to the historical discourse of the 19th century than to the current reality of the Spanish society.

Regarding the problem of teaching methods, the textbooks which were analyzed do not contain activities designed to promote the development of historical competencies and skills. There are few tasks that involve a variety of documentary sources, in which historical problems and proposals for researching them are set out, or information is given to be analysed from different points of view. In fact, these types of practical and engaging activities that lead to historical thinking are marginal in comparison with those based on historical knowledge. As regards the history that is taught, the textbooks present a prescriptive content of the school history inherited from the 19th century bourgeoisie culture, according to which the history that is being taught is still essentially nationalistic and Eurocentric, with a chronological structure justified by the purposes it serves and which is clearly male-dominated (López-Facal, 2010).

Obviously, the situation described above is a real matter of concern, since it reproduces a historical discourse that is obsolete and led by a way of teaching that is far from the basic principles of historical thinking (Seixas & Morton, 2013). It implies that the educational aims of history can be hardly reached, that is to develop in students the necessary critical attitude to form responsible democratic citizens, who are ready to actively participate in contemporary plural societies (Audigier, 1999; Barton and Levstik, 2004).

However, in Spain we are currently in the middle of an educational reform process. In December 2013 the Parliament approved (although it will be carried out over the following years) the 'Fundamental Law for the Improvement of the Quality of Educational, known by its acronyms in Spanish as LOMCE. It is the seventh reform carried out in primary and secondary education since democracy was reestablished in the Seventies. Since 1980, with the approval of the

Fundamental Law of Schools Statutes (LOECE in its acronyms in Spanish), through which the organization of schools was standardized, seven fundamental laws on school education have been passed and four more on higher education.

The LOMCE was created aiming to be a ground-breaking law, different from the current system; in the words of the legal text itself, 'it aims to adapt the educational system to the dramatic changes that current society is facing'. Having said that, in the case of history teaching, could it be a useful tool to solve the problems that have been pointed out repeatedly by teachers and researchers? Or is it just a new reform with more ideological connotation than pedagogical improvement? Unfortunately, the answer seems to be the latter.

This paper aims to show, on one hand, the little interest that this reform seems to have in eliminating the major problems observed in the history education in Spain at the compulsory educational levels. On the other hand, it aims to demonstrate that despite the obstacles that educational laws have to face, in many cases, there are several examples of educational innovation projects carried out currently in Spain by history educators in schools, and this is a good indicator that there is a wide sector of teachers at those educational levels willing to overcome the problem. There is still hope.

Unsolved problems in Spanish History Education

Theoretically, the problems observed nowadays in history teaching are due to the way in which the educational legislation addresses this discipline. This leads us to analyze the current situation. Since 1990 there has been no change in the way that history education is organized at pre university levels has been organized in the same way, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Pre university stages and subjects in which history is taught

Educational stage	Age	subject	Hours week
Infant Education (not mandatory)	3-5	Immediate Natural and Cultural Environment	8
Primary school	6-11	Natural and Cultural Environment	4
Secondary School	12-15	Social Sciences. Geography and History	3
Upper secondary school (not mandatory)	16-17	<i>Optional</i> : Contemporary History (first year)	3
		<i>Mandatory</i> : Spanish History (second year)	4

In infant education the historical content is included in the subject 'Immediate Natural and Cultural, one of the three areas of knowledge in which this stage is structured. This subject is organized in three blocks of content, two of them focused on natural science, for example, 'Natural environment: elements, relations and measures' and 'Discovering the nature', and one that includes all the content aimed to develop social thinking; 'Culture and living in society'. It is in this latter block of content in which topics related to historical issues are taught, although they are not as relevant as those focused on describing social relations. In fact, the introduction of the historical dimension seems to be reduced to serve as an illustrative or comparative element to explain current society (children's daily life), which is, after all, the main goal of the block (Miralles & Molina, 2011a).

The minimal presence of historical scope in Infant education clearly seems to be caused by the fact that curriculum designers consider children at this age are not able to properly understand social change neither to reach historical reasoning. This is contrary to what is done in surrounding countries (Cuenca, 2008), such as the United Kingdom, where basic historical contents are taught and temporal orientation is worked out as one of the main objectives in Infant education and primary education first stage (Cooper, 2002; O'Hara & O'Hara, 2001). Therefore, the first pupils' contact with history education is scarce, partial and it is very far from what is being carried out in surrounding countries.

In primary education the content relevant to history is also included under the title, Natural and Cultural Environment, in which the content related to social sciences and natural sciences are taught together but not in an interrelated way. The content of this theme is divided into seven blocks, of which four are related to natural sciences and three to social sciences. In the social sciences block one part covers geography and is named 'The environment and its conservation'. Another block is called 'People, cultures and social organization' and includes economy, anthropology, law, demographics, political science and sociology. The last block of social sciences is named 'History: changes over time' is the one intended for teaching history education. In this case the problem reported by several authors (Trepas, 2008, Prats, 2010) is not just that historical content does not get enough attention, but the fact that they do not have their specific space as they are 'mixed' with contents that are essentially very different. Likewise, a minimal presence of topics related to the history of art at this stage has been pointed out as a problem (Ávila, 2003). And last, but not least, the this block has been criticized for the gradual replacement of procedural content with conceptual content. In other words, just in the first two out of three key stages in primary education (the four first years) themes related to the concept of time —such as the course of time, the use of the calendar, basic historical chronology, dating conventions, etc.— pay little attention to methods used in historical enquiry (the use of primary sources, image analysis...). However, in the last key stage (years five and six), when the study of historical periods is introduced (ancient civilizations, changes and continuities, significant historical accounts and basic aspects of the Spanish history...), the method becomes more traditional. The students role in history teaching is passive.

History is taught as a given and learned by heart. A good example of this is shown when analysing the exams to evaluate the learning process of students of this key stage. Tests are designed almost exclusively to find out whether students have memorized facts and dates, but not to know if they have developed more complex cognitive skills (Gómez & Miralles, 2013). In addition to that, researches on textbooks and tests in this last two years of primary education show that content is absolutely chronological and almost exclusively national (Gómez, Rodríguez & Simón, 2013). This means that little attention is paid to world history, to construct informed responses using relevant historical information or to understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

In secondary education history is part, along with geography and history of art, of the subject so called 'Social Sciences: Geography and History' as we showed in Table 1. In this educational stage researchers' conclusions show that problems observed are similar to the ones described in the earlier stages: poor planning of the way both historical methods and historical discussion are taught (Sáiz, 2013). Empirical analysis of secondary history education is not as abundant as we would like (Miralles, Molina & Ortuño, 2011), and the majority of analyses are focused on learners' memories about the school history they have been taught, assessment of historical knowledge, the resources used in history lessons and analysis of textbooks, rather than on pedagogical practice (Merchán, 2007). Nevertheless, all of them show that pupils are evaluated, mainly, through written exams, based on questions about very specific content (dates, facts) in

the history of Spain, in which procedural methods are barely required (Merchán, 2005; Monteagudo, 2013). The analysis of textbooks does not show better results in the selection of content and the design of activities (Valls, 2001 & 2008, Sáiz, 2011; Gomez, Ortuño & Gandía, 2013), along with a lack of historical-artistic knowledge that is a matter of concern (Fontal, 2006; Gómez, Molina & Pagán, 2012).

In short, the history that is currently taught during compulsory educational and the way in which it is taught does not seem to be the most appropriate to way to develop democratic citizens capable of critical thinking, as noted by (Molina, Miralles & Ortuño, 2013). Therefore, one question arises: is history education going to improve with the new educational reform which is planned?

LOMCE: the same old song

Firstly in the new LOMCE no changes are proposed in infant education, so the insufficiencies and weaknesses observed at this stage are going to continue in the coming up years.

In primary education the subject *Natural and Cultural Environment* is divided into two new subjects: *Social Sciences: Geography and History* on one hand and *Natural Sciences* on the other. This measure does not seem to be useful at all to solve the problems detected above due to a very simple reason: considering the curriculum⁸⁶, the content to be covered in this new area is basically the same as before.

To illustrate this, find below a chart (Table 2) with a comparison of content between the LOMCE's social science subject and the content that is being currently taught in Key Stage 3 of Primary education mentioned in the current Organic Law on Education (LOE in Spanish). As it can be observed, there are almost no differences.

Table 2. Comparison of key stage 3 Primary Education history contents between LOE (2007) and LOMCE (2014)

⁸⁶ The curriculum can be found (Spanish version) at <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2014/03/01/pdfs/BOE-A-2014-2222.pdf>

Primary Education Social Science Curriculum (LOMCE)	Primary Education Natural and Cultural Environment Curriculum (LOE⁸⁷)
Block IV: Traces of time	Block 5: Changes over time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Historical time and its measure</i> • <i>Historical sources and its classification</i> • <i>Historical Epochs: length and remarkable accounts that date their duration</i> • <i>Spain in the Prehistory</i> • <i>Spain in the Ancient times</i> • <i>Spain in the Middle ages</i> • <i>Spanish Monarchy in the Modern history</i> • <i>Spanish Contemporary History (19th century)</i> • <i>Spanish Contemporary History (20th and 21st century).</i> • <i>"Our" cultural and historical heritage</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conventions on historical date and epochs</i> • <i>How to use techniques and methods to locate events over time: Duration, simultaneity and relation between historical accounts</i> • <i>Main features of historical civilizations (early, ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary civilizations)</i> • <i>Significant people and events in Spanish History</i> • <i>Identify and respect cultural heritage</i> • <i>How to use different historical, geographical and iconographical sources</i> • <i>History as a result of human actions and the role of women and men as history agents</i>

It is obvious that the history content in the new curriculum has national history as the centre, making almost no reference to world history, and giving too much emphasis on contemporary history over earlier historical epochs.

However, it is true, as a new development, in the first block of common content for geography, social sciences and history the procedural and attitudinal content is considered to be taken into account across the stage. There is content such as: 'Introduction to scientific knowledge and its application in social sciences' or 'Data gathering on the topic using different sources (primary and secondary)'. But considering the little attention paid to that first block in the current secondary school curriculum —where there already is a common block with similar characteristics, which is being ignored both in textbooks and in planning in schools, (Molina & Calderón, 2009)— it is likely that this will be omitted in the Primary education too.

The content proposed in Secondary education in LOMCE's draft curriculum (it is not yet developed) is the same as described in primary education curriculum. There is an additional problem: in this case the block of attitudinal and procedural contents — the use of maps, sources analysis and other methods— disappears. Therefore, there are no high expectations about the new law. However, despite the obstacles that legal texts might represent, not everything is lost: there are multiple innovative proposals in history education carried out by history teachers. This shows that teachers are totally aware of the problems outlined above and

87 The curriculum can be found (Spanish version) at <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2007/07/20/pdfs/A31487-31566.pdf>

they try to improve the quality of their history teaching guided by their own experience and expertise.

Improvements from the trenches: some examples of educational innovation proposals.

In infant education there are a lot of examples of educational innovations in which, contrary to the ideas assumed in the educational law, teachers do consider that pupils under 6 years old are capable of understanding historical topics. There are numerous publications containing teaching units, projects and even 'history corners' (Moltó & Carbonell, 2006; García & Miralles, 2009; Almagro & al., 2006) based on historical epochs and personalities (Prehistory, Middle Ages, Egypt, "El Cid", the time corner...) developed in different schools all over Spain. And all these educational innovations stress the high level of pupils' motivation and the learning goals reached. Likewise, there are numerous examples of field trips to museums, archeological sites, monuments or interpretation centres (Cuenca & Martín, 2009) that demonstrate the capability of children under 6 years old to understand basic historical concepts. Likewise, to make an inquiry based on family history reveals a strong didactic tool at these early stages (Ortuño, Molina & Miralles, 2012) which improves historical knowledge and thinking.

Among the educational innovations and experiences in history created by primary and secondary school teachers, we should highlight their emphasis on the acquisition of historical and social competencies. For example there are emerging experiences which combine history education and civic and citizenship education, through the analysis of relevant, contemporary issues from an historical perspective. This allows scope for interrelated social sciences and involves students in understanding the roots of issues that really matter to them (López Facal & Santidrián, 2011; Navarro, 2008; Ortuño, Gómez & Ortiz, 2012; Pagés, 2007).

The most important innovations suggested in teaching history come from a change in teaching methods going from teacher-centred to the use of primary sources and resources that encourage procedural learning, inquiries and the historian method. As regards methodology, problem based learning (PBL) is very useful in comparison to traditional expository methods (Canals, 2001; Oller, 2011). Through PBL it is possible to distinguish what is less important from what is essential, using critical discourse which allows the organization and construction of historical information. Besides, simulation, debates and case studies on historical accounts allow students to establish a relationship between historical knowledge and metahistorical knowledge (different interpretations of events, what we know about the past, how historical narratives are created and so forth) helping in that way to reach the true historical literacy needed to understand how historical representations in the present influence how we orient ourselves to possible futures (Gil & Ibáñez, 2013; Prats, 2005; Miralles & Molina, 2011b). In the last decade, research on history teaching and social sciences pointed out the necessity of including Information and communications technology (ICT) in the classroom as this represents an opportunity for the teacher to recreate virtual images in space and time (Hernández, 2011). The use of these resources increases the options of experimentation, empathy and historical and social immersion (Martín, 2011). As Acosta (2010) states, history is at a disadvantage to experimental science, due to the impossibility of reproducing the historical conditions that drove an historical account (due to the loss of evidences and remains of the past) needed to understand what really happened and its aftermaths. The introduction of ICT gives teachers the opportunity to solve some of these problems.

The main advantages mentioned about the use of new technologies in history teaching are related to a meaningful process in which the pupil has an active participation. This is facilitated by ICT, the cooperation between students and between teachers and students, and the fact that

the learning process could be more individualized. Also, as stated by Hernández (2011) or Rivero (2011), the use of virtual images, and the interaction that new technologies facilitate or the use of expository multimedia, constitute the main elements that strengthen history teaching. In fact some authors such as Rivero (2010), point out that the new multimedia didactic tools allow a better access to primary sources which benefits the design of educational activities to promote understanding of how history is constructed. The use of blogs in history classes is another of the most important tools of innovation that has been introduced recently in Secondary education (Sobrino, 2013). As it is described, the majority of these innovations make it possible to introduce historical enquiry, in order to promote historical thinking, empathy and reflection on epistemology, history and social values. Innovations such as the ones described by Monfort et al. (2009), Prieto, Gómez & Miralles (2013) or Tribó (2005) bring positive results in a teaching scenario that encourages historical thinking and the creation of an interpretative attitude in learners in relation to the past and history. Critical thinking development is certainly a key element in democratic societies as it has been revealed in the recent international congress, *Think historically in times of globalization* (López- Facal et al., 2011) held in Santiago de Compostela in 2011. The use of primary sources and the development of historical thinking development help students to acquire the ability to analyse. As Prats & Santacana (2011, p. 29) said, history, as an exercise in the analysis of past human actions which conditioned the relations among people and between humans and the environment, help us to understand the complexity of any fact, any current socio-political phenomena and any historical process through analysis of causes and consequences. This is its best formative potential.

Conclusion: Challenges and perspectives

The latest lines of work developed in Spain by history educators and history teacher- training departments at Universities tend to emphasize history teaching as a kind of thinking, promoting inquisitive skills more than the learning of historical accounts (Miralles, Molina & Santisteban, 2011; Ortuño, Gómez & Ortiz, 2012). And it is really a surprise that those initiatives have not received much attention in the curriculum. But at least, there is a consolation in the extent to which curriculum takes on its full meaning when it is applied in the classroom by teachers. This brings enough hope to see that despite the legislators' efforts to present school history as it was in the 19th century, teachers persist in the idea of considering history as an useful subject for 21th century society.

However, there is still a long way ahead since, educational innovations still represent a minority within the current Spanish school history scene. This is corroborated in textbook analysis, the main educational resource in classrooms, and exams. Content is more important than any other elements. With some exceptions, there is still no room in history classes for historical interpretations; the work with historical sources and the methods used by historians are considered much too complex intellectually to be taught at pre-university stages; meta-historical knowledge is still a utopia; and the conception of historical thinking is considered superfluous from the moment history is taught simply as something that happened in the past.

Part of the problem is still the insufficient communication between Academia and schools. Some of the practical classroom applications are designed in Social Sciences and History Education departments at Universities, not transferring to school practice. Experiences carried out at schools are hardly spread to other places from the one where they were put into practice. The majority of textbooks are conceived without consulting teachers of history education departments in the universities. And laws on education are motivated by ideological interests rather than by the opinion of professionals in the field of education.

It is necessary once and for all to understand the role of history in democratic decision-making, since historical literacy allows us both to contextualize our decisions based on path dependencies and to critically review historical arguments related to relevant, current issues. The fact that certain content is taught does not mean that it is presented in a useful way for our society (or meaningfully). Learners should be allowed to understand how historical narrative is formed, in order to be aware of the implications of their dissemination. And overall, history education needs both historical knowledge and historical thinking in order to reach true historical literacy.

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Teaching and Learning about World War Sea Disasters in Lesotho Secondary Schools: The Case of the SS Erinpura Tragedy of 1943

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Abstract: This study represents Lesotho's remembrance and commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the sinking of the SS Erinpura in the Mediterranean Sea on 1 May 1943 where 633 Basotho servicemen drowned. Its three main purposes are: firstly, to honour all Basotho World War casualties, with special attention to those who drowned on troopships; secondly, to call for inclusion in the Lesotho history syllabuses of the participation and contribution of the Basotho nation in the two world wars and, lastly, to suggest various history teaching and learning activities related to the SS Erinpura tragedy from a perspective of 'Lesotho and the World Wars'.

Keywords British Empire, World wars, War at sea, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Lesotho secondary schools, Curriculum review, History teaching and learning, Cross-curricular approach

Introduction

During the First World War of 1914-1918 (also known as WWI, the Great War or Kaiser's War) and the Second World War of 1939-1945 (also known as WWII, WW2 or Hitler's War), Lesotho participated as part of the British Empire (and, therefore, the Allied Forces) by contributing military labour, war funds, and comforts for its servicemen (Gray, 1953; Ntabeni, 1996; Jackson, 2006; Parsons, 2007; Killingray & Plaut, 2012).⁸⁸ As one of the aspects of 'total war', the war at sea resulted in heavy losses of human and material resources due to many natural and man-made disasters. Lesotho's heaviest casualties happened during the transporting of troops across the seas and oceans in what Ries (1992) refers to as '...the sinkings of...many other smaller and less known vessels' (quoted in Weber, 1998). The first sinking that the Basotho (and other southern African) servicemen experienced was on board the *SS Mendi*, 12 miles off St Catherine's point on the Isle of Wight on 21 February 1917, and it also happens to be better known than the *SS Erinpura* tragedy in the Mediterranean Sea on 1 May 1943. The latter constituted the greatest wartime disaster for Lesotho because it lost 633⁸⁹ men of Basuto [sic] Coy 1919 and 1927 (Gray, 1953, pp. 26-30;⁹⁰ Clothier, 1991; Rosenberg, Weisfelder and Friesbie-Fulton, 2004: p. 404; Commonwealth War Graves Commission [CWGC], 2009).

However, Lesotho's general public (not to mention the rest of the world) knows very little about their country's contribution to Britain's war effort, the wartime experiences of their servicemen. In

⁸⁸ To the Basotho (people of Lesotho), Kaiser's war and Hitler's war are known as *Ntoa ea K'heisara* and *Ntoa ea Hitlara* respectively. The servicemen of Lesotho (then known as the British colony of Basutoland) were part of a joint African Auxiliary Pioneer Corps (AAPC) – later renamed African Pioneer Corps (APC) – alongside the servicemen from Botswana (Bechuanaland Protectorate) and Swaziland or the three High Commission Territories (HCTs)

⁸⁹ This is number given by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) while some sources such as the *Annual Colonial Report* of 1946 says there were 624 dead

• ⁹⁰ B Gray (1953) *Basuto [sic] soldiers in Hitler's war* was commissioned by the colonial government, and is also the most accessible to the Basotho people because it was translated into Sesotho (their language) as *Masole a Basotho ntoeng ea Hitlara*

fact, the Basotho nation knows even less about specific world war incidents like the sinking of the *SS Mendi* and the *SS Erinpura* even though there are easily available publications on the two tragedies, and it has been decades now since Lesotho started observing the November commemoration of Armistice (Remembrance or Veterans') Day to honour the WWI and WWII casualties of Lesotho and the world.

On the other hand, one would expect the secondary school teachers and learners of history to be better informed about Lesotho and the world wars because the theme of 'World Wars' is included in both the junior and senior secondary history syllabuses. Instead, the opposite is true because the Eurocentric perspective of the content mentions Lesotho only in passing as one the 'non-European states [that] became participants in the First World War' (Ministry of Education and Training, 2004, p. 48).

The Basotho nation's lack of a collective memory about their country's war effort is the exact opposite of what obtains in the major European as well as some non-European participants in the world wars. This is because most, if not all, of them have made history (and/or social studies) compulsory at the school level, where they emphasise their national history and also pay special attention to the World Wars. A few examples from at least four continents include: New Zealand History online with detailed and highly informative pages on the two world wars under 'War & Society'; the WW2 People's War on the website of the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC] and the new history syllabus (Department of Education, 2013) that includes the two world wars in the twentieth century section of the Key 3 Stage; Singapore's lower secondary history syllabus with units 8 and 9 on Singapore during WWII, and Chavers's course syllabus of 2010-2011 on US history that also pursues Competency Goal 8 and Competency Goal 10 where 'The learner will analyze United States involvement in World War I and the war's influence on international affairs during the 1920s (1914-1930)...[and]...in World War II and the war's influence on international affairs in following decades (1930s-1963)' respectively.⁹¹

Therefore, since Lesotho's world war participation and contribution are yet to be fully recognised and appreciated by the Basotho nation, and also be taught in schools,⁹² the little that the researcher did (besides this study) was to alert the Lesotho History Teachers' Association [LHTA] and the student-teachers in the History Education Unit at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) about the upcoming 70th anniversary and centenary of the *SS Erinpura* tragedy and WWI respectively. Furthermore, the claims by South Africa's Department of Education (2007) and New Zealand history online about the effectiveness and popularity of anniversaries made it necessary to conscientise the stakeholders of history education in Lesotho about the urgent need to include a detailed account of Lesotho and the World Wars in the school history syllabuses. Unfortunately, that initiative did not change anybody's mindset because the 1st of May 2013 was still treated as nothing more than a regular Workers' Day holiday; neither the government nor the LHTA organised any special remembrance and commemoration of the Basotho nation's tragic Workers' Day of 1943.

Lesotho's school history syllabuses, the world wars, and the *SS Erinpura* tragedy

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- ⁹¹ All examples are available online.
 - ⁹² It would seem that Lesotho is not the only exception in that South Africa's successive history syllabuses since 1994 from Outcome-Based (OBE) to National Curriculum Statement (NCS), and now Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) do not include the country's participation in the two world wars.

Currently, the first 12 years of formal education in the Lesotho education system are divided into 7+3+2 for primary, junior and senior secondary level.⁹³ As far as school syllabuses are concerned, January 2013 marked the start of teaching for the first time the new Standard 1-3 Integrated Syllabuses in the primary schools, while the Examinations Council of Lesotho's (ECOL) Localisation Project for the senior secondary introduced new syllabuses for six subjects - including History - in Group 1.⁹⁴ In other words and as with all syllabuses, there is an ongoing phasing out of the 'old' and launching of the 'new' versions at the senior (but not at the junior) secondary level.

Regarding history teaching and learning in Lesotho, primary schools offer it in Standard 6 and 7 as a component of Social Studies (World Bank:147-148). Therefore, until the Integrated Syllabus gets to those upper standards, Lesotho primary schools will continue to teach the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial history of Lesotho as reflected in their textbook titled *Way Ahead with Social Studies*. Unfortunately, this learner's book is not accompanied by a teacher's guide even though most of the primary school teachers in Lesotho (and Britain) have little or no history background in their schooling and teacher training (Tsilane & Mathafeng, 2007; Cooper, 2012: 24). Lesotho's situation is exacerbated by the fact that, unlike Britain, there is hardly any research being done on history teaching and learning at the primary level (Ntabeni, 2010).

To make matters worse, the heavy load of content in Lesotho's Social Studies primary school textbook seems to have ignored the age and level of the learners; their struggle with English which is a second language that is being used as a medium of instruction, not to mention the Standard 7 multiple-choice examination paper of fifty marks that usually has about five questions on history.⁹⁵ Therefore, at this level and under the circumstances discussed above, Lesotho and the World Wars is not - and rightly so, part of the history component of the Social Studies syllabus.

As already indicated, the situation of little or no knowledge by the learners and teachers about Lesotho and the World Wars is the same at junior secondary schools. The fact of the matter is that, although the history syllabus does have a 'World Wars' theme with special emphasis on WWI, Lesotho is mentioned only once as a non-European participant. Similarly, both the old and new senior secondary history syllabuses include the World Wars, but not in the context of Lesotho. Therefore, the possibility of effecting the suggestions being made by this study will have to wait until the syllabus is reviewed and revised accordingly. For instance, currently, section B in Paper 1 of the new syllabus on 'Aspects of the history of Lesotho: 1820-2008' does not - and yet it should - include the World Wars during the colonial period. Another way of including the World Wars would be to teach Lesotho and WWI at the junior secondary level, to be continued as Lesotho and WWII at the senior level.

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- ⁹³ The year to year designation used for the 7 years of primary level is Standard 1-7, while for the two secondary levels it is either Form A-E or 1-5. Sometimes, the junior secondary is referred to as Junior Certificate (JC) and the designation becomes JC1-3
 - ⁹⁴ According to the Localisation Project Timeline provided by the Lesotho Council of Examinations (ECOL), the teaching of the new syllabuses for Group 2 and 3 subjects will start in January 2014 and 2015 respectively. The new qualification called Lesotho General Certificate for Secondary Education (LGSCE) replaces the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC).
 - ⁹⁵ With a few exceptions, most of the previous Standard 7 examination question papers of what is also known as the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) will bear witness to this fact.

Either way, teaching Basotho learners, if not the whole nation, about the participation and contribution of their country in the World Wars - and specific incidents like the *SS Erinpura* tragedy - is long overdue. This is in line with the sentiments expressed by Turner (as quoted by The History Association, 2010) about the sinking of the *Royal Oak*, where he states that 'The greatest satisfaction for me...is that I have managed to get this information into the educational system to teach children, because they need to know what happened.'

Teaching and learning activities about the *SS Erinpura* tragedy

The *SS Erinpura* tragedy provides many opportunities for the teacher and learners in Lesotho to engage in a variety of activities inside and outside the classroom. Such activities could also be coordinated from a cross-curricular approach that involves teachers of many, if not all, subjects in the school as discussed below. Syllabuses of school history (and other subjects), teachers' guides and history teaching books usually make suggestions about the different teaching and learning approaches among which field trips or fieldwork are always included (Mathews, Moodley, Rheeder & Wilkinson, 1992, pp. 88-95; Cooper & West, 2009, pp. 9-32). This is also true of the Lesotho junior secondary history syllabus; it first defines 'fieldwork and field trips [as] places where students may observe evidence of past developments or places where some events occurred', and goes on to describe how to prepare for fieldwork or a field trip (Ministry of Education and Training, 2004, p. 3).

Therefore, in line with the purpose of the present study of educating the Lesotho's public - starting with the learners - about their country's participation and contribution to the World Wars, there is no doubt that taking a field trip to the Lesotho World War memorials of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) in Maseru (the capital town) is of utmost importance. In fact, some learners may have attended the Armistice Day celebrations and, therefore, seen the memorials at close range, or walked past them on the main street. However, the field trips that are being suggested here are historical excursions for senior secondary learners whose history syllabus - once revised in the context of Lesotho - should include the *SS Erinpura* tragedy.

Therefore, once the school and history teacher have made the decision to take such a field trip, they will need to follow all the administrative and academic preparations for a successful and effective class excursion. For the teacher, these should definitely include the identification of relevant human and material resources such as resource persons, and the picture of the *SS Erinpura* and of the CWGC memorials in Lesotho.⁹⁶ For their part, the learners could prepare for the excursion by finding out more from their respective communities about Lesotho and the two World Wars. In addition and in the context of cross-curricular activities inside and outside the classroom, the teacher will also have to start identifying and connecting with other school subjects, which could be part of teaching and learning about the tragedy, the same way that Daniels did for his WWI lesson (Dittmer 2013).

The preparation in the form of classroom activities could start with a question-and-answer exercise to determine what the learners already know about Lesotho and the World Wars in general and the *SS Erinpura* tragedy in particular. Since the present study also calls for the review of the junior secondary history syllabus to emphasise Lesotho and WWI, the exercise

• ⁹⁶ A good starting point would be The Learning and Resources section (<http://www.cwgc.org/learning-and-resources.aspx>) of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) and the Learning zone of the BBC WW2 People's War http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/about/lzone_school_armedforces.shtml

would have to take into consideration what has already been taught and learned at that level. Therefore, the learners' prior knowledge - whether from school or family and community experiences - could include the appropriate terminology and concepts such as causes, outbreak, end and results of the world wars; existence of world war veterans in the respective countries including Lesotho; the war at sea and sinking during WWI of troopships like the *SS Mendi*; the difference between world war cemeteries and memorials; the number, kind, and location of memorials in Lesotho; remembrance, roll of honour, and reports on participation in the annual Armistice Day services, and many other related aspects.

Inevitably, the teacher will then have to reinforce, with enough detail and inquiry questions, the learners' responses during the question-and-answer activity, to arouse their curiosity in preparation for the field trip and all other related activities thereafter. The understanding here is that by the time the field trip is undertaken, the teaching and learning about Lesotho and WWII will have progressed up to the *SS Erinpura* tragedy, and most, if not all, of the above presumed knowledge will have proved useful in the compare-and-contrast activities on Lesotho and the two World Wars. A good example of such an exercise has already been provided by Edgar (1997/80/81, p. 105) when he explains how the British colonial officials adjusted their WWII military recruitment policies in Lesotho on the basis of what they learned from their WWI experiences. In other words, during the history lessons on WWI and WWII, no Mosotho learner should ever ask, 'What's this got to do with me?' (Terry, *et al*, 2001, p. 12).

However, as the teachers already know and the syllabuses usually indicate, senior secondary learners have to delve deeper into the themes and topics in the context of spiraling the issues. For instance, when teaching about the *SS Mendi* tragedy under the suggested revision of the 'Lesotho and WWI' theme at junior secondary level, it would be necessary to emphasise it as an aspect of the war at sea without getting into any detailed account of what it entails. Such details belong to History 0184 (Ministry of Education and Training, 2012: 6) where learners are to be taught about the navy, battle- and troop-ships, U-boats, the Battle of Jutland, convoys, and the like (Parsons, 2009, p. 49).

On reaching the site of the CWGC WWI and WWII memorials in Maseru, the teacher and learners can engage in several activities within the duration of their visit. These could include a brief review by the teacher, or presentation (hopefully with handouts) by a resource person from the Ministry of Home Affairs, which usually organises Lesotho's Armistice Day services in November. Then the learners could peruse the engraved rolls of honour where they will likely recognize many surnames. More importantly, taking the learners to the world war memorials is to bring them face to face with symbols of the World Wars and death; to help them envision the impact on the Basotho nation of the *SS Erinpura* tragedy through the concrete evidence that displays the proportion of the 1943 tragedy to a population of about 500,000 at the time, and taking into account the deaths of Basotho miners in South Africa (Census, 1936; Maloka, 1998, pp. 17-40). The sentiments that the learners would be expected to feel and imagine are succinctly expressed in the foreword to the first edition of Turner's kindle edition (2012) about the sinking of the *Royal Oak*. Thus, the quotation below:

This book is the story of the first great tragedy of World War II, told to remember the 833 men of the battleship *Royal Oak* who made the supreme sacrifice on 14th October 1939. Her loss left parents, wives children, families, mourning the loss of a dear son, loving husband, gentle father and close relative

could be re-written in the context of Lesotho (in bold) and the present study to read as:

This **study** is **about the teaching and learning** of the first **and only** great tragedy of World War II **for Lesotho, written** to remember the **633** men of the **troopship *Erinpura*** who made the supreme sacrifice on **1st May 1943**. Her loss left parents, wives children, families, mourning the loss of a dear son, loving husband, gentle father and close relative.

There are many more activities for the teacher and the learners to engage in on their return from the memorials to the classroom. The most critical question would be to solicit the learners' oral reports about what the visit meant to them, whether or not it was worthwhile, and why. Building on to that, the teacher could plan detailed presentations that incorporate the learners' review of the excursion (and the resource person's presentation) on the SS *Erinpura* tragedy. In the process, the teacher would need to impress upon the learners certain realities about Lesotho and the World Wars in general, and the tragedy in particular; that

- (i) death is always pervasive in the mindset of the potential and actual recruits, their families and the rest of the society for the duration of any war;
- (ii) the World Wars presented the Basotho with a different kind of military service that took them across the oceans to very distant places where they participated in several duties as non-combatants;
- (iii) the duties they performed were as invaluable to the wars as those of the combatants as embodied in the title, *No Labour, No Battle...* (Starling & Lee, 2009);
- (iv) they drowned in the Mediterranean Sea on their way to the Italian Campaign because General *Makomoreng* (Montgomery) demanded their presence there;
- (v) there were Basotho (and other) survivors of the SS *Erinpura* tragedy such as Lehlaphiri and Khomari (interviewed by Clothier and Ntabeni respectively), and their contribution and the ultimate price of death laid the foundations of today's post-WWII world.

Emphasis of the above points should help dispel the misconceptions picked up during interviews among the Basotho (Ntabeni, 1996) that their servicemen (and other non-combatants) were not *masole* ('real' soldiers in the sense of combatants), but were *basebetsi feela* ('mere labourers' such as cooks and the like).

The teacher's classroom presentations on the SS *Erinpura* tragedy should be accompanied by the learners' engagement in research activities to reinforce what they are learning and/or to pursue related topics of their own interest. For example, they could start by creating an inclusive WWII timeline that highlights Lesotho events, or a separate one on Lesotho from 1939 to 1949 when the last group of Basotho servicemen returned from the war.

Another research activity for the learners could be to collect, compile, and read primary and secondary sources specifically on the SS *Erinpura* tragedy, but also about the home-front war in wartime Lesotho. These would include books: clips and pictures from the Lesotho newspapers of the time such as *Leselinyana la Lesotho* (The Little light of Lesotho), *Moeletsi oa Basotho* (Basotho Adviser), and *Mochochonono* (The Comet) which was written in Sesotho and English; proceedings and/or speeches of the Basutoland National Council; photos; letters, and diaries.⁹⁷ Unfortunately, it is only learners in schools around Maseru, Roma and Morija who will have a better chance of access to a wider variety of sources in the respective good libraries and archives. All learners could then present their findings orally and/or in writing as history

• ⁹⁷ The last two items were hard to come by during my field work, and the one ex-serviceman who had kept a diary would not give access to it.

assignments, historical display or newsletter entries. At the same time, some of the research findings could be used in cross-curricular connections with other school subjects as suggested below.

Interviews by the learners of the ex-servicemen and older generation should have topped the list of their research activities because many publications on Africa and the world wars since the 1970s have used them extensively, and also made urgent calls for more (Special issue, *Journal of African History*, 1985; Killingray, 1986). The greatest fear then - which has proved valid and costly for sustaining Africa's oral history of the World Wars and research - was the fast loss of memory and disappearance through death of the ex-servicemen and their contemporaries on the home-front. Thus, now that there are very few Basotho ex-servicemen and older family members who attend the Armistice Day celebrations, the collection of Lesotho's wartime oral history by the learners will have to target the informants who were children during the SS *Erinpura* tragedy, and can still remember those events.

Cross-curricular connections with Sesotho, English and Geography

In this section, the present study makes suggestions about how Sesotho, English, and Geography can contribute to cross-curricular connections on the SS *Erinpura* tragedy. A good example of the approach is the report by Dittmer (2013) on Chris Daniels's experience as a case study of a 'multi-curricular lesson plan [on WW1] that would reach into every hour of the students' day.' This approach becomes all the more appropriate and applicable in a country like Lesotho because the cross-curricular connections would, at some point in their schooling, expose all learners to an important aspect of Lesotho and the World Wars such as the SS *Erinpura* tragedy.

Sesotho is the most widely spoken language in Lesotho (even by the nguni minorities), hence its status as one of the official languages, the medium of instruction up to Standard 3, and a compulsory subject at the junior and senior secondary level. As such, it could contribute the most in the cross-curricular connections because it embodies the culture of the majority within the Basotho nation about war and death while at the same time highlighting the need to compare and contrast those issues among the minorities.

One good cross-curricular example is death, one of the themes in the Sesotho syllabus to be connected with the history topic on 'the results of [either] WWI [or] WWII' and, therefore, the SS *Erinpura* tragedy. Thus, as the Sesotho teachers (some of whom also teach history) cover the contexts and cultural norms of the Basotho regarding death and bereavement (Maloka, 1998, pp. 17-40; 2004, pp. 179-206), they could connect them with what Jallard (2010, p. 8, 157) calls wartime 'conventional mourning rituals...in the absence of bodies to bury' and 'Experiences of Wartime Grief', as well as the memorial that reads, 'For those who know no grave but the sea'. In other words, the teachers would have to include specific wartime experiences of death following the sinking of the SS *Erinpura* as a national as well as a regional tragedy for the districts of Leribe and Quthing where the majority of the recruits who drowned came from. Such experiences include *pji* (announcement of [that tragic] death), the reaction of the Basotho nation and respective families, inaccessibility of the black cloth due to wartime shortages, villages populated by widows in black, and the like (Ntabeni, 1996; 2000).

In addition, other worthwhile cross-curricular activities in the Sesotho classrooms could include:

- (i) use of excerpts from the Sesotho translation of Gray (1953), *Masole a Basotho Ntoeng ea Hitlara*;

- (ii) analysis of the wartime songs of the Basotho servicemen that appear in Gray (1953), and connecting them with the relevant information from *lithoko* (Mangoaela, 19);
- (iii) collection of wartime and/or war-related songs in the home-front and comparison of their sentiments with those in the battle-front;
- (iv) discussion of the naming and/or dating practices of the Basotho based on events such as the war-related names like Rantoa or 'Mantoa (father or mother of war) or K'heisara (Kaiser), and it will be for the learners (and any other people) who bear such war-related names to trace their origins;
- (v) verification of birthday statements like; '*ke hlahile ka mokakallane*', *ntoa ea Hitlara*' ('I was born during the Spanish Influenza', Hitler's war'), and
- (vi) identification of world war-related symbols such as the designs of the 'badges of the brave' blanket [popularly known as NZ] that honored those Basotho who served in World War II' (Rosenberg, 2004, pp. 59-60).⁹⁸

Like Sesotho, English can contribute immensely to cross-curricular connections regarding the SS *Erinpura* tragedy because of its status as the other official language, the medium of instruction from Standard 4 onwards, and being compulsory at all levels of the Lesotho schools. Therefore, some of the activities listed above for a Sesotho classroom can be duplicated in English, but the English teacher can also come up with subject-specific activities. For example, learners could use the information they have gathered from their research activities to write:

- (i) a composition on a topic related to the SS *Erinpura* tragedy;
- (ii) a report on the trip to the CWGC memorial in Maseru, and
- (iii) a submission on the tragedy as a war journalist/survivor/relative of the deceased/concerned chief or citizen.

At the same time, the Sesotho and English classes could

- (iv) hold debates for or against Lesotho's participation in WWII on the basis of the tragedy, and
- (v) organise display of the sources they have gathered in the respective languages.

Geography is one school subject that is usually quoted as a good example of integration with history as reflected in the brief chapter by Mathews, *et al.* (1992, pp. 81-87). The chapter covers several aspects that highlight how 'geography influences history in terms of 'Position...', 'Physical terrain and wildlife...', 'Natural resources...' and a section titled 'Using maps in history', followed by several exercises for different school levels. Therefore, as far as this study

⁹⁸ One of the icons is a Lesotho 11 that is yet to be verified because there is a confusion between the image and the caption.

is concerned, all these aspects are relevant to cross-curricular connections in teaching and learning about the *SS Erinpura* tragedy.

To start with, the learners could identify on a world map all the countries where the Basotho men served as WWII military labour such as *Mahlabatheng* (Egypt/North Africa), the Middle East and Italy. They could then trace the routes on land and water along which the servicemen travelled from Lesotho to those battle-fields, and it is here that the teacher would need to emphasise the journey from North Africa to Italy across the Mediterranean Sea where the *SS Erinpura* sank. Regarding the other geographical aspects, the teacher would need to remind the learners that Basotho men were recruited as military labour because of their hardiness as mineworkers in South Africa, as expert horsemen, and inhabitants of the snowy, mountainous Lesotho. Above all, their impressive military record in the North African Campaign rendered them indispensable to Britain's (Allied Forces') Italian Campaign in 1943 where they were to serve as muleteers up and down the rugged and snow-covered mountains of Italy.

The above suggestions that the present study has made are just a few examples of the many activities that could highlight the *SS Erinpura* tragedy in a Sesotho, English Language and Geography classroom. Chances of the connections working are quite high because all teachers in the Lesotho secondary schools are equipped to teach at least two subjects, and history is usually paired off with any one of the three (as well as with Development Studies, Theology/Religion, French, English Literature, and Special Education). The cross-curricular approach would also become easier and exciting if the teacher were to consult many different sources of how to teach the World Wars in general and the related specific incidents such as the Learning zone of the BBC WW2 People's War (2003-2006) in order to bring variety into the lessons.

Conclusion

According to the CWGC, 'almost 1,700,000 men and women of the Commonwealth forces died in the two world wars.' Of those, 633 were Basotho servicemen who drowned in the *SS Erinpura* tragedy. This study pays tribute to them and all WWII casualties by calling for the inclusion of their stories in the school history syllabi – especially in Lesotho - and making several cross-curricular suggestions of how it can be done.

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HOW MIGHT PRIMARY TEACHERS' EXPERIENCE OF A HUMANITIES MODULE IN INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING HAVE IMPACTED ON THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF TEACHING HISTORY TO PUPILS WITH WITH SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS?

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Abstract

This paper aims to evaluate the ways in which a History component of a Humanities module on a Primary Initial Teacher Training course impacted on trainees' understandings of how to teach history to pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). Two trainees undertook a placement in a school specialising in teaching pupils with SLCN immediately upon completion of the module and were interviewed to discuss their perceptions of the experience. A case study of their experiences was designed to gather evidence to enhance future module development. The interviewees suggested in differing ways that the interplay between theory and practice on the module and on their school placement had significantly informed their emerging professional knowledge. The conclusion suggests that the valuable links between theory and practice in shaping trainees' emerging professional knowledge are vital but under threat from government policy.

Keywords

Teacher education, Teacher knowledge, History education, Speech Language and Communication Needs, Initial Teacher Training

The need for links between theory and practice

This research project examined how primary Initial Teacher Trainees might perceive the impact of history sessions at a Higher Education Institution (HEI) on their understanding of how to teach the subject to pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs. The trainees undertook a Humanities module with a history component in the second year of their course. The trainees interviewed then went on placement in a school specialising in the needs of pupils with SLCN shortly after the module had ended and their perceptions of the History sessions from the module taken at the HEI were discussed with them in relation to their school experiences. As the lead tutor on the history element of the module and as the interviewer for the research project, certain ethical issues arose which will be addressed later. The opportunity to research professional practice allowed for analysis of the interview data and evaluation of the outcomes of the module in relation to its stated aims.

The module aims were informed by national and institutional concerns. Ofsted have recognised that Initial Teacher Training for primary school teachers teaching in history is often inadequate or non-existent, given their future role as teachers of the subject, with trainees often having to 'tackle their needs' without formal support (2011, p.20). This may in turn contribute to 'limited awareness' among teachers of how to support pupils to develop understanding and skills in the subject (p.20). This was felt to be the case at the HEI where the research was conducted. Anecdotal and evaluative evidence from the taught course suggested that trainees lacked knowledge of the ways in which pupils can make progress in history. The module also built on efforts in Year 1 of the course to improve trainees' understandings of how to teach chronology. Ofsted (2011) has highlighted issues in history education where pupils' have only 'episodic' knowledge of history and fail to make connections between periods. Concerns also exist nationally with regard to teacher training for special education needs and the lack of opportunities for Initial Teacher Trainees (ITT) to develop their understanding of this field of

education and experience it at first hand (Ofsted 2008, Lamb enquiry, 2009 and the SALT review). Addressing such concerns requires teachers to have professional development that supports inclusive practice (Nash and Norwich, 2010). The module aims were informed by a conscious effort to better prepare the trainees in these areas.

Teaching history to children with speech, language and communication needs

The module sought to develop the trainees' understanding of what constitutes progression in historical understanding for primary school children. The trainees were asked to discuss the nature and purpose of historical progression and how they might develop pedagogy to support progression for pupils with SLCN on a school visit to Hampton Court Palace. They then had to devise a resource box, which would provide teachers with pedagogic materials suitable for the pupils' needs. This proved challenging as little has been written on the fields of primary history education for pupils with SLCN and as such trainees had to generate original ideas combining subject specific concepts and available literature relating to SLCN. Up until the late 1980s there were views that the subject was too conceptual and inaccessible for pupils with special needs (Wilson 1988). Recent publications (Riley 2004, Harris and Luff 2004) have discussed generic ideas for teaching pupils with special needs but not specific pedagogic strategies on topic-based work for pupils with SLCN.

The module offered the students support in meeting these challenges. The visit to Hampton Court Palace exemplified some of the pedagogic strategies that can be used with pupils who have SLCN. The Education Officer demonstrated a story telling session designed for pupils with special educational needs with experiential elements which act as 'hooks' to support thinking about a servant at the Tudor Court. The trainees considered how resource rich, visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches can develop SLCN pupils' thinking about the past. Tutors from the course discussed and demonstrated how selected parts of the Palace can be read to help pupils with SLCN infer meaning from the built environment and understand Henry VIII's changing relationship with his wives. The visit allowed the trainees to consider their own pedagogic thinking, leading to the construction of their resource boxes. In the final session teachers from a local school specialising in teaching pupils with SLCN came into the HEI to discuss how they meet the challenges of teaching a conceptually rich subject such as history to pupils who find conceptual thinking difficult.

Related literature

The case study explored the perceptions of two students who had completed the module and were then placed in a local SLCN school. The impact of the module on the trainees' thinking and practice was key in assessing the extent to which the module aims had been addressed. In researching the impact, two interrelated areas are covered which in combination make the research project unique. Firstly, the research captured the trainees' voice, exploring how they were constructing their emerging professional knowledge. It examines the interplay between theory and practice in helping them to acquire knowledge from the course and placement experiences. Secondly, the trainees' voice is discussed in relation to definitions of professional knowledge specifically for primary teachers teaching history, examining key components of what might constitute expertise for education professionals in history as defined by Chris Husbands (2011). The paper sets out to discuss conceptions of professional knowledge and how they can be defined in terms of knowledge for a subject discipline as a way of understanding the trainees' perceptions. Professional knowledge of history education is problematic for primary teachers since many relinquish formal study of the subject at the age of fourteen, impacting on their knowledge and understanding of the subject (Sossick, 2012). Their own knowledge of the discipline, as a result, may be weak and pedagogic knowledge of how to teach a historical concept such as chronology may be under-developed.

The value of engaging with emerging teacher knowledge as a conduit to improving teacher training and 'making innovations more successful' is acknowledged by Verloop, Driel and Meijer (2001, p.441). However, what constitutes 'teacher knowledge' may be contested. Shulman's seminal work in this area in the 1980s conceptualised teacher knowledge as 'pedagogical content knowledge' (PCK). This term identified areas of knowledge as necessary components of teachers' understanding. Shulman described PCK as, 'the particular form of content knowledge that embodies the aspects of content most germane to its teachability' (1986, p.9). In terms of teacher training he posed the question: 'how does the successful college student [ITT] transform his or her expertise into the subject matter form that high school students can comprehend?' (Shulman, 1986, p.5). In other words what does a trainee need to know and how do they impart this knowledge. However, rather than being concerned about what Fenstermacher (1994) labels as knowledge *for* teachers the research examines the trainees' emergent knowledge *of* teachers. This moves away from Shulman's conceptualization of what teachers need to know as something externally defined to an interest in how they are internalising their training experiences. This paper draws extensively on Chris Husbands' conceptualization of PCK for history teaching, taking a broader view than Shulman's of what defines teacher knowledge.

Husbands' notion of PCK for history teachers includes three areas: firstly subject knowledge embracing conceptions of the discipline, procedural knowledge and substantive content knowledge. Husbands points to his own research which suggests novice teachers rely more heavily on didactic transmission of subject knowledge than experienced teachers who value social constructivist techniques in developing pupils' understanding of procedural concepts such as concepts of change and continuity. Would these findings be supported in the case of the primary trainees being interviewed? Would they have an understanding of how to teach chronology moving beyond transmission of facts to encouraging pupils to consider change over time for themselves? Husbands' model, which was based primarily on secondary school teachers specialising in one subject, may not be entirely appropriate for primary school teachers. To what extent can generalists who may have little background in a subject discipline be expected to grasp disciplinary and procedural understandings? This critical issue has been considered when analysing how the trainees made sense of their experiences of teaching history.

Secondly Husbands defines teacher knowledge as including knowledge about pupils. This encompasses practical working theories of learning and knowledge about how pupils progress in history. This second point may also be more accessible to secondary school teachers who are specialists in their field. The primary trainees taking the module only had a two hour session to consider theories of what might constitute progression in history. Husbands takes knowledge of classroom practices to include knowledge about resources, activities and related pedagogy as a third dimension of teacher knowledge. This knowledge comes from a skilled and informed understanding of how, what and when to deploy resources, 'as teachers drew on a wide repertoire to make decisions about what would be most appropriate' (2011, p.92). He stresses that the relationship between knowledge about pupils, subject and classroom practices is a dynamic and complex one. Would the trainees be able to exemplify their developing awareness of the nature of history education in relation to their placement experiences?

Planning a case study to investigate theory/practice links when teaching children with special language needs

A key aspect of the research was to understand how the trainees made sense of the way the module was shaping their emerging knowledge of history teaching and whether Husbands' categories had meaning for them. This attempt to get trainees to consider their practice in terms

of theoretical understanding from the course can be linked to Thiessen's (2000) arguments about the way teacher training programmes should be orientated towards the development of 'professional knowledge'. Thiessen states that:

At the heart of this orientation is the image of teaching as knowledge work. Such work...involves the interrelated use of practical knowledge (routines, procedures, processes) and propositional knowledge (discipline-based theories and concepts, pedagogical principles, situation-specific propositions) (p. 528).

He suggests that teacher training with its constituent placement experiences should offer 'practically relevant propositional knowledge along with propositionally interpreted practical knowledge' (p. 530). Theory is seen as valuable in making sense of practice and vice versa, creating an indispensable symbiotic relationship in the development of trainee teachers' emerging professional knowledge. The trainees interviewed had had experience of a module which aimed to give them elements of theory informed by considerations of practice, discussing the nature of history education and the needs of pupils with SLCN and then asking the trainees to adapt these ideas to the design of relevant pedagogic resources. The two trainees interviewed had the opportunity on placement to apply this knowledge in practice and make sense of the theory they had previously encountered. The project explores the extent to which the trainees' perceptions were theoretically grounded and formally understood rather than intuitively appreciated. Did they feel that they had received 'practically relevant propositional knowledge' on the module and could they implement ideas on their placement as 'propositionally interpreted practical knowledge'? (Thiessen, 2000, p.530).

Method

The methodological framework for this study is based on qualitative data gathering concerned with capturing the perceptions of the trainees' experiences. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in naturalistic conditions designed to support a conversation about the emerging professional knowledge of the ITTs, producing a case study of the singular experiences of the trainees. Case studies have value as they allow us to explore unique contexts, which Adelman calls 'the principle of an instant in action (cited in Yinn, 2009, p.253)'. Claims are not made here for the data to be in any way statistically representative of teacher training programmes. However, Knight states that small-scale research may allow us to 'develop claims that enhance our understanding of the general' (2002, p.17). Although the data gathering is necessarily limited in a small-scale case study, value may come through significance rather than frequency. Case studies may acknowledge that 'there is a wholeness or integrity to human events' that may not otherwise be understood (Cohen et al, p.253). Findings are reported here using as much of the trainees' voice as practicable to allow the data to speak for itself.

The value of the research possessing trustworthiness and integrity was recognised and built into the planning. Cognisant of my role as interviewer and tutor on the module, certain ethical considerations arose whereby the trainees may have felt some difficulty in separating the two positions. Informed consent was sought from the two participants and their participation was entirely voluntary. They were reassured that their assignments on the module were second marked by another lecturer to ensure that they did not receive any favour or disadvantage from having agreed to be involved in the project.

Questions were structured so to enable the trainees to recall and discuss the placement in general terms before more specific questions encouraged them to think about history teaching, the needs of the pupils and the ways that the module might have developed propositionally informed practical knowledge. In reality my role in the interview process did not appear to inhibit

their ability to talk freely. The interviewees were critical of the programme at times and also felt confident enough to provide clear recommendations for improvements to the module. In these ways the case study interview appeared to serve its function as a 'construction site for knowledge' (Kavle, 1996, p.2) with the interviewees having freedom as active *informants* involved in a 'conversation' rather than more passive *respondents*, answering structured questions (Powney and Watts, 1987).

Interviews with two trainee teachers

Neither of the informants, Jane nor Maisey, had chosen a history specialism as part of their degree and both had stopped studying the subject at school at the age of 14 and so had received the minimum formal schooling in history. They had both volunteered to participate in the interview and spoke enthusiastically about their time in the SLCN school. Maisey placed greater emphasis in her answers than Jane on the value of her placement experiences but still signified the relevance of the module in shaping her own teacher knowledge. She was keen to emphasise the different needs that she had experienced in the classroom, revealing how the placement had developed her understanding of the pupils, which Husbands sees as one of the central components of PCK for History teaching:

There are different types of difficulties [with the pupils' needs] and that's what is so hard and that's what is difficult. Some of them can't talk or hear very well and some of them can't think of words very well, and some of them don't know what you are saying at all.

The dynamic relationship between her knowledge as constructed on the module and placement is perhaps revealed in her explicit references to history education. Her understanding of the importance of using large visual timelines as a resource suitable for pupils with SLCN may have come from the trip undertaken on the module to Hampton Court Palace and from an earlier Humanities module in the first year of the course, where these ideas were explored. Maisey was keen to apply this thinking to her interactions with the pupils. This can be seen as a demonstration of the way she could link the different elements of Husbands' conception of PCK for teaching History. Subject knowledge was linked to knowledge of the pupils she worked with and appropriate resources in the form of the timelines. On using visual timelines to (discuss the term 'ancient' and) locate the ancient Egyptians she stated that:

you really needed to [use the timelines] otherwise they just think it's a long time ago, you need to show them, 'you see that number 700BC. It's there and we are all the way up here' [points to far end of an imaginary timeline]. You have to do a lot of talking about what the words we use mean and visual resources showing what 'ancient' means.

Her knowledge of the pupils and suitable resources for making sense of chronology appears to have been finely tuned by experiences in the classroom. She mentioned the need to use timelines to scale and carefully locate eras to avoid the pupils becoming confused. Maisey also responded to Jane's ideas in the paired interview about teaching the pupils about interpretation. Whilst agreeing that this was possible and necessary to teach pupils about interpretation she qualified the idea in terms of pedagogy appropriate to the pupils' needs. For her, it was only possible, if managed carefully, using information that was selected and taught in ways to suit individual learners. She stated that, 'I think it's small steps at a time because they are covering so many skills as well as progression, small steps so that they really understand it'.

Maisey

Maisey was appreciative of the need to make history relevant to pupils' lives, using high profile news items and events to secure some measure of understanding. Like Jane she made use of the London 2012 Olympics as a way to explore the ancient Olympics and make tentative links between the two. There was evidence that making these links, in skilfully managed ways, had been effective in developing her pupils' historical understanding:

We talked about the differences between the sports we do now and the sports on the vase. We talked about how the people on the vase were not wearing any clothes so we talked about that and you have to chunk everything up, so today we talked about how women weren't allowed to watch and a boy was like 'oh is that because they weren't allowed to wear any clothes'? So it's linked to that but you can't tell them everything on one day or they get overwhelmed.

This may show an emerging and subtle awareness of how to generate PCK as argued by Husbands, by combining pedagogy and resources which relate to pupils' needs, in order to develop historical understanding.

Maisey felt frustrated at wanting to allow the pupils to research topics for themselves when their needs acted as a barrier and the resources available were largely unsuitable. Her ability to reach these informed positions may have arisen from the theoretically informed knowledge of pedagogy introduced on the module and then developed on her placement. Her experiences of the challenges facing the children's learning appeared to frustrate some of the potential learning ideas and outcomes she had in mind for them.

Her knowledge of resources suitable for the pupils demonstrated an understanding of the pupils' needs and how these might be used in History sessions. She mentioned the importance of repeating information and instructions and making them accessible by breaking them down into small manageable 'chunks'; ideas suggested on the module and enacted on her placement. This was discussed in her example of a lesson using images from primary sources on the ancient Olympics which appears to have been closely linked to ideas from the 'buzzboard' created for the module. The buzzboard had key vocabulary and related visual images which could be moved from one side of the board to the other once the pupil and teacher felt the child was comfortable with the historical language and concepts it contained. The influence of this resource idea can be seen in the following comments:

We also did a lesson on Greek vases where the Greeks drew pictures of sport and the children had to look at the vases and see what they could find. Whereas in a mainstream class you might have given the children the pictures and said 'see what you can find', I made a grid with a list of pictures and words to go with them of someone running and a picture of someone running. Then they had to match it to the picture on the vase.

When asked if she believed that these strategies were effective she replied:

It definitely worked, because otherwise they would go 'oh there's a picture of a vase with some people on it'. They needed the support and I also put things on there, things that definitely weren't part of it [ancient Olympics], like cameras and sports that weren't from then and they had to decide which ones weren't relevant at all.

Her ability to generate teaching ideas tailored to individual learning requirements in the moment they were required may well have been determined by propositional knowledge with its roots in the module. She described instances where she drew on knowledge generated on the course to adapt teaching strategies, responding in informed ways to situations as they unfolded. Maisey's insights were also informed by problems associated with the pupils' needs. Despite lessons which were resource rich and carefully planned, the pupils struggled with conceptual learning in several examples she gave. Maisey's sense of how learning had to be personalised for individuals was clearly influenced by her classroom experience. She commented:

You have to think of all the little things. Some would not have been able to write it [specific lesson task] because it takes them so long to write one word, they would have given up. Thinking about history, if they are always writing and writing, sometimes they need cutting and sticking and then they can get on and learn and not worry about the writing.

Maisey's answers suggest that unlike the novice secondary school teachers in Husbands' research, who relied heavily on the transmission of knowledge, she was applying more generically obtained, social constructivist techniques to support the pupils' understanding. She acted as a 'more knowledgeable other', scaffolding the pupils learning through the use of timelines and visual resources to support the development of skills. For her and Jane there was an understanding that overloading pupils with SLCN with information would be wholly inappropriate to their needs and that the focus had to be on developing pupils' understanding and that this has to be linked to knowledge of the pupil. Theory learnt on the course appears to have influenced practice in ways suggested by Thiessen.

Jane

Jane made a number of important connections between her experiences in school and the preparation that the module had offered. She made repeated points about the ways that researching for the module assignment about the needs of pupils with SLCN and how they might be taught History had influenced teaching approaches she took in school. She claimed that this had developed her awareness that a resource rich and active environment would suit the pupils' needs:

I was able to understand more because I had done the assignment and so researching everything for the assignment, right they need loads of resources, they need to actively use their hands to move everything around. So I planned the lesson based on that [knowledge from researching the assignment]. The children used loads of resources and were getting it right and I thought 'oh this is so exciting and one child said 'done it' and I would give him another question and another. It was amazing.

Practically informed propositional knowledge discussed and then enacted during the process of writing the assignment and creating the resource box seems to have supported her practice. The process of generating understanding from her assignment was mentioned repeatedly during the interview in relation to pedagogy suitable for the pupils needs. This knowledge appears to have been tested and refined on the placement.

Jane discussed the relationship between pupils' needs and classroom resources when teaching history. The trainees were asked if the pedagogy they had used in examples of maths lessons they had taught could be applied to teaching history. In this way the module aims of developing

understanding of teaching history to pupils with SLCN could be evaluated. Jane discussed how certain strategies could be supportive of history education:

I think there are so many skills you need for history, that some children who have SLCN haven't acquired yet, but I think it's such a great subject for them to learn those skills because you can do so many different activities like comparing. You can learn them in other subjects but history is such a great subject in which to learn them, because you can do old and new and you can relate it to them [the pupils] and you can say this is now, these are the toys you play with and these are the toys that they played with in Tudor times. How are they different?

Jane's awareness of the value of pupils developing understanding of procedural concepts such as change seems to be emerging here. She is establishing links between knowledge of pupils, subject and pedagogy, which Husbands sees as part of PCK for teaching history. The extent to which she would have consciously formulated these ideas without a module focusing on teaching history to pupils with SLCN is unclear. However, her teacher knowledge was similarly demonstrated in her discussion on chronology. Here she exemplified ways in which the module may have supported her understanding of the subject discipline and the needs of the pupils linked to pedagogy as key components of PCK for History teaching. She recognised the challenges of helping pupils with SLCN to work with concepts of time:

It's time isn't it and understanding how long ago something happened and being able to understand that this is now and this thing [undefined topic from the past] did not happen a few days ago, it happened this many years ago, because for some of them, if asked what they did last night, they really struggle. So to explain that something happened years and years ago before they were alive...

Jane appears to have gained a sense of the issues surrounding this key aspect of historical learning. Discussions on the problematic nature of teaching chronology to pupils with SLCN had been one focus of the taught module. The placement allowed for first-hand understanding of the challenge of teaching historical concepts to pupils with SLCN. She recommended that carefully designed resources were vital in linking the pupils' needs to the skills being targeted:

It's so important to have the timeline to scale. Otherwise, if you have 200BC and 700BC right next to it, it's confusing. You need to have the right amount of years between each point. Otherwise it is confusing for them.

It is unclear if Jane's sense of how pupils make progress in history came from the module. She saw the significance of pupils being able to 'compare different sources of information on the same thing that have two different views' as she stated it. Jane also expressed the view that pupils should be 'doing history', comparing sources and forming their own opinions, claiming that it, 'develops their language because they can express what they think and that's a skill in itself'. She claimed that the pupils were set on learning substantive 'facts' about the past but in the same interaction claimed the pupils wanted to know 'why did that happen?' She may be noticing differing issues concerning ways that pupils access the past. On the basis of the research in this study, the module has allowed Jane to consider ways in which pupils with SLCN can access history education, now evident in the shaping, planning and delivery of her lessons.

Jane's perceptions of the module, based partly on her experiences, led her to recommend that other students should have the opportunity to do placements in SEN schools such as the one she attended. She claimed that:

You can read as much as you want but it's not the same as actually being there with the child and seeing how everything you have researched comes into effect when you are in school.

She clearly placed importance on the link between the placement and the module, with the module helping her to make sense of the experiences she was having and vice versa, which resonates with Thiessen's (2000) theory about the interplay between the practical and the propositional. For instance, the module had given her ideas for teaching chronology and employing visual sources alongside key vocabulary. This led to suggestions for innovative links between knowledge of the pupils' needs and ICT based history resources. She discussed the development of multimedia applications for creating topic based sound boards linking the spoken and written word to associated visual images which could be used with pupils with SLCN.

Discussion of interviews

The case study provided certain phenomenological insights into the two trainees' lived experiences and developing teacher knowledge. The research explored teacher knowledge as Fenstermacher (1994) defined it, as knowledge of teachers, including the trainees' own beliefs and values associated with their developing practice; placing emphasis on how they made sense of their own experiences. The interviews suggested that they had gained enhanced understandings of how to teach history to pupils with SLCN from the module and placement experiences. However, the extent that they felt themselves to have benefitted from the module in supporting their teaching placement was not always clear and points to the complex nature of knowledge development.

Thiessen's theory of the benefits of practically informed propositional knowledge and propositionally informed practical knowledge helped to give meaning to the interviews. Both students pointed to the fact that they felt the module and placement had made them more aware of the needs of pupils with SLCN when learning History and that they had learnt some practical teaching strategies from their time on the course. There was a difference in emphasis, with Jane giving more detailed insights into how the module had supported her. She established specific links between theory and practice. Maisey started by suggesting that the module had provided more of an introduction to the needs of the pupils and focused more on the complexities of individual pupils needs on the placement to illustrate her points. However, her ideas can also be viewed in terms of knowledge she learnt on the module and then adapted to suit specific needs in the classroom when teaching history. Interpreting the trainees' sense of where they place value in terms of their training and/or placement experiences is problematic. These elements appear to act symbiotically with the trainees regularly if not always directly revealing the way the history module had shaped their practical understandings. Ultimately their teacher knowledge appears to incorporate both elements in achieving a higher degree of understanding than when they started the module.

Conclusions

The module is certainly enriched by evaluating the link between trainees who took it and then experienced a placement where they could implement and develop ideas. They made direct recommendations for enhancing the module in the future, some of which are easier to implement than others. They pointed to the value of readings published by The Communications Trust that have since been made readily available to trainees who have subsequently taken the module. They also stated that in future all students on the module should have placements in schools specialising in SLCN. This presents challenging logistical issues for the placement of

students in a limited number of specialist schools but does accord with research conducted by Feeney et al. (2008) which suggests that these placements appear to be transformative for those trainees undertaking them.

On the whole the module appears to have supported the development of Maisey and Jane's teacher knowledge and allowed them to enhance their understanding of the complex relationship between knowledge of History as a discipline, pupils, and classroom activities and resources. This knowledge seems to be realised and enhanced through the placement experience. If social phenomena can, as Knight states, 'enhance our understanding of the general' (2002, p.17) then this case study could serve to support the assertion of Verloop that 'the knowledge which teachers derive from their teacher education may, to some extent, be absorbed and integrated into practical knowledge' (2001, p.446). Maisey and Jane's experiences suggest how teacher education can support practice in developing embedded teacher knowledge. In his case teacher education can support knowledge and understanding of why and how to teach history where trainees have limited prior experience of the subject.

In Thiessen's terms a dynamic relationship between theory and practice emerges from a module such as the one referred to in this research project. Trainee's make sense of theory discussed on the module through practical experiences on the module itself which are then tested and refined on placement. On placement, experiences can become more powerfully meaningful because of previously explored ideas in a history specific context, where understanding of the subject itself can be explored and linked to practice.

If Jane's and Maisey's experiences find resonance with other trainees who have the opportunity to link taught inputs with placement opportunities then this relationship is to be valued. Central government's control in England over education in schools and HEIs is increasingly tightening through accountability measures centred on inspection regimes and frequent testing of teacher trainees and pupils. Standards for teachers in their varying formats can be seen as part of a 'technicalizing and deskilling approach to education' (Kinchloe, 2012, p.3). Teacher education is currently undergoing reform with attempts to relocate it as a more practice-centred apprenticeship style training, where exposure to theory is more limited. These reductivist moves may prove to be damaging. The types of engagement Jane and Maisey had where they were able in varying degrees to make sense of their experiences through their HEI training and bring their knowledge of History acquired on modules to bear on placement situations, suggest that trainees need opportunities to develop their PCK in HEI settings. Restricting training to largely practice based experiences may deny trainees opportunities where the connectedness of subject theory and practice leads to more enhanced professional understandings and higher quality history teaching.

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ⁱ i To help protect the anonymity of the research participants in my doctoral study, pseudonyms were used for for the research setting and participants' names.

ⁱ ii Māori are the indigenous people of New Zealand. They are the tangata whenua – the people of the land. Before 1300 AD, ancestors of Māori journeyed to New Zealand from Pacific Islands. The arrival of large numbers of Europeans in the 1800s had a significant impact on the way of life of Māori and began what Professor Ranginui Walker has called an “endless struggle of the Māori for social justice, equality and self-determination” (Walker, 2004, p. 10).

ⁱ iii The Gallipoli campaign in 1915 is sometimes described as a side-show in the larger history of the First World War. For the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) it was a defeat which foreshadowed worse losses on the Western Front. 8709 Australians and 2721 New Zealanders lost their lives in the campaign and as a place where the ANZAC spirit was forged it has found a significance place in the narrative of Australian and New Zealand history.

ⁱ iv. Interview notation: FI = first interview, SI = second interview, B = boys, G = girls

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KOLEJKA: TEACHING DAILY LIVING 1980s POLAND

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Abstract:

When discussing significant historical events, students often find difficulty comprehending the true meaning or interpretation. The use of role-play and board games provides students the opportunity to experience the pressure, excitement and frustration associated with 1980s Eastern Europe. The board game, Kolejka, provides a snapshot of 1980s Poland daily living under a socialist society.

Key Words: Board Game, Inquiry, Communism, Planned Economics

Introduction

The Fall of 1989 marked the beginning of steady growth to commercial, social and political rejuvenation for most of Eastern Europe, with the fall of Communism. While the Berlin Wall, often viewed as the past and defining icon of the Cold War, fell, for most Eastern Europeans, the direct and personal struggles with Communism were countless hours waiting to purchase goods. Learning about the historical pitfalls of Communism, a centrally planned economy and consumerism through the use of games, fits well with the standards, set forth by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). While other standards may apply, of the ten thematic strands outlined by the NCSS, two standards emphasize alignment. Standard (VI) Power, Authority and Governance, which indicates the value of examining different characteristics of differing governance systems, encourages students to learn how groups and nations established order and security. Standard (VII) Production, Distribution, and Consumption emphasizes the value and relevancy on delivery, services, use and distribution.

The goal of this article is to encourage social studies teachers to explore issues with strategic planning, for families that lived in 1980s centrally planned communist economy. More specifically, the purpose of this article is to (1) provide teachers with a classroom tested board game for teaching financial and historical content using Kolejka, and (2) to give students a better understanding of the Communist system that was specifically trying for the society: the centrally planned economy based on abstract principles.

Review of Literature

The term board game has different meanings. According to Klein and Freitag (1991), most board games have a design or representation of reality, followed by a set of rules on how to begin and how reach to an outcome. Furthermore, games require active participation to include elements of competition and cooperation. Board games used in the learning system should include specific learning goals, objectives and student feedback. Despite the antiquated idea that classic board games have little relevance with today's technological based students board games do provide curriculum benefits. Board games offer a different approach to teaching historical facts and stories compared with direct instruction. Unlike traditional lecture and rote-memorization, instructional games create a sense of enthusiasm and excitement because students play a vital role in learning and retention in long-term memory (Driscoll, 2005). Presented in small group settings, board games can develop critical thinking skills through

analysis, synthesis and evaluation in order to develop new knowledge and draw conclusions (Harris, 2009).

In addition, using small groups, teachers can help, and direct students to meet specific learning goals during and after playing the game (Durden and Dangel, 2008). Through the use of either open or closed ended learning, the teacher determines the value of inquiry. The open-ended approach occurs when the teacher has not yet decided what education or conclusions students are to reach for the study of a historical problem or condition, effectively allowing students to deal with issues, conflicts, outcomes and consequences based on their decisions (Soley, 1996). The closed-ended approach follows the conclusion that the teacher has already determined the direction, structures, or conclusions that students will learn. In terms of varying degrees of subtlety, students are able to get the true meaning or interpretation of the game play. Such a notion of better meaning or interpretation is noted by Krebs' (2009) assertion that when students use either games or role-play, they experience the pressure and excitement of an event or phenomena, providing a personal understanding of the event or experience compared to traditional lecture.

An Overview and Rational for Kolejka

Unlike, other board games, the Polish game, Kolejka, does not recreate historical battles or fictitious societies. Kolejka is designed to recreate, in a vivid degree, the context in which Poles and other Eastern Europeans lived for decades under a centrally planned Communist economy. Students feel the frustrations of empty shops, cancelled food deliveries and lack of consumer goods. The Polish Institute of National Remembrance provides students with shopping as it was experienced daily by millions under Communism.

The reality was that no Communist government intended to keep its populations impoverished. However, there was one serious drawback: should the standard of living increase, or should domestic industry be broadened? This was one of many dilemmas for most government officials. The case for cheap and affordable prices for the basic needs in Eastern Europe resonated with most Communist governments. It was these Communist officials who grew up under the past post-war capitalist governments and who lived in poor conditions with limited amounts of food, supplies and financial hardship. With the opportunity to make fixed pricing and planned production, every citizen would be guaranteed the basic needs in society, at affordable rates for all. With the extreme exception of farmers, produce, prices for products cost the same throughout the country whether it sold or not.

The issue of supply and demand created logistical issues for state controlled companies operating within a Communist country. Products on store shelves in West Germany for weeks or months rarely stayed on Polish store shelves for one hour. This rapid consumption of products was not due to their value or taste. Rather, it was the inconsistency of daily and weekly deliveries of goods from state-controlled factories. As a result, families often stockpiled selected products and saved them due to the uncertainty of availability. Fitz (2009) illustrates a typical Eastern sphere joke that illustrated daily shortages of household supplies. 'A person walks into a store and asks: 'Do you have toilet paper?' The shop assistant replies: 'No, the shop next door is the one where you cannot get toilet paper; we are the store with no aluminum foil' (p.103).

Most shopkeepers and employees were honest and clear about strategically placing scarce products on shelves throughout the day. This provided workers an option to purchase goods at a variety of government controlled stores. While larger Eastern European cities received enough merchandise to meet the demands of consumers, this was not the case for most rural areas. Such areas with smaller populations received inaccurate, incomplete or sometimes no deliveries

of goods, regardless of the need of schedule. In rural areas, deliveries were usually once a week, either on Tuesday or Wednesday. If deliveries failed to appear, residents waited until the following week. Certain goods, such as fresh fruits, were difficult to obtain regardless of populated cities or geographical areas.

Kolejka as an Activity

Teacher preparation is minimal. The author recommends that the first day ideally consists of notes designed to illustrate the general characteristics of Communism and command/planned economics, leaving day two to play the game and reinforce concepts discussed. However, when possible, a ninety minute block class should allow sufficient time for both pregame notes followed by game rules and procedures. Like Pagnotti and Russell's (2012) article *Using Civilizations IV to Engage Students in World History Content*, the main focus is the study of economic ideas, distribution, and the allocation of scarce resources. The activity culminates with a student debate over various emotions experienced waiting in lines for limited quantities, elite players skipping in lines, all the while attempting to fulfill their shopping list.

Playing the Game

Before the game begins, it is especially valuable for the teacher to have a thorough understanding of the technical and procedural aspects during play. The teacher should play different roles (i.e. market speculator, various family members purchasing products, and market trader) several times to become familiar with all the procedural aspects before student use. In an effort to conserve time, all pregame preparations take place before students arrive. This includes shuffling product delivery cards, product cards and game cards. To promote efficiency among student participation, the teacher should guide the board game and assume the role of market speculator.

The goal for students is to acquire all the items on their shopping lists. The first student to obtain all the items wins. In order for students to succeed, students must use their queuing cards, which represent commonly used methods to skip ahead in store lines. Examples of queuing cards include 'friend at the Polish United Workers Party' or 'mother carrying a small child' were common tactics to jump places in store lines (Madaj, 2013).

The game begins with each student placing family members in line at one of five government owned stores based on their needs and pre-determined shopping list. Placement of family members is speculative in nature since weekly deliveries of goods have yet to be delivered. Once all family members are in line, the teacher takes the top three cards from the delivery card stack and puts them face up on designated spots at the center of the board. Such cards' represents a day's delivery, and according to the cards, the teacher transfers the proper amount to stores.

Since some stores did not receive goods while others have extra, students can implement calculated turns jumping places in lines. Students randomly select three 'queue cards' representative of their families. Students use such cards to gain strategic advantages over their peers. Card play such as 'A friend had to pick up her son from kindergarten and let you get her place in line' or 'You have borrowed someone else's child and so are entitled to be served' allow students to move places in line in an effort to purchase goods. [Insert photo #1 here] Each day consists of three turns. The following third turn ends a day of shopping. Students continue to shop and purchase products for a total of five days. After each day, students can place family members in store lines waiting for new deliveries in an effort to complete their shopping lists,

hoping that day's deliveries arrive. With each day, students take another queue cards in a 'cut throat' attempt to satisfy their family needs. The first player to buy or exchange all items on their shopping list wins the game. In addition, the game ends if all stores and delivery trucks are empty, and the player who lacks the least amount of items from the shopping list wins.

Conclusion

The board game known as Kolejka, developed by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance, reconstructs in a vivid manner; the living conditions of millions of Eastern Europeans. Students born after the official end of the Cold War often find difficulty comprehending events or situations encountered by others. The concept, which is often foreign to them, of food shortages and a lack of variety in merchandise is difficult at best to portray, especially to the younger generation of American schoolchildren. To expose students to daily life in Communist Poland in the 1980s, through the use of a board game, encourages student creativity and emotions as students attempt to fulfill their daily shopping lists. The perceived success of the activity is evident in student emotions and frustrations. Observation of students becoming frustrated from limited and unpredictable deliveries was common. In addition, black market purchases and privileged players grabbing desired products provoked negative emotions, insensitive students and manifestations of malice. Such student reactions encourage historical empathy. According to Peter Seixas (1996), the idea of historical empathy implies a general understanding that 'people in the past not only lived in different circumstances . . . but also experienced and interpreted the world through a different belief systems' (pp. 773-774). As a result, the desired historical empathy encountered permits creative, inferential thinking to 'bridge the gaps' with limited knowledge of the past (Yeager & Foster, 2001, p.14). Such outcomes are what the game was designed to achieve.

Author's note: The board game Kolejka can be found on Amazon and eBay. Additional materials can also be found at: <http://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/2011/download-english-print-and-play-version-of-kolejka-game>.

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Appendix



Photo 1 Student strategically uses “queuing” cards to locate and purchase goods on their shopping lists. Photo taken by the author.

Photo 2 Examples of cards used in playing Kolejka.



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