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**Hilary Cooper**

## EDITORIAL

Hilary Cooper and Jon Nichol

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History has long been seen by politicians as a dangerous subject, the Kruschev trope may well be on the way to being a cliché, but still has a prescient ring “Historians are dangerous people and capable of turning everything upside down. They have to be watched.” And power is on the side of politicians in education as many papers in this issue make clear. And yet we educators continue stoically to strengthen our position by disseminating research into history and pedagogy that can osmotically and even directly influence and shape politicians’ views and policies.

The role of textbooks in history education is significant in this dichotomy and is examined by five of the papers in this issue. The importance of textbooks in changing practice or otherwise was discussed extensively at the meeting of experts on educational research on the learning and teaching of history at the Council of Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe for Cultural Cooperation in 1995. Textbooks were seen as a positive means to change the way history is taught. Yet the papers in this issue find that the European Union aims to promote democracy, social justice and human rights, which require a pedagogy to develop critical thinking, open-mindedness and respect for diversity, are still not reflected in many European textbooks. Clearly the subject of the Council of Europe meeting twenty years ago continues to be an issue.

Rona Bušljeta argues that history textbooks must take into account a pedagogy which requires active involvement, in order to develop such attitudes and values. Yet she found, in analysing the content of history textbooks in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, that neither country’s history textbooks were designed to significantly develop social justice or critical thinking.

Mojca Kukanja Gabrijelčič investigated the extent to which history textbooks prevent even the most able students from thinking critically. Using content analysis she compared Slovenian, Italian and English textbooks. She found that in Slovenian and Italian textbooks there is little to promote creative thinking, (the capacity for deeper insight into solving complex problems, or for metacognition (a critical awareness of the cognitive and learning processes), compared with English textbooks, and that this is significantly correlated with a student’s sense of efficacy and academic performance.

Andreas Andreou and Kostas Kasvikis analysed a new Greek history textbook which replaces a previously contentious one. Although the curriculum remains the same they found that the new textbook is a backward step, a narrative of Greek achievements, which sees ‘the others’ as perpetual enemies and contains no pedagogy based on open-ended questions or different perspectives.

Roland Bernhard gives a fascinating example of how Spanish, German and Austrian text books (and most probably others) have come to give an account of how Spain conquered the Aztec Empire, which he argues, wrongly shows the superiority of Europeans over the indigenous population. He suggests however that this account could be used to develop critical thinking.

The next six papers are concerned with the dangers of ignoring history pedagogy, as the above textbooks do, with attempts to enhance the role of pedagogy. Yosanne Vella, in discussing cross-curricular approaches, makes the point that history education and an emphasis on

European consciousness, civil society and rights are not necessarily the same thing. Although there is an overlap, since the thinking skills of history develop critical thinking, maybe the discipline of history will be destroyed if we expect it to develop a whole raft of generic values related to Social Studies.

Cicely Schneider Fischer's and William B. Russell's paper focuses on Social Studies in Florida, and in particular on women's perspectives. They construct theoretical bases for their analysis of women's perspectives in Social Studies courses. Their five point list of how women are represented could be a very useful tool for teachers and trainees to analyse history textbooks and their own teaching.

Tessa de Leur, Carla van Boxtel and Arie Wilschut use textbook analysis to research what is meant by pedagogy in history in relation to the concept of empathy. They identify the cognitive and affective processes involved when students work with empathy tasks, the processes students say are involved and the reasons they understand for completing empathy tasks. In an academic sense this paper would make a very good starting point for a discussion of the role of empathy in the context of role-play, drama, simulation as well as thinking exercises in the teaching and learning of history. The evidence the authors produced suggest that the empathy-task analysed was an additional element that was in contrast to the normal pattern of teaching and learning which came across as passive, teacher controlled and directed at the transmission of a body of knowledge. Indeed, decontextulised research of this kind [which is very good, pioneering in fact] leads to a bigger issue of the nature of educational research and pedagogy, echoing the *modus operandi* of the medical model, i.e.

- An intervention is tested via a pilot and control group
- The evaluation examines the extent and nature of the success / failure of the intervention
- On the basis of this research can then makes recommendations for practice

David Stoten examines the advantages of the Individual Assignment at A Level which requires students to undertake a small piece of historical research themselves and demonstrates the importance of preparing students for this and of the differentiated support they require. Next we have a second paper from Yosanne Vella, in which she describes how she worked with colleagues to improve students skills in writing history essays.

James Percival explores the role of narrative forms in the context of the 2014 new primary National Curriculum for England that has as a central feature chronological and narrative history. He argues that the use of drama and counterfactual scenarios effectively promote historical understanding of chronology and narrative with primary aged children. This reflects the findings of educational psychologists and the developments in primary pedagogy. Finally, Danijela Trskan concludes with a report on the development of initial teacher training of History teachers in the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana in Slovenia from the late 1940s to the present day. Despite the revolutionary changes during and following the Tito regime and the emergence of Slovenia as an independent country, the story is one of continuity at the grass roots level with adaptation to both national and international developments.

All of the issues addressed in this issue of IJHLTR are of general and on-going concerns and the editors are grateful to all those who think it important to engage with them.

Finally, we have received some fascinating books for review, which we are sure will be of interest to readers and plan to include one review in each future Issue. We start with *Writing*

*Material Culture History*, Gerritsen, A. and Giorgio, R. (2015) London: Bloomsbury Academic.  
In Volume 13.2 of *The International Journal of History Learning, Teaching and Research*  
Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington will review R.G. Collingwood: a research Companion  
Connelly, J., Johnson, P. and Leach, S. (2015) London: Bloomsbury.

*ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION THROUGH HISTORY:  
AN ANALYSIS OF CROATIAN AND BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN FOURTH GRADE  
GYMNASIUM HISTORY TEXTBOOKS*

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**Abstract**

*The implementation of the European dimension in education is one of the main pedagogical challenges for European Union [EU] member states today. This fact is emphasised by the large number of resolutions, declarations and recommendations adopted by European institutions. All of these texts clearly suggest that the European dimension is not a new and separate curriculum element, but a new way of approaching lesson content with the purpose of not only imparting knowledge (e.g. teaching pupils about Europe), but also developing a system of attitudes, values and competence sets in young people. Given that the potential of history lessons and textbooks in achieving the objectives of the European dimension in education is often emphasised, this paper purports to establish whether Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian gymnasium history textbooks are helpful in achieving the objectives of the European dimension and to what extent, on the basis of the analysis of the didactic-methodological elements of textbook units. The conducted analysis of the officially approved Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks has shown that they neglected the necessity of encouraging the development of the skills, attitudes and values necessary for the lives and work of young people in a multicultural, multilingual and democratic Europe.*

**Key words**

Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, European Union, European dimension in education, Objectives of the European dimension in education, Skills values and attitudes, History classes, History textbooks, Textbooks

**Introduction**

The purpose of the European dimension in education, which is 'to strengthen in young people a European identity and make clear to them the value of European civilization and of the foundations on which the European peoples intend to base their developments today, that is in particular the safe-guarding of the principles of democracy, social justice and human rights', was defined as early as 1988 (Chiarello 2012). Today, the European dimension in education represents one of the most important and topical educational principles, and all European Union [EU] member states avowedly implement its objectives in their education systems, with varying degrees of success. Owing to the numerous resolutions, declarations and recommendations adopted by the European Union, the broader theoretical framework of what the European dimension in education entails is quite clear. However, it appears that a problem lies in the lack of clear postulates in terms of the realisation of the objectives of the European dimension in education, especially having in mind the teaching and learning process.

Given the above, as well as the fact that teaching history has great potential in the realisation of the aforementioned EU objectives, this paper aims to ascertain the way in which it is necessary to conceive the primary means of teaching and learning - textbooks, in order for them to lead to the realisation of the objectives of the European dimension in education.



The aim of this paper is to define some of the criteria for designing history textbooks, based on the academic literature on the European dimension in education, in order to then use these criteria to analyse officially approved history textbooks in two countries - Croatia and Bosnia - Herzegovina, Fig. 1. The starting point in the comparison of Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks is certain similarities shared by the two countries in terms of education and history. Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have similar government education systems, similar 20th century histories, and are also linked through the fact that both consider themselves part of Europe and do everything in their power to achieve the objectives set for them by the European Union. Since Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are trying to follow the example of contemporary European trends in all areas, it will be interesting to determine the extent of their success in terms of history education. The European dimension is a good basis for the analysis, since its implementation into the education system remains one of the main pedagogical challenges of the European Union.

### **The objectives of the European dimension in education**

Education is often defined as one of the cornerstones of the development of a community (Hansen, 1998, p. 10), and as the starting point for and the basic vehicle for the progress of a society. Thus, it is not surprising that the European Union recognises education as the driver for its cultural, economic, social and political change, and that it sees the European dimension as an essential component of the European countries' future educational policies (Toprakçi, 2006, p. 4). The latter is confirmed by numerous reports, documents and recommendations adopted by European institutions, related to promoting the implementation of the European dimension in the education system. However, it is important to note that the European dimension is not simple to understand (Barthélémy, 1999, p. 65).

In a broader theoretical context, the concept of the European dimension in education could be defined as a kind of unification of Europe in the field of education with the aim of encouraging young people to: (1) learn about the customs, cultures, languages and economic circumstances of all European countries (Tholey, 1992, p. 39; Ritchie, Sanz, 1996, p.77), (2) develop skills resulting in a better quality of life and work in Europe, (3) understand the culture and history of other member states, (4) strengthen the sense of European citizenship and European identity (Economou, 2003, p. 120), (5) develop positive attitudes and intellectual approaches, such as pluralism, tolerance, openness to others, and (6) evaluate and develop personal potential (Kallen, 1997, p. 197).

However, bearing in mind the practical implementation and realisation of the objectives of the European dimension through the teaching and learning process, it is not incorrect to say that the European dimension, in fact, implies a pedagogical approach which provides young people with meaningful opportunities to acquire the knowledge, insights, attitudes, skills and values necessary for constructive participation within Europe and for constructive participation in changing Europe (Hooghoff, 1993, p. 7).

In order for them to successfully fulfil its role in the formation of young people as informed, active and responsible European citizens (Utecht, 2003, p. 10), academic literature highlights the fact that schools should be places '... for pupils to acquire knowledge, because although knowledge is admirable in itself, it must also enable us to act, to produce values, to create products, to solve problems ...' (Halašz as cited by Barthélémy, 1999, p. 81). If this is applied to the educational process, it becomes clear that the realisation of the objectives of the European dimension in education cannot be based solely on providing information and knowledge about Europe, i.e. directing students towards acquiring knowledge about Europe (Savvides, 2003,

p. 146; Shennan, 1991, p. 21), but also on encouraging young people to think, feel and act (Savvides, 2003, p. 146).

Specifically, the institutionalised teaching and learning process should encourage young people to: (1) obtain information about their past and present, about culture and their own surroundings, independently; (2) get acquainted with the different geographical, cultural and political aspects of Europe (Savvides, 2003, p. 146; Kallen, 1997, p. 12); (3) develop an active role in the process of deciding on their future (Toprakçi, 2006, p. 4); (4) raise the consciousness of common European cultural heritage and the responsibility they have as Europeans (Luisoni, 1997, p. 111); (5) be able to maintain their own national identity in addition to respecting and accepting the national identities of others (Fountopoulou, 2009, p. 74); (6) shape such interests and skills so as to be capable of participating in the active process of communicating and interacting with people of different cultures (Shennan, 1991, 215); (7) accept the European values which lead to coexisting in peace, promote solidarity, equality, tolerance and to value human rights (Savvides, 2008; Ryba, 1995, p. 33).

Given the above, it is obvious that the European dimension in education imposes demands in terms of the teaching and learning process. However, it is often highlighted that teaching history has great potential in accomplishing these objectives, primarily due to the content it deals with (Savvides, 2003, p. 146; Utecht, 2003, p. 13).

### **The European dimension in teaching history**

On the one hand, history can play a significant role in fostering hatred among nations, creating ethnic, social, political and religious groups and justifying the policies which lead to discrimination, persecutions, conflicts and wars. On the other hand, history affects collective and individual memories, cultural enrichment and the perception of the present as well as the future (Chansel, 2001, p. 297) and is often seen as the seed of social progress and the indicator of what needs to be changed in order to live in a fairer and more tolerant society.

The potential impact of history on the development of young people was recognised in the early 1990s, which resulted in a movement among the political elite, scholars and practitioners in the East and West with one primary goal – changing the practice of teaching history. In this context, especially since the *Maastricht Treaty*, stimulating the achievement of the objectives of the European dimension through the process of teaching and learning history and the introduction of pedagogical innovation in teaching history stand out as necessities in order to make history as a subject meaningful for the young people of the 21st century (Leeuw-Roord, 2008, p. 44). The first important step was considered emphasising the necessity not to regard history as a static subject, (which assumes students sit and listen to the teacher and acquire information from textbooks), and instead insisting on an active approach to learning in history, (i.e. independent thinking, assessment, reasoning and action) (Hales, 1973, p. 20).

In keeping with the above 'new' approach and the objectives of the European dimension in education, one could, not incorrectly, come to the conclusion that one of the primary roles of the process of teaching and learning history is to actively encourage young people to become European citizens who are:

- open-minded,
- aware of differences,
- willing to accept these differences and respect people of different cultures, religions and languages (Gallagher, 1996, p. 22),

- ready to recognise and accept differences and condemn bias and prejudice (Stobart, 1997, p. 69),
- capable of solving conflicts (Gallagher, 1996, pp. 27-29) and
- developing curiosity, tolerance, empathy, civic responsibility and courage (Stobart, 1997, p. 69).

An important role in this is played by history textbooks, which have a great responsibility in the realisation of these challenges, given that they remain one of the most important tools for teaching and learning in schools.

### **The European dimension in history textbooks**

Despite offering a selective choice of information, textbooks reflect the beliefs, knowledge and values of a society, which is why their impact on young people's thinking and attitudes is unquestionable (Mirkovic, Crawford, 2003, p. 91). This applies to history textbooks in particular, because their role is not only to present various social events and conditions, but also to encourage the process of understanding the causes and effects of human actions and the development of a democratic, pluralistic and more responsible social awareness (Agarkova, 2000, p. 6).

The importance of the role of the content of history textbooks in achieving the objectives of the European dimension in education is undeniable. However, the achievement of these complex objectives requires that textbooks do not solely present information on the social, political and cultural circumstances in Europe, but also that they encourage the development of future European citizens, who are open-minded, aware of differences and willing to accept them, citizens who are tolerant and respectful of people of different cultures, religions and languages (Gallagher, 1996, p. 22; Economou, 2003, p. 120).

Given that the achievement of the roles of the European dimension in education '...necessitates research, consultation, international content, debate, comparison ...' (Luisoni, 1997, p. 42), history textbooks should also be designed as a means to guide students towards independent research and the independent acquisition of desirable knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (Chall, Conard, 1991; Hooghoff, 1993, p. 9; Hummel, 1989, pp. 23-24; Schissler, 2001, p. 96, Riley, 2001).

In particular, the achievement of the objectives of the European dimension in education requires that history textbooks be designed in such a way that they encourage the following in students:

- i. Critical and constructive sceptical evaluation of information (Stradling, 1996, p. 30; Gallagher, 1996, p. 18; Stradling, 1997, p. 15);
- ii. sympathising with others and their view of certain events (using the methods of group work, simulation, socio-drama, role-play, projects and debates) (Shennan, 1991, p. 133; Gallagher, 1996, pp. 41-48; Stradling, 1996, p. 17);
- iii. using information technologies, e.g. computer simulations, especially in order to explain complex historical events and situations (Stradling, 1996, p. 17);
- iv. comparing the same historical periods or historical events in different countries (Stradling, 1996, p. 17);
- v. rational evaluation of different historical conditions/events/persons and making independent decisions/opinions/attitudes (Shennan, 1991, p. 133; Agarkova, 2000, p. 10);
- vi. co-operation and discussion with others in an open and constructive way, standing up for their own views, but also accepting the opinions of others (Leclercq, 2007, p. 5; Stradling, 1997, p. 7);

- vii. combating stereotypical ways of thinking and prejudice (Kallen, 1997, p. 197; Wieser, 2009, p. 61; Stobart, 1997, p. 69; Gallagher, 1996, p. 17);
- viii. encouraging empathy (Stobart, 1997, p. 69; Gallagher, 1996, p. 30; Shennan, 1991, p. 210);
- ix. further discovery/research (Gallagher, 1996, p. 34);
- x. accepting European attitudes and values such as solidarity, tolerance, equality and respect for human rights (Gallagher, 1996, p. 21; Luisoni, 1997, pp. 42-43; Arthur, Davies, Kerr, Wrenn, 2001, p. 125; Toprakçi, 2006, p. 4; Jacobs, Maier, 1998).

It is difficult to detect whether or not history textbooks accomplish the above only based on their content, but it is possible to do so based on their pedagogical elements; for example, the use of visual and written sources, questions, exercises and additional comments. These provide insight into the author's intentions in terms of creating and directing the process of teaching and learning.

### **Identifying the research problem and subject**

The objectives of the European dimension are realised with respect to four key areas: (1) imparting knowledge (e.g. teaching pupils about Europe); (2) developing skills that will enable pupils to live and work within Europe (e.g. social); (3) encouraging certain attitudes (e.g. respect for others and tolerance) and (4) promoting European values (e.g. democracy, freedom, equality and human rights) (Savvides, 2008, pp. 306-308).

Taking into account the fact that history textbooks play an important role in shaping young people into responsible European citizens whose knowledge and skills will contribute to shaping a better European society (Tholey, Noordik, 1992, p. 49), and the fact that the general aim of the European dimension is to provide young people with meaningful opportunities to acquire the knowledge, insights, attitudes and skills necessary to participate constructively in a changing Europe (Hooghoff, 1993, p. 7), this research aims to determine whether the Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian gymnasium history textbooks currently in use adhere to the above criteria, and if so, to what extent.

Assuming that history textbooks are more or less successful in meeting the criteria of one of the areas included in the objectives of the European dimension in education, the one referring to imparting knowledge (e.g. teaching pupils about Europe), the aim of this research is to determine the extent to which the pedagogy of history textbooks encourages the development of skills, values and attitudes highlighted as important by the European dimension in education, and whether there are any differences with respect to the above between history textbooks in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Chosen as the research subject were the fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks which were officially approved by the relevant Croatian ministry and the gymnasium history textbooks approved by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the school year 2013/2014. These textbooks were selected because it was most evident they met the cognitive dimension of the objectives of the European dimension in education, since they dealt with the topics of contemporary European history, a time when Europe became increasingly unified (Ebert, 1990, p. 27), especially since 1945, and the need to establish a community of European nations based on democracy, respect and acceptance of diversity, equality and freedom (Gallagher, 1996, p. 21). In addition to this, these fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks were selected due to the fact that they were used in the final year of secondary education, which is why they provided a solid basis for insight into how young people in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina prepared for the challenges of European society.

The analysis will not cover the textbook units dealing with national history, only the textbook units dealing with the history of Europe, and it will leave out the content of the textbooks. The achievement of the objectives of the European dimension in the history textbooks will be identified based on the methods of teaching and learning through which the content is learnt.

This study assumes that all the fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks analysed will be designed in such a way that they lead to achieving the objectives of the European dimension in education. This hypothesis is based on the fact that both Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have long adopted the research-based theory that the teaching and learning of history should be planned in ways which lead towards establishing a critical attitude towards historical facts and testimonies; developing the thought processes essential for the interpretation of history, such as analysis, evaluation, comparison and reconstruction, taking different perspectives into account; creating independent conclusions (Stradling, 2003, p. 10; Curtis, 1994, p. 25; Gullberg, 2009, pp. 240-241); adopting a value system and encouraging empathy (Illingworth, 2000, p. 20; Vinterek, 2010, p. 123). All the above methods of teaching and learning history represent a kind of prerequisite for achieving the objectives of the European dimension in education.

### The Research Process

When analysing Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks, we will use the method of quantitative content analysis. This method purports to establish the extent to which the pedagogical elements of a textbook encourage the development of the skills, values and attitudes which aid in the realisation of the objectives of the European dimension, and to determine whether there is a significant difference with respect to this between the officially approved fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For the purposes of the analysis, the textbook elements will be divided into four sub-categories:

- (1) visual sources of knowledge, i.e. all visual tools found in the textbook,
- (2) written sources of knowledge, i.e. all written sources found in the textbook,
- (3) additional comments, such as lesson summaries, highlighted key concepts, singled out technical terms, unfamiliar words, curiosities, various notes by the author, such as 'look', 'remember', 'consider', 'revise' etc., and
- (4) questions and exercises in the textbook.

The skills, values and attitudes aiding the realisation of the objectives of the European dimension, which are necessary to be encouraged by the teaching **and learning facilitated by the textbooks will be divided into ten sub-categories, see pp. 13–14**. The statistical method of the proportion test was used in order to establish whether there were any differences between Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks in terms of the established research criteria.

### Research sample

The study included a total of five Croatian fourth grade gymnasium history textbooks listed in the 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 *Catalogue of the Compulsory Textbooks and Accompanying Supplementary Teaching Tools for Gymnasiums*. These textbooks were also approved by the relevant ministry for the school year 2013/2014. The sample also included two Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks approved for the school year 2013/2014, listed in the *List of Approved Working Textbooks, Textbooks, Manuals, Worksheets and Workbooks for*

*Primary Schools, Gymnasiums and Secondary Technical and Vocational Schools for the School Year 2013/2014.* The selected history textbooks were:

- (1) Akmadža, M., Jareb, M., Radelić, Z. (2009). *Povijest 4: Udžbenik za 4. razred gimnazije*. Zagreb: Alfa;
- (2) Kolar-Dimitrijević, M., Petrić, H., Raguž, J. (2004). *Povijest 4: Udžbenik povijesti za 4. razred gimnazije*. Zagreb: Meridijani;
- (3) Agičić, D., Jakovina, T., Leček, S., Najbar-Agičić, M. (2011) [1999]. *Povijest 4: Udžbenik za 4. razred gimnazije*. Zagreb: Profil;
- (4) Miljan, G., Miškulin, I. (2009). *Povijest 4: Udžbenik povijesti za četvrti razred*. Zagreb: Profil;
- (5) Erdelja, K., Stojaković, I. (2012) [2009]. *Koraci kroz vrijeme 4: Udžbenik povijesti za 4. razred gimnazije*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga;
- (6) Hadžiabdić, H., Dervišagić, E., Mulić, A., Mehić, V. (2007). *Historija. Istorija. Povijest*. Tuzla: Bosanska knjiga;
- (7) Šehić, Z., Kovačević, A., Leka, A. (2007). *Historija. Istorija. Povijest. Udžbenik sa čitankom za četvrti razred gimnazije*. Sarajevo: Sarajevo Publishing.

### Research Results

Based on the established criteria, and with the help of the quantitative method of content analysis, we observed the extent to which the Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian fourth grade gymnasium history textbook elements encouraged the development of the skills and attitudes, and the acquisition of the values highlighted by the European dimension in education, see pages 9–10. In addition to the above, the statistical method of the proportion test was used in order to establish whether there were any differences between Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks in terms of the realisation of the above skills, values and attitudes. The realisation of the European dimension, discussed above, in Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks is shown in table 1.



Encouraging empathy	2	0,2	0	0	z=0,8 p>0,417	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,1	0	0,0	z=0,7 p>0,462
Encouraging further discovery/research	3	0,3	0	0	Z=1,0 p>0,320	2	1,8	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	3,4	Z=1,5 p>0,135	25	1,1*	1	0,2	0,2	0,0	0,0	Z=2,1 p<0,033
Promoting European values (solidarity, tolerance, equality and respect for human rights)	0	0,0	0	0		0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0		0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0,0	

\*The proportion is statistically significantly higher for the significance level of 95%  
Significance Level: p<0.05



Contrary to the initial hypothesis, the table shows that most of the skills, values and attitudes identified above were realised at a percentage lower than 50% in Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks. An exception was observed only with respect to a single aspect in Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks, where additional notes encouraged the use of information technologies at a percentage slightly higher than 50%. On the other hand, the analysis showed that certain desirable skills, values and attitudes, such as combating stereotypical ways of thinking and prejudice, and encouraging the adoption of European attitudes and values (solidarity, respect for human rights, tolerance and equality) were not represented at all in either the Croatian or the Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks,

However, the pedagogical elements of Croatian history textbooks, on the whole, engage students in further discovery/research, the rational evaluation of different historical conditions/events/persons and in making independent decisions/opinions/attitudes. The pedagogical elements in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks show a similar tendency and encourage the rational evaluation of different historical conditions/events/persons and making independent decisions/opinions/attitudes in the highest percentage, in addition to encouraging the use of information technologies. Nevertheless, the pedagogy in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks completely ignores not only skills, attitudes and values, but also the requirement for students to sympathise with others and their view of certain events, to compare the same historical periods or historical events in different countries, co-operate and discuss issues with others in an open and constructive way, or develop empathy. As can be seen from the table, this is not the case with Croatian history textbooks, which, albeit at a very small percentage, realise some of these skills, values and attitudes, although the table shows that the majority do not have this pedagogical experience.

Although the proportion test proved that there were no statistically significant differences between the above textbooks, thus highlighting the similarities between Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks, certain smaller differences can still be pointed out. In this regard, compared to Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks, the pedagogy in the Croatian history textbooks insisted on a rational evaluation of different historical conditions/events/persons, making independent decisions/opinions/attitudes and further discovery/research to a higher degree, although this is not clear in the table. On the other hand, compared to Croatian history textbooks, the pedagogy in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks encouraged critical and constructive, sceptical evaluation of information, and the use of information technologies, to a more significant degree than in the Croatian textbooks.

If we take into account individual aspects of pedagogy in interpreting the results, it is possible to detect certain specific differences between Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks, although these may not appear in the table. In this sense, the table clearly shows that, compared to Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks, the visual sources of knowledge in Croatian textbooks encourage the rational evaluation of different historical conditions/events/persons and making independent decisions/opinions/attitudes to a greater extent, although this is not shown in the table. On the other hand, compared to Croatian textbooks, the written sources of knowledge in Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks encourage critical and constructive sceptical evaluation of information, and additional notes encourage the use of information technologies, to a more significant degree.

Likewise, there are some similarities between the textbooks analysed in terms of individual aspects of pedagogy. In this regard, it is clear from the table that Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks use mainly questions and exercises to encourage the acquisition of the skills, values and attitudes which lead to achieving the objectives of the

European dimension in education the most, but use few additional notes. In addition to the above, the study showed there were more similarities between the two countries' textbooks. For example, neither use visual sources and additional notes to engage students in critical and constructive sceptical evaluation of information and fail to use questions and exercises to combat stereotypical ways of thinking and prejudice, develop empathy and adopt European attitudes and values. Nor do they use visual and written sources or additional notes to encourage students to sympathise with others and their view of certain events, to compare the same historical periods or historical events in different countries, to co-operate and discuss issues with others in an open and constructive way, to combat stereotypical ways of thinking and prejudice, to develop empathy or European attitudes and values.

### Discussion

The realisation of the complex objectives of the European dimension in education necessitates designing textbooks in accordance with contemporary teaching strategies. In this sense, textbooks should be designed so as to encourage:

- (1) student self-engagement, namely the desire for independent research and the broadening of knowledge and skills;
- (2) interaction, cooperation and communication among students (Schnack, 1995, p. 25; Läänemets, 1991, p. 31);
- (3) the use of various sources contributing to better understanding and insight into different views of the same events or problems;
- (4) using 'the Internet and communication via the Internet' (Den Beste, 2003, pp. 491-504);
- (5) the development of 'various skills' in students, such as critical, interpretation, communication, creative, selection and research skills (Lowen, 2009, p. 23), as well as the social skills which emphasise the importance of emotional and experiential learning (Fattinger, 2005, p. 226);
- (6) the adoption of the values that aid in finding a deeper meaning in different events and problems;
- (7) the development of critical thinking (Crick, 2002, pp. 117-120);
- (8) the development of personal and social responsibility in individuals (Aspin, Chapman, 2007, p. 3).

However, the results obtained by analysing the pedagogical aspects of Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks indicate that their history textbooks transmit historical information, while ignoring encouragement to think, feel and act (Savvides, 2003, p. 146; Luisoni, 1997, p. 75). Specifically, with respect to the research problem, the analysis indicates two major problematic areas in Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian textbooks. They do not implement or encourage students to be active creators of independent conclusions, ideas and attitudes (Duraisingh, Mansilla, 2007, pp. 22-30; Matijević, M., Radovanović, 2011, p. 118; Joyce, Weil, Calhoun, 2011, p. 391; Pranjić, 2005, p. 187). Additionally, it is evident that the history textbooks analysed almost completely disregard the need to encourage young people to develop a sense of their responsibilities as citizens of Europe (Kallen, 1997, p. 4) and the need to prepare young people for work and everyday life in a multilingual, multicultural, democratic Europe. What we need is research involving the writers of such textbooks to determine the principles that underpin their writing.

On the one hand, the result of this analysis is somewhat surprising since both countries are attempting to present themselves as part of Europe and are trying to adapt to the new European trends in all areas, including education. However we can not assume that there is a

relationship between international political rhetoric and its translation into policy and practice at the national level. On the other hand, there are reasons why, for both countries, training young people for a life within the European context is not even a secondary issue when it comes to history textbooks. The reasons for the latter, especially, should be sought in the fact that the concept of a European dimension in education in the academic discourse of both countries is rather new and even unfamiliar, so it is unreasonable to expect a practical realisation of the objectives of the European dimension in education. In addition to this, it is important to point out that both countries are still marked, in their social and political life, by their national histories of the 20th century, a fact which is most accurately reflected in history textbooks. Therefore discourses on history textbooks in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are most often reduced to determining the accuracy of the factual presentation of events in the national history of the 20th century, which leaves little room for new issues, including the European dimension in education. Why should this be?

### **Conclusion**

Despite the fact that Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are trying to keep abreast with Europe in all areas of activity, they appear to be lagging behind in certain areas, at least when it comes to education. However this is based on the assumption that the rest of Europe is implementing the European ideas in relation to history and pedagogy. Based on the research in this paper, it is impossible to reach any general conclusions in terms of whether the education systems of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are heading in the right direction with regard to the objectives of the European dimension or whether their young people will be prepared for the challenges of living in Europe. However, one can come to certain conclusions in terms of history textbooks.

The analysis clearly shows that the history textbooks in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are still preoccupied with factual representations of events, which does not leave much space for the methods of teaching and learning required by the European dimension in education. Accordingly, neither country recognises the fact that the achievement of the objectives of the European dimension in teaching history could provide an opportunity for young people to examine historical events, even the sensitive issues of national history, from the perspective of future European citizens, aware of and willing to accept national, religious and cultural diversity. Yet, in reality, are the countries concerned that they do not follow this agenda?

Although the officially approved Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian history textbooks do not suggest it, the desire to draw closer to Europe will surely make both Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina perceive the value of the European dimension in education in the near future, which will then make history textbooks ready for the realisation of one of their most important roles - preparing young people for life and work in Europe. Let us hope that this role is realised.

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*LEARNING FROM HISTORY TEXTBOOKS – IS IT CHALLENGING FOR GIFTED STUDENTS? AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONS AND TASKS IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS*

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### **Abstract**

*This paper presents a qualitative and quantitative analysis of 44 contemporary, legally approved history textbooks, which were issued by various publishers in Slovenia, United Kingdom-England and Italy and in use in the school years 2010/11-2012/13. The data processing has been conducted using the technique of content analysis applied to 44 textbooks, through which we wished to determine the level of appropriateness and the difficulty of almost twelve thousand [11.947] questions and tasks. Starting from the desire to promote educational work with able students in the top 30% of the ability range and then to give them opportunities to realise their potential, we wished to present the frameworks and modern teaching strategies that attempt to implement new teaching and learning methods in mainstream education. The research has shown that the most developed system for teaching more able students is in England, while the least developed is the Italian system.*

### **Key words**

Gifted & talented, High ability students, History textbook, International comparative analysis, Italy, Questions and tasks, Slovenia, Textbooks, United Kingdom

### **Introduction**

Through this research programme we wanted to determine to what extent and in what way the basic principles and concepts of school reform have taken into account work with more able students, whether they are effective in enabling them to reach their potential and to what extent care is taken devising the tasks and issues they encounter in history textbooks to enable them to reach the highest possible standard. The history textbook is an extremely important indicator of the condition and development of history education in a country. A textbook has the informative and formative function of transmitting knowledge, while also allowing individual development of abilities, skills and values.

### **Questions and classification in history textbooks**

The division of questions in terms of mental processes was mostly between higher and lower level. Lower level questions require the memorisation of taught data and facts (i.e. already checked, existing knowledge); while the higher level questions also engage thought processes (analysis, comparison, synthesis) that generate new knowledge.

A basic issue is the division of questions into two categories: open and closed (Marentič Požarnik & Plut Pregelj, 2009, p. 108). Open questions are highly effective for the development of students' thinking skills because they allow exploration, problem-solving, intuition, individuality and a range of discovery and research approaches. They can also lead to changes in students' mental processes (Cowley, 2008; Godinho & Wilson, 2007; Marentič Požarnik & Plut Pregelj, 2009, reflecting Blooms Taxonomy of Learning Objectives. Questions relating to Bloom's taxonomy of (Bloom, 1970; Heacox, 2009; Marentič Požarnik

1991, 2002; Marentič Požarnik & Plut Pregelj, 2009; Rutar Ilc, 2003) in the field of history are as follows:

- (i) Knowledge is the first level (step): Here the student is expected to recall data or retrieve previously learned information. Examples of such questions would be asking when the First World War started, where the French revolution began, and defining a term.
- (ii) Comprehension is the next step: questions require comprehending the meaning, translation, interpolation and interpretation of problems. A student must describe something in his or her own words, present the main ideas/thinking involved and conclude with the line of reasoning. Examples might be explain the reasons for the emergence of feudalism or explain how the Roman Republic functioned.
- (iii) Application: a student must use a concept in a new situation or apply new knowledge into novel or similar situations. Examples might be to edit the timeline of the First World War in relation to the most important battles, or the meaning of the right to vote.
- (iv) Analysis: these questions develop the ability to think logically and analytically, to separate material or concepts into component parts so that organisational structures may be understood. Examples might be compare the economic development of Italy and Germany during the Second World War, or analyse the causes that led to the French Revolution.
- (v) Synthesis: connecting parts in a new whole in the student's own, unique and different way, not just for transformation, but for original creation, or re-creation (Heacox, 2009, p. 56). Synthesis is a creative combination of knowledge from several areas, multiple disciplines, resources and information, and it builds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Precisely because of the originality and creative thinking required by the student to demonstrate synthesis, some authors classify this as the highest level in Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives. Examples might be can the development of totalitarianism be explained, or explain the best solution to the Versailles arrangements for Europe.
- (vi) Evaluation: These questions encourage the student's personal expression of values, morals and ethical positions. Examples might be expressing a personal opinion about the use of nuclear weapons in war, judged from the perspective of the human rights impact of totalitarian regimes or similar human rights violations.

### **Introduction to textbook analysis**

The purpose of the analysis of school history textbooks (questions and tasks) was to determine whether Slovenian and foreign textbooks have sufficient elements that promote differentiated learning in history lessons depending on the interests and abilities of each student. In particular, we wondered whether the textbooks encourage the use of higher thought (mental) processes, and critical and creative thinking in academic work.

### **Method**

We present an analysis of contemporary accredited Slovenian history textbooks, issued by various publishers and used during the 2010/11-2012/13 school years. Data processing used the analysis of questions and tasks in the primary history textbooks used in lessons. The research instrument was an information sheet (table) for each selected textbook.

For the qualitative and quantitative analysis of questions and tasks in the textbooks we examined the suitability (appropriateness) and difficulty of the questions, where we paid attention to contemporary teaching strategies that aim to implement the new methods and teaching approaches in history education, starting from the extent to which they promote work with more able students and opportunities for them to realize their potential.

The information sheet for the analysis of questions and tasks consisted of the following elements:

- (i) Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives, which we transformed into a three level taxonomy. The first level was knowledge and comprehension, the second was application, and the third level was analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
- (ii) The process: the level of thinking required (minimum, maximum) using Piagetian criteria.
- (iii) Encouraging creativity and originality. As in Heacox (2002), we focused primarily on the area of synthesis and particularly creative questions or tasks.
- (iv) Representation of Gardner's multiple intelligences (verbal-linguistic; visual-spatial; logical-mathematical; existential; naturalistic musical-rhythmic and harmonic; bodily-kinaesthetic; interpersonal; intrapersonal). Questions and tasks were analysed according to the type of intelligence and complexity depending on Bloom's taxonomy.

#### **List of history textbooks analysed**

In Slovenian, Italian and English textbooks, the selection criteria was focused on actuality as we selected current textbooks, i.e., those that were in use in the school years 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 (for a list of analysed textbooks, see sources and literature).

#### **The research cohort**

The research cohort included mostly sixth grade students children with an average age of 12.

#### **Analysis of Slovenian history textbooks**

Fifteen Slovenian textbooks and 2,361 questions were analysed.

**Bloom's Taxonomy** The main findings of the analysis, according to Bloom's taxonomy, were as follows.

We found that the most even distribution of questions, closest to the 30%–35%–35% recommendations of the National Commission for the management of the national examination, were in the textbooks 'Raziskujem preteklost 9' (38%–37%–25%) and 'Svet skozi čas' (38%–39%–24%). There are at least two textbooks which had the highest number of tasks that require only knowledge compared with the minimum number of tasks at taxonomic Level 3: 'Stari svet' and 'Spoznavajmo zgodovino'. The best textbook for gifted students in Slovenian schools is 'Prvi koraki v preteklost', followed by 'Od prazgodovine skozi stari in srednji vek' and 'Novi vek'.

The main findings in all the textbooks analysed relate primarily to the observation of the principle of individualised learning, which is in the design of questions and tasks related particularly to average and weaker students. We have noted that only four books of the 15 analysed (26.6%) had more than 30% of all questions at the highest, third taxonomic level, which requires higher thought processes matched to more able students.

**The Piagetian Perspective:** The findings regarding the complexity of questions and tasks in the history textbooks in relation to the developmental stage of thinking (according to Piaget) are as follows.

Although the boundaries between the levels are not clear, gifted pupils at this stage of formal education should have developed the following:

- causal-consequential thinking;
- logical thinking in relation to physical objects;
- spatial operations;
- reversibility.

- thinking in the area of relationships, such as classification and classification in the order, and mathematical operations.

Operations at this stage take place primarily at a mental level, but are tied to specific objects and phenomena by a pupil who has acquired them through of perception or experience (Labinowicz, 2010, p. 69). Students at the stage of concrete operations (7–11 years of age) are therefore not able to answer a question, if not presented with contextually concretely located objects in historical situations that require explicit teacher explanation. Such pupils are capable of logical thinking by observing and analyzing 'objects' if they are in real, 'concrete' and not 'abstract' form. Conversely they solve tasks less successfully that predominantly involve abstract terms and concepts (Labinowicz, 2010, p. 57; Marentič Požarnik, 2000, p. 141).

The formal operational stage from the ages 11–12 until the age of 15 is an important one for our study, the stage of abstract-logical thinking. This period refers to the ability to think outside concrete realities; the latter is no longer tied only to objects and concrete experience, but to more abstract concepts, relationships, verbal statements and propositions (Labinowicz, 2010, p. 80; Marentič Požarnik, 2000, p.143). The learner develops the capacity for hypothetical thinking and developing abstract concepts, and tackles problems in a systematic and organised way. At this stage, hypothetical deductive thinking is developed, which allows a hypothetical situation and imagines a deductive decision from general assumptions about the individual cases and the consequences. The learner is also capable of being aware of their own thinking processes, (metacognition), reasoned thinking (cognition), implementation of problem-solving (thought) experiments, understanding of abstract concepts and an interest, for example, in social and political ideas, philosophical doctrines and religion.

In the interpretation of the adequacy of the textbooks, we relied also on Strmčnik (2001, p. 107), which discusses the different levels of learning, depending on the purpose, quality, level of mental activity and autonomy of the individual. We found that they were important for us, in particular in relation to the ability to self-regulate rehearsed, in-depth understanding, transfer of knowledge and values to new learning situations, creativity, (deeper insight in learning the content and vision of the new issues, solving complex problems), and metacognition, (critical awareness of cognitive and learning processes). Different levels of learning are compared with the classification of knowledge (according to Bloom), depending on the different levels of complexity (from simple to complex, concrete to abstract), which reveals that the highest levels of learning are associated with the taxonomic level of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

According to the characteristics of the development of thinking displayed in conjunction with different Piagetian levels of learning, we found that Slovenian history textbooks take into account the developmental characteristics of 12 year old students. The textbook analysis reveals that the best textbook for more able students (and also the most demanding in terms of tasks and issues) is 'Prvi koraki v preteklost', a textbook for the sixth grade. The latter is adapted to learners who are in transition from the stage of concrete logical thinking to abstract-logical thinking. From this perspective, the textbook is challenging for other students who do not have these skills well-developed yet, but suitable for more able students who quickly reach certain developmental (intellectual) milestones. This textbook also promotes different levels of learning and encourages productive, creative learning and metacognitive learning.

The main problem occurs in the area of the adequacy of textbooks in the ninth grade, where students are on average 15 years of age and in which the level of abstract-logical thinking and hypothetical and deductive thinking is already very well developed. It would be expected that the level of a student's intellectual development is adapted to by having textbooks with

demanding tasks and issues that would promote higher thinking processes and advanced levels of learning. However, we noted that none of the analysed textbooks for the ninth grade include sufficient (relevant) numbers of questions and tasks at the third taxonomic level. There are also many gaps from the perspective of creative thinking, since the tasks and issues in Slovenian history textbooks do not sufficiently stimulate student learning.

### **Analysis of Italian history textbooks**

In total we analysed 14 textbooks and 7,743 questions and tasks and the research findings are as follows.

The most even distribution of questions, which should be close to the distribution of 30%–35%–35%, is in the textbook 'Scenari della storia 3' with 33%–45%–23%). The least suitable textbook, which has the highest number of tasks that require only knowledge and a minimum number of tasks at taxonomic Level 3 is 'Le tracce della storia 1'. The best history textbook for more able students in Italian schools is 'Scenari della storia 3', which has the most questions and tasks at the third taxonomic level.

An analysis of the different types of intelligence by Gardner reveals that:

- (i) The most frequently represented is the verbal-linguistic intelligence with 2,052 tasks or 52.86%;
- (ii) Then comes visual-spatial intelligence, where we observed 1,434 tasks or 36.94%;
- (iii) Logical-mathematical intelligence is stimulated by the 297 tasks or 7.65%;
- (iv) Natural science was stimulated by 41 or 1.06%;
- (v) Personal intelligence is represented in textbooks with only three tasks (self-evaluation), and
- (vi) Interpersonal intelligence with 55 tasks or 1.42%.

We noted that all the questions analysed and tasks in the history textbooks varied the different taxonomic levels, which means that their design take into account the principle of individualised learning and differentiation, but they are less suitable for working with more able students. Of the total 14 textbooks analysed, none had more than 30% questions and tasks at the third taxonomic level.

Depending on the Piagetian characteristics of the development of thinking we found that the textbooks were poorer in reflecting students' intellectual development which, at the age of 15, should be able to carry out higher, more complex cognitive operations, abstract-logical thinking, hypothetical and deductive thinking and moral judgment. Also, textbooks encourage mostly reproductive learning and less productive learning and creative thinking (the ability of a deeper insight into learning content and solving complex problems), and metacognition learning (a critical awareness of the cognitive and learning processes). In comparison with the Slovenian textbooks, the Italian textbooks better follow the development stages (levels) of the average intellectual development of students. The best history textbook for more able students in Italian schools was 'Scenari della storia 3' for 14-15 year old students which has the most questions and tasks at the third taxonomic level where the average level of student's abstract-logical thinking, hypothetical and deductive thinking is already very well developed.

### **Analysis of English history textbooks**

In total we analysed 10 textbooks (and an additional five where questions and tasks were not included) and 1,918 questions and tasks. We noticed that the tasks were not as evenly distributed as in the Slovenian and Italian textbooks. The conclusions of the analysis of the English textbooks are as follows:

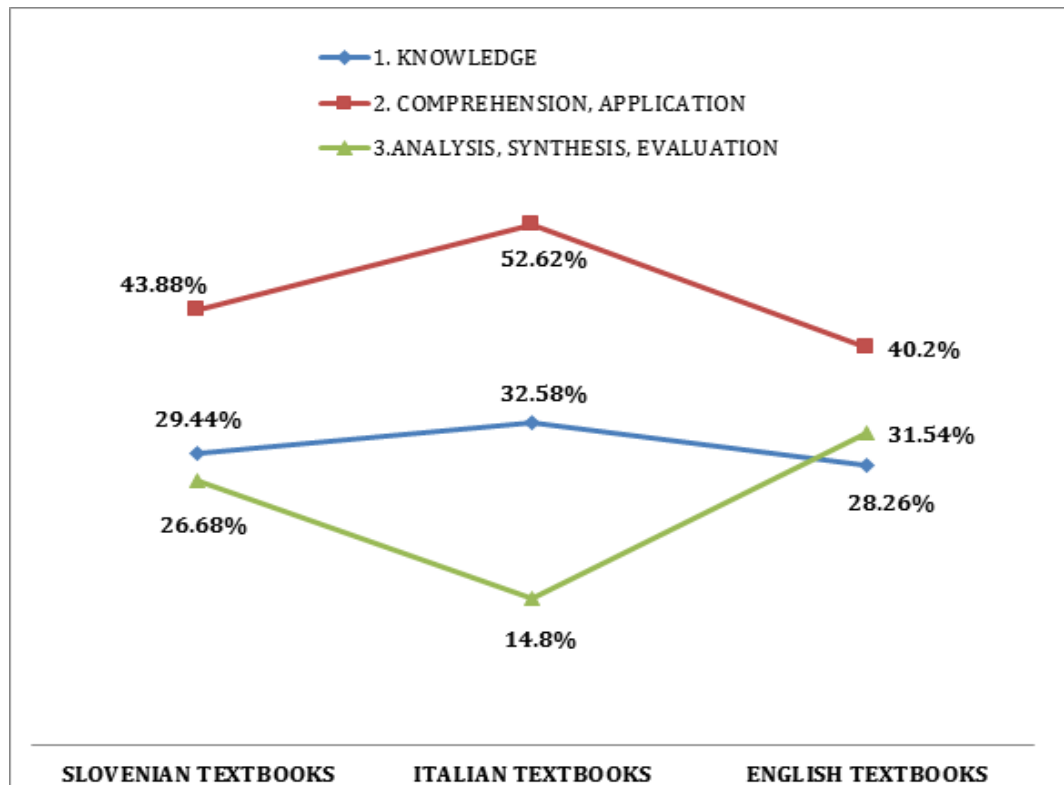


Figure 1: A comparison of questions and tasks by the three levels of the Bloom taxonomy in all analysed textbooks in Slovenia, Italy and England.

- all the English textbooks analysed have quite an uneven representation of questions and tasks based on complexity levels;
- in the design they take into account the principle of individual learning and differentiation.

The most even distribution of questions, which should be close to the distribution of 30%–35%–35%, is in the textbook 'School History Project (SHP) History - Year 8' with 17%–52%–33%). There is at least one textbook with the highest number of questions and tasks that require only knowledge compared with the minimum number of tasks at the third taxonomic level: 'GCSE Modern History', followed by 'GCSE History and The History of the World'. The best textbook for more able pupils in English schools is 'SHP History Year 9', followed by 'SHP History Year 7' and 'The Great War'.

All history textbooks contain questions at different taxonomic levels, which means that their design takes into account the principle of individual learning and differentiation. English history textbooks are mostly suitable for working with more able students, since more than six textbooks (60%) had over 30% of questions and tasks at the third taxonomic level.

An analysis of the eight types of intelligence according to Gardner, which were detected in all the analysed textbooks shows:

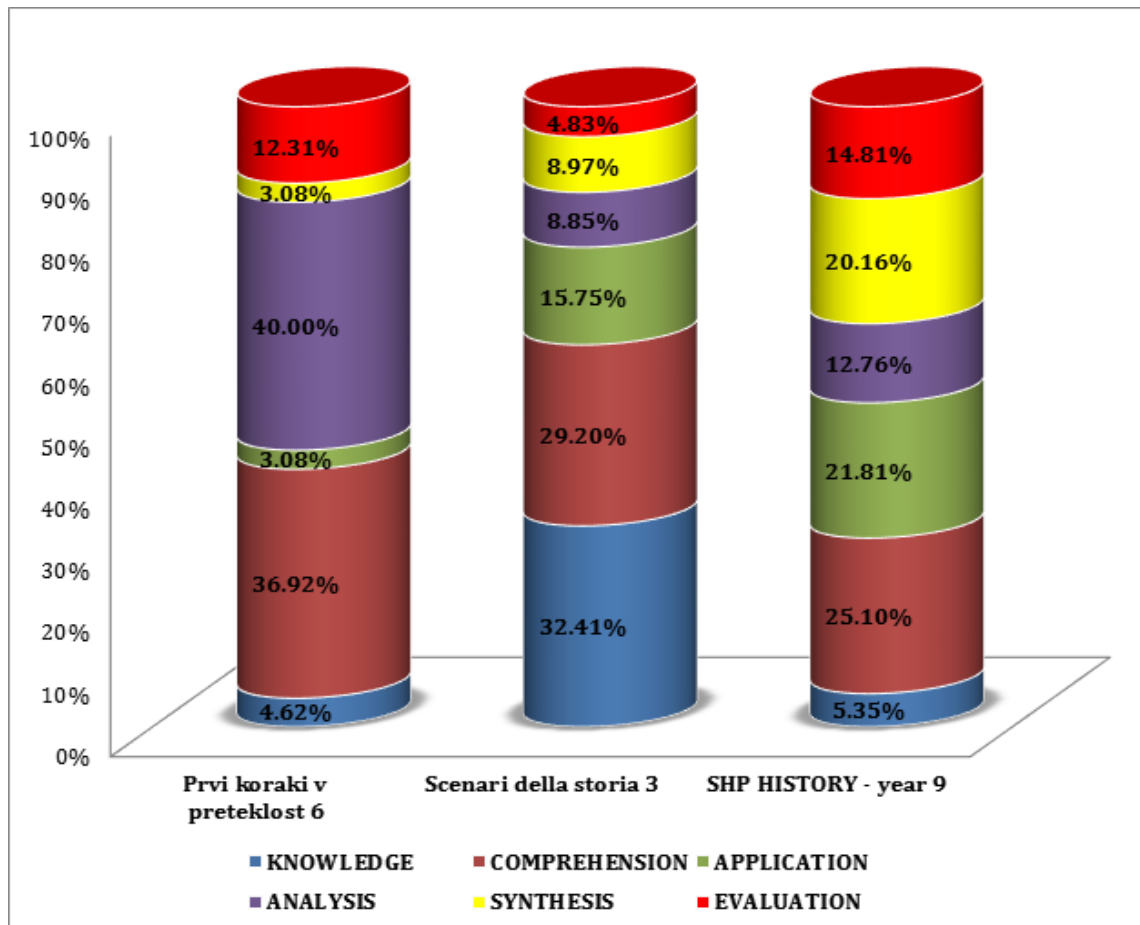


Figure 2: The most relevant textbooks in Slovenia, Italy and England, according to Bloom's taxonomy

- (i) The most commonly represented is verbal-linguistic intelligence with 447 tasks or 49.94%;
- (ii) This is followed by visual-spatial, where we identified 263 tasks or 29.38%;
- (iii) Logical-mathematical intelligence is stimulated by 119 tasks or 13.29%;
- (iv) Natural science intelligence is stimulated in 15 tasks or 1.76%;
- (v) Musical intelligence is driven by 13 tasks or 1.45%;
- (vi) Personal intelligence is represented in four tasks;
- (vii) Interpersonal
- (viii) learning can be developed with 34 tasks or 3.79%.

According to the characteristics of thinking development by Piaget, we find that the textbooks are much better at providing developmental opportunities for students at the age of 15, who are capable of higher, more complex mental operations, abstract-logical thinking, hypothetical and deductive thinking and moral judgment. The best history textbook for more able students in English schools is 'SHP History Year 9' for 13-14 year old. Also, English textbooks encourage productive learning and, in particular, creative thinking, metacognition learning (a critical awareness of the cognitive and learning processes), which is significantly correlated with the

individual's sense of efficacy and academic performance (Čotar Konrad & Kukanja Gabrijelčič, 2013).

### **International Comparison Of History Textbooks**

Figure 1 shows a comparison of questions and tasks in all textbooks analysed in Slovenia, Italy and England, a total of 44 textbooks and 11,947 questions and tasks, which were analysed according to the three level Bloom taxonomy.

At the first taxonomic level (knowledge), these questions account for 29.44% in the Slovenian textbooks. Italian textbooks have slightly more (32.58%) and the English textbooks have the fewest (28.26%).

At the second taxonomic level (comprehension and application) the most questions and tasks were in Italian textbooks (52.62%), with a significantly lower number in the Slovenian textbooks (43.88%), and slightly fewer in English textbooks (40.2%).

At the third taxonomic level (analysis, synthesis and evaluation), the most important level for more able students, we found the fewest questions and tasks in Italian textbooks (14.8%), followed by the Slovenian textbooks (26.68%) and the highest in English history textbooks (31.54%).

We find that, according to the highest number of questions and tasks at the third taxonomic level (and also the lowest number at the first taxonomic level) the best history books are in England, followed by the Slovenia. Italian textbooks stand out mainly at the second taxonomic level (comprehension and application).

Fig. 2 shows the most relevant history textbooks in Slovenia, Italy and England according to a six level Bloom taxonomy.

- At the first taxonomic level (knowledge) the Slovenian textbook 'Prvi koraki v preteklost 6' has the fewest questions (4.62%), followed by the English textbook 'History Year 9' (5.35%), and the Italian textbook 'Scenari della storia 3' with the highest number of questions (32.41%).
- At the second taxonomic level (comprehension) the English textbook has the fewest questions (25.1%), followed by Italian (29.2%) and then Slovenian textbooks (36.92%).
- The third taxonomic level (application) is the least represented in Slovenian textbooks (3.08%), followed by Italian (15.75%) and, finally, the highest number of tasks and questions that require the concrete application of knowledge appears in English textbooks (21.81%).
- At the fourth taxonomic level (analysis) the fewest tasks and questions appeared in the Italian textbooks (8.85%), followed by the English textbooks (12.76%) and a much higher percentage in Slovenian history textbooks (40%).
- The fifth taxonomic level (synthesis) was, in our analysis, the most important stage, as it develops creativity and innovation. The least developed and stimulating questions were in Slovenian history textbooks (3.08%), followed by the Italian textbooks (8.97%) and the highest number of tasks and questions that encouraged creative thinking and synthesis were to be found in English textbooks for history (20.16%). From this perspective, we can confirm that the English history textbook is best suited to more able students.



- At the sixth taxonomic level (evaluation), the fewest questions and tasks on evaluation were in the Italian textbooks (4.83%), followed by the Slovenian textbooks (12.31%) and, again, the highest number were in the English textbooks (14.81%).

According to the analysis of the questions, as presented by Bloom's taxonomy, we find that the English textbooks were more suitable for more able students, because they had the highest number of questions and tasks at the highest levels of thinking; the level of synthesis (which includes also creativity and originality) and of evaluation. Also, the latter had more differentiated questions and tasks at the most difficult level, even though the questions at the knowledge level were significantly fewer than the others.

### **Discussion**

In the analysis of history textbooks in Slovenia, Italy and England, in which we analysed a total of 44 textbooks and 11,947 questions and tasks from them, we come to the following findings (with an emphasis on domestic textbooks).

The questions and tasks in modern Slovenian history textbooks for school primarily promote encyclopedic knowledge and require the realisation of general learning objectives (of the curriculum) at lower taxonomic levels, according to Bloom's taxonomy, and do not develop enough creativity and higher mental processes.

Foreign textbooks (mainly from England) have questions and tasks much more differentiated and adapted to the varying abilities of students (with an emphasis on more able students), which encourage creativity and higher cognitive processes.

We note that, in Slovenian textbooks, the majority of authors do not follow the basic recommendations of the Council of Europe (1999) which emphasise the supreme importance of developing critical thinking, analysis and interpretation of information.

According to Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive objectives, Slovenian textbooks at a certain age stage (and between levels) have minor differences. We found that the tasks and questions in Slovenian textbooks are largely aimed at understanding and practical application of knowledge, and with only a minor emphasis on the stage of analysis, synthesis and evaluation which are the most important skills when working with gifted students. The most suitable textbooks from this point of view are English history textbooks.

The results of the questions and tasks analysis, according to Gardner's multiple intelligence framework, highlights the problem of promoting different types of intelligence, as the Slovenian textbooks for history are best represented by visual-spatial intelligence, followed by verbal-linguistic intelligence, and other types of intelligence are under-represented. The same proportions of multiple intelligence representations are found in English and Italian textbooks.

We also note that tasks and questions in Slovenian textbooks do not encourage creative thinking: the latter is negligible, in particular, the tasks that ask questions such as, 'what would have happened if ...', and are mainly oriented to convergent thinking, where all students come to the same solution to an historical problem. Divergent thinking, which is essentially creative, is not encouraged in Slovenian textbooks and is even worse in Italian textbooks: the best questions and tasks oriented to creative thinking development are in English textbooks.

The best history books for more able students are the English ones, followed by the Slovenian textbooks and then the Italian books that stand out above all in the dimensions of two taxonomic levels: comprehension and application. A selected English textbook (as the best of all analysed) is best suited to working with gifted students, since it has the highest number of questions and tasks at the most difficult, higher levels of thinking: synthesis (which can also be observed as creativity and originality), and evaluation.

Whereas the formulation and preparation of questions and tasks requires good pedagogical and psychological training, it makes sense that the authors of textbooks are connected to a project team, made up of various experts from the subject, pedagogical-psychological and other fields.

### **Conclusions**

When we talk about optimal development of the learner, we focus on all aspects of an integrated (holistic) approach to meeting their needs, desires and interests. For optimal development of able students in history, lessons focus on both cognitive and affective aspects (especially in the use of textbooks) and the possibility of individualised learning. Affective aspects were most clearly shown through analysis using different types of intelligence, where we were looking for tasks and questions that encourage personal and interpersonal intelligence (mostly self-assessment, group work and cooperative learning). In the cognitive domain, we wanted to assess personal and interpersonal intelligence through an analysis of the issues and tasks according to the selected taxonomy with examples of individual assignments (research, project work and other differentiated instruction strategies). We find that the optimal development of more able students in Slovenia in history lessons does not seem to be taken into account, because the tasks and questions do not encourage creative thinking or higher mental processes, while other activities are not intended to cater for different types of intelligence. Promoting creativity and multiple types of intelligence is best developed by English textbooks for history and at least developed in Italy.

The analysis of questions and tasks in school history textbooks, we particularly highlighted the importance of a thorough preparation of differentiated learning material for more able students. Questions and tasks in the textbooks are generally better adapted to the learning of less able students (those who are perhaps underachieving) and certainly not the more able, as most tasks and questions are applicable to the first taxonomic levels directed primarily to knowledge, understanding and application (over 72% of all tasks and questions).

Publishers and authors of teaching materials should also take into account the needs and characteristics of more able students, in particular, the different types of intelligence and higher abilities that set them apart from peers. Tasks and questions should be separately recorded in the literature on higher cognitive levels to encourage critical and creative thinking. In addition, we should strive to enrich the teaching and preparation of additional sections in history textbooks for more able students with a range of additional content, complex questions, tasks, and examples of enrichment and research activities.

Textbooks in the modern world are no longer the one and only source of information, so it is important that they also contain other content, which is crucial to learning in history lessons: the development of key competencies, learning how to learn, intercultural relations and, in particular, appropriate differentiation of content, tasks and questions which can be used when working with a heterogeneous group of students.

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17. Giudici, O., Bencini, A., 2011. *Con gli occhi della storia 1*. Il medioevo. Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A.
18. Paolucci, S., Signorini, G., 2001. *Il corso della storia 1*. Il mondo dalla preistoria alla meta' del trecento. Terza edizione. Bologna: Zanichelli.
19. Stumpo, B. E., 2010. *Scenari della storia 1*. Il medioevo. Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A.

##### *classe 2a*

20. Calvani, V., 2008. *Il colore della storia 2*. L'eta moderna e L'ottocento. Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A.
21. Giudici, O., Bencini, A., 2011. *Con gli occhi della storia 2*. L'eta moderna e L'ottocento. Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A.
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23. Stumpo, B. E., 2010. *Scenari della storia 2*. L'eta' moderna. Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A.

##### *classe 3a*

24. Calvani, V., 2008. *Il colore della storia 3*. Il novecento Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A.
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**A NEW 'OLD-FASHIONED' PRIMARY EDUCATION TEXTBOOK FOR GREECE: GOING BACKWARDS AFTER THE CONFLICT**

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**Abstract**

*The aim of this paper is to explore the historical content and teaching approach of the new 6th grade (11-12 years old) history textbook for Greek Primary Education. This textbook replaced a history textbook which had caused contention and became a topic of media debate some years ago. Despite the fact that the new textbook applies to the same history curriculum as the previous one, it signals a serious shift to a more conservative model of history teaching. The key elements of this backward movement, inherent in the new textbook's historiographical and epistemological content, are a persistent focus on the military and political history of the 19th century, with an overemphasis on the Greek War of Independence, while overlooking social and cultural history and a person-centred historical perspective. In terms of methodology it avoids an evidence-based approach and the development of students' historical skills in favour of a conventional content-based approach that employs a 'closed' historical narrative with ideologically manipulated interpretations of Greek national history.*

**Keywords**

History textbooks, Primary education, Textbook research, History learning, History conflict, Greek history

**Introduction: recent discussion about replacing history textbooks in Greece**

At the beginning of the school year 2006-2007 a series of textbooks was introduced to Greek compulsory education, including four new history textbooks for Primary Education (6-12 years old). One of them, the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade textbook of Modern and Contemporary History (Repoussi *et al.* 2006a), written by the team of Maria Repoussi, an academic and currently a member of the Greek Parliament, became an object of controversy for a variety of reasons. The textbook represented a significant attempt to introduce the principles of New History to Greek primary education and, despite its methodological and didactic innovations concerning the teaching of history (Andreou and Kasvikis, 2008), it provoked a lively public debate, predominantly as an outcome of the description and interpretation of a traumatic issue of the Greek past, the so called 'Catastrophe of Smyrna' (1922). The furor was rather immoderate and extraordinary for a textbook written to be used as a teaching tool but also quite revealing in ideological terms. It was driven by various interest groups, including the Greek Orthodox Church, the majority of the Greek political parties – or at least many of their members – with a substantial contribution by the extreme right wing and the Greek Communist party (KKE), popular journalists and 'memorial' societies (Kokkinos, 2008; Kokkinos and Gatsotis, 2008; Nakou and Apostolidou, 2010; Repoussi, 2007; Repoussi, 2009). Apart from the accusations against the writers and the textbook itself, imputed to be forcing globalization, as a danger for ethnic reasons and also as being anti-national (despite the fact that many commentators and academics eventually stressed that the textbook hadn't managed to escape from an ethnocentric approach, (cf. Andreou and Kasvikis, 2008; Kokkinos 2008), an overwhelmingly negative reaction towards New History and its innovative perspective on doing and teaching history was expressed by many intellectuals of the aforementioned critical groups, including conservative historians.

Despite the strong resistance by the Minister of Education, a member of the ruling conservative party (New Democracy), claiming that the textbook's 'correction' was a matter for the scientific community, the textbook was withdrawn soon after her replacement by another member of the same party, at the beginning of the next school year. For the next five years (2007-2012) the previous textbook (Aktypis *et al*, 1997a) was brought back into use. Simultaneously, the writing of a new textbook was assigned to Ioannis Koliopoulos, a well-known academic historian, who some years ago had also undertaken to 'replace' a Secondary Education history textbook (Kokkinos *et al*, 2002), removed in 2002, this time by the Greek Socialist Party (PASOK) (Kokkinos & Gatsotis, 2008; Repoussi, 2007, pp. 103-105). This textbook had been written by an interdisciplinary team of academics, historians, historians of art, school counsellors and Secondary teachers, under the supervision of G. Kokkinos. It was an attempt to present World and European History of the 19th and 20th century to Greek Higher Secondary Education (17-18 years old) on the basis of an ethical methodology and with a dispassionate historical perspective concerning the collective myths which had general credence and aspects of the traumatic past. A small text passage, discussing the Cypriot independence movement against British rule in the context of the broader post-war anti-colonial revolutions, annoyed the Cypriot Government which protested strongly and resulted in the textbook's immediate removal by the Minister of Education before even being in use. Nevertheless the school textbook has continued to be appreciated by the Greek Pedagogical Institute even after its rejection, being supported by critical international institutions as an example of good practice concerning history education, in instances where Greece has been accused of selective historical memory, bias, religious and cultural prejudices or ethnocentrism (Kokkinos, 2003, pp. 20 - 21). It is noteworthy that in both cases the assignment to replace the textbooks which had been withdrawn was given directly to the same author (I. Koliopoulos) instead of a new textbook competition, which is the usual practice in Greece for textbook selection and approval since 2000.

The new textbook for the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary education under discussion (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a) was finally introduced in the school year 2012-2013, after a short pilot period of implementation. Its content and didactic approach express an ultimate shift towards an old fashioned and 'traditional' perspective of teaching history for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The aim of this paper is to highlight and analyze the basic epistemological elements of this return to - literally this re-confirmation of - a conventional paradigm of history teaching and learning. Needless to say that the pedagogical and didactic approach of the new textbook is still quite dominant in the Greek educational system and assigns to history education the role of the ideological transmitter of cultural tradition and national identity, leaving to the learner the role of passive consumer of historical knowledge and to the teacher the role of the conveyor of a given and politically controlled knowledge about the past (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991).

### **The typical elements of the new textbook**

The new textbook was written by a team of four male historians, all specialising in Modern and Contemporary history<sup>1</sup>. The layout of the textbook is similar to all the other primary education history textbooks that had been introduced in 2006. What is more interesting is that it attempts to imitate its predecessor, the discredited textbook, in terms of the arrangement of its structural elements and other material in every teaching unit. However, a thorough examination reveals that these similarities are totally superficial and do not affect the very essence of its conventional approach to teaching and learning history.

Each teaching unit includes: a. *a title*, b. *an advance organizer*, c. *a large introductory visual element*, the majority of which are photos of paintings or engravings, d. *an extended historical*

*text*, e. *textual and visual historical sources*, f. *a glossary*, g. *extra informative material* (under the title 'A look at the past') and h. *final questions* at the end of each unit).

At the moment the textbook has attracted little, though quite negative, media and academic attention, accompanied by the fact that many teachers were very critical, mainly of its overly demanding language and the large amount of content to be taught. It is true that the new textbook has been extended to 238 pages whereas the previous one, having the same layout, covered 137 pages.

### The content arrangement and the 19th century domination

One important aspect concerning the new textbook is related to the ways it materialises the content prescriptions of the current *Cross-thematic Curriculum framework* of Greek Education (Ministry of Education, 2003) and how it arranges certain historical subjects considered appropriate for teaching. Table 1 shows the teaching units devoted to different periods in the three most recent 6<sup>th</sup> grade history text books. Table 2 shows the teaching units devoted to specific historical topics in the three most recent grade 6 history textbooks.

**TABLE 1.** Teaching units devoted to different time periods in the three most recent 6<sup>th</sup> grade history textbooks

Time periods	Aktypis et al 1996a (1989-2006, 2007-2012)	Repoussi et al/ 2006a (2006-2007)	Koliopoulos et al/ 2012a (2012-2013)
Introduction / Greek history over time	2 (3,90%)	-	-
15th – 18th centuries	16 (31,40%)	15 (30%)	12 (24,5%)
19th century	19 (37,25%)	19 (38%)	25 (51%)
20th century	14 (27,45%)	16 (32%)	12 (24,5%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51 (100%)</b>	<b>50 (100%)</b>	<b>49 (100%)</b>

**TABLE 2.** Teaching units devoted to certain historical topics in the three most recent 6<sup>th</sup> grade history textbooks

Historical topics	Aktypis et al 1996a (1989-2006, 2007- 2012)	Repoussi et al/ 2006a (2006-2007)	Koliopoulos et al/ 2012a (2012-2013)
European and World history	5 (9,8%)	7 (14%)	4 (8,2%)
Greek Revolution (1821-1830)	14 (27,5%)	13(26%)*	18 (36,7%)**
1950-present	4 (7,8%)	7 (14%)	3 (6,1%)

\* including the intellectual background, preparation and organizing issues, as well as aspects of everyday life, education, civil conflicts and the anonymous masses of the Revolution, in addition to a controlled presentation of the military, diplomatic and political facts.

\*\* including a thorough event-centered presentation of the Revolution with detailed military and diplomatic facts and an intensive account of the contribution of famous historical personalities.



Tables 1 & 2 depict the main content selections and variations between the three textbooks used since 1989 in the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade of Greek primary education. This comparison, based on teaching units, indicates that the writers of the new textbook diminish, omit or condense aspects of content concerning: a. the history of Greeks during the Ottoman period, b. 20<sup>th</sup> century Greek and European history and c. European and World history of the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century and in their stead promote Greek history in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which in total takes up more than half of the textbook (Table 1). A closer examination of the textbook content reveals an obsession with the Greek Revolution (1821-1830) that covers 18 of the 49 teaching units (36,7%, Table 2) concentrating fundamentally on the military aspects of the Greek struggle for independence from Ottoman rule. As a consequence, the Greek Revolution is elevated to a position which makes it by far the most important historical event in Greek history since the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

On the other hand, only 12 units out of 49 (24,5 %) are allocated to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all of which deal with the military and political aspects of the major and the most emotive moments of the Greek nation (Balkan Wars, First and Second World War, the 'Smyrna catastrophe' of 1922). Moreover, contrary to the previous textbook, only three units deal with history after the Second World War, one of which is devoted solely to the history of modern Cyprus and the Cyprus Issue (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 224-229).

European and World History is restricted to the first three units of the textbook and related to the important social, cultural and political developments of the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 10-24). Another teaching unit is devoted to the so-called Balkan crisis of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Koliopoulos *et al*. 2012a, pp. 170-173), though this is also indirectly related with Greek history in the context of emerging Balkan nationalisms. No other teaching unit wholly devoted to European or global history of the last two centuries is present with the exception of small text passages dealing with the important historical facts of Greek history that were contextualized within the broader historical situation of Europe and beyond. These include the rise of Fascism and Nazism in the interwar period (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 204-205) or other supplementary information in the section 'A look at the past' citing the Industrial Revolution, the Russian Revolution, the 1929 financial crisis, the Holocaust, the Cold War and the end of colonialism (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 156, 192, 202, 210, 221).

In general Greek history of the last five centuries defines the historical sequence and the few World and European issues included are arranged and synchronised by their correlation with the Greek past and not the other way around. This clear dichotomy between national and world history indicates that the history of the Greek nation and state is perceived and presented over and above what happened worldwide in the last five centuries and outlines to the students the singularity of the Greek past. In this light the title of the textbook (*History of the Modern and Contemporary World*) sounds rather misleading and irrelevant in terms of content. From this point of view the new textbook deviates absolutely from the imperatives of New History and current history didactics that stress the need for a historical knowledge which reconciles the local past with the national history canons and the common human experience in a supranational world for preparing citizens of the evolving global context. Needless to say that this undervaluing of World History is also a shortcoming of Greek Secondary education (Kokkinos and Gatsotis, 2007) and is related to the wider issue of incompatibility between the amount of academic attention given to new ways of conceptualizing World History and the difficulty of having these permeate through the levels of history education (Levstik, 2011, p. 118).

Due to the order of prioritization, social, economic and cultural history is attributed a lesser value as very little or no space is allotted, in the main texts, to aspects of social formation,

economic developments, ideological and social ferments, everyday life, women's history, arts and literature, the histories of childhood or labour, while some events related to the above history fields are relegated to supplementary information in the section 'A look at the past' (e.g. cooperative companies and trade caravans during the Ottoman period, everyday life during the revolution, the revival of the Olympic games the peasant uprising of Kileler, Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 46, 50, 96, 168, 184). Economic history in particular is occasional and interspersed throughout various parts of the textbook.

### **The return of the narrative and the rejection of historical enquiry**

Another important aspect of the new textbook is the way that it perceives history learning and the teaching approaches to understanding the past. A close examination of the textbook methodology indicates that it deviates from the current scholarly research and practice within history education that stresses the importance of developing historical enquiry and the necessity of using evidence in order to construct knowledge about the past in open-ended learning environments. This process addresses the students ability to formulate *historical* questions and to analyze historical evidence; to realize that history is not just a record of collected past events but rather a set of assumptions based on the available historical sources; to work towards a perspective recognition or empathetic understanding of the past; and to realize that historical evidence does not support a single correct picture of the past and that alternative interpretations can possibly be derived from a different set of questions (Dickinson and Lee, 1978; Dickinson, Lee and Rogers, 1984; Levesque, 2008; Levstik and Barton, 1997; Portal, 1987; Shemilt, 2011; Stearns, Seixas and Wineburg 2000).

Unfortunately this is not the case with the textbook under discussion. Every unit contains a basic historical text, where a version of the past is being narrated and then re-affirmed by the historical evidence, then additional informative material and the exercises provided in the workbook. These textual narrations contain many problems for students' comprehension in terms of their extent and their demanding language. In fact they appear to be more appropriate for advanced Secondary (14-15 years old) rather than 11-12 years old students, as they include quite obscure and abstract concepts, descriptions and jargon.

However this is not the only deficiency. The writers' attitude against letting students build evidence-based historical interpretations is revealed by the ways they treat historical documents. Each teaching unit contains an abundance of textual and visual historical evidence distributed between two different sections. The first section titled 'The (historical) sources narrate' (sic) includes the written sources while a series of visual material follows the section 'A look at the past'. In both cases it seems that the sources are selected to re-narrate and to re-confirm the versions and interpretations of the past given to students by the main texts and in almost no case is the method of students' historical enquiry suggested. Only at the end of each unit some final questions are posed but according to the relevant teacher's book they are aimed towards the 'understanding and consolidation of the teaching material' (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012c, p. 19). From the total of 98 questions 52 of them require students to recall the received body of facts given in the unit, with few exceptions concerning the evaluation or comparison of certain historical situations. The other 46 questions – almost one for each unit – mostly focus on the unit's textual and, more rarely, its visual evidence (only 4 times). In terms of instruction these questions are posed, literally, at the end of the teaching process after students' familiarization with certain historical topics has already been completed and consolidated, and thus too late for being challenged or examined via the sources. The majority of these final questions simply seek to confirm the already presented historical knowledge by deriving additional information, instead of developing multi-dimensional historical understanding as is suggested by history educators.

According to Chris Husbands (1996, pp. 24-25) thinking about historical evidence in relation to the historical past involves three sorts of questions that can be deployed by teachers and learners in ways which support different enquiries: questions which elicit information (accretion), reflection (judgmental) and (both divergent and convergent) understanding. The last two are not to be found in the textbook under discussion.

Another aspect of the selected sources is their very nature. The new history textbook contains 122 written sources, including 64 primary (53%) and 8 secondary documents (7%), 22 memoirs (18%), mostly of Greek Revolutionary heroes, and 27 literary texts (22%, poems, novels, folk songs). The domination of written primary sources in addition to the relatively large amount of memoirs compared with the provision of secondary sources is also a methodological problem in terms of current history education. Nevertheless it can be explained, though only by assuming that the textbook writers are trapped in the 19th century's epistemological tradition of objectivity secured through the use of authentic primary sources. In terms of history education, on the other hand, the importance of secondary sources as a history learning medium has been suggested as early as the 1970s stressing that primary sources are useless for teaching history unless students have some idea about the historical context, thus enabling them to investigate historical sources (Dickinson and Lee 1978). No contradictory documents are provided for issues of historical conflict or controversy, despite the fact that contradictory historical sources were used even in the previous textbook from the late 1980s, for example concerning the role of the Greek administrative bodies during the Ottoman Rule (Aktypis *et al*, 1997a, pp. 36-37).

The quantity and quality of the visual sources in the new textbook is quite impressive and welcomed but the illustration is rather one-sided, especially in that the units for the 19th century, which are restricted mainly to portraits of great men. In fact the role of the visual sources selected is mostly decorative and their teaching usefulness is limited in as far as there are no serious attempts to involve any of these pictures in any instructional process for understanding the past. Moreover, for the majority of the selected illustrations the information given is incomplete and confined mostly to the collection to which it belongs and the subject (theme) of the picture, while many times information on the medium of the artwork and the artists are missing, with the – not unpredictable – exception of the paintings which are included in the teaching units devoted to the Greek Revolution. According to the above analysis historical documents, both textual and visual, are used more as an apparatus for the textbook's narrative rather than to support historical enquiry.

The divergence from an evidence-based approach in the new textbook is also confirmed by examining the exercises and activities included in the related workbook (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012b). The comparison between the three recent textbooks from 1989 onwards (Table 3) reaffirms the reluctance of the textbook's authors to meet the challenges of a classroom history for the 21st century. According to the data a thorough emphasis is given in the new textbook to exercises and activities which require a recall of historical knowledge (61%), including work assignments recalling historical facts and/or reproducing the main historical narrative of the textbook. Strangely enough a search of historical information from out-of-school resources (encyclopedias, internet) represents the second most frequent type of exercise (19%). On the other hand, activities of historical enquiry and evidence analysis are very limited (7%), which is indicative of the textbooks' didactical approach. This conservative approach to learning history is also revealed by the absence of any workbook activity relating to empathy, local history research or the production of oral or written historical accounts.

**TABLE 3.** Exercises and activities in the three most recent history workbooks for 6th Grade

Exercises and activities	Aktypis et al 1996b (1989-2006, 2007-2012)		Repoussi et al 2006b (2006-2007)		Koliopoulos et al 2012b (2012-2014)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Understanding content knowledge (propositional knowledge)	125	50%	24	19,5%	52	61%
Historical enquiry (procedural knowledge)	38	15%	32	26%	6	7,%
Using textbook's educational material (information texts, maps, representations)	13	5%	6	5%	-	-
Understanding of historical concepts (conceptual knowledge)	21	8%	4	3%	2	2,5%
Creativity (painting, constructions)	3	1,5%	1	1%	-	-
Local history enquiry	14	5,5%	16	13%	-	-
Interpretation / expression of personal views / discussion	17	7%	4	3%	4	4,7%
Empathy / rational understanding	2	1%	-	-	-	-
Identifying of past - present relationships	8	3%	9	7,5%	4	4,7%
Production of oral or written academic specific language (historical)	4	1,5%	10	8%	-	-
Production of oral or written academic language	2	1,00%	3	2,50%	-	-
Gathering of historical information from out-of-school resources	1	0,50%	3	2,50%	16	19%
Other	2	1,00%	11	9,00%	1	1,1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100%</b>

According to the above analysis the new textbook favours a content-based approach and outlines a 'closed' historical narrative which is to be transmitted to students. Current research in history education suggests a movement towards history textbooks that employ 'open' narratives, based on the textbook's multimodal content (texts, documents, images, pictures, charts, graphics, colours), which do not offer students fixed answers but rather encourage historical enquiry skills and supports students constructing their own historical accounts (Repoussi and Tutiaux-Guillon, 2010, p. 164). In our case the examination of the author's main texts, the combination of documents and the exercises discussed above suggest that the new textbook constructs a 'fixed' narrative that embodies the one and only true picture of the Greek past. Moreover, this narrative, so descriptive and detailed, also carries the danger of transforming a history lesson into a language one, when for example urging students to write essays on the value of the death – always referred to as 'sacrifice' – of important historical figures of the Greek Revolution and the 'Macedonian Struggle' (Koliopoulos et al 2012a, pp. 113, 181). In this way an outdated version of cultivating moral values through school history is supported.

Research on the teaching and learning of history underlines the benefits of using narratives as a vehicle for learning history – for example in textbooks – as they provide consistency and interconnections between historical events and help students to memorise and make sense of the features of the past. On the other hand, it also stresses that narratives create difficulties and limitations for developing historical understanding: students do not easily perceive the historical narratives in textbooks as intentional and structured historical products based on evidence, nor do they encounter them as mediations between past and present, but rather as accurate depictions of the past (Barton and Levstik, 2004, pp. 132-137).

### **Interpretations, ideology and the uses of the past**

So, what types of historical narratives are provided to students that are considered so important as not to be challenged, according to the textbook's methodological approach described above? The dominant approaches can be summarized to the following:

A devaluation of the national and cultural 'Others', unless they are related to the Western world. This attitude is particularly evident for the Ottomans /Turks, always considered as the perpetual enemy of the Greek nation in conservative historiography and history education (Xochellis and Toloudi, 2001). The instability of naming the ruling people of the Ottoman period as 'Ottomans', 'Ottoman Turks' and most of the time simply as 'Turks', even within the same teaching unit (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 62-63), is supplemented in the textbook under discussion with several other disparaging references and images and the blatant examples of two primary sources (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 30, 34) concerning the violence of the Ottoman ruling class and the Ottomans themselves. In general, the textbooks' historiographical perspective of adhering only to the periods of conflict and neglecting times of peace and coexistence between peoples and nations contributes to the shaping of negative stereotypes mostly for the Ottomans, the Bulgarians, and also to a lesser extend the Latins.

National myths are dubiously handled, namely the so-called 'Secret School' and the Declaration of the Greek Revolution in Agia Lavra (1821). In the first case, while a whole unit is dedicated to the presentation of Greek education and to aspects of Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment in the Ottoman period, in the section 'A look at the past' the issue of the 'Secret School' is explained as an imprinting of the national collective consciousness, without addressing the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the ideological imperatives which influenced the creation of the myth. In the second case, while the typical national myth of the declaration of the Greek Revolution in the Monastery of Agia Lavra is avoided, it is replaced by contradictory visual and textual versions of the declaration of Revolution in Patra, thus maintaining the essence of the myth which is the unreserved participation of the clergy in the revolution and its blessing by the Greek Church (Koliopoulos *et al* 2012a, 82-83). Strangely enough the so-called 'Dance of Zalongo', the heroic event of a mass suicide of women to avoid enslavement (1803), the historical veracity of which has recently created another public controversy in the country, is not mentioned, despite the fact that the textbook devotes a whole unit to the related event of the war between the people of Souli and Ali-Pasha, the Ottoman-Albanian ruler of Epirus (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 66-69).

There is a conscious attempt of to ideologise important political or social historical facts and their consequences. A striking example is the irrational equation of the very different and traumatic events of the 1940s in Greece, (the German occupation, the Greek resistance 1941-1944 and the Greek civil war of 1945-1949), which are unified into just one teaching unit with the very emotional title 'A decade of struggle and sacrifice for freedom' (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, pp. 212-217). Equally problematic, even distorted in some of its details, is the presentation of the undemocratic regimes in Greece such as the dictatorship of Metaxas

(1936-1941) and the military junta (1967-1974), both neutralizing their social and ideological context and lacking discussion of their impacts on the Greek society (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, p. 201).

The presentation of females is degraded and confined to a few references and pictures of heroines, queens and politicians. No detailed reference is made to women's life and their role before and after the emancipation movements and the granting of rights in Greece and beyond, with the exception of one mention in the section 'A look at the past' (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, p 188).

There is a little mention or concealment of certain aspects of Greek history (military failures, political or civil conflicts, social and political movements, political assassinations) which are considered negative, so as to build a historical narrative of national concord and consensus through the ages without any social or ideological ruptures. This is achieved by omitting or misrepresenting political and military events with certain ideological connotations and without their social implications and backgrounds, sometimes simply as personal differences, in order not to challenge a sense of national consensus along the course of the unbroken national history. The case of the strong political tensions and the civil war during the Greek Revolution is an indicative example of a historical event extensively described in previous history textbooks (Aktypis *et al*, 1996a, pp. 117, 121, 123; Repoussi *et al*, 2006a, pp. 52-53; Kafentzis 1974, pp. 77-78) though only afforded a few words in the section 'A look at the past' in the new one (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012a, p 116).

This book is an event-centered and person-centered history that focuses, as already mentioned, on the important military and political events of Greek history. This historiographical perspective, concerned with the great figures of history and their deeds, is also highlighted in the titles of many teaching units and depicted through a great amount of visual material (mainly portraits). However, this emphasis on individual agency results in the underestimation or ignoring of the historical role of the collective or institutional agency and the neglect of other social categories and processes as forces of historical change, such as the ordinary people (history from below), masses, the working class, population movements, trade unions, social movements, local communities, and political parties (Burke, 1991, pp. 4, 16-18; Hobsbawm 1997).

As can be inferred from the above, the historical narratives of the new textbook are ideologically manipulated and conform to a nation-centered perspective of the past, aided by the typical chronological history curriculum. Additionally, in terms of historiography the authors seem to balance between a slightly modern and a more conservative paradigm, though the latter dominates. In these terms they adopt an explicitly traditional historiographical approach in their basic texts, having as an alibi the section 'A look at the past' where a set of modern historical topics are incorporated. This historiographical balancing is also particularly revealing when considering the case of the authors uncertainty when it comes to naming the period of Ottoman rule, referred either as the 'Ottoman Period' or else as the 'Turkish Occupation' countless times through the textbook (e.g. Koliopoulos, *et al* 2012a, p. 29).

## Discussion

The new 6th Grade history textbook for Greek Primary Education adapts to the requirements of the same history curriculum as the one which was previously withdrawn, (content standards, aims and objectives) and both of them share the same design and structure. Despite these similarities they are hugely different in how they conceptualize history learning and teaching, a contrast based on the historiographical and epistemological frameworks of academic history

and history didactics of their authors and of those who control the production and approval of textbooks in Greece (Repoussi and Tutiaux-Guillon, 2010, p. 157).

In our opinion the textbook under discussion represents an outmoded and conventional didactical approach in terms of aims, content and applied methodology for history learning in Primary Education. Concerning education goals, history as a school subject, from its very beginning, has served a variety of aims and purposes, ranging from the traditional 19th century promotion of national identity and development of moral values, in the context of the emerging nation states, to the more recent goals of promoting disciplinary 'ways of historical knowing' and preparing well-informed, rational and democratic citizens (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Lee, 2004; Rüsen, 2004). History education has also been enriched in terms of content, including economic and social history and the many themes and perspectives of new historic genres that emerged in the context of New History, covering virtually every human activity, such as cultural practices, mentalities, ideas, structures, environment, and everyday life, among many others (Burke, 1991, pp. 2-4; Le Goff and Nora, 1985). Thus it no longer relies mainly on the political and military history of the great men found in conventional school history. Finally, in terms of pedagogical approaches and teaching methods, the promotion of a constructivist learning environment that encourages enquiry-based instruction and the development of historical thinking via the use of evidence is a (not so) new challenge for history teaching compared with the typical chalk and talk and regurgitation of a body of received facts (Aldrich, 1984; Barton and Levstik, 2004; Husbands, 1996; Kokkinos, 2003).

Contrary to the above, according to our analysis, the new textbook encourages a history teaching that favours an event-centred and person-centred historiographical perspective which praises the significant political and military events of the nation and pays little heed to other aspects of the past. Additionally, the new textbook employs a content-based approach of history teaching which requires students to recall an accumulation of received information, based on the textbook's narratives and interpretation of the past and underestimating students' development of historical skills and their engagement with evidence-based interpretations. Naturally the didactical view identified in the new history textbook is ideal for achieving the goals of constructing national identity rather than of developing a critical historical consciousness (Rüsen, 2004; Rüsen, 2005) and this appears to also be the authors' conviction when stressing in the relevant teacher's book, the crucial role of history as a subject in shaping national and social consciousness ...' (Koliopoulos *et al*, 2012c, p. 13).

This return to a more conservative paradigm of history teaching and learning both in historiographical and epistemological terms, as it is mirrored in the current history textbook, is aligned to the existing introverted and self-reverential perception of Greek society in relation to its past, evident in many different official and vernacular discourses found in the public sphere and undoubtedly in the recent debates concerning history and history textbooks. In other words this textbook is a sign of the (Greek) times.

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*“BE WELCOME IN YOUR COUNTRY MY LORDS” THE STORY OF QUETZALCOATL AND THE SPANISH GODS IN TEXTBOOKS AS A SPANISH CONSTRUCTION TO JUSTIFY THE CONQUEST*

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### **Abstract**

*German and Austrian textbooks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century explain the outcome of the Spanish Conquest through painting a picture of superior Europeans linked to the ‘Cortés as Quetzalcóatl the god’ narrative. The Aztecs are said to have believed that Cortés was the returning god Quetzalcóatl and accordingly surrendered their empire voluntarily to the Spaniards. Nevertheless, academic studies indicate that there is no proof that indigenous people waited for the return of a god called Quetzalcóatl before the Spanish Conquest. The story as found in textbooks today is a Spanish construction by Cortés and Spanish writers of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to justify his conquest and colonisation policy and related political activity.*

### **Keywords**

Aztecs, Cortés, Historical thinking, Imperialism, Incas, Mesoamerica, Moctezuma, Myth, Spanish as gods, Spanish Conquest, Textbooks

### **Introduction**

‘... now you have arrived at your country ... come to your country, come and rest. Take possession of your palaces ... Be welcome in your country my lords!’ (Christoffer, Heimbach & Höfer, 2006, p. 215).

According to this German textbook, this is what the Aztec ruler Moctezuma said to the Spanish conqueror Hernán Cortés when they met. Conforming to a so-called ‘vision of the vanquished’, Aztecs believed in the divinity of the Spaniards and thought that Cortés was a long awaited returning god named Quetzalcóatl. That is why the Indians surrendered their empire voluntarily to the Spaniards. This story is present in many commonly used textbooks from Austria and various German states in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as shown in a study published by the Georg-Eckert-Institut for International Textbook Research (Bernhard, 2013, pp. 111-156). In this article this narrative will be deconstructed. It will be argued that the story of the Spanish gods as presented in history textbooks is not an indigenous vision of the Conquest, but rather the version of Hernán Cortés himself that was adopted and expanded later by Spanish clergymen in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In conclusion, the article outlines how the Spanish Conquest narratives in textbooks can be used in classrooms in order to develop critical historical thinking and a more considered historical consciousness among pupils.

### **The Spanish Conquest in textbooks**

A few Spaniards against millions of Aztecs: ‘How could such a small force conquer a huge warrior empire?’ (Spielvogel, 2006, p. 596). This is the question textbooks all over the world try to answer in respect of the Spanish Conquest of the Aztec empire. The question is also frequently asked by scholars and by teachers who have to present the topic to their pupils, and at first glance there seems to be no satisfactory answer. In many German and Austrian

textbooks from the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century<sup>1</sup> this question is answered with a story that conveys two stereotypes – strong, superior Europeans and weak, passive Aztecs. The Conquest is described as a crushing victory of a few hundred superior Spaniards over millions of abject and mute Aztecs (Bernhard 2013:130-146). In textbooks this is depicted in the following way concerning the conquest of the Aztec empire:

With 500 men, 14 cannons and 16 horses Cortés set out for Tenochtitlan in the highlands of Mexico.’ (Christoffer, Heimbach and Höfer 2006, p. 214) With this small force he was able to defeat 25 million Aztecs (ibid p. 217).<sup>2</sup>

The textbook states that there are 50,000 times as many Aztecs as there are Spaniards. Nevertheless the Europeans won the war. The presentation of the conquest of the Inca Empire is similar.

Nothing prevented them [the Spaniards] from advancing, neither the lack of knowledge of the vast lands nor the jungle and high mountains, cold and heat, hunger and other deprivations. (Brückner, 2004, p. 35)

Sometimes the Spaniards are explicitly presented as unbeatable supermen.

When Pizarro set out to conquer Peru, his forces consisted of 189 men and 27 horses. ... About 3,000 men attacked, a wild and howling mass of bodies [eine wild heulende Masse von Leibern]. But despite their numerical superiority, they were able to do hardly any harm to the Spaniards ... Also it was very easy [for the Spaniards] to chop the naked bodies of their enemies into pieces. (Lendzian & Mattes, 2005, p.158)

The text continues.

Surprised and frightened by the thunder of the cannons and the banging of the muskets, the Indians thought not of resistance, but only sought to escape ... Celso Gargia relates that about 12,000 Indians lost their lives in less than an hour, whereas there were no casualties among the Spaniards. (Lendzian & Mattes, 2005, p. 159)

The superiority of the Europeans is one element of the heroic saga of how a handful of Spaniards conquered the Aztec and Inca empires. Another element of the narrative in textbooks about how the Spanish victory over the Aztecs was possible is the story that the Aztecs believed the Spaniards to be divine and Cortés to be the indigenous god Quetzalcóatl, whose return from the East allegedly had been prophesied for the year 1519. A German textbook states:

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1 This study is based on a doctoral thesis and takes into account the six most widely used secondary school history textbooks in Austria (according to a communication to the author by the Austrian Ministry of Education on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September of 2009) in which the history of the Conquest is conveyed. In addition, eight textbooks published by major publishing houses and in common use in various German states were also examined; these widely used German textbooks were provided to the author during a research visit at the Institute of International Textbook Research in Braunschweig in 2009.

2 In older publications scientists estimated the number of inhabitants of pre-Spanish Mexico to be 25 million. Nowadays this number seems to be unrealistic. Historian Renate Pieper declined to use the traditional number of 25 million as early as 1994 in the Handbook for the History of Latin America – unfortunately with little effect on textbook writing (Pieper 1994:317).

The Aztec priests have prophesied that Quetzalcóatl would return in the first year of the age of the reed. According to a European calendar this would happen in the year 1519. (Christoffer, Heimbach & Höfer 2006, p. 214)

In another textbook this story is expanded:

This god ... fled long ago towards the East and over the sea. The Aztecs believed that one day he would return as a punishing sovereign. White messengers would announce his coming – this faith became the destiny of the Aztecs. In 1519 Moctezuma was told that white men had landed on the coast. The message spread very quickly that the gods had returned, and so the power of the Aztecs to fight and to resist was paralyzed right at the beginning. Thus, Cortés, with his 11 ships, 508 soldiers, 16 horses and 11 cannons, was able to land without hindrance on the Mexican coast. (Bernlochner, Gigl & Kalks 2004, p. 129)

In 1519 Cortés and his men arrived in Mexico and started their undertaking. The quotation above may make it seem to pupils that the arrival of the Spaniards was prophesied in a supernatural way. Otherwise it would be an incredible coincidence that Cortés, who happened to be a bearded and white Spaniard, arrived in 1519 in exact concordance with the Aztec belief in the return of a bearded white god in 1519, as current textbooks relate:

And actually the arriving Spaniards looked like the picture the Aztecs had made themselves of their god Quetzalcoatl: he had white skin and a beard.” (Tatsch & Regenhardt 2006, p. 180).

It is only said in textbooks that this prediction frightened the great leader of the Aztecs, Moctezuma, leading him to act irrationally. Thus, when Cortés and Moctezuma met, the Indian leader surrendered his empire voluntarily to the Spaniards (Christoffer, Heimbach & Höfer, 2006, p. 215).

The lord of millions of Aztecs and other Mesoamerican tribes, whose policies had brought the Aztec Empire to the height of its expansion, is said to have given his possessions trembling and shaking to the supposed Spanish gods. In reality, Moctezuma was not so much afraid of the Spaniards (Hinz 2005, pp. 251-255) as he was of the thousands of indigenous Mesoamericans who were ready to fight together with Cortés in order to overcome the lordship of the Aztecs. Neither fear of the strong Spaniards nor the belief that they were gods was the reason why Moctezuma didn't destroy Cortés and his small force right away, but rather fear of the “Indian conquistadors” (Matthew & Oudjik, 2007). The Spanish historian of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Lopez de Gómara put it this way:

Another reason was that he [Moctezuma] did not wish to stir up trouble for himself (and this was the truest reason), for it was clear that he would immediately have to face an uprising among the Otomí, the Tlaxcalans, and many others, who would be all for destroying the Mexicans [Aztecs]. So he decided to let Cortés enter Mexico without opposition, thinking to do as he pleased with those scanty forces afterward, and even have them served up for breakfast if they should annoy him. (Simpson, 1964, p. 134)

When the significance of the Indian allies of Cortés is not acknowledged, the history of the Spanish Conquest cannot be explained without creating either a Spanish heroic saga or a supernatural story containing prophesies of expected Spanish gods.

### **Deconstructing the narrative of Quetzalcóatl and the Spanish gods Sahagún and the Vision of the Vanquished**

The story about the Mesoamericans who believed the Spaniards to be gods and Cortés to be the returning god Quetzalcóatl is widely considered to be an authentic indigenous version of the Spanish Conquest. Textbooks refer to Miguel León-Portilla's book *Visión de los Vencidos* (León-Portilla, 1959), in which the author says he offers a version of the Spanish Conquest from the perspective of the natives based on his claim that the book contains genuine Indian narratives of the Spanish Conquest that thus attenuate the Eurocentric perspective in textbooks. Textbook authors included these accounts into their books probably based on the motivation of not only presenting Spanish histories but also giving space to 'the voices' of the indigenous Mesoamericans that had long been neglected in historical writing. Nevertheless, if we look more closely at the so called 'vision of the vanquished', it becomes obvious that this story consists not of Indian voices but rather of the voice of the conqueror Hernán Cortés himself, which was further developed by the Spanish writer Bernardino de Sahagún during the sixteenth century (Ballán, 1991; Litterscheid, 1989)

The version of the story as it is presented today in textbooks can be traced back to Bernardino de Sahagún, a Spanish friar who in the second half of the sixteenth century wrote a *Historia General de las Cosas de la Nueva España* in the Indian language Nahuatl – also known as the *Codex Florentinus*. Sahagún took up a story, originally told by Cortés, about his encounter with Moctezuma and connected it with accounts of indigenous people whom he had interviewed. Sahagún belonged to a group of friars responsible for the conservation of much knowledge about the indigenous culture and pre-Columbian past. After Sahagún had studied at the University of Salamanca, he arrived in New Spain in 1529. There, in 1536, a group of friars founded the *Real Colegio de Santa Cruz* for the sons of indigenous nobles in Tlatelolco (*Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco*). This was the first European school of higher education in the Americas. Soon Sahagún learned to speak the Indian language, Nahuatl (Arellano Hoffmann and Schmidt, 1998, p. 348).

Between 1558 and 1560, i.e. 37 to 39 years after the Spanish Conquest, Sahagún gathered a few notable residents of the city of Tepepulco and asked them to name indigenous persons with whom he could talk in order to get more information about the conquest period and the time before the arrival of the Spaniards (Todorov 1985, p. 256). Sahagún was given a list of old men, and he made contact with them. In the course of a few years he interviewed them - in the meantime mostly Christianized - natives and asked them about their culture and past. A few of these men reported to Sahagún (about 40 years after the conquest) that the arriving Spaniards were believed to have been gods by them or by their parents and that Cortés was seen as the returning god Quetzalcóatl. Together with pupils of the colegio in Tlatelolco he wrote the *Historia* up to the end of the 1560s and published the accounts in Nahuatl (Arellano Hoffmann & Schmidt, 1998, pp. 349-350). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Sahagún was enthusiastically called the 'first anthropologist of Latin America' and 'precursor of ethnography' (Vicente Castro & Rodríguez Molinero, 1986; Ballán, 1991) whose work is said to have preserved authentic Indian accounts about their cultural environment and history.

The *Codex Florentinus* talks about the so called 'Omen of the Conquest' – signs that allegedly preceded the arrival of the Spaniards. Sahagún tells us that years before the arrival of the Spaniards the destruction of the Aztecs had been foretold. When the Spaniards came to Mexico – according to Sahagún – Moctezuma held council with the elders of his people and said:

It is our ruler Quetzalcoatl who has come, because it was his will that he would return, that he would come to ascend to the throne (Litterscheid, 1989, p. 246).

Moctezuma prepared precious presents and had them brought to the Spaniards by messengers whom he told:

... pray to our lord god, tell him that you were sent by his vassal Moctezuma. Here is what he gives to you because god has arrived in his homeland, in Mexico (Litterscheid, 1989, p. 248).

When the Spaniards fired their cannon, the Aztec messengers to Cortes became 'weak of heart and unconscious'. In the meanwhile Moctezuma could not sleep, he didn't eat or talk, but, exhausted and depressed, he appeared full of 'fear of death' (Litterscheid 1989, p. 250). When the messengers to Cortes returned and reported to Moctezuma about their experiences, the Indian leader nearly fainted, 'he was very afflicted and in great fear; (Litterscheid 1989, p. 252). Thus, when Cortés and Moctezuma met, according to the version of Sahagún, Moctezuma surrendered his empire to the Spaniards with the above cited comment that has found its way into so many textbooks: '... now you have arrived at your country ...' (Christoffer, Heimbach & Höfer, 2006, p. 215).

**It must be taken into consideration that this narrative, which sounds so implausible, is the basis for all the textbook accounts that claim that Cortés was considered to be Quetzalcóatl.**

Due to the increased availability of primary sources written by Spaniards and Native Americans in the colonial period, historians have now gained a far more complex and sophisticated understanding of the history of the Spanish Conquest. In recent decades many newly found indigenous and Spanish sources have been analysed. Historians have asked the question as to whether there is evidence in sources for the narrative of the Spanish gods. In this respect, a study by Susan Gillespie was able to prove that, before Sahagún, the Cortés-Quetzalcóatl connection cannot be found in any indigenous Nahuatl source. She analysed all relevant sources of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and came to the conclusion that the story of Cortés as the Indian god Quetzalcóatl is not traceable to any source written without the influence of the Spaniards (Gillespie, 1989, pp. 197-98). In an article with the self-explanatory title "Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico" (Townsend, 2003a) Camilla Townsend argues that there is no solid proof that - prior to the Conquest - there was a Mexican story of Quetzalcóatl in which he was supposed to return from the East.

Likewise, the anthropologist and specialist of Aztec history Ross Hassing claims that the traditional narrative about Cortés and Quetzalcóatl was developed after the Conquest (Hassing, 1995, p. 242). The ethno historian James Lockhart, who extensively researched the history of indigenous languages, comes to the same conclusion (Lockhart, 1993, p. 19).

Quetzalcóatl as we know him is very likely to be a Spanish-Christian construction. In this respect it is noticeable that Quetzalcóatl corresponds to Christian conceptions of God. For example, he is said to have been adored as the only god by the inhabitants of Tollan (Christian monotheism), and he was gentle and did not demand human sacrifice (Prem, 2007, p. 17). Furthermore the story of the return of a god who had gone away recalls the expectation of the second coming of Christ by Christians. A possible origin of the idea that 'heathens' - as the Mesoamericans were seen by the Spaniards - considered the Europeans to be gods can be found in the Bible. In the Acts of the Apostles it is said that Paul and Barnabas were

believed to be the gods Zeus and Hermes by the inhabitants of Lystra (Acts of the Apostles 14, 8-18). Moreover Fernández-Armesto notes that the omens that are said to have preceded the Conquest are very similar to omens in Greek and Latin texts that are known to have been available to Sahagún's students (Armesto, 1992, pp. 287-305). Thus, the Princeton anthropologist Gananath Obeyesekere argues that the apotheosis of European sailors is, generally speaking, a typical topos of the history of European expansion that was exploited to justify European colonial dominance over indigenous peoples:

I doubt that the natives created their European god; the Europeans created him for them. This 'European god' is a myth of Conquest, imperialism, and civilization. (Obeyesekere, 1992, p. 3)

The story of the divinity of white conquerors stresses their singularity and their superior wisdom and power, a problem that is also pointed out by Restall:

The Spaniards-as-god myth makes sense only if natives are assumed to be 'primitive,' childlike, or half-witted. (Restall, 2004, p. 120) But '[...] there was no apotheosis, no 'belief that the Spaniards are gods', and no resulting native paralysis.' (ibid, p. 108)

In recent years, the majority of modern scholars of Mesoamerica consider the Cortés-as-Quetzalcóatl narrative to be one of many myths about the Spanish Conquest that arose after the arrival of the Spaniards (Hinz, 2013; Matthew & Oudijk, 2007; Hassing, 2006; Townsend, 2003; Townsend, 2003a; Schwartz, 2000; Pietschmann, 1998; Lockhart, 1993 among many others). And in fact, it is difficult to argue that a book written by a Spanish priest together with Christianized Indians after the conquest presents an indigenous version of it, when there is no proof that this version exists in any source written without Spanish influence. The story about the omen preceding the Spanish Conquest is very likely to have arisen from the desire to explain the happenings in a supernatural way by both Spaniards and Indians subsequently.

How the story of a returning lord was originally told by Cortés and how this story justified his conquest of Mexico and saved his life will be shown in the following section.

### **The narrative of the Spanish gods as meaningful story**

The myth of the Spanish gods has its origin in a letter written by the conqueror of Mexico, Hernán Cortés, to Emperor Charles V as early as 1520. In this respect it is important to know that the Conquest of Mexico had been authorized by neither the Spanish Crown nor by Cortés' superior, Governor Diego Velasquez of Cuba, as it is misleadingly suggested in textbooks (for example in Schröckenfuchs & Huber, 2004, p. 30). An internationally renowned academic historian of Spanish imperial history corrects this inaccurate textbook interpretation:

The governor of Cuba had specifically ordered that the expedition was to be an expedition for trade and exploration. He did not authorize Cortés to conquer or to settle." (Elliot, 2007, p. 4).

Nevertheless Cortés, together with thousands of indigenous allies, conquered the whole Aztec Empire within two years. That is why he was accused of insubordination and, if he had been found guilty, would probably have been executed. Thus Cortés' situation in Mexico was very critical until he had an idea that literally saved his life. He needed to construct a voluntary submission of the Aztec empire to Spanish rule before the conquest took place in order to justify



the war against the Aztecs as an abatement of an Indian rebellion. Subsequently Cortés wrote a letter to the Spanish king, Charles V, according to which Moctezuma had told Cortés the following story about the Indian expectation of a returning lord:

We have known for a long time, from the chronicles of our forefathers, that neither I, nor those who inhabit this country, are descendants from the aborigines of it, but from strangers who came to it from very distant parts (MacNutt, 1908, p. 234).

According to Cortés' letter, a ruler brought the Aztecs into the territory and then left. Cortés wrote to the king that the Aztecs believed that Charles V was their 'señor natural':

... and according to the direction from which you say you come, which is where the sun rises, and from what you tell us of your great lord, or king, who has sent you here [Charles V], we believe and hold for certain that he is our rightful sovereign, especially as you tell us that for many days he has had news of us. (MacNutt, 1908, p. 235)

After this, Moctezuma is said to have promised obedience and to have surrendered all his power and authority to the Spanish king '... because you will be obeyed, and recognized, and all we possess is at your disposal' (MacNutt, 1908, p. 235). It is very probable that Charles V liked this version of the story. For Cortés it was meaningful that the Aztec Empire was already under Spanish sovereignty before he used his arms to fight the Indians. In this way, nobody could accuse Cortés of having been disobedient to Charles V because, according to the version of Cortés, he did not start the hostilities. This letter of Cortés is the basis for all later narratives that talk about the expected return of a white lord or god and also inspired the *Historia* of Sahagún, even though Cortés in his letter did not claim directly that he was believed to be a god.

These stories were meaningful not only to Cortés. The story about the omens that preceded the Spanish Conquest could be taken as an explanation of what happened in Mexico, by both Indians and Spaniards, after the war. Leading Aztecs could put into perspective their responsibility for what had happened. If the destruction of the Aztecs had been foretold, then the responsibility for the loss of Aztec influence did not belong to the Aztec elite – it was just part of a supernatural plan. Also, some Spaniards regarded the omens as a divine legitimation of the policy of conquest and colonization. Some Spaniards believed that the Apostle Thomas had visited Mexico before the Conquest and foretold the arrival of the Spaniards and that this Apostle is named Quetzalcóatl in the Indian accounts. This story had significance for the building of a Mexican identity, especially among creoles (Lafaye, 1976, p. 177).

### **Decisive factors of the Conquest**

When textbook authors try to explain the outcome of the Conquest, they often either refer to the story of the Spanish gods and the passivity of the indigenous peoples, or they argue the superiority of the Europeans. But the decisive factors are, generally speaking, only taken into account rudimentarily. Here is not the place to treat this topic in detail – much has been written in this respect. To sum up the discussion: one decisive factor was, as already mentioned, the indigenous disaffected tribes alliance with the Spaniards, who outnumbered the Spaniards many times over. There was no unity among the Aztec subjects of its Mexican Empire. Many different peoples that the Aztecs had conquered lived in Mesoamerica, fighting for hegemony. Thus, different indigenous peoples joined forces with Cortés, and so nowadays historians say that during the Conquest '[...] the Indian allies, not the Spaniards, were in control.' (Hassing, 2006, p.174) Cortés won with a few hundred Spaniards, as stated in textbooks, but the 'pivotal

role had been played by his 200,000 Indian allies' (Hassing, 2006, p. 175). The participation of native tribes, Spanish allies, in the conquest, which has so long been neglected in historical teaching, was in recent years studied intensively, and it was shown convincingly that 'the extensive roles of indigenous allies in the Spanish Conquest' makes 'a reevaluation of the Conquest period necessary' (Oudjik & Restall 2007, p. 56). This discussion is summed up in the book *Indian Conquistadors, Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica*, (Matthew and Oudjik, 2007). From an Indian perspective the Conquest was rather a native civil war that was utilized by the Spaniards and resulted in an incomplete Spanish domination. This perspective is found in native sources (Restall, 2003, p. 46). Susan Schröder mentions in this respect that many Indian annals contain no record of a Spanish Conquest or mention the Spaniards only 'as if they were any other indigenous group in Mesoamerica' (Schröder, 2007, p. 13). The Spanish Conquest cannot be understood if we do not consider the important role of the indigenous allies of the Spaniards.

Another factor that scholars point out with respect to the outcome of the Spanish Conquest is epidemic disease: 'The Mexican capital fell not by the force of Spanish arms, but to disease and plague' (Restall, 2004, p. 141). The Americas had been isolated from the rest of the world for ten millennia and had not come in contact with typical European germs. When Spaniards arrived and introduced smallpox, measles and flu, millions of natives died because their bodies had never developed defences against these illnesses. The specialist of early modern demography of Hispanic America, David Noble Cook, wrote that these illnesses were the most important factor for the outcome of the European Conquests in the New World (Cook, 2000, p. 301). Since these two factors significance is unacknowledged in textbooks, the Spanish Conquest often seems to have been a crushing victory of a few Europeans over millions of trembling and irrational Aztecs.

### **Conclusion and perspectives**

German and Austrian textbooks answer the question of how a handful of Spaniards won two empires in the Americas with two narratives: 1. Spaniards are superior and nearly invincible Europeans; 2. Indians believed the Spaniards to be gods and thus surrendered their empire voluntarily to Cortés. The real decisive factors of the Spanish Conquest are not accorded their significance. The story of the Spanish gods presented in textbooks as an indigenous 'vision of the vanquished' is very unlikely to be authentically indigenous, but rather a Spanish construction to justify the Spanish Conquest and colonisation. Cortés was not authorized to conquer Mexico by either the Crown or by the authorities in New Spain. In order to justify his conquest of Mexico Cortes wrote to the Spanish king that the Aztecs handed over their empire voluntarily to the Spaniards because they saw Cortés as a messenger of a lord who had gone away a long time ago. Thus he was able to cast the Spanish Conquest as the suppression of a native uprising against an already existing Spanish authority.

The Spanish author Sahagún took up the story told by Cortés, expanded it and asked Christianised natives to confirm it decades after the Spanish Conquest. Then Sahagún wrote it down subsequently in the Indian language Nahuatl. That is why textbooks refer to the story of the Spanish gods as an indigenous vision of the Spanish Conquest although there is no proof that the Indians expected the return of a god called Quetzalcóatl before the Spanish landed. Research also indicates that the story of the returning god Quetzalcóatl does not exist in any source that was written without Spanish influence. Because of a multitude of newly found indigenous and Spanish sources, most scholars of Mesoamerica consider the story to be a myth.

Nevertheless, this story in textbooks can be used in classrooms to foster historical thinking. The global objective of history lessons in schools consists of preparing the ground for a well considered historical consciousness, and textbooks must contribute to that. From a history didactic perspective, the development of the ability to deal with historical information is crucial, and that is why historical learning is nowadays increasingly seen as a 'style of thinking' (Borries, 2008; Pandel, 2000, p. 126). Pupils should be empowered to deconstruct historical narratives and understand them in their deep structure (Kühberger, 2013, pp. 26-30). The narrative about Cortés and Quetzalcóatl can prompt insights that may help pupils to reflect critically on the making of history.

The story can be used for example to show how history is the result of a process of construction and is never 'finished'. Whereas until a few decades ago most historians held the narrative about Cortés and Quetzalcóatl to be empirically plausible, nowadays, after new sources were found, this view is questioned, and most historians think that it is a construction of Cortés. The old perspective is still found in textbooks, but it is very likely that this will change over the next decades. The writing of history never comes to a definitive end because it can always occur that new sources are found that require a specific narrative to be rewritten. This can provide the insight that textbooks are only constructions and that they are not a sacred scripture that can claim to present the past 'as it really was'.

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*HOW DO STUDENTS LEARN HISTORY? THE PROBLEM WITH TEACHING HISTORY AS PART OF AN INTEGRATED OR INTERDISCIPLINARY CROSS CURRICULAR PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH*

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**Abstract**

*Interdisciplinary/cross-curricular teaching involves a conscious effort to apply knowledge, principles, and/or values to more than one academic discipline simultaneously. The disciplines may be related through a central theme, issue, problem, process, topic, or experience (Jacobs, 1989). This approach is often seen as a panacea to various problems facing education today; from opening up more space and time on overcrowded school timetables to cutting down fragmentation and giving a more holistic, relevant and modern education. Unfortunately while undoubtedly having various positive aspects, like most cures, an interdisciplinary approach does not come without a number of negative side effects. This paper will attempt to show how, at times, effective history teaching does not sit comfortably with interdisciplinary approaches; indeed, in some instances they are incompatible.*

**Key words**

Citizenship education, Citizenship, Cross-curricular, Curriculum planning, History, Humanities, Integration, Inter-disciplinary, Malta, National Curriculum, Pedagogy, Thematic curriculum

**Introduction**

Interdisciplinary/cross-curricular teaching, sometimes also called an integrated approach, involves a deliberate attempt to apply knowledge and principles to more than one academic discipline concurrently. This approach is also linked to project work, topic or thematic teaching which incorporate the integration of different curricular areas around a particular topic, a central theme, issue, problem, process, or experience. This teaching approach is highly favoured in many primary schools (5 to 11 years-olds) in Europe and to a lesser extent in secondary schools too. In the secondary sector (11 to 16 year-olds) it is more difficult to implement as a method because it is harder to remove the subject barriers. However because of the attractiveness of cross-curricular advantages, attempts occur here too. Thus in the case of humanities such 'umbrella' titles as citizenship education, social studies and environmental studies may replace separate academic subjects such as geography, sociology, home economics, physical and social education, religious studies and history. These are now often taught as one integrated course.

This approach is seen as a panacea to various problems facing education today, from opening up more space and time on overcrowded school timetables to cutting down fragmentation and giving a more holistic, relevant and modern education. Unfortunately, while undoubtedly having various positive aspects, like most cures, an interdisciplinary approach which mixes history with civics or with any other subject does not come without a number of serious negative side effects. There are three particular challenges presented by an interdisciplinary/cross-curricular approach to history teaching and learning which I feel need to be addressed. These are decrease in a history teaching and learning time, loss of independence for history as an academic subject and that its pedagogy may not be reconcilable with citizenship education and interdisciplinary approaches.

### **Problems of teaching history within an inter-disciplinary/cross-curricular approach**

#### **Less history teaching and learning time**

First of all interdisciplinary/cross-curricular approaches compound the already existing problem of very little history time on school timetables; as Van der Leeuw-Roord (2001) found, 'the time allocated to history in schools is under pressure everywhere in Europe with a tendency to further decrease' (p.22). The situation of the dwindling history lesson is made worse because, within an interdisciplinary-cross-curricular approach, history stops being the focus and has to merge with all the other subject areas.

#### **Loss of independence for history as a school subject**

This leads to the second difficulty, that history ceases to exist in its own right. This was already a worry in 1992 when the top concern of most western European History Teachers' Associations was a possible loss of the independent position of history in the curriculum (Van der Leeuw-Roord 2006). By 2001 a considerable change in European school history curricula was noted by Stradling (2001) and according to Van der Leeuw-Roord (2001), referring to Stradling's work, 'There is now far more emphasis on recent and contemporary history, and a growing focus on strengthening European consciousness, human rights and civil society through the teaching of history and civics' (p.22).

#### **The nature of history as an academic subject and its pedagogy may not be reconcilable with citizenship education and interdisciplinary approaches**

Citizenship education has become very popular in the last 15 years and many interdisciplinary curricula are now tailored to include history and other humanities within the citizenship umbrella, and this leads me to the third and to me the most worrying aspect of an interdisciplinary/cross-curriculum. A concern that by far transcends both the two previous concerns, that is, the decrease in the time allotted to proper history teaching and that history stops being a separate subject on the school timetable. It is important to point out that in the case of history there is the added problem that history and citizenship do not always sit comfortably together; indeed, in some instances they are incompatible. Whereas citizenship is concerned with developing certain attitudes and values which currently prevail in a society, history is about questioning evidence. Citizenship is essentially an initiation process while history is not designed for this.

History teachers know that there are various problems when it comes to historical explanation. One does not need to be a postmodernist to realize that 'truths' uncovered by history are imperfect. The questions historians ask are determined by the questions of their society, reflecting the same apprehensions or optimism of the time rather than the historical period the historian is studying and all this casts serious doubt on the objectivity of history.

All our historical knowledge comes to us in an indirect way. This is true both for evidence coming from primary historical sources and for evidence coming from secondary historical sources. When working with primary sources we are dealing with what survives; other material which did not survive might have produced an entirely different picture. There will always be the possibility of sources being forged and the information they are giving is entirely false. This can also happen through mistakes occurring while the historian is working with the sources, for example mistakes during translations or while deciphering calligraphy. But even if one were to give allowance to these human errors, there exist even more serious problems when dealing with historical material. A truly untouched authentic piece of evidence cannot be said to exist. What we have all comes to us second hand, even documents, which are often regarded as sacrosanct where facts are concerned, were written by fallible human beings; even if they were actual eyewitnesses of the events they are reporting, their memory can be faulty. The account

is influenced by the eyewitness's prejudices and biases, which may cause him or her, even if perhaps unconsciously, to exaggerate or modify certain things.

Furthermore even when correct facts can be established, they only start to have meaning once the historian has gone to work on them. Facts are only the raw material, history is a continual process of interaction between the historian and his or her facts. To illustrate this point Carr (1964) states that. 'To praise an historian for accuracy is like praising an architect for using well-seasoned timber or properly mixed concrete in his building.' (p.10). It is a necessary function but not the main *raison d'être* of an historian. Ultimately the job of a good historian is to rigorously check, compare and question all known facts and information about the topic he or she is researching. Then the evaluation process starts, which includes interpreting evidence, explaining, attributing causes, criticism, tracing results and using the imagination. And it leads not to truth – historians can come to different conclusions – but rather to a valid interpretation.

However, this means that with secondary sources there are now even more concerns since, besides the bias to be found in the original source of information, there is also the writer's bias to contend with. History teachers know that facts become facts when historians decide to make them so, even when not expressing any judgements or opinions, historians are being selective by the very choice of the subject they have picked to work on. As Tosh (1984) says:

The facts are not given, they are selected. Despite appearances they are never left to speak for themselves. However detailed a historical narrative may be, and however committed its author to the re-creation of the past, it never springs from the sources ready-made; many events are omitted as trivial, and those which do find a place in the narrative tend to be seen through the eyes of one particular participant or a small group (p.113).

For a long time historians thought that only the history of kings, nobles and great men was important and therefore our history only dealt with such topics, leaving out whole chunks of the population who, because of their race, class or gender, did not fit this paradigm. This is especially obvious when it comes to women's history. Women have been for a long time, to coin Sheila Rowbotham's (1973) famous phrase 'hidden from history.' With the advent of more and more women historians, women's history began to be written and our perspectives on whole historical periods have since changed.

It is also the historians who decide in what order and context to place the facts and, as any good journalist knows, to influence opinion in one direction you merely have to select and arrange the appropriate facts. Historians are products of their own culture and the society and subject to their own prejudices and values.

History teachers today are aware of the very real difference between 'the past' and 'history', which are often taken to mean by non- specialists one and the same thing, when in fact they are not. It is important to accept that history is merely a discourse about the past but not the past itself and to a certain extent what Jenkins (1991) says is correct.

History as discourse is thus in a different category to that which it discourses about, that is, the past and history are different things. Additionally, the past and history are not stitched into each other such that only one historical reading of the past is absolutely necessary. The past and history float free of each other, they are ages and miles apart (p.5).

For the past 40 years history pedagogy has been developing and today it is dramatically different from the traditional history teaching of fifty years ago. The main objective in history



teaching today is the teaching of history thinking skills and concepts within a historical context, rather than mere memorisation of facts, and pupils are made aware of the main characteristics of the discipline. It is important to teach in history not just the factual knowledge, but what Bruner (1966) called the 'structure' of the subject. Historical method involves historical thinking and it is the analyses of sources in particular that provides the practice for a mode of thinking similar to that which the historian goes through. This approach in history teaching is in fact based on constructivist teaching methods.

Historical thinking is best described as a form of speculation, highly investigative in nature, so many of the learning theories are not immediately satisfactory approaches to history teaching. For example Dewey's problem-solving model, perhaps so useful in subjects like science and mathematics, might be inadequate for Watts says (1972) who says:

... because the material of history is uncertain and debatable, it is difficult, if not literally impossible, to solve problems in history...history is much more concerned with problem-raising than problem-solving. (Watts p.33)

Lee, Dickinson and Ashby showed that children's thinking in history is far more sophisticated than previously imagined. After analysing children's ideas on testing explanations in history, Lee, Dickinson and Ashby (1996) said that:

From the point of view of day-to-day classroom history teaching, our analysis so far suggests that we need to recognise that quite young children can begin to make sophisticated distinctions and develop powerful intellectual tools. We may need both to match such ideas with greater precision in our teaching objectives, and to increase our awareness of assumptions which hold some children back (p.19).

One of the best descriptions of what constitutes good history teaching today is given by Christine Counsell (2004a) and her characteristics of what make good history teachers are summed up below:

1. They consider learning as highly structured and very risky – (children need all kinds of structures to think at a high level – text one minute, picture the next, activity one minute – teachers need time to learn to teach).
  2. They consider variety – (by using many resources to compare sources and interpretations, to access the past and to construct history in different ways).
  3. They value knowledge – (critical thinking and reflection do not mean forgetting the importance of knowledge. We have to connect knowledge and skills).
  4. They establish a critical, informed and open discipline of history – (by its practices, its processes, its values. This to practice casual reasoning and to construct casual explanation).
  5. They select the right stuff – (by supplying a framework of thinking about the kinds of questions we ask about the past and the kinds of historical enquiry).
  6. They put emphasis on evidence and interpretation – (the processes of the discipline) this to establish and examine the truth claims that historians make).
  7. They give joy – (by historical enquiry which establishes curiosity amongst students).
  8. They make various encounters to learn all the time possible – (such as to encounter the other, otherness, the strange and the familiar).
- (pp. 18–56).

This is a very rewarding, effective but difficult kind of pedagogy of history. A pedagogy that can be very successful when delivered by excellent, experienced history teachers but if it is to occur, it has to happen in a subject-centred curriculum and not in an interdisciplinary cross-curriculum one, where the possibility of untrained non- specialist teachers is very high.

As can be seen the debate regarding the nature of history and the best approach to teach it, is quite complex, so considering how volatile history is, how can this be used to pass across the accepted values of a society? Citizenship is concerned with educating pupils on how to become citizens. But what does that mean? Definitely learning values but whose values? In one society citizenship might mean passing across particular dominant religious values, in another it might be ethnic or cultural values and often the top priority of citizenship is to accept the underlying political values of the time. Pushing forward any one set of values, no matter how noble they might be, is the antithesis of history education.

I accept what Cajani (2007) said that 'on the methodological level, the comparison of controversial interpretations and the analysis of documents, fundamental in history teaching, provides students with essential skills for the exercise of citizenship' (p.7) and indeed I have at times used history teaching to target citizenship (Vella, 2006; Vella, 2013). But one has to be very careful. History pedagogy researchers such as Rosalyn Ashby and Peter Lee never claimed history skills necessarily change a person's point of view. For example when discussing their findings on children's understanding and the skill of historical empathy Ashby and Lee (1987) advise against making:

simple-minded and grandiose claims, that prejudice against cultures or ethnic groups will be dispelled by empathy exercises in history at school. People's views are in large part based on material interests, fear, and their social relations with others: the presentation of rational alternatives in education is often almost powerless against all this (p.65).

I would like to think that Ashby and Lee are not totally correct and there is truth in Cajani's statement and I personally definitely believe that history teaching can indeed create people that think on a higher level. With the right history teaching one can get pupils to query the source of their information and its reliability, a trait which is very useful for citizens of a democracy. However the objective of history can never be, as it is in citizenship, to uphold any one system of government even if that system of government is democracy

### **Critical analysis of the benefits of an inter-disciplinary/cross-curricular approach**

History teaching is hard work and requires the right type of pedagogy, which is focused and in depth. Unfortunately it is very difficult, if not impossible, to practice this within an interdisciplinary framework which puts pressure on the very elements that make this possible. But perhaps the benefits of an interdisciplinary approach are worth the effort. So what are these benefits?

Morris (1970) as cited in Ingram (1979) argues that integration is an administrative device, a way of organising the timetable to cope with the expansion of knowledge. But should we abandon good practice for logistical reasons?

A stronger argument in favour is that given by Ranke (1968) who said it is child- centred and by Kelly (1982) who explained that:

demands that the curriculum be made relevant, meaningful and so on have been the most potent factor in the development of the idea of the curriculum integration (Kelly, p.60).

These studies point out that thematic interdisciplinary approaches help pupils to understand day-to-day life and place learning in a context and they do not compartmentalise a child's life.

There is a huge assumption behind these arguments that a subject-centred curriculum resembles one which is authoritarian and where the teacher is the giver of knowledge and the pupils mere recipients, a method which would fall under an Essentialist philosophy, and one which does not take into consideration the child's needs and interests. But this is a false assumption, a history teacher can use a constructivist, child-centred method in a subject-centred curriculum as exemplified by such brilliant history pedagogy as advocated by the work of numerous history teaching researchers (Nichol, and Fines, 1997; Counsell, 2000, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2008, 2011; Dickinson, 1978, 1984; Lee, 1996; Shemilt, 1987; Blyth, J. 1995; Phillips, R., 2002), while respected peer reviewed journals on history pedagogy such as *Teaching History* and the *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* continually showcase good practice in history teaching within a subject-centred curriculum.

This assumption that better learning occurs in an inter-disciplinary curriculum than in a single-subject one is a very strong one. However there does not seem to be any solid, empirical evidence which backs the theory. The only research study on the effectiveness of cross-curricular teaching versus subject teaching I managed to find is a study conducted almost 20 years ago by Yorks and Folio (1993). This study states that students learn better from thematic, interdisciplinary instruction than from a traditional, single-subject curriculum.

This conclusion is drawn from testing the engagement rates of 254 students learning social studies, reading and maths. in a mixed age classroom of 3rd and 4th graders. By observing these rates, it was demonstrated that there was a higher engagement rate during thematic tuition rather than during single-subject lessons. This may be correct, higher engagement may be occurring more in cross-curricular activities, but this does not necessarily translate into better understanding and learning on the part of the students. What kind of engagement is really happening?

Is interdisciplinary teaching improving the quality of history teaching? It is difficult to say, when empirical evidence is missing. However one source of information is the British government's Department for Education, one place where integrated approaches have long been advocated and practised in classrooms. As early as 1967 the Plowden report was praising this method. 'Integration is not only a question of allowing time for interests which do not fit under subject headings; it is as much a matter of seeing the different dimensions of subject work and of using the forms of observation and communication which are most suitable to a given sequence of learning' (Plowden Report, 1967, p.199).

In Education it takes time before one can see whether a method is producing good results or not, and it was in fact by 1980 that quite unsavoury comments against inter-disciplinary teaching methods began surfacing in various reports by school inspectors. One strong criticism was that there was often no organisation of subject matter and teaching was being done in a random way; thoughtful planning in advance was not occurring. The report of the Scottish Education Department (1980) was very unfavourable. It states that less than half the projects seen were of any real significance where learning was concerned and in an article in the Times Educational Supplement 'projects' which had become synonymous with integrated thematic teaching were highly criticised. Eggleston (1980) argued that topic teaching lacks learning objectives, individual pupil needs are not met and it reduces practice to very basic skills. Eight years later Yendell described thematic approaches as confused thinking, discontinuity, a lack of coherence

and progression, suspect classroom organisation, mismatch and weaknesses in assessment and evaluation (Yendell, 1988 p.39).

More recently Annual Reports of Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspectors of Schools reported even more alarming results of 'hybrid' integrated courses. In seven of the ten schools visited between 2008 and 2010 in which curriculum changes had been made towards integrated approaches, history, with other foundation subjects, had greatly suffered. For example, as stated in one Ofsted Report

a series of themes was created and history teachers were required to make artificial links to them...so the history curriculum lacked coherence and undermined progression ... schemes of work and lessons were created in which subject specialists had limited or even no input; the result was superficial and simplistic teaching and learning; feedback to students was of limited value because it lacked subject-specific comments about how they might improve ... the work set was not as challenging as when students were specifically taught history in discrete lessons ... with students saying the work was too easy Ofsted Report (2011).

Worrying reports indeed and ones which should not be ignored if the effective history teaching methods achieved in the last 20 years are not to be lost.

### **Conclusion**

Some 14 years ago I was supportive of incorporating history within an interdisciplinary integrated approach (Vella, 2000) but the gap between the rhetoric and the practice has long since made me rethink the validity of this method and I advised great caution when it was recommended that history in Malta's New National Curriculum became one of five subjects that make up one subject, that is, Citizenship Education (Vella, 2009).

Undoubtedly one of the foremost pioneers and advocators of interdisciplinary approaches is Heidi Hayes Jacobs, an American educational consultant on interdisciplinary methods since the early 1980s. It is interesting that even she detects that there can be a problem. She said

Without a commitment to when a skill will be taught, there is no commitment. Furthermore, skills are not taught in a vacuum. They are addressed in application to content, and they are evidenced in a product or performance by the learner (Hayes Jacobs, 1997, p. 4).

In explaining the procedures for curriculum mapping Jacobs makes it clear that to be successful an interdisciplinary/cross-curricular method needs to combine content, skills and performance assessment. She gives detailed and complex case studies that build up learning activities step by step in a developmental fashion. But does this happen in our European schools? All experts agree that when implementing such an approach teaching staff need a lot of support, if interdisciplinary approaches are to be successful. Unfortunately in many cases there is no guarantee that such support is available. Therefore in the case of history one should proceed with extreme caution when implementing an interdisciplinary cross-curriculum approach, rather than gaining the much hoped for benefits it might in fact prove to be the complete destruction of effective history pedagogy.

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**'JUST IMAGINE ...': STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON EMPATHY TASKS IN SECONDARY HISTORY EDUCATION**

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**Abstract**

*Historical empathy can be helpful when learning history. However, we do not know what students do when completing an empathy-task or how they perceive this type of task. In the explorative study presented in this article, we recognized different types of empathy-tasks, we saw students showing cognitive as well as affective elements in their responses on an empathy task, and we learned that students think that empathy-tasks are mainly useful to remember facts. Students also mentioned comparing the past with the present and imagining other people's lives as goals of empathy-tasks.*

**Keywords**

Historical empathy, Cognition and affect, Secondary education, Students' perspectives

**Introduction**

'Just imagine: you are a young boy, working in a factory in 1850. Describe your day.'

This task, from a Dutch, ninth-grade history textbook, is an example of what we will refer to as an empathy-task. In an empathy-task, students have to try to imagine what it was like to live in the past. They are asked to connect with a historical protagonist and are expected to describe an image from the past, using either given information or prior knowledge.

Imagining the past is essential to achieving historical understanding, as defined by Husbands (1996): '[...] historical understanding [...] can be characterized in a number of ways, but essentially, it rests on a concern to understand the particularity of human situations in time and context-bound situations' (p. 122).

It is very difficult for students to imagine the past without being judgmental or presentist (Husbands 1996). It demands the understanding that historical people are, on the one hand, human beings with feelings and needs like any other person, but on the other hand, people who had a different set of values and who lived under different circumstances, which may have resulted in actions and decisions to which modern people cannot always relate. Imagining the past as it really was is also impeded by hindsight: knowledge about the results of historical developments (Ashby & Lee, 1987; Yeager & Foster, 2001; Hartmann & Hasselhorn, 2010; Perikleous, 2011; Wilschut, 2011). Ignoring this knowledge and trying to imagine that you are in the middle of events without knowing how things "end" is an almost impossible achievement (Rozzman, Cassidy & Baron 2003).

Yet, we ask our students to perform empathy-tasks. We do so, firstly, because of their link to historical thinking; the contextualizing that is needed to be able to imagine the past is seen as an important component of historical thinking and reasoning (Van Boxtel & Van Drie, 2012; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; Seixas & Morton, 2012). Secondly, empathy-tasks can be a way of eliciting engagement with the past (Cunningham, 2009; Logtenberg, 2010). Although history education researchers have discussed extensively the meaning of historical empathy and described the potential of historical empathy-tasks in the history classroom, studies examining how students perceive and work with empathy-tasks are still scarce. A better understanding of how empathy tasks work for students is important for realizing the potential of historical empathy-tasks.

This study investigates students' perspectives on an empathy-task and their way of working during such a task. We define empathy-tasks as tasks that stimulate students to imagine the past from the perspective of a fictional or genuine historical person. In our study, we conducted an in-depth examination of an empathy-task about the Industrial Revolution, in which students had to imagine they were working in a factory.

### **Theoretical framework**

Historical empathy is a much-disputed concept. Most definitions of historical empathy consist of multiple components. Lévesque, for example, distinguishes between three components: imaginative achievement, contextualization, and moral judgment. The latter he calls 'an extremely risky business' (Lévesque, 2008, pp. 147-153). Barton and Levstik (2004) define historical empathy by emphasizing personal involvement in the past: 'Appreciation for a sense of otherness of historical actors, shared normalcy of the past, recognizing effects of historical context and the multiplicity of historical perspectives, and understanding that our view on the past depends on our present context' (pp. 210-221). Additionally, there are shorter descriptions given for historical empathy, which have fewer layers: historical empathy is, according to Grant (2003) the 'disposition to imagine other perspectives' (p.76). This definition is in line with the one given by Barton & Levstik (2004). Davis (2001) states: 'it is imagination restrained by evidence' (p. 4), which coincides with the first two components described by Lévesque (2008).

The aforementioned definitions represent only a few of those that have been proposed in the debate about what exactly historical empathy is, and there are many more (e.g., Yeager & Foster 2001; Lee & Ashby 2001; Brooks 2009). In all of the proposed definitions, two dimensions of historical empathy are present: a cognitive dimension and an affective dimension. The cognitive dimension includes reconstructing what the past could have been like by means of collecting evidence and conducting historical inquiry. The affective dimension involves sensing with one's own emotions how people in the past would have functioned, recognizing that historical actors are human beings with feelings. Thus, empathy can be a cognitive achievement, evidenced by the ability to reconstruct the circumstances of the past – the food, clothing, political situation, working environment, etc. – and it can also be an emotional experience (i.e., elicit affective reactions), as when thinking about how people in the past would have thought and lived results in feelings of, for example, indignation or pity.

It is a much debated issue whether historical empathy is a merely cognitive or essentially an affective achievement. Barton and Levstik (2004) tried to settle the matter by splitting up historical empathy into two parts: 'empathy as perspective recognition' and 'empathy as caring' (p. 206, p. 228). The first part involves the cognitive activity of recognizing perspectives (e.g., trying to understand statesmen, politicians and their views and decisions). The latter part involves the affective activity of imagining how historical actors experienced their lives. In



education, 'empathy as caring' is usually achieved using the 'underdogs' of history, such as the child-laborer used in the empathy-task for this study, as examples.

In order to describe the cognitive process of contextualization, the term historical perspective-taking is also used (Boddington, 1980; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Hartmann & Hasselhorn, 2008). Some scholars argue that too much emphasis on affective processes may be detrimental to historical thinking and academic achievement (Lee & Shemilt, 2012; Perikleous, 2011). If students are triggered with affect, they might become more inclined to judge from their own privileged points of view (e.g., 'Romans were crazy' or 'crusaders were murderers'), which is, of course, undesirable from an historical point of view.

On the other hand, Logtenberg (2010), who analyzed students' thinking while reading a text about a nineteenth century factory, shows that affect can be compatible with historical reasoning in some instances. Affective reactions, such as pity or astonishment, can cause the reader to feel a need to contextualize the past in order to understand its perceived strangeness and resolve the experienced imbalance between what has been learned about the past and what is considered 'normal' from a present-day perspective. Thus, affective reactions can co-occur with cognitive responses. Given Immordino and Damasio's (2007) assertion that feelings and learning are closely related, this finding should come as no surprise. The authors call the large overlap between emotion and cognition 'emotional thought' and stress that emotional thought is relevant to education because 'neither learning nor recall happen in a purely rational domain, divorced from emotion'. Kahneman (2011) also notes the importance of affect in situations in which people have to decide how to react.

In Dutch, our own language, the word 'inleven' (lit.: to live oneself in) is used, which means to step into the shoes of another person, trying to think and feel like the other as much as possible.

Empathy is clearly a concept with multiple dimensions. Cognitive activities (e.g., investigating, explaining, thinking logically, and working with evidence) seem to be an important part of it, while affective reactions (e.g., identifying with the past, imagining oneself in another's circumstance) are important as well. Both activities can be considered important for realizing the potential of historical empathy tasks.

According to Cunningham (2009), teachers recognize four main goals of empathy-tasks: Providing as powerful and vivid a sense of history as possible; Making history relevant and accessible for students; Combatting misconceptions while working with sources; and Creating as clear and vivid a picture of the past as you can with what you have.

Although a lot has been said in the literature about the concept of historical empathy, and Cunningham's research shed some light on how teachers perceive empathy-tasks, little is known about how students work with empathy-tasks, and practically nothing is known about what students think about these empathy-tasks or whether they value them. Do they think empathy-tasks are optional, or do they think these tasks are a 'genuine' learning activity? And if so, what do they think they learn from empathy-tasks? In our study, we examined how students work with historical empathy, taking into account its cognitive, as well as affective, aspects.

#### ***Aims and research question***

The aims of this explorative research are threefold. First, we want to explore which types of empathy-tasks are elicited by historical textbooks. This will enable us to select a task representative of empathy-tasks used in (Dutch) history classrooms. Second, we want to identify which processes, both affective and cognitive, occur when students work on an

empathy-task. And third, we want to gain insight into students' opinions about empathy-tasks. This research is guided by the following questions:

1. Which types of empathy-tasks are present in history textbooks?
2. To what extent are cognitive and affective elements present in students' performance on an empathy-task?
3. How do students perceive an empathy-task?

## **Method**

### **Participants**

This study was conducted with 16 students attending 4 different secondary schools in the city of Amsterdam. All four schools provide secondary education at the intermediate and higher levels. Secondary education in the Netherlands has three levels: 1) a lower level, which mainly prepares students for vocational training; 2) an intermediate level, which prepares students for professional education; and 3) a higher level, which prepares students for academic studies. Approximately 30% of the 12-17 year-olds in the Netherlands get their education at the intermediate level, called *havo*.

*Havo* students study history in the first three years of secondary education. In the higher grades, history is no longer a mandatory subject. We chose to study ninth grade students (*havo* 3, ages 14-16) because it is the last year in which many of them study history at school as a compulsory subject. Most of the participants were not yet sure whether they wanted to continue to take history classes.

Seven of the students were male; nine were female. Of the 16 students, 14 were born in the Netherlands, one was born in Turkey and one was born in Chile. All of the students were 15 or 16 years old. In a questionnaire, we asked students how well they perform in history. Three students considered themselves 'excellent' in history, three considered themselves 'below average', and the remaining students considered their performance to be somewhere in between. Seven of the students said history was dull or of little interest, while nine indicated that they enjoyed history.

All students voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

### **Task**

To answer the first research question, we analyzed empathy tasks in three chapters from four different history textbooks that were used by a substantial number of Dutch secondary schools (SLO & Stichting Kennisnet, 2014). The chapters were on the French Revolution, Industrialization and the First World War. In the textbook chapters we analyzed, a total of twenty-two empathy-tasks were found. One textbook had only one empathy-task, one textbook had six tasks, one textbook had seven tasks, and one textbook had eight tasks. We coded each task according to the type of empathy that was requested. Inter-rater reliability between the first and second coder resulted in an 87% correspondence rate

In order to answer research questions 2 and 3, we chose an empathy-task that explicitly asked the students to step into the shoes of a (fictional) person. Students were asked to study some texts and pictures and then, while imagining they were a child laborer, write about a day in a 19<sup>th</sup> century factory. The information given in the text comprised the working hours of a child laborer

including time for breaks, some statistics indicating how many children worked in factories, a story about a foreman with a whip, and information about children falling ill.

### **Data Collection**

Data collected from the students participating in the study consisted of: (a) pre-interviews, (b) written answers, (c) post-interviews and (d) a questionnaire. In the interviews, we asked students to reflect on the task both beforehand, detailing how they thought they would handle the task, and afterward, indicating what they actually did. Additionally, we asked students their opinion of the goals of the task. We used the interviews to discover what type of thoughts and perspectives students had about performing an empathy-task.

We used the written answers to investigate the cognitive and affective aspects of the students' writing. The questionnaire asked for information such as age, grade, and native language, to gather background information about our participants.

The research took place during regular classroom time. Two students at a time were taken from the classroom to be interviewed (together) and to work on the task (individually). The remaining students worked with their own teacher on the subject they were studying at the time.

First, students were asked to read the task. The task was taken from a textbook for students in year 2 (comparable to eighth grade in the UK and USA). Therefore, we expected that the cognitive level of the task would be appropriate for the students. All participants had already studied the topic of concern (i.e., the Industrial Revolution and its social consequences). When the students had finished reading the task, the first part of the interview was conducted (10-15 minutes). Students were asked about their perception of the task in a semi-structured interview. The interviews were conducted in pairs.

After reading the task and being interviewed about their perspectives on the task, students were asked to individually perform the task. The time allotted for completing the task was 15 minutes. Every student wrote a short essay on life in a factory using given information including text and pictures. Students were not allowed to work together. When the students were finished, the second part of the interview took place (15-30 minutes), asking students how they tried to perform the task, what they thought they needed to achieve historical empathy and whether they believe historical empathy is important for studying history and (if so) why. At the end of the second part of the interview, students completed a questionnaire.

In a pilot study, we worked with the same task and asked the students to complete the task by thinking aloud. We did this both with individual students and with pairs of students. In analyzing the results, we noticed that the students were exceptionally focused on the task and trying to produce an answer. It was difficult for them to reflect on the processes in which they were engaged, even when prompted. In this study, we decided to continue with the pre- and post-interviews, but not to ask students to think aloud. We also decided to keep conducting the interviews in pairs because we found that students talked more easily when interviewed together (see also Bosschaart, Kuiper & Van der Schee, 2014; McCulley & Barton, 2005). We worked with two male pairs, three female pairs and three mixed-gender pairs.

### **Data analysis**

For our first research question, we collected the empathy-tasks presented in the textbooks and identified different types of tasks. A summary of these tasks is presented in the results section.

For our second research question, we analyzed the students' written answers. One student completely misinterpreted the task and wrote a summary for each part of the given information. We did not include his work in the analysis; in total, we had a sample of 15 responses. The length of the responses varied from 98 to 264 words, with a mean length of 193 words.

We coded the responses for both cognitive and affective elements (see Table 1). Coding was performed at the sentence level (or at the phrase level when punctuation or sentence structure were lacking). Inter-rater reliability between a first and second coder was 84%.

TABLE 1.

*Coding Scheme used for analyzing cognitive and affective aspects of students' written work.*

Category	Description	Example
Cognitive	Construction of an image or context, reproducing given information	'Five o'clock in the morning, time to go to work'
	Construction of an image or context, using prior knowledge	'From the factory chimneys, black smoke is appearing'
Affective	Expressions of disgust, wonder or disapproval	'How can they let us work this hard?'
	Description of emotional experiences of the historical actor	'Every morning I pray to God to help me with the day'

In sentences or phrases that were coded as 'cognitive', the students either constructed an image by reproducing information given with the task or contextualized the situation with information that could not be found in the texts and pictures accompanying the assignment.

We coded as 'affective' all sentences or phrases that contained elements linked to emotions, both of the student (e.g., moral judgment) as of the child-laborer.

To complement this analysis of the students' written work, we also examined what they said during the interviews about how they handled the task. We considered the interviews as a whole and did not analyze students' statements separately.

For the third research question, we searched the answers given by students in both the pre-task and post-task interviews for statements about the way students worked through the task (process) and the purpose they felt the task served (goal). We asked students what they believed the value of this type of task to be. We wondered whether students' answers would correspond with those given by teachers in Cunningham's (2009) research.

## Results

### Types of empathy tasks

We found two main types of empathy-tasks. The first type were tasks in which students were asked to place themselves in the shoes of an historical actor and identify completely with that person. In this type of task, students would have to imagine themselves as a person of the past and try to feel, think and act like they lived in the past. An example of this type of task is:

'Imagine you are a poor citizen of Paris. Why do you think it is time for a revolution?' (emphasis added). In the second type of task, students were asked to imagine what an historical actor could have thought or felt. In this type of task, students do not explicitly have to imagine being the person of the past, but they have to be able to describe how a person in the past may have felt, thought and acted. An example of this type of task is: 'Imagine a poor citizen of Paris. Why would he think it is time for a revolution?' (emphasis added). As such, the difference between the first and second task type is the degree to which students are asked to identify with a person living in the past.

These two main types of tasks correspond with the distinction between 'imagining oneself in' (i.e., placing oneself in the shoes of someone else) and 'supposal' (i.e., reconstructing the possible thoughts of someone else) as described by Furlong (1961) and explained by Lee (1984).

In the supposal category, there is variation in the degree of identification a student may experience. For example, trying to imagine a person (e.g., a German soldier), we will call 'personal identification'; imagining an abstract actor (e.g., a political party or a government), we will call 'distant identification'. In the 'imagining in' category, we see only personal identification (i.e., historical actors whose perspectives students are asked to take) (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.

*Types of empathy-tasks.*

Type	example	Percentage of the found tasks
Imagining in: Students are asked to think and feel like a historical person	Step into the shoes of a child laborer in a factory. You work in one of the first factories. Write about your experiences in the factory. Write about the work you have to do, the foreman, the breaks, the other laborers etc. Use 200 words. Empathize as much as possible.	41%
Supposal: Students are asked to reconstruct what a historical person would have felt or thought	Personal identification Imagine the position of Louis XVI. Was it sensible for him to flee? Or were there other options? What could he have done better? With which argument could Louis have defended his fleeing?	41%
	Distant identification What would the liberals have thought of this picture? (illustration given: drawing of people in a train in first, second and third class)	12%

In sixteen of the twenty-two tasks examined, students were asked to work with given information, such as pictures or historical texts. In the remaining six tasks, no mention was made as to where the students should look for the information they might need. In five of the tasks, students were asked to work in pairs or groups.

All of the tasks were pencil-and-paper tasks, asking for written answers. Only one task also required some creative work ('design a poster advertising the Revolution'); in one additional

task, students were asked to draw a graph. One task suggested the possibility of a role-play but also provided lined paper to write out answers.

For our study, we chose an 'imagining in' empathy-task that was to be done individually, using given information, and that asked for written output.

### **Working with the task – cognitive and affective elements**

Ten students wrote a response that consisted mainly of cognitive components, and five students produced a response in which both cognitive and affective components were present in more or less equal quantities. There were no students who wrote an answer that consisted mainly of affective components. Two students wrote in the third person, thus interpreting the task as a 'supposal' task instead of an 'imagining in' task. These two students, Irene and Daniel, wrote responses with the most cognitive components. Table 3 shows the number of cognitive elements per student, compared to the number of affective elements.

TABLE 3.

*Cognitive and affective elements in the students' written work.*

Student	Cognitive elements	Affective elements	Cognitive/affective ratio
Daniel	12	1	92% / 8%
Irene	10	1	90% / 10%
Baris	8	2	80% / 20%
Marie	12	3	80% / 20%
Bas	11	3	78% / 22%
Cassandra	10	3	77% / 23%
Dalia	8	3	73% / 27%
Christa	5	2	71% / 29%
Urad	9	4	69% / 31%
Liv	8	4	66% / 34%
Wendy	11	7	61% / 39%
Khadija	7	5	58% / 42%
Sami	9	8	53% / 47%
Norah	7	7	50% / 50%
Simon	5	6	45% / 55%

In all written responses, we found elements that demonstrated that all of the students not only took notice of the text and pictures given but also used this information in their responses. However, there were major differences in the ways students handled the given information. Six of the students wrote a response in which they (often literally) reproduced information from the sources, meaning that (almost) all of the elements of their response could be traced back to the given information. Four students used the given information to recall what they already knew about the subject and the period; thus, their responses included historically correct information from their memory. For example, Bas wrote: 'from the factory chimneys, black smoke appears.'

Information about chimneys and smoke was not present in the material given with the assignment, so these elements were added by the student.

All of the responses contained words or phrases that depicted some type of emotional experience of the historical actor, such as: 'I do not feel good today, but I have to work on because my mother died last year' (Khadija). Because the task clearly asked the students to try to imagine themselves working in a factor 'Step into the shoes of a factory-worker. Tell about your work etc.' (emphasis added), students wrote things such as 'when I had to mend the threads, my hands burned after such a day' (Liv), to show they had tried to identify with a factory worker.

Many affective responses comprised some type of judgment about the working circumstances in the factories. Students expressed their own values, such as 'children shouldn't be forced to work', to comment on the situation in the factories. Norah had her factory worker say: 'If I could do something to stop child labor, I definitely would!'

We will examine two responses more closely: one response with more cognitive than affective components (example 1) and one response with an equal number of cognitive and affective components (example 2).

(Example 1)

*'[...] Together with my brother and mother and father I live in a very small house. We have little food, so all of us work. I work in a textile factory. I am 13 years old and the work is hard and my wages are very low. We have few breaks to eat or go outside and these [breaks] are forty minutes. I work fourteen hours a day and that is a lot, that's why I can't go to school and it is too expensive. Often when I come back from work I get ill and sometimes when I worked too slowly I was whipped. Many children my age were there.'* (Cassandra)

Most of the elements in this response can be traced back to the given information. Only the lack of food and not being able to go to school were added by the student herself. The response is descriptive and quite factual.

(Example 2)

*'For children, life in the factory is hard. I am one of the very young children working there. I have to work more than 12 hours a day with almost no break. [...] There was a boy who had to mend the threads and who refused because he was afraid to get hurt. That's why he was whipped. It was horrible to see the boy suffering. And my wages, that's nothing, even if my workload is very heavy! [...] So many children die, sometimes two a day. [...] I wanted to help another girl but the foreman saw it and I was whipped. I still have the wounds on my body.'* (Norah)

As in Example 1, we see a description of the working hours, the whipping and the heavy workload, which were present in the information given to the students. In Example 2, we additionally see that this student tried to feel like the child laborer, with an expression of indignation as a result. We see an affective element used to illustrate a cognitive element: 'the boy was whipped. It was horrible to see him suffer'. The student judges the environment in which young children had to work, suffering long hours and punishments. These comments most likely reflect the student's own emotions in response to the given information. The student described facts from the given information (cognitive) and then gave her opinion on them (affective); the cognitive elements form the framework of this response, the affective elements

are illustrative. We observed a similar pattern in the other more mixed cognitive/affective student responses.

In their interviews, all students mentioned activities that can be considered cognitive, such as working with sources or providing explanations. Before performing the task, the majority of the students indicated that they intended to complete the task using the information given. After the task, most of the students indicated that they actually did so. Christa said: 'I already knew a lot about it (...) so I took all that I knew and all that was here on the paper, and with all the information, I imagined the situation'. When asked, students explained that they can better imagine the past when provided with many types of information. 'How I work, depends on the information I find', said Simon. Sami thought, 'with pictures it is easiest'. Wendy and Marie both said that they tried to imagine they were the boy in the given picture and started thinking from there.

The role of affect, when working with an empathy-task, was stressed by most students. In only two interviews, students did not mention that they were relating emotionally to the child laborer. Some students talked about the importance of identification. They said that they are more motivated to imagine the past when they feel related to an actor from that past. 'When an empathy-task is about children our age', said Sami, 'it is easier to imagine their life'. However, Khadija says, 'one can never know how someone else thinks'.

When students expressed affective reactions in their interviews, the reactions involved more judgment than identification, although that judgment was not visible in all of the written responses. Students said they pitied the young factory workers, they compared the obligation to work to their own school attendance, or they thought it was important for them to feel the difference between the past and their own lives. Irene said: 'Now you see how you would experience [working in a factory] yourself, instead of only reading some information about it.'

### **Students' perception of the empathy task**

In the post-task-interviews, we asked the students' opinions about why they should have to work with historical empathy.

Most students talked about cognitive goals, indicating that empathy-tasks helped them to remember and understand history better. In every interview, the point was made that after an empathy-task such as the one they did, one would most likely get better results on a test. Students said they would gain knowledge from the tasks, remember that knowledge, and understand what they had learned. Apparently, the students believed they learn many facts when working with empathy. When asked why, Dalia answered, 'Because this way, you have to summarize everything', Sami explained, 'You will remember things that happened', and Kiran replied, 'Because of the story'.

Next to the gained knowledge, some students saw the task in a broader context (i.e., as helping them to relate to the past in comparison to the present). When students have a clear picture of the past, they feel they can appreciate the present: 'You can see the differences between then and now in the task. And I think that when I read and write this, I will think more about how it was then. You can think about how it was for somebody' explained Marie. Simon said, 'You learn that we have it better now and we should not be complaining.'

Finally, some students said that one of the goals of the task was to identify with the factory boy. Daniel stated it was about 'trying to think the emotion'. He was aware of the fact he can never



really feel what the factory boy has felt, but that he could surely try. And, Wendy concluded her interview with: 'Learning about the past can be interesting, but sometimes is a bit boring, but when you really are getting to know a person, that I find really special.'  
 In summary, the answers given by students when they were asked about their perceptions of the empathy-task can be split up into three main categories: deep processing, comparing past and present and imagining (see Table 4).

The 'deep processing' category includes all student answers regarding remembering and understanding information; students mentioned better test results, working with the historical context and obtaining new knowledge. The 'comparing' category entails students' answers about seeing differences between the past and the present and about them valuing these differences. The 'imagining' category includes student answers about trying to see the past like a historical actor would have done.

Table 4.

*Students' perceptions of the goals of empathy-tasks.*

Category	Sub-category	Example	Frequency	Total
Deep processing	Being able to remember facts / better results on a test	'When we get a test then we will know the answers because we have done this task'	9 times in 4 interviews	22 times in 6 interviews
	Being able to place the facts in an historical context (i.e., non-reproductive)	'you can understand what we are learning about'	6 times in 4 interviews	
	Learning new things	'you see how many people worked and how old they were'	7 times in 4 interviews	
Comparing the past with the present	Identifying differences in time	'How it is now is very different from the past. Such a task makes it easier to imagine'	7 times in 4 interviews	12 times in 4 interviews
	Realizing things are better now	'that we are not to moan about how we have things now'	5 times in 3 interviews	
Imagining	Imagining how people must have felt or lived	'Looking through the eyes of someone else means you are learning how that someone thinks and feels'	9 times in 4 interviews	9 times in 4 interviews

**Conclusion**

We discerned two main types of empathy-tasks: the 'imagining' type and the 'supposal' type. In the imagining-in tasks, students have to imagine themselves as someone from the past; the supposal tasks ask for a reconstruction of the thoughts and feelings of someone from the past. Most tasks ask for more or less the same involvement from the student: students have to study a text or a picture, imagine a situation and then produce a written product.

Students used both cognitive and affective elements in their responses to the empathy-task given in the study. Some students focused mainly on the cognitive elements; none focused mainly on the affective elements. Most students used affective elements to illustrate cognitive elements. The more affective components of their responses sometimes seemed to reflect students' own judgments of the past or responses from a present-day perspective.

When asked about how they had completed the task, students focused on working with the given information (cognitive) and less on imagining feelings or emotions (affective).

Students considered empathy tasks useful. When asked what they think the main goal of empathy-tasks is, they answered that it is to remember or better understand historical information. Students also mentioned comparing the past with the present and imagining other people's lives as goals of empathy-tasks.

### **Discussion**

We need to take into account the limitations of our study. Because we studied only 4 textbooks, 16 students and one type of empathy-task, the results of this study are, of course, limited. Further research is needed to investigate whether the types of empathy-tasks we identified are useful for describing empathy-tasks in the history classroom. Research using a larger variety of empathy tasks is needed to better understand how students complete the affective and cognitive components of the tasks and how they make sense of empathy-tasks.

Below we discuss the main results of our study and questions for further research.

### **Types of empathy tasks**

The distinction between 'imagining in' and 'supposal' tasks seems quite clear, but how students perceive this distinction is another matter. The task we selected for this study was an 'imagining in' empathy task. Still, two students wrote in the third person, as though they were completing a 'supposal' task. Apparently, what we ask of students and what they do is not always the same. This contradiction is important because with 'imagining in' we ask students to place themselves in the past; in these tasks, they can easily include their own values and beliefs in their answers. In the 'supposal' type of task, students are explicitly instructed to adopt the view of someone else. It is possible that students think more historically when 'supposing' than when 'imagining'.

When we want to separate 'imagining in' from 'supposal', we have to make a clearer distinction in how we phrase the task. Further research is needed to investigate the effect of different types of tasks (e.g., supposing versus imagining in) and the formulation of the task on students' ability to take a historical perspective.

When reviewing the empathy-tasks, it was striking almost all tasks asked for written output. During the interviews, most students said that they found it difficult or discouraging to have to write a certain number of words. It is worthwhile to explore how students' complete and experience empathy-tasks with other forms of output, such as role-play or drama.

### **Working with the task – cognitive and affective elements**

In the written responses, we see that cognitive and affective learning processes can complement each other. However, it is noteworthy that the two students who misinterpreted the task as a 'supposal' task wrote the most cognitive responses. It would be interesting to know

if 'supposal' tasks indeed produce more cognitive elements while 'imagining in' tasks produce more affective elements in students' responses.

In the interviews, students expressed that being able to relate to the historical actor (e.g., when the actor is of the same age as the student) helps them to engage in learning (see also Husbands & Pendry, 2000). This would be an argument for personal identification - whether in 'imagining in' tasks or in 'supposal' tasks - rather than distant identification.

When asked about how they worked through an empathy-task, students were quite outspoken. Again, there was a focus on the cognitive elements of the task in students' responses. Working with the given information was at the core of all the strategies adopted by the students. Students used the texts and pictures to check their own ideas, or simply copied the information given in their written work. Additionally, students indicated that they used their imaginations. The students who indicated that they tried to imagine that they were the boy in the picture are interesting in this context; firstly, because these students described how they actually stepped into the shoes of a person from the past, which is what we assume they will do when working on an empathy-task and, secondly, because these students showed that they used the picture to help them to engage with the past. In five of the interviews, students explained that pictures make history more easily accessible to them. Apparently, an image can act as an incentive to imagine the past. It could be worthwhile to further explore the possibilities of pictures in empathy-tasks.

When interviewed, most of the students said that they condemn the practice of child labor or said that they were glad to live now and not 'back then'. It is possible that the students' fixation on pity for the factory worker is a result of this particular subject matter. In all the textbooks, the narrative of the poor little child laborer is present. When Barton (2004) explains his two forms of empathy (perspective recognition, when working with statesmen and caring, when working with 'victim' groups), he gives child labor as an example of empathetic pity. We can wonder whether students' feeling that 'now is better' would be present in performing empathy-tasks on historical subjects other than child labor.

### **Perception of empathy-tasks**

Students said that they experience history as a knowledge-based subject. Therefore, it is understandable that students automatically think of reproductive knowledge when asked to describe the goal of a learning activity. Based on our present research, we cannot tell whether empathy-tasks are truly helpful in remembering factual knowledge or not. However, it is noteworthy that students think empathy tasks lead to better test results.

Cunningham (2009) showed that teachers mention a variety of goals, such as making history vivid and understanding other humans, when discussing empathy-tasks. The students in our study only agreed with the teachers in Cunningham's study with respect to empathy-tasks serving as a way to create a picture of the past and identify with historical actors. Differences between students' and teacher's perceptions of the goal of a particular empathy task might be problematic. Teachers and textbook authors should be more explicit about the goals of an empathy task. The stock-answers in the textbooks are not helpful in this respect: in most cases, only a generally described formula like 'any answer given by the student' is provided; little guidance about criteria to determine the quality of the answers or about the learning goals is given.

Empathy-tasks, like the one in this study, can stimulate an imagining of the past, as our students have shown us.

Further research is needed on what exactly we want to achieve with empathy-tasks.

Additionally, the specifics of the tasks themselves (e.g., the use of text and/or pictures in the task and the type of product the students have to produce) are useful subjects to study.

Finally, because empathy-tasks clearly elicit some affective reactions, we need to know if and why affective reactions may be helpful and how to guide students to use these reactions for further historical thinking.

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*THE INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT IN A LEVEL HISTORY: AN EXAMPLE OF  
SELF-REGULATED LEARNING IN SIXTH FORM COLLEGES*

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**Abstract**

*This paper seeks to explore how students approach their Individual Assignment in A Level History. The paper was informed by theories of self-regulated learning and independent learning. The research involved 84 students and 15 teachers at four Sixth Form Colleges, in which students responded to a structured questionnaire that was drawn from the literature on self-regulated learning. The data was analysed according to ability range. The views of students were supplemented by discussions with teachers and reference to the position taken by the Historical Association over the issue of A Level reform. The conclusion suggests that students adopt a range of approaches, some determined by their innate ability but others by more practical concerns. The paper suggests that teachers plan a skills-based programme that refines students' independent learning prior to launching on the Individual Assignment.*

**Keywords**

Advanced Level, Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level, Coursework, General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Level, Independent learning, Individual Assignment, Self-regulated learning (SRL), Sixth Form College (SFC)

**Introduction**

The media in England and some leading universities have periodically criticised the current General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (GCE A Level) qualification as failing to prepare students for undergraduate level study. Indeed, the Russell Group of leading universities has identified some subjects, such as history, as 'facilitating' entry to certain degree courses, and in doing so differentiated between these more academic and supposedly less academic subjects on offer to potential university entrants. This debate over the academic quality of A level led the British Coalition Government (2010-15) to announce plans to restructure the qualification after 2015. One major change to A Level is the change to Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level, which at present equates to half a full A Level in terms of content and value. The future AS qualification will be detached from the A Level qualification and remodelled as a separate qualification. There is, however, a much more profound criticism of GCE A Level in that students are often too spoon fed and not used to undertaking self-directed and independent learning. As early as 1998, Utley (1998) had identified this issue:

Many university tutors claim that the school system is failing to prepare students for what will be expected of them at university. A-level history in particular is seen to be teacher-dominated, creating a passive dependency culture.

The aim of the paper is to explore the possibility of the Individual Assignment (IA) in A Level History as a vehicle to develop students' skills as independent learners. This paper will investigate how students, teachers and the wider 'historical community' view the Individual Assignment, and the degree to which it develops independent learning.

### **The institutional context: Sixth Form Colleges and GCE A Level**

The Sixth Form College (SFC) sector remains relatively small both in terms of its membership and those students it caters for. Compared to the over two hundred General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) and 1689 schools with sixth forms reported by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) (Sixth Form Colleges' Forum (SFCF), 2011), there are now only 94 SFCs in the highly competitive post-16 education field. School sixth forms taught over 176,000 students and GFECs cater to over 86,000 students enrolled on level 3 (university entrance) programmes in 2008, compared to over 54,000 students in SFCs. Their market has tended to be limited to the provision of GCE A Level study, as well as a few colleges that offer the International Baccalaureate (IB). The sector is also characterised by the numbers of its student body. Compared with the 30% of providers that have a student body aged 16-19 of over 3,000 students, namely the large GFECs, SFCs tend to be much smaller. Although there are some that have below 1,000 students and an equally small number over 3,000, most range between 1,000-3,000 students, with an approximate average of 1,750 (Lauener, 2011, p.8). Although the SFC sector is relatively small in relation to the maintained school sector and the more diverse and larger GFECs, SFCs do make a significant contribution to university entrance in England.

The A Level qualification was introduced in the UK in 1951 as the primary entry qualification to university. The qualification is taken over two years by 16-18 year olds in both the State and Independent sectors, and indeed internationally. Awards are subject-based and cover a wide range of disciplines such as the arts, sciences, social sciences, foreign languages and some vocational subjects. In practice, most A Level students take a study programme of three or four subjects. In recent years there has been some diversification with the introduction of Applied A Level, which is designed to deliver a vocational curriculum for subjects such as Travel and Tourism. In many respects, however, A level is still dominated by the traditional subjects, with English, mathematics and the physical sciences being the most popular (Paton, 2012). In terms of the mode of assessment, A Level is still characterised by traditional methods of assessment, such as essay writing and formal external examinations. In some respects, the traditional make-up of A level is also reflected in the professional practice of some teachers who tend to adhere to traditional modes of teaching and learning. Hibbert (2014, p. 39) reported that 'students valued ... the structure of A Level teaching, but nearly all of them talked about having been spoon fed or force fed'.

### **What is the Individual Assignment (IA)?**

The IA constitutes 20% of the required assessment for GCE A Level History. The IA is composed of two pieces of coursework, each of 2,000 words. All the examining boards provide a very broad range of topics ranging from early medieval to modern History options from world history. The first piece of the IA is concerned with a topic in depth over a period of 20 years; an example of which is: 'What was the short-term significance of the Balfour Declaration?' In this part of the IA, students are required to obtain, interpret and use a variety of original sources to arrive at a judgment. In the second piece of writing for the IA, students are required to consider the topic from a broader perspective over 100 years; an example of which is: 'To what extent were foreign powers responsible for the continuing conflict in the Middle East, 1900-2000?'

Although the delivery and timing of the IA varies across institutions, most colleges schedule the work for the first term of second year A Level and allocate two hours per week to support it. The role of the teacher is restricted by the examination board's regulations, and is far more limited than is the case for other subjects that offer coursework at A Level. In History, the teacher is expected to deliver five weeks' worth of class time to teach the topic in its entirety, and then



send students off to research and write-up their submission. Teachers are forbidden to make written comments on draft work and their role as a facilitator in the IA is curtailed. This rule contrasts starkly with subjects such as Art and English where teacher support is ever-present and re-submissions of drafts for feedback are the norm. In this respect, History provides a rigorous example of self-regulated study and a useful point from which to evaluate independent learning in English SFCs.

### **Literature review: the self-regulated learner**

Pintrich's definition of self-regulated learning, cited by Schunk (2005), provides a concise insight into the concept and its practice:

An active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment.

In simple terms, self-regulated learning placed the student at the centre of the learning process and, in doing so, allocates a significant amount of responsibility to the student to reach their goals. The literature on self-regulated learning mirrors other theoretical approaches to student-centred learning that have appeared in research journals in the past few decades, such as Guy Claxton's *Building Learning Power* (Stoten, 2012) or more generally as independent learning. Research identifies self-regulated learners as more likely to achieve highly, enjoy studying, and develop life-long learning skills (Wolters, 1998; Zimmerman, 1989; Pintrich and De Groot, 1990; Shunk and Zimmerman, 1994). As Boekaerts (1999, p. 445) acknowledges, self-regulated learning has been informed by writing on learning styles, students' metacognition, and theories of the self. Importantly, self-regulated learning has also been linked to the need to encourage independent action and the capacity to take the initiative often associated with the idea of flexible specialisation in the workforce- a major requirement in the future labour force of the twenty-first century. Self-regulated learning has drawn both from information processing theory (Pintrich, 2004) social cognitive theory, and in particular the work of Bandura (1997) and Zimmerman (1998).

We should also differentiate theories of self-regulated learning from those associated with students' approaches to learning. Although both self-regulated learning and students' approaches to learning recognise the importance of goal setting and the motivational context to individuals' learning, they differ in terms of how they undertake empirical research and what they aim to investigate. Whereas, for example, self-regulation of learning research tends to use quantitative questionnaires, such as Pintrich and de Groot's (1990) Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), students' approaches to learning research, often influenced by postmodernist theory, may wish to use a phenomenological and qualitative approach. Moreover, students' approaches to learning investigations have tended to undertake research into general learning strategies, such as learning styles (Marton and Saljo, 1976; Entwistle and Waterston, 1998) or the idea of deep and surface learning. According to Pintrich (2004), self-regulation of learning research is more concerned with the generation and analysis of differences in student motivation and learning than is the case with most students' approaches to learning investigations. Consequently, we should expect to see the issues of motivation, goal setting and metacognition and as central to the discourse on self-regulated learning.

Schunk (2005, p. 174) has described the four main lines of research that have been undertaken into self-regulated learning. Firstly, citing the work of Boekaerts (1999), Schunk refers to the

interest in exploring the nature of self-regulation as a process, often comparing 'good' and 'bad' forms of self-regulation. Secondly, the issue of motivation is central to the work of Pintrich and De Groot, (1990) and Pintrich (2004) in which they explore the idea of influencing the level of motivation amongst students. Thirdly, we see that the possible relationship between learning and affective factors is explored in the work of Henderson and Cunningham (1994), and finally, in the research of Schunk (2005) and the idea that specifically designed forms of intervention can lead to an improvement in students' achievement. It is clear from the literature as a whole, that motivation is viewed as a major theme for researchers and work has tended to focus on the traditional discussion of intrinsic (inherent subject interest) and extrinsic (relationship with teacher) forms of motivation, to explore more specific issues such as the impact such as personal ideals, values and goals, as well as the impact of others, on outcomes. For Thoonen et al., (2011), motivation incorporates three additional components beyond a general orientation and students' intrinsic/extrinsic drives: these are value, expectancy and affective components. In short, students are regarded as being more motivated to learn where they see a clear benefit from the completion of the task, expect to achieve highly and enjoy their learning. Whether A level History students are motivated positively through the IA is an area that the research aimed to explore. The notion that targets can be set, managed and their outcomes evaluated is a second major theme associated with self-regulated learning. Indeed, the setting of targets is an important part of the tracking of students' performance today not least in the SFC sector where each student is given a target grade based on their GCSE performance. Sheldon and Elliot (1998) have reported that those students who are more aware of their targets tend to be more effective as self-regulated learners. They also reflect on their progress over a range of tasks and modify their behaviours in light of their evaluation. Such a view suggests that motivation is a nexus of complex processes and far more complicated than behaviourist thinkers had originally suggested.

A third major theme associated with self-regulated learning is reflection. For Zimmerman (1989), self-regulated learning can be defined in terms of a learning model with three phases: forethought, performance and self-reflection. Although the idea of students' control over their learning strategy is central to SRL, metacognition is more important as learning is the product of this iterative reflective cycle. For Zimmerman (1989), this process of self-reflection involves reacting to, observing and judging the learning experience. Boekaerts and Cascallar (2006) have reported that some students adopt a 'maladaptive' position that inhibits their progress and have suggested that students learn to modify their level of motivation and choice of learning strategy in order to maximise their level of achievement.

A fourth major theme of self-regulated learning relates to the importance of self-efficacy. The idea of self-efficacy is integral to this process of metacognition as students reflect on their learning experience. In part, self-efficacy is, as Zimmerman (1998) recognises a consequence of interaction with others and their feedback. For the most part, however, self-efficacy is related to the psychological state of a student, their experiences of learning over their entire educational career, and most importantly, their record of achievements. The implications are clear for teachers. Building-up a student's self-efficacy is a life-long process, as is learning, although Zimmerman (1998) considers that self-efficacy is most closely tied to their most recent results. The importance of constructive feedback becomes ever more important given the cyclical nature of feedback as a reinforcement of self-image. For Zimmerman (1998) the frequency and immediacy of feedback are both important in constructing a student's self-image. Perhaps one of the lessons to be learned for teachers is the need to design a feedback process that includes the student as much as in the teaching process, as suggested by Fluckiger et al. (2010). Quite apart from the instrumental requirements of effective feedback, it should also recognise the emotional context to all learning. Given the rubric of the IA, the

relevance of the lead-up period and what is done prior to the research seems all the more important.

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is closely tied to students' emotional condition, in that a positive self-image may reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Just as a positive self-image may be associated with higher levels of motivation, effort and achievement, a negative view may inhibit learning. For Rawsthorne and Elliott (1999), students are not simply driven by the attainment of goals, as suggested by goal theory, but need to deal with their emotional state as well. Together with other researchers (Elliott and Harackiewicz, 1996; Elliott, 1997; Middleton and Midgley, 1997) they have emphasised how emotional drives such as 'performance avoidance' and anxiety are integral to students' motivational state. In particular, a number of researchers (Pintrich and de Groot, 1990; Zeidner and Matthews, 2005) have identified test anxiety as a demotivating factor for less able students. Al Khatib (2010) reported that higher levels of test anxiety were tied to underperformance in examinations, and that female students were more prone to test anxiety than male students. Levels of test anxiety are reported to increase (Montalvo and Torres, 2004) when students compare their likely performance to others. This paper is concerned with investigating whether self-efficacy and test anxiety varied between ability levels in history, and whether the IA was preferred to examinations.

### **Research methodology**

The research process sought to elicit the views of students, 15 teachers and the national representative body for 12,000 History teachers, the Historical Association (HA), on their views of the IA. The research process was conducted over one year at four SFCs, two in the North of England and two in the South East. At the time of the research, two of the SFCs were regarded as 'outstanding', whilst the other two were judged to be 'good' in their provision of teaching and learning, by Ofsted, the statutory inspection agency for England. The author, who had worked at two of the four institutions, used opportunity sampling to obtain the data. Given the reality that the author was a 'practitioner-researcher', a departmental manager and had indeed taught on the course, certain ethical issues were clearly associated with the process of research in terms of interaction with respondents. Students' anonymity was protected as the questionnaires used were not issued or collected by the author and no names were elicited. In conversation with teachers, assurances were made that their views would be not be conveyed to senior managers and their participation would be kept confidential.

The first phase of the research process involved an analysis of 84 second year A Level history students' views using a questionnaire following their submission of the IA. This questionnaire used 15 statements each with a five point Likert scale to generate students' responses on issues generated through the literature review, such as fear of failure, motivation and their preparedness to undertake self-regulated independent study. These statements were reducible to three core coding themes: affective issues, self-reflection and most importantly how students approached independent learning. The data was initially analysed according to those who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement in order to obtain an overview of the cohort. The data was subsequently sorted into two data sets, grade A and DE students to see if there was any difference between the most and least able students.

As described above, the role of the author as a 'practitioner-researcher' complicated the research process. However steps were taken not to engineer responses. The conduct of interviews was driven by the wish to elicit rich data through open-ended discussion, and in doing so create an 'ideal speech situation' (Habermas, 1984/1987) in which neither participant was privileged over the other, anonymity was assured and individuals felt free to expand on

an issue as they thought appropriate. The questioning began with the core coding themes identified above, and as the conversation developed, developmental questions followed on. For example: what do you think about the value of coursework? Should the reformed A level contain an element of coursework? How do students approach coursework? For Habermas (1984/1987), this research setting should enable participants to arrive at an inter-subjective account based on common understanding. In contrast to conventional positivist validity claims, such as reliability and generalisability, Habermas (1984/1987) offers inter-subjective truth, and sincerity that reflect this fundamentally social constructionist approach to the generation of research findings. In addition to these research conversations, supplementary information was derived from the web-sites of the HA, the three major English examination boards and the Department of Education.

As with any small-scale study, its generalisability is limited and its value is tied to the insight of a small number of SFCs and their particular context and experiences. Further useful research could compare the performance between the SFC sector and the school sector for instance, as well as more extensive research within the SFC itself. A large number of students study A level History in the School and GFEC sectors and it would be informative to see if there is any variance between sectors, and what possible factors may influence diversity. This research exercise is useful in relating empirical results to theoretical issues raised within the literature review in relation to students' motivation, their self-efficacy and process of self-evaluation- did the IA motivate students; did it provide them with a different way of viewing their academic ability and did it develop their skills. These issues were central to the research. The findings to these research issues can inform the SFC sector on how to address these wider concerns with students' progress.

## Findings

### The raw data

Table 1 below displays the data generated from the questionnaires distributed to students, together with a reference to the theoretical context\*. There are a number of statements that generated very similar or indeed identical responses, such as statement 6 'set own learning goals' and statement 15 'learns more than required'. There are however, a number of statements that generate interesting findings. In particular, statement 1 'worry about exams', statement 3 'research prior to writing up', statement 4 'instrumental approach to work', statement 7 'enjoy learning in depth', statements 9 and 10 'plans work' and 'outcome is all-important', as well as statement 12 'highly motivated' and statement 14 'coursework is preferred to exams'. Although care should be taken when making observations on such small data sets, there is a basis here to make some tentative comments on how students approach the IA.

TABLE 1 Data generated from the student questionnaire

<b>Number</b>	<b>Statement Theoretical context*</b>	<b>Level of overall agreement (out of 84 students)</b>	<b>% of A grade students (out of 14 students)</b>	<b>% of DE grade students (out of 10 students)</b>
1	<i>Worry about exams</i> <b>Fear of failure / Test anxiety</b>	73	76	100
2	<i>Reflect on work</i> <b>Self reflection</b>	67	86	80

3	<i>Research prior to writing up</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	42	64	30
4	<i>Instrumental approach to work</i> <b>Instrumentalism / efficacy</b>	64	57	80
5	<i>Prefer to control learning</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	61	64	70
6	<i>Set own learning goals</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	43	43	40
7	<i>Enjoy learning in depth</i> <b>Intrinsically motivated</b>	69	100	80
8	<i>Explore before being instructed</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	28	36	40
9	<i>Plans work</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	55	76	40
10	<i>Outcome is all-important</i> <b>Instrumentalism / efficacy</b>	60	93	60
11	<i>Exercises initiative</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	42	50	40
12	<i>Highly motivated to achieve</i> <b>Intrinsically motivated</b>	57	80	50
13	<i>Prefers to make own notes</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	50	62	70
14	<i>Prefers coursework to exams</i> <b>Fear of failure / test anxiety</b>	41	28	60
15	<i>Learns more than required</i> <b>Deep / Independent learning</b>	54	50	50

**Data from research discussions:**

A consensus of opinion emerged from discussions with 15 teachers in favour of the IA. Teachers felt that the IA offered students the opportunity to practise the skills required for degree level study and also served an effective means of discriminating between ability levels in History. In particular, the emphasis on developing independent learning and time management skills were identified as important to students' wider maturation as learners. In this respect, the IA was thought to have value beyond the study of history. Teachers also felt that the IA enabled students to explore a topic in depth and pursue their own intellectual interests. For example, at one SFC students were offered the choice of researching women's history, the Arab-Israeli conflict or Medieval Spain. A number of teachers reported that empowering weaker students to pick their IA pathway from a range of options helped motivate students and produced better results. Although one SFC reported that the IA generated the best grades from the four units at A level, others felt that the IA did not necessarily ensure higher grades than a fully examination-based A level. This finding should challenge the view that the IA is an easy unit within A Level history.

Feedback from a representative from the HA was also supportive for a number of reasons, and echoed the public position of the body. The feedback reflected many of the positive remarks made by history teachers, especially the value placed upon the IA as a means of developing students' independent learning and writing skills. The idea of the IA as an introduction to university-level study was also valued, as was the view that undertaking an individual project

was inherently useful as it often stimulated students' interest beyond a minimalist approach of 'learning for the exam'. At national level, the HA and well as the university sector had also voiced support for the continuation of the IA during consultations with the Department of Education over the reform of A level History. It is clear that the 'History community' values the IA as a challenging intellectual exercise that promotes the study of history.

## Discussion

The data generated a number of interesting findings that echo much of the literature on self-regulated learning and pose some important questions for how we should approach independent learning. The first stage of analysis examined the cohort as a whole. Unsurprisingly, the statement that generated the highest level of agreement was statement 1 that referred to test anxiety (73/84). Given the pressure on students to achieve highly, this outcome could be expected to be prominent in their concerns, indeed this was echoed by statement 5 that referred to the importance of the final outcome and which was fifth (60/84). Those statements that came second, third and fourth related to: enjoy learning in depth (69/84), self-reflection (67/84) and the adoption of an instrumental approach to work (64/84). This list of the top five most agreed statements do resonate with the literature described above.

In terms of the statements which generated the least amount of agreement, a number of important issues emerged. Although the statement that came fifth from bottom suggests that students prefer to make their own notes (50/84), the bottom four statements carry important implications for teachers who wish to promote independent learning. The statement at the bottom of the data list related to students exploring before being told to do, and with only 28/84, such a figure is disappointing for those teachers who would wish to inculcate a culture of personal initiative and independent learning in their classes. Moreover, the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth on the list of most agreed statements reinforce this concern. Only 43/84 of students tended to set their own learning goals, 42/84 undertook significant research prior to writing-up and 41/84 preferred coursework to examinations. This data suggests that a great deal of work needs to take place prior to launching students on their IA. It also infers that students still look to their teachers for some form of direction and support. Teachers must be aware that simply 'letting them get on with it' will not create self-regulated independent learners. Teachers should consider delivering a period of training in the skills of independent learning for students.

The second stage of analysis of the questionnaires sought to uncover any differences between the most able (A grade) and least able (DE students) students. There were a number of issues that emerged from this analysis of the data. Data from statement 1 would suggest that the least able students (100%) are more worried by examinations than the more able (76%), perhaps because of past experiences. This finding is echoed by statement 14 in which proportionally less (28%) of the more able students preferred examinations to coursework compared with a majority (60%) of the least able in the cohort. If this were to be replicated elsewhere, then teachers should be conscious of the need to address students' lack of confidence as well as examination technique. The second major issue to emerge was from statements 12 and 4 that related to levels of motivation and approach to work. Whereas a large majority (86%) of the most able students described themselves as high motivated, only half (50%) of the least able students did so. In relation to their approach to study, whereas a small majority of the more able students (57%) adopt an instrumental approach to work, a large majority of the least able do so (80%). Whether this is because the less able choose a 'lowest cost' approach to study or another reason should be the focus for further research.

The third issue to emerge from the data relates to differences in how students approach independent learning. Data generated by statements 3, 7 and 9 all infer that the more able student approaches independent learning with greater confidence than the least able. Whereas almost two-thirds of the most able (64%) undertake extensive research prior to writing up, less than a third (30%) of the less able do so. In addition, the evidence suggests that the more able students (100%) enjoy learning in depth more than the least able (80%). Moreover, a large majority of the most able students undertake independent planning (76%) compared with a minority of the least able students (40%). This evidence would indicate that teachers should be careful of the needs of the less able history student, as well as of the more able. This evidence highlights the importance of supporting the less able students when undertaking independent research, and echoes Vygotsky's ideas (1934/1986) the scaffolding role of the teacher, prior to the formal research phase of the IA.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has sought to explore how students approach their IA and whether self-regulated learning can inform professional practice. Reports from Ofsted and policy documentation within SFCs indicate that teachers have responded to the call to empower students to manage their own learning and move away from traditional forms of didactic teaching. In moving towards a greater emphasis on the student as the focal point of the learning process teachers must be more aware of those factors that stimulate or inhibit learning. This investigation explored how the core themes of self-regulated learning- target setting, self-reflection, motivation, and self-efficacy - impact on A Level History students who were undertaking their IA.

The findings from this investigation are important to those who teach History at A level, and for those who are interested in how to promote independent learning through self-regulated behaviours. The findings from this study suggest that students do adopt differing strategies depending on their view of themselves, the importance of the assignment and the benefits of wider reading. The data infers that although a majority enjoy the opportunity to learn in depth, relatively few set their own learning goals or were prepared to take the initiative. This was particularly evident in respect to the four statements that were least favoured by students on the questionnaire. This finding has important connotations for teachers, as it suggests that students still look for support even when tasked to act independently. Teachers are advised to front-load the research process with a supportive period of research training prior to 'letting students go'.

A second main line of enquiry related to how ability levels impacted on students' outlook and behaviours. It was clear that the more able students approached the IA differently from the less able. In particular, not only did the more able students tend to reflect more on their learning and general progress, but also they were also more confident in undertaking independent learning. These findings suggest that teachers should approach the lead-up to the research with a differentiated strategy in place for different ability levels. The importance of self-regulated theory is tied to its provision of a conceptual framework within which to analyse students' learning. Paris and Paris (2001) offer two metaphors of self-regulated learning: the first is the acquisition of new skills and the second is the development of the student as a more independent learner. The first of these two metaphors is often dependent on the ability of the teacher to transmit the necessary skills and is inherently limited in its usefulness. The second is a goal that teachers should, and generally do, aim for. The practicalities of how this goal is to be achieved lies in further reflective research by teachers that informs their situated professional practice.

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*THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN'S HISTORY IN THE SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES  
CLASSROOM*

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**Abstract**

*This article examines the motivation for why, and methods of how, some secondary social studies teachers incorporate women's voices into the traditional history framework. A multi-layered qualitative methodology was employed for this study using survey, case study, and phenomenological approaches, including interviews and classroom observations of participants. The researchers discovered the percentage of the teachers who claim to incorporate women's history/perspectives into their lessons; how teachers incorporate women's history/perspectives into their lessons; and the factors that contribute to teachers including women's history/perspectives into their classes.*

**Keywords**

Gender, Feminism, Women's History, Women's Perspectives

**Introduction**

The purpose of the article is to discuss the results of a research study that aimed to uncover whether secondary social studies teachers are incorporating women's history/perspectives into their lessons and if so, to discover the methodologies that are being utilised to do so.

Incorporating women's history into traditional history classes has been the subject of a number of articles and studies. 'Scholars, curriculum developers, and learned societies have called for a more gender-balanced curriculum.' (Cruz & Groendal-Cobb, 1998). Unfortunately, even though there have been great advances in the amount of information and history available through academics and national organizations, women's history has not trickled down to the K-12 level. Curriculum specialists in a number of states have stated that:

... they thought that content on women was infused into courses such as U.S. history. That assumption, however, is not supported if social studies curriculum standards and textbooks are any indication of the curricular content that is delivered to students (Hahn, Bernard-Powers, Crocco, & Woyshner, 2007).

Woyshner (2011) stated that:

The biggest mistake we can make is to assume the notion of progress, that each year the curriculum becomes more sophisticated, more inclusive, and more reflective of self and society. (p. 261)

There is a cultural assumption that gender equity has been realized. Many still ask, 'What is feminism?' 'Haven't things changed, aren't women in high-powered positions across society (government, business, media/Hollywood), aren't things equal, since women can do just about whatever they want now?' The perception of equality or achievement is not the

overwhelming reality. The exception is never the rule, and many young women [and men] are left shortchanged both by an educational system that ill prepares them for a critical literacy of agency and by a society that conflates money with accomplishment (Villaverde, 2008, p. 2).

As Villaverde explains, although women have made inroads into high-powered positions, equality has not been fully achieved, as those instances in which women have achieved outstandingly are not the norm.

### Literature review

Margaret Crocco (1999) pointed out that, ‘Across social studies as well as in history, women’s contributions have been ignored, underestimated, or marginalized.’ (Crocco, 1999, p. 8) Woyshner (2011) examined the ways that gender is generally addressed in social studies classes by discussing common frameworks used in gender inclusion. She focused on three theoretical frameworks: phase models, care tradition and social education. The phase models, as outlined by Woyshner, helped identify a progression for integrating women’s history into the social studies curriculum. She described two models, one that she identifies as the Lerner model (1981) and the second, the McIntosh Model (1983).

The Lerner model begins with:

- male-defined history and then moves on to
- ‘compensatory history’ in which missing and notable women are added; then
- ‘contribution history’ in which women’s contributions to male-defined society are highlighted. Next,
- ‘oppression framework’ where women’s history is told in terms of oppression, and finally
- women are added on their own terms in history, e.g. suffrage (Woyshner, 2011).

The Lerner model provided the basis for Tetreault’s phase theory of common stages of thinking about women which uses Lerner’s schema as a conceptual framework (Tetreault, 1986a).

TABLE 1: Tetreault’s “Stages of Thinking about Women in History”

Male History	The absence of women is not noted, “There is not consciousness that the male experience is a ‘particular knowledge’ selected from a wider universe of possible knowledge and experience.”
Compensatory History	The absence of women is noted. There is a search for missing women according to a male norm of greatness, excellence of humanness. Women are considered as exceptional, deviant or ‘other.’ Women are added into the traditional structure of the discipline but the structure and methodology are not challenged.
Bi-Focal History	Human experience is conceptualized primarily in dualist categories: male and female; private and public; agency and communion. Emphasis is on a “complementary but equal” conceptualization of men’s and women’s spheres and personal qualities. There is a focus on women’s oppression and misogyny. Women’s efforts to overcome that oppression are presented. Efforts to include women lead to the insight that traditional content, structure, and methodology of the disciplines are more appropriate to the male experience.

<p>Feminist History</p>	<p>Scholarly inquiry pursues new questions, new categories and new notions of significance which illuminate women's traditions, history, culture, values, visions, and perspectives.</p> <p>A pluralistic conception of women emerges which acknowledges diversity and recognizes that other variables besides gender shape women's lives, e.g. race, ethnicity, and social class.</p> <p>Women's experience is allowed to speak for itself. Feminist history is rooted in the personal and the specific; it builds from that to the general.</p> <p>The public and the private are seen as a continuum in women's experiences.</p> <p>Women's experience is analyzed within the social, cultural, historical, political, and economic contexts.</p> <p>Efforts to reconceptualize knowledge to encompass the female experience. The conceptualization of knowledge is not characterized by disciplinary thinking but becomes multidisciplinary.</p>
<p>Multi-Focal, Relational History</p>	<p>A multi-focal, gender-balanced perspective is sought which serves to fuse women's and men's experiences into a holistic view of human experience. At this stage scholars are conscious of particularity, while at the same time identifying common denominators of experience. They must begin to define what binds together and what separates the various segments of humanity.</p> <p>Scholars have deepened understanding of how private as well as the public form a continuum in individual experience. They search for the nodal points where comparative treatment of men's a women's experiences is possible.</p> <p>Efforts are made to reconceptualize knowledge to reflect this holistic view of human experience. The conceptualization of knowledge is not character by disciplinary thinking by becomes multidisciplinary.</p>

*Adapted from "Integrating Women's History: The case of United States History High School Textbooks," by M. K. Tetreault, 1986, The History Teacher, 19(2) p. 215-217.*

The second phase model discussed by Woyshner, the McIntosh model differs from the Lerner/Tetreault model in its phase identification and descriptions. The McIntosh model consists of five phases beginning with:

1. 'Womanless, all-white history,' next is
2. 'corrective history' known as the exceptional other history, comparative to the Lerner/Tetreault 'compensatory history'.
3. In the third phase, 'issues history' sexism and patriarchy serve as interpretive frameworks for women's history; this aligns with the Lerner/Tetreault 'oppression framework or bi-focal history' phase.
4. McIntosh's fourth phase, 'Alternative starting point history' looks at women's lives as history, noting there is nothing 'too humble to study'.
5. In the final phase, 'history is redefined and reconstructed to include women's ways of being, knowing, living and loving' (Woyshner, 2011).

Through the phase models the discourse surrounding women's history is examined, challenged and set on a course for growth and increased inclusion. Examining inclusion in a post-structuralist light, allows researchers to 'see discourses not as groups of words or sets of signifiers which simply refer to or describe reality ... instead discourses are the practices that systematically form the object of which they speak. Therefore it is only possible for us to think and know through the discourses with which we have access' (Schmeichel, 2011, p. 13). Hence, it is important to examine the language scholars, educators, and curriculum developers

use when discussing the inclusion of women's history or women's history itself. As the state of women's history inclusion is discussed word choice become paramount to meaning. It is not exactly accurate to say women were omitted from the historical record, as Minnich (1990) notes, we were excluded (p. 32).

The second framework for bringing gender into social studies, that Woysner addressed, is the 'Care Tradition'. The Care Tradition attributed to educational philosopher Nel Noddings, recognized that women's contributions throughout history can be encompassed in the world of caregiving, 'women have been charged with caregiving – with caring not only for their own families but also for the ill, elderly, and needy in their immediate communities.' (Noddings, 2002, p. 51) Noddings' argument includes the notion that boys and girls should both be educated for caregiving as well as breadwinning; students should examine homemaking and caregiving through history, philosophy, art, music and geography; the care tradition promotes the study of social policy and a consideration of the public-private dichotomy so often divided by gender (Woysner, 2011, p. 266).

Acknowledging the care tradition in women's history is a significant inclusion for feminist pedagogy. Fisher (2001) describes feminist pedagogy as 'teaching that engages students in political discussion of gender injustice'. It is a collective, collaborative discussion and ongoing process that recognizes women's experience, feelings, ideas and actions. It's goal is to identify and confront oppressive power relations; and, it supports women's political agency by accepting the significance of the private sphere (Fisher, 2001, p. 44).

The third framework as delineated by Woysner is 'Social Education'. Woysner uses Crocco's definition of social education, teaching and learning about how individuals construct and live out their understandings social, political, and economic relations ... and the implications of these understandings for how citizens are educated in a democracy (Crocco, 1999, p. 1).

According to Woysner (2011, p. 267) The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) notes the purpose of social education is to:

help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. (National Council for the Social Studies, 2010)

There is a clear link between social education and democratic/citizenship education. Educating for democracy requires that social change becomes the impetus for education. Santora (2011) notes that there is a key challenge for educators on:

whether democratic social education should emphasize patriotism and the knowledge needed to maintain the status quo or should it promote citizenship for critical thinking and the transformation of selves and society? (Santora, 2011)

But what of gender? Crocco (2001) notes:

the future of a healthy society may depend on a social studies curriculum that considers these issues [shifting gender roles and greater openness about issues of sexuality] in a more forthright manner (p. 66).

Democratic education is a 'way of being' and serves as a moral imperative for 'classrooms that focus on understanding and improving interpersonal and intercultural relationship and the

world condition'. (Santora, 2011) In Dewey's seminal work *Democracy in Education* he regards the educational system as the primary social institution responsible for the moral development of students in preparation for life in a democratic society (Dewey, 1916). Thus, how can social studies be providing democratic education for a democratic society when half the population is excluded from the narrative? Moreover, how can studying the histories of only white, male, Christians be reflective of a democratic society which espouses equality?

Dewey, an American pragmatist philosopher, embraced the pluralism of experiences, values and meanings. He believed that human society can be made better, the idea that human action can improve the human condition. The point of social education (i.e. history education) in effect is to create good citizens. Yet citizenship education itself is multifaceted and its own purposes provide disagreement among scholars. When we teach students the history of their society and culture we are teaching them what we value. Our values are at the core of what we consider a good citizen.

Including female-oriented content into social studies classes would likely help to prevent the disconnect females have demonstrated with the material. Wineburg (2001) contends that:

The familiar past entices us with the promise that we can locate our own place in the stream of time and solidify our identity in the present. By tying our own stories to those who have come before us, the past becomes a useful resource in our everyday life (p. 5).

Women's intellectual growth has been stymied by the absence of women from the discourse of history; the male experience has been represented as the human experience.

Without knowledge of women's past, no group of women could test their own ideas against those of their equals, those who had come out of similar conditions and similar life situations. Every thinking woman had to argue with the 'great man' in her head, instead of being strengthened and encouraged by her foremothers. For thinking women, the absence of Women's History was perhaps the most serious obstacle of all their intellectual growth (Lerner, 1993, p. 12). The absence of women from the traditional historical narrative has caused women to appear inferior to men. Historically women have been included in the margins of the textbooks and lessons, usually as a token addition (Holt, 1990).

The effect this has on female students has been explored in studies in which the results indicate that females tend to dislike social studies because they feel ignored by the curriculum (Rogers, 1990). Minnich (1990) questioned how it is that society has so effectively held knowledge of, by, and about women outside that which has been and is passed on, developed, and taught (p. 12). Curriculum theorists argue that the creation and development of curriculum is a normative process, that is, curriculum presents cultural truths and values (Crocco, 2008, p. 180). Clearly throughout history, men's and women's experiences have been markedly different, yet through the practice of history education women's history has been folded into male history creating an erroneous depiction of the past. Men's story gets told; women's gets left out. Thus not only do women's lives not count in the story of civilization, but men's lives 'stand in' for women's lives, essentially rendering women invisible to history (Crocco, 1997, p. 32). Though social studies organizations have suggested that teachers should include women and gender into their courses, it is unclear to what extent they are doing so, especially if they are following state standards and primarily using county approved textbooks. According to Joan Wallach Scott (1997) the conception of curriculum standards in American and world history had the effect of codifying a political approach that makes the systematic inclusion of women difficult (as cited in Hahn et al., 2007).

This approach underscores the development of nation-states, and since women have been minimally involved in state governance, this type of method manages to eclipse women's role in history.

In the *Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity through Education* the authors assert that attention to gender in the social studies has waned for a number of reasons in recent years:

- Decreased emphasis on social studies as a non-tested subject;
- Assumption that gender equity has been achieved;
- Misplacement of gender issues under the umbrella of multiculturalism; and
- Lack of federal funding for gender-related research (Hahn et al., 2007).

The fact that there is waning attention to gender in social studies is concerning because social studies offers a uniquely appropriate venue for addressing issues of gender bias, sexism, and women's issues in relation to other curriculum areas. Students should learn about women's participation in American life; about women's involvement with the abolition and anti-lynching movements, varied labour movements, peace movements, and other reform efforts.

Research shows that most students learn about the Seneca Falls Convention and the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. However, gender related themes such as the movement for birth control, the defeated Equal Rights Amendment (securing equality under the law for women) and Title IX of the 1972 Amendments to the Higher Education Act (ensuring women could not be excluded from participation in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial aid) are not covered (Hahn et al., 2007).

### **Research goals**

This study set out to discover if teachers claimed to incorporate women's history/perspectives into their lessons and the methodologies employed to do so. Since this study is feminist in nature, that is, as Lather (1991) states, it seeks to 'correct both the invisibility and distortion of female experience in ways relevant to ending women's unequal social position' feminist theory was utilized to guide the study (p. 71).

### **Research Design**

A multi-layered qualitative methodology was employed for this study using survey and phenomenological case-study approaches. This study included a survey to discover what percentage of respondents claimed to incorporate women's history and women's perspectives into their classes; from this survey, individuals were identified to participate further. Additionally, qualitative data was taken from classroom observations in order to understand the process with which each participant incorporated women's history/perspectives into their classroom practice.

Creswell (2007) notes that case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e. a setting or context) (p. 73). He goes on to say that 'case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores ... bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case-based themes'.

### **Research Setting**

The school district where the research was conducted is one of the largest school districts in the nation. There are 175 schools serving 181,448 students in this district, of those 175 schools,



53 are traditional (non-charter, non-K8) secondary schools with approximately 825 secondary social studies teachers. The research was completed at multiple school locations. Observations were conducted at the participants' schools.

### **Population and Sample**

A purposeful, theoretical sample was generated for this study. Such a method allowed for selecting 'people on the basis of their potential manifestation or representation of important theoretical constructs' (Patton, 2002, p. 238). Thus, a small sample was purposefully selected to conduct an in-depth study of the phenomenon in question.

Secondary social studies teachers in this district received a survey (See Appendix A) soliciting their participation in the research study. The survey asked teachers if they incorporated a variety of multiple perspectives into their teaching practices. Included in the list of multiple perspectives were women's voices/perspectives. The last part of the survey requested participants to provide contact information if they consented to be contacted for further participation. Once participants were identified classroom observations were conducted. All names have been kept confidential, and pseudonyms have been used.

### **Observations**

Due to the fact that this research intended to examine *how* participants incorporate women's perspectives, all observations were scheduled in advance. Although this ran a risk of participants planning lessons specifically to meet the needs of the study, this posed less of a problem than unplanned visits in which participants did not at all meet the needs of the study. During the observations, the researchers looked for how participants incorporated issues pertaining to gender and women's history into their lessons. Any materials they used during the lesson were collected and analyzed as well.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to best understand the data, all observations were transcribed and underwent initial coding and analysis for semiotics and stages of inclusion. Following the initial coding phase Tetreault's 'Stages of Thinking About Women in History' (Table 1) was applied as the framework of how each participant included women's history in her/his classroom. This framework contains five phases:

1. Male History (in which the absence of women is not noted),
2. Compensatory History (the absence of women is noted; there is a search for missing women according to the male norm of greatness),
3. Bi-focal History (focus on women's oppression and misogyny; women's efforts to overcome oppression are presented),
4. Feminist History (women's experience is analysed within the social, cultural, historical, political, and economic contexts), and
5. Multi-focal/Relational History (seeks to fuse women's and men's experiences into a holistic view of the human experience) (Tetreault, 1986a).

Thus, each observation provided data as to where participants fell along the continuum of women's history inclusion.

**Discussion**

**Survey Findings**

The first form of data came from the survey. Participants were asked about their inclusion of a number of minority voices including women voices. This was done so as to not limit bias in their reporting. Question six read: ‘Do you include women’s voices in your social studies lessons?’ Those who answered ‘Yes’ were piped to a question that asked how often they included women’s voices. Those who answered ‘No’ were piped to a question that asked why they did not include women’s voices. The survey data was critical to answering the research question, ‘Are teachers incorporating gender and women’s history in their lessons?’

**TABLE 2: Inclusion of Women’s Voices Survey Question**

Do you include Women’s voices in your social studies lessons?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	64	85.3	91.4	91.4
	No	6	8.0	8.6	100.0
	Total	70	93.3	100.0	
Missing	System	5	6.7		
Total		75	100.0		

**TABLE 3: Frequency of Inclusion**

How often do you include Women’s voices in your lessons?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than Once a Month	9	12.0	14.1	14.1
	Once a Month	21	28.0	32.8	46.9
	2-3 Times a Month	18	24.0	28.1	75.0
	Once a Week	8	10.7	12.5	87.5
	2-3 Times a Week	6	8.0	9.4	96.9
	Daily	2	2.7	3.1	100.0
	Total	64	85.3	100.0	
Missing	System	11	14.7		
Total		75	100.0		

From the survey, it is apparent that over 91.4% of secondary social studies teachers claim to incorporate women’s voices. However, only 25% claim to incorporate women’s voices once a week or more, with the greatest percentage, 46.9%, claiming only to incorporate women’s voices once a month or less.

**TABLE 4: Reasons for Non-Inclusion**

Why do you not include Women’s voices in your lessons?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not required	3	4.0	50.0	50.0
	Not enough time	2	2.7	33.3	83.3
	Other	1	1.3	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	8.0	100.0	
Missing	System	69	92.0		
Total		75	100.0		

**TABLE 5: Gender of Survey Participants**

What is your sex?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	27	36.0	42.9	42.9
	Female	36	48.0	57.1	100.0
	Total	63	84.0	100.0	
Missing	System	12	16.0		
Total		75	100.0		

Only six teachers surveyed indicated that they did not include women’s voices in their lessons; half of those due to it not being required in the curriculum and the other half due to time constraints (although one person indicated ‘other, s/he explained in the write-in box that time was the main cause).

Demographic data on participants showed that 57.1% of valid respondents were female. However, of those who elected to participate further in the study, only one was female.

In order to answer the question *Are teachers incorporating gender and women’s history in their lessons?* the survey was set up to ascertain how many teachers claimed to do so. The results indicated that an overwhelming majority of secondary social studies teachers, 91.4%, did indeed incorporate women’s voices into their lessons. Yet, only 12.5% claimed to include women’s perspectives more than once a week. Ultimately, while the question can be answered in the affirmative, teachers *are* including women’s voices in their lessons, only a small percentage does so on a regular basis, and it remains unknown what those lessons include and where they fall on the continuum of inclusion.

While a large majority of teachers claim to include women’s voices in their lessons, they may be doing so in such a manner that perpetuates oppressive systems and does not highlight the contributions women have made to society. Thus if the lessons of inclusion are based on the Compensatory History stage, then women are added to the traditional content only if they can be measured ‘according to the male norm of greatness’ and not through a holistic view of human experience (Tetreault, 1986a).

### Observation Findings

In order to answer the second question, *How do teachers incorporate women's history/perspectives into the lesson?*, five teachers were observed teaching in their classrooms. The observation followed an initial interview; hence, participants were aware of the study's topic and for the most part planned and taught lessons that, in their view, met the goals of the study. Interestingly, two participants, Nathan Spelts and Darren Motola, planned lessons on specific women's issues, The Equal Rights Amendment and the Women's Movement of the 1970's, respectively. The topics in those cases affected where each teacher fell according to Tetreault's 'Stages of Thinking about Women in History.' Whereas Nathan Spelts's lesson about the ERA was under the Bi-Focal History stage, Darren Motola's lesson on the Women's Movement actually fit under the Feminist History stage. Interestingly, the interview data and observational data did not always match. This could be the result of the fact that some participants may have told researchers what they thought they wanted to hear in the interview, but did not, in actuality, perform in such a manner in their own classrooms.

Understanding how teachers incorporated women's history was best explored through finding where each participant appeared on Tetreault's continuum.

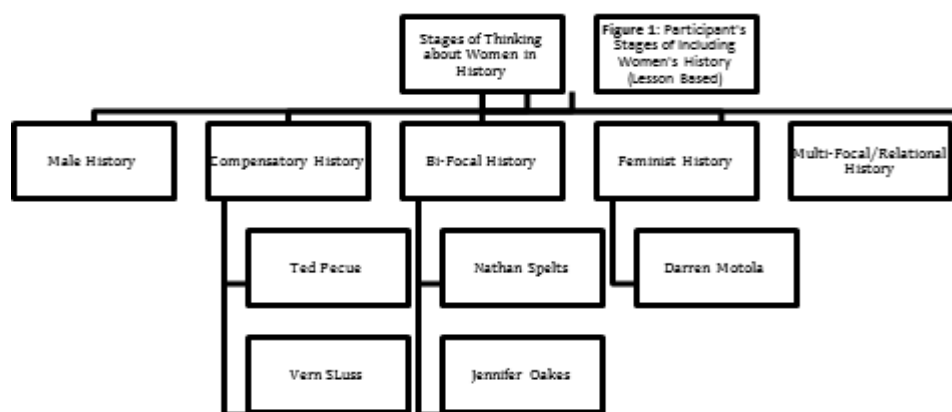


Figure 1: Participant's Stages of Including Women's History (Lesson Based)

For the purpose of this study, researchers examined the content presented, the dialogue between teacher and student, and the resources utilised by the teachers. However, researchers did not critically examine the methodologies employed by each teacher pertaining to whether they implemented best pedagogical practices.

While the pedagogical methods were not critically examined, it is worth discussing the variety of approaches used by participants to incorporate women's history/perspectives. It appeared likely that Ted Pecue and Jennifer Oakes were the only teachers to stick with their previously planned lessons, allowing the researchers to see how they authentically include women's history into their curriculum. While Pecue conducted an Advanced Placement test review scavenger hunt, his inclusion of women's history was based on pointing out to students the challenge of being able to name female psychologists in comparison with the ease of naming a number of male psychologists. Oakes on the other hand, demonstrated her approach to including women by acknowledging that it was the textbook that included women's history, her lesson magnified

the inclusion by drawing students' attention to the section on women's history and having them complete a foldable, one section being dedicated to women's history.

Documentary films similarly provided teachers with a way to include women's perspectives. Both Nathan Spelts and Vern Sluss implemented documentaries to allow the experts (the historians interviewed for the film) to better explain the content included. The documentary used by Spelts focused on the history of the ERA, while the one shown by Sluss told the story of a female Civil War veteran and her disguising herself as a man during her enlistment. Notably, Spelts's lesson focused solely on an issue pertaining to women's history, whereas Sluss's lesson incorporated a female perspective into a traditionally male oriented topic, the American Civil War.

The discussion that followed the video in Sluss's class also provided insight into the manner in which women's perspectives are included. The video itself pointed out the way in which women's activities in the public sphere are acceptable when they either champion male activities (as was the case with Sarah Edmonds, subject of the documentary) or are a broadening of women's supporting role within the family. This reinforces the idea that women's virtue lies in self-sacrifice. During the discussion activity following the video, one female student remarked that if she was the mother of a daughter during the Civil War, who wanted to fight disguised as a man, she would support her through anything, because that is what a mother does. As Tetreault pointed out, adolescent females struggle with the ethic of self-sacrifice in contrast to the concept of their own rights (Tetreault, 1986b). However, these issues were not explored in the discussion.

Teachers also used lectures to disseminate information to students. Darren Motola was the only participant in this study to fully employ a lecture. However, his oration was supplemented with a PowerPoint presentation, using graphs, charts, images, and video clips. While his students were not engaged in any sort of critical thinking, they were exposed to the highest level of inclusion along Tetreault's "Stages of Thinking about Women in History" in this study.

When it came to matters of gender bias, the five participants observed were cognizant of the issues. Gollnick, Sadker and Sadker identified six types of gender bias in both textbooks and in the classroom (Gollnick et al., 1982, p. 94). These include:

- 1) Invisibility or underrepresentation
- 2) Stereotyping
- 3) Selectivity and imbalance (focus on aspects of history such as political and military that have little female presence)
- 4) Unreality in instructional material (spotless housewife)
- 5) Fragmentation and isolation (marginalization)
- 6) Linguistic bias: caveman, mankind, forefathers etc. (Gollnick et al., 1982).

These participants acknowledged the invisibility and underrepresentation of women in the curriculum, and thus made efforts to overcome those issues by adding more women's perspectives into their lessons. A number of the participants intentionally addressed issues of stereotyping, for instance, Sluss asked his students to consider historic gender roles and challenges women faced that men did not. When it came to issues of selectivity and imbalance, most participants intentionally chose topics that were based on social history rather than military or political history.

Marginalization, however, remained an issue, particularly in Pecue's class – when the focus of his inclusion relied on simply pointing out to students a paucity of awareness of female

psychologists that existed in their content knowledge. Finally, linguistic bias, as defined by Gollnick, Sadker and Sadker, did not appear in the lessons observed.

### Implications

This study provides information on current classroom practices that address gender equity concerns. Currently, teachers who incorporate women's perspectives do so predominately in the middle-low end of Tetreault's continuum. If incorporating women's perspectives and women's history was made a priority in teacher education then perhaps current classroom practices would reflect a higher level of inclusion, both in the amount of inclusion and in the 'Stages of Thinking About Women in History.'

Gender equity must be addressed in teacher education in order to foster teacher candidates' desire to include women's history in social studies classes. Teacher education programmes that include gender equity training may include curriculum that instructs teacher candidates how to incorporate women's history and perspectives at the higher end of the 'Stages of Thinking About Women in History.' Thus, there is a need for pre-service teachers to understand the stages of inclusion so that they are able to incorporate women's history at the higher end of Tetreault's continuum. This will allow for opportunities for teacher candidates to consider ideas of gender equity while in a teacher education program.

Moreover, teachers could implement the suggestions from *Clio in the Classroom: A Guide for Teaching U. S. Women's History* which provides a handbooks with key content, concepts and teaching strategies that "move" beyond the notion of women's history as a compendium of 'firsts,'" (Berkin et al., 2009, p. 3). Included are strategies for redesigning history courses to implement a focus on feminist pedagogy, and social studies best practices.

Furthermore, classroom teachers can implement the strategies outlined in the *Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity through Education*; in which the authors recommend social studies teachers:

- Ensure that substantial attention is devoted to gender in the curriculum in order to present an accurate view of gendered human experience in history and contemporary society;
- Social studies curriculum developers give more attention to the diverse experience of women and girls by class, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation;
- The notion of gender equity be expanded to include all individuals; men and boys are gendered as well as women and girls;
- Connections between universities and colleges and K-12 social studies educators be strengthened to support curriculum transformation based on new knowledge;
- Policy makers, practitioners, and scholars address the need to look at structural problems in school systems and classrooms that create barriers to delivering gender-equitable social studies; and
- Continue research along several lines of inquiry – including among others – the benefits of gender inclusion in social studies in the elementary grades, gender and technology, and teacher and classroom practices (Hahn et al., 2007).

Additionally, if teachers can employ Feminist teaching practices such as 'empowering students, decentering authority in the classroom, creating cohesive learning communities, and honouring students' diverse experiences' they have a better chance of fostering a gender balanced curriculum and equitable classroom environment (Goldberg, 2009, p. 210).

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations to this study. First, the participants were selected from the southeastern region, thus the data and conclusions will have a regional, rather than national perspective. Additionally, this study only addressed secondary social studies teachers who incorporate women's history/perspectives into their curriculum. This concentration denied the contributions of elementary teachers who promote gender equity in their classes.

Furthermore, this study did not look at the inclusion of sexuality issues nor of the presence of other multiple perspectives such as race, class, or ethnicity. Additionally, this study did not address the construction of male identities or theories of masculinity. In regards to the study design, since the lessons observed were planned, it is not clear how participants incorporate women's perspective on a weekly basis, when the content is not focused explicitly on the female experience, or when they do not have the opportunity to plan when they are being observed. Finally, since this study took on a phenomenological approach, it is not generalisable to a larger population.

A further limitation of this study is the fact that current curriculum standards do not include a large number of standards on women's contributions to society, thus teachers who do include women's history run the risk of losing their jobs if they veer too far away from they required content standards. This may have impacted, and limited, the participants available for this study.

### **Future research**

There are a number of possibilities for future research related to the findings from this study. Primarily, it would be interesting to see how students in participants' classrooms perceive the lessons which include women's voices and how the students are affected by such lessons over a period of time. Moreover, a similar study examining how sexuality is addressed in social studies classrooms would be beneficial. Furthermore, a study that examines how teachers incorporate a variety of multiple perspectives including race, class, gender, sexuality, and how often each of these perspectives is addressed in comparison to the others and in comparison to the traditional social studies/history framework might complete the picture of why and how social studies teacher address multiple perspectives.

Additionally, some of the drawbacks of phenomenological case studies are that they are not generalizable to greater populations. However, a future study could develop a survey from themes found within this study for large-scale dissemination and factor analysis.

### **Concluding thoughts**

Perhaps one reason participants did not overall find themselves on the higher end of Tetreault's continuum, was their lack of content background, 'Teachers whose own education has emphasized traditional perspectives are often reluctant to address topics from social and women's history with which they are not familiar' (Crocco, 1997, p. 32). As Gollnick, Sadker, and Sadker pointed out, most students leave school only knowing a few facts about women's history:

Women arrived in 1619. They held the Seneca Falls Convention on Women's Rights in 1848. During the rest of the nineteenth century, they participated in reform movements, chiefly temperance, and were exploited in factories. In 1920 they were given the vote. They joined

the armed forces during the Second World War and thereafter have enjoyed the good life in America (Gollnick et al., 1982)

Thus, teachers whose knowledge of women's history encompasses only those few facts cannot engage their students in deep understanding of women's contributions to society. While the efforts of the participants in this study to include women in their lessons are commendable, much work needs to be done to increase the awareness and importance of including women's history, voices, and perspectives.

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**APPENDIX A: SURVEY**

Part I

1	Please indicate if you regularly include the below minority viewpoints in your history lessons.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	African-Americans
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Women
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Latinos/as
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay/Lesbian
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Native American
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religious Minorities
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

Part II

Do you include <b>African- American</b> voices in your social studies lessons?		yes	no
If yes, how often:			
Multiple times per week <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Seldom <input type="checkbox"/>
Rarely, if ever <input type="checkbox"/>			
If not, why not:			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough time		
<input type="checkbox"/>	No interest		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Too hard to find resources		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____		

Do you include <b>Women's</b> voices in your social studies lessons?					yes	no
If yes, how often:						
Multiple times per week <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Seldom <input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely, if ever <input type="checkbox"/>		
If not, why not:						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough time					
<input type="checkbox"/>	No interest					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Too hard to find resources					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____					
Do you include <b>Latino/Latina</b> voices in your social studies lessons?					yes	no
If yes, how often:						
Multiple times per week <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Seldom <input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely, if ever <input type="checkbox"/>		
If not, why not:						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough time					
<input type="checkbox"/>	No interest					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Too hard to find resources					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____					

Do you include <b>Native-American</b> voices in your social studies lessons?				yes	n
If yes, how often:					
Multiple times per week <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Seldom <input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely, if ever <input type="checkbox"/>	
If not, why not:					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough time				
<input type="checkbox"/>	No interest				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Too hard to find resources				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____				
Do you include <b>Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ)</b> voices in your social studies lessons?				yes	n
If yes, how often:					
Multiple times per week <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Seldom <input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely, if ever <input type="checkbox"/>	
If not, why not:					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough time				
<input type="checkbox"/>	No interest				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Too hard to find resources				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____				

Do you include <b>Asian</b> voices in your social studies lessons?		yes	no	
If yes, how often:				
Multiple times per week <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Seldom <input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely, if ever <input type="checkbox"/>
If not, why not:				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough time			
<input type="checkbox"/>	No interest			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Too hard to find resources			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____			
Do you include <b>Religious Minority</b> voices in your social studies lessons?		yes	no	
If yes, how often:				
Multiple times per week <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Seldom <input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely, if ever <input type="checkbox"/>
If not, why not:				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough time			
<input type="checkbox"/>	No interest			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Too hard to find resources			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____			

Part III

Questionnaire

1. How do district/federal initiatives affect your feelings of autonomy in your content choices?
2. What units do you tend to incorporate women's perspectives?
3. Does the textbook you use provide sufficient material to present women's voices? What book do you use?
4. What other resources do you use to supplement the text to bring in women's perspectives?
5. Does your classroom décor reflect both male and female representations (i.e. posters, timelines, bulletin boards, etc.). OR  
 Please list the posters/décor you have up in your classroom on a regular basis:
6. Do you incorporate more or fewer multiple perspectives in your lessons than you have in the past? Please explain why.

Part IV

Demographics

1.	How many years have you been teaching?												
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%; padding: 2px;">1-3</td> <td style="width: 30%; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">4-8</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">9-12</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">13-20</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">20-30</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">31 +</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-8	<input type="checkbox"/>	9-12	<input type="checkbox"/>	13-20	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-30	<input type="checkbox"/>	31 +	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>												
4-8	<input type="checkbox"/>												
9-12	<input type="checkbox"/>												
13-20	<input type="checkbox"/>												
20-30	<input type="checkbox"/>												
31 +	<input type="checkbox"/>												
2.	What is your highest level of schooling?												
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%; padding: 2px;">Bachelor's Degree</td> <td style="width: 30%; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Some graduate school</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Master's degree</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Specialist Degree (Master's +30 hrs.)</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Doctorate</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Bachelor's Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some graduate school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Master's degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Degree (Master's +30 hrs.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doctorate	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Bachelor's Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Some graduate school	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Master's degree	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Specialist Degree (Master's +30 hrs.)	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Doctorate	<input type="checkbox"/>												

3.	What is/are your degree(s) in? _____												
4.	What is your sex? <table border="1"><tr><td>Female</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>Male</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>												
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>												
5.	What is your age? <table border="1"><tr><td>20-25</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>26-30</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>31-40</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>41-50</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>51-60</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>61+</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table>	20-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	26-30	<input type="checkbox"/>	31-40	<input type="checkbox"/>	41-50	<input type="checkbox"/>	51-60	<input type="checkbox"/>	61+	<input type="checkbox"/>
20-25	<input type="checkbox"/>												
26-30	<input type="checkbox"/>												
31-40	<input type="checkbox"/>												
41-50	<input type="checkbox"/>												
51-60	<input type="checkbox"/>												
61+	<input type="checkbox"/>												

**Please Place Any Additional Comments in the Box Below**

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If you would like to participate in a follow up interview, please list your contact information, i.e. name and email or phone number. \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You for Your Time!**

**RAISING PERFORMANCE IN HISTORY TEACHING WHILE IMPROVING SECONDARY STUDENTS' ESSAY WRITING SKILLS**

Yosanne Vella and Roseline Caruana, Faculty of Education, University of Malta

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**Abstract**

*This paper describes an attempt to improve secondary students' essay writing performance during history lessons. Experienced history teachers intuitively know that stimulating pedagogy will probably result in better quality student essays. However the authors of this paper wanted to see if case-study research evidence can support or question this hypothesis. It aimed to improve students' historical understanding in history lessons through focusing on the processes of essay writing, as normally it is only after writing an essay that students receive feedback in the form of a mark or grade. In the case-study the researchers wanted to create a situation where they involved students, through a range of teaching activities, in the gradual development of their essay writing before final composition. At the same time the case-study firmly kept in mind the time constraints of real classroom situations.*

*The case-study also raises the impact of dialogic teaching based on oracy, discussion, debate and cooperative problem solving with the teacher taking a central role in guiding and supporting interactive learning. The contrast was stark, between the lessons in which students passively assimilated knowledge that the teacher transmitted and the interactive lessons in which the students were challenged and played an active part in developing their ideas and historical understanding. The quality of the essays resulting from the transmission mode of pedagogy and the interactive mode supported the hypothesis that the case-study was testing: there was a major improvement in the quality of essay writing from the interactive lessons.*

**Key words**

Case study, Dialogic learning, Dialogue, Discussion and debate, Discursive pedagogy, Essay writing, History lessons, Interactive learning, Oracy, Passive learning, Pedagogy – interactive, Progression – gradual development, Secondary students' performance, Teaching activities, Transmission model of teaching.

**Introduction**

Essay writing has always been an integral part of history teaching in secondary school. It is often used as a way of assessing students' understanding of a particular aspect of the historical topic being studied. To research the link between pedagogy and essay writing and to improve the quality of essay writing, permission was granted from Malta's Education Department to carry out research with a year 9 class (13 year olds). The Head of School and the class history teacher were both willing to help in this research by allowing the researchers to carry out the history lessons in the school and in the classroom.

In all there were four lessons of 45 minutes each and the topic, which was taken from the National Curriculum and which is part of the syllabus for this class, was 'The building of Valletta, Malta's capital city'. The main objective of the lessons and the eventual titles of the essays were 'Why was Valletta built?' and 'What were the consequences of the building of Valletta?' So basically the history thinking skills the researchers needed to focus on were the concepts of cause and consequence.



Cause and consequence are two major disciplinary concepts in history. Haydn et al. noted they “are arguably the most complex of the key concepts . . . They are difficult to teach because it is easy to make assumptions about the extent of your pupils’ understanding of cause and consequence.” (Haydn et al. 2008, p.105)

Many debates have arisen over the concept of causation. “One of the major reasons for debate here is that causation is rooted in contingency and uncertainty” (Phillips, 2002, p.42). There can be many causes of an historical event. However, it is difficult to say whether one or more causes were the sole causes of the event or whether there was another or others not as significant. The teacher often chooses certain causes over others to present to the class.

However, pedagogical research in history (Counsell,2004; Hayden, 2008; Phillips, 2008) suggests that it is much better to create a learning situation where students decide to highlight which causes are more important after careful analysis of evidence. Then they need to link them together, sort them under long-term and short-term causes and then organize them according to their level of importance as causes of the event. In the case of causes Calleja (2003, p. 35) suggests that, “The learner must understand how the different causes and motives have worked together to make one event, or several events, happen.” Students find all this quite difficult, especially when it comes to linking causes together and to understanding that an event happened due to multiple causes and not just one cause. Students also tend to believe that the final cause in a sequence which precipitated the event is the most important one; “events were ‘inevitable’. It is almost as if, given a certain combination of causes, an event was ‘bound to happen’.” (Haydn et al, 2008, p.106).

A simple ‘clean’ explanation takes away the issue of doubt or uncertainty and therefore it is more comfortable for students to think in this way. Only a few students can actually differentiate between the predictability of scientific causation and the unpredictability of historical events which are contingent on the vagaries of human agency. The teacher’s remit should include the need to remind students to be sceptical because of the human factor particularly concerning conclusions that a particular event was inevitable.

If students are able to master the difference between the motives or hidden agendas and the real cause, then they are able to understand and work through the concepts of cause and consequence. Haydn et al. (2008, p.107) argue that despite the fact that every event is ‘unique’, pupils should use key words such as ‘social’, ‘political’, ‘economic’, ‘technological’ and other adjectives to help them understand and categorize causes and consequences, always, keeping in mind that these terms may be used in diverse events.

### **The survey**

The following is the format of the four lessons conducted consecutively over a period of just over a month. According to the school timetable Maltese history lessons occur once a week.

#### **Lesson 1**

##### *Introduction:*

First the researcher introduced herself to the students and explained the research she would be carrying out. (2 minutes)

Introduction: The teacher showed a picture of Valletta to the students and asked why was it built (5 minutes)


**Step 1:**

A Power point was presented to the students with possible reasons as to Why Valletta was built? The researcher explained the Power point presentation while answering any queries. (15 minutes)

**Step 2:**


After listening to the causes which led to the building of Valletta, the students were presented with a traditional format essay sheet. The sheet included the title of the essay: *Why did the Order of Saint John build the city of Valletta?* and students were asked to write the causes that led The Order of Saint John to build the city of Valletta? (around 200 words) (18 minutes)

**Why was Valletta built?**

 There were several causes which led to the building of Valletta. One could mention \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

This was important because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

However, on the other hand, one must not forget that another cause was \_\_\_\_\_  
which led to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Without any doubt, there was  also \_\_\_\_\_ which led to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Among others, there was \_\_\_\_\_,  
this helped \_\_\_\_\_.

Another cause of the building of Valletta was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, this cause was important  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

As could be observed, there were several causes which led the Order of St John and the Grand Master La Valette to build the city of Valletta.




Figure 1 Guided Writing Frame to analyse causes

*Step 3:*

The researcher collected the essay sheets and the students were thanked for their cooperation. (2 minutes)

**Lesson 2**

*Introduction:*

The researcher showed the students a picture of Valletta on the Interactive Whiteboard and asked them 'What was that place?' and 'Why do you think it was built?' (5 minutes)

*Step 1:*

After few minutes discussing their answers, the class was divided into 5 groups with 4 students each. Each group was given a set of causation cards and the question '*Why was Valletta built?*' Each group was carefully chosen so as to have a students at different levels of achievement in each group. Where possible, students were grouped as follows: two high achieving students and two low achieving students. This helped them in supporting each others' learning (5 minutes)

*Step 2:*

For the first task each group had to put the causation cards in a line according to their importance. The group members discussed each cause together and started from the most important to the least important minutes.

*Step 3:*

After each group had finished placing the cards in a sequence of importance, each cause was discussed by the class, in groups. Throughout the discussion, students from each group came out and placed the causes in the line of importance on the Interactive Whiteboard. (15 minutes)

*Step 4:*

For the second task students had to put the same causation cards in an inner or outer square, according to their importance. The causes which the students considered as 'most important' were placed in the inner square, those considered least important outside the square. (10 min.)

*Step 5:*

The teacher, together with the students, discussed the answers of each group. Also, during the discussion, students from each group placed the causes on the Interactive Whiteboard, according to what they had discussed in their group. The researcher also provided students with feedback during the discussion. (15 minutes)

*Step 6:*

All the cards were collected and the students were presented with a guided writing frame with the title '*Why was Valletta built?*' The writing frame is shown in figure 1.

**Lesson 3**

*Introduction:*

The researcher showed the students the first slide of the Power Point which was a picture of Valletta and asked students if they remembered the causes which led to the building of Valletta. (5 minutes)

*Step 1:*

A Power Point was presented to the students, this time with the possible consequences of the building of Valletta: 'What were the consequences of the building of Valletta?' In a similar way

**What were the consequences of the building of Valletta?**

The building of Valletta left several important consequences, such as \_\_\_\_\_.

This was important because \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

Another consequence of the building of this city was \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

which led to \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

Without any doubt these effects brought about other consequences, such as \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

However, on the other hand one cannot forget that there was also \_\_\_\_\_.

because this helped \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

Among others, there was also \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ which led \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

Today, Valletta is the capital city of Malta, which provides the government of Malta with an administrative centre.




Figure 2 Consequences guided writing frame

to the first lesson, the researcher read all the consequences and explained them one by one in further detail, while answering any questions. (15 minutes)

**Step 2:**

For this step of the lesson students were required to write, in a traditional essay form, the consequences of the building of Valletta. Students were presented with an essay sheet including only the title 'What were the consequences of the building of Valletta?' They were asked to fill in the sheet by writing the consequences that came about due to the building of the city of Valletta. (20 minutes, around 200 words)

**Step 3:**

The researcher collected the essay sheets and the students were thanked once again for their co-operation. (2 minutes)

#### **Lesson 4**

##### *Introduction:*

The researcher showed the students a picture of Valletta and conducted a brainstorming session of the situation in Malta after the building of Valletta. (5 minutes)

##### *Step 1:*

The class was divided in 5 groups with 4 students each. Each group was given a set of consequences cards and the question '*What were the consequences of the building of Valletta?*' (5 minutes)

##### *Step 2:*

For the first task each group had to put the consequences in sequence according to their importance. Starting from the most important consequence to the less important ones, the students discussed them together and arranged them accordingly. (10 minutes)

##### *Step 3:*

After each group finished placing the cards in the line of importance, each consequence was discussed together in class, as groups. Throughout the discussion, students from each group came out and placed the consequences in the line of importance on the Interactive Whiteboard. (15 min.)

##### *Step 4:*

For the second task students had to put the same consequence cards in the square or outside the square, according to their importance. The consequences which the students considered as 'most important' were placed them in the, while those which they considered as 'less important' placed outside the square. (10 minutes)

##### *Step 5:*

The teacher together with the students discussed the answers of each group. Also, during the discussion, students from each group placed the consequences on the Interactive Whiteboard, according to what they had discussed in their group. The researcher also provided students with feedback during the discussion. (15 minutes)

##### *Step 6:*

All the cards were collected and the students were presented with a guided writing frame with the title '*What were the consequences of the building of Valletta?*' The writing frame is shown in figure 2. (20 minutes)

##### *Step 7:*

The researcher collected the students' writing frames and they were thanked for their cooperation. (2 minutes)

#### **Analysis of students' responses**

Students' essays (total of 4 essays one produced at the end of every lesson) were marked according to prepared criteria. The marking criteria was set up so as to allocate marks for each cause and consequence mentioned. Each cause and consequence mentioned held one mark, while two marks were allotted for a detailed explanation of the cause or consequence. This was an open-marking scheme. Hence there was no maximum number of marks a student could obtain. The more detailed causes and consequences the student mentioned, the more marks were allocated.

The marks acquired for each cause mentioned in the students' essays, after lesson 1 and after lesson 2 were gathered and a graph was plotted for each cause given. The following is a table with all the causes presented by the students:

<b>Causes: Why Was Valletta Built?</b>
Fort Saint Elmo did not offer proper defence for the Grand Harbour
After the Great Siege life was different: the Order decided to stay in Malta and thus needed a good fortified city
The Order wanted to build a city which could protect two important harbours; Marsamxett and The Grand Harbour
The village of Birgu did not give them good shelter anymore
It was La Valette's wish to build a new city
The Order of St John had the money, therefore they could build this big city
The Order of St John wanted to show their greatness and economic power with this city
The Order wanted a city like Rhodes
The Order wanted to have lots of cities
The Order wanted a new city

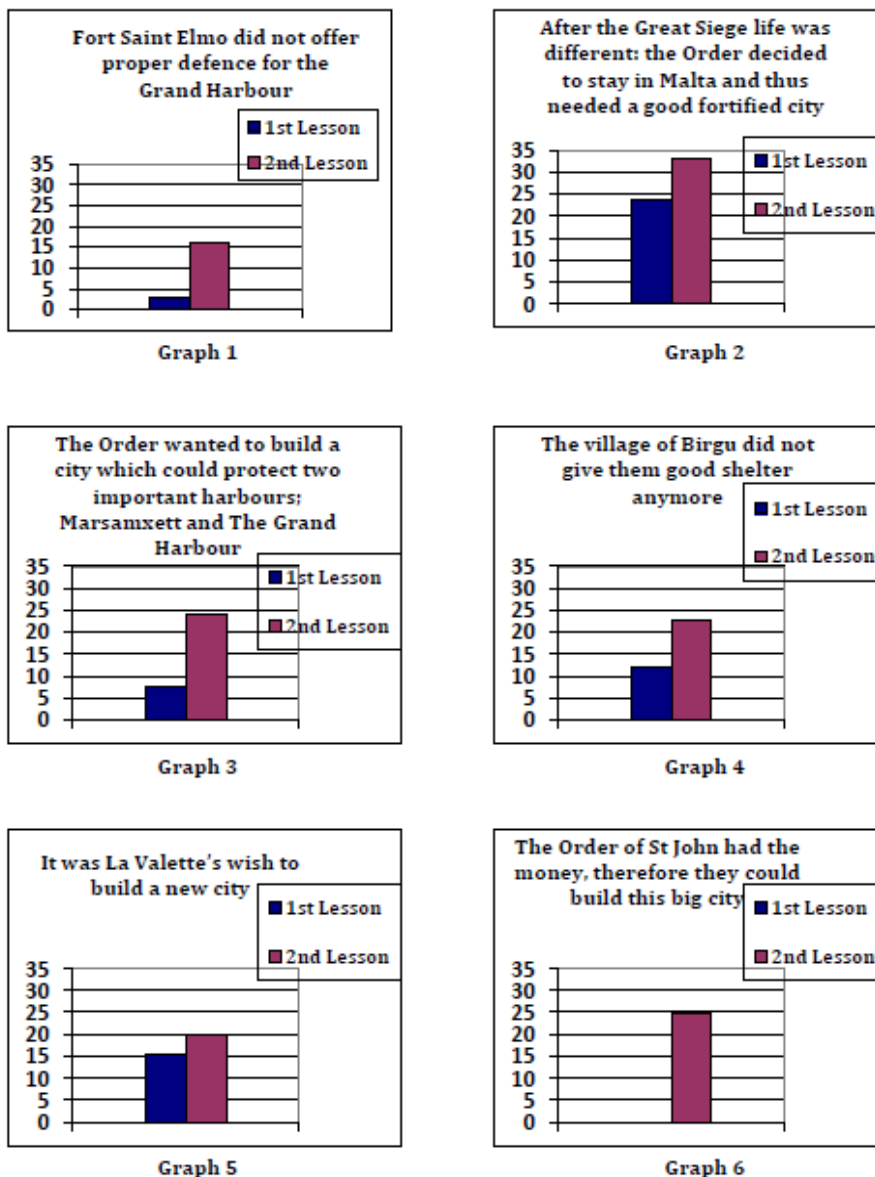
TABLE 1 All the causes mentioned in students' essays

Similarly marks acquired for each consequence mentioned in the students' essays after lesson 3 and after lesson 4 were gathered and a graph was plotted for each question. Table 2 shows all of the consequences the students. Noted:

Commerce moved from Birgu to the new city
A new city equipped with all the necessities
City with the highest defence
Mdina and Birgu lost their importance
Auberges and places of great importance surviving up to today where built inside this new city
The Order of St John remained associated with the city of Valletta
A city that became the capital of Malta where you find shopping centers, bars and shops among others
The British, who were the successors of the Order, used this big city
Today, the government of Malta uses this city as an administrative centre
The Order of St John showed their economic and social power with the building of this city

TABLE 2 All the consequences mentioned in students' essays

Graphs comparing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> lesson's essays



TABLES 1-6 compare students' essays after the first two lessons

### Comparing essays after lesson 1 and after lesson 2

Graphs 1-6 compare the average class marks achieved in the essays after the first lesson and the average class marks of the essays produced after the second lesson, They show a significant improvement in the average marks of the class. Table 1 shows the criteria used for marking. There is an overall improvement. The extra lesson revisiting the causes by means of interactive tasks appears to have greatly aided in getting pupils to give more causes and to accompany these with explanations.

Pupils picked up information mentioned in the Power Point and then discussed it during the tasks in the second lesson; for example 'Fort Saint Elmo was not enough to protect the Grand Harbour' which was later reproduced in their essays.

It was however common for students when writing down causes which they remembered to do so in very short sentences or phrases, sometimes even four word sentences such as: 'Saint Elmo is not enough.' This hindered them from gaining marks because it showed that they did not understand the real cause but they only remembered bits and pieces of it. On the other hand, they did use long sentences after the second lesson when they tried to link causes to each other, although still often failing to explain the causes correctly.

The 'bound to happen' reasoning Haydn (2008) talks about occurred with the cause that stated that 'After the Great Siege life was different: the Order decided to stay in Malta and thus needed a good fortified city'. Where students discussed how life had changed after the Great Siege, many students were inclined to attribute this as one of the major causes for the building of Valletta and they did this before and after all the lessons.

It is encouraging to see that some causes not mentioned at all or mentioned very briefly in the first essays started to appear in an elaborated way in the second essays. For example, this happened with the following cause: 'The Order wanted to build a city which could protect two important harbours, Marsamxett and The Grand Harbour'. In spite of this being a very important cause, students failed to explain it well, or did not mention it at all after the first lesson while was given much greater significance in the essays after the second lesson. In their first essay most students just mentioned the cause; in fact at this stage only one student added an explanation to this cause in her essay. In comparison, after the second lesson there were 9 students who elaborated this cause. Moreover, there was a difference in the language usage by some students. For example, 'On the other hand, one must not forget that another cause was that the Order of Saint John wanted to build a city which would protect the two most important harbours of Malta, those of Marsamxett and The Grand Harbour.' This student in her previous essay had not mentioned this reason at all. This would imply that, through the activities, she gained more insight and now not only mentioned it but added an explanation.

As the lessons progressed, especially during the class interactive card activities, students were directly involved in the decisions on which causes were most important and which were less important. Through discussions and debates, students reasoned the causes together and agreed as a whole group where it was best to put these. The class discussion was very important when it came to students' understanding of each cause and one could notice during the task that students were elaborating their answers by recalling what had been said in class. This was clear when students first discussed how '... the Order was afraid of being attacked again, he had to do something to protect the people ...' and wrote '... the Order feared an attack and thus they wanted a city which could protect them.'

'The village of Birgu did not give them good shelter anymore' was quite familiar to the students and they referred to it in all their essays. However, it is interesting to note that in the first essays many students were not assigned marks for this cause, not because they did not mention it, but because they did not use the correct wording or explanation. A considerable number of students described Birgu as: 'broken', 'fallen', 'not good anymore'. Using only these words, students did not succeed in explaining the cause. One student, showed that she was aware that Birgu was not needed anymore by the Order of St John but did not know or did not mention why. However, the same student in her second essay wrote, 'Another cause of the building of Valletta was that the Order realized that Birgu was not of any use to them anymore, hence they wanted a new city.'



This confirmed, yet again, the importance of involving students orally in decision-making tasks, in order to achieve complete understanding and mastering of skills. Those who mentioned it elaborated it very well, giving the full cause with further explanation. The interactive conversations and discussions held between students during the tasks facilitated mutual learning as they supported each others' understanding. The students were definitely learning from each other and evidence for this can be seen from the essay answers after lesson 2 when students often used similar words such as 'feared an attack' and 'St Elmo was heavily damaged'.

There were causes, for example, 'It was La Valette's wish to build a new city' which were very popular and appeared in all the essays after both the first and second lessons. In fact there is only a nominal difference between the marks obtained in both essays. (see graph 5) This is probably because Valletta being named after La Valette is easy to remember.

The cause which stated that 'The Order of St John had money. Therefore they could build this big city' caused much debate. During the group work there were different opinions within the groups, some students said that the Order did not have money, while others said that they did not have enough money because they requested additional funds from the Pope and other European Kings. Three out of five groups opted to place this cause between the most important and the less important. Hence, they did not agree whether it was an important cause or not. The other two groups decided that it was one of the most important causes leading to the building of Valletta. This was clearly reflected in the marks assigned where the total added up to twenty-five marks. It is interesting to note that twenty marks were assigned for an detailed cause, while the remaining five marks were assigned for mentioning only the cause. This meant that students' answers in the essay reflected their opinions expressed in the class group discussions.

The following causes, 'The Order of St John wanted to show their greatness and economic power with this city', 'The Order wanted a city like Rhodes', 'The Order wanted to have lots of cities' and 'The Order wanted a new city' were introduced in the study as possibly less important causes.

Discussions during the tasks took the form of a real debate in which students presented their opinions, while also explaining why they thought other student's reasons were wrong. The common perception among students was that the Order did not specifically build the city of Valletta to show its power or to show that it had a lot of money and as graph 6 shows this was a common student perception before the second lesson. The activities in the second lesson seem to raise the students' awareness to human motivation and hidden agendas.

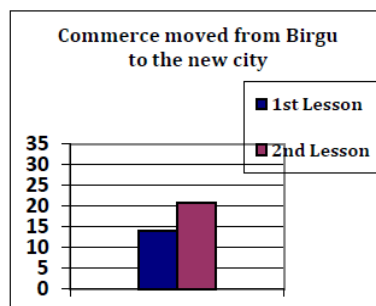
Students did not know where the city of Rhodes was and this created an atmosphere of curiosity among students in the groups. Unfortunately since they did not know anything about this city and its connection with the Order of St John, students concluded that this was not an important cause leading to the building of Valletta. Hence, every group placed this cause as the least important, in the line of importance and made sure it was touching the outer edge of the second task, which meant that it was not important as cause.

The same result was obtained in 'The Order wanted to have lots of cities' which students only obtained three marks in. During the discussions students unanimously substantiated that this was not a valid cause for the building of Valletta. Hence, the majority of students decided to exclude it from their essay.

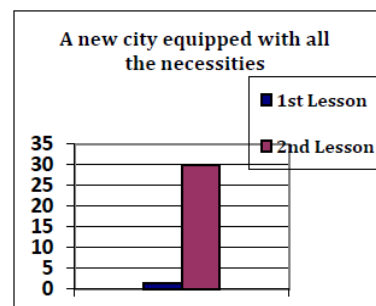
'The Order wanted a new city' was a cause which stimulated mixed feelings among students. This was due to the fact that some of the students linked this cause with another cause, which stated that: 'The Order decided to stay in Malta and therefore needed a fortified city.' They argued that since the Order wanted a fortified city then they also needed a new city according to their needs. However, during the discussion students debated among themselves that as a cause on its own it did not represent the real need of the Order. As a result, only six students mentioned it in their second essays, with no one elaborating it further.

**Comparing students essays after lesson 3 and after lesson 4**

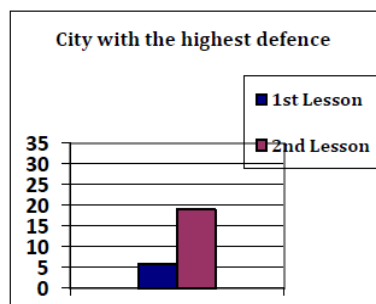
Graphs comparing 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> lesson's essays



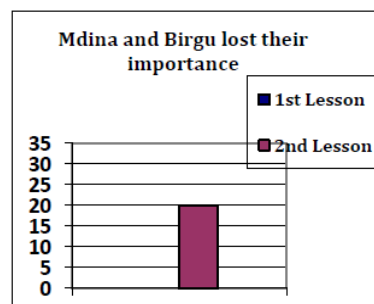
Graph 11



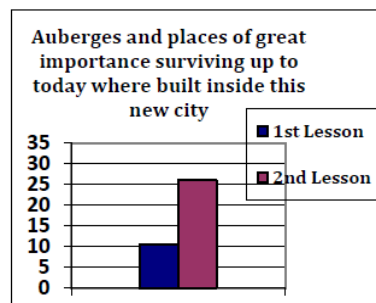
Graph 12



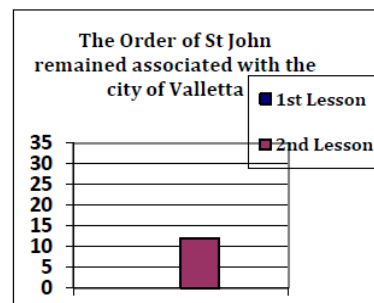
Graph 13



Graph 14



Graph 15



Graph 16

Similarly, as with the case of the causes, at the end of lesson 3 and 4 students were asked to write an essay mentioning the consequences brought about by the building of Valletta. Each consequence was mentioned, both after the third and fourth lesson according to the criteria (Table 2). The graphs comparing the average class marks achieved in the essays after the third lesson and the average class marks of the essays produced after the fourth lesson once again register an improvement in the average marks of the class. It would seem that the pedagogy used in lesson 4, similar to the pedagogy used in lesson 2, helped students to produce better essays, this time on the consequences of the building of Valletta.

In both essays students mentioned various consequences, for example, they often mentioned the moving of commerce from Birgu to the new city as one of the effects of the building of Valletta. One student elaborated further, explaining that the new city attracted people and became a hub of commerce. However, in the second essays a higher mark was assigned, due to the fact that almost all the students mentioned this consequence and also a higher number of students elaborated it further. One particular student who mentioned this consequence in both her essays described the consequence in this way: 'Among other things, there were people who went to live in the new city. This is because there they were protected through the fortification and could also find work. This in turn led the moving of commerce to the city of Valletta where people started selling and buying their products.'

The discussions which took place in class during lesson 4 involved the interactive card tasks and these provided students with opportunities to share each other's ideas regarding each consequence. These gave students a wider context of thinking and linking effects of an event with one another and this helped them to obtain much higher marks for their second essay on consequence.

The consequence of the building of Valletta was that 'the Order and the Maltese could enjoy a new city which catered to all their needs' obtained only one and a half marks in the first essay and thirty marks in the second essay. Despite being one of the most logical consequences of the building of Valletta, students failed to mention it in their first essay. On the other hand, in the second essays high scores were achieved for mentioning it and adding elaborated reasoning. The second time round students showed a higher level of understanding in their essays with such statements as 'Another consequence of the building of Valletta was that they built a new city where they had everything they needed, shops and fortification to protect them from attacks. Consequently people did not have to walk from village to village in order to buy food but they had everything catered for in one city.' Other well-argued and substantiated statements produced by the students were 'The building of Valletta brought about very important consequences, amongst which is the strong fortified city' and 'Without any doubt these effects brought about other effects, given that they wanted a fortified city to protect them from any attacks, they built a new fortified city to protect them from the enemies.' This suggested that students not only understood the consequence, but also identified and linked causes which brought about certain consequences.

Remarkably enough, the fourth consequence which stated that Birgu lost its importance, was not mentioned at all in the first essay on consequence. This reflected the lack of understanding through a mere Power Point explanation where students acted only as listeners and observers. By contrast in the second attempt the high mark assigned for this consequence was twenty. their second essays such answers as 'The building of the city of Valletta left important consequences, amongst which was the loss of importance of Birgu, this was important because it led to the building of a new fortified city, through which they could protect themselves' and 'Without any doubt these effects brought about additional consequences such as the

consequence that the importance of Birgu and Mdina started decreasing because many people moved to the new city.' These sentences indicate that the students had discussed this consequence extensively among themselves, expressing their acquired knowledge in their choice of words and elaborated answers.

The consequence that 'Auberges and places of great importance surviving up to today where built inside this new city' brought an unexpected result in the first essays on consequence. Several mentioned it in their first essays and many more in their second attempt where there was a very visible change in the words used in order to describe this consequence. During the explanation in the third lesson, one student asked the researcher what did 'bereġ' mean and the researcher explained by mentioning 'Il-Berġa ta' Kastillja' the office of the Prime Minister. This gave a reference point to the students and thus it was natural for them to write and mention the current Prime Minister in their essays instead of mentioning 'il-bereġ'. During the tasks in the fourth lesson students had the opportunity to discuss this among themselves and explain to each other what were the 'bereġ' and the rest of the important places, such as the Cathedral of St. John. This, in turn, removed students' need to mention the Prime Minister in their essays and to describe clearly the proper consequence.

One of the outcomes of lesson 4 was that students mentioned for the first time that a consequence of the building of Valletta was that the Order of St. John remained associated with this city. Students explained how the Order of St. John remained till this day associated with the city of Valletta and how the Order, especially Gran Master La Vallette, was remembered every time students visited this city.

One of the most popular consequence mentioned by all students in the first essays on consequence was that it 'became the capital of Malta where you find shops, bars and shops among others' – in their second essays there was a deeper level of understanding and analysis based upon the fourth lesson. One student's original answer was 'The city of Valletta is the capital city of Malta nowadays'; her second essay reveals more complex causal reasoning: 'However, on the other hand one cannot forget that there is the city of Valletta, which nowadays is the capital city of Malta where one can find shops which sell everything. This in turn led to the building of commercial centres.' The second answer illuminates the general level of responses to this question by the class, reflected in graph 12.

The British, who occupied Malta after the Order, had their own plans for the city of Valletta. This was clearly explained to the students during the third lessons. However only nine students reported it in their essay, with no explanation but after the fourth lesson students showed from their answers that they were well aware of who succeeded the Order, that is, the British and what buildings they made use of. This was confirmed through the graph 16.

### **Conclusion**

This study has various limitations and by far does not address all the facets of how students can achieve higher standards when writing history essays which deal with the concepts of cause and consequence. This research does not begin to address in depth the problem of 'contingency' and 'uncertainty' mentioned by Phillips (2002) which is a very important issue for causation in history. There were no students who showed during the lesson or in their essays deep understanding of the differentiation between the predictability of scientific causation and the unpredictable historical events which are manipulated by individuals.

It is also debatable how much the students were in fact actually coming up with the causes/consequences themselves. What they were actually doing was getting more involved in the selecting and discarding process of the given causes/consequences. This is very useful for it helped them to produce essay writing of a higher level but ultimately the causes/consequences were given and at no point did they come up with the causes/consequences themselves as advocated in excellent history teaching.

However, students were able to remember more of what was done during the lessons and to produce better answers. Moreover, key words found in the cards of the causes and consequences were significantly used by the students in essays. This implies that students were aware of what was written in the causes and consequences cards and made use of them. The discussions and debates among students put them in a stronger position when it came to writing of the essays. It is evident, from the graphs, that students were not able to deliver elaborate structured statements after just following the explanation of the researcher/teacher during the lesson. This traditional teacher-centred approach gives little space for students to be involved and therefore to be able to investigate their own learning.

In their second attempts they were able to mention more possible causes/consequences and more importantly to support these with reasons and explanations. This is an achievement, for it shows a significant move away from giving a mere short list of causes/consequences towards more categorising and reasoning of causes/consequence. The class activities helped produce better history understanding, and it is a good start towards helping students produce better and more meaningful essay answers.

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*PAST INTO FUTURE: INITIAL TRAINING OF HISTORY TEACHERS IN THE FACULTY OF  
ARTS – UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA IN SLOVENIA FROM 1945*

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**Abstract**

*The Faculty of Arts – University of Ljubljana (in Slovenia) has always been one of the basic institutions for the initial training of History teachers for elementary and secondary schools in Slovenia. Since 1949/50 and before 1961/62 the History department of the Faculty had offered only the single-major programme of History and educated students in becoming teachers of History for secondary schools. Subsequently, the double-major study programme was introduced, which enabled better employment opportunities for History students, giving them the possibility to select another study subject in addition to History. The Faculty of Arts offered many subjects, but most frequently students decided on Geography, Sociology, Philosophy, or various language studies.*

*Apart from the general educational subjects (Psychology for Teachers, Didactics, Pedagogy, and Andragogy), the subject Methodology of History Teaching or History Didactics played a crucial part in the preparation of students for their teaching profession. All the holders of this subject played an important role and integrated a great deal of their teaching experience, expertise and an understanding of the various European school systems of History teaching into the subject and passed on their knowledge to the students. However, also certain changes and various reforms in higher education influenced the organization of the subject, the entire study programme of History and all educational study programmes at the Faculty of Arts. In 1949, this was the introduction of the single-major study programmes, in 1960, the introduction of the double-major study programmes, vocational education and three levels of education, in 1980, the introduction of guided education, in 1993, the introduction of higher vocational education and university education, and in 2004, the introduction of the three levels of the Bologna study programmes.*

**Key words**

Bologna programme – Higher Education, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, History Department, History Didactics, History Teachers, Initial teacher training – professional development, Ljubljana, Methodology of History Teaching, Slovenia, Teacher education and professional development, Undergraduate Education, University of Ljubljana

**Introduction**

The University of Ljubljana was founded in 1919 and the first lecture was held on December 3rd 1919. At that time it combined five faculties which included the Faculty of Arts. At the beginning, the Faculty of Arts included 10 scientific fields or disciplines one of which was History. The History department began working in 1920 as the Historic Seminar and the first lectures were held on February 19th 1920. This contribution presents how the education of students (future History teachers) took place at the History department after 1945. As part of their training, Methodology of History Teaching or History Didactics had an important role in the preparation of students for their future teaching profession after 1952. Before 1985, the Faculty of Arts was the only institution in Slovenia, which educated History teachers for both secondary and elementary

schools. This is why we would like to analyse and evaluate its development along with the changes in higher education due to various reforms after 1945.

### **Training of History Teachers from 1945/46 to 1960/61**

Students at the Faculty of Arts between the years 1945 and 1947 had the opportunity to study History as a double-major study programme, most frequently in combination with Geography. After a regulation in 1947, it was possible to combine History as the A (major) subject with various other subjects as B (minor) programmes, whereas History was also possible as a B study programme (Zwitter, 1973, p. 138). The reform in 1949 or the Higher Education Act in the Republic of Slovenia had a profound impact on the study programme of History, as it introduced the single-major study programme of History (Voje, 2000, p. 13). In this way from 1949/50 to 1960/61 the History programme was a single-major study programme, with emphasis on Slovenian History, general History and the History of Yugoslav Peoples (Grafenauer, 1982, p. 188; Zwitter, 1973, p. 138). Among other subjects (Introduction to the History, Archaeology, Auxiliary Historical Sciences, etc.), there was also the subject Pedagogy and Methodology (List of Courses for the Winter Semester 1950/51).

At that time, Slovenia had only one institution, which trained also future History teachers for elementary schools, the Higher Educational School in Ljubljana, which had educated students ever since 1947 in becoming History and Geography teachers, whereas the students that achieved their degrees at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana taught History at secondary schools (Stupan, 1963, p. 96).

With a decree of the Council for Education and Culture of the Republic of Slovenia as of July 1st 1952, Bogo Stupan was appointed as a part-time lecturer for the subject Methodology of History Teaching with the obligation of two hours of lectures and three hours of practical work per week (Internal Archives of the Faculty of Arts – Bogo Stupan). At first, he was employed at the educational department and later in 1959/60 at the history department (List of Courses for the Academic Year 1959/60). Bogo Stupan graduated in History and Geography in 1926. From 1927 to 1941 he was a general secondary school teacher in Maribor, from 1941 to 1945 he taught at various general secondary schools in Serbia as an emigrant, and from 1945 to 1948 he taught at the teacher training college in Maribor. From 1949 he was the National Inspector for History and Geography at the Ministry of Education and then subsequently the head of National Inspection Service at the National Secretariat for Education and Culture (Gestrin, 1992, p. 401).

The subject Methodology of History Teaching was primarily intended for the preparation of History students for teaching in secondary schools, especially in general secondary schools. History students in particular learned about the special methodology of their profession. They were given numerous opportunities to observe history lessons in lower and higher classes of general secondary schools; they tested their own educational and methodological abilities in their own teaching attempts, and analysed observation lessons and teaching experiments. This practical work enabled the students to recognize the basic meaning of teaching principles and teaching methods, they learned the explanations for a successful or an inadequate teaching process, adopted different ways of strengthening and repeating the learning content and had the opportunity to get to know the criteria for the accurate evaluation and assessment of pupils (Internal Archives of the Faculty of Arts – Bogo Stupan).

### **Training of History Teachers from 1961/62 to 1984/85**

The Higher Education Act of 1960 introduced vocational higher education, which was organized by independent vocational colleges or higher schools and faculties. This introduced the three-level-structure of higher education. Vocational training lasted for the first two years and ended with a diploma of the first level. The following two years were the university programme, which ended with a diploma of the second level. This system lasted until the introduction of the new programmes in the academic year 1985/86. The third level lasted from two to four years and was named the postgraduate stage (Medves, 2000, pp. 269–271).

In view of provisions of the Basic Education Act of 1958, which introduced the eight-year-long elementary school and abolished lower general secondary schools (Gabric, 2006, p. 1036), the training of teachers changed. Teachers of the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade and of the 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade at elementary schools were educated at higher schools or educational academies on two year courses. Because of these changes, elementary school teachers were trained at the Higher Educational School in Ljubljana and after 1964 at the Pedagogic Academy of Ljubljana, as well as at the newly founded Pedagogic Academy in Maribor, which started training in 1961 (Tancer, 1994, p. 289).

The Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana could not give the academies exclusive rights for the training of teachers for higher classes of the elementary school, as this would give the students fewer employment possibilities in elementary schools. This is how levels of the double-major study programme were introduced. The students could combine the study of History with Geography, Sociology, and Art History, so that History was either the A (major) subject or the B (minor) subject (Zwitter, 1973, pp. 139–140). There were no differences between the two study programmes, that is A or B History study programmes, for the first two years before graduation or diploma in the first level (both included an overview of general history and the peoples of Yugoslavia in periods, Ancient Age, Middle Ages, modern times and the world after the First World War). History as an A study programme was only possible at the second level (in-depth studies and individual work, e.g. problems in periods for general History, Slovenian History and History of other Yugoslav peoples) (Study Programme for History at the Faculty of Arts 1971).

A smaller change in the study of History occurred in 1976 with the new Higher Education Act of 1975 and it concerned assignments. The students' obligations lowered at double-major study programmes (abolition of examination papers and seminar assignments), leaving only the diploma thesis as the only remaining obligatory paper (Voje, 2000, p. 15).

From 1961/62 to 1975/76 Bogo Stupan as a part-time lecturer at the History department carried out Methodology of History Teaching. The course was carried out at two different levels. At the first level the subject was mandatory for all students, who finished the study programme of History, whereas for others it was selective. It was carried out in the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester (two hours of lectures and three hours of practical work, beginning in the academic year 1962/63). The main contents of the Methodology of History Teaching I were–

- *Methodology of History Teaching and correlations with general methodology, didactics, and pedagogy;*
- *Purpose and role of the Methodology of History Teaching;*
- *Teaching and educational purposes of History in the past and present;*
- *History as a subject in elementary school (historical overview);*



- *Place and role of History in the school system;*
- *History as a component part of a complex subject;*
- *Social Sciences in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade of elementary school;*
- *Chronologically progressive way of displaying History in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade of elementary school;*
- *The problems of History teaching in departments with combined lessons;*
- *Teaching forms: whole class, group, and individual History teaching;*
- *Getting to know the new content;*
- *The importance of repetition at History lessons;*
- *Evaluation and assessment;*
- *Structure and types of lessons;*
- *Didactic principles, meaning and use at History lessons;*
- *The methods of History lessons which increase the pupils' activity;*
- *Content and methodological preparation for History lessons. (Stupan, 1971, p. 26).*

The practical part of the Methodology of History Teaching I included observations of history lessons at elementary schools, student lessons in classes (each student had to give at least one student lesson at elementary school), analyses and evaluation of the lessons and a colloquium in the theory of Methodology of History Teaching I.

The subject Methodology of History Teaching II took place at the second level in the 7<sup>th</sup> semester (two hours of lectures and three hours of practical work, beginning in the academic year 1964/65). The main contents were–

- *Special methodology of teaching and its relation to general methodology and didactics;*
- *The meaning of findings of genetic psychology for didactics and methodology of History teaching;*
- *Social conditions of didactics and methodology in selecting and determining the educational content, selection and use of teaching forms, methods, and procedures;*
- *Noted philosophers and pedagogues on the meaning and role of History in education and teaching;*
- *Role of History as a school subject;*
- *Our school system and the role and purpose of History in it;*
- *History as the leading subject in the group of social subjects at secondary school;*
- *Problems of choosing and grouping of the content;*
- *History as an independent teaching subject and History as a component part in complex subjects of social sciences;*
- *History in the Soviet and American education system; comparison with History in our school system;*
- *Treatment of History according to paradigm or patch system and system according to themes and development;*

- *Overview of didactic principles according to the principle of educational teaching;*
- *Methods of History teaching;*
- *Learning of history syllabi or various types of secondary schools and the problem of adapting the subject content to various educational principles of the schools;*
- *The purpose of active teaching methods;*
- *Structures and types of lessons;*
- *Content and methodological preparation for History teaching;*
- *Problems of evaluation and assessment of pupils;*
- *Programmed History teaching. (Stupan, 1971, p. 26–27).*

The practical work in Methodology of History Teaching II were observation lessons (at least 4) for students at history lessons at secondary schools, student lessons in classes (at least one student lesson in secondary school), analyses and evaluation of the observation lessons and student lessons, and a colloquium in the theory of Methodology of History Teaching II.

Stupan (1963, p. 96) wrote on the meaning of the subject that in addition to the 'fundamental professional education, the study programme at the Faculty of Arts now offers satisfactory pedagogic and methodological education. With the introduction of mandatory lectures and practical work in special methodology at the first and second level of university programmes, the criticism of the insufficient pedagogic and methodological qualification of graduates of Faculty of Arts, was from then on no longer appropriate'.

Bogo Stupan was in the academic year of 1976/77 succeeded by Stefan Trojar. He completed his studies in History at the Faculty of Arts in 1955. He taught History at general secondary school in Ajdovscina from 1956/57 to 1957/58 and taught History, Geography, and Political Economy from 1958/59 to 1963/64 at a secondary economy school in Ajdovscina. He passed his proficiency examination for the title of secondary school professor in History in 1960, taught History and Sociology from 1964/65 to 1971/72 at a general secondary school in Nova Gorica, and History from 1972/73 to 1976/77 at a general secondary school in Ljubljana. Stefan Trojar became a professor for higher school in 1977, then a senior lecturer for the Methodology of History Teaching in 1982 at the Faculty of Arts (Internal Archives of the Faculty of Arts – Stefan Trojar). The study programme of History for 1978/79 shows that Stefan Trojar took over the same teaching programme from Bogo Stupan and therefore at the same time carried out Methodology of History Teaching I for higher education and Methodology of History Teaching II for university education. His work reports show that he lectured on Methodology of History Teaching I for the second year (two hours per week in the winter semester) and Methodology of History Teaching II for the fourth year (two hours per week in the winter semester) and held practical work with groups of the second and fourth year (each group for six hours in the summer semester). He introduced group teaching methods (observation lessons, analyses of observation lessons), individual work with students, consultations after the student lessons and the theoretical part of the exam (Trojar, 1978, pp. 45–48).

Faculty of Arts increasingly offered a greater number of possibilities for double-major study programmes. In 1978, students could study History as an A subject in connection with Sociology or Art History or Geography as the B subject. History was possible as the B subject in connection with Philosophy, Pedagogy, Psychology, Art History, Ethnology, Geography, World Literature or Musicology as the A subject (Study Programme for History at the Faculty of Arts in

Ljubljana 1978). These connections offered better employment possibilities for future teachers in secondary schools in addition to the most common combination of History with Geography, which was best suited for teaching in elementary schools in Slovenia.

### **Training of History Teachers from 1985/86 to 1990/91**

For an entire decade the Guided Education Act (1980, amendments 1983 and 1989) ruled higher education and regulated the entire education after elementary school as the so-called guided education and regulated the acceptance of educational programmes (Krek, 1995, p. 262).

This is how in the academic year 1985/86 a new study programme of History was introduced. Due to the reform of secondary education, the first level was abolished and the four-year-long higher educational programmes were introduced. Lectures and seminars for the study programme of History had to be redistributed so that the students could select them according to semesters (Voje, 2000, p. 136). The study programme encompassed general History from Antiquity until 1945, Slovenian History from Antiquity to 1945, History of Yugoslav Peoples from 1918 and Contemporary History (General History and History of Yugoslav Peoples 1918–1945, 1941–45 and after 1945) (Educational Programme for the Study of History 1985).

The programme introduced in 1985/86 included two fields of study (History teacher and BA in History). History teacher was an educational worker, whose tasks were defined by the needs of the self-governing socialistic society, tasks of the elementary school and secondary guided education and by the requirements of historical sciences. A teacher ought to recognize the individuality of each pupil, encourage, direct the pupils' development and influence the formation of their learning and professional interests. He or she also had to plan, organize, and realize the educational goals in elementary and secondary schools, organize and direct the pupils' interests, as well as other activities, and shape and strengthen their learning and working habits. At the same time, a teacher ought to lead as an example in his work and actions and pass on the social and moral values of the socialistic self-governing society, coordinate and link his work with correlating educational fields, museums, archives, parents, guidance counsellors and health workers, societies, social-political organizations and others (Educational Programme for the Study of History 1985, pp. 1–2).

Methodology of History Teaching was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year (introduced in 1987/88), held in three hours of lectures per week for students, who studied History as a B subject and in the 4<sup>th</sup> year (first introduced in 1988/89), held in three hours of lectures for students, who studied History as the A subject. Students had three hours of lectures in the winter semester, and one hour of lectures and two hours of practical work in the summer semester.

The theoretical part of the subject had the following contents–

- *Basic educational tasks of History teaching at elementary and secondary schools and its role among social sciences;*
- *The planning of history syllabi in elementary and secondary schools, contents and didactic characteristics;*
- *Elements of planning history lessons: content analysis, preparation of a detailed annual plan, concretisation and operation of goals;*

- *Factors of selecting and didactic advantages of appropriate combinations of forms and methods in history lessons;*
- *The characteristics of frontal teaching and qualities and possibilities of group and individual working methods in history lessons;*
- *Arrangement of teaching methods in history lessons with regard to pupils' activity and the role of educational technique in developing methods;*
- *The characteristics of traditional methods of history teaching and the purpose of modern methods;*
- *The role of the workbook and various methods of its use;*
- *Working with historical texts;*
- *Didactic and methodological possibilities in including audio visual resources in history lessons;*
- *The role of the social science classroom for history lessons, various audio visual and other teaching material as well as the individual pupil's learning set at history lessons;*
- *Possibilities and methodological variables in evaluation of History and the problems of assessment;*
- *Organization and methods of historical excursions;*
- *Direct preparation of history lessons; the microstructure of a lesson, sequence of procedures in planning, lesson plan;*
- *Analysis and evaluation of history teaching and its importance for the critical self-evaluation and quality growth. (Trojar, 1985, pp. 50–51).*

Students had to attend lectures and seminar practical work, complete an exam in Methodology of History Teaching, observe eight lessons of History and carry out two student lessons in a class (one in elementary school and one in secondary school).

The education of History teachers for elementary schools took place at the Pedagogic Academy in Ljubljana and the Faculty of Education in Maribor, whereas the education of History teachers for secondary schools, as well as for elementary schools, took place at the Faculty of Education in Maribor and at the Faculty of Arts of Ljubljana. Since the Pedagogic Academy of Ljubljana in the academic year 1987/88 began the four-year-long education for teachers of the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade of elementary school (History of the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana), the education of history teachers for elementary schools in Ljubljana was entirely adopted by the Faculty of Arts (the subject of History was taught from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade).

### **Training of History Teachers from 1991/92 to 2001/02**

The system of guided education was under increased scrutiny and this brought along new changes in higher education. One of the weaknesses of the system was that this kind of educational system led to the fact that 'each person who had completed four years of secondary school (before 1991 even without taking the final examination) in principle could have applied to any study programme. /.../ Under such circumstances the situation was resolved by more and more selective entrance examinations and by increasing the number of entrance positions in existing programmes and higher education institutions and not by creating more attractive programmes or establishing a new perspective institution' (Krek, 1995, p. 264).

The Higher Education Act from 1993 enabled a system change in the development of higher education and at the same time preserved the dual system in such a way so that the higher education was composed of higher vocational and university education (Medves, 2000, p. 269). History teachers gained their education by completing a four-year-long university study programme either educational or non-educational. In the latter they had to additionally complete an educational study programme in order to become teachers. Training for History teachers for elementary and secondary schools took place at the Faculty of Education in Maribor and at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana.

History department in 1991/92 introduced a new study programme, which was quite different from the old programme. The programme dealt with one historical period in general and Slovenian History and the History of the Southeast Europe in each academic year. In the 1<sup>st</sup> year this was Antiquity and Middle Ages, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Modern Age, 3<sup>rd</sup> year 19<sup>th</sup> century, and in the 4<sup>th</sup> year Contemporary History (Annual Report of the Faculty of Arts in the Academic Year 1991/92). The study programme was possible as a single-major (non-educational) or double-major educational study programme. As an A study programme, History was either educational or non-educational, and as a B subject, the History study programme was only possible as an educational programme. Due to this division, the students of the A programme had special lectures in Methodology of History Teaching and students of the B History programme had two special hours per week in Methodology of History Teaching. After 1999/2000 the A and B study programme division was cancelled, leaving behind only the double-major educational History programme in combination with other educational programmes at the Faculty of Arts (Philosophy, Sociology, Art History, Geography, Pedagogy, Slovenian Language and Literature, French Language and Literature, Spanish Language and Literature, English Language and Literature, Latin Language and Literature, Greek Language and Literature, Russian Language and Literature, Croatian, Serbian, and Macedonian Languages and Literatures), as well as other non-educational programmes (Musicology, Library Science, Japanology, Sinology, and others) (List of Courses for the Academic Year 1999/2000).

Methodology of History Teaching was only in the 4<sup>th</sup> year (60 hours of lectures and 60 hours of practical work). The professor in charge was dr. Stefan Trojar, who had become an Assistant Professor for the subject in 1991, and an Associate Professor in 1996. He retired in 1998, but remained on contract until 2001/02 (Internal Archives of the Faculty of Arts – Stefan Trojar). From 1999/2000 to 2001/2002 Assistant MA Danijela Trskan helped as a member of contract staff with the practical work of the subject (group lesson observations and analyses, preparation and evaluation of student lessons). For two years (2000/01 – 2001/02) she organized the one-week-long voluntary teaching practice for students of the 4<sup>th</sup> year in elementary and secondary schools. The practical work encompassed four hours of student lessons, six hours of observation lessons and preparation of the self-evaluation journal (Trskan, 2001).

The following theoretical contents were dealt with at the subject Methodology of History Teaching–

- *Didactic and methodological characteristics of traditional history teaching;*
- *Modern didactic approaches in modern and socially critical history teaching;*
- *Educational, logical, pedagogic and operational tasks of our history teaching;*
- *Methodological and didactic structure of history syllabi in elementary and secondary schools and preparation of the annual teaching plan;*
- *Types of teaching methods and forms and methodological combinations at History teaching;*

- *The role of audio visual resources in contemporary classes, characteristics of classroom materials and the individual pupil's learning set;*
- *Structure of history textbooks;*
- *Procedures of history lesson planning and the structure of the written lesson preparation;*
- *Critical observation of lessons, analysis of teaching situations and evaluations of lessons;*
- *Trial teaching of History and evaluation of methodological successfulness. (Trojar, 1999, p. 53).*

It was mandatory for students to attend the final seminar and pass an oral exam in the theoretical part of methodology. After this they could attend practical work, where the students observed lessons in elementary and secondary schools (four in elementary and four in secondary school, in groups of 16 students). In addition, the students had group analyses of the lessons (groups of eight students), where students expressed their opinions about the lessons they visited, and where they obtained didactic guidelines for their own student lessons. They had to keep a methodological journal of the history lessons they visited. Each student had to complete two student lessons, one in elementary and one in secondary school. The teachers at schools offered mentorship to the students and help in preparing the students' lessons in the class. After the student lesson, Stefan Trojar held individual analyses with the student (Trojar, 1999, p. 53). Practical work was of crucial importance for the fundamental preparation of students for their future work in classrooms and their profession. The only disadvantage was that the teaching practice was not yet mandatory for future history teachers, as was the case at some other departments and other educational study programmes at the Faculty of Arts.

### **Training of History Teachers from 2002/03 to 2011/12**

Dr. Danijela Trskan took over the subject named History Didactics in 2002/03 (List of Courses for the Academic Year 2002/03). Prior to 2002/03 she had been teaching History and French at a general secondary school in Ljubljana from 1992 to 2001/02. She became an Assistant Professor in 2002 and an Associate Professor in 2007. She held two hours per week for two groups (for each group 60 hours of lectures per year), whereas the practical work (60 hours) was distributed throughout the academic year.

The theoretical part (lectures) included the following content:

- *Introduction into History Didactics (The aim and purpose of History teaching; Contents and literature for History Didactics);*
- *A didactic and methodological structure of lesson plans (Types and formulation of goals; Selection of contents and didactic principles; Teaching forms, methods, and motivational techniques; Types, selection and use of teaching materials; Use of historical visual and written resources; Use of modern information technology; Note-taking skills; Planning of History lessons);*
- *Alternative lessons (Project work; Interdisciplinary work; "Authentic" lessons; Extra-curricular activities);*
- *Didactic and methodological characteristics of History lessons (structure, characteristics and use of history syllabi, textbooks, reference books, and examination guidebooks for elementary and secondary schools);*

- *Types of evaluation and assessment (Characteristics and types of evaluation; Types of assessment and assessment criteria; Self-assessment and peer-assessment; Alternative evaluation and assessment);*
- *History teacher (Action research work of teacher; Probationary service; Life-long education of History teacher; The Slovenian History Teacher's Association; International education and cooperation; Differentiation, the individual approach and pupils with special needs; Class teacher; Educational documentation; History classroom and teachers' room; Pedagogic inspection; Classroom discipline);*
- *Current questions (External examination; History Didactics in the 21st century; Teacher – pupil relations in the 21st century). (Trskan, 2004, p. 72).*

For the practical part (practical work) students had to complete a group assignment, seminar paper, four observation lessons in elementary and secondary schools and analyses (in groups of 10 to 14 students), four individual observations of fellow students' lessons, prepare two lesson plans with two individual consultations (one in elementary school and one in secondary school), pass the oral exam and make a personal self-evaluation course portfolio. All obligations related to the specific work of a teacher. For the first time the study programme of History had mandatory two-week-long teaching practice in elementary or secondary school under the guidance of a teacher – mentor and special didactic. During this time of the teaching practice the students had to complete at minimum six observation lessons, eight independent student lessons and at least six hours of additional educational work and complete a journal of the teaching practice (Trskan, 2004, p. 73).

Obligations concerning practical work have partially changed since 2005/06. Instead of the evaluated student lessons in elementary and secondary school, a three-week-long teaching practice was introduced in elementary or secondary school and students were also given the opportunity to complete the practice in museums and various Centres of School and Extra-curricular Activities in Slovenia. The three-week-long teaching practice included the following minimal obligations for the students: 10 student lessons, 8 hours of observation lessons, and at least 12 hours of additional work at schools. The journal of the teaching practice included several topics, which prepared the students for self-evaluation of their work and the professional teacher's development (Trskan, 2007, p. 513).

Training of History teachers for elementary and secondary schools took place at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana and at the Faculty of Education (from 2006 at the Faculty of Arts) in Maribor.

### **Training of History Teachers in Slovenia Today**

The training of History teachers is based on the Bologna reform and changes, which began at Slovenian faculties in 2006/07, when the new Bologna study programmes started running along with the traditional ones.

The previous university educational system, which had two levels, the undergraduate (four to six years) and postgraduate (two years for Master degree and two years for Doctor's degree or four years for a Doctor's degree without Master's), has been replaced by the three levels of the Bologna system (Higher Education Act of 2004). The first level consists of professional study programmes and university study programmes, second level Master's study programmes and third level of doctoral study programmes (Sverc, 2007, p. 66).

The Council of the Republic Slovenia for Higher Education in 2008 adopted the criteria for the accreditation of study programmes for teachers' education, which determine that Bologna educational study programmes for teachers ensure the acquisition of competences, which are necessary for the efficient performance of the teacher's profession. The criteria require that teaching practice in schools is mandatory and a component part of the educational training and organized and carried out according to the principle of reflexive practice. It requires from students facilitating integration of the contextual knowledge and educational professional knowledge as well as a gradual introduction into teaching and the teaching profession (Criteria for the accreditation of Programmes for Teacher Education 2008).

At the History department of the Faculty of Arts, students are able to choose from the single-major educational study programme or double-major educational study programme of History at the second level. At both programmes students have general educational subjects such as Psychology for Teachers, Pedagogy – Theory of Education and Andragogy, Didactics, special educational subjects, such as History Didactics I, History Didactics II, and numerous professional historical subjects, where students can choose from all except one mandatory subject (Selected Chapters from Contemporary Slovenian History) and at least one selective subject, which is also possible to attend at also other faculties (Trskan, 2009a; Trskan, 2009b).

Due to semesters, the subject History Didactics is divided into two subjects: History Didactics I and History Didactics II. At History Didactics I (four hours per week in one semester) there are lectures, seminar work and practical work. The students by the end of the semester are able to plan annually and daily (lesson plans), organize and carry out regular history lessons, use different teaching methods and motivational techniques at various stages of education, use teaching materials for History and information technology for lesson plans, written assignments, records, and portfolios. Students are able to observe, follow, evaluate, and self-evaluate the teaching process, as well as display satisfaction, responsibility and a positive attitude towards the teaching profession (Trskan, 2009a, p. 122; Trskan, 2009b, p.121). At History Didactics II (again four hours per week in one semester) there are lectures, seminar work and practical work. At the end of the semester students are able to explain, compare and evaluate the development of special didactics of history teaching, the teaching goals of modern history teaching, and the didactic and methodological basis for historical syllabi, textbooks, and handbooks. In addition, students are able to plan, organize and carry out extra-curricular activities, compose and evaluate written, oral, and authentic assignments, use teaching materials for History as well as IT for written assessments and for their portfolios. (Trskan, 2009a, p. 126; Trskan, 2009b, p. 125).

The teaching practice, which takes place for three weeks, accustoms the students to the systematic observation of history lessons, as well as other social sciences in elementary and secondary schools. The students are able to put theory to practice, to execute and evaluate regular history lessons and extra-curricular activities and develop a responsibility for the educational profession. They have to complete at least 10 hours of observation, 10 hours of individual lessons, 10 hours of cooperation with the mentor (talks after observations, before the lesson, after the student lesson), and perform at least 15 hours of extra activities at the school and outside the school, such as meeting the school management, the school's guidance service, the librarian or other teachers; attend field trips, class lessons, conferences, teachers' meetings; help at exhibitions; attend educational trips; supervise, complete individual lessons with pupils with special needs; observe extra-curricular activities; correct homework, prepare written exams, etc. (Trskan, 2009a, pp. 130–133, Trskan, 2009b, pp.129–133).



History teachers for elementary and secondary schools are trained at the second level Bologna study programmes for two years and at three faculties: at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana, at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Maribor, and at the Faculty of Humanities Koper at the University of Primorska. The only difference is that only at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana do students have the possibility to study History as a single-major educational study programme (Trskan, 2015a; Trskan, 2015b), whereas at both other faculties the study programme is only double major.

### **Conclusion**

The Faculty of Arts has been educating teachers for secondary schools (after 1945), since 1961 also for elementary schools, and it remains today the only institution in Ljubljana for training History teachers.

At the Faculty of Arts students of History have always acquired solid knowledge in various historical periods, which had been divided from 1945/46 to 1991/92 (when Slovenia got its independence) to general History (World and European History) and the History of Yugoslav Peoples, in particular Slovenian History. After 1991/92 the study programme changed so that general History, Slovenian History and History of Southeast Europe were dealt in periods, that is the Middle Ages, Modern Era, 19th century and 20th century. In addition, the Antiquity or Ancient Rome and Ancient Greece, the Ancient East, and other topics were dealt with. In Bologna educational study programme there is greater emphasis on selective subjects at the second level, whereas the remaining mandatory subject has to be at least one subject in Slovenian History.

An important part of the training of history teachers at the history department of Faculty of Arts has always been the subject Methodology of History Teaching. Its name has been used in Slovenia till the beginning of the 21st century and has been in accordance with other subjects. The methodology (special didactics, professional didactics or methodology of education) was considered a science, which deals with the specific requirements of teaching and learning of a certain subject. Methodology of subjects has never played a minor role in comparison to general didactics. To the contrary, it has always been the general didactic knowledge that adapted to the scientific subject and enriched the general didactic knowledge (Strmcnik, 1993, p. 109). This is why in professional journals the term special didactics became more commonly used, as well as the term didactics of a particular subject. This term was introduced in the academic year 2002/03 for the subject History Didactics and remains the same also for Bologna educational study programmes of History at master level.

In the theoretical part of the Methodology of History Teaching we find that contents were in accordance with educational novelties and the knowledge of the professors of the subject. This is how Bogo Stupan placed greater importance on the relationship between Methodology of History Teaching and general methodology, didactics, and pedagogy, the role of History at subjects of Social Sciences in elementary school and history teaching in combined classes (where several classes were taught together due to the small number of children). Another specialty was the representation of History teaching in the American and Soviet school system. Dr Stefan Trojar emphasized history syllabi, the use of teaching methods, especially explanations, conversations, dealing with texts and audiovisual means. He also included the systematic learning process according to the German didactic school and presented the Canadian educational system. Dr Danijela Trskan dealt with alternative lessons and alternative assessments, as well as the history teacher with all the assignments at a school, including the

permanent professional education. She also included examples of History teaching from the English and French school systems after.

Despite slight differences, all the professors placed greatest importance on the direct preparation of lessons and this is why practical work has been from the very beginning a component part of the subject and organized so to include observation lessons of trained teachers at elementary and secondary schools in Ljubljana, analyses on the observation lessons, guided preparations for student lessons in the classes. This remains also in Bologna educational study programmes. Of course since 2002/03 various practical work has been organized also in lecture halls, where students have tested their knowledge and developed the required skills for the educational work of History teachers with various practical assignments pertaining to the teacher's individual or team work (Trskan, 2007).

At first, teaching practice in elementary and secondary school was voluntary (2000/01), which meant that only some students opted for it. In 2002/03 it became mandatory, first lasting for two weeks, then after 2005/06 for three weeks. The Faculty of Arts introduced teaching practice for all double-major Bologna educational study programmes lasting for three weeks, whereas for single-major programmes for five weeks. This is no major change for History Didactics according to Bologna. The only difference is that the teaching practice in history is no longer a component part of History Didactics, but it becomes an independent subject.

We can conclude that up until 1985, the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana had been the only institution in Slovenia training History teachers for both secondary and elementary schools. With Bologna master study programmes, three different faculties at three Slovenian universities (in Ljubljana, Maribor, and Koper) take care of the training of History teachers for elementary and secondary schools. This is important progress for the Republic of Slovenia. Once again, we can stress that Methodology of History Teaching or History Didactics has always played a key role in educating students to become future history teachers in Slovenia.

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## REVIEW

Gerritsen, A. and Giorgio, R. (2015) *Writing Material Culture History* London: Bloomsbury Academic

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This book delights me. In 1992 I used artefacts and images, in my doctoral research, combined with a strategy for 8-9-year-olds to make deductions and inferences about how they were made and used, to make probability statements and to recognize questions which cannot be answered (Cooper 1992). In 1993, when a member of the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA), I was ridiculed for suggesting that A level sources could include what this book calls *Material Culture History*.

This collection of essays shows how material culture can extend the scope of historians by combining artefacts with other sources. It is argued that people's emotions can be inferred from artefacts and that links can be made across spaces, (a seventeenth English teapot in America or Japanese exports to Europe).

One chapter describes how artefacts can be visualized from descriptions in written inventories, wills and 16<sup>th</sup> century plays, which provide statistical information about the things people valued, about their status and relationships between people, even making it possible, in richer wills, to picture the rooms people lived in from descriptions of their contents.

We know that a basket which was made extremely skillfully from rushes in 1820, by an indigenous Indian American, Maria Marta, at a mission run by Franciscans, says around the rim, 'Maria Marta made me' in Spanish. We know that those who entered the mission lived like the friars, had food and shelter, but could not leave. We know that such baskets were made by the Chumash people before the Spanish arrived. It is decorated with motifs from a coin bearing the head of Charles IV of Spain. Such baskets were sold to make money for the Church. But we cannot know why her name is on basket. Did she design it herself? What did the patterns mean to her?

Archaeological sources, ceramic tableware, tiles and sculpture from late Medieval to the Early Modern period, reveal social, cultural and ideological changes: the rise of a new urban merchant/middle class, who were instrumental in promoting new modes of intensive production and new decoration: salt-glazed stoneware with molded decoration was cheap and could respond to rapid changes. Demographic changes in areas of London are revealed; in a narrow street in Limehouse enormous quantities of pottery and glass from different countries were found, while finds in Aldgate, a previously prosperous area, reveal a materially impoverished community.

Artefacts reveal religious changes. Evidence of trade within the Hanseatic League shows that it was instrumental in promoting Protestantism in England and Germany and that Protestantism was an urban phenomenon. They provide evidence of change from religious to secular: humanist imagery and secular armorial devices, combined with woodcut -based illustrations of leading protagonists of the Reformation, and evidence of political satire: for example satirized images of Hapsburg emperors on a mug from Koln found in London.

Artefacts provide evidence that history can include the perspectives of ordinary 'unseen' people, seldom referred to in documentation, as everyday objects to speak for them. Anthropologists

realized that the lives of peoples without texts can be studied through materials, which provide different perspectives. It became relevant to examine the colonized as well as the colonisers.

Artefacts, we learn, tell of global interactions. Between 1400 and 1800 there was global trade between Europe, India and China, especially in cottons and porcelains, at a time when it took 2 years to go from Europe to China and back. This allowed Europeans who never went far from home to see images of life in these places. Negotiation between buyers and sellers meant these artefacts changed, as Europeans specified changes they wanted. Europeans were depicted on Chinese porcelain and Indian fabric, so the Indians and Chinese had images of what European life was like. Finally Europeans had the technology to make Chinese pottery in Dresden and Indian printed cotton in England.

An interesting outcome of cosmopolitan relationships in the crossroads of the Pacific Ocean was that garments were given as precious gifts. For example the Unangan people of the Bering Straits made exquisite waterproof garments from the guts and aeosophougus of sea mammals and bears. One such was given by Kamehameha to the King of Hawaii and by him to the Ukranian artist on a Russian vessel, in return for painting his portrait for Emperor of Russia; it is now in a Museum in Massachusetts.

Another chapter shows how objects, combined with writing and painting, can endorse sensory deductions, can tell us about the impact of sounds. A sixteenth century Italian hand-bell, made from tin and copper, in proportions which make the maximum sound, can be heard today, but we can not hear it as was heard in past by a master summoning servants. But other sources show that his study would be quiet, away from servant and family noise but close enough to be heard. The bell is decorated with classical images of authority and shows the master's authority over his servants but also reflects the decorum of using a bell rather than using his voice to shout.

The Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority was long ago replaced by other bodies, but I understand that A Level history still does not require interpreting artefactual sources. After this book surely no argument can be made as to why not.

Hilary Cooper

### Reference

Cooper, H. (1992) *Young Children's Understanding in History*, unpub. PhD thesis, London University Institute of Education

## **IJHLTR INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS**

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