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EDITORIAL

Shared aims, many approaches: there's more than one way to kill a cat...

Hilary Cooper and Jon Nichol

In the editorial of volume 8.1 of this journal we began by saying, 'Internationally history has a major role to play in preparing children to be citizens in a world of plural democracies. History Education sits at the most volatile point on the interface between politics and education'. We continued that this journal aims to present an evidentially-based body of knowledge and understanding which might influence those who guide and shape curricula across the world. These are ambitious claims. Yet the papers in this volume do not belie them.

They describe research into history education in places as different as Turkey and Illinois, New South Wales and the Netherlands, Northern Ireland and Greece. They deal with pupils' thinking in history and with pedagogy and with the attitudes and understanding of students training to be history teachers, on which their pupils' thinking depends. And in these very different contexts the papers all have key principles in common. They are all concerned with exploring strategies for teaching and learning history in ways which promote open-mindedness, pluralism, understanding of differences both within and between societies, while also developing social cohesion. And, as with history itself, this involves complex questions.

Erinc Erdal and Ruken Akar Veral help student teachers to understand the 'Armenian deportation' from different perspectives. Alan McCully and Alison Montgomery describe an initiative which helped student teachers in Northern Ireland to acknowledge the influence their backgrounds may have on how they view and teach about the past in Northern Ireland. Giorgos Kokkinos and his colleagues explore the reasons for the absence of World History in Greek history text books.

Robert J. Parkes suggests a response to the Conservative replacement of history curriculum reforms of the 1990s in Australia with a return to a single narrative, while William Russell and Jeffrey Byford evaluate the impact of discussing controversial issues with students in a Chicago secondary school.

In the UK Terry Haydn and Richard Harris found that some pupils had less understanding than we might hope of what is involved in historical thinking and Alan Hodkinson challenges their chronological understanding. Ali Messer examines the impact of a virtual learning environment in enabling beginning teachers to develop collaborative activities within a community of practice. Carla Van Boxtel and Jannet Van Drie describe an encouraging variety of research in the Netherlands into strategies for developing pupils' historical reasoning.

The references in these papers reveal the impressive and surprising extent of research into history education world wide and the opportunity to engage with it. We feel privileged to be part of this vibrant research community.

Teaching History through Drama: the ‘Armenian deportation’¹

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Abstract—The basic aim of this research is to teach 4th grade students (ages 20-21) about the Armenian deportation (Tehcir) in 1915 through drama, by using primary and secondary sources. The sample of this study consists of 14 students who took a drama course as an elective. The primary research questions to be answered through the course of the study are:

- Do students revise their understanding of the Armenian deportations through learning the processes of historical enquiry?
- Can the students learn to understand the Armenian deportation from different perspectives, through using primary sources?
- Can they, through historical imagination, learn to empathise with the people who were deported in 1915?

The main data collection tools are designed to: elicit prior knowledge, analyse photographs, analyse documents, evaluate the issue. Observation notes were also taken during lessons. This study shows an improvement in the students’ historical skills and that, as a result, most of the students following the course had a comprehensive knowledge of the decision to deport, the process and the consequences of deportation. In addition, they decided to undertake further research; they felt the necessity to search for new documents and evidence about this subject.

Keywords—Armenian deportation, Concepts, Deportation, Documentary analysis, Drama in Education, Empathy, So called genocide, Historical empathy, Historical imagination, Interpretation, Multiple perspectives, Primary sources, Ottomans, Prior knowledge, Revised understanding, Secondary sources, Turks.

Context for the research

An overview to the background of the Armenian deportation

The deportation of Armenians during the First World War can be seen as a most important event, which drastically altered the population ratio of the province. However, this development cannot be analyzed without considering the political and economic context of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Moreover, clarifying the legal status of the non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire is also crucial to understanding Armenian-Muslim relations during this period.

The Ottoman State determined the legal status of non-Muslims, in principle, according to Islamic Law. According to Islamic Law, non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim ruler, who were the People of Scripture, were called *zimmi*. *Zimmi* status formed the basis of the *millet* system in the Ottoman Empire (Ortaylı, 2005). This system was based on religion and Armenians (Gregorian) were one of the Non-Muslim communities, accepted as *millets* by the Empire. However, legal regulations perceived Muslims to be superior to the others and social interactions between Muslims and the minorities were restricted in many aspects of social life (Göçek, 1996).

Nevertheless, the French Revolution and the rise of nationalism led to some significant socio-political changes in Europe. One of the fundamental consequences of those movements was the dissolution of the *millet* system in the early 19th century. This was a transformation of the Ottoman religious communities into ‘ethnic groups’ due to increasing awareness of their national identity. Therefore the Ottoman ruling elite made some reforms within the state and society to make the Empire compatible with the new circumstances shaped by the French Revolution and its principles. The basic aim of those reforms was to secure the loyalty of non-Muslims to the state, thus preventing the disintegration of the Empire (Sonyel, 1993). Moreover, Ottoman statesmen were not the only ones who were aware of the necessity for the reforms; they were also made under European pressure because non-Muslims gained protection of the European States in the nineteenth century.

When all legal reforms, which began in the early nineteenth century and continued until the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire are analyzed, it can easily be seen that they all became null and void. The reforms that took place as a result of foreign state interventions and internal dynamics of the Ottoman Empire did not succeed in providing the loyalty of non-Muslims to the Ottoman state. On the contrary, the social and political tensions, which in the long run prepared the ground for ethnic and religious conflicts, began to increase (Dölek, 2007).

The second half of the 19th century was disastrous for the Ottoman Empire. Defeats in war, loss of lands and people and the rise of nationalism in different parts of the Empire were all indicators of the political and economic disintegration of non-Muslim communities. Following the defeat in the war with Russia in 1877/78, the Armenian issue emerged as an international matter (Gürün, 1985). That is to say, all reforms demanded by the European states in Eastern Anatolia in accordance with their national interests and the power struggle between them played a central role in the Armenian issue.

The foundation of Armenian Resistance organizations and their activities were another important political developments in the late 19th century (Uras, 1987). National awakening among the Armenians was the key factor in the foundation of those organizations. The rise of the level of education with the opening of new Armenian schools and the increase in printing activities led to the development of an intellectual group among the Armenians (Nalbandian, 1963). Actually, emergence of a new intellectual group among the Armenians was closely related to missionary activities. In particular, American missions, after coming to the province in late 19th century, opened schools in a

¹ This article was also presented in the “Contemporary orientations in Education III – Constructivism and its reflections in Education-Symposium”, Özel Tevfik Fikret Okulları, 26th April, 2006 Izmir

short period of time. Education, as an important aspect of missionary activities, had not only religious; but also social, economical and cultural dimensions. Moreover, they were a way of influencing policies in the society (Kocabaşoğlu, 1989). In short, the changes in the Armenian community led to the emergence of organizations with strong patriotic beliefs and demands for independence from the Empire. These led to the resistance activities of Hınçak and Tashnak Parties in Eastern provinces of Anatolia (Nalbandian, 1963).

When the Ottoman Empire entered the war, the issue became more complicated. Some Armenian groups began to join the Russian army and waged war against the Ottomans. Meanwhile, Ottomans were preoccupied by Armenian revolts in Eastern Anatolia. Under these circumstances, the Committee of Union and Progress, the ruling party of the Ottoman Empire decided to remove this threat by deporting the Armenians. The process began on 24th April 1915 when the Ministry of the Interior ordered the closing down of the Armenian committees, confiscation of their documents and the arrest of their leaders. In İstanbul, 2.345 were arrested immediately.

During the deportation, a number of Armenians died due to the difficult wartime conditions such as disease, climate conditions, difficulties of travel and the illegal actions by some officials. Some of them also lost their lives as a result of the rebellions of many Armenians, during fights and revolts. Therefore, this decision, made on 24th of April 1915, was declared as a genocide by the Armenians.

Wartime propaganda (disinformation) was also effective in supporting the Armenians, claiming that the Ottomans had caused 'massacres', 'genocide' and even 'holocaust'. One of the propaganda materials was a book written by Arnold Toynbee in 1916, 'Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire', which was popularly known as the Blue Book (Sonyel, 2000). Arnold Toynbee was a member of the Masterman Propaganda Bureau in London and wrote the book on the instigation of Viscount James Bryce who had a distinct sympathy for the Armenians. The materials in the book were mostly based on Armenian sources and secondary sources. Therefore the validity and the reliability of the book was questionable. The book had a devastating effect in being used by Armenian activists in perpetuating their hatred of the Turks, and by certain scholars.

From this point onwards, it can be said that the Armenian question has been and still is highly politicized. There has been strong political argument on this issue. Apart from those who approach the question scientifically, the issue was polarised into rejection or defence of the so called genocide claims. On the one hand, Turkish official historiography emphasizes that the deportation decision was made to end the Armenian threat before and during the war, due to their resistance activities and their waging war with the Russians against the Ottoman Empire. The official narrative doesn't attempt to question what happened, but instead focuses on proving, through primary sources, that the state officers never aimed to kill the Armenians intentionally and all the deaths were caused by wartime and natural conditions such as illnesses, weather and journey conditions.

Moreover, it tries to prove that it was the Armenians who massacred the Turks. The best representations of this discourse can be seen in the studies of Halaçoğlu (2001), Gürün (1985), Sonyel (1993), Ataöv (1997) and Şimşir (1983). On the other hand, the Armenian thesis is based on just the opposite; it claims that the Ottomans were responsible for the genocide of Armenians during the deportation and that most of the population was decimated. According to them, the Ottomans used deportation as a technique to destroy the Armenians rather than directly annihilating them. In this way, the Ottomans withheld the security conditions, food and shelter, which resulted in increased deaths.

There is another movement, which Göçek (2006) calls 'postnationalist critique narrative', which is increasing its popularity in both the academic and the public sphere. The most significant feature of this group is its strong criticism of nationalism as an ideology and recognition that Turkish society is a cultural mosaic that comprises different religious and ethnic groups. This group consists of liberal Turkish intellectuals such as Taner Akçam, Halil Berktaş, Murat Belge, Fatma Müge Göçek, Cemil Koçak, Ahmet İnel and Baskın Oran. They are inclined to emphasise the suffering of the Armenians and claim that although there were murders on both sides, it wasn't an equal struggle and the Armenians were the ones had the most grievances. Therefore Turkey has to face up to the past and accept that there was a massacre during the deportation.

Historical thinking

In recent times, the ability to empathize and tolerate the 'other' has become increasingly important as a means of finding peaceful solutions to national and international conflicts. This ability could only be achieved through humanist education programs starting from pre-school, with the aim of living together in a peaceful community. For this reason, developing students' ability to see an event from different perspectives and so to develop historical empathy should be at the heart of social studies curricula. It is very important that social studies teachers have skills in historical thinking and are themselves free from prejudice. They should be able to teach pupils to use primary and secondary sources in order to develop their historical thinking skills.

In traditional history education, a main textbook is used as the only source. Thus, the book's point of view becomes the only perspective available to students. This prevents students from developing their own points of view and values. Students are not able to understand the processes of historical enquiry if they only use one book.

Interpreting primary sources

Researchers aiming to promote the reform of history education increasingly argue that the use of primary sources is essential. By making deductions and inferences from primary sources, which are the 'traces of the past', the students have the opportunity to engage directly with the past. Due to the differences in their socio-political and historical status, their gender, ethnicity, interests and the times in which they are writing, historians interpret sources in different ways. It is very important for the students to realise this.

While examining written documents, it is very important to understand for whom and in what context they were written. Accordingly, to use a single document while examining a certain case may cause problems. In order to prevent this, comparisons with different documents must be made and background information on the subject must be given; in other words, it must be supported with secondary sources.

Research indicates that using primary sources in history courses increases students' historical thinking skills. Rouet et al. (1996) found that students' ability to make inferences about documentary evidence is influenced from the documents they engaged with. They took two groups of students from different universities and made them read historical documents consisting of different types of sources. They gave primary sources to one group and articles of historians who cited primary sources to the other. Students were required to read the documents and write a short article evaluating the usefulness and reliability of the sources and their thoughts about the issues discussed in the documents. The results prove that directing students to different kinds of sources, especially primary sources changes their understanding of historical problems.

The basic aim of Wineburg's (1991) research was to analyze how people evaluate primary and secondary sources by questioning historical evidence. The sample of the study consisted of eight historians working in universities of San Francisco and eight students aged 16 from two high schools. Eight written and three pictorial documents about the Battle of Lexington were used as sources. He found that students can use and evaluate different kinds of sources as historians do although at different cognitive levels, and this helps to improve their historical thinking skills.

Photographs, as visual sources, also play an important role in forming an image of the environment in which they were produced. However, photographs are not always the identical reflection of the reality. Choice of subject, perspective of the camera, light, tone, contrast and texture adjustment may evoke different emotions on the person looking at the photograph; which leads the person to interpret the photograph in a certain way. Therefore, in order to grasp the photograph thoroughly, different sources of information must be referred to just as it is with the written documents (Stradling, 2003).

Multiple Perspectives

Multi-perspectivity depends on the ability to compare different perspectives. Perception of 'other' and the relationship between the 'other' and 'us' lies at the core of multi-perspectivity. Therefore multi-perspectivity, looking beyond your own perspectives, is necessary in trying to understand how others might perceive events. This enables students to understand how the 'other' might perceive events. Students can consider differences and similarities between different groups. Students come to a deeper understanding of the historical relationships among nations, neighbouring countries and the different ethno-religious institutions within national boundaries. They get a clearer view of the past and of current dynamics through analyzing the interactions and relations

among different peoples and groups (Stradling, 2003). Multi-perspectivity can be described as an approach which allows the students to examine and utilize the evidence derived from different sources in order to analyze the complexity and components of a situation. In this way, students realize that there can be different interpretations of an historical event. More significant is that they grasp the fact that even the primary sources might not reflect the objective truth and that they are rarely unbiased.

Students remember information and connections more easily when they are built up not by teachers or writers of the books, but by themselves.

According to Mayer (1999), it is very important for the teachers to show their students methods of historical analysis so that they grasp that not every interpretation is equally valid, and can distinguish between the powerful and the weaker interpretations.

Historical empathy

The worlds of the students are different from the personal and emotional worlds of the past, as the people in the past were thinking differently from us. Cooper (1995) states that, through studying historical empathy, we could understand why the people who lived in the past thought, felt and behaved differently from us. In this way, history students are better able to understand the behaviour of the people in the past. (Husbands and Pendry 2000)

This prevents any tendency to judge the past from today's point of view; contextualizing the past requires the use of historical imagination, and historical empathy because, the experiences in the past can be understood not with today's value judgements, but through considering the knowledge base and social and economic constraints and belief systems of the time. Knight (1993) states that the past has to be examined within the context of its own facts; the aim is to try to understand the "others", not with today's value judgements, but within the context of their own situations and cultures. Historical sources are seldom complete. Consequently, while examining these sources, the historian completes the missing information through 'historical imagination'. If sufficient possibilities are considered and the interpretation is reasonable, with no contradictory evidence this may be termed 'historical empathy'.

Revised understanding

According to Korbin and Abbot (1993), to make history education authentic means to give students the skills of historians. These skills require that students are to:

- generate questions
- arrange reliable evidence to support their questions
- search historical records beyond those offered in their books,
- consider documentation, periodicals, diaries, historical places, work of arts, historical findings and other evidences belonging to the past
- search these records taking the conditions of the relevant era into consideration
- compare events through multiple viewpoints. (Nash, 1996)

Teaching historical thinking through drama

Classroom teachers use drama methods when teaching social studies to many students in different age groups. Classroom research studies (Fines & Verrier, 1974; DeCourcy-Wernette, 1977; Farris & Parke, 1993; Taylor 1998) examining this method of using drama for social education, give mixed reviews. The use of drama in social studies can serve as a method to examine problems from historical content and current events in the context of the modern world:

The purpose of education is not to fit the individual in a place in society, but to enable him to make his own place.

(Bode, 1937, p. 237)

Drama classes can be places where students feel responsibility for and take action on problems. Shermis (1992) argues that students should feel problems passionately, as their own.

The use of drama in history courses can serve as a method for examining problems from historical content and current events in the context of the modern day world.

Drama in teaching history gives the students the opportunity to recreate an event or a situation and impersonate the relevant people. Students are given advance information on the event they will role play, and then they are asked to reflect their perspectives by putting themselves in the places of the people whom they will impersonate. Stradling (2003) has defined some of the skills, which the student would acquire from history education through drama, as follows:

1. To understand the daily lives and viewpoints of ordinary people who have lived in a certain period and witnessed the developments around them.
2. To handle different opinions and perspectives with tolerance, to look through different perspectives.
3. To empathizing with people who have experienced a certain event, situation, difficulty or change.
4. To understand and interpret important historical events and problems.

History education through drama is considered to help students look through different perspectives and have a thorough knowledge by questioning different interpretations on historical subjects, empathizing with the people of the historical period being examined, and analyzing primary and secondary sources. It is quite important for the student teachers to have historical thinking skills, to be far from prejudice and to be capable of inventing education environments using different teaching techniques.

Moreover, Armenian question is a sensitive issue and has a potential to produce tensions within the society. In Turkey, there are minority schools for Jews and Greeks (Rum) and Armenians as well. Moreover, most of the Armenian children go to same state or private schools with their Turkish friends. Therefore, teaching Armenian deportation as one of the sensitive and controversial issue in the school curriculum with multiple perspectives gains more importance in this sense. However, these issues should be taught in accordance with respect to differences, mutual trust, consensus and compromise among the societies. The decision² that European Council has taken in 31 October 2001 and Turkey also signed says that; "make it possible to develop in pupils the intellectual ability to analyze and interpret information critically and responsibly, through dialogue, through the search for historical evidence and through open debate based on multiperspectivity, especially on controversial and sensitive issues".

For these reasons, this study is deemed to be beneficial for the student teachers who will teach history at both primary and secondary school levels.

Objectives of the Study

The basic aim of this research is to teach 4th grade students about the Armenian deportation in 1915 through drama, using primary and secondary sources. In line with this main objective, the primary research questions to be answered through the course of the study were:

1. Do the students empathize with the people who were deported in 1915?
2. Can the students evaluate the deportation from different perspectives?
3. Is there a difference between the students' prior knowledge/opinion about deportation and their knowledge/opinion after the course?

Method

This is a case study related to teaching a group of students through drama, about the deportation of Armenians in 1915, and analyzing the students' activities and responses in depth. It is designed to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data. Participant observation and document analysis were used as data collection methods and data were collected through observation and document analysis, to enable 'data triangulation'.

The Sample of the Study

The sample of this study consisted of 14 fourth grade students aged between 20 and 21 who took the drama course as an elective, at Çukurova University in the Faculty of Education, Social Studies Department Adana, Turkey.

² Recommendation Rec (2001) 15 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on History Teaching in 21st Century Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31 October 2001

[https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=Rec\(2001\)15&Language=lanEnglish&Site=COE&BackColorInternet=DBD CF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=Rec(2001)15&Language=lanEnglish&Site=COE&BackColorInternet=DBD CF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864)

Data Collection

The following proforma were designed:

- 'Prior Knowledge Definition Form', on which students recorded what they knew about the deportation prior to the drama course and later, their concerns about the deportation
- 'Concept Definition Form', see below
- 'Photograph Analysis Form'. This required students to form an overall impression of a photograph, then list the people, objects and activities they could see. Second, they were asked to list 3 things they might infer from the photograph, what questions the photograph raised for them and where they might find the answers.
- 'Written Document Analysis Form'. See table 1 below. Students were asked why they thought the documents were written, which of the writers' opinions they agreed with and why, which they disagreed with and why and whether they thought the writers were prejudiced and if so why.
- 'Evaluation Form'. This asked students what their perspective was about the Armenian Deportation before the course, whether the course changed their perspective, how and any further comments.

Implementation Plan

Implementation lasted for four weeks, two hours for two groups each week. At the beginning of the study, students were informed about the subject and duration. The students were intrigued by the subject but were hesitant and insecure because they lacked knowledge of the subject and experience of drama. In order to improve the *I-we* concept, form a group synergy, make the participants use their body more confidently and effectively and help them express themselves comfortably; various games were played, exercises and warm up studies, improvisations about different topics were made at the beginning. After these studies, participants felt more comfortable and confident in taking roles.

In the first week, students were informed about the aim of the study. Then, the *prior knowledge definition* form was given in order to determine students' prior knowledge about the subject.

Afterwards, students were divided into two groups and the *concept definition form* was given to both groups to make them find similarities and differences between the concepts of 'deportation, so called genocide, migration, ethnic group, minority, and racism'. The groups firstly tried to define and give examples to these concepts. Secondly, they chose two of the concepts and each group made a construction and improvisation concerning these concepts. The groups demonstrated their improvisations alternately, and each group tried to guess the concept, which the other group demonstrated. First group improvised deportation and migration; second group improvised minority and migration. Then, the whole class talked about the concepts and differences among them. Finally instructors told the participants that they were assigned to write a social studies textbook for elementary level fourth grade students and prepare a unit about Ottoman-Armenian relationship prior to deportation and the causes of deportation in that textbook.

The topic of the second week was causes of deportation in 1915. Therefore, to make a connection with the previous assignment, instructors told the participants that they were members of the *Talim Terbiye Kurulu* (Educational Council) and they should attend an assembly in which a new social studies textbook for fourth grade elementary level will be prepared. Later, a meeting was held and meanwhile, the participants determined the causes of deportation. After that, the participants were divided into two groups, they were given a worksheet including the list of causes and requested to list the facts from the most to the least important (Armenian revolutionary activities, nationalist movements, Armenian collaboration with the Russians on the Caucasian Front and missionary acts). Groups prioritised these causes from 1 to 4 according to their importance in the deportation decision-making. Later on, both groups staged an improvisation based on whichever they regarded as the most important cause of the event. During an improvisation based on the activities of the missionaries, the missionary sat on the hot seat - and was asked questions.

In the third week events, which took place with the loosening of the Ottoman Empire's control, caused conflicts in places like Van and Zeytun were explained to the students. Thus, Enver Paşa sent a telegram to Talat Paşa and wanted him to announce the decision of deportation. Afterwards, a meeting was held in which participants were the ministers of the Cabinet and the instructor played the role of Talat Paşa. In this meeting, the telegram sent from Enver Paşa (Appendix 1) and the decision the Council of Ministers took regarding the process of deportation (Appendix 2) were read and the ministers' opinions were taken. Then the ministers were divided into two groups and were asked to determine three important obstacles which might be faced during deportation and possible solutions the government should choose and implement and to prepare a report concerning these. In this report, the striking points were that: health crews were stated to be provided in order to deport the children, the ill and the old people safely, security crews were to be put in charge throughout deportation in order to prevent internal fights and attacks of other groups, the migration route was to be explicitly specified, security crews were to be assigned for the protection of the deportees' homes and belongings they had left behind, for the time when they would return.

In the last week, instructors and students sat on the floor in a circle. On the floor there were some photographs showing the deportees, their houses left behind, their temporary encamping places and conditions. Then students began to analyse the photos they chose using the photograph analysis proforma. After finishing the photograph analysis, instructors showed the students a photograph of an abandoned Armenian settlement area and wanted them to focus on it. While examining the photo, instructors wanted them to ask questions such as who was living in that place and how they were living. Afterwards, students drew pictures of the household belongings of that family and made a paper location activity by painting, cutting and locating the belongings on the specified area. Instructors indicated that there had been a family album left. Students were divided into two groups; and were asked to form a still image of one of the photos

in that album. Then they were asked to freeze frame two photos of ‘the moment of hearing about the deportation decision’ and ‘the time of departure’. Later, while the students were examining the formed photos, instructors put their hands on the students’ shoulders and asked who they were and how they felt. After that, these two groups made two improvisations on ‘the best thing’ and ‘the worst thing’ this family might have faced during the deportation. Finally, students’ thoughts and feelings were shared.

At the final stage, the class examined the subject from today’s perspective. Students were given two conflicting secondary sources and they were assigned to analyse these sources as per the written document analysis form. Finally, in order to assess students’ prior knowledge/opinion about deportation and their knowledge/opinion after the course, the evaluation forms were given.

Validity and reliability

In order to maintain the structural validity of the study, the duration took ten weeks; six weeks for preparation for drama and four weeks for the courses. ‘Data triangulation’ was made by using participant observation and document analysis as data collection methods. Thus, multi dimensional and detailed information acquired the correlation of the information obtained through two different methods, was examined. The process was defined in detail and supported by related documents to extend the reliability of the study. For this purpose, while reporting the findings, relevant observation records were quoted. In addition, two researchers made coding and categorization of the data individually to increase the reliability. The findings and the discussion were also supported by theoretical knowledge and related researches.

Abbreviations that were used are defining the students. Such as (S1): The first student.

Data analysis

The researchers transcribed the observation notes word by word from forms. Transcription was performed on a word processing program and produced raw data. Researchers coded the data. Given the actual data, inferences, the researchers’ perceptions and previous knowledge and experiences (Dey, 1993, p100) were drawn upon. Lastly, theoretical issues should be reviewed. Each succeeding unit of meaning was compared to previous categories of from the first observation transcript. Under each category, sub-categories emerged. The researchers then worked back and forward between the data collected verifying the meaningfulness and accuracy of the categories of data. At the end of this process relevant categories were organised under the research questions.

Abbreviations that were used are defining the students. Such as (S1): The first student.

Findings—related to multiple perspectives

In order to determine how students evaluate this subject from different perspectives, they were given two secondary sources; Akçam (1999) defending genocide claims and Gürün’s (1985) rejecting the defense. After analyzing these sources, students filled in the written document analysis forms. Findings obtained from this form were categorized as reasons of documents being written, agreed views, disagreed views and prejudices of the writers, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Students’ views on different perspectives on deportation

Reasons of sources being written		Lobby works, land demands, defending genocide, rejecting genocide, making the public conscious, imposing views, responsibility of deaths, causes of deaths
Agreed views	Gürün’s	Causes of deaths, punishment of violence, mutual killing, rejecting genocide, accuracy of decision, unintentional deaths, reasons of deportation, war, collaboration with other nations, violence
	Akçam’s	Evidence, being scientific, role of Talat Paşa, violence
Disagreed views	Gürün’s	Reasons of deportation, accuracy of decision, not being scientific, not basing assertions on evidence, unintentional deaths
	Akçam’s	Defending genocide, role of Talat Paşa, number of the dead, not taking measures, provoking deaths, not being on notice, not being scientific, not basing assertions on evidence, depending on rumours
Prejudices of the writers	Gürün’s	Claim of terrorist, not being scientific, not basing assertions on evidence, unintentional deaths, categorizing Armenians, number of the dead
	Akçam’s	Defending genocide, role of Talat Paşa, reliability of documents, not basing assertions on evidence, innocence of Armenians, perpetrators of genocide, depending on rumours

When students were asked the reasons why the sources were written, all of them said that one reason was to defend so called genocide and the other to reject this defence. Besides, according to one student (S5), the reason for creating these sources was because Taner Akcam, was lobbying politicians in Armenia to get a Law on Genocide passed in their parliament and supporting Armenian demands for the return of lands lost in the diaspora. To another student (S11) it was to raise awareness and to impose views; and to another (S2), it was to explain the causes of deaths and whether Turkey was responsible for them.

When students were asked which views of the writers they agreed with and disagreed, they stated on the whole that they agreed with Gürün's views and disagreed with Akçam. Most of the students said that they agreed with Gürün's rejection of so called genocide during deportation, because deaths, individual violence on and punishment of deportees most of the deaths being unintentional, for example caused by weather conditions, illness and hunger. These students also declared that they agreed with the decision because of the period's condition of war and the collaboration of Armenians with other nations. However, two students (S3 and S11) said that they were partially in agreement with Akçam's thoughts about *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa's* (Ottoman intelligence agency) arbitrary actions and implementing so called genocide secretly by a group under Talat Paşa's control. Moreover, two students thought that Akçam's views were accurate because he based his assertions on evidence.

I have the same opinion as Taner Akçam. Talat Paşa had a lot of mistakes. Although it can't be regarded in the same way as archival documents; our grandmas and grandpas who lived there tell us that there had been so called genocide. Besides, the information Taner Akçam gave is in official records. (S9)

Writers' views, which students oppose are as follows:

Most of the students were against Akçam's viewpoint due to the fact that he has not presented evidence. In addition, they mentioned that genocide claims would be paradoxical because that Armenians were called as *millet-i sadıka* (loyal community) and that not all Armenians were killed during deportation. They considered that all those experiences can only be defined as mutual murder. These students also were in opposition to Akçam's points on Talat Paşa's role during deportation and the number of the dead. One student (S7) found Akçam's statements "officers are not taking measures to prevent – are even promoting murders" and "other members of the government were not consulted about the decision" as contradictory. Three students disagreed with Gürün's statements about reasons of deportation and the efficacy of the decision. Besides, claiming that officials' illegal actions played an important role in deaths, they were also opposed to Gürün's statements on the reasons of deaths. In addition, two students were in opposition with both writers saying that they their assertions were based on evidences and rumours which were not robust enough to prove their claims.

I don't agree with Taner Akçam's genocide claims. They have killed us, and we have killed them as well. It was wartime. (S1)

If there had been planned mass murders, then related documents should be given explicitly. (S13)

I am against Kamuran Gürün. Taking people away to the lands which they don't know and making them walk for days under bad conditions, even if not a direct murder, is to convict them to death. (S9)

When students were asked if the writers had prejudices or not eight students thought that only Akçam was prejudiced because of his statements defending so called genocide, whereas Talat Paşa, was not prejudiced because of the reliability of the documents he used. Five students found both writers prejudiced for different reasons. These students found Gürün's views about unintentional deaths, categorizing Armenians, the number of the dead and claims that some Armenians were terrorists were prejudiced. They also found Akçam prejudiced for his thoughts on the role of Talat Paşa, basing his image of Armenians being innocent on rumours and his claims about people who were in charge of so called genocide. There was only one student who found Gürün prejudiced and one student (S7) hasn't answered the question. However one student (S4) stated that he saw Taner Akçam was prejudiced and that he did not agree with any of his explanations. On the other hand he noticed Gürün as free from bias on account of his thoughts being neutral and convincing.

Is everyone who causes disorder a terrorist? Therefore, can today's politicians be terrorists? (S10)

I also see Taner Akçam as prejudiced. If there is genocide, then not only Talat Paşa, but also other people condoning this event are guilty. (S9)

Gürün tries to make interpretations about the deaths without having absolute knowledge about them. For instance he doesn't know the exact number of the dead and its ratio to the population. While Akçam describes this event as a planned action, bases this on informal speeches and there is a lack of lack of primary document. (S3)

Findings related to students' empathic thinking skills

In order to determine whether or not the students empathized with the people who lived in that period, they were shown eight photographs of deportation and camping places and asked for an analysis of these photographs. Findings obtained from photograph analysis forms are as follows. When students were asked their inferences about the photos they mostly emphasized people's exhaustion, extreme poverty, hopelessness, despair, inevitable acceptance, pessimism, ambiguousness about what would come next, and children's unawareness. In addition to these, negative conditions like dirtiness and oldness of the belongings, torn quilts, coldness and illness were the points students observed.

Women are in despair in this photo. Children are crying. Their clothes are torn, their tents don't seem to be good. That is to say, they are all under bad conditions. Men are watching the environment as if they accepted everything. (S1)

When students were asked about their concerns emerging from the photograph analysis they stated their curiosity about why people were in such bad conditions, where they were migrating, why they took so few belongings, why officials didn't consider these difficulties and try to overcome them, and why there was a mourning atmosphere in the photos.

After the freeze frames following photograph analysis, students said that they were so much more influenced by the photos. They stated that people's leaving their homes, physical and moral losses they went through during deportation made a deep impression, thus they understood that period of time and people better and they felt themselves much closer to the people living at that time. They also said that they had never seen the event from this perspective before. Findings obtained from evaluation forms are as follows:

I understood better how people felt. I saw how the causes of Armenian deaths were diverse. (S3)

Deportation was a normal fact to me. But when we lived this event through role play, it was more than a torture. Because we were forced to migrate, we were leaving our homes and breaking apart with our beloved ones. We lived every moment, every breath of these, it was really hard. I stood in these people's shoes. (S9)

Findings related to the difference between the students' prior knowledge/opinion about the deportation and their knowledge/opinion after the course

The prior knowledge definition form and concept definition form were used to describe students' prior knowledge and opinions. Data obtained from prior knowledge definition form was categorized as knowledge about deportation and concerns about deportation, as seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Students' prior knowledge and opinion about deportation

Knowledge about Deportation	Collaboration with other nations, unintentional deaths, mutual killing, war, reaction of other nations, obligatory migration, mass demises, resistance activities, Armenian revolts, land demands, lands prosecuted to migration, lands of migration, provocation of other nations, using force, situation of properties, mass massacre, arming against Armenians, genocide claims, lack of authority, places of living, <i>millet-i sadıka</i> , lobby works, reasons of deportation, process of deportation
Concerns about Deportation	Number of the dead, using force, reaction of other nations, situation of properties, reasons of deportation, process of deportation, Armenians after deportation, resistance activities, genocide claims, Armenian revolts, causes of deaths, evidences of so called genocide, alternative solutions, violence, answers to genocide claims, scientific researches, accuracy of decision, nationalism, lobby works, <i>millet-i sadıka</i> , lands of migration, collaboration with other nations

What students knew most about the deportation was the impact of Armenian revolutionary activities, Armenian revolts, provocation of other nations, collaboration with other nations and lack of Ottoman support in doing this. Besides, students described deportation as obligatory migration and considered it the reason for genocide claims. Moreover, they emphasized that there were mutual killings on account of this decision taken during wartime. According to students, the reasons for the deaths were unintentional such as cold weather, epidemic diseases, and hunger. However, one student (S13) defined the deportation as mass murder and stated that the Ottomans were armed against the Armenians.

The dimensions that students wanted to know most about can be listed as follows. Further reasons for the decision for deportation, whether the decision was accurate or not, whether other possible solutions could be taken or not, causes of deaths, whether any violence was practiced on the deportees or not, the situation of movable and immovable properties Armenians left behind. Besides, students mentioned that they were curious about the evidence of the assertors who claimed there had been so called genocide. They were also concerned about why the other nations constantly put genocide claims on the agenda and why Turkey couldn't give adequate answers to these claims. In addition, they stated that they would like to know which stage relevant academic research and discussions has reached.

In order to determine students' knowledge about the basic concepts of the subject, they were divided into two groups and assigned to fill in the *concept definition form*. Each group defined and exemplified every concept by brainstorming. After analyzing the data obtained from the forms, it was found that both groups correctly defined and exemplified the concepts.

Data obtained from the *evaluation forms* students filled in to determine their knowledge and opinion after the course were categorized as *prior knowledge and opinion and changes in prior knowledge and opinion*, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Students' knowledge and opinion after the course

Prior knowledge and opinion	Lack of knowledge, accuracy of decision, <i>millet-i sadıka</i> , collaboration with other nations, komitacı actions, genocide claims, unintentional deaths, mutual killing, being one-sided, evaluation according to the conditions of the periods, causes of deaths, process of deportation
Changes in prior knowledge and opinion	Evaluation according to the conditions of the periods, alternative solutions, mutual killing, increase in knowledge, evidence, accuracy of decision, process of deportation, empathy, scientific researches, desire of research, experience, critical perspective, different perspectives, teaching techniques, genocide claims, number of the dead, incoherent knowledge, discrimination

When students were asked their perspectives on deportation before the course, most of them acknowledged their lack of knowledge. On the other hand, they believed in the accuracy of this decision because of Armenians resistance activities and their collaboration with other nations. Moreover, they said that there were mutual and unintentional deaths due to the severity of the period's conditions. They also stated that they were one-sided while assessing this subject; they considered all Turks as innocent and Armenians as murderers. Besides, they asserted that they imagined the event as a simple migration; they never thought about the difficulties the deportees faced and what they might have felt.

When students were asked whether there had been changes in their prior knowledge and opinion, all of them indicated that their prior knowledge and opinion didn't change much. In other words, they still believed in the accuracy of the decision within the period's conditions and that there wasn't genocide. On the other hand, they said that they could evaluate the event through Armenians' eyes and they could understand better how they felt. In addition, they empathized with the deportees through the roles they took and they felt the people's troubles inside. Therefore they believed those people could be deported in better conditions, there might have been alternative solutions and that many innocent people had been involved. Two students said that they didn't have much information about and weren't interested in this event before the course. However as they learned and based their knowledge on evidence, their interest was increased and they started to believe in the necessity of in depth research. Four students added that the techniques used in the lessons made the course more enjoyable and effective and also useful, enabling theoretical knowledge to be put into practice.

Only one student (S6) asserted that the decision was correct owing to Armenians' oppression and mass murder of Turks. He added that this course didn't make any changes in his thoughts by saying:

My thoughts didn't change, no need to change. However I felt really sorry that the innocent suffered with the guilty. I thought that the only cause of Armenian deaths were unintentional like illness and weather conditions. But I understood the effects of officials' and soldiers' behaviours on these deaths. It wasn't genocide, but the number of the dead can't be regarded as too little. (S3)

I still believe in the rightness of the decision. But they might have been deported in better conditions. We saw some photos of deportation during the course. Their appearance was really touching. They were lying down with torn quilts. Besides they were trying to sleep in open air. As to me, the conditions could have been improved. Anyway, I feel that doing this would be very hard under that period's conditions. Because the Ottoman Empire was making war in different fronts, it was ruined and nearly falling down. (S8)

On the other hand, most of the students declared that they didn't have a comprehensive knowledge about this subject before the course and were one-sided while assessing this subject. However, after the course, they realized their lack of knowledge, their judgments have changed, questions arose in their minds and they felt the necessity for further research.

Conclusion and discussion

Lee and Shemilt (2004) state that, students come to history courses with many prejudices and preconceptions. If their preconceptions can't be related to the new concepts to be taught and these concepts can't be reconstructed in their minds, the learning won't be meaningful. In this study, the students' pre-knowledge about the concept of deportation and other related concepts was explored. Furthermore, instructors aimed to make the students analyze the event of deportation within different perspectives, to practice real world experience about this event and to empathise with the deportees through drama. In this course, the facilities were given to the students in order to make them realize the dramatic reconstructions relevant to particular period or fact. Moreover, they were expected to take role and make improvisations. All of these provided the students with a fictional context in which they found the opportunity to practice real life experiences. This study, from the point of the findings related to students' empathic thinking skills, shows an improvement in the students' historical empathy skills in their personal perception. The research made by Fines and Verrier (1974), proving that teaching social studies through drama improves the students' empathic thinking level, supports this conclusion. Students developed a deeper empathy sense towards the decisions previous generations made while they engaged with the past more by making history themselves.

The findings related to multiple perspectives show that almost all of the students reject genocide claims and in this line agree with Gürün's sight. However, the same students' opposing Gürün's views on the causes of deaths and the rightness of the decision of deportation can be regarded as an indicator of their critical thoughts. Besides, some students found a certain number of Akçam's views realistic. This also shows their assessing the event was not one-sided although Akçam defends genocide claims. These can be regarded as a result of their taking various roles of both statesmen and both Turkish and Armenian subjects. Thus, the students had an opportunity to see the perspectives of these people. In his study about teaching Boston Massacre through drama in seventh grade social studies course, Taylor (1992) also concluded that when students learn to engage with the accuracy of historical accounts, they are able to analyze different kinds of historical sources from different perspectives. Moreover, Foster and Yeager (1999) did some research investigating students' ability to evaluate different kinds of sources. They gave the students documents concerning the issue they studied and asked them to answer given questions using historical methodology. The consequences of that research showed that students demonstrated historical enquiry, matching the sources, determining biases and ambiguities, and designating missing parts in the evidences. Therefore, this research supports especially some educators' claims that students have the ability to engage with the processes of historical enquiry.

Findings related to the difference between the students' prior knowledge/opinion about deportation and their knowledge/opinion after the course, show us that most of the students had comprehensive knowledge about the decision, process and consequences of deportation after the course. Moreover, they improved in seeing an event from

multiple perspectives. In addition, they decided to undertake further research and felt it necessary to search for new documents and evidence. DeCourcy and Wernette (1977) concluded that teaching social studies through drama makes students feel the need to question and research historical events. As a consequence, the results of this study show that teaching history through drama helps students understand and analyze the events in a multiple perspectival way and within the period's conditions. Besides, drama is effective for students to learn how to use primary and secondary sources and to improve historical empathy skills; thus students improved in both cognitive and emotional skills.

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Appendix 1—Telegram from Enver Paşa to Talat Paşa

Around Lake Van and in specific areas known by the governor of Van, Armenians are constantly gathered and prepared to continue their insurrection. I am convinced that these Armenians who have gathered must be removed from these areas, and that the rebellion's nest must be destroyed. According to the information provided by the 3rd Army Command, the Russians brought the Muslims within their borders into our country under wretched and miserable conditions, on 20 April 1915. In order to respond to this, as well as to reach the goal I have stated above, it is necessary to either send these Armenians and their families to Russia, or to disperse them within Anatolia. I request that the most suitable of these two alternatives be chosen and carried out. If there is no inconvenience, I would prefer that the families of the rebels and the population of the region in rebellion are sent outside our borders, and that the Muslim community brought into our borders from abroad are relocated to their place. (Gürün, 1985, p.200)

Appendix 2—Decision the Council of Ministers took regarding the process of deportation

It is absolutely necessary to annihilate and destroy by effective operations this possible harmful activity which has a bad effect on the war's operations which are designed for the benefit of protecting the state's security and existence.

The goal of the operation begun by this order of the Ministry is obvious. It is stated in the memorandum of the Ministry of the Interior that the Armenians who must be transferred, of those residing in the towns and villages, will be sent to their allotted local dwellings. Their transfer will be made in comfortable circumstances, their comfort will be provided on the way, and their lives and possessions will be protected. Until they are settled in their new dwellings, they will be fed through funds of the deportees' appropriation. In proportion to their previous economic and financial condition, they will be given property and lands; the Government will construct dwellings for the needy ones, will distribute seeds for sowing, tools and implements to the farmers and craftsmen who need them. Possessions and belongings left behind will be returned to them in an appropriate way. After the value of the possessions and immovable property belonging to the transferred deportees has been calculated and registered, it will be distributed to the immigrants. Immovable properties such as warehouses, factories, shops, orange groves, vineyards, olive groves, orchards; which would remain outside the specialized sphere of the immigrants, will be sold at auction, or will be leased, and their value will be deposited in financial offices for safe-keeping to be paid to their owners. A regulation has been implemented by the said Ministry to the effect that the expenditures arising from these transactions and procedures will be paid from the appropriation set aside for the deportees. Through this decree, the administration and maintenance of the abandoned properties will be ensured. The general transactions concerning the deportees will be accelerated, regulated and supervised. Commissions will be formed, which will employ salaried officials who will have the duty and authority, and who will be directly dependent on the Ministry of the Interior. These commissions will be composed

of one president and two appointed members, one of whom will be selected from among the officials of the Ministry of Finance. These commissions will be sent to their regions, and the quarters where a commission will be present, the Governor will submit to the said Ministry a note stating that they have begun the application of the said regulation, and they will give information to the responsible departments. (Gürün, 1985, p.209)

Children's ideas about what it means 'to get better' at History: a view from the UK

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Abstract—*The past three decades have seen radical changes in history educators', policymakers' and educationalists' ideas about what it means 'to get better' in history as a school subject in the UK. The inception of a National Curriculum for History brought about a much more clearly defined framework for progression in the subject. The introduction of formal (and quite complex) models for measuring pupils' progress in history, and changing and contested ideas about progression in history as a school subject occasioned vigorous debate, both between politicians, historians and history teacher educators, and between teacher educators themselves.*

However, less attention has focused on pupils' ideas about what it means to get better at history, and the extent of their understanding of the models of progression, which have been developed in recent years.

The research asked pupils to explain in their own words what they thought it meant 'to get better at history'. The outcomes revealed that many pupils had very little understanding of the models for progression for history which have been put in place in UK schools, and quite vague and inchoate ideas about what it means to make progress in history. Only a minority of pupils, in some of the schools involved, were able to explain progression in terms which in any way reflected the models of progression laid down in official curriculum specifications, and as expounded in adult discourse about history education.

It is possible that many teachers have perhaps made assumptions about the extent to which pupils understand what they have to do to make progress in history, and that more time and thought might be invested in this aspect of history education in order to improve pupil motivation and attainment in history.

Keywords—*Assessment; Curriculum; History education; Progression; Pupil voice.*

Changing ideas about progression in History in the UK

The past three decades have seen radical changes in policymakers', educationalists' and history educators' ideas about what it means 'to get better' in history as a school subject in the UK (Lee and Ashby, 2000, Husbands et al., 2003). Before the advent of a formal, standardised 'National Curriculum for History' in 1991, the idea of progression in the subject was loosely defined, not precisely articulated, and seen generally in terms of an aggregation of subject content knowledge, assessed largely through extended writing based on pupil comprehension and recall of what they had been taught. In 1985, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) attempted to define a model of progression based around

the development of pupils' 'historical skills' (DES, 1985: 16-19) but this model was exploratory, 'ahead of its time' and was not widely adopted in schools. In the words of John Slater, then Senior HMI for History:

Skills – did we even use the word—were mainly those of recalling accepted facts about famous dead Englishmen and communicated in a very eccentric literary form, the examination-length essay. It was an inherited consensus, based largely on hidden assumptions, rarely identified, let alone publicly debated.

(Slater, 1989: 1)

Although this was in some ways a parody of prevailing curriculum arrangements, it was not far from the reality of assessment practice in schools and in public examinations for history. In many history departments, assessment in history was largely a matter of testing pupils' factual recall and their ability to deploy their factual recall in the context of extended writing, and this was the main method of testing for pupil attainment in external examination at the ages of 16 and 18.

The inception of a National Curriculum for History brought about a much more clearly defined framework for progression in the subject, based on 45 statements of attainment, divided into three main strands or 'ladders' of progression:

- the development of historical knowledge and understanding
- the development of pupils' ability to use historical sources
- the development of pupils' understanding of historical interpretations.

(DES, 1991)

Many history teachers were very sceptical and critical of the framework for progression and assessment laid down by the original National Curriculum, particularly the 'discovery' that attainment in all curriculum subjects could be identified and measured in a number of 10-level scales (Phillips, 1993). This very detailed model of progression was very complex compared to previous notions of progression; it was also quite speculative in the sense that it was not based on an extensive and trialled evidence base. To further complicate matters, the first revision of the National Curriculum for history, in 1995, identified five different 'strands' or domains of the study of history that teachers should give attention to:

- Chronology
- Historical knowledge and understanding
- Use of sources
- Interpretations
- Organisation and communication.

These were termed the 'Key Elements' of the National Curriculum for history, and were intended to ensure that pupils received a 'broad and balanced' historical education, which gave some attention to history as a form of knowledge as well as a body of knowledge (Lee and Ashby, 2000).

The 1995 revision of the National Curriculum for History also abandoned the '45 boxes' approach (see Haydn, 1994) and substituted a single nine-point scale for attainment in the subject (DfE, 1995). Instead of separating the assessment of pupils' progress into three different strands, the revised levels of attainment attempted to give an overall 'best fit' judgement about what standard pupils were operating at across the various 'domains' of history. In a further revision of the history curriculum in 1999, the five 'key elements' remained comparatively unchanged but were now described as five aspects of 'knowledge, skills and understanding'.

Whatever history teachers in the UK felt about these models of progression, whether they agreed with them or not, they were obliged to report on pupils' level of attainment in all subjects at the end of each key stage (at the age of 7, 11 and 14). In many schools, heads and senior management teams required departments to report on pupils' levels of attainment much more frequently, in some cases, every six to eight weeks. Some departments split the levels into 'micro-levels', others developed a hearty cynicism about both the validity of the levels as a measure of progression, and about the effect of the 'levels' system on teaching and learning more generally, and the pressures to 'teach to the test' (Counsell, 2004).

In addition to the fact that many history teachers did not believe in the models of progression and the assessment systems that had been imposed by the National Curriculum, these models of progression were much criticised and contested by several commentators in the field of history education. In 1993, Lomas suggested a list of 12 areas where pupils might demonstrate progression in their learning, and these bore only a very limited relation to the models laid down by the National Curriculum specifications (Lomas, 1993). The work of Lee, Ashby, Shemilt, Dickinson and Wineburg explored pupils' ideas about particular second order concepts in history, in order to gain greater insight into children's thinking about these concepts, in areas such as empathetic understanding, accounts, cause, rational understanding, explanatory adequacy and objectivity (see, for example, Lee and Ashby, 2000, Lee et al., 2001, Lee and Shemilt, 2003, 2004, Wineburg, 1997). These studies also were at some variance to the 'official' model of progression laid down by the National Curriculum. Byrom (2003) also pointed to the complex interrelationship between elements of progression in pupils' learning – and the problem of retention - the extent to which pupils were prone to regression and forgetfulness in their understanding of history, particularly in terms of substantive historical knowledge. More recently, the groundswell of teacher dissatisfaction with the levels system has led to the development of alternative ways of assessing pupil progress (Burnham and Brown, 2004, Cottingham, 2004, Harrison, 2004).

Given the radical nature of change in assessment practice which the 'levels' model and subsequent adjustments to it represented, it is not surprising that teachers did not rush to embrace the model unquestioningly. Phillips' research (1992) revealed that 72% of heads of history across 5 local authorities were unhappy with the TGAT model as applied to history. Comments ranged from 'complex', 'impractical', 'verbose', to more desperate cries of 'awful', 'daft', or 'mad' (Phillips, 1992: 255). Lawton made the point that as well as adding to the workload involved in assessment, the attempt to use the levels system to make teachers accountable for their impact on pupils' progress, as well as a formative model to inform teachers' attempts to move pupils forward in their learning, was always likely to lead to teacher scepticism (Lawton, 1989). The idea that progression was not to be measured primarily in terms of the aggregation of subject content knowledge was also to prove controversial in some quarters (Phillips, 1998).

Ideas about progression have been further complicated by media reporting on school history, which regularly sensationalises gaps in pupils' factual knowledge of British history (Culpin, 2007), and the public pronouncements of some British politicians about young people's baleful ignorance of the national past (see, for example, Collins (2005). Both these phenomena foreground the accumulation of subject content knowledge as the prime desirable outcome of the study of history.

Context of this study

Thus, over the past two decades, models of progression in school history in the UK have gone from being fairly vague and underdeveloped, to extremely complex and contested.

But throughout the debate about what it meant 'to get better'; at history in school, less attention has been paid to pupils' ideas about what it meant to make progress in the subject. To what extent is there a shared understanding of progression between history teachers and their pupils; how aware are pupils about what it means to get better in the subject?

The context of this study was a review of curriculum arrangements for history commissioned and funded by the Curriculum and Qualifications Authority (QCA), the statutory body responsible for the 'health' of the school curriculum in the UK. The study aimed to explore pupil perceptions of what they liked and disliked about studying history in school, their ideas about why they were obliged to study history, and their understanding of what it meant 'to get better' at history.

Research design

The survey was based on a questionnaire survey of 1,740 pupils across 12 schools in the UK, and focus group interviews with 160 pupils from the same schools. including schools from the East of England, London, and the South Coast. Within the limits imposed by such a sample size, efforts were made to obtain findings from a range of schools, in terms of the nature of the school (independent, faith, urban-rural, large-small), the uptake of history at KS4 (14-16 age range), the percentage A-C pass rate in the General

Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) (national examinations taken at 16) and the number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. There were 160 pupils involved in the focus group interviews, which typically had 6 pupils in each group, with equal numbers of boys and girls with the exception of one single sex school. The interviews were taped using digital voice recorders and then transcribed before analysis. There were 27 focus group interviews in all, with pupils aged between 11 and 14.

A majority of pupils (just under 70%) reported that they enjoyed history as a school subject (see Harris and Haydn, 2006), but many of them had quite vague or idiosyncratic ideas about why they studied history at school (Haydn and Harris, 2008). This paper focuses on pupil responses when they were asked about what they felt in meant 'to get better' at history. With some groups, in the light of pupil responses to this initial question, pupils were asked about what pupils would be like if they had not studied any history at school - in what ways they would be different to pupils who had done history, and in some cases, if there had been no reference to anything other than the aggregation of subject content knowledge in their initial response, pupils were prompted to talk about the idea of developing particular skills as part of progression in the subject.

Findings

The dataset from the transcripts was sufficiently large that it was possible to code responses into 'types' of response which give some indication of the sort of thinking that many pupils may be working with in terms of their ideas about progression in history. Year 7 indicates 11-12 year olds, Year 8, 12-13, and Year 9, 13-4. 'FG' indicates the number of the focus group transcript.

One of the most common responses, which featured in more than half of the focus group interviews, was the idea that getting better at history was exclusively or primarily about acquiring more substantive content knowledge of the past. One pupil went so far as to suggest that it was not possible 'to get better' at history:

I don't think you can get better... you can't get properly better, all you can do is be more attentive or like... have a better memory, or be better at recording things, but you can't be better at it because you're not discovering things, you're just learning them so you can't like physically become better. (School 1, FG 1, Year 7)

The following extracts are examples of responses where content knowledge seemed to be their main idea in terms of making progress in history:

I think it's just that you learn more things... (School 4, FG 4, Year 7)

Just knowledge really, more knowledge. (School 7, FG 8, Year 8)

More knowledge, like how much you know. (School 11, FG 18, Year 9)

Know more. (School 12, FG 21, Year 9)

Remembering things. (School 6, FG 7, Year 8, Pupil A)

Yes, remembering dates'. (Pupil B)

There were also several responses which mentioned gaining in subject content knowledge, but stating that it was also about getting better at writing, and in particular, getting better at writing essays:

Skills... like being able to write better... essays... they're good in a way because as you go up the school you're gonna have to do more aren't you... so if you start when... (School 1, Focus Group 1, Year 7)

I've learned how to write essays well this year... Mr B gave us a... in how to write an essay. (Pupil A, School 4, Focus Group 4, Year 7)

I agree... our teacher, Mrs A... she's taught us how to write a good essay. She's saying, don't start off "In my essay I'm going to talk about"... she's told us to write, yes. (Pupil B)

I do think we learned to structure things better... and it helps the way you put things on paper. (Pupil C)

Because we've got to write it... to start off with a balanced argument. (Pupil D)

I've got better at essays... instead of just carrying on and writing what I want... I can write what is needed now (School 7, FG10, year 9)

It helps you with your English... kind of like writing everything. (School 7, FG 11, Year 9)

There were also a number of responses where pupils appeared to be struggling to reformulate some of the words and terms which they may have encountered in the course of history lessons, without giving the impression of a clear grasp of the concepts and skills involved, or who expressed their ideas in quite vague and inchoate terms; mentioning 'sources, or 'bias', but without being able to formulate a sentence around the term or concept:

I don't know... sources and stuff. (School 3, FG3, Year 7)

It helped us to gather everything... and some mind work... bias...' (tails off) (School 4, FG4, Year 7)

You get understanding of things.(School 10, FG 14, Year 8, Pupil A)

Yeah... and you learn how to find out information and what kind of questions to ask. (Pupil B)

I think it's more that you just get an understanding for it and then you sort of... (tails off). (Pupil C)

You learn from other's mistakes, yeah. (Pupil A)

Understanding things. (School 6, FG6, Year 7, Pupil A)

Looking at sources. (Pupil B)

I think it's like... observational skills and things. (School 12, FG22, Year 9, Pupil A)

Because you have to... um... look for sources of stuff... and you come up with points of view and see what other people think of it. (Pupil B)

You look at sources and stuff and tell the points of view. (School 6, FG8, Year 8)

Knowledge and understanding. (School 11, FG18, Year 9, Pupil A)

That's basically what they mark it on, because... urm... there's a National Curriculum and there's knowledge and understanding of it. (Pupil B)

Yeah. (Pupil A)

However, there were some responses where pupils demonstrated an understanding of progression which was to at least some degree more in accord with the ideas specified in curriculum specifications and in line with the sort of ideas that history teachers might hope for. In some cases this was linked to the idea of putting various sources of information together to formulate an explanation of events:

We learn about the causes and the events, and what it led to and things like that. (School 6, FG8, Year 8, Pupil A)

Yes, it's knowing... rather than just knowing a date, it's like, knowing a big chunk of what happened... the causes. (Pupil B)

Being able to describe things and why they happen. (School 7, FG10, Year 9)

I think like if you apply what you know and like, being able to answer questions about it and talk about it and stuff. (School 9, FG21, Year 9, Pupil A)

And you can also use knowledge from not just that, say, not the sources, but subjects as well, you use all the knowledge you have if everything to do on that certain subject and put it together. (Pupil B)

There were also responses which demonstrated an understanding of some of the 'key elements' (or 'key concepts and processes' as they are now termed) in curriculum specifications:

Being able to know whether you can trust someone, or whether you can't... different people's view points... understanding different people's views and like taking that on board. (School 11, FG 16, Year 7, Pupil A)

Yeah, different views and you look at things with a different perspective and it helps you in life as well, because you know you can look at things in a different way. (Pupil B)

And there's things like... um... provenance... what it is, you know, if you read a source you've got to write who wrote it and when they wrote it to see if the source is reliable because that's like, quite important. (School 12, FG23, Year 8)

Some pupils also mentioned the role that history can play in giving pupils a sense of identity and orientation:

As an overseas student, it has helped me to learn more about England. (School 8, FG13, Year 9)

It's useful because it teaches you about what your country did (School 8, FG 12, Year 8)

Where pupils had initially given a response which indicated that gaining more factual knowledge of the past was the main or only way of getting better in history, they were asked a supplementary question about whether they thought there were some particular skills which history teachers were trying to get them to develop through the study of the past, as a prompt which might elicit a more considered and developed response, which showed some understanding of the benefits of studying history as a form of knowledge:

We had to look at people's motives and things, and I think that things like that are useful for written work and just talking to people in everyday life. (School 6, FG 8, Year 9, Pupil A)

And you can see someone else's point of view. (Pupil B)

I think analysing sources among pieces of information is quite important. (Pupil C)

Yeah, because you have to analyse sources in life. (Pupil A)

I've improved my source skills and writing skills. (School 8, FG 12, Year 9)

Chronological order and stuff. Dates and stuff. (School 11, FG 18, Year 9)

You learn to look at information. (School 11, FG 20, Year 9)

Another follow up question to groups who initially mentioned 'more facts', or 'more knowledge' as the only areas where it was possible to get better at history was to ask them in what ways they thought pupils who had not done any history at school would be different to those that had studied history. The question elicited very differing responses:

They wouldn't understand some jokes. They'd seem a bit stupid. (School 7, FG 11, Year 9, Pupil A)

In what way? (Interviewer)

Less general knowledge... if you come across someone who doesn't know when World War Two happened, or why it happened, or even if it did happen. (Pupil A)

They wouldn't have knowledge of our country. (School 11, FG 20, Year 9)

Like empathy skills, because it is about... to really learn history you have to really know what happened and how people felt and how that affected people because life is about people and relationships and if you don't understand that then you haven't got much chance really. (School 11, FG 16, Year 7, Pupil A)

It also helps you interpret... how things could be seen... history teaches you that ... you might be able to see the ... the thing that they'd done could be interpreted in multiple ways like, depending on which side that you're on. (Pupil B)

Also, it like... teaches you to question things. (Pupil C)

In response to this question about whether they felt that a pupil might have 'missed out' by not doing history at school, there was also one pupil replied 'No because they probably filled it in with something else.'

Some pupils expressed their responses in terms of the 'levels' system, and the targets which they had been set to improve their work, but the responses suggested that this was not always closely or clearly linked to an understanding of the subject domains described by official curriculum specifications, the key concepts and processes, and in some cases, progression was seen in terms of providing more detailed answers or being neater in presentation:

I've stayed at the same level for the whole two years. (School 7, FG 10, Year 9, Pupil A)

I went up, I went from a 4 to a 5. (Pupil B)

What does that mean? (Interviewer)

I'm not sure. (Pupil B)

It's like... we do essays... the teacher tells you what mark you're going to get... if you get like, a level 4 for writing points, but then you've got to link them together to get level 6. (School 12, FG 23, Year 8, Pupil A)

They give you a target level and then they say, you know... maybe this paragraph was a bit weak... you can put more information here and that should get you up to this level. (Pupil B)

It's like it being neat and not really scruffy and stuff. (School 11, FG 17, Year 9)

As with the outcomes of the questionnaire survey, the data suggested that some pupils may be hampered in their understanding of progression by the fact that they are uncertain about the overarching purposes and benefits of a historical education. It should be noted that in response to the question asking what skills history lessons helped to develop one pupil who clearly did not enjoy the subject responded 'Patience and handwriting'. In all 12 schools, there were some pupils who were clearly profoundly disaffected from the subject, and also many who struggled to understand what benefits might derive from the study of history. Two examples are given below:

Like Abby asked why we needed this, because it's important to know why we need it... because why are we learning it? And she goes "It's for an exam". Is that all we're learning it for, why do we learn it for an exam if it's not going to be useful for our careers? (School 11, FG 16, Year 7)

It's not particularly useful for our sort of lives... but it's useful when you come to exams... but it doesn't really help us in our outside lives. (School 12, FG 22, Year 9)

One of the most striking findings from the questionnaire element of the study was the number of pupils who appeared to lack understanding of the purposes and benefits of studying the past (Haydn and Harris, 2008), and the deficits in pupils' grasp of progression issues may be linked to this.

Conclusions

The outcomes of the survey suggest that in spite of the extensive and high profile debate about the purposes and outcomes of school history between policymakers, historians and history educators, many pupils in the UK may have a very limited understanding of the framework for progression in history outlined in recent curriculum specifications. Models of progression in history have become much more sophisticated and complex compared to the pre National Curriculum era, but learners' understanding of these developments may have failed to adjust to these changes, and their complexity may have made it difficult for teachers to make models of progression transparent to their pupils. There is also some evidence to suggest that many history teachers have reservations about current instruments for measuring pupil progression and attainment in history (Burnham and Brown, 2004, Counsell, 2004, Harrison, 2004).

It is possible that policymakers and history teachers make assumptions about pupils' understanding of progression, and that some departments may not be spending enough thought and time making clear to pupils the ways in which they can make progress in the subject. This is a difficult area, given that one of the problems that history teachers currently wrestle with in the UK is lack of curriculum time – the amount of time given to school history is almost half that which was envisaged at the inception of the National Curriculum, and many pupils have only one history lesson of under one hour's length per week (Culpin, 2007, Ofsted, 2007). However, time invested in explaining to pupils what it means to get better at history, in terms which are meaningful to them, may well be a sensible investment, and may serve to reduce the fundamental confusion which is evident in many pupils' testimony. At the moment, we are only aware of one text book which gives explicit attention to the issue of what it means 'to get better' at history (Dawson, 2003).

From the sample of schools and pupils in this study, there is little to suggest that progression in pupils' understanding in this area is age related. Many of the more sophisticated understandings of progression came from younger pupils, and there were a substantial number of 14 year old pupils in the survey who, having studied history as a school subject for 9 years, appeared to consider progression in history in terms of the aggregation of subject content knowledge, or at best, a combination of this and progress in essay writing technique, with very little reference to developing insight into history as a form of knowledge, and into their understanding and use of second order concepts in history, such as cause, change, evidence, significance and interpretation.

There also appeared to be at least to some extent a 'departmental' or 'teacher' effect in the responses. There were more 'high-level' responses in some schools within the sample (schools 6, 10, 11 and 12 contained a much higher proportion of comments which to some degree reflected an understanding of adult discourse and curriculum specifications relating to progression). This suggests that there are things that departments and teachers can do to develop pupils' understanding of what it means to get better at history.

There is a degree of irony or paradox in these findings. The whole system of National Curriculum 'levels' was designed to strengthen the levers of progression in the subject, by providing transparent criteria which would help pupils to move up from one level to another, and most schools in the UK place considerable emphasis on progress in the National Curriculum levels. However, the aggregation of levels into one global scale for progress in history, mixing up all the components or strands of history (in current terms, the key concepts and processes) into one outcome, seems to have made pupils lose sight of the different domains of progression. There is some evidence from this data to suggest that even when they do 'go up a level' in history, they have little understanding of what this means, and the levels become an end in themselves, rather than a key to pupils' understanding of progression. The levels may have become 'detached' from the various domains of historical knowledge and understanding in pupils' minds and the obsession with 'levels' of attainment engendered by the National Curriculum system may have served to confuse rather than enlighten pupils, in terms of what it means to get better in history. There is some evidence to suggest that pupils are thinking about levels as hoops to jump through rather than being related to aspects of history as a body and form of knowledge. The Historical Association in the UK has also pointed to some of the possible distortions caused by inappropriate use of progression models:

Research-based models work on the assumption that pupils' second-order concepts do not develop in parallel. Thus separate models are needed for pupils' ideas about evidence, change, cause and so on... A research-based model does not break down into convenient numbers of levels. It can identify an order in which ideas might develop but the gap between its 'levels' will not be equal. Research-based models cannot therefore be used to measure progress against precise targets (in the way that the National Curriculum Attainment Target, for example, is often used). (Historical Association, 2006)

Lee and Shemilt (2003, 2004) make the important point that progression in history needs to be seen not just in terms of constructing children's thinking about the past, but in understanding, addressing and even 'attacking' their misconceptions and helping them to make particular 'moves forward' in terms of replacing their immature ideas about what history is and how it works, with more sophisticated and powerful ones. Focus on pupil misconceptions is still quite limited in much of the political and policymaking discourse on history education.

Counsell (2004: 2) suggests that the emphasis on 'levels' may also have had a damaging effect on teachers' attempts to address progression:

Working as an Advisory Teacher, with over 50 schools, I found a mixture of condemnation and incomprehension. There was also a fair amount of bizarre, inconsistent and meaningless attempts to implement it... It seemed to have the surprising effect of stopping teachers from thinking about what it meant to get better at causal thinking, or using sources or whatever... The drive for measurement and accountability has also been behind this curious distortion of 'assessment for learning' into (as far as history is concerned) a puzzling closing down of thinking about progression in history, and instead a pressing of the level descriptions into inappropriate service.

Some of these problems may be linked to deficits in pupils' understanding of the purposes of studying history in school in general. More explicit focus on explaining to pupils the full range of ways in which the study of the past can be of benefit to them in their lives outside and after school, and careful unpicking of the ways in which it is possible to get better at history may lead to increased pupil engagement and attainment in the subject, and a reduction in the number of pupils who are profoundly disaffected from the study of history by the age of 14 (Harris and Haydn, 2006). This might best be achieved by making use of the comparatively straightforward (and less contested) lines outlined by Lomas (1993), as a complement to the complex, highly technical (and contested) models which have been debated by policy makers and history educators over the past two decades. It is important that teachers have an understanding of pupils' ideas about history that is grounded in research evidence, and the works of Lee and Shemilt, amongst others, provide valuable understanding of the 'moves' that pupils make in the way they develop towards more powerful and helpful understandings of second order concepts in history. But there is also a place for a less technical and complex agendas for progression in history, which can be more easily shared with learners.

A modest proposal emanating from this study is that policymakers, history teacher educators and history teachers need to give more consideration to devising some way of making it clear to pupils what it means to get better at history as a school subject in ways that are meaningful to pupils.

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To date or not to date, that is the question: a critical examination of the employment of subjective time phrases in teaching and learning of primary history

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Abstract—The extent and nature of young children’s chronological understanding is a major cause of concern. The National Curriculum for History suggests that chronological understanding is age related and that dates, as abstractions, are confusing. Subjective, temporal phrases have replaced dates. This paper argues that such subjectivity exacerbates the problem of lack of chronological understanding for primary school pupils. The English government’s National Curriculum for History [NCH] mirrors the age related approach to chronology. But its prescription of age related knowledge and understanding of chronology conflicts with the research evidence. Indeed NCH treatment of aspects of the development of temporal concepts is confused and unrealistic.

This study investigated the usage of subjective time phrases in teaching the NCH, specifically the usage of temporal vocabulary. It critically examined whether research evidence supports the notion that young children can understand conventional time vocabulary such as years, decades, century, and the conventions of BC and AD dating. The research explored and determined children’s comprehension in relation to key words and phrases such as, a long/very long time ago, the past, history. Its key question was: Do subjective temporal phrases hold any usefulness for temporal conceptual development? The research involved a sample of 150 seven/eight year olds.

The findings of the research challenge the English National Curriculum for History’s [NCH’s] usage of subjective time phrases. It seriously challenges the NCH’s premiss / belief that subjective, temporal phrases are beneficial for lower ability children. Vague temporal terms such as a long/very long time ago, history and the past have little, if any, usefulness in the development of temporal cognition.

Keywords—Chronological conventions, Chronology, Cognition, Conceptual development, History National Curriculum, History, National Curriculum – History, Primary, Temporal vocabulary and phrases, Time.

Introduction

Throughout my teaching of primary history I have been amazed by the number of asinine questions that children have asked about the subject matter. For example, a child once asked, ‘Sir, if Queen Cleopatra hadn’t been bitten by the asp would she still be alive today?’. Another enquired if I had been alive during the Roman invasion of Britain. Whilst these questions caused merriment – amongst my colleagues- they also suggest that despite seemingly comprehensive teaching these children lacked a fundamental

concept that is needed to appreciate history; they lacked an understanding of historical time. Although I have ‘aged beyond my years’ -because of the stressful employment that is teaching -one would have thought these children should have realised that the passage of time between the Ancient Egyptians, Romans and the present would have made it impossible for either Cleopatra to be still alive, or for myself to have been engaged in hand to hand combat with Caesar’s legionaries! (Hodkinson 2004a)

From the early 1920’s research has examined and seemingly mapped out children’s historical cognitive development (see fig. 1). The view that has been widely accepted is that children’s temporal cognition develops with age and it is seemingly because children’s development of chronology is linked to maturation that children make temporal errors such as those detailed above (Hodkinson, 2003).

Figure 1: The development of historical time: a summary of research

Age	Concept developed	Reference
8 months	Children order some actions	Friedman 1978
18 months	Children display ability to construct past events	Piaget 1962 in Friedman 1978
30 months	Children use word to denote past, present and future - before yesterday	Ames 1946
3 years	Children know own age	Ames 1946
3 years	Children able to use temporal order to describe mechanical events	Bullock and Gelman 1979
4 years	Children have some knowledge of seasons	Ames 1946
4 years	Children know whether it is am or pm	Ames 1946
4 years	Children know the date of their birthday	Schechter et al 1955
4 years	Children begin to order daily routines chronologically	Thornton and Vukelich 1988, Friedman 1978
4.11 years (MA)	Children have ability to decentre in time	Cromer 1971
5 years	Children have primitive capacity for judging durations	Friedman 1978
5 years	Children know the names of the days of the week	Ames 1946 Schechter et al 1955
5 years	Children begin to order past events into earlier or later	Jahoda 1962
5 years	Concept of day appears as 24 hours	Schechter et al 1955
5 years	Children know the names of the months	Schechter et al 1955
5 years	Children can tell time up to 5 min intervals	Schechter et al 1955
5 years	Children use words such as yesterday, today, tomorrow, morning and afternoon	Patriarca and Alleman 1988, Jahoda 1962

Age	Concept developed	Reference
6-7 years	Clock time develops from longer to shorter units	Bradley 1947 Gothberg 1949
6-7 years	Children acquire a firm grasp of clock and calendar time	Friedman 1978
7 years	Children can name days of week, list months, list season and identify current month	Ames 1946 Jahoda 1962
7 years	Children begin to construct a coherent system, involving duration and succession	Friedman 1978
9 years	Historical time sense emerges	Thornton and Vukelich 1988
9 years	Children correctly use time references – long time ago, way back when	Friedman 1978
9 years	Children name weeks months and days	Thornton and Vukelich 1988
9 years	Children start to order dates chronologically	Friedman 1978
9-10 years	Children list months correctly	Jahoda 1962
10 years	Children master sequence, duration and succession	Poster 1973
10 years	Children realise the consistency of hours, minutes and seconds	Oakden and Sturt 1922
10-11 years	Sharp improvement in temporal performance	Oakden and Sturt 1922
11 years	30% of children are able to use dating system	Friedman 1944
11 years	Usage of clock time mastered	Gothberg 1949 Friedman 1948 Bullock and Gelman 1979
11 years	No sudden acceleration of temporal performance.	Bradley 1947
11 years	Children understand basic implications of historical dates.	Jahoda 1962
11 years	Children master calendar time	Bullock and Gelman 1979
11 years	Historical time sense beginning to develop	Oakden and Sturt 1922
12 years (MA)	Children can tell time to five-minute intervals.	Gothberg 1949
12 years	Children can name specific month	Bradley 1947
13 years	Children can be expected to label time periods and match these periods with dates	Oakden and Sturt 1922
13-14 years	Temporal cognition arrives nearly at an adult level	Gothberg 1949
14 years	Children use appropriate adult time vocabulary and concepts such as century-	Friedman 1978

Age	Concept developed	Reference
15 years	Children are able to distinguish between parts of a century	Harner 1982
16 years	Maturity in understanding time words and dates is noticeable	Flickinger and Rehagen 19**
16 years	Up until 16 historical time is subject to foreshortening	Hunter 1934
16	Children can use time concepts such as 15th and 16th century meaningfully	Harner 1982
16.2/16.6 years	Formal thinking in history begins	Hallam 1966

Teaching history through dates was once a fashionable pursuit. However, in recent times it has been argued that as dates are abstract in nature primary aged children will be unable to master their usage. Within the current teaching and learning of history dates have seemingly been de-emphasised and have been replaced by phrases such as 'a long/very long time ago' 'history' and the 'past'. From my perspective, the substitution of dating conventions for subjective such temporal phrases is problematic as it appears that these may be causation of the temporal difficulties experienced by my pupils. It is my belief that if children are to ever to fully appreciate history the development of historical time has to become central to our teaching methodologies.

This paper offers an overview of a recent project that examined the employment of subjective dating phrases within the National Curriculum and QCA Schemes of Work. The research critically examined if concept development within the NC was maturational in nature and whether the teaching and learning activities laid out within the QCA schemes of work were effective for the development of children's historical time skills.

The development of time within the National Curriculum and schemes of work

The introduction of a National Curriculum as part of the Education Reform Act (1988) placed history within the primary curriculum. For the first time this curriculum laid down in statute the knowledge, skills and understanding that had to be taught to pupils. Within these orders, there was an expectation that young children should be taught aspects of historical time.

At the earliest stages of the National Curriculum, then, children are expected to be aware of terms describing the passing of time, for example, before, after, a long time ago and past. At Level Two the curriculum determines that the vast majority of children should be able to place events and objects in a correct chronological order, and be aware of a past beyond living memory. In the earlier years of the junior school (seven to nine years) pupils should show a developing conceptual awareness of chronology, and a realisation that the past can be divided into periods. Additionally, children should start to use dates and terms to describe the past. The later years of the junior school should observe pupils producing "...structured work, which makes appropriate use of dates

and terms" (QCA/DFEE 1999:39). On leaving primary education, the vast majority of pupils should have been taught to use dates and vocabulary such as ancient, modern, AD, BC, century and decade (QCADFEE 1999:17). It is interesting to note that it is only by the end of Key Stage Three that the curriculum would expect children to make "...appropriate use of a wider range of dates and the conventions of time, to describe historical periods" (QCA/DFEE 1999:20).

The QCA schemes of work

Within England many schools utilise the QCA schemes of work (QCA 1998) to inform curriculum planning. These schemes detail teaching activities, which are 'designed' to promote temporal cognition. Throughout these schemes, a hierarchal linear format to cognitive development is again observable. For instance, Year 3/4 pupils should make appropriate usage of dates with 'poorer' children using non-conventional time units eg 'a long time ago'. However, upper juniors should use dates appropriately and understand temporal conventions, such as AD, BC and century, in order to place changes within a chronological framework.

Whilst it seems apparent that the National Curriculum and schemes of work are maturational and broadly reflect research findings there are a number of statements, which are incongruous to extant research findings. For example, early in Key Stage Two (7-9 years), the curriculum determines that children should make appropriate usage of dates. Research (Friedman 1944; Friedman 1978; Oakden and Sturt 1922) argues that dates begin to emerge at nine years of age, and full understanding is not achieved until 13 years of age. In the later years of the junior school, "the vast majority" (DFEE 1999:17) of pupils should have been taught to use dates and vocabulary such as ancient, modern, AD, BC and century. Research does not demonstrate that children of this age can assimilate AD and BC conventions. Moreover, the usage of century at this age would appear incompatible with Harner's (1982) contention that this term is not understood until a child is 16. The curriculum also details that children will use non-conventional time phrases, such as 'a long time ago, a very long time ago and the past;' in place of conventional temporal dating systems. Extant research (Hodkinson 1995) asserts that usage of subjective phrases such as these might lead to temporal confusion.

Within the literature base, it is evident that there has been minimal research conducted in relation to children's comprehension of a century, and even less so with respects to a decade. It therefore would seem appropriate to question the usage of temporal vocabulary, such as this, within the National Curriculum for History and its Schemes of Work. The questioning of the usage of this temporal vocabulary arises because the Schemes of Work specifically associates it to certain chronological ages. This usage, of age, is based upon little or no research evidence and thus must be treated as highly speculative.

Summary

It would appear, even from a cursory examination of the National Curriculum for History and its schemes of work that the notion of maturation as a catalyst for assimilation has been accepted. The organisational framework of the National Curriculum and the schemes of work clearly develop chronological understanding as an 'invariant hierarchy' (Booth 1993). Whilst it may be observed that the National Curriculum has seemingly high aspirations of what children should know at Key Stage 3 it would appear that the teaching and learning activities presented for the development of chronology at Key Stage 1 & 2 do not have the propensity to develop effectively children's sense of chronology. From the examination of the National Curriculum and QCA Schemes of work it would appear that the treatment of aspects of the development of temporal concepts is confused and unrealistic.

The research

The study examined the usage of time phrases both within the literature base and within the National Curriculum for History. It specifically investigated the usage of temporal vocabulary by critically examining whether research evidence supports the notion that young children can understand conventional time vocabulary such as years, decades, century, and the conventions of BC and AD dating. Additionally, the National Curriculum's usage of time phrases such as a 'long time ago,' a 'very long time ago', 'the past' and 'history' is subject to a critical examination to determine whether these phrases are beneficial in developing understanding, or if they merely serve to confuse children's temporal comprehension (Hodkinson 1995).

Research questions

This research, then, sought to explore and determine children's comprehension in relation to key words and phrases such as, a long/very long time ago, the past, history. It addressed one key question:

- Do subjective temporal phrases hold any usefulness for temporal conceptual development?

In September 2000, I began to collect data in relation to children's academic attainment in history. The data were obtained, over the course of one academic year, from a co-educational school situated in a suburb of a north-western city in England. At the time of the study 435 girls and boys attended the school and were arranged in 13 classes. For the purposes of the research a sample of four parallel classes, of children aged eight to nine years (Year 4), was chosen and the assimilation of temporal concepts of 150 children was examined.

The population and samples

Population: Year 4 children, all from the same school. Sample: four parallel Year 4 classes matched for intelligence, reading and mathematical ability. Subjects: 120.

Data collection instruments—the temporal assessments

Temporal data were collected using extant research assessment techniques (see Oakden and Sturt 1922, Bradley 1947, West 1981, Hodkinson 1995), albeit with minor modification of test protocols. Information relating to historical time concepts was collected by the employment of a questionnaire, semi-structured interview and multi-sensory assessment tests. Twenty sub tests explored children's:

- Ability to use ad and bc dates
- Development of the concept of century and decade
- Development of temporal concepts which relate to the National Curriculum for history
- Use of subjective and conventional time phrases (see Hodkinson 2003b).

Interviews

Twenty children, randomly selected from each of the research cohorts, were subject to semi-structured interviews. During these interviews, questions ascertained pupils' understanding of the specific temporal vocabulary of decade and century. Additionally, the children were asked to place three AD years within the correct decade and century.

The results—children's comprehension of the phrase 'history'

During the interviews children were asked to outline what they thought 'history' meant. The responses elicited prove to very interesting, for it appears that whilst the data obtained from the research generally concurs with extant research findings Firstly, the data, indicates that the most common responses used temporal vocabulary such as 'the past', something has happened and a long/very long time ago to define the word 'history'. These findings support the assertion of Levstik and Pappas (1987) who also note that children linked 'history' to the past.

Furthermore, these findings suggest that children's understanding "...involves little more than recognition that something has happened before (Friedman 1978:74). In other words 9 year olds use general time words in lieu of specific understanding" (Friedman 1978:74). In summary, then, the participants of the study generally used broad categories to define history and only a minority of children gave a specific reference to an historical period. These findings are similar to those of 4th and 6th graders observed within the Levstik and Pappas' (1987) American research.

Children's understanding of the phrase 'the past'

Extant research (Levstik &Pappas 1987) indicates that, in general, children have more difficulty discussing the past than they do in talking about history. In this assertion a high degree of agreement is demonstrable within the results of this study. The results, for the question relating to the phrase history denote a hundred and thirty two responses. In stark contrast however, in relation to a similarly phrased question which asked children to discuss what they thought the past meant, only seventy-three responses were documented. Despite re-phrasing of the question and even with some prompting many children simply failed or were unable to proffer a response. In light of these and

extant findings it is possible to suggest that children find 'the past', as a temporal term, one that is very difficult to comprehend. Whether this is because they perceive it to be a vague word, as in the usage of a 'long/very long time ago' or indeed for some other reason, remains unclear. It would certainly seem that there is a case for teachers to either abandon the use of this word, or to ensure that if they do utilise it, they must endeavour to make sure they specifically indicate what they interpret this word to mean.

Further analysis of the data also indicates a vagary of comprehension in the minds of children, in that the most common responses refer to the past as something that has gone before (23%), a long time ago (11%), just before now (9.5%) and ten to twenty years ago (9.5%). These results compare favourably with those documented for 4th grade pupils in Levstik and Pappas (1987) research.

Children's understanding of the phrases 'a long time' and 'a very long time ago'

For children, it appears that the meaning of a 'long time ago' lies somewhere between a few months ago and many billions of years. This vast range remains consistent within the analysis of the responses to the phrase 'a very long time ago'. Although children consider that this phrase has meaning in relation to a few years ago, rather than just a few months, the continuum again stretches out to many billions of years. Further analysis is though more meaningful, and it is perceptible that a pattern of results exists which does denote a substantial difference in children's understanding of these two temporal phrases.

What seems apparent is that while the range of results, for these temporal phrases, may be similar it is clear that the mode is not. For 42% of children of this age it is apparent that 'a long time ago' relates to a period of one hundred years or less. When this result is contrasted with those available for a 'very long time ago' a marked difference is observable, in that only 16% of the same sample felt that this phrase appertains to a similar temporal period. Additionally, it is apparent that a substantial differential exists between these two phrases, if one examines the results from those participants who felt that these terms related to a period of one thousand years or more. These findings denote that whilst 38.75% of the sample attested that 'a long time ago' meant a thousand years ago or more, 77.5% indicated that 'a very long time ago' related to a similar temporal period. This result suggests that in the main, children do differentiate between these two temporal terms. Furthermore examination of specific answers detail that for a 'long time ago';

- 18.75% equated it with a thousand years
- 13.75% equated it to one hundred years
- 8.75% indicated it related to just a few years ago.

These results are comparable with those evidenced for children's comprehension of 'a very long time ago', where 18.75% felt that this term equated with a period of one thousand years. However, whilst it is demonstrated that the top answer for both phrases

are the same, the second and third most common responses fall on differing sides of this divide dependant upon the phrase used. These results suggest therefore that although patterns of responses are perceptible, it is clear that for individual children these findings confirm those of earlier researchers, who denote the vagary of comprehension.

Discussion—the National Curriculum and the usage of subjective time phrases

The analysis of the data from the research strongly suggests that temporal phrases such as a long time ago and a very long time ago are subjective. This finding is though somewhat disturbing because it calls into question the usage of these temporal phrases within the teaching and learning of primary history. For example, how is it possible, based upon these results, to presume that when using a sentence such as, 'This house was built a long time ago,' thirty individuals, within a class, would understand what temporal period the teacher was referring to? Furthermore, the usage of these phrases becomes even more confusing, and totally unsuitable, if children are trying to compare and understand differing historical periods. If they are constantly told that something happened a long time ago, or indeed a very long time ago, with no other delineation of the past being used. Then might it not be the case that history will be subject to foreshortening, in the minds of children, with historical events people and places being relegated to either one hundred or one thousand years ago? It would appear that any lessons based upon subjective phrases such as these might serve to confuse rather than develop children's temporal understanding.

A further important issue arises from the Schemes of Work's reference that some children will not progress as far as others within a given unit. Whilst this may be a reasonable suggestion in relation to factual knowledge, in relation to temporal cognition it is clear that this assertion is not founded upon empirical evidence. The Schemes of Work suggest these less able children will continue to use such terms as a 'long time ago' as a substitution for dating conventions. Other research data do not support the contention that 'less able' children cannot utilise dating conventions (Hodkinson 2003b, 2004b). What does seem clear is that if these 'less able' children at KS2 do not receive specific teaching how then are they able, as dictated in the first unit of the KS3 Scheme of Work, to make appropriate use of dates and periods? The assertion contained in this KS3 unit appears wholly inconsistent based upon the teaching described in Key Stage 2.

Conclusion

The development of chronological understanding has been deemed to be an important feature of the teaching of history within 'curriculum 2000'. This need to focus upon the teaching of chronology may be traced back to the fears expressed by Her Majesty's Inspectors (DES, 1978) that children were '...acquiring a very confused, superficial understanding of the past' (Hodkinson, 2002, p.173). It would appear that the importance of an understanding of chronology to the development of historical thinking cannot be over stated. As Stow and Haydn (2002, p.85) account, chronology '...is the distinctive marker of history, setting it apart from other disciplines...'.

This research though seriously undermines the NC for History and its Schemes of Work's usage of subjective time phrases. Moreover to assert, as it appears that the Schemes of Work do, that these temporal phrases are beneficial for lower ability children would appear highly speculative. The findings of the research strongly intimate that vague temporal terms such as a long/very long time ago, history and the past have little, if any, usefulness in the development of temporal cognition. Indeed it would seem reasonable to suggest that the usage of vague temporal vocabulary is deleterious to conceptualisation. It is clear then that the formulation and current application of the NC and its Schemes of Work is in direct conflict with the evidence documented within this study. Whilst it appears that the teaching of chronology has become enshrined within governmental curricula it seems that development of teaching method and assessment of chronological understanding has not been grounded in empirical research findings (Hodkinson 2003b, 2004a).

The conclusion must be therefore that the usage of subjective temporal vocabulary, within the teaching and learning of primary history, is in need of a fundamental review. Importantly other research (Hodkinson 2004b) does indicate that primary aged children are capable of assimilating conventional temporal vocabulary beyond the levels determined by previous maturational research. The findings of this research clearly serve to undermine the notion that primary aged pupils cannot assimilate the concept of a century or decade. Based upon such evidence the NC and its Schemes of Work inclusion of conventional dating concepts at KS2 would seem wholly appropriate. However, what seems clear is that the Schemes of Work that are presently in operation do not provide children with suitable activities, which will enable them to develop these difficult concepts.

It is my belief that if children are to ever to fully appreciate history the development of historical time has to become central to our teaching methodologies. The development of time skills should be seen to be important because it allows children to assimilate an organising structure for their learnt knowledge. A useful analogy is that if history is related to a cloakroom of knowledge and the people, periods and places are seen as the coats, then the coat pegs relate to the organising structure of time. Without this structure, the coats would become a confusing mess on the floor from which attempts to extract and examine individual items would be fraught with difficulties. Recent research then suggests that rather than being de-emphasised, dates appear vital to historical study, and as it is evident that children can assimilate them they should be employed consistently within lessons. I would, though, not want to throw 'out the baby with the bathwater' by advocating a return to the heavily criticised traditional teaching method of memorising the dates of British Kings and Queens. Rather my opinion is that we perhaps need to freshen up the water a little by re-emphasising the teaching and learning of dating conventions and chronological within a curriculum that allows teachers to formulate creative and active primary history lessons (Hodkinson 2004a).

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Are Boys really better than Girls at History? A critical examination of gender-related attainment differentials within the English educational system.

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Abstract—The paper examines research which contends that gender differentials exist within the English educational system. Specifically, it analyses research within the teaching of primary history which postulates that males are more able to assimilate historical concepts than their female counterparts. A review of the literature denotes that previous studies are based upon small samples, are subject to methodological delimitation and produce contradictory results. The paper contends, therefore, that these limitations must lead to a questioning of these extant findings. Subsequent to this initial analysis this article examines, through classroom based research, whether gender-related performance differentials exist within the teaching and learning of history for children aged eight to eleven years of age. Children's performance is evaluated through questionnaire, multi-sensory assessments and unfocussed observations. Based upon statistical analysis of the study's results it is concluded that gender does not act as a performance determinant in the teaching and learning of primary history.

Keywords—Boys' performance, Girls' performance, Cognitive acceleration, Primary history, Gender, Attainment, School effectiveness, Sociology,

Introduction

This paper draws upon information gained through research into cognitive acceleration in primary history (Hodkinson, 2003a,b,c; 2004a,b; 2005). Within the study, one element of the data collection specifically analysed gender as a confounding variable to educational attainment for children aged eight to eleven years of age. The findings from this element of the study are outlined below.

Gender and educational attainment: a vexed question

The question of gender-related attainment differentials is one that has been the subject of intense debate within the context of the English educational system. Indeed, a conspectus of the literature reveals that this is a wide ranging debate and one that is not a peculiarly English one. (Coombs, 1994, Busato et al. 1995, Voman, 1997; Gambell and Hunter 2002). The debate, in essence, may be distilled down to two conceptual frameworks; those of school effectiveness research and those which may be labelled as sociological approaches (Wong et al. 2002). While there is not space here to fully review this literature base it is, perhaps, pertinent to pick out some key studies.

Gender and school effectiveness

As far back as 1974, Maccoby and Jacklin's meta analysis of some 1600 studies into gender inequality and educational attainment revealed that males were better in numeracy and the physical sciences, whereas, females were more competent in reading and writing (Wong et al., 2002). More recent research (Government Statistical Service [GSS] 1997, Gillborn and Mirza 2000) broadly demonstrates that within the English school examination system females, at all levels, have higher levels of attainment than their male counterparts. These findings are substantiated by Machin & McNally (2006) whose research findings expose significant gender differentials in educational attainment. Their research demonstrates that at the end of the compulsory phase of education, 10 per cent fewer males achieved five or more GCSE at A to C than their female peers. According to Machin & McNally (2006) not only has the gender gap widened over time, but, that at all key stages and in most subjects average male attainment is below that of the average female. It is interesting to note that gender inequality in educational attainment is also a feature of many other educational systems (OECD, 2004).

Male underachievement, then, is an issue that has dominated the English debate upon gender and education in recent years. However, and of importance, is that if one disaggregates the published data to reveal the subcutaneous layer of performance statistics it becomes apparent that female superiority is actually not a constant feature of compulsory education. For example, if we re-examine the early study of Mortimore et al (1988) we find that schools do not have a significant effect on gender attainment differentials (Wong et al. 2002). Furthermore, other researches intimate that while males may perform well in mathematics and the sciences (DFEE, 2003) females outperform males in English, History and French (Bartlett et. al., 2001).

Gender differentials within the primary school

Within primary education females display superior attainment in the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and science (DFEE, 2003). Whilst examination results for these core subjects are detailed, for pupils aged seven to eleven years, the same cannot be said for children's attainment in history. History, within the English state educational system is deemed to be a foundation subject and as such it is not subject to statutory assessment within the primary school. Indeed, a review of the literature reveals that in terms of gender-based research, primary history has become somewhat of a 'Cinderella subject'. The research that does exist is dated and in the main it outlines contradictory findings. A review of these extant studies, though, does suggest that broadly males outperform females within this important curriculum area (Friedman 1944, Coltham 1960, Henry 1960, Rogers 1967, Shemilt 1980, West 1981, Booth 1983).

Previous research findings, though, are most perplexing and lead to the formulation of many more questions than they provide answers to. For example, why is it that girls outperform boys in history at sixteen but seemingly do not do so at aged eleven? Is it the case that history is taught more effectively to girls during the secondary phase of

English education, or is research, within this vista, limited thus making claims of gender-related performance differentials spurious? The aim of the paper, then, is to critically examine the research base within history to determine whether the claims of gender attainment differentials are justifiable for children of primary age.

Gender: do attainment differentials exist in primary history?

Within this section previous research is critically analysed to evidence whether any significant differences exist between the academic attainment of males and female within the teaching and learning of history.

A systematic review of the research base evidences no consistent findings in relation to gender-based attainment differentials. Indeed, this vista of research appears to be totally contradictory in its determination of whether a correlation between gender and educational attainment is evident. What the review does reveal, though, is that previous research findings are generally based upon small sample size and are, in the main, associated with children aged eleven to sixteen years of age. Within this research base, researchers suggest males have a more positive attitude to history (Booth 1993), are better able to conceptualise the integral concepts of history and that their cognitive abilities operate at higher levels than those observed for females (Rogers: abstract). These research studies, then, all observe '...a marked difference in responses between the sexes associated with academic performance in history' (Coltham 1960:91).

Gender and temporal cognition

Other researches (Friedman 1944, West 1981) postulate that within the area of temporal cognition gender differentials, as evidenced above, continue to make themselves apparent. The research of Friedman and that conducted by West suggests that the area of chronology might be one where males are better placed to assimilate concepts than their female counterparts. For example, West (1981:332) accounts 'The discrepancy in performance by sex was marked...' and Friedman relates that males display an advanced performance in relation to the usage of historical time lines.

So are boys better than girls at primary history?

Some researchers suggest that males have higher attainment levels in history and they also provide suggestions as to the possible causation of these gender differentials. Booth (1983), for instance, believes that weaknesses in females' performances are due to a lack of oral confidence, negative attitude, low enthusiasm and teachers grading females' achievements at lower levels than males. Volman (1997) offers support for this contention confirming that differences do exist in teacher attitudes towards gender. For Rogers (1967:107), though, performance differentials are attributable to the '...acceptance that boys are better at mathematics and mastery of abstract concepts in general.' Coltham (1960), like Rogers, raises the notion that males are more readily able to assimilate historical concepts. Although, she does also suggest that gender differentials may be accounted for by test procedure and the selection of the test items themselves. The issue of test selection is one that has current

credibility as it is contended that 'girls find timed, end of course examinations less favourable than boys' (DfEE 2003). It is suggested, then, that males and females prefer the assessment tests which reflect their predilection for reading and writing (DfEE 2003). At first reference it appears there is a large body of evidence to support the hypothesis that males are better placed to assimilate historical concepts than females.

However, in the context of the English educational system only one study has examined primary children's temporal concepts in any detail (West, 1981). Moreover, although previous researches denote gender related attainment differentials many of the findings are non significant. If it is the case, then, that many research studies are framed within the secondary age phase are based upon small samples and document findings, which are non significant, we must be cautious in their generalisation. It is perhaps only reasonable, here, therefore, to accept Coltham (1960), Henry (1960) and Rogers (1967) assertion that more research is needed before we can conclude that males have a predilection for superior performance in primary history.

Are girls are better than boys? The gender default model

Whilst there is evidence to suggest that males perform better at history than females there are those researchers who argue the converse may be true. It is argued that as males literacy skills lag behind those of females, and as history is a literacy based subject, then, females should have the potentiality for superior attainment. It is useful, here, to label these contentions as the default model. Within this model advanced academic performance is correlated with the prerequisite of superior language skills. Application of the default model to analyse performance in primary history though is intensely problematic. The default model of academic attainment appears problematic because of the findings outlined in recent research (Hodkinson 2003). Hodkinson's research revealed that a language superiority was not a significant confounding variable in young children's assimilation of historical concepts and knowledge. These findings are also supported by two small- scale research projects within primary history. Research conducted into young children's recounting of historical stories denotes that no sex differences in attainment were apparent (Levstik & Pappas 1987). Furthermore, Case and Collinson (1962) observe that no statistically significant attainment differentials between the sexes exist in formal thinking in the verbal comprehension of historical material. Moreover, taking into account Borg's (1996) research, which found no gender differentials before the age of eleven, a persuasive argument is formulated that correlation of advanced language skills to superior academic performance in primary history should be observed as speculative. With this evidence base in mind, it would seem appropriate to suggest that the default model of academic attainment should be subject to further examination.

The research study

The literature review outlined above identified a number of areas which merit further investigation. Research was therefore conducted during 2000-2003 which sought to examine whether:

- females have significantly higher language skills than their male counterparts
- superior language skills translate into greater levels of assimilation of historical concepts and knowledge
- females attitudes and enthusiasms for history are significantly lower than their male counterparts
- teachers grade females at lower levels than males; and
- teaching methods affect gender related attainment in primary history.

Methodology

In September 2000 data collection in relation to children's academic attainment in history began.

Situational analysis

The setting of the research was in a voluntary aided co-educational school situated in a suburb of a north-western city. The school was established in the 1950s to serve two Roman Catholic parishes. There were, at the time of the study, 435 pupils on roll who were arranged in 13 classes, and whose age range was from seven to eleven. Approximately 80 per cent of the pupils were from predominantly privately owned accommodation. The remaining 20 per cent were from houses that were predominantly council owned. Approximately 16 per cent of the pupils were eligible for free meals; this compares broadly with national figures for a school of this type. An analysis of the data collected in relation to parental occupations indicated that there was a good spread of social classes within the chosen population. For the purposes of the research a sample of four parallel classes, for children aged eight to nine years of age, were chosen. Additionally, one class of nine to ten year olds was also selected to act as an age control. In total 150 children were chosen who were distributed into five age related classes.

Experimental research design

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Group A1	T ₁ STM T ₂	STM T ₃	STM T ₄
Group A2	T ₁ STM T ₂	NTM T ₃	NTM T ₄
Group A3	T ₁ NTM T ₂	NTM T ₃	NTM T ₄
Group A4	Taught by own teacher	-(?)	T ₄
Group A5	T ₁ - Taught by own teacher	-(?)	T ₄

STM: Special Teaching Method

NTM: Normal Teaching Method

T: Data collection phase

The research was of a quasi-experimental multi method design based upon a pre, post and repeated measure with control. Two classes of eight to nine year old children (Treatment and Active Control) with a Special Teaching Method (STM) were taught by the researcher. One group of similarly aged children (Control), also taught by the researcher, progressed through what might be called a traditional teaching approach to primary history. This approach utilised the state controlled curriculum and schemes of work. The STM whilst using the same traditional curriculum and schemes of work emphasised the teaching of chronology and other related temporal concepts through the usage of multi sensory interactive teaching activities. After one term of employing the STM the Active Control reverted to the traditional teaching method. These three classes were assessed for temporal cognition at the start of the academic year and then again at the end of each term. Two other classes, who were taught by their own class teachers, were also assessed for levels of temporal cognition and historical knowledge at posttest. The design allowed a consideration of whether gender-based attainment differentials are evident for the whole sample or indeed whether two separate teaching methods had any effect on the assimilation of time concepts or the ordering or historical knowledge.

The population and samples

Population: Year Four and Five children from the same school

Sample: Four parallel Year Four classes matched for intelligence, reading and mathematical ability. One Year Five class acted as an age control.

Subjects: 150

Groups: 5 X (30)

Data collection instruments: temporal cognition

The temporal data were collected using extant research assessment techniques (see Oakden and Sturt 1922, Bradley 1947; West 1981, Hodkinson 2003a) albeit with minor modification of test protocols. Data were collected by the employment of a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, unfocussed observations and multi-sensory assessment tests. These temporal assessments explored children's:

- ability to use AD and BC dates
- development of the concept of century and decade
- development of temporal concepts which relate to the National Curriculum
- usage of subjective and conventional time phrases (see Hodkinson 2003b).

Data collection instruments: attitudes, enjoyment and interest in history

A number of data collection techniques were employed throughout the research study. Firstly, pupils' attitudes towards school were measured using a three point scale and then classified as being positive, neutral or negative (Tymms 1999). In addition, a child's enjoyment of history, in relation to other curriculum areas, was also examined and graded as enjoy, OK and don't enjoy. The research also developed the work of Stones (1967), West (1981) and Tymms (1999) and devised a questionnaire that measured a pupils' levels of interest in history outside the context of the school (Historical context – see Hodkinson 2004a).

Data collection instruments: language abilities

Pupils' language abilities were examined by the employment of two assessments, these being the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (1998) spelling and written English test. The pupils' raw scores were converted to standardised scores utilising the QCA conversion grids. Each participant was placed into one of five groups A to E, with group A representing those children of highest ability.

Discussion

Do gender differentials exist in attitudes and enjoyment?

A contention raised within the literature base is that females under perform in history because of poor attitudes and low levels of enthusiasms for the subject (Booth 1983). Whilst the review of the literature concluded that the notion of gender differentials in attainment in primary history was speculative, the claims of attitude and enthusiasm differentials have not been the subject of detailed analysis. To examine these claims parametrical statistical analysis of four data sets relating to enjoyment of history, attitudes towards school, attitude towards history and a participant's interest in history outside school was employed. For Booth's contentions to be substantiated the study's analysis needed to determine a significantly advanced performance, by males, within these areas.

An initial graphical analysis of the data sets suggest that Booth's claims hold a modicum of merit. It is evident that males do have a more positive attitude to school than females and this positivity extends itself specifically to history lessons. Additionally, the results denote that males have superior interest levels with respects to their engagement in history activities conducted outside of the school-based curriculum. However, whilst these graphical findings are persuasive it is apparent though that parametrical statistical analysis does not provide strong support for Booth's postulate. It is only in the secondary analysis of the data sets that attitudes to school, in general, were subject to significant gender differentials ($p>0.05$). It appears, then, that although males may view school in a more positive light it appears that no significant gender differentials in attitude were noted for the history lessons themselves. Furthermore, if we combine this result with those for "enjoyment in history", where females have slightly advanced levels, then the study is not able to forward robust evidence to corroborate the notion that females' attitudes and enthusiasms are manifestly lower than those displayed by males.

Examination of the default model

Within the following section the hypothesis contained within the default model are subject to re-examination. The analysis seeks to determine whether a superiority in language skills leads to attainment differentials in primary history. Furthermore, the seemingly paradoxical contention which argues that females' lack of oral confidence is responsible for their underachievement is also examined. To facilitate this re-examination three lines of analysis were pursued. First, the data sets for the pupil's reading and spelling abilities were displayed graphically. Second, the data sets were examined by parametrical statistical analysis to evidence if females displayed a significantly higher

level of language competence. The contention that females' oral confidence is linked with attainment in primary history was examined by employing the data gained from unstructured observations. This specific analysis sought to determine if '...boys dominated the classroom vocally' (Younger et al 1999 in Becky 2000:31).

Graphical analysis of the language datasets illustrate that females display higher levels of academic achievement than do males. Furthermore, it is evident that gender differentials in attainment were most marked when considering participant's language abilities. Statistical analysis, by way of an independent samples t test, denotes that females have significantly higher standardised scores in literacy than did their male counterparts ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, there is strong evidence to support the contention that females possess a language superiority within primary classrooms. The analysis of participants' oral responses from the unstructured observations determined that out of 661 recorded portions of speech, 343 were made by males as opposed to 318 made by females. Whilst these results do evidence that the majority of responses were made by males (51.9 %) they in no way suggest a vocal dominance of the classroom by males. Moreover, without deeper content analysis of the tone and structure of the responses these findings remain limited. With these limitations in mind Booth's (1983) assertion that females' underperformance in history is due to a lack of oral confidence is not one that can be ably supported by the research.

In summary, then, a detailed analysis of the findings cannot provide evidence to substantiate the hypothesis that females' underperformance in history is due to inherent deficits in attitude, vocal confidence and enthusiasm. Based upon these findings, it may be concluded, therefore, that gender deficit models of concept assimilation should be discounted. Although, it appears that females do have better language skills it remains unclear as to whether these advanced levels translate themselves into advanced temporal academic performance.

Gender differentials: teachers' attitudes and grading

Before an examination of the temporal data sets themselves can be countenanced, it seems necessary to examine the contention that teachers grade females lower on tests than their male peers. This analysis is progressed by using the class teachers' subjective grading of a child's social class and intelligence recorded during the research study. The analysis of these data sets illustrate that there is little differentiation in grading with respects to social class. However, it does appear that in relation to intelligence class teachers, in general, indicate that males have superior intellect. These results are though non-significant and as such the study must discount the premise that gender differentials in teachers' judgements exist.

Gender differential and temporal cognition

The aim of this section is to highlight whether gender-based attainment differentials exist in the assimilation of the concepts of historical time. A conspectus of the research

data lends no support to the notion that males' academic achievement is superior to that of females. Although it is observable that males display slightly advanced rates of scoring in relation to clock time, duration and temporal concepts associated with the traditional curriculum approach it is clear from statistical analysis that these results are non-significant. One set of results, though, those of BC dates assessment two, remain anomalous. Whilst non-significant, the graphical data clearly indicate that males display a marked superior attainment to that evidenced by the females. From these results it possibly could be argued that males are able to assimilate the conventions of a BC dating system more readily than primary-aged females. However, the results for BC dates assessment one, a test it should be noted which examined exactly the same concepts as BC dates assessment 2 but by a differing test protocol, clearly illustrated that no gender attainment differentials were apparent. These results lend to persuasive support to Coltham's (1960) and the DfEE's (2003) contention that differences in test procedure and selection of test items can have a detrimental affect on females' attainment. It would appear, then, that this is an area which merits further detailed investigation within a specifically designed research study.

The data available from the temporal assessments were furthered examined to ascertain whether females' display significantly advanced academic attainment in temporal cognition. Preliminary graphical analysis illustrates that females displayed advanced attainment with respects to the Temporal Absurdity B, AD Dates, Time Machine, Century, Decades and Temporal Mathematics Assessments. In addition, it is also illustrated within the areas of temporal naming, temporal absurdity, historical language and the retention of historical knowledge that females evidence a slightly higher mean rate of scoring than their male counterparts. The data initially offer limited support for postulates which associate advanced language skills with higher levels of academic achievement in history. However, as it is evident all of these aforementioned results are non-significant the hypothesis of the default model must again be discounted.

In summary, then, the results evidenced by the analyses of the factor of gender undermines contentions that females are subject to significantly lower levels of achievement in relation to the assimilation of temporal cognition or the retention of historical knowledge. Therefore, it seems reasonable to discount gender as a performance determinant. Additionally, it would appear that previous studies which attribute advance levels of performance in history to gender differentials should be treated with caution if not scepticism.

Gender and the application of teaching method

The final analyses in relation to gender examined the effects of the application of the STM [Special Teaching Method] upon males and females within the Treatment cohort. Subjectively, it appears that the application of the teaching method and curriculum benefits the female participants, more than it does the males. Graphical analysis determines that the Treatment cohort females evidence superior scores on 19 out of the 22 assessments as opposed to Control females who manage an advanced performance

on just 11 assessments. However, only on two of the assessments, those of temporal naming and temporal absurdity, is this advanced performance significant ($p < 0.05$). Based upon these results it appears unwise to assert that the STM has any particular relevance for specific gender groupings.

Conclusions

The aim of the paper was to provide a critical analysis of early research in primary history which provided anomalous and contradictory findings in relation to gender attainment differentials. The data from the study reveal several findings that have important implications for educational researchers and practitioners alike. Primarily an overview of the data indicate that gender is not a attainment determinant within primary history. Additionally, the research lends support to research which details that females display a superiority of language than their male peers. However, and of most importance, is this language superiority does translate into advanced cognitive assimilation of historical concepts or greater acuity in the retention and ordering of historical knowledge. Therefore, in this context gender does not function as an interfering variable. The conclusion of the research, then, is that gender as a factor in the development of temporal cognition and the retention of historical knowledge should be discounted.

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World History in Greek primary & secondary education

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Abstract—This article deals with the almost total absence of World history as a portion of school History, in Greek primary and secondary education, despite the renewed interest in Global History nowadays. The writers have reached this conclusion after examining the history syllabus using content analysis. The reasons for this absence relate, basically, to the ethno-centric and partly euro-centric values, which predominate in: a) the selection of the teaching material and b) the editing of the teaching instructions by the Pedagogical Institute, an institution supervised by the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. They also relate to a number of dominant assumptions, based on the traditional model of historical learning in Greek schools. The situation does not alter essentially in the new Cross-curricula Integrated Context of Studies (C.I.C.S.) for primary school and high school. Therefore, according to the writers' view, Greek school history, in its current state, is neither connected with the wider dimensions of history on a global level nor with modern epistemological and pedagogical dimensions.

Keywords—Atavism, Chronological syllabus, Civilisation, Curricular reform, Curriculum, Ethno-centricity, Euro-centric, European History, Global History, Greece, Greek History, Greek Identity, Identity, Integration, Internationalism, Nationalism, Nation-centric, Pedagogy, Politically controlled curriculum, Positivism, Primary education, Secondary Education, Textbooks, Western History, World History.

Introduction – Interest in World history nowadays

The philosophical basis of this approach refers to Jürgen Habermas' analysis of the post-nation state, the European and world system (Habermas, 2003; 2004/2007). In the light of this analysis, supranationality and globalisation are considered to be our zeitgeist³.

The end of colonial empires, the emergence of new nations in the postwar era and the belated recognition that societies of all continents and regions of the world possess a history of their own, have all brought about a reappraisal of the domain of history, which now includes past human experience in its entirety. At the same time, historians increasingly regard the nation, that nineteenth-century unit of analysis, as far less autonomous and far more complicated, marked by internal differentiation and ongoing debates about national identity⁴.

³ According to Habermas, on the one hand, the growing interconnection and interrelation among the nation-states, mainly in European Union, deprives the nation-state a number of its authority. On the other hand this process creates the need for a new orientation, a new sense of identity, a new civic and historical education and consciousness. Jürgen Habermas, *Der Gespaltene Westen. Kleine Politische Schriften X*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2004.

⁴ Thomas Bender (2004: 16-17).

On one hand, the global community of historians begins to discuss the terms and the cognitive and value content of the shifting of historical research and education on global history. On the other hand⁵ – as far as the educational policy of the various nation-states and public opinion about history is concerned, despite the attempt made by international organizations, (UNESCO, Georg Eckert Institut (Middel-Popp-Schissler, 2003) EUROCLIO) history textbooks do not prioritise National, European or World history.

The curricula and school history textbooks show epistemological and politico-social conflicts or compromises which reflect ideological domination in interpreting the past, ignoring the present and hopes for the future. Unjustified authority interposes mechanisms of control and social obedience in the learning of history by regulating the knowledge, values, teaching and evaluation techniques, which are either epistemologically obvious, or objectively and ideologically neutral (Crawford, 2000). For this reason, the possible shifting of the focus of historical education on to global history and, so introducing the multi-cultural elements of the societies⁶, is associated with the self-perception of each society and, with the either dynamic or fearful acceptance of globalisation by society itself. Therefore, we reach the conclusion that the shift to global history will come about when the historiographical and the pedagogical need is combined with the social needs, ideological orientations, democratisation of historical education and culture, of the state. Multiperspectivity and ecumenical narratives are basic approaches consisting of keywords, behind which lie simple realities and pretenses⁷.

The teaching of World history in school has to do with the global dimensions of historical development and with the understanding of the interconnectedness of historical facts and phenomena. In addition, World history undermines narcissistic nation-centricity as way of looking at human life, by integrating national history and the ethno-cultural identity into a wider historical context. At the same time, it can contribute significantly to overcoming stereotypes and prejudices, to understanding and handling diversity, to intercultural communication, and to awareness of the historical peculiarities and differences, which might exist in contemporary societies. Last but not least, World history makes the exclusively diachronic approach of historical phenomena relevant (Levstik-Barton, 2005, p. 85).

All the elements mentioned above lead to the re-examination of the dominant importance of the triptych “National history – European-centricity – Western-centricity” in curricula and in school history textbooks. This will lead to the demystification of the nation-state, to the deconstruction of idealised self-images of Europe and the West as centers of values, of progress, affluence, freedom, democracy and justice (Nash-Crabtree-Dunn, 2000: 277).

⁵ Luigi Cajani (2006: 126) expresses this new trend and underlines the following: “[...] the main political, economic, social and ecological problems of today have a global dimension, and this awareness leads more and more people to the research of the past and the present in a global scale. As a result, the school system ought to respond to a new social request for historical knowledge”.

⁶ The “transcultural turn” in historiography occurs as global turn (Sachsenmaier, 2007: 471).

⁷ Dominic Sachsenmaier (2007: 465-466)

It might also lead to appropriate conditions for the cultivation of cosmopolitan-global historical consciousness. Redefining history in a global era by thinking historically, inclusively and globally/worldly seems to be a necessary new approach – a paradigm shift in history that scholars and teachers realise its importance. This draws attention to the often over-looked goal of teaching students how to think, focusing on the development of political intelligence through history teaching⁸. It is acknowledged that the definition of citizenship and general educational aims strongly influences not only the contents, but also the status of school knowledge and the practices that are encouraged or prescribed – and vice versa (Tutiaux-Guillon, 2007: 53).

As Jörn Rüsen (2007: 14) points out:

Globalisation confronts different traditions with the threat of a clash of civilisations as a consequence of the role played by cultural memory and historical thinking in the process of forming collective identity.

He asks whether we already have a cultural tool to overcome domination, exclusiveness and unequal evaluation in conceptualizing identity. This question has a negative answer due to the unbroken power of ethnocentrism when different groups, nations and cultures meet.

The school version of World history is, therefore, combined with two new and, to a certain extent, interrelated dimensions of history as a subject. First, the dimension of trans-nationality–universality, that is to say, the integration of National history into the wider international context, based on the sense of concentric circles leading from the local and national context to the continental and global one. Secondly, the dimension of cultural pluralism in History, that is to say, the dimension stemming from the dissimilarity and multiculturalism of each society, as well as of each ethno-cultural group or minority's contribution to universal civilisation⁹.

Finally, according to Falk Pingel (2000), the teaching of History in Europe is initially oriented towards the historical course of the nation and the nation-state. However, a big part of it has to do with the historical developments in the European Continent and the global scene, in general. A typical example of this revisionary spirit is the case of the History subject in Germany, where the 40% to 70% of the teaching time is spent on National history, whereas the rest of the time is equally divided between European and World history.

⁸ Antonis Hourdakis (1999: 492).

⁹ Keith Barton and Linda Levstik (2004: 38) claim, firstly, that “through the study of social institutions, cultural tendencies and lifestyles of isolated people in time and space, pupils would have the chance to be mentally prepared so well that they could perceive the numerous ways of the human presence in the world”. Secondly, they point out that such a complex capability offers the opportunity to recognise and understand the numerous differences shadowed by the nationalistic ideology or existing in the modern massive and multi-cultural societies.

The Greek case-study

In order to detect the importance attached to global history in the context of the history taught in Greece during the year 2005-6, we have mainly examined the syllabus, the curriculum and the teaching instructions based on them, to find out whether there are teaching hours devoted to what we defined above as 'World history'¹⁰.

We could also detect the presence or absence of World history based either on the curricula or on the number of pages spent on issues or facts in school textbooks. However, all these elements themselves do not constitute safe criteria, due to the fact that the importance of school historical learning – the teaching technique included – is attached to what is taught and examined, not to what is planned by the curricula or is simply contained in the textbook. There are some chapters in the textbook, based on the curriculum, which are neither taught nor examined. As a result, these chapters are either read by pupils of their own free will only occasionally – or are often omitted. Therefore, more assiduous research with regard to the questions in school exams, on the local level, as well as of the Pan-Hellenic University entrance exams, both of which take place every year, would prove to be useful. We suggest that as far as the exams of all kinds are concerned, the rarity or, even better, the non-existence of World history questions becomes more evident.

Professor George Mavrogiorgos (1981) revealed the discrepancy among the curricula, school textbooks and school exams; he demonstrated the ways in which the school exams distort the principles of the curricula and eliminate the best textbooks or the mechanisms through which practice refutes verbal declarations. According to him, "exams violate the formal specifications of the curricula and apply their own 'informal' and 'hidden' curriculum" (Mavrogiorgos, 1981, p. 300; for the 'hidden-curriculum' see also Mavrogiorgos, 1992). One may wonder whether the situation has actually changed in essence in comparison with the year 1981, when the above research revealed that the history examined is based on the passive memorisation of dates and, mainly, of military-political facts; as a result, history is proved to be obsolete, perhaps functioning as a mechanism of 'anti-learning' (Mavrogiorgos, 1981, pp. 296-322).

Another useful question worth considering has to do with the pupils' attitude towards the few pages concerning World history, which might be included in the syllabus. Such research could be conducted in the form of a questionnaire or of an organised interview and could detect the interest and the value attached by the children to global history. In addition, this research could indicate that pupils attribute greater importance to global history than their instructors or the curricula and textbooks, (Kokkinos – Athanasiadis – Vouri et al, 2006, pp. 224, 278), as well as compared with what happens to World history in the curricula, the school textbooks and teaching instructions.

¹⁰ World – or Global (in this case) – history is distinguished from other history in the sense that it is centred on humanity as a whole. However, not all that is named World – or Global – history is put clearly in this way... Most World history texts are written from the Western point of view and usually consist by a collection of narratives of nations' or regions' past... (Hourdakis, 1999: 494).

Teaching Hours

In our research we used four categories, which correspond with concentric circles of historical evolution, into which we integrated the total number of the planned teaching hours annually:

1. 'Nation-centred history' contains teaching hours, concerned with the so-called unbroken continuity of the Greek history.
2. 'Western-centred history' contains teaching hours allocated to Western history, that is Europe and Northern America. Besides, the notion that Greece is advantageously associated with the West is widely known, since the classical antiquity of the 5th century BC is considered to be the cradle of the European and, consequently, of the Western civilisation (see Dragona–Kouzelis–Askouni, 1997, p. 242; Askouni, 1997, pp. 295, 322; Fragoudaki, 1997, p. 350).
3. 'History of the Eastern, the Mediterranean and the Balkan people and cultures' contains teaching hours to do with people and cultures of the Near and Middle East, of the Mediterranean and the Balkans, who appear, more or less, as either in favor or opposed to the Greek nation in history. However, the teaching hours in this category were few because, although there is often talk of other people and cultures in the Greek curricula and in the school history textbooks, the nation-centered aspect is dominant. For instance, elements from the history of ancient cultures of the Near East, like the Egyptians, are placed as an introduction for the presentation of the ancient Greek civilisation that follows. Other people and cultures, such as the Romans, the Arabs, the Bulgarians, the Latins and the Turks are presented as rivals or opponents, who embezzle, conspire against or/and conquer the 'Greek' geographic space. A typical example of this fact constitutes the chapter 'The Byzantine state and its neighboring people', found in the book of the fifth class in primary school. The Greek nation is presented either to vigorously make a stand against all these cultures, or, at least, to survive despite the adversities and thanks to the upper culture, its historical destination or its unbeatable will as well.
4. 'World history' contains teaching hours to do with issues affecting areas of interests far more extended than the categories mentioned above, sometimes on a truly global scale.

In order to divide the teaching hours into these categories, we used as criteria not only the title of the teaching unit, but also, the aims and objectives defined by the curriculum, and, the content of the school textbook itself. These criteria were chosen because the way in which a matter is placed and approached, the explicit or latent reason why this is done, has greater importance than whether the history is entitled as 'World', 'European', 'Greek' or history of any other kind.

Consequently, we went on with the review of the history syllabus referring to respective school textbooks used during the year 2004-5 (Athens, Organisation for the Publication of Teaching Books) as basic handbooks of the corresponding classes, from the first class of Lower High School (Gymnasium), age 13-15, to the third class of Upper High School (Lyceum), age 16-18:

1. Tsaktsiras, L. & Tiverios, M. (1995) *History of the Ancient Years up to 30 BC* Athens, O.P.T.B.
2. Tsaktsiras, L., Orfanoudakis, Z. & Theohari, M. (2004) *Roman and Byzantine History* Athens, O.P.T.B.
3. Sfiroeras, B. (1999) *Modern and Contemporary History* Athens, O.P.T.B.
4. Mastrapas, A. (2004) *History of the Ancient World* Athens, O.P.T.B.
5. Dimitroukas, I., Ioannou, Th. & Baroutas, K. (2003) *History of the Medieval and Modern World* pp. 565-1815. Athens, O.P.T.B.
6. Skoulatos, B., Dimakopoulos, N. & Kondis, S. (2003) *Modern and Contemporary History, Issue a' and Issue b'* Athens, O.P.T.B.

If we examine some examples in detail, we can discuss the dilemmas which arise as far as the categorisation and the dominant view of the teaching units is concerned.

Units such as the Mycenaean culture, the Greek-nation period and Byzantium¹¹ were integrated into the nation-centered history, since they are presented as stages of the Greek history. Units, such as the Cycladic and the Minoan culture, the later antiquity (4th and 5th century) and 'the Latin states and the Greek resistance' were also integrated into the 'nation-centered history', because they deal with historical evolution based on a nation-centered aspect. For instance, the Cycladic and the Minoan culture belong, according to the teaching instructions, on the one hand to the unit 'The Bronze Age in Greece' (Ministry of Education, 2002-b, p. 226), on the other hand to the sub-unit 'Greek prehistory', which, in its turn, belongs to the unit 'The Ancient Greeks, from the Prehistoric Years up to Alexander the Great' (Ministry of Education, 2002-c, p. 237). In other words, these two Aegean civilisations are discreetly attached to ancient Greek history, because they appeared in the place later called Greece.

It is worth mentioning the presentation of the Minoan culture in the book for the third class in primary school. It does not have to do, at first sight, with nation-centered history, but rather with an experiential approach, which is appropriate to the children's age. However, if we take a closer look at the numerous references of the unit to ancient Greek mythology, for example, the photographs of the modern way of life in Crete showing the traditional 'tsakonikos' dancing, which is associated by the authors with heroes of the ancient Greek mythology, Theseus and Ariadne. This choice indicates the emphasis is on the uninterrupted continuity of the Greek nation and we can understand that the chapter practically functions as an introduction to Greek history. Many of its teaching units are, therefore, integrated into nation-centered history.

¹¹ As we have found out, the Byzantine history in the books for the fifth class of Primary School, the second class of Lower High School (Gymnasium) and the first class of Upper High School (Lyceum) attaches greater importance to the role of the Greek element – especially when there is talk of Hellenizing the East Roman empire – compared to the relevant historical approach in the book for the second class of Lyceum.

To continue—Roman history is mostly integrated into 'Western-centered' history, due to the fact that it is associated with the developments in the Italian peninsula or with the historical dynamic launched from there. However, as often happens in the context of the Greek school history, the historical approach of another people or culture is stamped by the nation-centered aspect. Not to mention that particularly great emphasis is put on the latent or explicit cultural 'superiority' of the Greeks, who 'conquered their conquerors', the Romans, who in their turn spread, deliberately or not, the Greek-Roman culture through their conquests on the skirts and the interior of the Mediterranean.

The teaching units to do with later antiquity (4th & 5th century) are divided into the nation-centered and the Western history, that is into, on the one hand, the transformation of the Eastern Roman state into a Christian monarchy, in which the Greek element is prevalent, and on the other hand, the conquest of the Western Roman state by the German people.

According to the same reasoning, the teaching unit to do with early Christian art of later antiquity is integrated into the nation-centered history, because, on the one hand, the influence of the ancient Greek spirit on the Fathers of the Church (Greek-Christianity) (Gazi, 2004) is praised. On the other hand, the Christian faith is, from then on, considered to be a component element of the medieval Greek nation.

The Justinianian era has been integrated into the nation-centered history, since it is approached as a basic reference point of Byzantium, which is thought to be a Greek-Christian empire, although the emperor's dream was Roman domination.

Now, as for the Latin states founded in the area of Byzantium after 1204, we could claim that they are partly integrated into Western history, in the context of geopolitical conflicts and cultural osmosis. Nevertheless, if we take a closer look at the aims and objectives, Greek continuity becomes evident again. As a result, the didactic aims are the following:

1. Pupils should become familiar with the most important Latin states founded in Greece during the era of the 'Frankish domination'¹² and with their character.
2. Pupils should evaluate the Greek attitude towards the Latin conquerors (Ministry of Education, 2003-b, p. 3). Under these circumstances, the history of the Latin states is concluded to be of a nation-centered nature.

¹² The term is highly charged. It implies the period of the Greek people's subjection to a foreign conqueror, the Franks. Terms, such as 'Roman domination' (the period from 146 BC, when the Romans conquered Greece, see Actipis et al, 2004-D', p. 113; there is talk of 'Roman yoke' in Tsaktsiras-Tiverios, 1995, p. 280), 'Latin domination', 'Venetian domination' and 'Turkish occupation' are also used, either in the curricula, or in the school textbooks. Alternatively, the terms 'Western dominations in Greece' and 'Ottoman domination', having a political character, have been suggested; however, they cannot be easily adopted, as it becomes obvious even in the recent edition *History of the New Greek nation 1770-2000* (Panagiotopoulos, 2003). For more details, see Asdrahas (2003).

The discoveries of the New World (15th–16th century) have been integrated into the western-centered history and not into the **World one?**, since their presentation is more similar to a unit of European history, to a period of dynamic expansion of the Spanish and Portuguese voyages of discovery and expansion. The destruction of the pre-Columbian civilisations is mentioned to a limited extent; the presentation of the issue occupies three lines in six pages (together with the quotations) in the book for the third class of lower high school (Gymnasium) and seven lines in seven pages in the book of the second class of upper high school (Lyceum). In any case, emphasis is laid on the processes having to do with the European societies, concerning either the causes or the effects of the phenomenon.

The Russian revolution of 1917 has been integrated into the World history category, as it is planned—according to the teaching instructions of history in the third class of lower high school (Gymnasium)—to be taught together with the treaties, which ended the First World War and is, therefore, integrated into a unit of a rather international aspect.

Two more typical examples constitute the teaching units of the two World Wars. We would rightly expect that, in these cases, there would be much talk of the World and not of the European history only. However, at least as far as the units to be taught are concerned, on the one hand, the two World Wars are presented more as internecine conflicts of the European powers rather than as events of worldwide significance—a point of view historiographically popular nowadays, even at a European level. On the other hand, extreme emphasis is put, in our opinion, on the importance of the Greek participation and of the Greek nation's sacrifices for the fulfillment of its national rights and for the protection of international law. It would certainly be unfair not to mention that some mention of global history can be detected in the two World Wars, such as the points where there is talk of imperialistic competition away from Europe, of the cost in human lives and material destruction, of the United Nations Organisation and the Cold War. Nevertheless, in most cases outlined above, the angle is western-centered rather than worldly. In addition, the teaching instructions do not provide for any further talk of the Holocaust, nor of the drop of the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Issues of great importance for the whole mankind, which could stir up productive discussions in the class, are therefore usually omitted in practice.

A typical dilemma was placed by the teaching unit 'The postwar world' in the history book for the third class of lower high school (Gymnasium). According to the aims included in the teaching instructions, the unit is planned to be taught briefly by putting emphasis on:

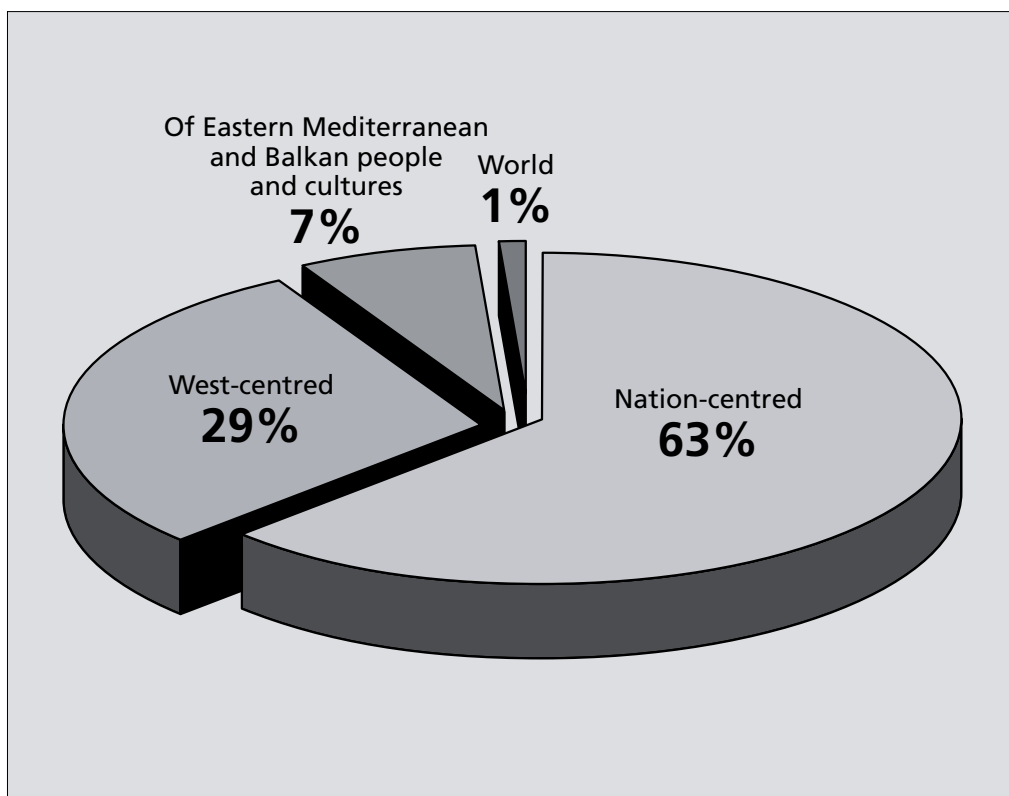
- a) the major problems of the era
- b) the accession of Greece to the European Community and
- c) the consequences of the USSR collapse.

However, this unit consists of thirteen pages together with the quotations-sources; as a result, it is a wonder whether the instructor, who will teach this unit 'briefly', is going to choose or not the issues of Greek history, which, either way, occupy eight pages, over the half of the relevant syllabus. Consequently, even if both the title and the didactic aims lend a global history dimension to the unit, it is doubtful whether this dimension will become evident in class.

The results of the research, based on the above criteria, are summed up in the following chart and pie-chart.

Planned teaching hours—based on the valid 2005-6 school-year teaching instructions of Greek secondary education

History:	Nation-centered	West-centered	Of Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan people and cultures	World	Total
1st class of high school	50	1	7	0	58
2nd class of high school	30	17	6	0	53
3rd class of high school	43	25	0	2	70
1st class of Lyceum	28	14	4	1	47
2nd class of Lyceum	17	23	5	0	45
3rd class of Lyceum	32	13	0	0	45
Total	200	93	22	3	318
Percentages	62.89	29.25	6.92	0.94	100



At first sight, we have to emphasise the zero or almost zero percentage of the teaching hours corresponding to World history. However, if we take a closer look, we will understand that, at least, there is some talk of many other people, civilisations and cultures, apart from the Greek one, even if this is done briefly. For example, according to the curriculum for the third class of Lower High School, the unit 'XVII. The other world in the 19th century', which has to do with developments in the USA, China and Japan, is 'to be taught briefly'. Similarly, the civilisations of the Far East and Southern Asia (mentioned in the last chapter in the History book in the first class of Lyceum) are supposed to be taught within an hour. In fact, this is refuted by the recommendation according to which, the unit mentioned above should 'be taught briefly'.

As a result, we are again faced with the reality that the World history is absent, based on the given fact that important issues, such as long-lasting big changes in the way of thinking (eg the people's views about gender, the nation, the body, death, the environment), the climax of natural disasters provoked by the growth of the human civilisation or the relation between man and nature (ecohistory), the approach of global problems from a national aspect, are totally absent from the syllabus, the curricula and the history textbooks.

To sum up, we have reached the conclusion that the history taught in the Greek Secondary Education is based on a nation-centered perspective, is surrounded by Western-centered historical elements of relatively lower importance and is, finally, embellished with elements from the history of people and cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean. These appear:

- a) only as a prologue or in relation to Greek history
- b) either in favor or opposed –it depends on the occasion– to the historical Course of the Greek nation. These three axes of unequal weight (nation-centricity the utmost priority, western-centricity secondly and, up to a limited extent, the history of the Eastern Mediterranean peoples) constitute the norm of the Greek school historiography.

Theodora Kavoura's observations (2002) on the 1999 curricula for History in the Lyceum are similar. The researcher has discovered that, despite their selective innovative elements, nation-centricity and the purely historicist/positivistic epistemological paradigm continue to be dominant in the new curricula too, while a discrepancy between general and particular goals (aims and objectives) is being observed. She also points out that: "European and global history seem to serve rather as tools of direction in order to set off the Greek civilisation and its grandeur, than as evenly matched and equivalent historical issues" (Kavoura, 2002, p. 427).

We have applied the same research programme in relation to the teaching units of History in primary education. The books for the primary school, which were examined, are the following:

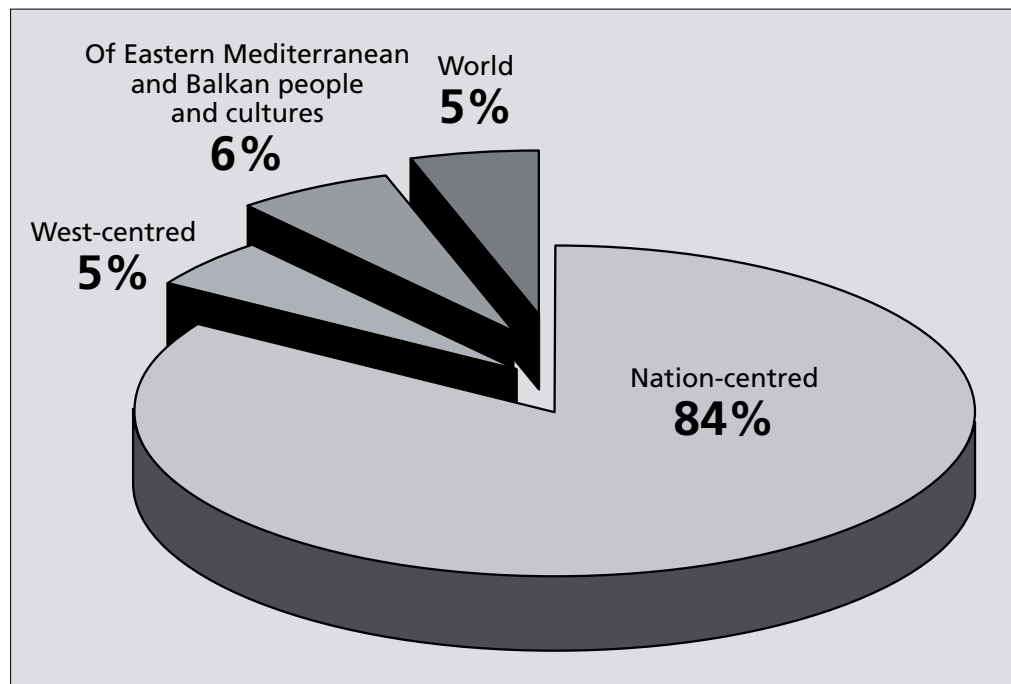
1. Actipis, D. et al (2004). In the very Old Years – History for the Third Class of Primary School. Athens: O.P.T.B.
2. Actipis, D. et al (2004). In the Ancient Years – History for the Fourth Class of Primary School. Athens: O.P.T.B.
3. Asimomitis, B. et al (2004). In the Byzantine Years – History for the Fifth Class of Primary School. Athens: O.P.T.B.
4. Actipis, D et al (2004). In the Modern Years – History for the Sixth Class of Primary School. Athens: O.P.T.B.

We have also consulted:

- a) the four books "for the teacher", which were written by the same authors and contained the corresponding curricula on their last pages
- b) Supplementary Instructions for the Teaching of Subjects in Primary School—2002/3 (Ministry of Education – P.I., 2002, pp. 55-59). The results from the collection of elements based on the above stuff are summed up into the chart and the following pie-chart:

Teaching units in the Greek Primary Education (2005-6)

Curricula of Primary School (2005-6)					
History:	Nation-centered	West-centered	Of Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan people and cultures	World	Total
3rd class of primary school	24	0	8	8	40
4th class of primary school	38	1	0	0	39
5th class of primary school	35	6	1	0	42
6th class of primary school	42	2	1	0	45
Total	139	9	10	8	166
Percentages	87.73	5.42	6.02	4.82	100



The hours used for the revision units at the end of each chapter (approximately eight per year), according to the instructions for the teacher, as well as the introductory chapters summing up the material taught in the previous class and introducing the one of the new year (one hour per year), have not been taken into account in the total of the syllabus. In any case, the corresponding percentage is negligible, not to mention that the balances do not change in essence, at least, at the expense of the obvious domination of the nation-centered history, domination which becomes more evident compared to secondary education.

This fact is understandable if we bear in mind that, according to the pedagogical principle, we should start teaching based on things already-known, then proceed to new knowledge. But the things already-known are not always associated with national history. "The children's direct experience is related to the material culture and to a simple view of the world: Food and the nutrition, means of communication, ways of travelling and means of transport, household equipment, toys, material objects, ways of organizing time, projects, ways of becoming sociable all constitute part of the children's experience" (Mattozzi, 2006, p. 155).

Moreover, the transition to the new and the unknown is not achieved in Primary School history (eg through the description of other cultures' images) and this is an omission of grave importance, since the appropriate psycho-cognitive background is not created for future inter-cultural approaches.

Another unfortunate fact is that nation-centricity has become absolute; some typical titles of the chapters from the history book for the sixth class in Primary School, are the following: 'Venetians, Genoans and other conquerors', 'Spiritual growth through slavery', 'The Greeks faced with the conquerors', 'The Greek nation in the course of centuries'. In addition, another nation-centered characteristic of the book is its cover embellished with warriors of the 1821 Revolution armed with yataghans (swords of the Ottoman type).

On the other hand, the number of hours planned for West-centered history is very limited, while the percentage of the Mediterranean and the Balkan peoples' history is almost the same in both primary and secondary education.

A typical example of the inadequate approach to European history represents the teaching unit from the History book for the sixth class in Primary School, entitled 'Towards the united Europe'. From the seven paragraphs included in the unit, only the two lines, mentions the terms 'European Union' and 'Europe'. The rest of the text has to do with the political developments in Greece during the change of regime (1974 onwards). However, at the end of the unit we are faced with the question: 'Why have many European countries decided to be united? What are the benefits they derive from this union?'

We should also point out the fact that, at first sight, the percentage corresponding to World history seems to be larger in primary school than in lower high school and the Lyceum; in fact, however, things are slightly different. The teaching units concerned with global history are all contained in the book for the third class of primary school, Long ago and particularly, in the first chapter on Prehistory. Furthermore, Greek mythology and the archaeological findings in Greece, including Cyprus, become more than evident in this chapter. Besides, the only other areas of the world mentioned are Mesopotamia and Libya; as a result, Greek-centricity becomes prevalent again. There are also tiny portions of World history in the book for the sixth class of Primary School referring to the First and Second World War and to the period between the two World Wars. However, even in these cases, more emphasis is laid on the developments in the West, so the historical aspect is characterised as Western-centered, rather than world focused.

Finally, based on the same categories (nation-centered history, West-centered history, history of the Mediterranean and Balkan people and cultures, World history), we have looked into the Cross-curricula Integrated Context of Studies for Primary School and High School ¹³, according to which, new school textbooks have been written, in order to gradually replace the old ones from the year 2006-7 ¹⁴.

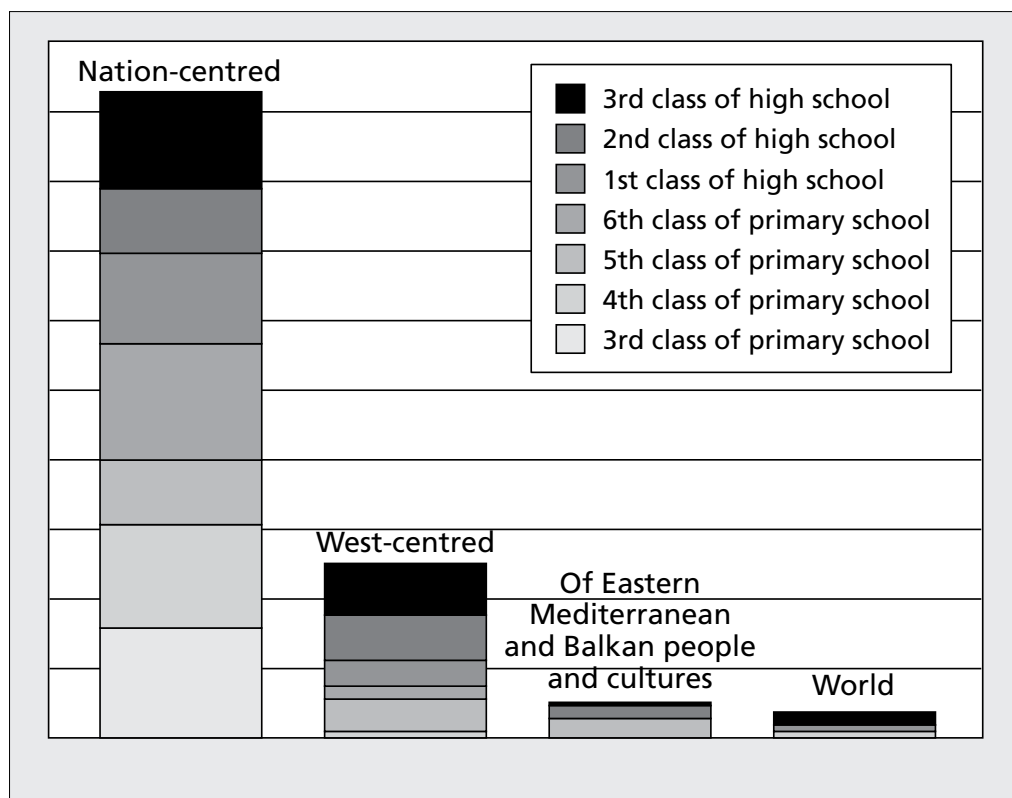
According to the Cross-curricula Integrated Context of Studies for Primary School and High School (C.I.C.S.), the teaching model does not seem different compared with the previous 'norm', as seen in the chart opposite.

Cross-curricula Integrated Context of Studies (C.I.C.S.) for History in primary and high school, applied gradually from 2006-7 onwards

History:	Nation-centered	West-centered	Of Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan people and cultures	World	Total
3rd class of primary school	43	0	0	3	46
4th class of primary school	39	3	0	0	42
5th class of primary school	25	11	6	0	42
6th class of primary school	46	4	0	0	50
1st class of high school	35	10	0	2	47
2nd class of high school	25	17	3	0	45
3rd class of high school	39	21	2	4	66
Total	252	66	10	9	338
Percentages	74.56	19.53	3.25	2.66	100

¹³ It can be found (2006) on the site—<http://www.pi-schools.gr/programs/deeps/>, where there is a reference to the relevant pages from the Government Newspaper (P.N.G.) and in which the C.I.C.S. of each subject is published.

¹⁴ Although, according to the new syllabuses, all of the teaching units of the new schoolbooks are going to be taught. Still, the educational legislation imposes a restriction on what will be included in the exams (something between three fifths to one half in the gymnasium or two thirds to one half in the lyceum of the total amount of pages, which are expected to be taught). This selection allows the distinction of the teaching units as, more or less, 'important'; that is suitable, for the exams. However, most of the schoolteachers—either trying to avoid disturbing reactions from the side of their pupils and their parents or for ideological reasons, ie estimating as more 'important' for the children to know the traditional school-history themes—do not change each year, intentionally and systematically, their choices in relation to what should be asked in the final exams. Therefore, the leading norm of the exam-questions does not alter.



If we take a closer look at the chart and the graph above, we can point out the already recognised ‘norm’: Nation-centered history dominates. The portion of Western-centered, in particular European-centered history, lags far behind. That of World history remains very small. The new ‘Cross-Curricula Integrated Historical Studies’ is a regression rather than a move forward.

As a result, we are faced with a conscious and continuous attempt to carve first a Nation-centered and next a Western-centered historical consciousness. This is being done in a way that presupposes the nature, of not only the nation, but of Europe as well. The transnational European narrative is structured upon explicitly planned coordinates of cultural and political nationalism and aims at the creation of a binary historical identity (national and European). This binary but unequal relation refers, to a certain extent, to the conception of Europe as a confederative ‘big nation’ (‘Euro-nationalism’), which is composed, on the one hand, of the common cultural and historical heritage of the European people, and, on the other hand, of their mutual interests and values.

Nevertheless, the member states preserve their cultural peculiarities by trying to co-ordinate their different identities, based on the principle ‘union in difference’ (Kokkinos, 2003, pp. 38-39, 41). The exact weighting of this unequal relation between nation-centricity and European-centricity remains to be looked into, based on the relative references contained in the corpus of the new books, written according to the new Cross-curricula’s (C.I.C.S.) provisions.

Therefore, we conducted further research, using Content Analysis, this time regarding the new history schoolbooks of the Greek Gymnasium (lower secondary education, for children in the age of 12-15 years old). These are:

For the 1st class of Gymnasium—Katsoulakos, Th., Kokkorou-Alevra, G. & Skoulatos, V. (2006) *Ancient History* Athens, O.P.T.B.

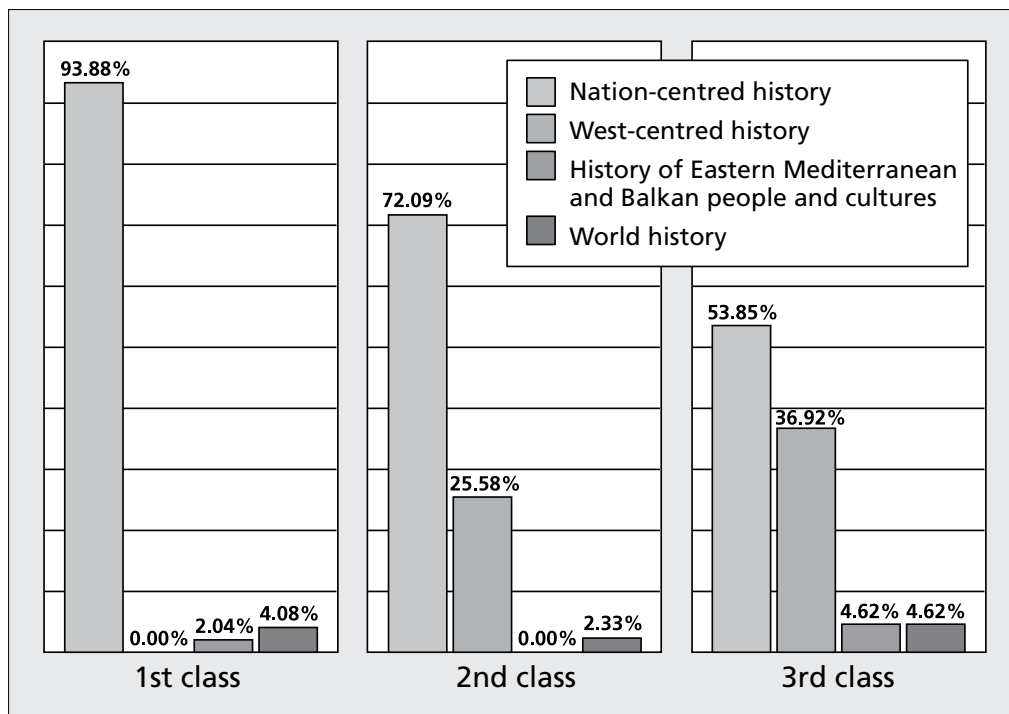
For the 2nd class of Gymnasium—Dimitroukas, J. & Ioannou, Th. (2006) *Medieval and Modern History* Athens, O.P.T.B.

For the 3rd class of Gymnasium: Louvi, Ev. & Ksifaras, D. (2007) *Modern and Contemporary History* Athens, O.P.T.B.

The findings, as one can see in the diagrams presented below, reaffirm the continuous supremacy of Ethno-centered history, which is even more reinforced in the case of the history schoolbook in the 1st class of Gymnasium, while in the two other classes (2nd and 3rd), the well-known binary model of nation and Western-centricity is clear. The findings also confirm the insufficiency or total absence, occasionally, of the two remaining categories, the history of Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan peoples and cultures, plus World history.

History schoolbooks in the Greek Gymnasium (lower secondary education). School-year 2007-8

		Teaching units		
		1st class	2nd class	3rd class
	Ethno-centric history	46	31	35
	West-centric history	0	11	24
	History of Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan people and cultures	1	0	3
	World history	2	1	3
Total		49	43	65



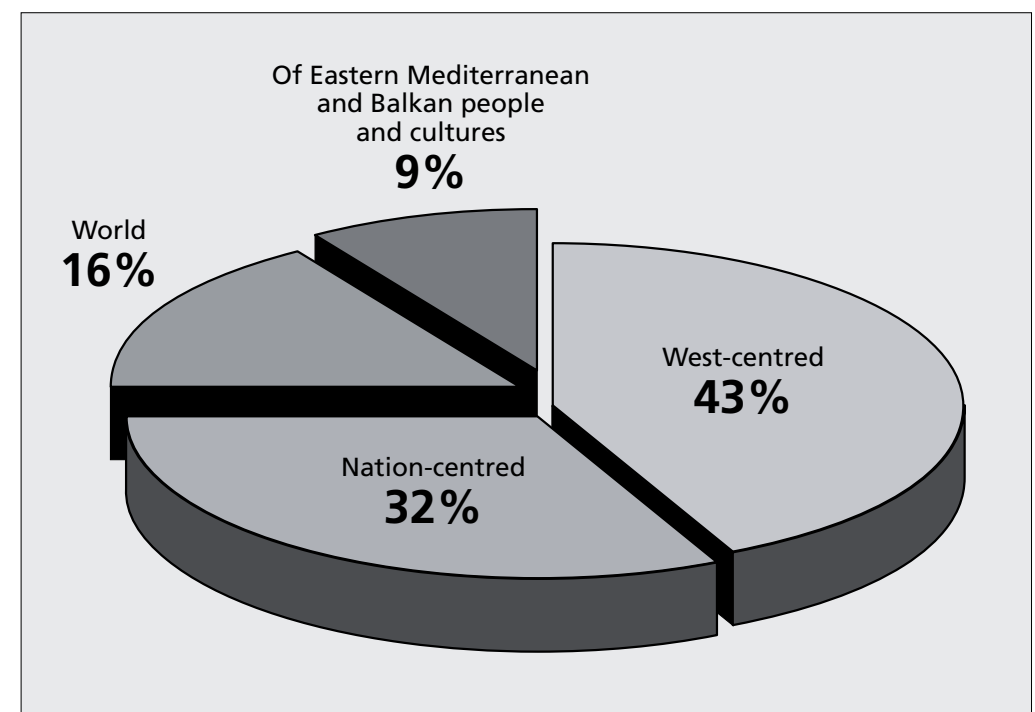
Seeking to determine the status of World history in Greek school history, let us now examine the most recently introduced history schoolbook, in Greek secondary education, which was written by a group of authors directly entrusted by the Pedagogical Institute and not selected after an open competition—publicly proclaimed, through an official call for papers:

Koliopoulos, J., Svolopoulos, C., Chatzivasiliou, Ev., Nimas, Th. & Scholinaki-Chelioti, C, (2007) *History of Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 until today)* 'C' Class of Lyceum. (Ιστορία του νεότερου και του σύγχρονου κόσμου (από το 1815 έως σήμερα). Γ' τάξη Γενικού Λυκείου και Δ' τάξη Εσπερινού Λυκείου) Athens, O.P.T.B.

After having applied the same research program, regarding the content of the teaching units of this book, we reached the following conclusions:

Koliopoulos, J. et al (2007) *History of Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 until today)* Athens, O.P.T.B.

	Teaching units	Percentage	
	Ethno-centric history	14	31.82%
	West-centric history	19	43.18%
	History of Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan people and cultures	4	9.09%
	World history	7	15.91%
Total	44	100.00%	

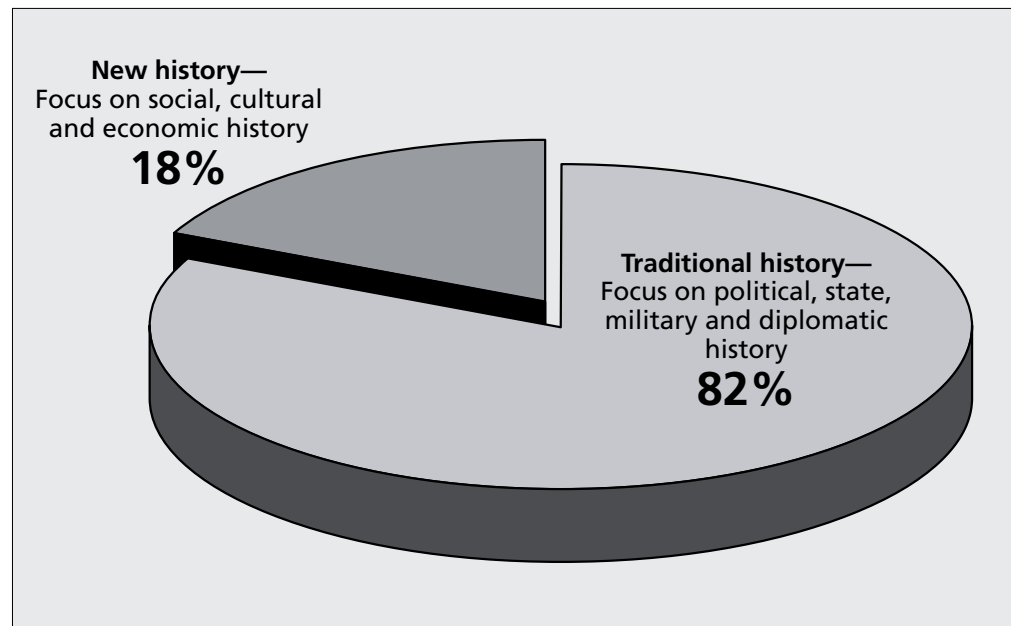


At first sight one might speak of an exceptional book, which dedicates sufficient space to World history, while the percentage of history of Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan peoples and cultures is not negligible. However, the key to interpret this observation rests on the writers' focus on the history of international diplomatic relations (political, military and economic). In our opinion, this overwhelming emphasis on international relations is in accordance with the methodological orientations and ideological presuppositions of

Traditional History versus New History¹⁵. The following data, presented both in a table and a diagram, support this argument.

Koliopoulos, J. et al (2007) History of Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 until today) Athens, O.P.T.B.

	Teaching units	Percentage
Traditional History—Focus on political, state, military and diplomatic history	36	81.82%
New History – Focus on social, cultural and economic history	8	18.18%
Total	44	100.00%



¹⁵ For the distinction between Traditional History and New History see: Husbands–Kitson–Pendry, 2003, p. 12; Barton–Levstik, 2004; Burke, 1991, pp. 1-23; Kokkinos, 2006, pp. 20-21. The main differences between the two historiographical paradigms are considered as follows: (A) From the point of view of New History: 1) a total, ie multidimensional, approach to human activity, 2) focus on economic, social and political structures of the human deeds (infrastructure), but without losing sight of the factual level (seen as the surface of deep structures), 3) sets of historical questions which extend far beyond the narrow cadres of nation-state history, 4) an equivalence, if not superiority, of historical analysis in relation to historical narration, 5) an emphasis on continuous epistemological reviewing and methodological innovation, abandonment of the positivist paradigm and quest for multi-perspectivity, 6) interdisciplinary–transdisciplinary approaches. (B) From the point of view of Traditional History: 1) an emphasis on narration, 2) a preponderance of ethnocentric history, 3) a positivist conception of the historian's work, 4) an emphasis on the factual level of reality, especially on political and military developments, on the lives and acts of 'big men', 5) a depreciation of the 'connaissance procédurale', ie, of developing critical historical thinking in contrast to transmitting a corpus of knowledge to the pupils.

In addition to the above considerations, supported by Content Analysis, one might also use qualitative research, focusing on specific points, such as, for example:

- a) the writers' underestimation or total neglect of the destructive consequences of the Industrial Revolution and the European Neo-Imperialism (Marketos 2008)
- b) the presentation of the minorities, which were created after the 1st World War, as the main obstacle ("fateful" sic!) for peace (Koliopoulos et al 2008: 86)
- c) the helplessly arrogant –in a multicultural world– presentation of pre-1939 Europe as 'the centre of international developments: the cradle and the nurse of the cultural and political streams which dominated in the world-wide scene' (Koliopoulos et al 2008: 109).

A special reference should be made to the representation of Greek classical antiquity. There is no doubt that it is promoted as the basis of the European and, by extension, of the Western civilisation, if not of the global too, having the Hellenistic and Greek-Roman culture, the Slavs' conversion to Christianity and the Greek scholars' contribution to Renaissance and Humanism as their main connecting links. The constantly reappearing view of the Greek nation's model as 'the barbarians breakwater' and Europe's 'native land' does not cause surprise (Kokkinos, 2003, pp. 52, 54-55).

The same view takes on racist obsession dimensions on the level of some Greek school textbooks. The following abstract, ignorant of history, but included in the subject of Modern Greek Language (Expression-Composition) (Tsolakis, 2004-5, p. 254), as an exercise for the pupils of the third class of Lyceum, constitutes a typical example of the above view: "There is no doubt that the Messiah cult has to do with the theocracy and the feudalism of the West, which, however, did not affect the ancient Greek spirit that remained untouched by such influences. Can you explain this phenomenon? Which is the power (Greek conquest) that the Greek nation opposes to the Messiah cult, the theocracy and the despotism of the East? The following texts [...] will help you". (For the conceptions indicated in such a quotation and the relative objections, see Said, 1996).

The belief in the supremacy and the longevity of the Greek nation and civilisation reappears in the brand-new books, written under the auspices of the new Cross-curricula (C.I.C.S.). The two following abstracts (Glentis et al, 2006, pp. 19, 126 respectively) confirm this— The Greeks:

1. Found themselves enslaved for the first time to a foreign conqueror.
Preserved their language, their religion, their manners and customs.
'Conquered their conquerors' through their literacy and arts.
Cooperated and created the 'Greek-Roman' civilisation'.
2. '[After the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453] many Byzantine scholars found refuge in Italy, where they brought with them manuscripts of ancient texts. Thus, they passed the torch of the ancient and Byzantine tradition to the West. The most important thing of the Byzantine education, during the empire's lifespan, is that it was not restricted to the boundaries of the state. It surpassed its boundaries and brought light and benefits to the near-by peoples and to the whole Universe. And this is its grander offer to the humanity' [sic].

From such quotations one can get a glimpse of the ideas, which restrict helplessly the possibility of altering, enhancing and enriching the views and horizons of the Greek school history, especially from a genuine world perspective.

To sum up, we have reached the conclusion that the element of nation-centricity remains undoubtedly prevalent in the syllabus and the curricula of the Greek school history, as defined by the Pedagogical Institute. Furthermore, a comparatively satisfactory percentage of teaching hours has been kept for the history of the West culture, more in the secondary than in the primary education. References to Eastern, Mediterranean and Balkan people and cultures are limited; they appear occasionally, either in favor or opposed to the historical course of the Greek nation¹⁶. World history, as it is presented in the first part of this article, is either absent or underestimated.

Moreover, in Greek school history there are only a few references to World history, having to do with the pre-historical period of the human race, the ancient civilisations of China and India, the First and Second World War, the period between the two World Wars, the establishment of the United Nations Organisation (U.N.) and the Cold War. However, even in these cases, it is under question whether the approach is World or West-centered. In fact, in Greek school history, focuses on the good fortune of the Greek nation, that things happened there first and, secondly, in the West. Under no circumstances does the Greek school history have to do with developments taking place in the global scene. Finally, we have to underline the fact that the Greek school history has been constructed and approached in such a way that leaves no space for different concerns, angles or approaches pre-supposed by a truly World history.

Conclusions

Taking into account all the elements mentioned above, we should underline the fact that the concept of universality in the syllabus, the curricula and the history books used in the Greek primary and secondary education, is either absent or inadequately approached.

The centralism of the Greek education system effectively shrinks the time used for the study of the non-nation-centered and the non-West-centered history. This is because the Pedagogical Institute (P.I.) is legally responsible for the curricula, Teaching Instructions and other special circulars—of defining in detail:

- 1) issues connected to the production of a school history textbook (content, basic principles)
- 2) the didactic aims of the units
- 3) the syllabus and the assigned topics for the examinations
- 4) the indicated 'teaching improvements'¹⁷.

¹⁶ Similar observations, having to do with nation-centricity, the fragmentary or inadequate approach of the 'Others' history, as well as the view of the Greek nation's continuity, have already been made by Petridis-Zografaki (2002: 493).

¹⁷ The unanimous approval of K. Katsimanis' suggestion by the members of the P.I. is characteristic and revealing of the blatantly interventional role of the said sector. According to his proposal, a committee's duty (of the P.I.) in order to evaluate school textbooks is to examine: "1) which chapters or parts of chapters are ailing so as not to be taught, 2) which points are diminished or hushed up in the textbook in order to be observed and underlined, 3) which points are characterised by scientific inaccuracy or partiality so as not to be brought up, 4) which points (or pages, etc.) are significant but vague in order to be made clear" (decision 34/16-10-1990, see Mavroskoufis, 1997: 290).

Therefore, even if there are numerous pages concerning issues of World, or simply non-Greek and West-centered, interest in the available school textbooks, which is not usually the case, they remain unutilised in the teaching procedure.

Consequently, we are faced with an anti-reform movement. The formula is already known. The innovative elements, so far as they exist, for example the new book for the Sixth Class of the Elementary School written by Maria Repoussi and her colleagues (2006), was nevertheless finally 'withdrawn'. Such books are not categorically turned down. Instead, they are either indirectly excluded, since they are not utilised in the teaching procedure,¹⁸ or deprived of their original aims and meaning. The latent ideological-political priorities combined with the utilitarian approach of school historical learning, and of the school education in general, act selectively and decisively to reproduce the dominant model of historical learning, irrespective of the quality of what is being learned and how it is learned.

The traditional subject of History in the primary and secondary education, despite the criticism of it, is characterised by cohesion and pragmatism. It connects teacher-centered narration, the guided dialogue with the one and only textbook, which is regarded as a 'Gospel'. In addition, it combines the strictly limited syllabus and the assigned units for examinations so that they and the evaluation methods can be easily memorised. As a result, the teacher is directed to ask a limited range of commonplace questions and so is, released from further investigations, worries or demands, which might possibly cause difficulties, frictions and embarrassing reactions. Finally, it associates the popular factual-positivistic and nation-centered approach of the historical past with the explicit or latent advocacy of the curricula (Repoussi, 2004, p. 226).

Actually the whole process, as described above, overrules any innovative element found in the new curricula and even in the new history textbooks, meant to apply the basic New-History methodological approaches. Referring to teacher training courses taking place all over the country, one detects the contradiction in theoretical approaches presenting New History—as applied in history didactics and respective model lessons presented by the trainers—and the general awareness of the difficulty of practicing such methods in the context of curricula and textbooks predominated by national, political and military history. More important, curricula and educational authorities do not seem to take into consideration the reality of a multinational audience of school classrooms in a country where almost 10 per cent (estimation based on 2001 census) of the population consists of immigrants coming from several—mostly neighboring—countries. Also, the lack of systematic and well structured initial and in service teacher training as well as the lack of an active History Teachers' Association deprives history teachers of a constant and reliable epistemological, pedagogical and historiographical updating of information. Therefore, the inertia and resistance or indifference towards new trends, such as the teaching of World history and the renewal of methodology, can be somehow explained as a kind of "ignored ignorance" (Kokkinos-Sakka-Trantas, 2007) of the up-to-date orientations in History Teaching.

¹⁸ The removal of significant material from the syllabus having to do with issues of global interest and being included in the Skoulatos-Dimakopoulos-Kondis' books for the third class of Lyceum is a typical example.

Referring to public perceptions of History, the influence of Mass Media focusing on 'controversial' topics such as the one provoked by the new history book in the 6th grade of the primary school (Repoussi et al, 2006) is based on distortion, ignorance and half-truth, as well as the fear of losing a solid identity in a constantly changing world. This encourages the average person to resist shifts from nation-centered history to a wider or global perspective. An 'ideological turn' to new forms of nationalism is supported not only by the far right, as one might expect, but also by far left political groups and influential people. They follow, although from different perspectives, conspiracy theories, which imply the threat of globalisation and the idea of a universal misperceived 'postmodern cosmopolitan' pattern and theory of school history as an international 'melting pot' of identities and personalities. Therefore, they encourage individual and civic resistance to obscure manipulative forces, which aim to turn people to subjects; whilst erasing the core of their substance, that is national identity. In spite of the surprising interest in historical novels, history books and books concerning the theory of History and History didactics, as well as an interest in history in the cinema (for example, in medieval and ancient history ¹⁹, as well as the ever popular 20th century deconstructive, films such as Clint Eastwood's approaches) people's perspective does not really change when referring to the issue of national history. History sells, but usually the product is of poor quality. Public uses of History, national holidays, commemorations, monuments, newspaper articles or debates, in fact contradict the overall picture, while intellectuals and the academic world are not in tune with public opinion and popular history. School history is stuck in between, more keen to follow the painless beaten track (Sakka, 2007).

However, the above mentioned model does not correspond to the profound orientation needs of the members of the modern multi-cultural society, which is threatened by identity politics, terrorism, the new poverty, infectious diseases, symbolic wars, nuclear and ecological destruction. On the contrary, the preservation of this model reveals a provincial form of xenophobia, a form of historical consciousness, which vacillates between traditional goals, malfunctions, inertia and the inflexibilities of the Greek educational system. The same model is mostly responsible for the inanity of the school history. Consequently, we are faced with a mostly anachronistic net, with multi-levelled branches and safety valves, capable of invalidating the modernistic elements each time. The views of most instructors and pupils underestimating the need of the World history study, cannot escape from this net. (Kokkinos–Athanasiadis–Vouri et al, 2005, pp. 81-83, 165) ²⁰.

¹⁹ See the success in terms of national and global audience of films such as '300' presenting old fashioned super-heroes facing evil, representing contemporary affairs leading to easy associations/connotations. And as Sam Wineburg (2003: 307) points out, "the images students carry with them come from places quite distant from the classroom—from the media, from popular culture, from the church and the home".

²⁰ The research in question had to do only with the Primary Education; but things hardly differ in the High School (Secondary Education).

To make matters worse, under these circumstances both the school subject and the discipline of History are downgraded, since false impressions are created and obsolete views or wrong expectations are preserved. In other words, the prestige of the school historical learning, in terms of education, is undermined, as it is neither connected with the wider historical questions in a global level nor with the modern epistemological and pedagogical orientations. For all these reasons, we might conclude that the Greek school history, in its current state, contributes neither to the formation of globally informed and responsible citizens nor to the construction of an open historical culture and consciousness demanded by the modern or, should you prefer, postmodern times.

Unfortunately, it seems as Greek society's prevalent historical perceptions and history education are being pinned down in the first two stages of Jörn Rüsen typology of historical conscience: the traditional and the paradigmatic one. We are prisoners of nationalism plus a mentality looking for a history with a capital 'H', a history seen as a 'magistra vitae' but in a narrow, unworldly sense.

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Knowledge, skills and dispositions: educating history teachers in a divided society

Alan McCully and Alison Montgomery

Abstract—*This paper addresses the challenges of educating teachers during the initial teacher education phase to teach history in a society which is emerging from a sustained period of violent communal conflict. Briefly, it draws attention to the reluctance of many educators in Northern Ireland to engage directly in potentially sensitive cultural and political debate, and to previous obstacles encountered when introducing controversial issues to student teachers. The paper then outlines the strengths and limitations of history teachers' responses to teaching history in a divided society to date. It focuses on one initiative, which encourages student history teachers to acknowledge the influence that their own backgrounds may have on how they view, and, subsequently, teach about the past. From an analysis of the qualitative data collected, the authors identify a range of knowledge, skills and dispositions required by teachers to address issues relating to a post-conflict environment.*

Key Words—*Teacher education, history education, post-conflict, values, controversial issues.*

The challenge of teaching history in contested societies

Experts in the field of education and conflict recognise that teaching history in conflict and post-conflict situations presents special challenges (Smith and Vaux, 2003; Cole, 2007). One key reason for this is that history is so closely tied to emotional identity and collective belonging. Deeply divided societies are often characterised by 'identity politics' and experience violence and human rights abuses. In Northern Ireland (NI) the 'dominant' narratives of the Unionist and Nationalist communities, respectively, are prominent through symbolism such as wall murals and commemorative marches. In turn, these narratives frame exclusive cultural identities that are used by each community to justify contemporary political positions (Walker, 1996). Those who formally study and teach about the past, are not exempt from these informal encounters with representations of history. Here we are entering the realms of historical consciousness; 'the area in which collective memory, the writing of history and other modes of shaping images of the past in the public mind merge' (quoted in Seixas, 2006, p.10).

The response of history teaching in NI to conflict deserves to be recognised. By focusing on an enquiry-based, evidence-led, multi-perspective approach, a consensus has been achieved, enabling a common statutory history curriculum to be taught in all schools within the province's segregated education system (Phillips et al., 1999). While this is a considerable achievement in such a contested society, where history is frequently used for political purposes, obstacles have also been encountered. Research indicates

that teachers are reluctant to address the more sensitive aspects of the past (Conway, 2003; McCombe, 2006; Kitson, 2007). They have tended to 'hide' behind a mask of professional neutrality by portraying themselves as neutral arbiters of evidence. Thus there is a danger of restricting their students' exploration of sensitive issues to their historical context, rather than examining, explicitly, their significance for the situation today:

Fundamentally teachers differed in the emphasis they placed on history's intrinsic and extrinsic purposes and the extent to which they were prepared to be explicit in challenging misconceptions, tackling controversial issues and relating the past to the present.

(Kitson, 2007)

Here Kitson is referring to Slater's 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' purposes of history teaching (Slater, 1995, pp.125-6). The former are those aims that are inherent in the subject discipline. The latter are the 'broader educational aims', focused on influencing society. Kitson's findings support an earlier hypothesis put forward by McCully (1998) that tension exists in NI between history teachers who may be prepared to engage in innovative practice provided it remains within the intrinsic framework, and those 'risk-takers' whose teaching seeks to influence social change (Kitson and McCully, 2005). It is the contention here that the former suppress that emotional dimension in themselves, and their students, which is so much a part of the partisan histories students encounter on the streets. Unless emotions are addressed, there is a danger that cognitive understanding alone, will not impact on young people's thinking and values beyond the classroom.

Working with Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students

The avoidance of potentially sensitive cultural and political issues has been a coping strategy for people in NI during the 'Troubles' and in their aftermath. This capacity to deflect dealing with difference and conflict is well documented (Gallagher 2004, pp.128-129; Arlow 2004, p.264; Morrow, Eyben and Wilson 2003, pp.165-166). Gallagher calls it the 'social grammar' of silence, avoidance and politeness. Understandably, teachers, too, are products of a divided society and, therefore, are not immune to its pressures.

Evidence shows that the student teacher constituency in NI has proved resistant to the more direct aspects of work in the community relations field (Fulton and Gallagher 1996, Siberry and Kearns 2005). Work with student teachers in our own institution in the late 1990s (Montgomery and McCully, 2000) illustrates the hazards of raising sensitive issues, and the importance of adhering to sound principles of practice. The words of one student who protested, 'the (workshop) session appeared to be an attempt to call my values into question – my values are the values I will cherish and keep' (Montgomery and McCully 2000, p.63), encapsulate how emotional reactions, arising from entrenched beliefs, can act as a barrier to constructive dialogue. Ashton and Gregoire-Gill (2003) acknowledge that negative emotions can curtail attempts to develop cognitive thinking

in young teachers. Yet they argue that emotion and cognition are inseparable and that previous efforts to effect belief change in student teachers have been too dominated by purely cognitive approaches. Referencing Chinn and Brewer's idea of 'deep processing' (Chinn and Brewer, 1993) they argue that conditions should be created whereby students are exposed to personally relevant information that contradicts their beliefs and then should be required to justify their responses to others. From the resulting discomfort, both positive and negative, emotions come in to play. These become the 'energizers of intellectual activity' which leads to a more fundamental examination of value positions.

Therefore, an intervention was sought to enable student history teachers to engage directly with the emotional dimension of their learning; and, through that, to acknowledge the possible influence of their respective biographies on the way they teach about the past. In effect, could a strategy be identified that would force students to step off their emerging professional pedestal to enable them to encounter the raw and emotive reactions to historical events that might replicate the experiences of their pupils in the classroom? The implication is that experiential teacher education is an essential pre-requisite if teachers are to contribute to the transformative process within post-conflict societies. As Weldon (2005, p.1) asserts from working with practitioners on the reformed history curriculum in South Africa:

If we are to embrace this values-driven curriculum and develop in learners a respect for human dignity, equality and social justice, then teachers need to develop these same values first and use them to transform their classrooms and teaching.

The initiative featured below was conducted with student teachers drawn largely from the two dominant communities in NI*. Even amongst those educators committed to cross community intervention, there has been tension between those placing an emphasis on establishing commonality and building personal relationships in such mixed groups, and those who have insisted that progress can only be made when group identities are fully recognised and challenged. Research conducted by Hewstone (2003, p.353) informs this work. He found that inter-group conflict can be reduced by bringing together individuals from opposing groups (in NI, Protestants and Catholics) under specific conditions, involving both inter-personal and inter-group contact. Intergroup conflict is most likely to be resolved where individuals, in the contact situation, are prepared to acknowledge and display their respective cultural identities. Initially, to overcome the 'high anxiety and fear threat' (Hewstone 2003, p. 353), the experience should foster inter-personal co-operation, and be perceived to have a common goal. Once in contact, the fostering of self-disclosure and perspective-taking of 'the other's position' are key mediating factors in challenging stereotypes and developing trust. Thus, contact works best over an extended period when there is a positive combination of inter-personal friendship and inter-group exchange.

The Intervention

The intervention was inspired by a project conducted by the education departments of McGill University and the Université de Montreal in Quebec. Tutors undertook a field-trip to Grosse Ile, the point of entry to Canada for Irish emigrants escaping from the Famine, to explore the cultural perceptions of Anglophone and Francophone student teachers and their relationship with each other. For the Northern Irish initiative, three consecutive year groups of Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) history students from a range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (numbering between 14 and 17 students each year, 46 in total), went on a field-trip to two sites associated with the year 1916. They visited Kilmainham Gaol, in Dublin, Republic of Ireland and, on the following day, the Somme Centre, in Co. Down, Northern Ireland. The Republican leaders of the Easter Rising were executed at Kilmainham. The Somme Centre commemorates the role of Irish soldiers in World War I with a particular focus on the contribution of the 36th Ulster Division at the battle of the Somme. Both events have special significance for Nationalists and Unionists in Ireland, being viewed as 'blood sacrifices' to the cause of their respective communities. Each has been represented, extensively, in contemporary wall murals and songs during, and after the NI conflict, with the intention of inspiring their communities to action.

Student engagement was two-fold. At the level of practice, participants were asked to critique the sites as potential venues for curriculum-based field-work; places that they might consider taking pupils in the future. At a reflective level they were asked to explore their personal and professional values and the impact these might have on their teaching. The sites were chosen because they were believed to offer experiences that would generate emotional responses, facilitate 'deep processing' and cause students to question unconscious assumptions.

The conditions prevailing within the groups were consistent with Hewstone's contact principles. The visits took place half-way through the PGCE programme. Each group had already spent much time together and engaged in considerable collaborative learning. Trust was evident in the manner in which individuals interacted. Cultural background and difference had been acknowledged at different times during the previous months on the programme. Also, the sites offered students insight into their own and 'the other's' dominant narratives.

Methodology

The qualitative data collected drew on student voices to evaluate the field-trip experience as a potential strategy for preparing to teach sensitive history. It was collected in three ways. First, on each visit with the three year groups, a researcher acting as an observer and recorder, took notes on the content, structure and presentation of the sites' exhibits, the guides' commentary and students' responses as they walked around. These notes then formed the basis for an in-depth reflection and discussion facilitated by the tutor immediately following the visit. Then, in the week following the visits, the 46 participating students, (across the three years), were asked to submit an entry to an online discussion forum by responding to this stimulus, provided by the tutor:

I'd like each person to add a reflective piece on the field trip experience. Can you respond at two levels? Firstly, from the perspective of the teacher. Were the sites valuable as venues? How effectively did they interpret the past? How would you use them? Secondly, from a more personal perspective; What did the visits mean to you? Emotions? Deepened Understanding? In the context of your own upbringing and background?

Students were also required to respond online to at least one entry of their colleagues. Finally, each year, the researcher convened a representative focus group of five to six people, selected by random, stratified sampling taking into account gender and cultural background, shortly after the visits, to further explore issues raised during the online discussion.

Employing a combination of research methods over a short period directly following the visits, enabled the researchers to explore students' perspectives from different angles and while the experience was still fresh in their minds. The discussion group convened at the end of the site visits captured students' very immediate reactions, allowing them to articulate and share personal and in some cases quite emotional experiences with peers. The online discussion forum, set up in the week following the site visits, recorded more reflective pieces from students when they had had time to consider and in some cases further investigate what they had seen and heard. Finally, the focus group facilitated a more in-depth exploration of students' experiences. Also, since it was convened some weeks after the visits, it provided evidence of the impact of the experience in the longer term and the manner in which student teachers were assimilating this as part of their overall professional development.

Taking ethical issues into consideration, students were advised in advance of the site visits, that the tutor and researcher were conducting a study of their field-trip experiences. They were assured that their contribution to the research was voluntary and that their responses would not be included if they choose not to participate. Students were also assured that any contributions they made would remain anonymous.

Findings

From feedback given during the visits, and in online and face-to-face discussions, it was clear that the sites had been successful in awakening the emotions of the participant groups. This was especially so at Kilmainham. Several students used the term *'emotional'* to describe the visit. One talked of being *'overwhelmed by the atmosphere'* and another that the *'the smell and feel made it (the visit) worthwhile'*. Phrases ranging from *'eerie... scary'* to *'disturbing ...uncomfortable'* to *'romantic'* were used to describe different aspects of the gaol tour. For the great majority of student teachers, irrespective of background, the gaol made a significant impact as indicated by their reactions; it was in the view of one *'very memorable and moving'* and another felt it *'left an indelible print on my mind'*.

Understandably, the Somme Centre, an interpretative exhibit rather than the actual site of the event, did not quite evoke the same reactions. For instance, one participant perceptively commented that the emotional equivalent of the gaol experience might be instead, *'if we were walking the fields of the Somme we would have had a real shiver down the spine moment'*. Nevertheless, several were moved by some of the artefacts and stories. One student talked of having *'a sense of anticipation and panic'*, another of being *'nearly in tears'* and another referred to its stories as *'heartbreaking'*.

When the data were analysed collectively, four categories of response were identified. These were viewed as being on a continuum from those that were largely cognitive to those that were increasingly empathetic in their response:

- The Professional Stance
- Personal Resonances
- Challenge and Affirmation
- Transformative Understanding.

The allocation of students' responses to each of the four categories does not imply any criticism or judgement of students' responses. It is intended rather, to enhance the reader's understanding of the nature of students' engagement with each historical site. It is also important to note that students' responses did not always fall neatly into just one category. Every student offered a response from the *'teacher's'* perspective and where they then proffered additional comments, these were assigned to the second, third and fourth categories, or indeed any combination of these.

The Professional Stance

There were students who concentrated mainly on the questions which addressed what they perceived as being within the professional realm of the history teacher: issues pertaining to the pragmatic concerns of learning, teaching and the organisation of field visits. So, for example, one restricted her comments to her own teacher competence:

Both sites presented their history in very different ways. I felt the Somme centre was more user-friendly and that very little subject knowledge would have been required to get to grips with the information.

Another valued the sites according to their appeal to young people:

As venues to make field-trips... The Somme would win this hands down. If we look at Kilmainham..., yes it was my favourite, but the jail would be less of an attraction to young people.

Many students simply commented on the *'impact'* the visits could have on pupils, in *'bringing history almost alive'* and supporting the teacher by *'giving them another perspective'*, *'speaking to their imagination'*, *'developing their empathy'* and *'leaving them with enduring memories.'*

As indicated above, every student made comments from a professional stance. In each year, there were several students, six in total, who did not engage in further reflection, preferring to remain within the domain of educational practice rather risking any encroachment on their own values.

Personal Resonances

For others, the sites succeeded in triggering personal family associations. For one young man a link was established through his grandfather:

I really enjoyed visiting Kilmainham Jail because it dealt largely with the Easter Rising and key individuals from it. I really loved this topic at school as my great grandfather was part of the Free State Army.

(Male, Nationalist background)

Another participant made connections through the sacrifice of her great grandfather:

I felt much more for the Easter Rising participants than I thought I would. However, having a family history involved in the Somme (my great grandfather fought there and lost his three brothers) made the Somme Centre more intriguing for me.

(Female, Unionist background)

In both instances family involvement was an important stimulus to historical interest. In a third case, the family association went beyond curiosity and affirmation. At a personal level, this individual experienced the challenge that historical investigation can pose to one's family's prevailing value system; in this case, its nationalist associations were challenged by the uncomfortable knowledge that a descendant had died fighting for the British army:

My great grandfather died at the Somme and it was a 'dirty' family secret never discussed. I found out about it by chance because I found his medal when I was about 10.

(Female, Nationalist background)

This sensitive disclosure, made at an early stage in the online discussion, set a marker for others, signalling that it was appropriate to share more personal thoughts and insights.

Challenge and Affirmation

There were those for whom the visit initiated a reassessment of their views on their own community's position. The final comment quoted in the previous section indicates that the field-trip was helping the participant to place the history of her own family within its community perspective. Later, she pursued this, first by drawing attention to a museum on

display associated with a topic she often found missing in her community's master narrative, the role of Cumann na mBan, the female wing of the militant Republican movement:

I was impressed by the introduction of some of the artefacts of Cuman na mBan which is, for me, a forgotten history ...

(Female, Nationalist background)

Going further, she disclosed that the republican material exhibited at Kilmainham had caused her to re-examine the impact of that republican narrative itself:

...the bitterness between the treaty and anti-treaty side. All in all, it left me with a greater understanding of conflict, bitterness but above all, I never mind what the British have done to us? What have we done to ourselves and continue to do?

(Female, Nationalist background)

For the tutor, this type of comment is reassuring. It suggests success in that deeply held community perspectives are being challenged. However, initially at least, it can be more disconcerting when the experience appears to re-affirm existing community positions, or indeed, awakens or re-awakens community identity, as is the case in the response below:

I found the Church Remembrance lists at the end of the tour very moving as it shows the impact on the small community. It even made me stop and look at the Roll of Honour at the back of my church the Sunday after.

(Female, Unionist background)

And yet, this comment, too, indicates that the field-trip was helping this student teacher to connect her historical learning to her own upbringing and the past suffering of ordinary people in her community as a consequence of war. Her reaction appears to correspond to Barton and Levstik's vision of 'caring' through historical learning, Such learning 'invites us to care with, and about, people in the past, to be concerned with what happened to them and how they experienced their lives' (Barton and Levstik, 2004, pp. 207-208). From caring comes the motivation to study the past. As the authors perceive it, it establishes an emotional connection with stories of the past, 'the mechanism for rendering history meaningful' (p.241). Crucially, through caring comes the possibility 'to change our beliefs or behaviours in the present based on what we have learned from our study of the past' (p. 229). This 'empathy as caring' is a potentially important tool in breaking down emotional barriers in contested societies, especially so if 'caring' can be identified with the experience of the 'other'.

There was another even more jarring comment re-affirming a student's connection with his own community. Yet with reflection this too demonstrates that the field-trip

was fulfilling its remit. The student was reacting to a wall plaque at the Somme Centre containing contemporary text, detailing one eminent Englishman's response in the immediate aftermath of the Somme attack: 'I am not an Ulsterman, but yesterday, the first day of July, as I followed their a.m. attack I felt I would rather be an Ulsterman than anything else in the world'.

I felt very strange at this point. I would consider myself the least patriotic person but when I read this I felt really proud of the sacrifice made and the esteem in which men were held. Maybe, despite our efforts we cannot get away from national identity and patriotism.

(Male, Unionist background)

Through a realisation of the unexpected emotional association embodied in the comment above, it is likely that this student teacher will be more aware of his potential for unconscious partiality in the classroom. He is also better prepared to understand the challenge posed by teaching pupils for whom the 'blood sacrifice' of the Somme is of deep community significance.

Transformative Understanding

Thus, there is evidence that the intervention encouraged ITE students to examine popular interpretations of the past in their own community. However, it was also the intention to deepen their understanding of the other community's position. One indicator of this was considered to be how far students could process the concept of 'blood sacrifice' and recognise it as a common phenomenon, arising from both the Easter Rising and Somme experiences. Certainly, there was a desire amongst participants from different backgrounds to explore common ground. Most were comfortable in seeing the legacy of the First World War as something that deserved to be shared:

After all 'we' did come together for a common cause – maybe this should be emphasised more in schools – just a shame it didn't last!

(Female, Unionist background)

An interesting online discussion ensued from this on the Somme Centre Guide's use of 'we' in the context of history and to whether he was referring exclusively to Ulstermen, or to all those Irishmen who fought in the war.

I found it endearing too (Guide's use of 'we') and I am from a nationalist background ...It dealt with the fact that Irish were involved in the war also and could help students make sense of the common misconception that it is a British war.

(Male, Nationalist background)

There is a sense here that this respondent is both reclaiming participation in the war for his own community (which many within it might shun), but also acknowledging that history is enriched when individuals identify directly with key events. One discordant note was sounded in this online exchange however in relation to commonality, signalling a warning for those who, too cosily, seek to foster a common identity through history:

Whilst I understand that they wish to concentrate on the achievements of the soldiers from the island of Ireland, it was not a battle that they fought exclusively

(Male, English background)

Coming from outside NI, this student clearly felt somewhat excluded by the Somme Centre's focus on Ireland's contribution to the war to the detriment of a broader interpretation of the event.

As regards transferring the idea of 'blood sacrifice' across the cultural barrier, the extract below gives grounds for optimism, not least because it suggests that this student's vision of affective history teaching was expanded by the Kilmainham visit:

Rather than just seeing them as names that I needed to learn for an exam (those executed at Easter, 1916), it became more about the motivation... the blood sacrifice and the gravitas associated with it was made obvious to me... when we went down the back steps and into the courtyard and the tall walls that surrounded it I was thinking if I had been taken out there it would have been the last time I'd see the sky.

(Female, Unionist background)

Again 'caring' appears to be the catalyst for triggering greater cognitive understanding.

The initiative, then, sought to engage participants in meta-cognitive thinking, encouraging them to process emotions engendered by the field-trip visits. The two comments below are not indicative of all students' responses but they do reveal the potential for exposing student teachers to emotive contexts:

I was surprised how much my views were changed by the visits, especially regarding the 1916 rising. Coming from a Controlled (de facto Protestant) educational background I have to be honest and say that the Easter rising was a topic that was addressed but never studied in depth and I had never really considered the men who fought as 'real men'. They were always in my head, simple part of a chain of events which led to partition: not real people, fighting for what they believed was a very real and genuine cause, and certainly not husbands, fathers sons and brothers.

(Female, Unionist background)

This suggests that the understanding gained from previous historical study has been significantly enriched by the insight acquired through engaging with personal stories. The assertion that such experiences perhaps can transform the value base from which a young teacher operates, is encapsulated below:

The visit to Kilmainham really challenged me. I have to admit I had some inbred feelings ...I realised how much historical events like this get distorted as a result of the current political situation. My views of the Easter Rising were totally tainted by my opinions on the situation in NI and, I guess, this was the lens I used to view the past. But Kilmainham really shattered that lens.

(Female, Unionist background)

Impact on Teaching?

We cannot know from this study whether or not the impact of the visit will actually influence classroom practice. As the findings indicate, it seems reasonable to assume that the young woman quoted immediately above is unlikely to view the Easter Rising in quite the same way when she next encounters it with her pupils. Her own understanding of the event and its resonances has been deepened by the experience and one would expect this to reflect in how she approaches the topic with pupils. Also, her comment indicates that her own 'challenge' will give her a greater feel for possible obstacles in the way of their learning.

In the focus group interviews students were asked to describe how the field-trip might influence their teaching about the events of 1916. The reference in the comment below to being 'removed' from normal study captures a general view that the circumstances of the field-trip has caused at least some individuals to re-assess their previous interpretations of the two events:

It removed it from normal study, like in my school where it is a Protestant and Catholic thing... the subtleties of the thing were brought out like the pro versus anti treatyites... just on how comrades could turn on each other and that this is still there in Ireland... it was no longer Prods and Catholics... it was just that people couldn't agree... still this goes on... came home feeling very ignorant about history and needing to know more...

(Focus group comment)

A key outcome of learning in contested environments must be that history does not provide simple answers. Only when teachers comprehend this complexity can they develop that understanding in pupils, especially in segregated schools where the range of peer responses may be restricted. The field visits helped these trainee teachers deepen their subject knowledge and understanding of how history is processed in day-to-day life. It was encouraging, too, that a number of students contrasted the experiential

learning experiences of the field-trip with what they had observed in classrooms. They recognised that more might be done to confront the formal/community history interface:

I think as schools we are failing. The school I was in on Teaching Practice I felt I was being pushed. The teacher said, "No, I'm not having Red Hands of Ulster"... it's up to me as a teacher not to be partisan or to take a one-sided view...we need to learn more ourselves... it's important that children know that opinions need to change...

(Focus group comment)

Conclusion: Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

The field visits, then, appear to have had a significant impact on many of those who took part. But how do the findings illuminate our general understanding as to the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to teach history effectively in a society emerging from conflict?

First, history teachers must have a sound grasp of the cognitive underpinnings of the enquiry approach to teaching their subject and thus be able to induct students in evidence handling skills and in making judgments as to the efficacy of different interpretations.

Second, it is transparent that teaching history effectively in any context is enhanced by a deep and nuanced knowledge of the topic under scrutiny. In the case of divided societies, it is particularly important to make conceptual connections between internal events and similar situations in other places. In the example above, it was the 'blood sacrifice' that provided the link for comparative study and reflection.

Third, it is also crucial that teachers immerse themselves in the human aspects of past, contentious events. During the visit to Kilmainham gaol, several students from a Unionist background remarked on how they had been moved by the James Plunkett/Grace Gifford story which followed in the wake of the rising:

It was an eye-opener for me, because it humanised it. I went home and told my parents about how Plunkett got married the night of his execution... how she went home a widow and went into a shop to buy herself a marriage ring... the next day Plunkett's marriage and death were recorded in the same 'Deaths and Marriages' column.

This is an excellent example of what Barton and Levstik mean by motivating student learning through the 'caring' aspect of history. It is not unreasonable to expect that this teacher will utilise this story with pupils in years to come.

Finally, this work provides insight into appropriate teacher dispositions. It supports the proposition that teachers will not be able to teach sensitive history effectively until they have first recognised the role of emotion in their own learning and, in the process,

confronted the potential impact of personal values and identity on their teaching. It is envisaged that teachers who emerge from experiential learning initiatives, such as those illustrated in this study, are those who:

- take risks by making connections between past and present and by fielding and challenging strong reactions in the classroom
- view history as the pursuit of truth but not necessarily the provider of 'the truth'
- are comfortable with complexity and uncertainty and foster this in students
- regard history as a discursive process where 'perspectives' and 'interpretations' are debated and de-constructed.

These history teachers will have the capacity to facilitate pupils' effective engagement with sensitive and controversial issues and to contribute positively to a society that is slowly in transformation toward a more just and peaceful future.

* Individual students are described here as being from a Nationalist or Unionist background. These terms indicate their broad cultural and religious origins (ie Nationalist /Catholic - Unionist/Protestant) and do not necessarily reflect the students' political or religious standpoints.

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For us it was very much made our own... how beginning teachers develop collaborative creativity online

Alison Messer

Abstract—*It is now common for beginning teachers to have access to virtual learning environments during their initial education course, and there is a rapidly growing body of research seeking to examine their online interactions. This paper examines the way in which beginning teachers (BTs) develop their social presence in online to work collaboratively whilst on placement. Does this kind of collaboration matter? Is it a form of collaborative creativity? Qualitative analysis, based on a questionnaire, a focus group interview and selected online discussion, was used to examine how BTs used the virtual learning environment (VLE) on placement to develop collaborative activities within a community of practice such as problem solving, knowledge construction, resource development and identity formation. Results suggest that some BTs value this type of online community, though the costs and benefits of their participation are not clear. Findings also suggest some patterns of participation might promote more little 'c' creative online collaboration from some participants, but the evidence for this is limited. The issues raised by this enquiry are significant as we seek to develop in BTs 'a commitment to collaboration and co-operative working' and 'a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation' (new standards for QTS 6 and 8).*

Key Words—*Beginning Teacher (BT), Communities of Practice, Creativity, e-Learning, e-mentoring, Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Mentoring, Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), Social Presence, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)*

Introduction

The Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course at the centre of this study is an intensive 36-week route into teaching, including 12 weeks in university and placements in two contrasting schools. When I completed a PGCE in 1980 the time spent on placement was exciting, but it was also isolating and intimidating. It was impossible to share teaching materials or reflect on the day's developments with another Beginning Teacher (BT) unless they lived nearby and few did. Yet today's BTs are often 'digital natives' (Prensky, 2001), in daily contact online. Some BTs stay connected through a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) available throughout the course; where they join an online community that includes e-mentors, (teachers who qualified through the same course). It seems very likely that online connectedness helps to make a PGCE in 2008 a very different experience to those undertaken in 1980. Indeed, a BT commented last year 'But generally I think, online collaboration is just so common now, I think, as a teacher, as a student, personally I expect there to be something like that in place. I don't think anyone coming onto a PGCE, especially someone about to embark on a teaching career... *I think there's an expectation that there is a tool available for online*

collaboration. I don't think it's a 'Nice to have' any more. I think you have to have it' (my italics). The new standards for government accreditation of BTs, Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) established in 2007 support this BT's claim, as we are urged in Initial Teacher Education (ITE), by the government, to develop in BTs 'a commitment to collaboration and co-operative working' and 'a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation' (QTS 6 and 8). The context of this enquiry, then, is the expectation on the part of BTs and the government that PGCE courses will include some form of online collaboration. This means that PGCE tutors, usually 'digital immigrants', (Prensky, 2001), need to understand a way of working that may be in marked contrast to our own early experiences.

There is a fast-growing body of research into e-learning that can inform our understanding, and this account draws firstly on the idea of 'social presence' (Rourke et al, 1999). In 1980 any discussion about school placements and teaching materials had to take place face to face. If BTs involve themselves in online discussion now, they need to be able to 'project themselves socially and affectively [online] into a community of inquiry', creating 'social presence' (Rourke et al., 1999). Rourke et al. (1999, p.7) argue that it is possible to observe social presence, recognised through three broad types of contribution to online discussion: 'interactive responses... affective responses ...and cohesive responses...'. They suggest that where these types of response are frequent, the learning environment is 'warm and collegial...' and that this 'supports students in the otherwise risky act of posting their tentative ideas...' (Rourke et al. 1999, p. 9). Thus the initial questions are: how are beginning teachers (BTs) at my university developing their 'social presence' online? Can we see it developing through observation of online discussion?

Rourke et al (1999, p.15) go further and suggest that: 'Although we postulate that fairly high levels of social presence are necessary to support deep and meaningful learning, we expect that there is an optimal level above which too much social presence may be detrimental.' In this context then, we need to look for evidence of BTs working together as well as getting to know and support each other. Is there evidence that BTs collaborate online whilst on placement? This account seeks to draw on elements of Wenger's (1998) indicators of collaborative learning within a community of practice to address this question. If collaboration can be found, it would also be interesting to know if it was 'creative' (QTS 8). In this study the focus is on four broad categories of collaborative 'little c' creative activity (Craft et al., 2001): problem solving, resource development, knowledge construction and identity formation. These are four creative activities that, it could be argued, are important elements in the development of all beginning teachers.

Methods

The Secondary PGCE programme at the university in the study has been developing the VLE since 2004; in 'a self-reflective spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting'. In previous cycles the tracking tools provided by the VLE software had shown that different subject groups used the VLE in very different ways, but the quantitative data gleaned by this method did not explain why group behaviour varied, or

examine the nature of BT interactions. In the cycle examined here (2006-7), e-mentors, BTs and colleagues have reflected on the use of the VLE in an attempt to improve our understanding of the online activity taking place. Without advice and support from all these participants, the research could not have been completed.

One hundred and thirty-four BTs (out of two hundred and twenty in the whole cohort) completed a questionnaire during the second placement. The questionnaire asked BTs about a range of online activities, from the use of email and search engines, to more specific questions about their use of the VLE. At the end of the course, BTs from four (out of ten) subject groups took part in a focus group interview designed to follow up issues raised by the questionnaire. In addition, selected online discussions from the History subject group were analysed. Originally, the intention had been to examine discussions from a range of subject groups, but for ethical reasons this had to be abandoned. BTs were asked for their consent after the discussions had taken place, and the focus group interviews indicated that some subject groups were uncomfortable with the idea that their comments were read by tutors and not just other BTs. The History group, on the other hand, was aware of the research focus from the start of the course and all fourteen participated. To ensure informed consent, some members of the History group were invited to work with e-mentors to select the discussions used for analysis, and discussions not chosen as significant by this group were discarded. There were 1,110 messages posted to discussion by BTs. The datum collected was analysed for evidence of social presence, collaborative processes, and creative activity. The coding table, Appendix 1, shows how these approaches were combined to identify four different types of collaborative process, differentiated by the focus (eg problem solving), discourse indicators (eg cohesive ties), content (eg problem identification) and pattern of participation (eg length of discussion thread and number of participants).

The data, covering a wide range of issues, was shared with colleagues. This paper is focussed on a qualitative analysis of selected data relevant to the research questions: how do beginning teachers (BTs) work collaboratively whilst on placement? In the next section the findings suggest that it is possible to identify useful, and arguably creative, collaborative discussions.

Findings

The findings are shown here in two sections. In the first section, an analysis of the selected discussion threads explains how problem solving, identity formation, resource development and knowledge construction were identified in online discussions. One discussion thread (a discussion where BTs respond to each other online) is examined in some detail.

In the second section, evidence from the questionnaire and focus group interview is used to explore how different types of online participation may affect the development of online collaboration.

Section One: Discussion analysis

Three BTs were asked to choose discussion threads for analysis, paired with e-mentors who were also school mentors. They chose threads in which they participated and also threads they considered significant but in which they had been observers only. It was suggested that they look for discussions that showed some evidence of joint problem solving, knowledge construction, resource development and identity formation. These categories were not explained to participants, resulting in each pair working with their own definition of what these terms might mean. It was interesting to note how these co-researchers defined their task. One e-mentor explained that she 'understood this task to mean deciding which threads were the most helpful for moving on the thinking of trainees...' Threads was a phrase used by Craft in 2001 (cited in Fautley et al., 2006 and originally based on work by Maynard and Furlong in the 1990s). She was confident in rejecting threads for analysis where she could not find evidence of 'moving on' in the thinking or practice of BTs. All the threads chosen for analysis in the study were selected by co-researchers as examples of online work or online learning, not just social networking or the development of social presence, however valuable that might be.

1. Problem solving

Problem-solving threads were characterised by 'the rapid flow of information and propagation of *innovation* (my italics)', and '*very quick* set up of the problem to be discussed,' (Wenger, 1998, pp. 125-6). They also had some of the discourse features that Rourke et al (1999) suggested were indicative of participants displaying 'social presence', including cohesive ties and interactive discussion where participants respond directly to one another.

The example examined here was created near to the end of the course. It was a request for help in planning an interview lesson and posted in a discussion area designed by BTs themselves. A full version is shown in appendix 2, with all names changed.

Sue announces that she has a job interview and will be observed teaching a lesson on 'an aspect of social history 1100-1450'. Sue replies to her own post with three quick questions, broadening the scope from topic selection (what topic should she teach?) to lesson planning (how do you structure a lesson only twenty five minutes long?). The early responses are full of cohesive ties to the original posting, respondent two replies '...erm...perhaps the Black death?...' and respondent 3 offers 'stuff on the Black Death. I'll mail it to u now, may help, just sift through it.' The next response launches straight into Sue's planning problem. 'For interviews that are 25 minutes I've been told to have a starter a main and a plenary. So a five minute starter, five minute explanation to task, 5-10 doing task and then 5 plenary, or something like that. ...'. This discussion is evidence of online collaboration as information and materials have been exchanged. The discussion does not end here, however.

The next respondent is more innovative, and redefines the planning problem, a classic example of little 'c' creativity, (Craft, Jeffrey and Leibling cited in Fautley et al., 2006). She suggests that Sue should consider what the conceptual focus of the lesson should be and whether some element of progression could be built in: 'Hi Sue, the stuff I've been doing on social history is on peasants' lives and violence - will try and post it now - has an evidence focus over four lessons (I know this is too much but may help get you thinking!) Kept meaning to post this anyway for people doing enquiry for assignment four although maybe I'm too late, its not that great but was my attempt to plan for progression in evidence skills...' She then attached to her message some materials based on an attempt to translate research by Ashby and Lee (2004) into a lesson sequence that she could analyse for an assignment due in six weeks.

Does this type of collaboration matter; and is it collaborative creativity? Sue got the job, and she argued that for her the VLE was "a lifeline" worth "checking every day", (focus group interview). Much more significant, arguably, was the process all the participants had gone through in their online discussion. It began with Sue's valuable online reflection, followed by responses about lesson topic and structure, and finally the focus on progression in children's learning, drawing on research. A discussion lasting only three days thus encapsulated the PGCE journey, from a starting point where BTs are typically concerned about subject knowledge and teaching as performance, to thinking about children's learning. The journey has been a collaborative one, including not only the BTs involved, but also school mentors ('I've been told to have a starter a main and a plenary') and the wider History teaching community (reflected in references to Ashby and Lee, 2004). This interpretation is supported by Rourke et al. (1999), who argued that 'Social presence supports cognitive objectives through its ability to instigate, sustain and support critical thinking in a community of learners'. It is suggested here that problem finding and problem solving (Craft, Jeffrey and Leibling cited in Fautley et al. 2006) shown in this online collaboration is a new way of dealing with old issues. Elliott and Calderhead (1993) suggested that 'novices personally developed cases ... are powerful influences on their learning'. Online discussion makes it possible for BTs to discuss their problems as they arise, and this may be why it matters to them.

2. Identity formation

The collaborative online problem solving just discussed appears to depend upon other discussions that build trust, an essential element in social presence. One participant in the focus group suggested 'We actually used the ...[VLE...] when we were on placement as a really good way actually of keeping in contact with people *you don't normally talk to* [my italics], for example on the course.' The implication is that the VLE offered a central but also safe place for work related discussion not dependent simply on friendship. 'I thought the internal emails were really good, because I was able to get in contact with e-mentors, people from last year's group, who were like: 'Don't freak out, this is exactly what happened, and we were emailing each other through that as everyone's email is on there, through WebCT... it was incredible, I find'. Some discussion

threads showed 'sustained mutual relationships... 'Shared ways of doing things together 'and' local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter' (Wenger, 1998, pp. 125-6). Discourse features included vocatives, inclusive pronouns, and affective language that, unlike the problem solving threads, emphasised recognition over advice. The sense of identification with each other, and willingness to share their sense of self is revealed in this message, where it is hard to tell whether 'you' in the text means Joanne, the respondent Alice, or anyone in the group: 'oh Joanne! sounds pretty tough! I can't offer much advice as I ... had a shocker today. But what I think is important to remember is not to take anything personally. You feel like a complete idiot when they are so rude to you, but inside you have to be laughing at it. (Just try to look like you are really angry!) I think you have to make sure they have something to get on with as soon as they enter (even if it is simply writing the title/aim) ...' Alice.

3. Resource development

Questionnaire responses suggested that most BTs exchanged resources online at some point. Resource development was also found in discussions, identified using Wenger's (1998) indicators, such as the use of 'specific tools, representations and other artifacts' and 'jargon and shortcuts to communication ...'. In practice this meant looking for attachments to discussion messages and the use of jargon terms such as 'ebi' (to improve the resource it would be even better if), and everyday terms with specific meanings in a History teaching context such as 'sources', 'interpretation', and 'historical account'. One discussion chosen by co researchers was an example of reification (Wenger, 1998); where one BT applied an approach to the development of evidential understanding from a Teaching History article to her own resource. Another BT responded to her message and attachment: 'Wow Gemma ...I can completely see how this would lend itself to interpretation as well.' ... I'll read the article and steal'. The participants collaborated creatively in this example, but significantly, other BTs said that they read other people's discussions when looking for insight into an unfamiliar topic or a difficult issue, (focus group interview, June 2007). Thus, a reflective process that is part and parcel of resource development, applying ideas from reading to a lesson sequence, had been modelled for BTs who were not discussion participants.

4. Knowledge construction

Participation in a VLE is often a required element in undergraduate courses, and sometimes assessed. The knowledge construction observed in the PGCE discussions in this study is very different, and more characteristic of a community of practice. In an academic setting, 'not knowing is largely construed as a personal deficit... [Whereas in a community of practice] ... it is more important to give and receive than to know everything oneself', (Wenger, 1998, p. 152). A crucial element noted in this study was a willingness to pose questions implying vulnerability. In this sense, the VLE was being subverted from its original commercial design, (tutor designed content and the testing of students on an established body of knowledge) into a community where students posed and (usually) answered their own questions. Discourse features included messages starting and ending

with questions, and responses suggesting agreement or disagreement. The threads allocated to this category were much longer than most other threads selected, and had the flavour of ongoing debate rather than the need to solve a problem in a hurry, or complete resource development for an imminent lesson. One co-researcher identified risk in placing too much weight upon discussion analysis out of a classroom context, however. Eventually, it would be interesting to develop an understanding of this area by asking BTs to reflect on the resources and strategies they used in the classroom in relation to online debates.

Section Two: What patterns of participation in the VLE are shown in the questionnaire and focus group data?

There were about 220 students in the whole PGCE cohort, and 134 answered a questionnaire about their use of the web during their PGCE year. Most BTs said that they did not normally collaborate with others online, but 41/134 claimed to collaborate with other trainees at least once a month and 35/134 claimed to collaborate online with experienced teachers such as mentors from an earlier placement, at least once a month. This collaboration was not always achieved through the use of the VLE, but 92/134 respondents said that they asked for help through the VLE at least once a month.

Ten BTs took part in a focus group interview at the end of the year. The interview contained invaluable evidence of negative cases, BTs who could explain why they preferred to collaborate offline and groups that hated the VLE technology. This gave it particular value as 'contradictory evidence' (Robson, 2002, pp. 168). As the representatives of four subject groups discussed the issues raised by the questionnaire in the focus group differences in experiences and perceptions emerged. The comments made have been used here to identify patterns of participation that may possibly make a difference to the development of online collaborative creativity, though further discussion of this data is needed. Collaborative creativity is defined here as collaborative activity with little 'c' creativity characteristics (based on Littleton and Miell, 2004).

Flash!

As most interview participants made very clear, the software used for the VLE was very 'clunky', time consuming and difficult to use. This meant that to post to discussion, or attach a resource to a message meant involved considerable investment of time and patience that many BTs under pressure simply did not have, 'because you are so busy doing other things, to put a resource up on WebCT that you have already used and you are finished with it, you have better things to be doing with your time, to be putting a resource up for someone that they might possibly use...'

In a conference presentation for ESCalate in 2006, Chris Hopkins suggested the term 'flash' student, for the contributor willing and able to make such an initial investment, posting a message or resource that motivates other participants to respond. It seems likely that for collaborative creativity to develop there must be some contributors of this

type. Initially, I think Hopkins was suggesting that these contributions were most likely to be from more able or creative BTs. Interestingly, a participant in the focus group interview viewed this differently, arguing that for resource development to become collaborative it needed to be supported by a significant group of BTs: 'it sounds like in other subjects, you actually worked more collaboratively, and got over this whole notion of 'well I don't care what people think about my stuff, I'll put it there anyway because it might be useful, ... But I think it's an all or nothing. Either you have all got to do it, or nobody does it. And I think we had a little try, didn't we ... in the second term, and had a little bit of blitz, but then it all sort of fizzled away. And even in that little blitz, if we're honest, there were probably only 5 or 6 people that made an effort to put stuff there. And that's not enough' (focus group interview, June 2007).

It might be useful to conceptualise the 'flash' participant instead as one who lights up the VLE, rather than having to be particularly 'bright'. This means that, maybe, with a 'commitment to collaborative working' (mentioned in the new standards for QTS), a range of BTs could spark discussion, reaching the critical collaborative mass suggested by the comment above.

Frequent fliers

If we are to use the term collaborative creativity, there must be evidence of work done involving more than one participant. In 3 of the subjects surveyed more than 70% of BTs accessed personal email every day. One participant (not history) said: "well yes, we communicate via the internet A LOT together when we are out on our placements, but we didn't use [the VLE] WebCT for it." They may not have needed to VLE to facilitate collaborative problem solving. Nevertheless, members of subject groups using the VLE more were also more inclined to describe themselves as collaborating in the questionnaire and the focus group interview. So what was going on within the VLE? Comments in the focus group interview suggest that most discussion threads and resource exchanges depended not only on a spark but a group of people (frequent fliers) prepared to log in every day and respond quickly, particularly if the message was a request for help or if the resource posted had involved a big investment. In the focus group interview the following exchange (about VLE limitations) makes it clear that without a commitment to access discussion regularly it can fail BTs:

1st participant ... there is no guarantee of an answer if you ask something, and you might be desperate for an answer...

2nd ...So what would you do then if you were desperate and didn't get an answer? Would you then resort to?

1st: ...Have to resort to phone calls... or tears... (General laughter).

The history group responses to the questionnaire stood out in two ways. Two respondents said they rarely used personal email but all respondents said they used email within the VLE. Questionnaire responses suggest at least 25% of the group made weekly contributions to discussion; and tracking tools support this showing that most BTs on

average posted at least once a week and some 2-3 times; so perhaps joint problem-solving within a useful time frame was more likely for this group. To constitute 'rapid flow', a response time of a few hours (or at most days) would need to develop. One history focus group contributor said: "I checked it every night, during school, to see because we had different sections like 'help I need an idea in a hurry' so you could just reply back to each other, to help each other out if other people have already done this and you haven't, or just generally..." Again, however, it seems likely that a range of BTs could fulfil the frequent flyer role, and indeed, having sparked a discussion, BTs became frequent fliers as they checked back for responses and suggestions.

Productive lurker

The third role is that of the productive lurker (Messer, 2006). These are BTs who participate less often in discussion and so, unlike 'frequent fliers'; they are invisible to other BTs. Yet they are using the ideas of others outlined in discussion and download, use and adapt materials created by others. All subject groups who responded to the questionnaire had BTs who did this, and two groups (neither History) had BTs who claimed that they were using adapted versions of other BT materials daily. Their invisibility is an issue, however. If participants log in and see no sign of activity, they assume there is no community with which to interact and may not return. If they do not see how 'productive lurkers' adapt and use the ideas sparked by others, they may remain unaware that this process is occurring in the work of other BTs. Flash participants may also retreat from participation without feedback. In one subject group, where BTs decided to conduct their discussions primarily on Facebook or Myspace, the VLE was still considered useful for resource exchange: 'I uploaded a PowerPoint on how to thread up a sewing machine, and everyone found that... I kept on getting emails: 'Thank you so much for putting that up there, that really really helped, I used it in my lesson, this lesson, that lesson!' So loads of people did actually access it and use it... I even had a teacher commenting on it, through someone, through another school, or something, and it got back to me that they had seen it, and I was like 'how did you see it? (Surprised tone), well, it was on WebCT, and they had got it from there'.

Eavesdropper

Data analysis in this study also suggests that there may be two other important roles not identified previously. Firstly, there is the eavesdropper (a tutor or researcher who watches but does not appear to contribute and may even be seen by some BTs as a threat). But is it reasonable for BTs to expect their tutors to be involved? Is it part of the tutor's role to make 'productive lurking' visible in some way, for example by archiving material to make it easier to find, and so add value to the collaborative process? Will eavesdropping become an activity BTs indulge in? These questions remain open and unanswered by the evidence collected this year.

The focus group interview suggests another type of eavesdropper: **the time traveller** (an e-mentor or perhaps even a BT who contributes reflections on developments over time within discussion and VLE email). Other articles on the value of a VLE to History BTs have suggested that they are simply too busy to make much use of it. But it seems that in this case study, there are BTs prepared to re-visit discussions, and e-mentors prepared to visit the VLE after their course has been completed. These participants reflect on the processes they see developing online, and feed these reflections into discussion, commenting on how perceptions change, and even posting amended and developed resources to the VLE. This role has probably great potential for supporting BTs in developing the VLE, so that they can, as one History participant suggested, feel that "it was very much made our own". (focus group interview 2007).

Conclusions

It seems that some BTs are willing to collaborate online, and that participation in a VLE can contribute to the development of an online community of practice, where 'knowing what others know, what they can do, how they can contribute', has value (Wenger, 1998, p. 125). What underpinned the willingness of some groups in this study to overcome the counter-intuitive aspects of the VLE software (when others collaborated elsewhere)? It may be explained by the willingness of some participants to play significant roles, sparking discussion, responding quickly, and then shaping the VLE according to their needs, skills and dispositions in a manner more characteristic of Web 2.0, "for us as a group, it was really made our own", (focus group interview). It is possible that there needs to be explicit negotiation of tutor, e-mentor and BT roles, so that experienced participants play the role of reflective time travellers rather than eavesdroppers.

It is possible to claim that online collaboration does have some role to play in initial teacher education: '...I don't think it's a 'Nice to have' any more. I think you have to have it.' Some BTs in this study, even with the most insightful and supportive school mentors, appeared to value it as a 'lifeline'. But what kind of collaboration do BTs need to have? Rourke et al's. work shows that social presence can provide a foundation for learning but BTs under pressure to perform need online collaboration that helps them to solve teaching problems, create better resources, develop their understanding of learning, and explore what teaching means to them. In other words, they need collaboration that supports them in their work, in what they are doing and making, and not just their social lives. But does it matter if some participants appear to take without giving? Does it matter if someone takes a resource or an idea, develops it and then claims it as his or her own? These questions have yet to be answered, but they arose directly out of discussion with colleagues about the interpretation of collaborative creativity posed here.

Craft (2006) argued that creativity does not have to be seen as an individualistic pursuit but can involve engagement with the ideas and experiences of others. In this context, that might mean tutors modelling the role of the frequent flier by admiring the sparks of the flash participant, making public the make do and mend activities of the productive

lurkers, and encouraging participants to reflect on their learning as time passes. In the process, a creative learning environment may then be made out of a virtual one.

There is an opportunity to explore what might make online collaboration creative, so that ‘the successful intellectual achievements of one person arouse the intellectual passions and enthusiasms of others, and through the fact that what was at first expressed only by one individual becomes a common intellectual possession instead of fading away into isolation’ (John –Steiner interview, 1985, cited in Azmitia, 1994).

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Appendix Coding Table

Category Community of practice indicators? (Wenger 1998)	Discourse indicators? <i>Based loosely on social presence analysis</i> Rourke et al, 2001	Content indicators? <i>Little c creativity and P creativity</i> Craft and Boden (cited in Fautley and Savage, 2007, p.99)	Selected threads	E mentor/ BT reflections
Problem solving Wenger indicators 3, 5 ... quick set up and rapid flow	Cohesive ties Interactive: responding directly	Identification of problems as well as problem solving (Craft, 2006, p. 99) Way of coping with everyday challenges... (Craft, 2006, p. 99)	Aspect of social history Year 9 <u>More than 10 turns</u>	[Pair 1] (BT3)
Identity formation Wenger 1, 2, 8, 11 Sustained and shared...stories... mutually defining	Vocatives/ Inclusive pronouns Affective inc Phatics Emotion/ Humour	Active and intentional taking of action (Craft) Self disclosure/ Worries, fears... Eureka moments?/ Inside jokes?	Aaaaaahhhhhh Alternatives to SMART software <u>More than 10 participants and many turns</u>	(BT3) (Pair 2)
Resource development Wenger 10, 12 Tools... jargon	Jargon terms used as short cuts to describe activities	P creativity (Boden, cited in Fautley and Savage p. 99) eg Attachments/ Teaching activities described within responses that... Involve innovation (Craft, 2006, p. 99)	Children’s crusade sources Y12 overview <u>Later threads: fruits?</u>	(Pair 1)
Knowledge construction Wenger 7,9,14 e.g. assessing actions... sharing perspectives	Questions especially at start and end of messages Interactive: agreeing or disagreeing	References to research and sources of information in such a way that they... Involve a ‘moving on’ Craft, 2006, p. 99	Sorry if this rocks the boat Empire and slave trade <u>Less than 10 participants, long time span</u>	[Pair 2] [BT3]

Teaching History as historiography: engaging narrative diversity in the curriculum

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Abstract—During the decade of the Howard conservative government in Australia, history curriculum became positioned as a vehicle for social cohesion and cultural reproduction. Rejecting the ‘postmodern’ and ‘relativist’ history curriculum reforms of the early 1990s, the conservatives proclaimed that Australia’s past had been rewritten during the decade prior to their own government in the service of a partisan political cause. Regularly collapsing important distinctions between multiculturalism, political correctness, and postmodernism, these conservative politicians and their allied social commentators read all forms of contemporary social theory as ideologically-loaded, while their own historical narratives are proposed as ‘common-sense’. In this paper, drawing upon recent work in historiography, I rethink the ‘problem’ of narrative diversity in the curriculum. Proposing a historiographic approach to the teaching of history, I argue that relativism is not the inevitable conclusion of teaching rival historical narratives. Rather, I argue that through teaching history as historiography, a space is opened within the curriculum for a ‘critical pluralism’ that pedagogically engages with narrative diversity.

Keywords—Australian history, Constructivism, Curriculum Reform, Deconstruction, Historiography, History Curriculum, History from below, Historiography, Multiculturalism, Narrative, Narrative—grand or master narrative, New History, Pluralism, Political correctness, Postmodernism, Relativism, Representation, Social history, Whiteness, Women’s history.

Introduction

Australia is recently under new political management, but the legacy of a decade of conservatism has placed in doubt the nation’s will to pluralism. Since the early days of the conservative Howard federal government in the mid 1990s, conservative politicians, sympathetic journalists and social commentators, engaged in a series of sporadic attacks upon the teaching of the nation’s past, made clear their commitment to using school curriculum as a vehicle of social cohesion and cultural reproduction. Supported by the ‘politics of concern’ peddled by the right-wing educationalist, Kevin Donnelly, and reactionary historian and social critic, Keith Windshuttle, the Howard government challenged what they saw as attempts by their predecessor government to rewrite ‘the nation’s past in the service of a partisan political cause’. These sorties against ‘politically correct’ curriculum by the Howard government intensified towards the end of their term of office, and culminated in two important acts, the then Prime Minister’s call for a ‘root and branch renewal’ of the teaching of Australian history in his 2006 Australia Day speech (Howard, 2006); and his Minister for Education, Science and Training’s call for a national summit to rethink the teaching of Australian history in schools (Bishop, 2006).

The terms of reference for this summit included exploring possibilities for a narrative approach to the teaching of the nation’s past (Melleuish, 2006), and considerations for the reintroduction of History as a mandatory stand-alone subject in all states and territories (Taylor & Clark, 2006), the majority of which had moved to an integrated social studies curriculum. Coupled with the adoption of Blainey’s ‘black armband history’ rhetoric from a decade earlier, the current moves towards a ‘normative’ and ‘narrative approach’ to teaching history (Melleuish, 2006), arguably veil distrust of narrative diversity, and embody a reactionary desire to ‘return’ to a single grand narrative of the nation.

In polemic fashion, one of the main tactics of these conservative politicians and social commentators has been to collapse important distinctions between multiculturalism, pluralism, political correctness, and postmodernism, suggesting to the public that all forms of contemporary social theory and practice are confusing and ideologically-loaded (see for example Slattery 2005), while their own ‘grand narratives’ are offered as ‘common-sense’ (see Apple, 2001, for an analysis of the New Right’s ‘common sense’ tactics in the United States). In this paper, drawing upon important recent work in historiography, and exploring History curriculum change in New South Wales (NSW) as an illustrative example, I rethink the ‘problem’ of narrative diversity in the curriculum. Arguing that relativism is not the inevitable conclusion of teaching rival historical narratives, I propose a historiographic approach to the teaching of history that, by providing a curricular space for ‘critical pluralism’, pedagogically engages narrative diversity. Central to the argument presented in this paper then, is an attempt to explore, as a central problematic, the question of how we might maintain narrative diversity and a socially critical curriculum, without dooming our students to a pessimistic view of the nation’s past.

The death and return of ‘history’

It has been well documented that from the 1960s onwards, a range of critical interpretations of Australian history have emerged that challenge the enduring myths of peaceful settlement and benign progress (Clark, 2003). In New South Wales (NSW), the case I will use as an illustrative example in this paper, it was not until the early 1990s that the so-called ‘New History’ (Osborne & Mandle, 1982) impacted significantly on History education, and curriculum took a decidedly more political turn. This political turn involved ‘changing the subject’ of school History (Parkes, 2007), through the incorporation of the perspectives of women and Australia’s Indigenous peoples into the teaching of Australian history. Organised around five focus questions that attended to issues of Australian identity, heritage, Australia’s international relationships, women’s experience, and Indigenous perspectives, the 1992 NSW Years 7-10 History Syllabus was significant in its incorporation of social histories of, and more importantly from, the perspective of women and Australia’s Indigenous peoples, perspectives that had been historically sidelined; and its framing of these histories as legitimate alternatives to the master-narratives of ‘famous men’ and ‘pioneering settlement’.

Arguably, it was the civil rights and social reform movements of the sixties, and the equity policy context of the late seventies and early eighties, that included the publication of policies such as: Girls, school and society in 1975; Towards non-sexist education in 1979; the Multi-cultural education policy statement and guidelines also in 1979; and the Aboriginal education policy in 1982, that provided the conditions in which a radical history syllabus in 1992 was made possible. Influenced by a growing social conscience constituted in part by the discourses of feminism, neo-Marxism, and multiculturalism, not we should note, 'postmodernism' per se, 'history from below' had at the time become an increasingly appealing option over more totalizing approaches to history in the academy (Perry, 2002). With their emphasis upon "the lives of ordinary people" rather than the study of elites (MacRaild & Taylor, 2004), the 'new histories' made their way into the curriculum of the early 1990s, while leaving behind the Feminist and Marxist theory and scholarship that had produced them.

While the interjection of women's history into the curriculum undoubtedly followed the success of Feminism in influencing education policy in the late sixties and early seventies, public awareness of a distinctive Aboriginal perspective on Australian history appears to have arisen partly as a result of a series of grass roots protests that culminated in a 'day of mourning' during the Bicentennial celebrations of 1988 (Reed, 2004). For many Australians, the call for a 'day of mourning' by Indigenous elders at the time of the Bicentennial provided an important catalyst for reflection on the nation's past, and challenged the "Great Australian Silence" around Indigenous history (Biskup, 1982), that had been sustained by an Anglo-Australian myth that "the destruction of Aboriginal society in the face of colonising forces [was] inevitable ... [and] also complete" (Macdonald, 2001, p. 176). The High Court's Mabo decision, which, translated into practical terms, meant that Indigenous people had a right to dominion over their traditional lands, and that this situation demanded recognition within Australia's political and legal institutions (Ritter & Flanagan, 2003), pushed these issues further into the public consciousness. Further, the Mabo decision (and the Wik decision that followed in 1996) had important consequences for Australian history in particular and Australian society more generally. For, as Attwood (1996) has argued:

Mabo and the new Australian history ends the historical silence about the Aboriginal pre-colonial and colonial past upon which the conservative invention of Australia and Australianness was founded, and since their Australia was realised through and rests upon that conventional historical narrative, the end of this history constitutes for them the end of Australia.

(p. 116)

It was this 'end of history' that so unmistakably emerges in the 1992 Syllabus, and that made it unpopular with conservative politicians, and some 'traditional' historians.

The white backlash against 'black armband' history

Igniting a series of heated and highly public 'history wars' (Macintyre & Clark, 2003), the popular Australian historian Geoffrey Blainey (1993b) had, during an important public lecture in the April of 1993, and shortly after in an article in the conservative journal *Quadrant* (Blainey, 1993a), argued that the Australian nation's collective memory was under siege from a 'black armband' view of history. In short, Blainey (1993b) was concerned that a 'mournful view' of the nation's past was being promoted by the Keating left-wing Labor government, influenced by the writings of revisionist historians such as Henry Reynolds (1982). Blainey's (1993a) argument was that the 'balance sheet' of the past did not warrant an excessive focus on past wrongs, and that to do so was not only inaccurate, but promoted a mournful relationship with the past that harmed the national spirit. Although Blainey's protest did not go unnoticed, it was not until three years later, when the newly elected Prime Minister, John Howard, borrowed the phrase that Blainey's metaphors of the 'balance sheet' and 'black armband' view of history entered into the national lexicon (Warhaft, 1993).

Blainey's criticism of the representation and teaching of Australian history, and desire for a return to what he called the 'three cheers view' of the national past, was shared by a host of journalists and commentators (see for example, McGuinness, 1994; Partington, 1987; Wilkins, 1994). Their attacks on the teaching of what they perceived to be an overly 'politically correct' view of the nation's past have been well documented (Clark, 2003; Henderson, 2005; Parkes, 2007). More recently, Donnelly and Windshuttle have led similar charges. Donnelly's (1997; 2004) broadsides against public education and state-based curricula have targeted what he considers to be a host of evils, including, but not limited to, 'political correctness', 'multiculturalism', the teaching of 'popular culture', and most importantly, the teaching of 'black armband' accounts of the colonisation of Australia, particularly those that depict White 'settlement' as an 'invasion'. His comments follow significant debate on the issue (see the essays in Land, 1994). Windshuttle's polemics, on the other hand, have not been directly aimed at school curricula (though there has been some discussion in the professional journals, see for example, Poad, 2003). Rather, his attacks have been sharply focused on the academy, particularly criticizing the dominance of French social theory on contemporary scholarship and teaching (Windshuttle, 1996), and more recently, proposing that revisionist accounts of Australian history that depict a frontier war with the country's Indigenous inhabitants amount to nothing less than a fabrication (Windshuttle, 2002). Needless to say, there has been significant debate both in support of (Dawson, 2004), and against his views (Manne, 2003; Ryan, 2001; Attwood 2005).

Arguably, the conservative reaction to multiculturalism, political correctness and narrative diversity in the curriculum, in part operates as a nostalgic yearning for an unproblematic 'White history' that has been 'naturalised' to the point of its conflation with 'reality'. It aims to capture a power-base among the White disenfranchised, who had experienced a succession of losses during the eighties, including less job security, traditional gender role

contestation, and territorial encroachment through increased non-white immigration. In this climate of perceived 'White disenfranchisement', the Wik and Mabo decisions, and the political spin that arose around them, suggesting that even suburban backyards could be under threat from Native Title claims, roused further concern. The recent emergence of global Islamist terrorism has been cause to heighten national security (Zakaria, 2001), and it is within this context that 'multiculturalism', and by default narrative diversity, came to be perceived as undesirable – at least for Howard and his sympathizers – a position that would have been unfathomable as a policy position during the seventies. Resultantly, for the New Right and their constituencies, pedagogical acknowledgement of alternative historical perspectives of both women and Indigenous Australians, given their destabilizing effects on the national mythology, is understood as an attack on Australian culture (Clark, 2004). Howard's Australia Day speech on 26th January 2006, that once again repeated his Blainey-inspired rhetoric of getting the balance of history right, argued that a sense of national unity, to be provided by a History curriculum that focused on a coherent (all-embracing) narrative, was essential in the fight against 'terror' (Howard, 2006). The National History Summit that followed Howard's proclamation to the nation should be read as a *sorti* against relativism and political correctness, and in realizing the neo-conservative vision of a singular national History. Yet, despite these curriculum wars having at their centre a concern for historical representation (particularly of the colonial past), it is precisely recognition of history as a 'form of representation' that remains absent from these debates.

Reconceptualising history as historiographic representation

Putting aside discussions about history education for a moment, I want to follow Yilmaz (2007), and suggest that in order to understand histories we must have a clear sense of the historiographic traditions from which they emerge. With this in mind, I will explore some of the insights about the nature of historical representation that can be gleaned from work in contemporary historiography. To do this work justice, rather than attempt to be comprehensive, I want to pursue one particular line in this body of scholarship that commences with Roland Barthes. In his essay, 'The discourse of history', Barthes (1967/1997) made his now famous pronouncement that historical discourse is in its essence a form of ideological elaboration. Barthes' skepticism about the truth-value of historical discourse did not come from the identification of 'biased content' in a particular narrative; the weighing up of one historical account (or narrative) against another; or the testing of a narrative against the evidence. For Barthes, the recognition of the 'ideological nature' of historical discourse emerged from an examination of the way in which historical narratives operate rhetorically. It is "the absence of any signs of the author in the text" (Kansteiner, 1993, p. 275) that helps to give the reader of an historical narrative the sense that what they are reading is fact rather than fiction. Resultantly, it was Barthes' argument that history was best understood not as a collection of facts, but as a literary genre.

Barthes' argument prefigured much that has since been articulated by scholars such as Hayden White (1973) at the level of rhetoric, and Frank Ankersmit (2001a) at the level of the statement. The ideas of Hayden White have had a mixed reception among historians (Spiegel, 1987). Like Barthes, White has been accused of seeing "historical narrative as intrinsically no different than fictional narrative, except in its pretense to objectivity and referentiality" (Ankersmit, 1998). Sometimes Hayden White has been quite explicit about this, though he denies that he is saying certain events didn't really happen (White, 2001). White's (1973) main argument seems to be that historical narratives are artefacts of an interpretive act constituted in part by an historian's aesthetic, epistemological and ethical commitments, and in part by the underlying tropic forms of language itself. Exploring the literary structure of the historical text, White (1978a) has advanced a sophisticated 'tropology' or poetic theory of historical discourse, which has proven important in the philosophy of history, and despite its clear structuralism (Domanska, 1998), has recently been championed by Jenkins (1995) and Munslow (1997), among others, as an important contribution to a postmodern approach to history. According to Hans Kellner (1980), Hayden White's work "represents an aggressive move to turn historical thought from a logical to a rhetorical form, and a defensive entrenchment against any counter-movement from rhetoric to logic" (p. 28).

Throughout his work, White argues that when historians begin the process of writing a history, they are predisposed to organize their insights in one of four modes, derived from and limited in choice by what he believes to be the tropic 'deep structure' of our 'figurative' (White, 1978c), or what Chartier (1997) has called "the historical imagination" (p. 29). White's scheme appears to synthesize and extend earlier schema developed by Vico (Ricoeur, 1983), and Mannheim and Pepper (White, 1973), among others. Hayden White put forward the theory that the four tropes of metaphor (representation), metonymy (reduction), synecdoche (integration), and irony (negation), prefigure the production of any historical narrative, and when combined with particular modes of argument (ideographic, organicist, mechanistic, contextualist), emplotment strategies (romance, comedy, tragedy, satire), and ideological commitments (anarchist, conservative, radical, liberal), constitute "the historiographical 'style' of a particular historian or philosopher of history" (White, 1978b). Further, he argues that in general, historical events can be emplotted in different ways, resulting in both divergent interpretations of, and the ascription of different meanings to, the same event (White, 1975). I think it can be safely said that this is usually considered Hayden White's most controversial claim. His point is not that particular events didn't happen, as we might see argued in the revisionist narratives of anti-Semitic holocaust-denying historians (see the discussion of Irving in R. J. Evans, 1997). Rather, White (1997) argues that there is no inherent meaning in an event, and that it is meaningful to us only after we give the event significance through our narrativisation of it. Therefore, it should not be surprising to find that Hayden White makes no claims for the ontological reality to which historical narratives refer. The historic past comes to us, in Hayden White's view, always 'mediated' by textual forms (Roth, 1995).

Chartier (1998) has indicated uneasiness about Hayden White's commitment to a semiological approach to the study of history texts that ignores questions about the text's "reliability as witness" to specific events (p. 38). Likewise, Lorenz (1998) has challenged White on the basis that his theory of history does not allow historical narratives to appeal to 'the evidence' in order to verify their truth claims, thus conflating history and fiction, projecting them "as two exemplars of the same species" (p. 329). There is, however, a clear difference in the process of producing (and for that matter 'reading') an historical account and a fictional novel, despite the presence of similar tropic structures. Adopting an aesthetic orientation towards history does not preclude such recognition. Indeed, according to Golob (1980), "Collingwood showed with great precision how evidence limited the formation of historical narrative and how it disciplined imagination" (p. 59). Thus, it should not be surprising to learn that the later White "allows that the data may resist representation in a given form and therefore require a different topological structure" (Nelson, 1980). Despite criticisms from a number of sources (Evans, 1997; Roth, 1995; Vann, 1998), Hayden White's work remains important for the attention it draws to rhetorical, topological, narratological, and ideological analyses of the content and form of history texts (Chartier, 1997); for the liberation of history from its insensitivity to "the modalities and figures of discourse" (Ricoeur, 1983); and for its central argument that "history is intrinsically historio-graphy . . . a literary artifact" (Holton, 1994).

A similar narrativist conception of history was also 'advanced' in the work of Louis Mink. Mink (1978/2001) argued that historical narrative was best understood as "an artifice, the product of individual imagination", that acted as a "cognitive instrument" whose function it was "not just to relate a succession of events but to body forth an ensemble of interrelationships of many different kinds as a single whole" (p. 218). Hans Kellner's (1989) assertion that "the straightness of any story is a rhetoric invention" makes a similar point (p. x). Together, these scholars can be taken as developing a particular historio-graphic view of history, in which the 'real events' of the past are seen to be organised by the structuring effects of the narrative form, having no inherent structure in themselves. This view is sometimes referred to as 'narrative impositivism'. It certainly has its critics, particularly among those who, like David Carr (1986; 2001), argue that life is lived as a narrative independent of a historian's attempts to write about it. However, it is difficult to argue against the suggestion that subject to the selective, ordering, re-contextualising strategies of the historian, the past becomes an object that we can 're-cognize' as history; and that without the 'gaze' of the historian, traces of the past remain fragments of memory, and not history.

Ankersmit (2001a) makes this problem clear in his example of "the Renaissance". 'The Renaissance' is a category that historians apply to a series of events that could have been ordered, described, selected, defined, periodised, or segregated in some other way (Jenkins, 2003). While 'the facts of the matter' may include reference to Leonardo Da Vinci, Michelangelo, and a host of other 'important' figures and their contributions to the intellectual and cultural life of their times, 'the narrative' of the Renaissance, which

furnishes these people and events with meaning, arises from particular interpretations of 'the facts'. Thus, a debate about what the Renaissance was or means, "is not a debate about the actual past but about narrative interpretations of the past" (Ankersmit, 2001b). Ankersmit (2001b) argues that "Interpretation is not translation. The past is not a text that has to be translated into narrative historiography; it has to be interpreted" (emphasis in the original, p. 237). Further, he asserts that "Narrative interpretations apply to the past, but do not correspond or refer to it (as statements do)" (emphasis in the original, p. 239). As "proposals", narrative interpretations of the past "may be useful, fruitful, or not, but cannot be either true or false", according to Ankersmit (2001b). This is because only an individual statement can be verified as true or false (Ankersmit, 2001b).

Quite powerfully, I think, Ankersmit (2001b) also argues that "a historical narrative is a historical narrative only insofar as the (metaphorical) meaning of the historical narrative in its totality transcends the (literal) meaning of the sum of its individual statements" (p. 243). Where this is not the case, the set of statements is probably better described, as Hayden White (1973) argues, by the term "chronicle". Ankersmit (2001a) asserts that "the ultimate challenge for both historical writing and the historian is not factual or ethical, but aesthetic" (p. 176). Viewed in this way, historical research only becomes 'history' as the traces of the past are given meaning within a narrative structure (a historiographic form). To quote Jenkins (1995), and his more radical conception of this historicizing phenomenon, "most historiography is the imposition of meaningful form onto a meaningless past" (p. 137).

In the preceding discussion, I explored a series of compelling arguments that history is an act of writing that transforms, rather than simply gathers, the traces of the past into a narrative text. Whether we are examining Barthes' (1967/1997) notion of the way the impersonal style of the historical narrative encourages us to read it as fact, White's (1973) argument for the prefigurative power of an historian's aesthetic, epistemological and ethical commitments, operating in conjunction with the underlying tropic forms of language itself; or Ankersmit's (2001a, 2001b) conception of the way the metaphorical meaning of an historical narrative transcends the literal meaning of the sum of its referential statements, the overall message must surely be that history is unavoidably "the texted past" (Denning, 1996, p. 42). Such an understanding of historical representation and narrative has important implications for History education, implications that are promising in terms of a curricular response to the 'problem' of narrative diversity in the curriculum.

Teaching history historiographically

Taking seriously the idea that history 'as we know it' is the transformation of the traces of the past into a narratively organized textual form, opens up the possibility for thinking differently about current debates over what should be taught within History curriculum. It means that we must understand the act of teaching and learning history, as one of engaging in interpretive acts, as we read the histories that are made available to us. Acknowledging and pedagogically emphasizing the interpretive act, or the practice

of 'reading', that is required if we are to engage with multiple histories, opens up the possibility for a transformative history pedagogy that does not automatically or inevitably result in a turn to relativism. That is, acceptance of the existence of multiple, and indeed rival narratives, does not in and of itself, doom us to indecision about which narratives are more likely to present an adequate representation of the past. Let me show this by exploring the three approaches to history teaching identified by Peter Seixas (2000), understood in the context of the historiographic work of Keith Jenkins and Alan Munslow (2004), and explored in relation to the idea of reading history historiographically.

According to Seixas' (2000), teachers may decide to present a single story as the best history we have available, perhaps because, as he notes elsewhere, this is the way they encounter history from historians (Seixas, 1999). He describes the approach of teaching 'the best story' as "enhancing collective memory" (Seixas, 2000, p. 20). In the historiographic work of Jenkins and Munslow (2004), this approach to teaching history would seem to correspond with a "reconstructionist" epistemology (p. 7), held by those few historians who still claim "to fair-mindedly discover the 'truthful interpretation' in the documents and write it up in an essentially unproblematic representation" (Munslow, 2003, p. 5, my emphasis). This is of course, the approach to history teaching that many conservative politicians would have all schools adopt, given it provides them with a sense of control over 'public memory'. The 2006 Australia Day speech of Australia's conservative Prime Minister John Howard, in which he called for a return to teaching history as a "structured narrative" informed by "the central currents of our nation's development" (Howard, 2006, p. 4), is unreserved in its support for a 'reconstructionist pedagogy' of 'collective memory'. At its' best, as Seixas (2000) suggests, it promises the possibility of group "identity, cohesion and social purpose" (p. 22), or in the themes of Howard's (2006) Australia Day tome, "social cohesion" and "national unity" (p. 4). At its worst, this approach is likely to manifest in a doctrinaire, nostalgic, nation-centric 'names and dates' pedagogy that has the potential to limit the development of more differentiated and sophisticated forms of 'historical consciousness' and 'historical literacy' (for some interesting work in this area see Rüsen, 2004; or Lee, 2005).

An alternative approach identified by Seixas (2000), and one that parallels in some ways the reforms of the early 1990s described earlier, involves presenting conflicting interpretations of the past to students, with a view to "reach[ing] conclusions about which is the better interpretation on the basis of [studying] a series of documents, historians' assessments, and other materials" (p. 20). In Jenkins and Munslow's (2004) heuristic, this approach would seem to be underpinned by a "constructionist" epistemology, held by historians who engage in "the study of the actions of people in groups" (p. 10), using "varying levels of social theory . . . to [form] more or less complex forms of explanatory conceptualisation" (p. 11). Constructionist historians use "concepts and theories such as race, class, gender, imperialism, nationalism" to make sense of 'the past' (Jenkins & Munslow, 2004, p. 11). According to Jenkins and Munslow (2004):

Constructionists accept that getting at the story is not simply assured by a detailed knowledge of the sources. . . (but that) knowing the truth of the past is still feasible in principle precisely because history is constructed through using the tools of sophisticated conceptualisation and social theory.

(p. 11, original emphasis)

Given the constructionist's confidence in developing relatively reliable histories from the evidence, this approach is likely to engage students in learning "disciplinary criteria for what makes good history" (Seixas, 2000, p. 20), assuming that one is seeking to determine which interpretation among alternatives is the 'best interpretation'. Although the 1992 Syllabus encouraged teachers to engage students in 'historical inquiry', and to look at the past from 'multiple perspectives' (underpinned by at least some understanding of social theory), the use of loaded words such as 'invasion' in place of the traditional, and perhaps equally loaded but seemingly benign, 'settlement', to describe British colonisation of Australia, showed a commitment to a 'constructionist pedagogy'. Arguably, it also demonstrated the intrusion of a pedagogy of 'collective memory'; albeit, one that operates as a pedagogy of 'counter-memory' that has the potential to replace one master-narrative with another, even if that new master-narrative originated 'from the margins'. Of course, the 1992 Syllabus did not preclude using different perspectives to push disciplined inquiry, but nor did it mandate such an approach.

The third and final approach to teaching history discussed by Seixas (2000), is oftentimes identified by its resistance towards any attempt to adjudicate between histories in terms of which story is the 'best interpretation', and aims instead to assist students "to understand how different groups organize the past into histories" (pp. 20-21), an approach that it is distinctly historiographic in orientation. This approach would seem to be based on what Jenkins and Munslow (2004) describe as a "deconstructionist" epistemology (p. 12). According to Jenkins and Munslow (2004), deconstructionist historians typically reject "the clear distinction between fact and fiction. . . and the idea that the appropriate use of social theory (concept and argument) can generate truthful statements (p. 12).

Committed to an anti-representationalist (though not necessarily anti-realist) position, deconstructionist historians often "explore the consequences of reversing the priority of content over form . . . experimenting with [new forms of] representation" (Jenkins & Munslow, 2004, p. 13). Understanding history as a representational practice invites recognition that different groups, and indeed different historians, have organised their histories differently, underscoring Wineburg's (2001) assertion that historical thinking is an "unnatural act" (p. 3). However, accepting that history is a thoroughly 'cultural-historical act' does not necessarily mean that we must consider all histories of equal merit. This in fact misrepresents the actual practice of historiographic scholarship, and the manner in which disciplines like History function, where methodological rules, themselves the product of a particular socio-historical milieu, assist 'readers' to adjudicate between rival historical representations.

.If we accept that all histories are coloured by their socio-historical circumstances, even highly 'empirical' histories (since they too are determined by what historical questions are, or are not asked; what evidence is collected, or is ignored) then systematic induction into ways of 'reading' history, perhaps drawn from literary theory such as those advocated by Dominick LaCapra (2000), become even more pressing. As Curthoys and Docker (2006) note, there is a particular quality of "doubleness" to history that prevents it from escaping either its sources or its representational forms (p. 11). Historiography assists us to work "in the space between history as rigorous scrutiny of sources and history as part of the world of literary forms" (Curthoys & Docker, 2006, p.11). It leads us to the realisation that "history is a method rather than a truth" (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 86). Embracing this insight into the way history functions means paying attention to how we read our sources, and how we read the historical narratives we encounter. It means understanding 'historical method' as a thoroughly hermeneutic or interpretive act. When history is understood as 'historical representation', engaging with histories historiographically becomes a tool to navigate through and between multiple and conflicting historical narratives. This historiographic move allows us to understand and appreciate, but also adjudicate between, rival historical narratives.

Conclusion

In taking on a historiographic approach to teaching History, two things become important. Firstly, we need to understand that historical representation emerges from within particular historiographic traditions (such as Feminism, Marxism, Social History, Intellectual History, Cultural History, etc.), and hence is marked 'historically' by the biases of those methodological traditions; and secondly, that our own acts of reading and interpretation are prejudiced by the methodological biases of the historiographic traditions we have been initiated into, and for that matter, our personal socio-historically situated experiences. Teaching history as historiography we come to understand what Foucault (1969/1972) has called 'the conditions of possibility' for any historical narrative we encounter. We come to know, at least potentially, what it was possible for this history to tell, and perhaps what it was impossible for it to tell. Further, like Falzon (1998), we come to realize that interpretation is not only historically shaped, but that it is also inevitable and unavoidable. We are unable not to pass judgment on the interpretations of the past we encounter, and we do this within the limits of our methodological prejudices. Where history pedagogy is able to emphasize the historiographic and hermeneutic dimensions of 'history' in this way, we are not left at the mercy of an uncritical relativism. Rather, there is potential for us to take a 'critical pluralist' stance towards history, in which we accept narrative diversity in the curriculum, recognizing the inevitable and almost endless proliferation of historical interpretations, but have the capacity to make value-judgements about the historical narratives we encounter.

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Fostering discussion through case studies in the history classroom: a case study of high school students

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Abstract—This article presents reads with a theoretical basis for teaching history via the case study and discussion method and discusses the results of research study of high school students' attitudes toward the case study and discussion method. The research study was conducted in a suburban community outside of Chicago, Illinois. A total of 40 students participated in the study. Two themes emerged from the data, 1) students' validation of their decision process and 2) students enjoy the alternative instruction of case studies and discussion. Currently, the use of case studies and the discussion method is one of several effective teaching strategies that can be used by history teachers as a means of learning in the classroom. This article attempts to encourage history teachers to use a variety of teaching techniques, specifically the case study and discussion methods.

Keywords—Alternative teaching techniques, Case Studies, Controversial issues, Decision-Making, Differentiated Instruction, Discussion, Pedagogy, Teaching History,

Introduction

Today, the use of case studies and the discussion method is one of several effective teaching strategies that can be used by history teachers as a means of learning in the classroom. Unfortunately, many teachers often neglect this method due to the lack of classroom control and comfort in students openly discussing and debating the issues at hand (Russell & Byford, 2006). Rather, teachers tend to use only one teaching style day after day, which denies students the opportunity of a variety of teaching techniques (Siler, 1998).

The purpose of this article is to encourage history teachers to use a variety of teaching techniques, specifically the case study and discussion methods. To do so, this article will present a theoretical basis for teaching history via the case study and discussion method and discuss the results of research study of high school students' attitudes toward the case study and discussion method.

Review of Literature

VanSledright (2004) explains, "the common preoccupation with having students commit one fact after another to memory based on history textbook recitations and lectures does little to build capacity to think historically" (p.233). The use of discussion, particularly clarification and analysis through discussion can be used to teach students to clarify and justify their opinions on public issues, literature and historical events. Hess (2001) suggested that teaching with discussion and allowing student feedback means improving student's ability to think. Furthermore, teaching with discussion enables students to develop an understanding of the issues, enhance critical thinking skills

and improve student's interpersonal skills. Previous research concludes that students have more interest in a topic when a variety of teaching methods were implemented; allowing students to engage in higher order thinking tasks, such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Bonwell & Eisen, 1991, Russell & Byford, 2006). Furthermore, Hoagland (2000) argues that using a constructivist approach (like case studies and discussion) will connect the content to the individual interests of the students thus increasing student interest in the content and actively engage students in the historical learning process.

Harwood and Hahn (1990) allude that analysing controversial topics is prevalent to history/ social studies for three reasons. First, analysing controversial issues discussion helps prepare students for future roles as citizens in a pluralistic society. Second, discussion and analyses of potential controversial public issues helps in the development of critical thinking skills, and third, analysing public issues helps to improve the interpersonal skills among students.

Building on previous research, the researchers interviewed high school students to gain answers to the following question: What are the attitudes of students who use case studies and discussion as a tool to help develop and build social skills and learn historical content? In answering this research questions, students were interviewed to gather information on the following related questions: A) How does the case study and discussion approaches differ from other approaches used in your history class? B) Do students see any relevance between the analogies used in class compared to their present and future lives? C) Some teachers suggest the textbook should be the only form of instruction. What would you say to them? D) Do you think using case studies and classroom discussions dealing with controversial material helps you in preparing for society?

Design of study

In order to capture the students' individual perceptions, the researcher chose to use a phenomenological research design to bracket, analyse and compare the essence of the phenomenon. According to Merriam (1998) in the conduct of a phenomenological study, the focus is on the essence or structure of an experience and the assumption that there is shared experience. The community in which the study was conducted is a suburban community located 35 miles from Chicago, Illinois. The high school services 1136 students of which 85% are white, 11% Hispanic, 2% African American, and 1% consider themselves multi-racial. The high school used throughout the research study was the only high school in the community.

Methods and sample selection

At the time of the study roughly two hundred and twelve students were enrolled in history courses. Based on the input of teachers at the school, the researchers decided to select four teachers specializing in emotional disorders. The researchers then randomly selected ten students from each of the four teachers to ensure representation. A total of forty students (22 male and 18 female) were selected using two-stage random sampling as described by Fraenkel and Wallen (1990).

For a period of one school year students were given fifteen case studies (For Example: See Appendix A). After reading each case study, students were asked to answer and discuss each situation for its authentic values, realism and application to their lives. Interviews were conducted in the spring. All names have been changed.

Research findings

The purpose of this study was to explore in depth, what affect case studies and discussion has on high school students in the development of social, life skills, analysis of issues, and historical content. With the research questions in mind, themes were developed from the frequency of data and participant feedback. As the bounded system was analysed, two dominant themes emerged. The first theme illustrated students' validation of their decision process. The second theme suggested that students enjoy the alternative instruction of case studies and discussion.

Validation of decision making

Thirty-three of the forty students believed a majority (twelve out of the fifteen case studies) allowed them to make their own decision and outcomes based on the evidence provided. Students described the case studies and discussions as interesting and often thought-provoking with an opportunity to investigate, formulate and defend their decisions. Chris, who thought for a moment, described the case studies as an opportunity to express his opinion.

When our teacher used the case studies, most of them were good. Our teacher used them sometimes before we started a new chapter or after a test. I guess I like them because it gives me a chance to come to my own conclusion without someone telling me I am right or wrong. I like the fact that I can help in determining the outcome.

Megan agreed and placed great emphasis on the increase role of the student in the decision-making process. She explains:

Mr. Moore gives us a chance to sit down and discuss the issues. Unlike other teachers I had in the past, we are basically in charge. I really like that everyone can come up with their own answer or solution. When it's time to discuss our decisions; each person can defend their opinion.

Students who solve problems through discussion, reading and writing are more likely to be engaged in higher order thinking compared to traditional text driven instruction. As a result, students are more inclined to learn material that would often be overlooked when presented in the form lecture and worksheets.

The Need for Additional Alternative Instruction

When high school students were asked how they felt about using case studies as a method to teach and discuss controversial issues, all of the respondents indicated a strong need for interesting material in addition to the textbook. Students expressed the importance of lecture and textbook, but how alternative instruction may produce the same information with better results. Adam explained it best when he said:

I understand it is important to have lectures and lots of writing assignments. I know it's important for college, but I think that teachers, especially here at this school forget that it is often boring. When I have the chance to do projects, group work and debates, I actually learn. It makes me look at different peoples' opinions and then come to a conclusion based on the evidence and material given. Doing the case study on immigration was fun. We had to develop our own immigration policy and then defend what we made. It was good, because we looked at other policies used throughout history to better make our policy work.

Emily supported the importance of using a variety of instruction when she said:

I just like it when my teachers change things up. Almost all of my history teachers now and in the past have lectured or simply told us to read the book. That works for a while, but gets really old. Sometimes the book is just boring. When we did the case studies, it made me think. I wasn't use to working in a group and being forced to come up with a solution. As we did more scenarios, it got easier to work in groups, but it also helped me better understand stuff talked about in the chapter.

Adam's and Erika's opinion, along with the others, reflects the belief that teachers often rely solely on text, lecturing, worksheets and traditional tests as methods of learning. The aforementioned techniques often encourage students to take a passive role in learning history. As well, these techniques often instill students with a negative attitude toward history, because it is viewed as boring and not relevant to their everyday lives.

Discussion

Students noticed importance in effective discussion among their peers. The case studies required the students to discuss the topic among their peers. In turn, the discussions allowed students to express themselves while investigating issues and situations relevant to their lives. Twenty-three students stated they enjoyed discussing the case studies and openly enjoyed hearing their peers' opinions. The students' opinions reflected Ehman's (1977) belief that the positive effects of discussion include the opportunity for students' wide range of views and beliefs to be heard by others. As a result, teachers expressed that a majority of their students, when given the opportunity to discuss issues and social situations in class, increased their civic awareness towards social, political and environmental issues.

Students were described as "feeling a part of society" and "having a chance to discuss important issues with the teacher in the classroom." It would seem that by allowing students to do so, would support Hess' (2001) argument that teaching with discussions and allowing student feedback means helping students improve their ability to think. Furthermore, teaching with discussion enables students to develop an understanding of a specific issue, enhance critical thinking skills and to improve interpersonal skills.

Designed to help students learn values and inquiry skills, the case studies were used to help high school students in the classroom. At times, students can have a difficult time relating consequences to their actions. Case studies help students see direct relationships and potential consequences of their immediate decisions. Case studies often help student's better see that impromptu decisions may lead to negative long term affects and thinking through their decisions often resulted in a desirable outcome.

Teachers in this study were required to follow the districts history scope and sequence and state curriculum standards. Since this research was designed and conducted using a qualitative method, quantitative methods on a larger magnitude should be encouraged. Although the researchers are comfortable with the facts and findings, the limitations of qualitative methods are recognized. A broad quantitative survey may further contribute to students' perceptions of this approach towards case studies and discussion. History teachers can create and develop case studies around issue that are relevant to whatever topic/s is being covered (See Appendix A to see how a case study could be set-up).

Having analysed the data, the researchers must emphasize the complexities of being a student. The success of being a student and a productive citizen relies not only on the students' teacher, but the community and school district. With this in mind, further studies about the method of case studies and discussion seem necessary.

Conclusion

In sum, the results of the study are promising and should encourage history teacher to foster discussion in the history classroom using case studies. The ability to make decision is often overlooked and neglected by history teachers, even though decision-making is considered the heart of social studies (history) education (Engle, 1960, 2003).

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Appendix A

Religious freedom

Suppose that you are a Justice (member) of the Court. How would you answer the complaint in each case, and why?

- A taxpayer's complaint against the holding of a Christmas party in a public school.
- A taxpayer's complaint against the placing of Christmas trees in public school classrooms.
- A demand by parents of non-Christian students (Jewish, Buddhist, etc.) that their children be excused from public schools for their own religious holidays.
- A parent's objections to an interdenominational prayer service to be conducted in the school for the graduating public high school class.

Suppose that you are a member of a local Board of Education in a fairly large city. The board is considering issues raised by a unit on religion that Mrs. A., the social studies teacher, has developed at the request of students. Mrs. A. explains that she has tried to present a "broad and positive view" of religion by inviting individuals from nine religious groups and an atheist group to express their views before the class. She has asked each representative to speak "with feeling" about their own religion, but not to debate or criticize the views of other religions. She has also encouraged class members to go together, on a voluntary basis, to the weekend services of the religious groups represented.

Three parents have come to the board meeting.

- Mr. X. protests, claiming that the unit should be removed from the social studies program.
- Mr. Y. supports the classroom program, but says that the field trips to religious services should not be permitted.
- Mr. Z. supports the entire program, which he calls "one of the most useful and imaginative ever devised in our school."

Do you agree with any of these three positions? Why? Why not?

Note:

This case study is from The Harvard Social Studies Project, Middleton, CT., Xerox Publishing Corporation.

Enhancing historical reasoning: a key topic in Dutch research on history education

Carla van Boxtel and Jannet van Drie

Abstract—*The number of Dutch studies on the learning and teaching of history has increased substantially in the last ten years. Enhancing historical reasoning is a key topic in Dutch research on history education. This paper discusses recent and current empirical studies in the Netherlands on methods to enhance historical reasoning in the classroom. These studies show that historical reasoning can be enhanced through the (collaborative) construction of multimodal representations, document-based writing tasks and the use of certain teacher strategies in whole-class discussions. Conclusions are drawn for further empirical research and instructional practice.*

Keywords—*Cognition, Collaborative learning, Constructivism, Document-based writing, Historical reasoning, Iconic representation, Piaget, Transformation, Visual representations.*

Introduction

Since the 1990s there has been an increased interest from (educational) researchers in the subject of the learning and teaching of history (Carretero & Voss, 1994). Especially in the United States and the United Kingdom various studies have appeared on this topic. These studies have been conducted from a predominantly cognitive perspective on learning, and focus, for example, on expert-novice comparisons, reasoning with historical documents and giving historical explanations. This line of research has been broadened with research from a socio-cultural perspective (eg, Barton, 2001; Wertsch & Rozin, 1998).

Until recently, substantial empirical research on the learning and teaching of history was completely lacking in the Netherlands. In teacher training institutes history teacher trainers were not facilitated to do research and educational researchers mainly focused on general educational topics or on other domains, such as science, mathematics or languages. Nowadays, it's a different picture. Over the last ten years several studies have been conducted or started. Dutch studies on history learning focus on the following main questions: How do students understand and reason about history? What are effective tasks and teaching methods to enhance the learning of history? Which competences do history teachers need to teach history and how can these be developed? What are the goals of history education and what are the implications for the organization of the history curriculum?

There are several studies in the Netherlands that focus on how students understand and reason about history. Albert Logtenberg conducts a PhD study (University of Amsterdam) on the asking of historical questions as a component of students' historical reasoning. What kind of historical questions do students ask, what are the underlying cognitive and affective processes of questioning and how is questioning related to prior knowledge,

interest and text genre? Also at the University of Amsterdam, Marc Kropman investigates the extent to which students in secondary education possess shared historical knowledge and shared considerations on the significance of historical phenomena in the Dutch past. Recently, Geerte Savenije started her PhD study (Erasmus University Rotterdam) about primary and secondary school students' entrance narratives about heritage and how these narratives transform during learning activities about heritage.

Several studies have focused on the development and evaluation of teaching methods and competences of history teachers to enhance the learning of history, i.e. praxis and pedagogy (e.g., Van Drie, 2005; Prangma, 2007). This theme is still present in current studies. In a design research Harry Havekes (Radboud University Nijmegen), for example, investigates the potential of Active Historical Thinking Assignments. Marcel van Riessen (University of Amsterdam) focuses on making historical thinking in the classroom more visible and on the use of rubrics to evaluate students' progression in historical thinking. Next to empirical studies, there is also theoretical research. Arie Wilschut (Amsterdam University of Professional Education) studies a fundamental but neglected component of learning history: historical time awareness. According to Wilschut, the most central aspect of historical thinking is that it deals with bridging the gap of time in a specific way (Wilschut, 2009). Central questions of his study are: What exactly is modern historical time awareness? What is the relation between that kind of time awareness and our kind of society? How can historical time awareness be taught and learned?

Whereas in most countries the majority of empirical studies on the learning and teaching of history focuses on students' conceptions and understandings, many studies in the Netherlands focus on teaching methods, especially teaching methods to enhance historical thinking and reasoning. In this paper we address this key topic in Dutch research.

In the following sections we will first explore the construct of historical reasoning and present the framework we use to study historical reasoning in the classroom. Second, we discuss recent and current studies on teaching methods to enhance students' historical reasoning. An important assumption underlying all these studies is that discourse in small group work and whole-class discussions contributes to the development of historical understanding and historical reasoning ability, provided that students are actively engaged in collaborative historical reasoning. We present three examples of teaching methods that promote collaborative historical reasoning: the construction of multimodal representations, document-based writing tasks and the use of teacher strategies to promote collaborative historical reasoning in whole-class discussions.

Historical reasoning

Historical reasoning is a central concept in our research work. The term historical reasoning emphasises the activity of students when learning history and the fact that students do not only acquire knowledge of the past, but also have to use this knowledge for interpreting phenomena from the past and the present (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008).

This emphasis on activity and use of knowledge is in line with socio-constructivist theories of learning, which stress that knowledge is actively constructed and mediated by the use of language and tools (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Historical reasoning becomes visible in verbally explicated reasoning, in speech or in writing. Reasoning reflects a transformation of knowledge and information. New relations are created through giving examples, using analogies, reformulating or combination of information. Only through such transformations new and coherent 'stories' (interpretations or explanations) can be constructed.

In our studies on history learning in secondary education we needed a framework that would enable us to analyse students' reasoning both in writing and speaking, for example, in collaborative learning situations. We wanted to create a framework that would allow us to describe progression in both reasoning and learning in history, as well as to identify the effects of different learning tasks and learning tools. From the available research literature, we identified components of historical reasoning in order to use them as a starting-point for the analysis of our data. We subsequently refined and extended our initial set of components through analysing the quality of historical reasoning in student essays, chat discussions in an electronic learning environment, small group discussions, and whole-class discussions. Based upon a review of empirical literature on students' thinking and reasoning about history and our own studies, we constructed a theoretical framework for analysing historical reasoning (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008).

The framework consists of six components: asking historical questions, using sources, contextualisation, argumentation, using substantive concepts, and using meta-concepts.

We define historical reasoning in the context of history education as an activity in which a person organises information about the past in order to describe, compare, and/or explain historical phenomena. In doing this, he or she asks historical questions, contextualises, makes use of substantive and meta-concepts of history, and supports proposed claims with arguments based on evidence from sources that give information about the past. These components often co-occur in a reasoning, but are not necessarily all present at the same time. In the example presented in Figure 1, historical reasoning occurs in the asking and answering of an explanatory question when discussing a picture of medieval peasants and knights and a castle in the background (Van Boxtel, 2002). Together with some students (12 years of age) the history teacher constructs an explanation for the fact that many peasants in the Middle Ages were tied to the landlord's land, cultivated this land and paid the lord some form of rent. In the process of building this explanation, the teacher and students use historical concepts, such as serfs and nobility. In the previous lesson the students explored these concepts in a preparatory group task. Later in the same whole-class discussion (not in the transcript) the teacher situates the manorial system within the broader context of an agricultural society in which money is hardly used.

Figure 1. An example of a reasoning episode in an excerpt of a teacher guided whole-class discussion about the manorial and feudal system

Teacher:	And now the question, why did these people do this?
Teacher:	Because, we don't have this system anymore, we don't know this
Teacher:	Perhaps it is interesting to see how this system developed
Teacher:	Why did people obey to this system?
Mary:	Yes, they got that in return
Mary:	When they cultivated the land they got food
Mary:	Yes, they had to pay a little bit for it
Mary:	And they also got protection
Teacher:	Can you repeat that, when they?
Mary:	Yes, when they cultivated the land they got food
Teacher:	Who do you mean by they?
Mary:	The serfs cultivated the land for the nobility
Teacher:	The serfs cultivated the land for the nobility
Femke:	(raises her hand)
Teacher:	Do you want to add something to this answer or want to make a change?
Femke:	when the serfs cultivated the land of the castle, they got protection from the castle when they were attacked themselves.

The quality of students' historical reasoning is shaped by their historical knowledge, skills, and meta-historical insights (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; Van Boxtel & Van Drie, 2008). Knowledge of historical concepts and chronology, for example, enables students to situate statements, objects, texts or pictures about or from the past in the context of time, historical location, general phenomena or particular events in order to make them more intelligible. The ability to use discipline-based heuristics for explaining historical phenomena (e.g., discerning immediate and indirect causes) can bring historical reasoning on a higher level. Meta-historical insights, such as the awareness that the past is different from our present times, promote contextualised thinking.

The framework of historical reasoning is not only helpful to analyse the quality of historical reasoning in history classrooms, but also helps to guide our research. Our review on the components of historical reasoning made clear that relatively little is known about some of the components, for example, asking of historical questions and contextualisation. We try to deepen our understanding of these components, for example, by investigating the kind of knowledge and strategies students actually use when asked to contextualise an unknown historical picture or document (Van Boxtel & Van Drie, 2004). In addition, Logtenberg studies the cognitive and motivational processes underlying the asking of historical questions when students read a text that introduces a historical topic.

Dialogue as a means to enhance historical reasoning

Lemke (1990) stated that students need to 'talk science' in order to learn science. He believes that it is the specific use of science concepts in communication such as the discussion of hypotheses, essay writing, reporting experimental results and asking questions that is most important. We think that the same holds for the learning of history. Students should be actively engaged in the asking of historical questions, in explaining, comparing and contextualising, and in using substantive and meta-historical concepts. In dialogue students have to make explicit their thoughts and ideas. When thinking is made explicit, it is open to questioning and discussion, and can thus stimulate students to consider alternative views and arguments. In this way discussion can enhance the quality of reasoning (cf. Kuhn, Shaw, & Felton, 1997). We believe that in history classrooms students should have ample and various opportunities to reason about the past. How can historical reasoning in the classroom be elicited and promoted? What are powerful tasks to engage students in historical reasoning? In the following sections we present three examples of methods that are promising considering the results of some Dutch studies. First, we discuss a study of Maaïke Prangma in which students were asked to co-construct multimodal representations of information about the past. Second, we discuss a study of Jannet van Drie on collaborative document-based writing in a computer learning environment. Lastly, we present a recently started study on teaching methods to enhance collaborative historical reasoning in whole-class discussions.






Collaborative learning tasks: co-construction of multimodal representations

Modern schoolbooks are full of pictures, tables, graphs, and diagrams, in addition to texts. Visual representations can support memory and concretisation in the acquisition of historical knowledge. Mostly visual representations are presented to students. In Belgium, Vielfont, Goegebeur and Van Looy (2008) are currently conducting a study in which they try to develop student teachers' historical competence through the use of graphical representational instruments, such as a history compass and a history's methodological barometer. However, also the construction of visual representations is considered valuable for learning, for it focuses on central concepts and relations, makes knowledge gaps visible and can consequently stimulate the process of elaboration (Cox, 1999). Representations can be constructed both individually and collaboratively. Van Drie & Van Boxtel (2003) showed that students who constructed a concept-map on communism in pairs were able to give more complete and accurate descriptions of the concepts in a post-test, compared to students who constructed a concept-map individually. The collaborative construction of a representation can stimulate elaborate discussions between students, since students have to verbalise their ideas and negotiate the meaning and relations of information represented. The representation that is dynamically constructed functions both as a cognitive thinking tool and as a communicative tool.

Maaïke Prangma (2007) studied the effects of group tasks in which students construct a visual representation on the use of historical concepts when describing a historical development. We consider the use of disciplinary concepts as an important component of historical reasoning. Historical concepts are tools to question, describe, analyse, synthesise and discuss historical phenomena. However, many students have difficulties with understanding the abstract concepts in history and using these concepts to describe, explain or compare historical phenomena. Pictures can make developments, structures, temporal, and causal relations visible. We expected that when students are asked to self-construct such pictures using some given historical concepts, this task would result in student discourse in which students actively use historical concepts to describe and interpret historical developments. Prangma investigated the effects of tasks in which students were asked to construct a multimodal representation. Multimodal representations combine textual information (propositional representations) with schematic or depictive visualisations (visual representations). The participants were 143 students aged 12 to 14 from six different pre-vocational secondary schools. In a dyad the students constructed a process diagram in the form of a storyboard about the decline of the Roman Empire (see Figure 2), a network chart incorporating pictures showing the effects of the fall of the Western Roman Empire, a structure diagram where students labelled an image about manorialism, and cartograms showing the spread of Christianity and Islam. Dialogue protocols of the taped student conversations were analysed for the use of historical concepts and content utterances about historical phenomena and relations.

The most powerful task in terms of talk about and with historical concepts was the task in which students were asked to construct a kind of storyboard about the disappearance of the Roman Empire. Preparation for the task consisted of reading a text about the decline of the Roman Empire. Then, they had to select appropriate drawings out of a whole set of drawings and to put them in a logical (chronological) sequence. Students were asked to connect a historical concept to each drawing and write captions that together tell a story of how the Roman empire disappeared. In this way they constructed a multimodal representation of the historical development.

Figure 2. Task sheet with model answer for the collaborative learning task in which students had to order and describe pictures in a process diagramm about the disappearance of the Western Roman Empire.

Part 1 the Roman empire disappears				
				
<p>What were things like around the year 400? Concepts that go with this period. 1. Antiquity 2. Roman army 3. Emperor</p>	<p>Concept: Transmigrating people</p> <p>What happened? Peoples from Eastern Europe transmigrated into the Roman empire</p>	<p>Concept: Split of the Roman empire</p> <p>What happened? The Roman empire was split into Western and Eastern parts</p>	<p>Concept: Western empire gone</p> <p>What happened? The emperor of the Western part is dethroned, The Western Roman empire disappears</p>	<p>Concept: The Romans leave</p> <p>What happened? The Roman army and administrators move back to Italy</p>
<p>The Roman empire disappeared because the Western part had weak administration and because Germanic people coquered Rome</p>				

Ten dyads were selected from the final sample for discourse analyses. The focus of the analyses was on the part of the discourse that dealt with domain-specific content. The total number of concepts used within the whole set of content utterances was tabulated, as well as the total number of different concepts. One utterance could contain more than one concept. The discourse during the construction of the storyboard task contained the most historical concepts. Furthermore, the task was most succesful in eliciting talk about a wider variety of concepts within the task topic.

Significant positive correlations were found between the post-test result and the total number of concepts used. This confirms our premise that more discussion of domain-specific concepts or talk with history concepts is positively related to learning outcomes.

Collaborative learning tasks: document-based writing

Writing can be considered to be an important means to engage students in historical reasoning (Counsell, 1997; Leinhardt & McCarthy Young, 1998; Husbands, 1996). Several studies showed that writing tasks engage students in historical reasoning, since students are actively engaged in the subject and explore relations among ideas, which contributes to the construction of knowlegde and the development of deep understanding (Klein, 1999; Boscolo & Mason, 2001). Especially writing based upon the study of multiple documents

can enhance historical reasoning, since students not only have to reason with the information presented in the documents, but also need to reason about the documents by identifying different interpretations and considering the thrustworthiness of the sources (cf. Rouet, Britt, Mason, & Perfetti, 1996; Voss & Wiley, 1997). In addition, several authors consider collaboration on a writing task an effective strategy, since it makes ideas and writing processes more available for feedback and critical reflection (e.g., Gere & Stevens, 1989; Erkens, Jaspers, Prangmsma, & Kanselaar, 2005).

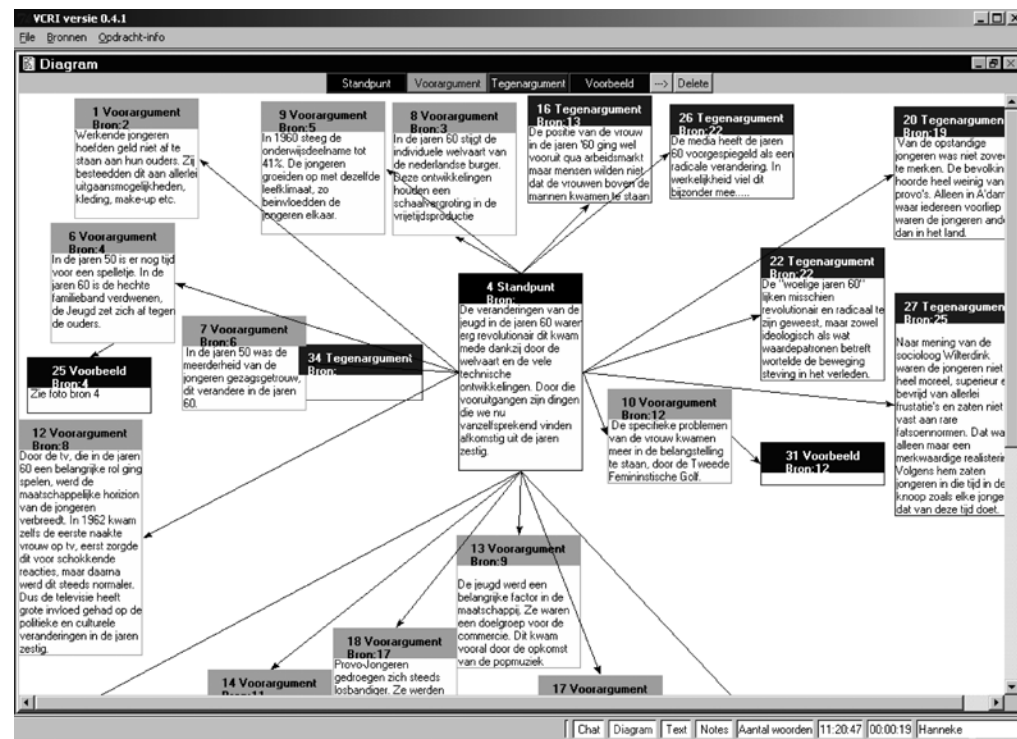
Van Drie (2005) conducted a PhD-study on the question of how to promote historical reasoning in a document-based writing task that is presented in a computer learning environment. This study was based on the idea that historical reasoning can be enhanced both by collaboration and writing. In this study students had to collaboratively study several historical documents and co-author an essay. The students conducted this task in a computer learning environment. This environment provided the dyads with multiple historical sources and the possibility to write an essay together. Communication took place via chat (the students worked in separate rooms each behind their own computer). The task was about the changes in the behaviour of the youth in 1960's in the Netherlands. The students (pre-university education, 16-17 years of age) worked about 5 hours on the task.

Van Drie carried out two experimental studies. The aim of the first study was to investigate the appearance of historical reasoning of students working on a historical inquiry task in the computer-supported collabortive learning environment. She also wanted to gain insight into the question of whether the type of inquiry task affects the apearance and quality of historical reasoning in student discourse while performing the task. She compared the effects of using an explanatory question versus an evaluative question. Results showed that the task elicited historical reasoning, however this was only a small proportion of all discourse (13%) in the chat, since most of the talk was about procedures. The comparison between the explanatory and evaluative question revealed that the students who worked on the evaluative question showed more historical reasoning in the chats and produced an essay showing a more thorough historical reasoning. It was thus concluded that especially evaluative inquiry questions are powerful to enhance historical reasoning in essay writing (see also Van Drie, Van Boxtel & Van der Linden, 2006).

In the second study, three representational tools were added to the computer environment to provoke and support historical reasoning. In an experimental study Van Drie studied the effects of using schematic representations in which students can organise information from the historical sources. In one condition students were asked to use a tool to construct an argumentative diagram before writing the essay. In such a diagram a point of view and arguments pro and contra can be graphically represented. Furthermore, students can refer to the source from which the argument or the example derives (see Figure 3). In the List condition students simply listed arguments pro and arguments contra. In the Matrix

condition students could use a matrix tool to characterise and organise historical changes. In the matrix students could summarise and label processes of change and continuity (revolutionary change or not; cultural, political, or economic changes). The analyses showed that using different types of representational formats did not result in differences in the overall quality of historical reasoning in the essay, nor in the outcomes on a post test. However, there were differences found in the chat-dialogue. For example, Matrix users talked more about historical changes, whereas Diagram users were more focused on the balance in their argumentation. A questionnaire in which students were asked to evaluate the tools revealed that they found the tools very useful. Although a computer-supportive learning environment has several advantages, the construction of a diagram or a matrix to organise information from sources can, of course, also be done by using paper and pencil (see also Van Drie, Van Boxtel, Jaspers, & Kanselaar, 2005; Van Drie, & Van Boxtel, 2004).

Figure 3. Example of a diagram constructed by one of the dyads (in Dutch)



Key

Standpunt = standpoint; Voorargument = argument pro; Tegenargument = argument contra; Voorbeeld = example

Collaborative historical reasoning in whole-class discussions

Thus far we have focused on collaborative reasoning in groups of students. However, historical reasoning can also be elicited in dialogue with the teacher. Van Boxtel (2002) compared small group reasoning and reasoning in teacher-guided whole-class discussions. Four lessons of small group work and four whole-class discussions that were part of a course on the Middle Ages were analysed. Two classes of students (12 years of age; 32 students and 24 students) and one teacher participated. In the class discussions the teacher did most of talking (about 80%), the students were actively participating. However, the teacher did not talk for a long time. In the student dialogues there was some asymmetry in participation, although not very high. Although the class discussions did not reflect a shared control and an equal participation of students, they were characterized by sharing knowledge, co-construction of meaning, and a shared responsibility for learning. A general comparison between the small group and the whole-class discussions showed that in the whole class discussions there was more focus on the content and less on procedural aspects and less social talk. The amount of historical reasoning with concepts was about as much in the small groups as in the whole-class discussions, however other types of reasoning occurred. The whole-class discussions showed more use of abstract concepts, more explanation, more contextualisation, and more talk about changes and continuity, however less descriptions. It can thus be concluded that in small group discussions students have more opportunity to verbalise their ideas and to use the language of history, and that in whole-class discussions a higher level of historical reasoning in terms of the degree of explaining, contextualisation, use of abstract concepts, and sound reasoning can be reached.

These kind of whole-class discussions, however, implies that students act as active participants in the discussion, and that it is not the teacher who does all the talking. This involves amongst others that students make substantive contributions to the discussion, express their thoughts, develop lines of reasoning, initiate, and ask questions. Students do not only respond to the teacher, but also to each other. In a small-scale study we explored the extent to which teachers foster collaborative historical reasoning in whole-class discussions and what strategies they use to promote this (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, in preparation). The detailed analyses of four whole-class discussions showed differences in the extent to which the teachers succeeded in provoking collaborative historical reasoning. This seemed to be related to the strategies the teachers used and the role of task at hand.

First, the teacher can foster collaborative historical reasoning by using various strategies. The purpose of the questions the teacher asks is not to evaluate the students, but to elicit students' thinking and to make this explicit and open for further discussion. The teacher can use questions to challenge the students to elaborate on previous ideas, to provide arguments, and to engage them in historical reasoning by introducing different components of historical reasoning or deepening reasoning on one specific component. The questions used are open questions and require long student answers. The feedback the teacher provides should preferably not be an explicit evaluation (for that stops the

discussion), but should function as a starting point for a new or continuous line of reasoning. The teacher can, for example, ask for elaboration, or invite other students to respond. Examples of specific strategies used by our observed history teachers were amongst others: questions that relate to the definition of historical concepts, providing different arguments to support a point of view, asking other students to bring in counter-arguments or considering alternative viewpoints, inviting students to consider the issue from a different perspective, and questions related to reasoning about the trustworthiness of the source. By bringing in additional components of historical reasoning or elaborating on one specific component, teachers can deepen and broaden the line of historical reasoning.

Second, the task seems to have an important role in provoking collaborative historical reasoning. Especially tasks that are open-ended and ask for reasoned judgement seem to have potential to provoke collaborative reasoning in whole-class discussions. This is in line with earlier findings we described on the power of evaluative questions to provoke historical reasoning. In addition, the extent to which students have the opportunity to explore the topic or problem at hand before participating in a whole-class discussion, seems to be an important factor. Combining group work with whole-class discussions in a mutually reinforcing way can therefore be a fruitful approach. Husbands (1996) already suggested that a class discussion in which students actively participate and share responsibility for the construction of understanding, can be best prepared by small group work. Subsequent whole-class discussions then support processes of consensus building, and the establishment of shared knowledge. As mentioned before, such teacher-guided discussions allow for attaining a higher level of reasoning compared to discussions in small student groups. As a result, whole-class discussions may in turn provide students with a model of historical reasoning and collaborative talk, which they can adopt in subsequent work in small groups (Elbers & Streefland, 2000).

Conclusion

Historical reasoning can be considered a key topic in Dutch research on history learning. The central question of the effects of different tasks on students' historical reasoning provides valuable insights into the teaching and learning of history. These insights do not only deepen our theoretical understanding of how historical reasoning can be promoted, but also give teachers some practical guidelines for designing powerful tasks. We believe that an important task of the teacher is to create ample opportunities in the classroom for students to practice historical reasoning, in writing, in dialogue with other students, and in dialogue with the teacher. In all these three ways, the use or construction of visual or multimodal representations may sustain the reasoning process. For example, visual representations can be used to organise information from multiple documents in a writing task, in small group work, or as a point of reference in whole-class discussions. Clearly, teaching students to reason in history is a challenging job. It takes much time, is difficult to assess, and it requires good instruction materials and learning tasks. A lot of research can still be done in this area.

It should be clear that Dutch research on history education has 'taken off' and already resulted in interesting findings relevant for history teachers and teacher educators. In comparison with other countries, such as the UK and the USA, we have to make up for many years without any substantial research within the domain of history education. At this moment, the Dutch research covers a rich variety of relevant issues and research methods. The studies that are still in progress are promising and will certainly result in valuable contributions to our growing international body of knowledge about the learning and teaching of history.

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Endnotes

- a) English primary education covers children from four to eleven year of age. English secondary education covers children from eleven to sixteen years of age.

- b) The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is a quasi-governmental body who monitor standards in education and training in England. They work with others to maintain and develop the school curriculum and associated assessments, and to accredit and monitor qualifications in schools, colleges and at work.

